

Annual Activity Report 2010-2011

**RURAL UPLIFT CENTRE
DEEPAM, THUMPALY,
IRENIPURAM – 629197,
KANYAKUMARI DISTRICT.**



Annual Report
April 2010 to March 2011

"If you are dealing with human beings, you are dealing with a thousand year job" - Dr. Y. C. James yen, founder International Institute for Rural Reconstruction With immense pleasure and joy, I am presenting the brief activity report that ensure livelihood resilience of the rural poor, articulate their concern on climate destruction, enhance their capacity and assert the rights.

Programmes implemented by RUC during 2010-2011



- Disaster Risk Reduction in Drought & flood prone villages
- ❖ Policy advocacy on Disaster Risk Reduction in India:
- ❖ Formation and sensitization of Panchayat level women's right in Kanyakumari, Tirunelveli and Tuticorin Districts
- ❖ Capacity building on organic farming in Kanyakumari district
- ❖ Skill training to poor and excluded through community college
- ❖ Micro-Credit assistance to poor and marginalized.
- ❖ Pre-school education
- ❖ Refuge Centre for women in distress.

1.Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction Programme. (CMDRR)

This is an innovative initiative implemented by RUC with the generous support of Cordaid, The Netherlands. Participation, involvement, commitment and monitoring skills of rural people were witnessed very much during the process of implementation. This has strengthened the process of sustainability and empowerment of the rural people. The first phase covering 11 drought prone villages and 4 flood prone villages in Tirunelveli district are nearing completion. The activities undertaken during the year are:

Drought risk reduction- activities:

- ❖ Nine irrigation tanks were de-silted. An average of 6000 cu. Ft silt removed from each tank and 13850 feet length bunds of these tanks were strengthened
- ❖ Feeder canal at Ezhangal were de-silted with the contribution of people and RUC
- ❖ 4.8 kms length of feeder canals desilted at Lethikulam, Silaiyam, Kallathi, Chinthamani and Ezhangal and renovated outlets in two ponds by Government.
- ❖ Removed Julie-flora at Arumaneri, Eraipuvvari, and Chinthamani and Ezhangal villages by the respective Panchayats
- ❖ Additional drinking water facilities were provided to five villages (Padaparkulam, Ezhangal, Lethikulam, Chinthamani and Kallathi) by constructing four new bore wells, deepening the existing one drinking water well, providing overhead tanks, installing electric pumps and necessary distribution system by RUC.
- ❖ All 15 villages have been linked with Tamirabarani comprehensive drinking water scheme and thus assured protected drinking water.
- ❖ 1053 people have joined with the small savings scheme
- ❖ Eleven food grain storage cum Information centres have been completed in drought prone villages
- ❖ 12 volunteers have been motivated and recognized as LIC agents. 336 members have insured their life with LIC
- ❖ Five percolation tanks were constructed at Ezhangal, Chinthamani and Kallathi by the respective Panchayats
- ❖ Drainage was constructed by the people of Lethikulam.
- ❖ Nine days Organic farming trainings were conducted to 154 farmers and 35 farmers were given exposure to the various organic farms
- ❖ DRR fund of Rs.23,500/- have been mobilized by the people in 2 villages. Total fund thus mobilized is Rs.2,02,608/-.
- ❖ Facilitated the weaker sections of the people to avail government scheme.
- ❖ Eleven public meetings were conducted with the participation of Members of Legislative Assembly, Panchayat leaders, Government officials, Member of Parliament and political leaders demanding the Government to implement Disaster Risk reduction measures and establishment of District Disaster Management Authority.
- ❖ Capacity building workshops were conducted in all the eleven villages on Disaster Risk Reduction monitoring by the community themselves
- ❖ Mock drills were conducted in three villages to familiarize the emergency rescue measures
- ❖ Enabled the eleven communities on people centered policy advocacy strategy for demanding risk reduction measures from the Government.
- ❖ Repeated requests and demands were placed before the government to execute a special scheme for feeding the major irrigation tanks in these drought villages with dam or river water. Frequent contacts, policy and political advocacy were also taken up insisting the government for such special scheme

Results - indicators of achievements

- ❖ Nine irrigation tanks are in a better position to hold more quantity of water that assured at least one crop of cultivation to 1050 acres and enhanced the ground water level in these villages.
- ❖ Provision of drinking water facilities in five villages ensured additional drinking water facility to the people
- ❖ The linkage of 15 villages under Tamirabarani comprehensive drinking water scheme has assured regular protected drinking water to 15 village people.
- ❖ 1053 people have started saving for their better future.
- ❖ The people have started storing food grains in the food grain storage that assured them food security
- ❖ 336 people have transferred their life risk through insurance.
- ❖ The percolation tanks constructed in two villages supported for the collection of run off rain water that enhanced ground water level.
- ❖ 258 farmers are practicing with drought resistance crops that assured food security.
- ❖ The community prepared themselves for multiple hazard response by having DRR committees, emergency respond fund, emergency communication systems.
- ❖ The landless and the physically challenged people are in a position to earn a regular monthly income of Rs.1500/ through cattle rearing and self employment
- ❖ The repeated requests, demands, frequent contacts, policy and political advocacy paved way for the allotted of Rs. 515 crore to Palayam Canal Scheme, Rs. 3.42 crore to Nanguneri Canal Scheme in Tirunelveli district. This scheme is a World Bank Scheme specially designed to feed the drought prone villages in Tirunelveli district with Tamirabarani river water. The work has recently started and is progressing well. Another Rs 20 crore was allotted to Kanyakumari district for the maintenance of irrigation canals in Kanyakumari district.
- ❖ Weaker sections of the people have availed government welfare measures.
- ❖ Widows pension at the rate of Rs.400 by 25 women
- ❖ Old age pension at the rate of Rs.400 by 45 persons.
- ❖ Marriage assistance at a rate of Rs. 20,000 each to 8 women.
- ❖ New Ration Card to 8 families.
- ❖ Assistance to physically challenged at Rs. 400/ each to 108
- ❖ Provision of 35 kgs of rice per month under Anthiyothaya Anna Yojana Scheme to 238 families
- ❖ Facilitated 2094 landless poor people to get employment under National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme.

Flood Risk Reduction - Activities

- ❖ Four rescue cum information centre buildings are under construction
- ❖ 40 houses had been completely constructed with the subsidy of Rs.20,000/ each by RUC and the construction of 64 houses is in progress
- ❖ Four flood prone villages have mobilized Rs.5,70,000 for the purchase of land to construct rescue centre in their village
- ❖ Two canals at Patchandiram and Moongiladi were de-silted with the contribution of people and RUC.
- ❖ Retaining wall on both sides of a feeder canal at Patchandiram village was constructed by RUC.
- ❖ Provided emergency flood relief materials such as cloths, utensils, beddings baby food etc., to 1600 families in Kanyakumari district
- ❖ Nine days Organic farming trainings were conducted to 55 farmers and 15 farmers were given exposure to the various organic farms
- ❖ 175 families saved an amount of Rs.55,950/- to handle the flood risk
- ❖ 54 families availed loan from Micro Credit Scheme to a tune of Rs.5,40,000/- for their socio economic activities
- ❖ 95 persons insured their life
- ❖ Capacity building workshops were conducted in all the four villages on Disaster Risk Reduction monitoring by the community themselves.
- ❖ Mock drills were conducted in one village to familiarize the emergency rescue measures.
- ❖ Enabled the four communities on people centered policy advocacy strategy for demanding

risk reduction measures from the Government

Results - indicators of achievements

- ❖ 40 families had been eliminated vulnerability to flood and 64 householders will complete their houses shortly
- ❖ The mobilization of funds for the purchase of land to the rescue centre indicates the involvement of people and their readiness to meet hazard.
- ❖ Cultivation of flood resistance crops by 40 Farmers assured for food security.
- ❖ 1600 flood victims have been rehabilitated
- ❖ 175 families are assured of their lives even during flood through small savings
- ❖ 54 families have enhanced their income through self employment.
- ❖ 95 persons have transferred their life risk through insurance.

2. Policy advocacy on Disaster Risk Reduction in India:

Major activities are

- ❖ Simplified publication of CMDRR manual, CMDRR concept dissemination through seminars
- ❖ National Consultation cum Workshops
- ❖ Meeting with Executive (Executive advocacy)
- ❖ Media advocacy
- ❖ Advocacy through People's Movement

Simplified publication of CMDRR manual, CMDRR concept dissemination through seminars.

RUC distributed the simplified publication of CMDRR manual prepared in regional language to various sectors. We have collected the feed back from the concerned. The preparation of final draft is in full swing by constituting a special team. We are sure the initiation of publishing the simplified regional language manual (a pioneering initiation of RUC) will be published in a month or two.

National Consultation cum Workshops

- ❖ National Consultation cum workshop on Disaster Management Act (2005) was conducted at New Delhi on 17th of May 2010 to get the views of more experts involved in disaster management. Prof. Vinod Menon, Honourable member of the National Disaster Management Authority inaugurated the consultation and was attended by eleven NGOs and three INGOs. The delegates of the consultation prepared a set of demands for the consideration of Government of India
- ❖ RUC secretary, Mr. Maria James participated in an international Seminar on Building Livelihood Resilience in Changing Climate, during March 3 to 5, 2011 at Malaysia. He enriched with the current trend and information on CMDRR and climate change. He shared his learning and experiences with staff members. This is a good exercise for the staff members in the learning process of CMDRR and climate change

Meeting with Executive (Executive advocacy)

- ❖ A NGOs, INGOs representative team of delegates met the Honourable member of the National Disaster Management Authority, Prof. Vinod Menon at National Disaster Management Authority office at New Delhi on 18th of May 2010. RUC submitted the memorandum and the recommendations of UN Solution Exchange Disaster Risk Reduction Community and interacted with the member of NDMA. Prof. Vinod Menon, assured the team members to consider the recommendations favourably.
- ❖ Met the Home Minister of India and submitted the Memorandum for the need of amendments on Disaster Management Authorities, Disaster Mitigation plan, Disaster mitigation fund and Disaster Risk Reduction institute and Disaster response forces at all levels
- ❖ Met the Principal Secretary, State Disaster Management Authority and submitted a detailed petition regarding the mitigation and preparedness activities needed and to be undertaken in Tirunelveli District: Also held follow-up meeting with District officials
- ❖ A memorandum was prepared incorporating the recommendations of the consultation held at Kanyakumari, New Delhi and the recommendations of UN Solution Exchange Disaster Risk Reduction Community to all the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha Members of Parliament,

all the Union Ministers of the Indian cabinet, the Prime Minister cum Chairperson of the National Disaster Management Authority requesting to make necessary amendments in the Disaster Management Act, 2005.

Media advocacy

- ❖ The declaration was published widely in one of the National News Papers (The Hindu) and Tamil regional dailies and in several televisions.
- ❖ As a preparation of the Delhi consultation a query was published in the UN Solution Exchange Disaster Risk Reduction Community for their feedback on the following
- ❖ Share experiences and challenges in the process of implementing the Act
- ❖ Suggest strategies to improve its implementation and
- ❖ Propose amendments to the Act to make it more applicable in all phases of Disaster Management.

Advocacy through People's Movement:

A mass protest was conducted at Nanguneri on 7th of July 2010, demanding the establishment of District Disaster Management Authorities at all Districts. Copies of the memorandum were sent to Government for consideration.

Results of policy advocacy:

- ❖ Government of India announced new policy guidelines. National Disaster Management authority brought out three guidelines namely Drought Management, Role of NGOs in Disaster Management and Management of Tsunamis on 24-09-2010 and 16-09-2010 respectively
- ❖ State Disaster Management Authority formed at State level.
- ❖ Tirunelveli District Collector sent proposal to Government of Tamil Nadu to establish emergency information centres in all the villages
- ❖ Ministry of Home affairs allocated ten percentage of the National Disaster Response fund for National Disaster Mitigation fund. This is one of the greatest achievement
- ❖ Government allotted more funds for Disaster Risk Reduction initiatives such as renovation of water bodies, creation of new link canals, formation of percolation ponds, and removal of encroachments from the water bodies and allocation of fund for drinking water schemes under drought mitigation and flood mitigation programme Kanyakumari District.

As a special scheme the Government has sanctioned funds for three major projects with the collaboration of World Bank

- ❖ Palayam Canal Rs. 515 crore
- ❖ Nangunerian canal Rs.3.42 crore The above two schemes are for creation of new link canals (Tamirabarani River water to drought prone villages.)
- ❖ Maintenance of irrigation canals in Kanyakumari district Rs.20 crore

3. Formation and sensitization of Panchayat level women's right in Kanyakumari, Tirunelveli and Tuticorin districts

This is an ongoing programme implemented in three Southern districts of Tamil Nadu with the financial assistance of MISEREOR exclusively to assert the rights of women.

Activities undertaken during the year are.

- ❖ Conducted ten one day Panchayat level women's right monitoring workshops.
- ❖ Organized five women's Right monitoring cells
- ❖ Conducted six, three days residential workshops in three Districts (Tirunelveli, Tuticorin and Kanyakumari) to the leaders of Women's Rights monitoring cell
- ❖ Conducted three, one day capacity building workshop on advocacy strategy to the members of women's Rights violation monitoring committee.
- ❖ Organized one counseling workshop to 34 leaders and volunteers on counseling.
- ❖ Conducted two village level Legal Aid camps
- ❖ Conducted nine conferences jointly with women's associations, demanding to pass the pending bill on 33% reservation right to women in Legislative bodies.
- ❖ Organized special campaign against dowry system and dowry harassment in four centres.
- ❖ Organized one day campaign on torture in Tirunelveli district.
- ❖ Organized International Women's Day programme along with women's Associations

demanding 50% reservation right to women in Legislative bodies, establishment of district level special court to deal the cases of women and children and to speed up actions on dowry and dowry harassment cases

- ❖ Organized a demonstration in front of Collectorate during International human rights day and demanded the government to comply human right standards.

The effects of the programmes were:

- ❖ 1220 women acquired knowledge on protection of women from domestic violence and the provisions of dowry prohibition Act
- ❖ 164 women acquired skills on women's rights violations monitoring
- ❖ 120 women leaders acquired skills on advocacy
- ❖ 4463 women articulated their issues on socio economic and political rights through campaigns and rallies
- ❖ 570 women participated in the campaign against dowry system and dowry harassment.
- ❖ 450 men and women participated the campaign against torture and sensitized the community on the need of legal frame work against torture
- ❖ Women victims asserted their rights and obtained the following remedies.
- ❖ Three women received back 764 grams gold ornaments.
- ❖ Four women got back the housed hold articles worth Rs.2,92,500/-.
- ❖ Compensation amount of Rs.13,60,000/- was awarded in six women cases.
- ❖ Two families were awarded with monthly maintenance of Rs.5000/- and Rs.2000/- respectively.
- ❖ Three family disputes were settled peacefully, out of court
- ❖ Two cases filed with the court challenging the domestic violence done to two women.
- ❖ High Court Madurai Bench issued orders in favor of one women to give back the dowry amount and the armaments from her disputed husband.
- ❖ Prevention of offences against the child bill 2009 is under the consideration of government of India
- ❖ UN special reporter indicated the non-compliance of Human Rights standards in India.

4. Capacity building on organic farming in Kanyakumari District

RUC played a major role in the promotion of organic farming practices especially in Kanyakumari district. The initiatives taken during 2010-2011 are

- ❖ Monthly organic farming foundation course trainings were organized in four centres (Marthandam, Moolachal, Thittuvilai, and Senbagaramanputhur) with 35 Participants each (total 140 farmers). Theory and demonstration are part of the training.
- ❖ Forty identified members were given intensive training on Animal Husbandry at RUC training centre, Parvathipuram for 10 days.
- ❖ Eight students from Agricultural Research Institute Killikulam had their field experiences on organic farming practices with the support of our members for 15 days. They shared their experiences with All India Radio.
- ❖ Annual farmers meet was organized at Moolachal with 400 farmers.
- ❖ Exhibition on organic productions.
- ❖ Talk by experts and scientists.
- ❖ Discussions on the grievances.
- ❖ Submission of Memorandum to government.
- ❖ Organized signature campaign insisting the government to ban the pesticide "Endo Sulphan".
- ❖ RUC facilitated the Organic farming federation members to identify, analyze and to undertake the problems and issues that affect the farmers and community at large. Details of such activities are:
- ❖ Demanded the District Collector to prohibit the use of agriculture land for the construction of buildings and other commercial activities.
- ❖ Demanded the District Collector to convene organic farmer's grievance day at district level every month
- ❖ Demanded the Padmanabhapuram municipality to provide receipt for all fee collected in the market from the farmers.
- ❖ Demanded the major political parties to address organic farmer's grievances.

- ❖ Demanded the district authorities to undertake maintenance of Chittar Pattanamkal main canal from Irenipuram to Kunnathur

Results

- ❖ 85 farmers are adopting organic farming system in 12 acres.
- ❖ 210 farmers are in the process of procuring organic seeds.
- ❖ 250 farmers are producing organic manures such as compost, vermin compost, Bio-fertilizer etc.
- ❖ The government has temporarily withdrawn introducing Bt. Brinjal on commercial basis.
- ❖ The District Collector has issued an order prohibiting the use of agriculture land for construction of houses and other commercial buildings.
- ❖ The District administration has announced 3rd Friday of the month as farmer's grievance day
- ❖ The Padmanabhapuram municipality started issuing receipt for all fee collections.
- ❖ Proposals such as waiving of agriculture loan, protection of crops from wild animals are under the consideration of government.
- ❖ Some of our demands such as separate department for organic farming, subsidy to organic farming, distribution of agricultural implements directly to farmers, price increase for milk, subsidized cattle feed distribution through public distribution system are considered by the Government.
- ❖ 50 Agricultural Officers and one Scientist from Kerala Agricultural university, Vellayanikara visited the organic farmers and their field to have an in-depth study on organic farming practices.
- ❖ The intervention of RUC and Kanyakumari District Organic Farmers Association, the district authorities constructed a new canal along the side of the newly formed road to a length of 4 kms from Irenipuram to Kunnathur under National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme
- ❖ Sharing of experiences by twenty organic farmers through All India Radio, created wider visibility of Organic farming.

5. Skills training to poor and excluded through community college at Nanguneri.

The community college aims to include the excluded by providing skill based education and facilitate them for better placement and self employment.

Courses offered:

Apart from the usual short and vocational courses offered under National Institute of Open Schooling, under MHRD, Govt. of India, such as.

Indira Gandhi National Open University approved the following two Associate Degree courses under community college systems namely

- ❖ A.S.C. (Associate of computer science)
- ❖ A.S. (Associate of Electronics)

and two Community linked learner centre courses such as

- ❖ B.Com
- ❖ B.P.P

58 students benefitted through Associate degree programmes and Bachelor Preparatory Programme (A.S.C. (computer science) - 19, A.S. (Electronics) - 6 and B.P.P - 33).

The admission for B.Com course will be started from the forthcoming academic year.

Results

- ❖ All fourteen students appeared for the exam under A.S.C. (Computer Science) have passed with high marks during the year
- ❖ All successive fourteen students of A.sc have been selected for appointment through campus interview by various companies and they are earning from Rs.3500 to 5000 per month
- ❖ Under B.P.P course, nine out of ten have passed their exam. Trials are being taken for the placement of these students.
- ❖ Second batch of 23 students will appear for the exam during July 2011.

- ❖ IGNOU accepts our proposal and declare the Notification of Community Linked Learner Centre, Nanguneri on 01.05.2011 to conduct B.Com & B.P.P courses. It should be noted that CLLC, Nanguneri is the 1st centre in Tamil Nadu and one among seven in India.
- ❖ Our college has been identified as the nodal training center for Hair Dressers Development scheme in Tirunelveli district by IGNOU through TNOU. 101 students benefited by the scheme.

6. Micro-Credit assistance to poor and marginalized.

The major thrust of the programme is economic and social development of women Beedi workers and weaker section in three southern districts of Tamil Nadu.

During 2010 and 2011- 433 beneficiaries have availed loan to a tune of Rs. 41,63,000/-.

The details are:

SI No	Purpose	No. of beneficiaries	Loan Amount
1	Agricultural Operations	223	20,38,000
2	Educational	70	6,65,000
3	House Construction	29	2,90,000
4	Purchase of Equipments	4	40,000
5	Medical Expenses	18	1,45,000
6	Petty Business	22	2,00,000
7	Cattle Raising	47	4,45,000
8	Purchase of Land	10	2,40,000
9	Sewing machine	7	70,000
10	Debt Relief	3	30,000
	Total	440	41,63,000

Result:

- ❖ Poor people have relieved from the clutches of money lenders.
- ❖ The poor people are free from sexual harassment of the money lenders
- ❖ Social status and security of rural women have enhanced
- ❖ The credit scheme has supported the poor people to acquire assets, promotion of their self employment, meeting educational, medical and agricultural expenses, repay the high interest rate loan.

7. Pre- School education:

RUC is running four pre-schools in Nanguneri Taluk with 100 students with the financial support of Social Welfare Board. They are provided with mid day meals and health care support. Good habits, mutual love, songs, group plays, stories, alphabets (both in English and Tamil) are the trainings given in the centres.

Result:

The pre-schools are enabling the rural children to acquire motor development, knowledge development, social development, physical development, and language development. More over these schools are reducing the burden of the parents in caring of children while the beedi workers and agriculture workers go for manual work during day time.

8. Refuge Centre for women in distress.

RUC constructed a Refuge Centre at Nagercoil, for providing care and support of women in distress. The building is having an area of 4600 square feet with the financial support of Government of Luxembourg, through Indesch Patens Caftan. The Centre was jointly inaugurated by Mr.Suresh Rajan, Minister of Tourism, Government of Tamil Nadu, Mrs.Helan Davidson, Member of Parliament, Mr.Rajan, Member of Legislative Assembly, Mr.Ashok Solomon, Chairman of Nagercoil Municipality and blessed by

Fr.Tagore.sj, President of RUC and Fr.A.Pappuraj, Treasurer of RUC. RUC submitted the request to Government of Tamilnadu to approve RUC and the centre as Service provider. The application is under the consideration of Government of Tamilnadu.

Receipts & Payments account for the year 2010-2011

We have received donations from the well wishers, foreign donors, repayment of micro credit and bank interest worth Rs:-24787537.23/. An amount of Rs-2, 46, 83,205.70/- was utilized for the above activities.

Thanks to the collaborators & Partners.

We, RUC & beneficiaries whole heartedly thank Cordaid - The Netherlands, Misereor - Germany, Indesch Patens Chaften - Luxembourg, Manos Unidas - Spain, Holy Family Sisters - London, Tamil Nadu State Social Welfare Board, Honourable Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Mr.Vinod Menon, Honourable member of National Disaster Management Authority, Member of Parliament Mrs. Helen Davidson, Honourable Minister Mr. N. Suresh Rajan, Members of Tamil Nadu State Legislative Assembly Mr. H. Vasanthakumar, Mr. John Joseph, Mr. John Jacob, Mrs. Leema Rose, District Collectors of Kanyakumari, Tirunelveli and Tuticorin, Mr. M. Appavu & Mr.Rajan, Central& State Government officials, Chairman and Members of State & District Legal Services Authorities, ASK - New Delhi, Mr. M. Kandasamy - Chennai, PRI representatives, NGOs and People's Movements of Tirunelveli, Tuticorin & Kanyakumari Districts, Print & Electronic Media News Reporters for the valuable cooperation in implementing the activities carried out during the year 2010 - 2011.