

2017

Kudumbashree Visit Report



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Kudumbashree has caught the world-wide attention, due to high social impact on women empowerment and poverty eradication. Creative and predictive natures of program planning and effective implementation are the highlights of kudumbashree. Through NHG (Neighbor Home Groups/ Ayalkoottams) kudumbashree created largest women organization/association in Asia. 'Harisree' is fifteen members NHG of Uurakkadu Panchayath (Alappuzha) started their weekly meeting with prayers. Sindhu Kizhakkedam chaired the meeting and Secretary Jaya. K.K facilitated. Secretary presented minutes and it is passed. Then they discussed various topics. Through the sharing of knowledge, psychological and intellectual development occurs. They are the living examples of it.



'Arogya Dhayika'- Rejeena beegom talked about health consequences of Iodine deficiency. Iodine deficiency in pregnant women and children may leads to thyroid problems and it will have major health problems. Rajeena advised to have iodine containing salt. Harisree collects twenty rupees from one member for weekly collection fund. Some of them love to call NHG as Courtyard bank. Harisree NHG cultivates tapioca also.

Kudumbasree Panchayat Samithy (Community Development Society) formed at the village panchayat level or at the municipality (town) or corporation (city) is a federation of ADSs.Each ward will have one CDS member.



*CDS Chair Persons from kannur Dist.
from left Seetha gopalan (Alakkode),
Shakunthala (Chapparappadavu),
Shaija (Kadirur), Praseetha (Mukeri).*

Chair person, vice-chair person, sub-committee convenors, women representatives from panchayath, and two former CDS members will constitute a CDS committee. Praseetha, chair person of Mukeri panchayath CDS (kannur Dist) is very happy with the working of CDS Committee and she adds that they have at least two meetings per month. 'Asraya' program is successfully running under CDS with the help of challenge fund of District mission and plan fund of panchayat. Micro-enterprises, JLG groups, hotels run by ladies, around 30 balasabhas, 173 kudumbashree functions working under Mukeri CDS. They organize study tour for the empowerment of children. Other than CDS committee, they have General body meetings on every three months and monthly meetings of Bank Committee. Panchayat president often participates in CDS meetings if necessary, Praseetha concluded.

Statement of a Grama Panchayat Member

My ward (ward IV Purakkad Panchayat, Alappuzha) owns 16 Kudumbashree NHGs of which 14 are working smoothly, but the rest of two is in trouble.



[SAJI (Panchayat Member, Ward IV, Purakkad Village, Alappuzha)]

They also conduct proper audits at regular time intervals. All are working from small capital investments; there is no chance of implementing new policies. For ensuring new policies it is necessary to get proper governmental support in the form of loans including subsidy. In my ward most NHGs are working only with selling firewood. They need proper training for other working areas like as electronic items making and plastic toys making etc... This will fetch them more profit. I strongly believe they can improve their abilities with government support. And they will reach high possession as more than we expected.

Kudumbashree views Micro Enterprise Development as an opportunity for ensuring women's representation in employment. It attracts more and more women because of its wide range of options and its women friendly approach. They can start their own entrepreneur plans with considering their time availability and taste. 'Surabhi Kudumbashree' form (Purakkad Panchayat Alleppey) runs a rental service (Plates, Chairs and desk etc...) named 'Taxi House'. They are first started a small unit of homemade 'Chammanthipodi (a curry)' on cash loan. V.O. Ajayan managed to get a loan of 3 lakhs for them and the received a subsidy of one lakh from block panchayat. It was profitable at the beginning, but now the condition is little bad. Sujini mol and Susheela are the current president and secretary respectively.

'Aishwarya' is another micro Enterprises unit at Purakkad panchayath. Firewood sale is their main commodity. Coconuts, Soap powder, Unniyappam (Sweet-cake) are also sold by them. Ambika, member of Aishwarya group says that firewood sale is highly profitable. Around 55-60 quintal firewood are brought at each stretch or turn. The starting phase grama panchayath offered five thousand rupees. At each sale 750-900 rupees profit easy is earned by each member. This thirteen member group has some more future plans too.

To encourage agriculture and to ensure non-toxic vegetables, Kudumbashree launched 'Joint Liability Group' (JLG). They cultivate on their land or lease the lands from land owners. 'Ammey Devi' is a JLG from Purakkad panchayat (ward IV). They are group of fifteen women. Vasanthy is the current president and Leela is the current secretary of 'Ammey Devi'. Currently they cultivate Beans, Yam and Colocasia etc...



“At the beginning stage we received free seeds and fertilizers from Krishi Bhavan Purakkad.” Secretary remembered. Well and pond are use for irrigations methods. They themselves sell vegetables on vehicles. Even though they had to work hard, they have reasonable income. Unavailability of seeds at proper times and crop loss due to heavy rain are the challenges ahead.

Kudumbashree designed a project called ‘Asraya’ in the year 2003. It is a Rehabilitation and Monitoring Project for the destitute families. It conceived as a joint program of the Local Government and Kudumbashree CDS. Lalitha widow from Purakkad village is one among the beneficiaries of ‘Asraya’ program. She shared her experience with the program. She acknowledged as the beneficiary of ‘Asraya’ by the Chairman of CDS and ward member. She monthly receives groceries and other needy materials with the value of four hundred rupees. This is a great relief to her unbearable life. “With the help of sponsors, CDS used to distribute onakkodi (dress on the occasion of onam) to the beneficiaries of Asraya”- Chairman says.

Kudumbashree can be treated as the best tool for the Poverty eradication and women empowerment. No doubt it has contributed to the economic and social independence to the women. Despite the remarkable achievements, there are clouded and hidden deficiencies, which will work against the established goals of the mission affecting the sustainability and other serious problems in future. Unavailability of markets for their products, poor marketing techniques, etc... are some among them. We have to address these kinds of issues; otherwise it may affect the smooth functioning of Kudumbashree.

Submitted by

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