

Four pillars of Diakonia explained to Tamilnadu partners





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Report by Jasmine, Programme Officer
Edited by Patrick Hansda, Documentation & Publications

“Trend of regrouping of people based on race, caste and religion is taking place,” alarmed Fr. Frederick D’Souza, Executive Director of Caritas India to the partners of Tamil Nadu during the perspective building workshop at Chennai.

He was sharing his views on the changing global scenario and advised that we should change our approach to long-term, programme, ownership and multi-stakeholder approach.

Caritas India is holding perspective building workshops with focus on volunteerism in different part of the country for their partners to orient them on socio-economic and political scenario and training them to strategise their actions accordingly.

Supporting the cause, Bishop Yvon, Archbishop of Tuticorin reiterated that engaging multi-stakeholders is very important keeping in mind the local and national issues. Siting the example of Tamil Nadu, he said the state is dealing with disasters and how it is affecting the people as they are grappling with a drought situation for three consecutive years.

He also highlighted the lack of appropriate sewage treatment issue which create havoc for the people. He suggested to tap human resource which is abundant and unutilized towards tackling these issues. He urged the partners to build a strategy where people can resolve their issues while we partner with them.

“Caritas India is not just an NGO but a core component of the Gospel and Diakonia is an action that unfold the love of God,” shared Fr. Paul Moonjely, Assistant Director of Caritas India during his presentation on Diakonia.

Explaining ‘Diakonia’, as Gods outpouring of selfless love, both a gift and a duty, Charitable activities based on compassion, he said that it is a mission to promote charity and justice.

He said, “In our country, poverty and marginalization has become a huge issue. Infact, the extreme and extensive poverty in the country is a scandal. Poverty is a symptom of the deeper problems of injustice, greed and the massive accumulation of wealth encouraged by the neo libral paradigm and implementation”.

According to WHO report on Nutrition situation of the country, India will become the world capital for malnutrition by 2035.

Fr. Paul shared that the dangers of modernity have made church less communitarian, less organic and more institutional. The church and her institutions are made understood as organization to be managed than to be lived in the prophetic and radical ways of Jesus.

Taking nuances from Amartya Sen’s definition of Poverty, Fr. Paul raised certain questions on how do we tackle poverty and what is our role.

Further he suggested that we become just the facilitators while the people become the subjects of change and not objects, they are no more treated as beneficiaries but as partners.

Later, he shared four pillars of Diakonia that can be used to practice in the development programmes which were Empowerment Animation, Dialogue, Volunteerism and Giving community.

Quest of Korku tribe for Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group status

Report by Robinson Robert, SABAL -Asst. Program Manager
Edited by Patrick Hansda, Documentation & Publications



A training for Strategizing Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG) & Forest Right Act (FRA) was organized by Caritas India Sabal for the Partner staff at KDSS, Pastoral Center, Khandwa.

The training was facilitated by Mr. Prakash Michal on various aspects of PVTG & FRA ACT. He defined PVTG, as stage of status for the primitive tribes in which each recognized individual will be identified as Primitive Vulnerable Tribal Group with his own Tribal identification.

As per the government guideline, PVTGs constitute the most vulnerable section among tribal and inhabit isolated, remote and difficult areas in small and scattered hamlets/ habitats. Mr. Prakash explained that this recognition (scheme) aims at planning for socio-economic development in a comprehensive manner while retaining the culture and heritage of the community by adopting habitat development approach and intervening in all spheres of their social and economic life, so that a visible impact is made in improvement of the quality of life of

PVTGs several other benefits according to the guideline.

Different norms & rules of Indian Government on the bases of which recognition for the status of PVTG will be given was also shared by Mr. Prakash.

Discussion also took place on PESA & FRA Act where maximum villages of SABAL project activities will be intervened. Community Based Malnutrition Management was also discussed during the training.

It was decided to sensitize the community & community representatives at different level and a common representation group of active leaders should be developed so that the objective of PVTG status for the Korku tribes can be raised up to the administration at the Government level.

Water starved villagers restored their dried pond

Report by Dr. John Arokiaraj, ZM - South
Edited by Patrick Hansda, Documentation & Publications



The villagers of Irudhayapuram bearing the burden of drought for quite some years. 50 families of this village are majorly dependent on Agriculture but due to lack of rainfall they are forced to migrate to other places for employment. There is public transportation and schools for children in the village.

A drinking water pond constructed 30 years ago, with the support of Kumbakonam Multipurpose Social Service Society (KMSSS) is the only source of water for the villagers. The 5.5 acres' pond was divided into two parts; one part for common purposes and the other for drinking. But during last summer, that only source of water also dried up.

As it was not regularly dredged, it reached a state where it could no longer contain sufficient water for the people's use. Since, the pond belongs to the diocese, the government authorities refused to carry out any civil works on the pond.

Irudhayapuram, being one of the target village of Udhayam programme of Caritas India, Ecosystem based Disaster Risk Reduction, KMSSS approached the village community to initiate the dredging the pond.

Local parish priest, community leaders and the entire village community decided that the pond would be dredged with a dimension of 50x50x5. The entire community planned to contact the collector of Ariyalur and get the relevant permissions to dredge the pond.

Community with an initial support of Rs 30, 000/- from

KMSSS- Local Disaster Relief Fund started the work for a dimension of 20x20x5. The local community took active part and many volunteered to work for free. The effort and support of the women SHG's and the youth was invaluable in the program. Every day, they provided food to the volunteers. The village heads remained at the site till the work was completed.

A tractors & JCB owners from the local community came forward to help voluntarily in the work. All the residents agreed to buy minimum ten tippers of excavated sand @Rs.200/-per load. It is for their domestic house purposes. The rest of the sand was used to strengthen the boundary of the pond. The low-lying areas in the public places that were inundated with water during the 2015 floods were filled with the excavated sand. The remaining sand was sold in the market and received Rs.120000/-. A designated committee was formed to maintain the accounts.

The pond was dredged in 20 days as planned with the dimension of 50x50x5. The recent showers have filled the pond with water and the residents of Irudhayapuram can now enjoy the fruit of their labour.

The saying stand true that, "You've been given the innate power to shape your life...but you cannot just speak change, you have to LIVE change. You can't just want it; you have to do it." The residents of Irudhayapuram had proved that they not only wanted it but have done it too.