



# Madurai Symposium 2015

Localizing Sustainable Development Goals

12-16 September, 2015



## Bulletin

Day 4: 15 September 2015

### Conventions and Conferences

#### Conference on Financial Inclusion of Small Farmers

“Technology is going to be Key enabler for furthering financial Inclusion Process” said Mr.M.Balachandran, Chairperson, National Payment Corporation of India. Speaking at the National Conference on Financial Inclusion of Small Farmers organised by International Network for Alternative Financial Institutions (INAFI-India) in Madurai Symposium 2015 he said, “Agricultural credit under electronic banking method with RUPAY Card would overcome last mile connection of banks and farmers. There is a need for issuing more Kissan Credit Cards and convert them into Rupay Cards for farmers to make use of them in various input, fertilizer outlets for making e-payments”.

After inaugurating the national conference, Mr.K.Venkateswara Rao, Chief General Manager, NABARD-Tamil Nadu Regional office has sounded the proactive measures taken by NABARD in Financial Inclusion. He said, “Facilitation of Kissan Credit Card to small farmers through the cooperative banks, Joint Liability groups of farmers in many NABARD schemes aimed at reaching out to the small farmers. The schemes such as Umbrella Programme for Natural Resource Management enhance farmers’ access to credit to build their own natural assets”. He also reiterated the need for forums such as farmers’ clubs to deliver transfer of technology and ensure repayment of adequate utilization of credit. He insisted that the need for commercial banks to gear up and expand credit to Farmers producers’ organizations in order to achieve seven percent target set for current financial year.



### Events

#### Conventions and Conferences

- Conference on Financial Inclusion of Small Farmers
- People Convention: Mutuality through Social Security
- Consultative Workshop on Sustaining Tank Ecosystems in South India
- Workshop on Sustaining Water Sector through Networked Community Organisations (INFARM)

#### Seminars and Workshops

- Inland Fishery for Nutritional Security - Key Learnings from NFDB Projects
- Sustainable People Institutions through Farmers’ Producer Organisations
- Workshop on Strengthening Community Governance in Disaster Risk Reduction in Coastal Communities
- Dissemination Workshop on "A Study to Explore Best Practices to Address the Gaps in Disaster Management in Four Coastal Blocks of Balasore District, Odisha"
- Workshop on Role of Youth in Civic Engagement
- Workshop on Housing for Poor: Evolving Perspectives, Design and Credit Products for Cluster Housing
- National Conference on Gender Disparity in Protection of Girl Children (Child Abuse)
- People Workshop: Women Empowerment - Graduation of Women Empowerment Process
- People Seminar: Feminisation of Agriculture - Status, Challenges and Prospects
- Community Media for Localizing SDGs
- Workshop on Converging Strategies towards Open Defecation free India
- National Workshop on Excellence in Education

Mr.M.P.Vasimalai, Chairperson in his speech mentioned three pronged perspective of financial inclusion of small farmers namely Demand System (what are the farmers’ needs?), Supply System (Transformative supply that changes the quality of Life) and Enabling System (including processes and methods).

Mr. Sanjeev Singha, General Manager of Reserve Bank of India, Regional office Chennai in his key note address said, “RBI has developed a Charter of Consumer Rights. Bank

Boards have been asked to put in place frameworks that ensure those rights are protected. RBI has been encouraging banks to adopt a structured approach to financial inclusion with commitment at the highest levels by preparing board approved Financial Inclusion Policies". He believed strongly that the target for direct lending by banks to agriculture under priority sector norms has aimed to increase the flow of credit directly to farmers. He highlighted that Banks are directed to ensure that their overall direct lending to non-corporate farmers does not fall below the system wide average of the last three years achievement. He urged the farmers to avail the benefits of three schemes announced by Finance Minister in his budget speech of 2015 namely Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana and Atal Pension Yojana.

In two technical sessions followed representative of Non-Governmental Organisations member institutions of INAFI shared their experience in Financial Inclusion of small farmers and bankers' views on case of access to Financial Services for Small farmers with appropriate products and friendly processes and policies.

The government schemes that assist small and marginal farmers do not have a reach. There is a mismatch in getting support from the bank with respect to seasonality and crop cultivation. The rate of interest for the loan to farmers' producer organizations is too high. Small and medium farmers are not treated well by the banks. At the age of 72, I have just got my first loan of Rs.4 lakhs for which I had to provide my land documents and jewelry as collateral.

Mr. Narayana, Member of Rainfed Farming Group,  
Kallikudi, Madurai District.

### Declarations from this workshop

- Top level management needs to percolate the concept and practice of financial inclusion downwards. Field staffs have to be motivated and incentivize to work towards greater inclusion.
- Banks must extend non collateralized loans to farmers' producer organizations.
- The agency and social capital of the farmers groups should be the basis of trust for linkage with banks as that of self-help groups.
- Institutionalize access to formal credit to farmers by the convergence of all stakeholders namely farmers, bankers, NGOs, and regulatory authority.
- The RBI mandate of eight percent credit to farmers being the very lower side and it needs to be increased.
- Insurance companies and bodies like agricultural insurance corporations (AIC) should bring more crops under the insurance umbrella.
- Increased awareness on e-payments and adoption of wide range of technology such as RuPay cards can go a long way in bridging the gaps to financial inclusion.
- Small and marginal farmers need to be given identification and a facility needs to be extended where the credit limit can be customized at the group level.

- Farmers are going to separate banks in the same area due to restrictions on credit limit. Therefore need based lending should be put in place. Farmers can benefit from customized insurance and other products depending upon their risk and drawing capacity.
- FPOs as a platform need to be expanded to bridge the last mile implementation gaps.

### People Convention: Mutuality through Social Security

People Mutuals, a micro insurance promoting institution convened a day long convention on the theme "Mutuality through Social Security" in Madurai Symposium. The members represented from Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Karnataka shared their experiences about how insurance provided a safety-net to the members' families and mitigated their risks, and protected their livelihoods.

The scope of micro insurance should be extended from life to non life segments in order to stabilize the livelihoods of the poor. Because, insurance programmes help insulate livelihood assets of the poor people, which otherwise would be diluted by them to meet the emergencies. When insurance programmes are implemented by involving the community organisations many pro-poor insurance products and processes could be developed which would increase the seeking for and access to insurance services.

At the end of the convention all the SHG federation leaders have resolved to enroll all the eligible poor into Prime Minister's Jeevan Jothi Scheme by paying Rs.330 for life insurance and Surakshabhima Yojana by paying Rs.12 for accidental insurance. Also, they resolved to pilot credit insurance and endowment insurance, which could be possible by organising regional councils to ensure the access to insurance products.

### Consultative Workshop on Sustaining Tank Ecosystems in South India

The Vayalagam Farmers' Movement is spearheaded by the Vayalagam Programme of DHAN Foundation since 2002 in the southern peninsular India, which is blessed with more than 150,000 tanks created by our forefathers. The Movement is spread over six Indian states and reached out to 280,000 farm families. Over 200 farmers' leaders from these federations came together at Madurai Symposium and discussed on ways and means for sustaining tank ecosystems in southern India. Mr. N. Venkatesan, Chief Executive of the Vayalagam Movement recollected the growth and achievements of the Movement over these years. At the end of the workshop, following action points emerged.

By networking farmers' associations at district level, regional arms of Vayalagam Movement can be promoted to address the local issues representing around 15000 to 20000 farmers. This Movement Arm will take care of introduction and strengthening of Movement activities, self-regulation

practices, resolving water sharing disputes, evicting encroachments, facilitating water sharing, representing community needs with district administration and line departments.

Local management of resources is only possible through people organisation. Formation of Vayalagam associations facilitates continuous maintenance and vigilance. Formation of networks / nested institutions helps the farmers to realize their strength.

The sustainability of Vayalagam organisations can be achieved at the village level by facilitating partnership between the Panchayats for usufructs sharing. The income out of usufructs can be used for maintenance of tanks, command area development, supply channel renovation, village level development works and meeting the administrative costs of the associations. The partnership would facilitate purpose, governance and financial sustainability at village level.

The leaders of best performing associations can serve as resource person for strengthening the association. People to people learning will be more effective. Also, leaders can be motivated and engaged as volunteers.

The leaders found that Shramdhan is the best way to regenerate community management on water bodies. It builds ownership and establishes connectivity between the water body and the local community. The Movement leaders resolved to introduce water-walk around the tank to enable community to realize the situation of irrigation tanks. Absence of such connectivity results in pollution, encroachment and deterioration.

### **Workshop on Sustaining Water Sector through Networked Community Organisations (INFARM)**

The SDG 6 focuses on ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. Dhan People Academy organised a workshop on sustaining water resources through Networked Community Organizations called INFARM (Indian Network of Farmers Federations for Water Resource Management) was launched during Tamil Nadu Water Week in December 2014. INFARM is an independent National network of farmers' organizations, youth organisations, watershed associations and civil society organisations concerned on development and management of water resources. This network aims to bring back community governance in traditional water resources by protecting the precious and heritage water resources and its environment one of the main objectives of INFARM is documenting, sharing of best practices and creating knowledge repositories so as to benefit the people institutions working in water sector.

Leaders from Gundar upper sub-basin shared their best practice in tank encroachment eviction, periodical maintenance of tanks from the interest generated from the

endowment fund available as fixed deposit in the bank. Similarly they adopt conjunctive use of ground and tank water and working for creation of a model tank. Similarly farmers from Pambar Kottakariyar sub-basin shared their best practice as SRI method of Paddy cultivation, crop yield competition, community-well and kitchen garden promotion and catchment area treatment. Particularly the region has set up a model village where SRI method of paddy cultivation and use of agriculture machineries for transplanting and weeding are in practice.

INFARM would work for bringing all the water related people institutions together to conserve over two lakhs water bodies in the country and it will work for Identification of farmer's innovation, documentation and sharing. A comprehensive website would be built and social networks would be used for wider dissemination.

## **Seminars and Workshops**

### **Inland Fishery for Nutritional Security - Key Learnings from NFDB Projects**

DHAN Vayalagam (Tank) Foundation convened a seminar on Inland fishery for Nutritional Security on the fourth day of the Symposium and disseminated key learning from three pilot projects implemented by it in Assam, Telangana and Karnataka sponsored by National Fishery Development Board with 50 percent subsidy, executed by farmers' groups and women SHGs.

Mr. Ravichandran, Retired Deputy Director (fisheries) emphasized the importance of technical advancement and improved fish farming to achieve more production to meet the demand of fish meat in future. He shared about the schemes available with department of fisheries.

Dr. Anand, Associate Professor, Fishery College and Research Institute highlighted that fish contains rich protein, vitamins, mineral and therefore it plays vital role in addressing nutritional security of the poor. Access and affordability to consume fish in rural and tribal context should be enhanced. There is a need for modern technology and new species to intensify inland fish farming.

A fish farmer from Shillong from his experience emphasized supplementary feeding in order to enhance the fish production in common water resources. Kalanjiam women farmers from Barama Block in Assam have formed themselves into 17 fishery producers' group and reaped good harvests from individual ponds in the homestead and village ponds. Farmers from Adilabad district in Telangana state also spoke.

The seminar concluded that Malnourishment in Children and women in the country pose a big threat to future generations. Fish products provide required nutritional supplements and nutritional security. It is encouraging to

witness increasing participation of small farmers and villagers in inland fishery. Quality seeds and training are critical for sustainable fish production. They should adopt 'Eat first, sell next' approach so as to ensure nutritional security. The fishery department should come forward to evolve similar schemes in Tamil Nadu State to accelerate inland fish rearing by SHGs.

### **Sustainable People Institutions through Farmers' Producer Organisations**

DHAN Vayalagam (Tank) Foundation organised this workshop with participants representing different FPOs of Tamilnadu. Mr. K. Saravana kumar, Senior Executive from DHAN, explained the FPO concept, its sustainability through profitable operation in the back drop of present agriculture scenario and issues.

Mr. V.A. Rahavan, AGM, NABARD, Chennai, explained differences between SHGs and FPOs and the unique features of FPO like formal registration, homogeneity in its membership and collective business operations.

Mr. Moorthy, Deputy Director, Agriculture Marketing, Madurai, explained different operations of PFOs like production, harvesting, procurement, grading, pooling, handling, marketing, selling and export of primary produce and subsequent produces through value addition. He pointed out schemes available for farmers. He asked the FPOs to focus on consumer demand and quality of product.

Mr. Babulal, Company Secretary, Madurai, emphasized importance of trust and collective action of directors of FPO. He elaborated about registration, byelaw, share capital, banking transactions, accounts and auditing procedures, meetings systems, composition of the leadership, and operational system including legal compliances and reporting system needed for FPOs.

Mr. G. Chandrasekar from Kalanjium Thozhilagam Limited, shared experience of SFAC funded FPOs. He explained the processes followed in FPO promotion, its operations and its different components like supplying inputs, supporting finance and technology, creating marketing tie-up, providing training and collaborative



effort with mainstream institutions.

The participants made declarations to promote the FPO with small and marginal farmers and strengthen the federation through FPOs, to create networks among different FPOs, to enhance the organic products, to do commodity marketing through FPOs and to ensure share capital, registration, training to BoD of FPOs.

### **Workshop on Strengthening Community Governance in Disaster Risk Reduction in Coastal Communities**

Coastal Conservation and Livelihoods Programme of DHAN (CALL Programme) and Advanced Centre of Enabling Disaster Risk Reduction (ACEDRR) jointly organised this workshop with participants from fishermen community from Cuddalore district participated. Mr. P. Subburaj, Programme Leader, CALL Programme, explained the need for contextualising the SDG goal 11 – 'make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable' relevant to the coastal areas where cyclones and floods are very common. Also the workshop focused on ways and means to strengthen the community governance to face such disasters.

Mr. P. Rajan, Programme Leader, ACEDRR, explained the global and Indian contexts of disaster risks, different laws, institutions, schemes and approaches towards addressing disasters. He also insisted the importance of building resilient communities through community governance to mitigate the disaster risks. Mr. P. Sivasubramanian, Project Executive, DHAN from Cuddalore region, explained about the role of community in disasters, DHAN's experience, and different committees for DRR at the village level. Also, he facilitated the sub group processes and synthesised experiences of different committees of early warning, rescue, shelter management, first-aid and health and relief and damage assessment. Outcomes of the synthesis are:

Early warning committee will induct educated persons, and the committee is meant for awareness creation, dissemination of early warning message, identification of safe area, keeping important materials and documents safely. It will work in collaboration with different departments like fire, health, electricity board and insurance companies.

Rescue committee will induct brave and courageous members skilled in swimming and climbing. It will have defined roles and responsibilities among the team members. It will prepare rescue plan, ensure training, organise mock drill regularly, and keep required rescue materials available in good condition, create key emergency contact numbers and share with all the villagers.

Shelter management committee will take up regular maintenance of shelter points, and ensure basic facilities at the cyclone centres including toilets, fire fighting materials and water. Identification of neighbourhood families, potential shelter points in government buildings, supporting

villagers to improve their houses to withstand disaster situations are its functions.

First-aid and health committee will keep all essential medicines in advance and setup community medical teams, provide first-aid training, create awareness on regular basis, obtain support from nearby PHCs/hospitals, extend enough medical care for livestock, keep environment clean and ensure support from government and volunteers to provide healthcare services.

Relief and damage assessment committee will work for ensuring equitable distribution of relief materials, assess the damages and ensure rehabilitation support from mainstream, ensuring insurance for life, health and assets, keeping regular contact with mainstream institutions.

The federations resolved to prepare first-aid training kit and conduct training on first-aid, search and rescue. Also they resolved to prepare disaster management plan for all the working blocks.

### **Dissemination Workshop on "A Study to Explore Best Practices to Address the Gaps in Disaster Management in Four Coastal Blocks of Balasore District, Odisha"**

Coastal Conservation and Livelihoods Programme of DHAN (CALL Programme) and Advanced Centre of Enabling Disaster Risk Reduction (ACEDRR) jointly organised this workshop in which 60 participants from coastal villages of Balasore district, Odisha and Cuddalore district, Tamilnadu participated.

Mr. P. Rajan, Programme Leader, ACEDRR, explained the core areas of an action research project taken up in Balasore, Odisha such as disaster risk reduction and restoring livelihood project, which is done with the support of AXIS Bank Foundation. Promoting disaster risk reduction committees in all the working villages is the one of the important components. Understanding the best practices available at grassroots level and identification of its gaps to strengthen the DRR committees are its process components. Based on this felt need of the programme, this study has been initiated.

Mr. P. Subburaj and Mr. A. Madhan Kumar facilitated the community consultation processes on the study outcomes and recommendations, and participants reflected on the findings.

The study outcomes: The study came out with the findings on early warning practices of community, flood resistant varieties of paddy, traditional preservation of paddy, package of practices in agriculture, methods to reduce salinity, fodder storing methods, livestock shelter arrangements, and livestock disease treatment, early warning, preparedness in fishing, communication methods of fishermen, community best practices related to housing, cooking fuel and electricity and practices in water and sanitation.

The study recommended for Promoting disaster management committees to build resilience among the community, creating village common fund for disaster risk reduction by the community, storing essential food items to address the food crises during disaster, ensuring first aid-kit and creating health awareness, training and organising mock drill regularly to handle difficult situations.

### **Workshop on Role of Youth in Civic Engagement**

"Engagement of Youth in civic activities will enhance their individual growth. They need practical skill, education and guidance. Youth in rural areas are voiceless, and they need more support", said Mr. Satheesh, Zonal Director, Nehru Yuva Khendra. Speaking at the workshop on "Role of Youth in Civic Engagement" organised by Rajiv Gandhi National Institute for Youth and Development, Nehru Yuva Kendra and Youth programme of DHAN Foundation at the Symposium.

In a lead presentation, Mr.P.David Paul, Training officer of RGNIYD insisted 12 essential 'P' such as Participation, Providing Opportunities, and Professional network and so on. The civic engagement begins at youth involvement in Panchayat Raj Institutions. They become more productive when their innate potentials are engaged in civic activities. 'Attitude' of youth should be shaped towards civic engagement. Mr. V.Venkatesan, Programme Leader of Youth and Development Programme in DHAN facilitated the workshop.

The workshop resolved to involve the youth intensively in disseminating government programmes to the people. They need to take more in farming and they need to be organised. They should know about their rights. Once they know their rights, they can attain whatever they want. They should be motivated to work for ensuring basic infrastructure for the village like sanitation. Volunteerism should be promoted at high pace.

### **Workshop on Housing for Poor: Evolving Perspectives, Design and Credit Products for Cluster Housing**

The sustainable development goal 11 insists 'Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable'. Inclusive housing includes housing for marginalized, disadvantaged communities. Kalanjiam Development Financial Services (KDFS) organised a workshop on 'Housing for poor: evolving perspectives, designing credit products for cluster housing' on the fourth day of Madurai Symposium.

Speaking at the workshop Mr. Janakiraman from KDFS said, "Estimates show that 37 percent of the Indian population lack safe-housing. There is a need for unified efforts of financial institutions, real-estate operators, professionals and community to overcome this challenge".

Mr. Ramalingam, Architect, said, "There is a need for rethinking conventional housing. There is an emerging feature of cluster housing, which can prevent high cost of housing, which is a deterrent for low income people to go for housing. We can build a good house in 450 square feet at the cost of Rs. 3.5 lakhs". Mr. Karmeham from Vijaya Bank highlighted the community friendly housing products.

Reasons for restrictive entry into institutional housing finance provided by banks, financial Institutions, housing finance companies are many, ranging from high transaction costs for small loans, non-applicability of traditional mortgage lien and difficulty in determining repayment capacity vide income documentation. The impending scope to enable the poor and vulnerable people access Housing, stands at crossroads. While the urban housing shortage in India stands at 18.78 million units, 95 percent of this shortage belongs to the Economic Weaker and Low Income Group sector population, who both by inadequacy of income and informality of employment to service the debt, remain unable to access the formal housing finance market.

There should be a combination of own savings, credit from banks and low cost technology, collective housing can be tried. In terms of financial security a family can invest maximum of five times of their annual income in housing. Government housing schemes needs pragmatic shift to suit community needs and cover increasing demand of housing.

Amidst this complexity in ensuring access to housing for the poor, the KDFS resolved to pilot low cost cluster housing and connect loans with innovative cost effective, eco-friendly and sustainable housing solutions.

### **People Workshop: Women Empowerment - Graduation of Women Empowerment Process**

The workshop organised by Kalanjiam Foundation in Madurai Symposium focused on evolving and a framework for the women empowerment process from the experiences of women SHG leaders. The fifth Goal of SDG says that 'Achieve Gender Equality and Empower all women and Girls' with special focus on sub goals 'ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political economic and public life'. Women leaders from SHG federations attended this workshop. The workshop made an attempt to enlist leadership traits expressed by women leaders of Kalanjiam at the family level and Federation level.

Some of the common leadership traits expressed by the participants were:

Space and opportunities provided or expressing leadership, learning environment, and collective work with clarity of purpose. The women leaders could see their transformation by experiencing improved management abilities, total transformation in personality and improved negotiation

skills, ability to provide mentoring to next generation leaders, enhanced social concern and finally leadership as a way of life. The workshop also facilitated to find out facilitating and inhibiting factors to use their inner and acquired strengths and power to express the effective leadership. One of the concerns expressed was ageing and a few family commitments. Otherwise, a lot of external factors and opportunities have enhanced their motivation to advance their leadership.

### **People Seminar: Feminisation of Agriculture - Status, Challenges and Prospects**

Agriculture in our country provides engagement to 80 percent of women, yet the important decisions in farming remain in the hands of men farmers. In a people seminar convened at the Madurai Symposium, women folks shared their best practices in farming. Ms. Josephin, a progressive woman farmer from Madurai shared innovative methods of honeybee rearing and honey collection developed by her, which made her to become a successful entrepreneur.

Dr.Jeyakumar, Professor of Agronomy, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Aruppukottai said, "Women farmers face a lot of challenges in agriculture due to lack of women friendly technologies. They should come forward to practice organic farming in the near future to get better price for their commodities".

Ms.Rajalakshmi, Regional Coordinator, DHAN presented about the prospects of women farmers in watershed and horticultural development. Many women farmers from Madurai, Virudhunagar and Sivagangai districts shared their experiences in adoption of successful farm technologies. Recommendations came from the workshop were:

Mainstream agencies should invest substantial energy in building capacity of the women farmers on various packages of practices of crops. Technical inputs should be made available to them timely and they could be motivated to follow environmental friendly organic farming practices. They need to be encouraged to take up crop insurance to cover the risks. The women farmers shall think about and follow the crop diversification, crop rotation and integrated farming system to get the stabilized income. Loan shall be provided to them at the time of cropping season with flexible scheduling. SHGs should make it mandatory to create assets in the name of women, when purchased with group loan.

### **Community Media for Localizing SDGs**

The Workshop "Community Media for Localizing SDGs" was organized by the ICT Programme of DHAN Foundation and Vayalaga Vanoli, Madurai District Tank Farmers Federation, Kottampatti, Madurai. Dr. Shantha, former Head of the Department, Journalism, Madurai Kamaraj University in her presidential address said, "Now-a-days media became an eco-system, which as occupied the space of friends and books in homes. Radio is the low

cost media and which does not require any technical knowledge to operate to listen". She further added, "New opportunity has emerged for the communities to occupy the media space in the form of Community Media like Community Radio. Community Radios have greater role to simplify, localize and disseminate the sustainable development goals at the grassroots".

Dr. Umarani, Associate Professor, Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Science University, Madurai inaugurated the internet version of the Vayalaga Vanoli, which is a Community FM Radio Station functioning in Kottampatty, owned and managed by the Farmers. Farmers from Kottampatty interacted with her online to get advice for veterinary queries. After inaugurating it she said, "Technology brings the community and expert closer. Live interaction done with the farmers of Kottampatty last year on veterinary healthcare solutions through Community Radio brought impressive results". She further added, "Farmers, who had participated in the phone-in programme on livestock healthcare adopted the scientific management of animals".

Mr. Beer Mohamed, Deputy Director, Department of Labour and Employment, Madurai in his keynote address said, "Community Media is an effective tool for lifelong learning and it can be deployed for skill building. There is a huge gap between the demand and supply of skills, community media can bridge this skills". He explained in detail about the Vocational Training Programme in detail.

Mr. Senramar, Team Leader, ICT Programme presented on the role of Information and Communication Technology for localizing the SDGs. Participants discussed in sub-groups about the role and use of Community Media for achieving SDGs. Mr. Muthukuarasamy Station Manager, Vayalagam Radio facilitated the workshop and Mr. Premanand, Director, DHAN-People Academy delivered a valedictory address.

Community Media should facilitate the sharing of market information, availability and price of seeds, fertilizers, pesticides. The youth from the agricultural families have to be involved more in the Radio programme so as to encourage them to get involved in farming. Like Farmers Producers Organization (FPO), Farmers Media Groups (FMG) can be promoted with the regular participants and listeners of Community Radio. The Community Radio can share information related to nutritional food for different age group of women, awareness about Cancer, anemia control, ill-effects of early marriages, mental and physical health of women and children.

### **Workshop on Converging Strategies towards Open Defecation free India**

"Only 48 percent of the people in Tamil Nadu have access to toilet facility, and the remaining population have only resort to open defecation, which is widespread and very

high in rural areas. Many of the health issues are connected to lack of sanitation and hygiene", said Mr. Rajapandian, Chief Executive of SUHAM (Sustainable Healthcare Advancement) Trust. He spoke at the workshop organised on Converging Strategies towards open defecation free India at the fourth day of Madurai Symposium. He further added "These goals could be localised only when we eradicate the menace of open defecation from our country, which needs collective action of government, NGOs and Community Institutions".

The Sustainable Development Goal four advocates ensuring healthy lives and promoting wellbeing of for all at all ages, and the goal six calls for ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. The workshop focused on indentifying the causative factors for this problem and drawing lessons from the best practices in some areas, where the issue of open defecation had been addressed with interventions.

"Constructing a toilet is not as simple as building a house. It needs technical assistance. Most of the people know only about septic tank model of toilets. The government programmes in haste promote improper models of toilets in the areas where water is scarce that fails the purpose for which it was done. Dual leach pit model of toilet is found to be eco-friendly, cost effective, less water requiring and causing no pollution to our environment", said Mr. Subburam, SCOPE - Trichy.

"Swachh Bharat Mission and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme are available to promote construction of toilets. Toilet linked bio-gas recovery system has the potential to convert the waste into a resource", he added.

"The age-old stigma of constructing a toilet within the home should go", said Ms. Rajakumari, Kalvikendra, Viluppuram. "Creating awareness to the villagers is the key, as sustainability of this initiative to construct, use and care depends greatly on the community ownership. The strength of SHG Movement could be tapped to achieve open defecation free country", she added.

Mr. Ponanant from Water.Org said, "The field workers and SHGs should take the message of pride in owning a toilet to each household. It should not be promoted just as a subsidy scheme. With collective action of SHGs, local bodies, NGOs and government programmes, no doubt, we can achieve 100 percent sanitation".

Mr. Iyyappan from DHAN Foundation explained about the project taken up in Sanarpatty to eliminate open-defecation completely with the assistance of State Balanced Growth Fund.

Participants for this workshop were from NGOs and Community Institutions working on the issue of open defecation, donors and experts in promoting affordable sanitation.

### National Workshop on Excellence in Education

The fourth SDG states, 'Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all'. Drawing clues from this goal Dhan Karunai Illam organized this workshop on the fourth day of Madurai Symposium. Sixty five people from various institutions have attended this workshop. In his key-note address, Dr. M.P. Gurusamy, Secretary Gandhi Memorial Museum said, "Today's education system is less inclined towards imparting values. It has become as business. Education should promote physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual growth equally". He also said, "Attitudinal change is solicited in the parents too as they should aspire that their children emerge as good human beings. Teachers should facilitate analytical reasoning among children. Education should make them love their fellow human, environment and the country which would keep them away from indulging in anti social activities such as bribery".

Dr. Meenakshi Pattabiraman, Educationist expressed concern about declining patriotism and moral values among the students community. She compared the educational system in Australia which she claims to be a liberal one as children of about 10 years of age write stories. She also said that today's televisions are more entertainment oriented than imparting knowledge. She cautioned parents to keep a vouch on their children's engagement with TV and other recreational media.

Mr.S.Dhanasekaran, Educationist expressed concerns over diminishing attitude towards hard work. Based on the children's skills and competitiveness their future goals

should be drawn. A good teacher is a friend, philosopher and guide to his students. The afternoon session was continued with the sharing of participants. Mr. T. Raghavan, Correspondent, Karunai DHAN School, Nilakottai welcomed the participants and Mr. G.Gomathymurugan thanked the participants.

Education is a continuous process and doesn't stop with school. Education should tap the creativity in children which is already inherent in them and unleash their skills and potentials. Teachers should necessarily carry out demonstrative techniques and provide space for the children for experiential learning. Providing quality education at affordable cost to all should be the mandate of the Government. Promoting transparency in the administration of educational institutions by including all the stakeholders in decision making is the need of the hour. Poor should get equal opportunity in availing the education services. Better learning environment should be provided by encouraging creativity in teaching pedagogy. SHG federations can promote a model school in every block/federation incorporating all these suggestions.

#### Folk-art Performance

All four days of the Symposium had cultural performance by the folk artistes from different parts of Tamil Nadu in the evening hours after the formal events. Participants including general public, guests of the Symposium, students and youth enjoyed the cultural performance. Folk-art formats Parayattam, Karagattam, Kolaattam, Oyilattam, Saatai kuchiyattam, Kizhavan-kizhavi Aattam, Karuppusamy Aattam, Thevaraattam, Sevaiyattam, Kummi and Silambam were used to entertain the audience.

## 10<sup>th</sup> Development Film Festival on Sustainable Development

The Festival organised on the sideline of the Symposium received over 90 films from all over the worlds. Twenty films shortlisted from these entries scheduled for screening at the Festival. Five films were screened on the fourth day of the Festival.

### Khattis Withering Lifelines

Filmmaker: Rejendra Rajan

Duration: 10 minutes Language: English

Water is elixir of life and we need to conserve the traditional water resources like Khattis. The film forcefully communicates the need and importance of conserving them.

### News

Filmmaker: Debasis Chakraborty

Duration: 09:35 minutes Language: Bengali

This film is an attempt to sensitize the harsh reality – corporate sponsored media, which promotes news in an unethical way, not listening to the voices of the people. By telling story of a father, who lost his son unnaturally, questions why media did not find a news value in it.

### Kadamai

Filmmaker: M.Balasubramanain

Duration: 14:07 minutes Language: Tamil

This film tries to tell the value of responding positively to a person, who did an injustice to you.

### Parivarthane

Filmmaker: Arasu

Duration: 16 minutes Language: Kannada

Through a vivid story, this film tells the message of promoting good humane values.

### Classmates

Filmmaker: Reza Golchin

Duration: 01:33 minutes Language: Persian

This film highlights the story of children, who attend their schools, walking for a long distance.

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