

Moving Toward Skill Enhancement Of NHG Members: A Framework Building For Further Diversification Of Kudumbashree Units

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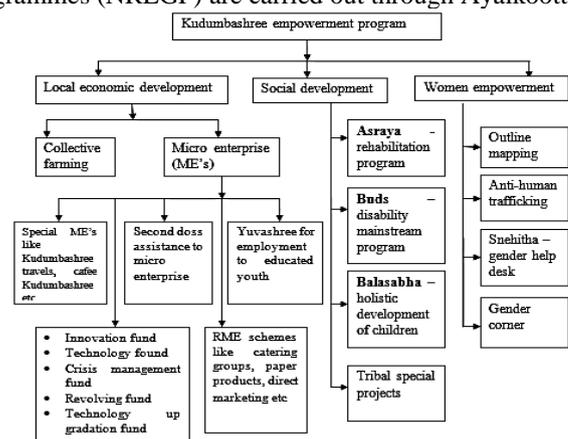
Abstract: The Kudumbashree mission, started with an objective Poverty Alleviation and Women Empowerment has achieved a number of mile stones during these years. In Kudumbashree women mainly target loans or savings. Only a few of them join the unit with the aim of self-employment or business. However, it is necessary to move Kudumbashree mission to newer levels and in new ways and partnerships. For that Kudumbashree mission has to focus more on the Ayalkoottam (NHG) members to go ahead with new ways of action for creating employment opportunities for self-sustaining life for its members. This study aims to create a new framework for Kudumbashree for its further diversification and to bridge the gap between professionalism and Kudumbashree focusing on activities with the support of social enterprises (SEs), technology start-ups along with management and professional students.

Keyword: Kudumbashree, Social Enterprises, Startups, Diversification, NHG Enrichment, Skill Enlargement, Women Empowerment

I. INTRODUCTION

Kudumbashree is a decentralized effort of Kerala government to alleviate poverty within a period of ten years through women empowerment. It was launched in the year 1998. (Devika & Tambi, 2007). Kudumbashree's functions are built-on a three tiered mechanism – NHG (Neighbourhood Groups), ADS (Area Development Society), and CDS (Community Development Society). Firstly, it functions via women's involvement as structured groups for self enhancement. The base of the mission is Ayalkoottam (NHG) having 15 to 25 members. NHGs federate at ward level and form Area Development Society (ADS) and at panchayath or municipality level, ADS are grouped into Community Development Societies (G. Williams et. al.2011). Ayalkoottam clusters are envisioned to function as independent establishments for poor women's social and economic empowerment. The basic action of such clusters is collection of thrift and provide credit services. Basically all NHG's are expected to conduct systematic and regular cluster meetings. The money collected through savings is used for

expansions as well as payment of loan interest. Other activities of Ayalkoottam include micro enterprises (ME's), animal husbandry, dairying, tailoring, pickle manufacturing, paper bag making, rice farming and vegetable cultivation (on leased land). Most of the National Rural Employment Guarantee programmes (NREGP) are carried out through Ayalkoottams.



Source: Kudumbashree website

Figure 1: lists the activities of Kudumbashree employment programs

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Kudumbashree is an effort of the state of Kerala for empowering poor women through groups called Ayalkoottam or Neighborhood Groups (NHG). They are federated under panchayaths and municipalities. The basic aim of such clusters is to advance participant's economic and social security through their empowerment (government of India, 2008). Apart from nation-wide and state anxieties of decentralization (panchayathi raj), the CPI (M) launched PPC (people's planning campaign in 1996 a novel experiment in decentralization with Porto Alegre's participatory budget became one of the most celebrated participatory empowerment governance (Thomas Isaac with Franke,2000).The current arrangement of Kudumbashree task howsoever initiated in the year 1991as a 'Community- Based Nutrition Programme' (CBNP) by government of Kerala with funding of UNICEF for amending the nourishment position of women and children (Devika, 2002). Kudumbashree has given much consideration to Ayalkoottam (NHG) for construction of women's social capital for poverty abolition and empowerment. At the same way it is a requisite to have an institutionalized and long lasting framework for encouraging the contribution of women. Even though Kudumbashree delivered civil society of Kerala a form of nourishment (Baiocchi et al.2008) and made an innovative and novel sodality among with unorganized poor marginalized women and later it turned out to be an entity hostage for satisfying local political forces at work. The mission brought a genesis challenge to gender behaviors via building an amalgamated collection of poverty eradication solace through entrepreneurialism. The thrift and loan (micro financing) fixed the objective to some extent. The touch of professionalism in Kudumbashree should necessitate at managerial side as well as technical side. While assessing the model as well as the influence of the model Kudumbashree were making women more noticeable with in communal domain. Many Ayalkoottam could make a widespread influence on social issues than their instant economic side. In West Bengal, such small saving groups could advance belief and harmony through the economic relationship. Now a day's alliance of women are more positively mediate to resolution social problems (Sanyal, 2009). Today Kudumbashree is a stepping stone for many women for political career as well. 33% reservation for women with in panchayath and municipalities provided chances. Women who were viewing capability and governance abilities with in Ayalkoottam. Kudumbashree programs of poverty eradication and political empowerment given power to some poor women (Devika & Thumbi, 2010). However women could be part of politics and social economic uplift actions. Still there is a gap of no-professionalism in managerial and technical side of Kudumbashree's activities.

III. BUILDING NEW FRAMEWORK FOR KUDUMBASHREE

The other challenging face of Kudumbashree in present Kerala is that the leadership and activities of members of Ayalkoottam (NHG) are deeply embedded with the programmes of the state. The prevalence of a new frame work is a must for bestir the Kudumbashree from view of poverty eradication from thrift and loan for women from entrepreneurship. This is not only a need of the poverty eradication of the state but for the social uplift and gender equality. The appraisalment of Kudumbashree programmes or any other attempts of state government as an arrangement to link poverty annihilation collective procedure to link poverty abolition through collective action should address the impact of such attempts on their members. The impact measurement should be for reshaping their actions and activities. There is gap of professional touch and space in participatory programs (chambers – 1997). To ensure the space of professionalism there is a need of framing and defining the issues they have to address the new frame-work building for Kudumbashree mission.

In Kudumbashree, women are mainly targeting loans or savings. Only a few of these join the unit with the goal of self-employment or business. To achieve the objective of empowerment of Kudumbashree's women, it should provide skill enrichment programs to members along with thrift and micro credit. For this Kudumbashree mission should subdivide the total members of each unit into two groups (production and technical staff) based on their skills, abilities and education. Then provide better training to members to make them capable of doing activities effectively.

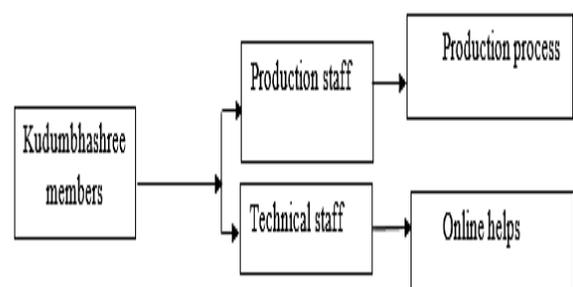


Figure 2: First step to frame work

Secondly, mission will be easier to move forward by adding social enterprises and the start-ups. With the Help established social enterprises in training programs related with marketing and funding creation, and the help of start-ups for training of services such as website creation and mobile app creation trainings, Kudumbashree can move further. Additionally, the services of management and engineering students doing final year projects with Kudumbashree units will be able to move forward to the mission unlike today's model.

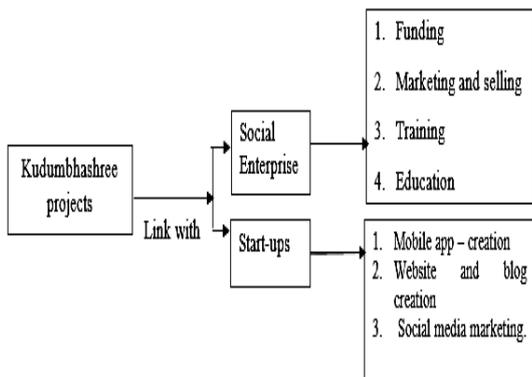


Figure 3: Second step to the frame-work

By sub-dividing units and adding established social enterprises and participation with new start-ups, members can enhance their ability and change the pattern of mission's working style. At present most of the units are performing only basic activities of Kudumbashree. Now it's high time for Kudumbashree to diversify activities further. This will be possible only by changing the present working model.

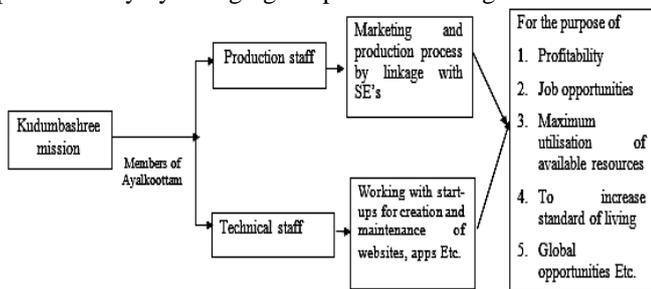


Figure 4: presents the New Framework for Kudumbashree Mission

IV. PLANNING AND EXECUTION OF THE PROPOSED FRAME-WORK

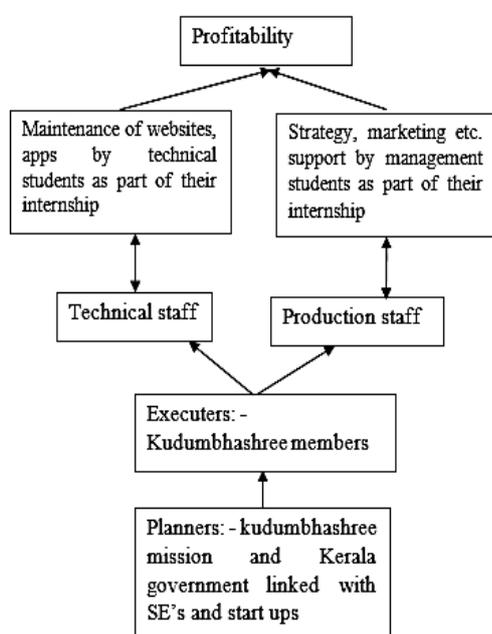


Figure 5: presents Planning and execution of the frame-work
In order to work on such a frame-work the Kudumbashree Mission and the Government must come to terms with the Start-ups and social enterprises. Additionally, different Ayalkoottam units should be included in the program and they are to be trained. Social enterprises and start-ups need to handle the initial planning and training and execution should be performed by unit members. By ensuring participation of engineering and management students with such units will help to create new jobs and thereby increase profitability.

V. BENEFITS OF CREATING LINKS WITH SOCIAL ENTERPRISES, START-UPS AND STUDENTS

We believe that it is possible to enhance benefits by linking the activities of social enterprises, technical start-ups, students and state resources through an enactment. It is a fact that Kudumbashree was started with the intention of improving the economic as well as social status of kitchen-tied females. To a considerable extent these targets were fulfilled. In this context the scope of activities of social enterprises should be enhanced. This can be achieved by linking the activities enterprises, technical start-ups, student bodies as mentioned herein. The initiatives of Kerala government to support start-ups and knowledge incubators at every educational institute can fertilize the growth of Kudumbashree further. Participation of students of technical and management colleges in Kudumbashree activities may help the Kudumbashree units to have better idea of technological developments and managerial practices which in turn help the better management of Kudumbashree activities. As per government figures social enterprises in India contribute billions of rupees to Indian economy. The Kudumbashree units captures innovative idea and converts that sustainable saleable propositions to bring about economic and social change. To enhance these type of changes the Kudumbashree se- up requires a new frame-work.

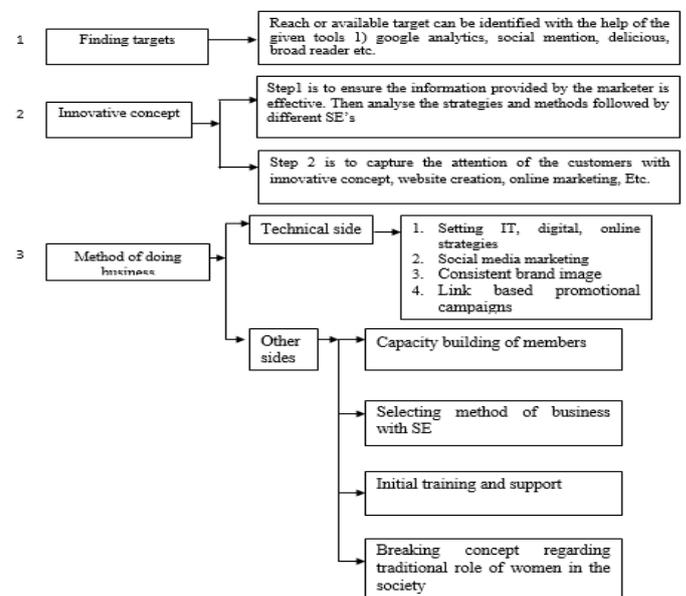


Figure 6: presents major challenges that may affect the frame-work and the solutions

VI. CONCLUSION

Need of mending Kudumbashree to envisage the imaginings and requisites of today's and tomorrow's generation should also be reckoned by Kudumbashree mission. By modifying and granting opportunities to start-up's and students, Kudumbashree can make miracles. Today, the activities of Kudumbashree is confined to just for satisfying the members of Ayalkoottam (NHGs) and its surrounding families. But the opportunities in front of Kudumbashree mission are wide and to grab those opportunities it should equip itself to cope with global competitors.

Adopting new methods of business with experienced people and with latest technologies, Kudumbashree mission can create more direct and indirect job opportunities. This will enable the mission to utilize more resources and enhance the pace of economic development of the state.

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