



Trichy - Tamilnadu, S.INDIA: Two days workshop on issues of migrant girls in the garment industry was organised at *Kudumbam Kolunji ecological farm in Trichy* on 7th and 8th October 2017. 50 girl students studying from 8th to 10th standard from five schools participated. Topics discussed were community monitoring of migrant girl workers, health hazards in the garment industry and preventive measures.



250 kms from *Pudukottai* district is the Textile capital of South India called *Thirupoor town*. More than 400 garment factories are located wherein more than 225,000 girls are employed in the age group of 15-25 years. They live in very dehumanizing condition and are compelled to work between 10-14 hours a day.

Mr.Shakul a resource person on addressing the topic of 'migrant women' facilitated the

workshop. *Radhika* shared how agents from the garment industries come to the village, and how they promise to the parents of a bright future, if the girls migrate. This training has been an eye-opener of the myths created. It also gave opportunity for the participants to realize the importance of higher education and skill development.

Tindivanam - Tamilnadu, S.INDIA:

Village Community Development Society (VCDS) had been conducting 18 Non-formal schools in 17 villages of *Villuppuram district*. These schools aim at ensuring and protecting child rights on education, participation and experimenting their scientific knowledge.

From 3rd to 24th October 2017, the students of these 18 Non-Formal schools held their Science Exhibition in the local primary or Panchayath Union schools of their respective villages to show the public on personal hygiene, sanitation, sexual protection and water borne diseases like dengue, malaria, typhoid, chikungunya, diarrhea etc. The students also showed exhibits on the effects of deforestation, community water body encroachments, dumping of waste and plastics in landfill and burning of plastics. The students work was very much appreciated & two students were chosen for their rain water harvesting method exhibit to be presented in National Science Contest which was held in *Pune* in Nov 2017.



Delhi, N.INDIA:

Between October to December 2017, TARA has supported 30 more children in *Agra* and from *Nikau village in Uttar Pradesh* under the education sponsorship program. With this action, Tara has been supporting more than 230 children now. The support is helping them to continue their regular education. Tara social workers team visit the children and their families on a regular basis to provide counseling

to the parents and the children. Parents are encouraged to discuss the issues related to their children's education and upbringing. The children are motivating to continue their education and discuss the problems faced by them on a day to day basis.

Firozabad and the surrounding villages like *Nikau*, where TARA is active are known for glass bangles manufacturing. In these villages many children are involved in bangle joining and decoration processes. The education sponsorship program provided by Tara has helped these children to reduce their working hours and has made them more aware about their rights and responsibilities. It is a matter of satisfaction that over the years, the awareness program has helped children to pursue their education. Most of the children are now registered and are attending the government school. Several of the beneficiary children have also moved to the city for pursuing higher education. These

students are given the financial support to pursue higher education. Many of the children are also provided stationery, uniforms, shoes and nutritional supplements. The teachers are given training to improving their teaching skills. Help is also provided to upgrade the existing infrastructure facilities of the center.





ruralECO TOURISM

Galaha, SRILANKA: Gami Seva Sevana (GSS), since 2014, has been closely working with a network 'Green Volunteers', which bring students/tourists to GSS on regular basis. 'Green Volunteers' with their headquarters in *Japan*, implements 180 projects worldwide, offering the chance to students, retired persons, volunteers & college leavers to work in developing countries from few days to months and years, and pass on their skills & experience. It provides an opportunity to spend a unique working holiday in helping those in need, the benefits of which do not end after they return home.



In the last quarter of 2017, 'Green Volunteers' brought 46 volunteers to 'Gami Seva Sevana' - 8 From *Japan*, 1 from the *Czech Republic*, 1 from *France*, 13 from *Oman*, 1 from *Germany*, 1 from *Greece*, 1 from *Belgium* and 20 from *Hong Kong/China*. GSS provided them with food and accommodation, the cost of which had been reimbursed by 'Green Volunteers'. Income from this eco tourism program helps GSS to continue their social activities, and to meet part of their administrative expenses.



It was pleasing to observe that the volunteers (most of whom were students) had a penchant to work in the farm and some of them were really interested in learning about the values of Organic home gardening and the consumption of organic food. These volunteers had been working in GSS farm with enthusiasm and during some other days they were able to visit some interesting places around Sri Lanka.

Cuddalore - Tamilnadu, S.INDIA: *Florance Home Foundation* received two guests from *Emmaus Brighton* based in UK. *Joanne and Christine*, both of them stayed in FHF in the month of October, and got involved in the regular activities of the organisation. They were teaching dress making to the tailoring girls who are trained in FHF centre, and also visited the women micro credit beneficiaries in the villages. Both of them also spent their time in visiting local tourist and heritage sites, and explored the local culture.



Delhi, N.INDIA: A group of friends from 'World shops' in *Belgium* visited TARA during November 2017. The group was led by *Dr.Herman Koppers*. They visited Tara under the eco-tourism project. Most of the visitors were the volunteers involved in promoting Fair Trade through selling crafts in the 'World shops' in *Belgium*. They also visited Tara community development programs and met several volunteers, producers and community members during their stay in India.

The Belgian friends visited *Badarpur, Bawana, Agra and Nikau* village communities and interacted with the beneficiaries. They observed livelihood generation programs, health, micro-credit, education and skill development actions of Tara. The volunteers also visited the solidarity sales organized by TARA at its premises. They appreciated the solidarity initiative, not only selling the crafts but also spreading awareness about Fair Trade at local level. They also attended the community meetings organized, and interacted with health workers in *Bawana and Badarpur* community. They visited and appreciated the newly built community center, supported by *Foundation Abbe Pierre in France and Rotary in Belgium*.

Tara team, informed the friends about the Emmaus movement and its political actions worldwide, and about three struggles. They were also informed about the actions taken in the field of environment protection, water conservation, education, gender equality, health care and skills development. Also volunteers visited the *Nikau* village and interacted with the education sponsorship children, visiting their homes. They shared with the children about the education system in their country and how the girls and boys are treated equally.



The Belgian friends appreciated the social programs carried out by TARA. It made them more aware about the solidarity initiatives taken to support the excluded in the society. They assured of their genuine efforts to support and sell more Fair Trade crafts in their country, and to make people aware about the trade injustice, exploitation, inequality and to raise voice against it.



Bogra, BANGLADESH: *Polle Unnoyon Prokolopo* (PUP) has been implementing *Anti-tobacco Campaign* as a consortium Partner of “CSFRRD” (*Consortium for Smoke Free Rajshahi & Rangpur Division*) since last 7 years. Under this campaign, PUP has been working to reduce any form of tobacco use and increase smoke free public place and public transport. Also were involved in creating awareness among public about harmful effect of second hand smoking so that non-smokers, child and women are not affected by it. According to the Tobacco control law of *Bangladesh*, it is mandatory to keep public places and public transport smoke free.

A national level workshop took place from 26 to 28 December 2017 in Kuakata of Potuakhali district, where all tobacco control activists across the country met together along with Govt authorities and Policy makers for future plan of the movement. Mr. Abu Hassanat, the founder of PUP also participated in the workshop.



Besides that, PUP’s Tobacco control team were able to stop a “Concert” arranged & sponsored by British American

Tobacco Bangladesh (BATB) at Bogra city on 27 October 2017 by organising a human chain at the centre of the city. As per the Bangladesh legal act, advertisement, promotional activities and sponsorship on any kind of tobacco products is banned. PUP also got the support from District Tobacco control task force committee, District Health Department, Police administration and Media by advocacy and lobbying. PUP also organised another human chain on 21st December to stop corporate tax evasion and reduce tax burden on low-income people.



Cuddalore - Tamilnadu, S.INDIA:

In the month of *October 2017*, more than 50 university students from ‘Annamalai University’ in *Chidambaram* and *Florance Home Foundation* (FHF) jointly organized a social service camp in *Killai* area for 10 days. During this camp, FHF organized campaign against usage of plastic, and against child marriage.

Also organized awareness campaign among the public about *dengue fever* - a mosquito borne disease caused by dengue virus which is usually self limiting in most cases. There is no specific treatment for dengue fever and most people recover within 2 weeks. The more clinically severe dengue hemorrhagic fever can be life-threatening, and the best way to prevent dengue fever is by taking precautions to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes. FHF also involved the participants in mass cleaning and tree planting activities in the villages. Also Dental and Eye camps were organized for local people, and with the support of local fire service department, disaster management training were provided to the village people.

Tindivanam - Tamilnadu, S.INDIA: The problem of violence against women rages all over the world and is a crisis in almost all societies. Governments and organizations have tried to make laws and policies to protect and help women but the violence continues. Violence against women and girls is a problem of pandemic proportions. At least one out of every three women around the world has been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime with the abuser usually someone known to her.



Village Community Development Society (VCDS) organized a campaign with two other organizations – MAITRI and ADECOM network on violence against women on *9th December 2017* in *Ulagapuram village*. The campaign began with a massive rally of around 2400 women from 6 villages. Topics related to gender equality, empowerment of women to take part in the legislative body,

atrocities against women, and women rights were highlighted in the campaign. This campaign had been a continuation of a 16-day campaign, which started from *Ulagapuram village* and went through 6 villages on *9th December*.

Mr.Lakshmipathi from 'Child Lune' of *Villupuram district* spoke about the need of child protection, the precautions and teachings to children on self protection, and *Mrs.Jothilakshmi*, Inspector of Police from *Tindivanam* gave a special address on protection of women against violence faced by women in the name of dowry, caste, and how young girls face sexual abuse and harassment in their schools and working area and how they have to protect themselves. The Campaign ended at *Siruvadi* village. The campaign and rally targeted the rural population and more than 3000 public benefited through this campaign.



Trichy - Tamilnadu, S.INDIA: Training on sustainable agriculture was organized by Kudumbam for 52 agricultural students from *Nallandha Agricultural college, Trichy* on *30th November 2017*. Tamilnadu has 67 agricultural colleges which offers four year Bachelors course in Agricultural science. 80% of their syllabus are based on Conventional agriculture. Seven colleges each send 15 students for 15 days to learn organic agriculture and how to work with farmers. The content of the training was in water conservation, organic soil fertility techniques, integrated pest control and integrated farming. Kudumbam also demonstrated Community learning process, Community water resource mapping and how to facilitate farmer's field school. Students visited field of organic farmers and were impressed to overstep crop diversity. Crop yield and Crop health built faith among the students in organic farming.

Tindivanam - Tamilnadu, S.INDIA:

Eleven Students from KVK (Government Agricultural College – affiliated to the Coimbatore Agriculture University) participated on a 2 day residential organic agriculture field visit program to Village Community Development Society (VCDS) at Vellakulam centre. Students studied about the field preparation, sapling production, planting & irrigation methods of paddy through traditional organic agriculture methods. They also learned about mulching & pruning process, and the benefits of the process with this residential training program. Students have also planned to organize awareness on organic traditional agriculture to rural small farmers in coming months.



Delhi, N.INDIA: TARA organized a series of cleanliness drive in JJ colony Bawana and Badarpur community. The unhygienic conditions and the open/ blocked drains in the lanes continue to be the main cause of diseases in the communities.

Inspite of local Government efforts, the situation remains far from satisfactory. Garbage lies scattered in the lanes without being collected for days, adding woes to the present situation. Consequently, many people are suffering from various diseases caused by such unhealthy conditions. The situation is so grim that even the Central Government had to start the Swatch Bharat Abhiyan (Cleanliness Drive). It is a great initiative but a lot needs to be done on the ground. The communities are not satisfied with the work done by the local authorities. They are negligent and irregular in performing their duties to clean their areas of work.



Under the wellness program, TARA has been organizing various meeting to make people aware about cleanliness. They also met local authorities together with the local community members and health workers and urged them to take action. On **2nd October**, under the 'Swatch Bharat Abhiyan', Tara organized a cleanliness drive in the Bawana community. The participants comprising of the local inhabitants, health workers, MCD officials and Tara social workers showed interest and decided to organize the drive. During the drive, the participants used brooms for cleaning the area, collected garbage lying in open as well as cleaned the blocked drains. The drive was inspiring and motivated people to come forward and take part. It was encouraging to see local inhabitants taking part in the cleanliness drive.

A meeting was also organized on the day with the health workers and community inhabitants to plan and discuss the next stages for the community wellness program. The health workers also spoke in detail about diseases like chikungunya, dengue fever and tuberculosis, and the precautions to be taken. The health workers also informed the inhabitants about their training actions and experiences so far. The inhabitants encouraged the health workers and appreciated the initiative taken. The cleanliness drive ended with the participants taking a resolution that they will continue to work on cleanliness in the coming year.



Bogra, BANGLADESH: Polle Unnoyon Prokolopo (PUP) has been providing different handicraft skill training to poor, destitute women, illiterate and under-privileged living in urban and slums, to make them self-confident and self-reliant, so that they can earn to increase their livelihood. A six month duration training course of 25 trainees had been completed on 15 October 2017. Those 25 training graduates will be

accommodated in PUP's producer groups based on their working skills. A training completion ceremony was arranged by PUP where District officer of social service department participated as a chief guest.



Tindivanam - Tamilnadu, S.INDIA: ‘Indian Social Institute’ – ISI, Bangalore has been organizing ‘Cadre building training courses’ in *Tamilnadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka* for capacity building of marginalized rural youths for social, cultural, economic and political leadership in coherence with current social situation. VCDS was chosen as host NGO for providing this leadership and capacity building training for *Tamilnadu East Zone* and to organize training for 42 cadres from 3 NGO’s. This cadre building training program will continue for 5 years with cadres equipping themselves with political, history, social knowledge of Tamilnadu and India.



LEBANON NEWS

BEIRUT: In the last quarter of 2017, AEP supported 103 small entrepreneurs by providing them loans to a tune of \$410,900 for developing their businesses and increase their productivity and livelihoods.



Since 2005, YMCA Lebanon (Young Men Christian Association) and Citi Bank partnered together to improve lives of the needy, and support small-scale businesses all across Lebanon. For the year 2017, YMCA distributed 41 awards for winners nominated by 11 Micro-finance Institutions, among which five borrowers from AEP have been awarded.



Every year, AEP renews its commitment to support the artisanal work of nine mothers preparing chocolate during the festive season. This year they were able to prepare 2300 Kilos of special chocolates, and all the benefit went to their family members.



Cuddalore - Tamilnadu, S.INDIA: Florence Home Foundation (FHF) celebrated its 25th year anniversary celebrations on 1st November 2017. FHF had invited its Board members, beneficiaries, neighbours, colleagues and well wishers to attend the celebration. *Mr.Alexander*, the founder of the organization spoke about the history of the establishment of the organization, and then the function continued with the lighting of the traditional lamp.

FHF with the motto of 'Love and Care', has been established in 1992 by a group of committed and experienced social workers started initially to work for the street children & physically challenged, later also involved in organic farming methods to sustain the Home and other activities, along with alternate energy. It is a non-sectarian, non-political and non-governmental voluntary social service organization. FHF has been involved in social service activities (Children homes, livelihood programs for sustainable development, Youth exchange programs),



Income generation activities (Emmaus multi farm, Mud block unit, Paper cup and areca plate production), and Environmental issue activities. *Mr.Selva Arokiaraj* appreciated and thanked the former and present Governing and Executive Committee members, and all the staff members to continue this 25 years journey in serving the poor and the needy population.

SOLIDARITY sale



Delhi, N.INDIA: As a sign of belonging to the Emmaus movement, all its member organizations that carry out an economic activity are required to pay the proceeds from a day's sales each year to Emmaus International Funds received through the Solidarity sales is the only source of income for the movement, which helps the groups worldwide to

implement their solidarity projects and to develop new activities.

This year also, TARA organized a solidarity crafts sale at Tara premises in the month of *October and November 2017*. The crafts sale was organized to create awareness among the local consumers about Fair Trade and Emmaus actions. Many products ranging from handmade imitation jewellery, Zari ornaments, candle and tea light holders, bags and soap stone crafts were displayed.

Persons from the neighborhood, University students, teachers, executives as well as the international guests visited the sale, and expressed their support for solidarity by buying crafts for their friends and families. Informative leaflets and banners were displayed for publicity at different locations. The sale was a success and we could mobilize many supporters. During the one month long sale, many consumers visited the sale and supported the cause. Some of them also showed keen interest to know about Fair Trade and Emmaus movement, and offered help as volunteers.

TARA also participated in the exhibition organized at *Gautam Buddha University* and in “Fair Trade Utsav” organized by Fair Trade Forum-India. The crafts presented and information provided about various solidarity projects of the organization was appreciated by the visitors. Apart from selling the crafts, TARA team also took this opportunity to motivate and urge the visitors to become conscious and responsible consumer, promoting trade justice and Fair Trade.

Emmaus Asia condemns the cruelty & human rights violation by Myanmar Government against Rohingya population



MYANMAR: Serious human rights violation and cruelty is faced by the innocent Rohingya people by the hands of Myanmar’s autocratic Government. Rohingya have existed in Myanmar for centuries, but they were not considered to be one of the country’s 135 official ethnic groups. Since late 1970s, nearly one million Rohingya are estimated to have fled Myanmar. By 1982, a new citizenship law was passed that prevented Rohingya from easily accessing full citizenship, rendering many of them stateless.

With this perception of Rohingya as outsiders and illegal immigrants, in the last several months, the unarmed innocent Rohingya people have been mercilessly killed and have become the victim of systematic ethnic cleansing, forcing them to leave their own country. This is an act of systematic ethnic cleansing by Myanmar’s government to root them out of their homes. It has resulted into the mass exodus of more than 400,000 people. They have lost everything and are living in very inhuman difficult conditions as refugees in the eastern border of Bangladesh.

Freedom of movement is a fundamental right championed by the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (articles 13 & 14). The forced denial of fundamental rights and human dignity is the crime to humanity, unacceptable to all of us. Being part of Emmaus movement, we strongly believe in human dignity, Right to live with self-respect, irrespective of any faith, caste, creed, and color. With pain, we witness the sheer violation of the fundamental human values,



'Freedom of Movement' by the Myanmar autocratic government. It has brought immense and unimaginable suffering to the poor minority Rohingya population.



Despite all the efforts made by UN, the situation still continue to be very serious. Thousands of Rohingya people are at risk of being wiped out completely by the cruel act of the autocratic government of Myanmar. Their inhuman actions have compelled them to migrate as helpless refugees to Bangladesh. The situation is extremely grim & pathetic. Thanks to Bangladeshi Government which has opened its borders, and extended its welcome & solidarity, by offering safety and shelter to suffering families.

Emmaus Asia strongly condemns the act of violence against the Rohingya people by Myanmar autocratic Government for their brutal act of ethnic cleansing and killing innocent people. Being a member of Emmaus movement, it is must that we all condemn the act of Myanmar's Government, and take action to support the refugees by all possible means.

The planet Earth belongs to all. We are all equal, with one home – the world, and the entire humanity is one large family. Every human being has the right to move, not only within a state but within countries beyond borders and live with peace and dignity.

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