

Report of the Meeting on Alternate Livelihoods for the Tsunami Victims

Venue: Conference Hall, Collectorate

Moderator: Achamma

Date and Time: 17th Feb 2005, 4 pm

Background

As tsunami shattered the livelihood sources of the fishing and agricultural communities, the workforce in the region undergoes through great stress. They are facing threat with virtually no income coming to the families to meet the forthcoming expenses. Pressure is coming from the field seeking the means of family sustenance. Heeding to this call, some of the NGOs has already started to intervene in this issue and a few more is interested to be involved. In this context, NGO Coordination Centre decided to set platform for discussions to frame a concrete approach of NGOs regarding the alternative livelihood approach. (*see annexure 1 for list of participant organisations*)

Presentations

The ground setting for the general discussion was done with two presentations on alternate livelihoods. In the first presentation, EFICOR representatives portrayed the grave situation from the field and described how they intervened to tackle the issue. As the situation demanded immediate attention, cash for work program was selected as the suitable intervention strategy. Through their intervention EFICOR could provide work for 3,114 families in 16 villages. The program integrated the values of keeping up the dignity of the tsunami victims, environment setting where the victims can overcome their agony, ensuring the participants are getting time for social gathering and finally the most important aspects of ensuring the families are getting at least minimum income.

In the second presentation, Sarvodaya Rahat Abhiyan representatives, cited the different self employment activates and cottage industries that can be effectively adopted as alternative livelihood options. Various products developed through cottage industries were also exhibited to build confidence among the NGO representatives that there is further scope for intervention.

Discussion

The discussion session turned into a live one with NGO representatives raised concern over the potentiality of building alternative employment opportunities. The cash for work and food for work can be visualised as short term interventions coming under relief package. Most of the alternative livelihood initiatives need locally available cheap raw-materials, dedicated skilled workers and above all the market accessibility. It is very difficult to compete with the well established companies and MNCs in the marketing field. SHGs shall be considered one of the suitable means of income generation. Even men are ready to be part of the SHGs.

Suggestions

- There is a need for alternative livelihood strategy development taking into account the present situation where the current livelihood sources were subjected to both short term and long term shocks
- The cash for work program shall be treated as a proper short-term intervention strategy as it ensure the families are getting at least minimum income and act as a confident building effort
- However, for the long-term livelihood there is an urgent need of creating self employment opportunities and setting up of cottage industries after analysing the local peculiarities, strengths and marketing potentialities
- The SHG formation, as they can create the environment for self employment generating activities and cottage industry formation shall be encouraged in this line
- There is an increased need for information exchange among the NGOs working in the alternate livelihood area that will help to increase the effectiveness of the intervention
- The government should undertake responsibility of involving in the process of alternate livelihoods creation in its own level and also provide support to the NGOs involving

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List of Participant Organisations in the Alternate Livelihood Meeting

S.no	Name of the Organisation	Contact Person	Phone no./Email
01.	OXFAMGB	Silke Alfred	09830708002 spite3sch@oxfam.org.uk 9865145883
02.	Marutham	S.Sekar	9245112633
03.	DWCDS-Nagai	M.Gnanavalli	9344011098
04.	TMSSS-Thanjavur	Fr.Senfole Fr.S.M.AntonyRaj	9443130009 9443350270
05.	CRS/CARIAS INDIA	Mamata Sahu	9894241432
06.	CASA	Joseph P.Shayam	09840881268
07.	EFICOR	Mr.Kennedy Dhanabalan	09865502877
08.	World Trust	M.Govindaswamy	9842372011
09.	TEDE Trust	R.Ramavarma	9842615363
10.	Bharathamatha	Mr.R.V.Manimaran	9842466342
11.	REAL+ICICI	SeethaLakshmi	9842657963 real@md4.vsnl.net.in
12.	SIFFS	Antony	9842902609
13.	RDT	Ravi	9443727615

14.	Centre for Environment Education , 734, Avinashi Road Coimbatore-641018	M.Sarswathy	ceetamilnadu@ceeindia.org h.saraswathi@ceeindia.org
15.	St.Joesph's development trust	N.Sethu	9865391075
16.	DMI	Adithya	9865791980
17.	Peace Trust	S.Raja	986577266
18.	Chinniah educational society		954362-232775
19.	Veed Trust	J.Valarmathy	9344010209
20.	IAHV	Rajagopal	9843065063
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23.	KUDUMBAM	Albert Horne	9842614431
24.	Sarvodaya Rahat Abhiyan	Co-ordinator : Yusuf Meherally	04365249122 9443874360