

**Chinmaya Organization
for Rural Development
Sri Lanka**



2022 Newsletter (January-June)

1. Deepening economic and humanitarian crisis has severely affected the vulnerable rural Communities in northern Sri Lanka

Worst economic crisis since independence sparked by cumulative social, economic and political issues has led to severe shortages of food, medicine and other essential items causing immense difficulties to poor rural families.

Both dwindling of foreign currency reserves and drastic devaluation of the rupee has led to sharp price increases of all imported commodities including food, medicine, fuel and industrial raw materials. Local food production too was badly affected by sudden ban of chemical fertilizers and agro chemicals to the country.

Food inflation is almost reached 40% and many families find it extremely difficult to meet their nutritional requirements. Considering the seriousness of the problem, India sent a shipload of humanitarian aid consisting of essential items such as rice, milk powder and medicine worth Rs 2 billion to be distributed among the vulnerable families in different parts of the country.

India has also provided US \$ 1 billion credit line to buy urgently needed food, fuel and medicine till IMF assistance is received to overcome the economic crisis in the country. Considering the unprecedented difficulties faced by the vulnerable families living in rural villages in Kilinochchi district, CORD initiated a program to provide a basket

of essential food items to 190 families. Many donors supported this initiative and joined hands with CORD to provided food items to the most deserving segment of the community.





RENU project together with CORD distributed food baskets to 150 extremely poor elderly individuals/families from GN divisions Punnaineeravi, Kallaru, Ulavanoor, Nathan Thittam, Kannahi Nagar and Mylvahanapuram in Kilinochchi district.

Beneficiaries were selected by the village level government officer (Grama Niladhari) who has the firsthand knowledge of these people. Each beneficiary received a total 15 kg of rice, and a kilo of red dhal and Rupees 2000 in cash to buy vegetables and other provisions. The recipients, some who had walked few kilometers, were almost in tears when they received the grant and were extremely grateful to CORD and Renu Project for their timely intervention to prevent them from near starvation.

2. CORD sponsored children received stationaries required for their studies.

CORD Sri Lanka has been supporting the poor children from marginalized rural communities to continue their education with the help of donors to build their future careers.

Many students during the Covid pandemic faced severe difficulties in attending classes and many attended virtual classes conducted by various teachers.

As a result government did not conduct the usual island wide public examination General Certificate of Education (Ordinary Level) in 2021. However, schools were re-opened as usual in 2022 and CORD continued to provide extra educational support and educational requirements to the sponsored children. In January, 60 sponsored children were given required stationery for the studies.

This will be useful for the children considering the recent price escalations of stationary items. With the devaluation of the currency.



3 CORD Support self-employment livelihood for women

CORD provided career guidance and training to 14 women from Vada Varani who own sewing machines and are already involved in sewing at home.

Four-month training program involved 36 classes conducted by a competent teacher which provided additional skills and knowledge to broad-base their products to increase their earning capacities. Women were extremely happy and grateful for the training received and looking forward to expand their business.



4. Training on Modern Agricultural Practices

Agriculture is the main livelihood of the women in remote areas of Kilinochchi who continued to follow traditional methods with little exposure to current trends and latest research findings.

As a result their productivity fell below the potential. CORD arranged a field day for forty women farmers to receive much needed exposure and training on correct agricultural practices at Vattakachchi government farm school in Kilinochchi.

They received training on correct agricultural practices and organic farming. Beneficiaries were educated to select suitable crops and varieties based on disease resistance, market requirements and their personal preferences based on past experience. Participants were extremely happy with the training and promised to practice what they have learned to improve their productivity.



5. Training on organic farming to women farmers

In April 2021 Sri Lanka Government took a sudden and arbitrary decision to make agriculture 100% organic and banned the use and import of chemical fertilizer, pesticides and herbicides to the country, causing immense hardships to the farming community.

Considering the plight of the women who depend on farming as a livelihood, and their lack of knowledge to prepare organic fertilizer and pesticides, CORD arranged a training program for 50 women from its Self Help Groups to learn the know-how from an expert working for Northern Province Agricultural Modernization Project.

They received practical training on selecting material and methods of preparing these liquid organic fertilizers and pesticides to replace the chemical fertilizers and pesticides that they were used to for years.

CORD also provided 20 litre plastic can to these women to prepare the liquid fertilizers and encourage them to practice what they have learned.





Women receives large cans to prepare liquid fertilizer

6. Women successfully grow Groundnuts with the help of CORD funds

Groundnut cultivation is profitable and suitable for Kilinochchi district. However, women are reluctant to grow it because of high cost of seed and other practices involved.

CORD promoted selected women to grow groundnuts in February and provided them with interest-free loans. Despite the bad weather, five women have done well to harvest 720 kg and earn Rs. 182,000. Individually, they have earned up to Rs. 45,000 and hope to continue growing groundnuts in future.



CORD has selected 11 women farmers for the second round by providing interest free loans to commence their cultivations. They are in the process of land preparation and planting in the field. CORD field officers visit these women frequently and provide required guidance.

An appeal for urgent support to help the poorest of the poor in Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka is facing its worst socio-economic crisis since it gained independence in 1948. The rapidly unfolding crisis has seriously affected the poor marginalized families including the children, elders and pregnant women living in remote villages of the island.

Country's headline inflation has shot up to 45% while food inflation has increased to 58% with the depreciation of local currency, the Rupee, from Rs. 200 to Rs. 360 against the US dollar. The country's foreign reserves are so low and for the first time it has defaulted on its foreign debt payments.

Further, the country's food production has been drastically affected by the government's ill-advised decision to shift 100% organic agriculture overnight by

banning chemical fertilizer and synthetic agro chemicals. This has contributed to low production of rice, vegetables in the country and doubled their prices.

Most families across the country are struggling to afford their meals and around 70 percent of households are reporting reduced food consumption. County's health sector too is suffering from lack of life-saving drugs. Fuel and gas supplies are running low with long queues to obtain petrol, diesel, and kerosene oil and cooking gas. Daily power cuts imposed by the authorities due to fuel crisis has affected the country's industrial production and students.

With all these problems, the poorest of the poor are feeling the brunt of this worst economic meltdown and are urgently in need the humanitarian support for their existence. The government intervention to support this deserving segment of the population is also extremely limited and highly inadequate. Most of them depend on the generous contributions from the donors for their existence.



Long queues outside the grocery shops to buy the essentials



There are endless list of queues for Petrol, Diesel, and Gas queues where, the husband is in one queue; the wife is in another and the children are in yet another queue.



Long queues are snaked around petrol stations to obtain their fuel



Long queues snaked around gas stations



Daily power cuts have forced children to study using homemade kerosene oil lamps.

We earnestly appeal you to donate generously to provide the essentials to poor marginalized families.

Remittance details are given below:

Name: Chinmaya Organisation for Rural Development
Bank: Hatton National Bank Plc,
Branch; Kollupitiya,Colombo 3,Sri Lanka
Account No: 115010123859
Swift Code: HBLILKLX
Bank Code: 7083
Branch Code: 115

Through Western Union:
Full Name of CORD representative: Mrs.S.Kumarasamy
Address:No:32,10th Lane,Colombo 3 Srilanka
Identity Card No: 585823236V

Kindly send us a copy of the remittance.

UK Remittances

Chinmaya Mission (UK)
Sort Code - 60-08-20
Account No 60122935
Contact Person:Shakthi Carthigesan
[e-mail:shakthi_carthigesan@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:shakthi_carthigesan@yahoo.co.uk)

USA Remittances

Please forward the cheque written in favour of CORD USA to the following address;

Mrs.Meera Mahenthiran
947 North Wolcott Ave,
Chicago IL 60622
USA
Contact No:312-622-3402

DO NOT FORGET

- 1.To mention CORD Sri Lanka in the memo at the bottom.
- 2.Please write your email address and mailing address on the reverse of the cheque in order to forward an electronic receipt for your tax purposes immediately .