



# Madurai Symposium 2021

Advancing Development: Community Swaraj

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Bulletin

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## KNOWLEDGE BRIEF

### **SUHAM Federations and Community Swaraj for Community's Health Sustainability: A Convention**

Poor health is a cause for and consequence of poverty. A family's well-being is strongly influenced by the physical health of its members. Poverty also causes unequal access to health services between the rich and poor. Healthcare should be affordable, accessible and adequate to address the needs of people from the bottom line. SUHAM Federation is promoted to expand and deepen health, nutrition and sanitation interventions by integrating with thematic federations to ensure affordable health benefits to the poor. Emerging community institutions like SUHAM Councils need to be promoted at the village, panchayat, block and district levels and they should be governed by secretaries of Kalanjiam and Vayalagam-nested institutions. The role of health governance by these councils focuses on health promotion, prevention, protection and primary care through community awareness, adolescent education and counselling to pregnant women and lactating mothers through a behavioural change communication approach. About 100 SUHAM Health Federations with four growth stages would be promoted in the year across all thematic DHAN Collectives across the country. The federation spearheads community health programmes like community health and nutrition, sanitation and safe drinking water and medical care and diagnosis. The mechanisms for the sustainability of SUHAM Federations would emerge by involving mass community consultations for arriving at consensus and decisions.

### **Workshop on Transformation of Kalanjiam SHG Federation and its collective as a civil society organisation**

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) are characterized by their self-respect, self-regulation, exercising freedom of choice and decision-making capacity. The community members who belong to CSOs are expected to ensure the fullest involvement and ownership to drive their CSOs towards their mission. In this respect, leaders of people institutions have a dual role in shaping their own

leadership capacity and also the capacity of fellow members. In order to promote sustainable collectives, CSOs should come up with shared goals coupled with a higher order of accountability. Equal opportunities in decision-making will enhance community ownership manifold and this will pave way for establishing a new social order.

Leadership rotation is a vital mechanism that provides space for everyone to acquire leadership skills and also to express their accountability to the mother federation. It is the need of the hour to evolve exclusive policies to graduate the vulnerable families from poverty and this should be the prominent agenda for CSOs. Similarly, community members should be exposed to the macro perspectives through a systematic educative process. This will enable them to acquire necessary skills in mainstream collaboration, which is highly required for a CSO.

### **Webinar on Inclusive insurance and its impact on SDGs**

Insurance as a risk protection mechanism can arguably support many of the SDGs directly and indirectly. Insurance will be critical to the achievement of six of the 17 SDGs – No Poverty, Zero Hunger, Good Health and Well-being, Gender Equality, Decent Work and Economic Growth and Climate Change.

People institutions have taken up the process of making inclusive insurance possible by creating awareness among their members. Their educative process in creating awareness has resulted in a large number of poor people getting enrolled in various products providing social security cover. They have collaborated with the service providers to reach out to the targeted population and have been facilitating the creation of creating systems and processes to educate, enrol and enable claim settlement. Protection of people and assets is a key component of sustainable development. A concerted global effort to promote inclusive insurance is necessary to leverage its contribution to the achievement of the SDGs. Inclusive insurance contributes to provide a buffer to stop the vicious circle of poverty, builds resilience among women and creates enabling environment for economic growth and sustainability.

### **Workshop on Role of community governance in facilitating community swaraj**

Community Swaraj can be achieved on the basis of three factors a) Governance, b) Resources and c) Stakeholders' engagement. In the process of promoting federation collective, resources and governance play a vital role. On the resource front, governance has to handle financial resources, human resources and also the stakeholders' engagement. Community Swaraj would bloom wherever resources are effectively managed by the governance. The perception of the leader should get transformed from "I to We" in order to position the institution as the core. The leader should take responsibility for satisfying the needs of the community, especially S1 members. The governance should have a concern for individual family members and the institutions to scale greater heights.

### **Workshop on Sustainable Agricultural Practices in Tank-fed Areas through Community Institutions**

Tank-fed agriculture and crop production play a key role in food and livelihood security for small and marginal farmers who own land in the ayacut. Low productivity from tank-fed land, inadequate soil nutrition and lack of natural farming methods remain as major gaps. Sustainable agricultural practices in the farm ecosystem could be ensured by continuous field demonstration, capacity building and training of farmers and women on integrated farming. The practices then could be scaled up to all the villages through community ownership and community financing. The Vayalagams encourage tank ayacut farmers to go in for organic cultivation, and integrated and collective farming. Documenting success stories and dissemination of the best practices and an affordable farm credit mechanism through Vayalagam-nested institutions are the essential ingredients for a sustainable Agricultural Swaraj among farmers.

### **Webinar on Nature based approach for water body rejuvenation and faecal sludge management for improved water and sanitation towards Sustainable Development: Water Swaraj**

Water is inextricably linked to the development of all nations. But unsustainable development by countries is putting more pressure on freshwater resources. By 2030, the global demand for water is expected to increase by 50%. Meanwhile, agriculture (which currently accounts for around 70% of global water usage) is expected to experience a 70% increase in demand by 2050. There existed traditions of community management of water resources before Independence. The vanishing of Water Swaraj from the community led to many environmental

issues in WASH sector. Water scientists and environmentalists adopt sustainable technology that plays a critical role in ensuring safe and sustainable use of water. CDD Society, Bengaluru, and DHAN Foundation are playing an active role in simplifying the technology and creating mass awareness amidst the community in addressing water quality issues. Among the Sustainable Development Goals, Goal 6 – the 'water goal' – is to ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. The realization of targets for this goal could be feasible only by localizing community action. Improvements in drinking water, sanitation and hygiene are essential for progress in other areas of development, such as nutrition, education, health and gender equality.

### **Seminar on Small Millets Recipes for promoting consumption**

Small and little millets, named after their grain size, are the food of 'majorities', the economically poor. Life in slopy terrains and rainfed regions is possible only because of the varietal diversity in small and little millets. The grains are consumed by humans and straws are used as fodder and thatched as roofs of their shelters, well supporting their stamina-driven lifestyle. With public distribution and private market systems, paddy and wheat have replaced small millets on their plate. On the other side, malnutrition and non-communicable diseases are increasing in a rapid phase. This has created an increasing market for these long-ignored millets filling the plates of the rich and affordable. With the United Nations' declaration of 2023 as International Year of Millets, the humble 'slow calory' millets are set to go global.

Small millets, once embedded in the culture of economically poor communities, should be re-established with the support of the latest technologies, scientific opportunities, and social enterprise models. Promotion of small millets-based Farmer Producer Organisations, developing targeted products for the diverse (socio-economic) consumer groups through grassroots research, building on indigenous knowledge on small millets, steering international networks for small millets on promoting 'prosumer' consumption will be key factors in securing food and nutrition for all and securing the genetic diversity of the 'climate-smart eco-friendly' small millets.

### **Workshop on Community finance for strengthening and sustaining Jeevidam**

The federation at the block level, comprising 200 to 300 primary groups, has been promoted with the purpose of livelihood enhancement and/or poverty reduction. Primary producer/marketing groups, called Jeevidam Groups are promoted on the basis of crop clusters. Farmer producer institutions are promoted by collecting share

capital from farmers and they function under mother federations. Savings and credit activities are undertaken in the primary groups with the support of block-level federations and business activities are taken up through farmer producer institutions. Crop production enhancement activities and business promotion activities are undertaken through Jeevidam for improving the livelihood of the community. Profit earned through business development activities is used for FPO management and maintenance. It is possible to get promotional funds from various mainstream agencies initially for three to four years to promote FPOs. Share capital, service charges paid to meet working capital needs and crop loans and farmers' contribution form part of community financing, which is the core for promoting and nurturing FPOs. Community financing is essential for sustaining the Jeevidams through which crop production enhancement activities can be planned and implemented. Ensuring skill development, building strong community governance, establishing robust systems and community processes on community ownership, collective procurement and marketing of commodities are expressed community behaviour and practices in strengthening the FPO ecosystems in many States.

**Convention on Community institutions for Inclusive growth in coastal context**

India is the third-largest fish producing and second-largest aquaculture fish producing country in the world. India's blue economy supports 95% of the country's business through transportation and contributes an estimated 4% to its Gross Domestic Product. It has the potential to engage a large workforce and the country has been doing it for the past many decades in fishing, aquaculture, fish processing, marine tourism, shipping and port activities. Among these, the fisheries sector alone provides livelihood to about 16 million fisherfolk and fish farmers at the primary level and almost twice that number along the value chain.

Since 2004, DHAN Foundation has been implementing its Coastal Conservation and Livelihoods Programme with the goal of increasing community involvement in coastal conservation. The institution has federated communities of different coastal zones and launched the Neithal Movement to conserve coastal biodiversity at the national level. The programme works on social development, financial development and environmental development in the coastal context. DHAN's Integrated development approach has generated a range of solutions from the community and for the community in addressing poverty. Community institutions promoted in the coastal context witness sustainability and swaraj through inclusive growth.

**Workshop on Professional Action in Community Swaraj: Best Practises and Way forward**

Enabling community at the grassroots by young development professionals with commitment plays an important role in poverty reduction and community development. DHAN Academy, as a knowledge enabler, grooms and nurtures young graduates and transforms them into development professionals to directly work with the community through designated civil society organizations across India. Experiences shared by the alumni from different States has revealed that the basic training in two years of their initial residential course prepared them well to face all challenges and work with the community to build context-specific social capital to address the development needs of the people by adopting innovative approaches and through thematic interventions. Advanced communication methods using technologies, utilisation of PALM (Participatory Learning Methods), living in the vicinity of people, and involving them from planning to decision-making by systematic processes enhance the development outcomes and bring more happiness and satisfaction to the alumni in their profession. Development professionals need exposure to systems thinking and organizational learning, the emerging knowledge areas, for use in their respective context and to lead the community towards water, health, food and eco- swaraj. Alumni of the academy have found an effective application of their professional skills in NGOs, Government, academia etc. that has helped them in the journey towards Community Swaraj.

**Workshop on Community Swaraj: Gandhian thoughts in Development action for Community Swaraj**

The need for Gandhian principles in the contemporary era is highly relevant and, in fact, much needed in these challenging times, where both Capitalism and Communism are stepping away from the commons. DHAN is basically rooted in Gandhian principles and it gets its inspiration from various Gandhian practices such as truth, non-violence, community-centric approach, direct democracy, decentralized governance, self-reliance and self-rule. Over a span of a quarter-century, DHAN's development action has always upheld Gandhian values in all its interventions. DHAN observes Gandhian practices in five dimensions – social dimension, economic dimension, governance dimension, environmental dimension, and human resource dimension.

The social dimension's focus is on building social capital by emphasizing key elements like equality, women empowerment, integrated development and rights of the voiceless. DHAN focuses on building the mother economy, an exercise validated by the sustainability of

self-managed federations. The governance dimension is expressed in terms of trusteeship as reality in managing common properties, collective leadership, etc. DHAN's contribution to land, water, coastal, flora and fauna conservation and development in the Gandhian way is the noble expression of the environmental dimension. The high degree of integrity and commitment demonstrated by DHANites, people functionaries and leaders reveals the human resource dimension in the Gandhian way.

## PROCEEDINGS

### **SUHAM Federations and Community Swaraj for Community's Health Sustainability: A Convention**

In his keynote address, M.P. Vasimalai, Executive Director, emphasized that attaining Health Swaraj should be the motto of SUHAM Federations. In the 25 years of development work, DHAN had reached out to over 24 lakh families. Many communities required health interventions with affordable cost and high quality of service through multiple health infrastructure and strategies. He said SUHAM should aim at promoting 100 new federations from Kalanjiam, Vayalagam and Coastal Rainfed Programme.

R. Rajapandian, CEO, SUHAM Trust, narrated SUHAM's functions and activities to achieve Health Swaraj. Federation Collective and its constituents with appropriate community governance and institutional mechanisms would ensure holistic community impacts, including healthy living, he said. The SUHAM Federations would follow sustainable behavioural change communication practices to implement context-specific activities towards achieving nutrition



security, access to WASH and setting up of curative care hospitals for primary and secondary care.

Regional coordinators from Dindigul, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Madurai highlighted the unique community health interventions in their respective regions and the plan for promoting the new SUHAM Federations with systems and processes. Dr. Rajaratnam Abel, Advisor, praised the community health model followed by SUHAM and felt that separate manpower should be placed for health and main

federation activities with an aim to offer integrated benefits to the poor.

### **Workshop on Transformation of Kalanjiam SHG Federation and its collective as a civil society organisation**

In his welcome address, A. Ramesh briefed about the different phases of Kalanjiam Federations and the nature of transformation that happens in their metamorphosis.

A. Umarani, Chief Executive of Kalanjiam Foundation, in her opening remarks, said that the CSOs had greater power in taking the society towards higher goals. She pointed out that shared goals could be cherished through discipline, honesty, clarity, accountability and self-regulation. She reiterated the key elements of CSOs like effective decision-making, value-based growth, leaders' participation in various events, special care for the vulnerable community, and enhancing skills to collaborate with the mainstream.

The workshop recalled the experience of bank linkage in Kalanjiam Federations and highlighted the need for achieving 100% life insurance, health insurance, and pension. DHAN Collective has huge opportunities to ensure specialized services like health, livelihood, financial assistance and education for the poor.

The sub-group discussion focussed on deepening the federation collective across all federations. Effective sharing of resources, internal monitoring, leadership development, mainstream linkages and strong connectivity for scaling up were highlighted as the key roles of federations in establishing federation collective. The workshop's declarations reinforced key elements like mainstream collaboration, product development for vulnerable people, child care and building value-based systems in the federation collective.

### **Webinar on Inclusive insurance and its impact on SDGs**

S. Ahila Devi, Chief Executive, DHAN People Mutuals, said inclusive insurance policy was not gender-neutral. Women and men had the potential to be differentially impacted by financial policies and regulatory and supervisory approaches to insurance. Women faced a number of legal, economic, and socio-cultural barriers that could disproportionately impede their access to insurance. Such barriers included the predominance of women in the informal sector, lower levels of financial literacy, and the inability to enter legal contracts without male signatories. In such cases, women were comparatively more vulnerable to a multitude of risks that could plunge them into poverty. Despite these barriers, there was a significant market opportunity to provide inclusive insurance for women.

Localizing SDGs, fixing the targets with focus and synthesizing the contribution of each intervention on each SDGs should be done at all levels.

Annette Houtekamer, Co-founder, IBISA, Netherlands, virtually shared how six of the 17 SDGs were relevant for impacting through insurance products. It was an unknown truth that 98% of cropping farmers in the world were not covered by crop insurance products. With increasing shocks and natural catastrophes, 1.7 trillion USD worth of farm produce was always at risk. As many of them were small farmers from poor countries, there was an imperative need to have insurance products to cater for the needs of the vulnerable, she said. Likewise, the lack of health insurance cover was dragging many marginal families into poverty. The loss of breadwinners and their critical illness resulted in women in the family being stressed and strained economically, leading to gender-based exploitation. Addressing them with relevant insurance products with scale could serve all and promote sustained, inclusive sustainable economic growth, thereby ensuring full and productive employment and decent work for all. The problem of inadequate products, cost and claim handling could be attended through scale, coupled with index-based product solutions.

Jun Jay Perez, Executive Director, MiMAP (RIMANSI), The Philippines shared that their mutual micro-insurance products occupied 60% of the micro-insurance market in The Philippines. Their diversified product base covering financial and non-financial services, micro-insurance products and services, and health and education services prevented the members from falling into poverty. A study done by the University of Cambridge on their clientele showed that the insured were able to rebuild their homes and businesses by mitigating their financial loss. Even during the pandemic, their microinsurance coverage increased by 5%.

Ahila shared the experience of DHAN in working in 14 States, covering 2.4 million member families. The best practice of inclusive insurance of DHAN came from the social capital built with nested mutuality structures. The federation collective's use of the scale advantage aided by community solidarity made it a sustainable community-led initiative.

**Workshop on Role of community governance in facilitating community swaraj**

The workshop was coordinated by the regional coordinators S. Iyappan and S. Rajalakshmi. In her inaugural address, Otchammal, President, Kalanjiam Mutual Movement, highlighted the qualities of Kalanjiam leaders and their key roles. Leaders should emerge through voluntarism, she said and pointed out that members who had completed three years in Kalanjiam formed the potential pool for leadership.

Capacity building of leaders was critical as it played a greater role in confidence-building. It should happen across all levels like group, cluster and federation, she added.



A. Umarani shared her knowledge of how a Kalanjiam or group or federation could govern its responsibilities. She described leadership as a quality of listening to the voice of the last mile community and responding to their requirements.

The lead paper presentation focussed on strategies to identify the best practices in governance and broadbase them to achieve Community Swaraj to a greater extent. Well-equipped governance will have the required skills in risk management, mainstream collaboration, value building, compliances and administration. The leadership selection process should happen in a participatory mode and leadership graduation, leadership rotation, and leadership education are the vital components in governance building, the paper said.

Deliberating on resources and stakeholder management, several speakers dwelt at length on the features of community financing and the role of governance in deepening community financing. Financial discipline among members and proper utilization of funds with a focus on poverty reduction made the whole system more efficient, they said.

Discussions happened around a few key areas like best practices in good governance, effective mechanisms and processes in preparing second-line leaders, systems and processes to ensure sustainability and interface with mainstream institutions.

In her concluding remarks, Umarani referred to Lijjat Papad as a classic example of good governance. Second-line leaders were now emerging in the movement and they should be groomed with adequate capacity building to strengthen federation governance to a greater extent, she said. Iyappan proposed a vote of thanks.

**Workshop on Sustainable Agricultural Practices in Tank-fed Areas through Community Institutions**

U. Vellaiappan, Team Leader, recalled how farmers, from the era of the Green Revolution, had been indulging in

excessive use of inorganic fertilizers, insecticides and pesticides for getting a high yield. Now, India was a major consumer of pesticides globally. A major share of 70 % in the use of pesticides was in paddy and cotton. Every year, farmers spent a huge amount on pesticides and fertilizer. Successive failure of crops pushed farmers into distress and suicide.

Vivekanandan, Joint Director of Agriculture, the chief guest, narrated the farmers' struggle in the last two years due to COVID19. He noted that the keen interest shown by graduates and professionals in farming was a welcome development. He said sustainable agriculture could be realized by farmers through Integrated farming practices and explained the State Government's schemes for the benefit of farmers.

In her special address, Nirmala, Assistant Director, Horticulture, outlined the activities undertaken by the Department of Horticulture for the benefit of farmers. Micro planning, crop diversification through high-value crops, micro-irrigation methods and capacity building of farmers were essential for sustaining agriculture, she said.

Daniel from TAFE showcased the importance of agriculture machinery and their advantages in saving time in farming.

In his presidential address, K. Satyagopal, Member, National Green Tribunal, stressed the importance of following the traditional eco-friendly methods of agriculture. Proven and successful new farm technologies such as SRI, CRI, along with vermicomposting, would enhance the natural environment in farms. Organic farming and cultivation of suitable flower crops in tank-fed agriculture would fetch income from tank ayacuts than cereal cultivation. Saral Navroji proposed a vote of thanks.

### **Webinar on Nature based approach for water body rejuvenation and faecal sludge management for improved water and sanitation towards Sustainable Development: Water Swaraj**

The webinar's focus was to introduce and orient the target audience to nature-based solutions for ecologically rejuvenating polluted water bodies and systematically collect, treat and dispose of or reuse the sludge wastes collected from septic tanks and soak pits of households in a community, village, town or city. Also, to relate how these water technologies will help to achieve a water-sustainable future.

A. Gurunathan, Director, The DHAN Academy, said safe and sustainable use of freshwater commons with active ownership of the local community was very much needed for ensuring easy access to safe water and becoming a self-reliant community. Traditional water resources played a significant role in making the villages and cities

self-sufficient. Community-led and friendly technology interventions were the way to achieve a sustained water future, he said.

Sandya Haribal of CDD Society, in her keynote address that set the tone for the webinar, spoke about CDD Society's involvement in water treatment and faecal treatment technologies and management. Water bodies had become dumping grounds and the time had come to focus not only on water body rejuvenation but also on ecosystem-based restoration with community participation. She suggested the evolution of nature-based treatment as it would ensure a safe and healthy community.

Godwin Clifford of CDD Society, in his lecture on 'Approach on Ecological Water Body Rejuvenation,' highlighted the need to focus on sustainable solutions in the context of severe water scarcity, increased disease burden and reduced economic growth. He said the key challenges in restoring water commons were wastewater, solid waste, weed/silt and data/information. The success stories of Mahadevepura Lake, Bengaluru, and Palam Drain Remediation, Delhi, were shared as a call for a paradigm shift in conservation and restoration of water commons with a holistic approach, nature-based contextualized solution, and community-based approaches and technologies.

Debisha Sharma of CDD Society spoke on 'Environment-friendly treatment, Disposal and Reuse of Faecal Sludge'. She pointed out how people had moved from open defecation to toilets, without thinking about the waste generated by them. This created a huge health impact. She highlighted the success of Devenahalli FSTP implemented with the techno-managerial support of CDD and explained the different disposal methods, treatment processes followed in India and their gaps vis-à-vis competitive advantage of nature-based faecal sludge treatment processes. Praveen Kumar, Project Executive, said that the Water Knowledge Centre and CDD Society would aim to implement more pilots and action research involving the community to ensure safe sanitation for all.

### **Seminar on Small Millets Recipes for promoting consumption**

The event was inaugurated by P. Premanand, CEO, Small Millet Foundation. Vedyappan, Team Leader, introduced small millets as a climate-resilient dryland hardy crop that required low inputs, low investment and no chemical inputs, which indeed served as the 'food security' of rainfed areas. Small millets are known as a 'therapeutic diet' that serves as a solution for 'nutrition security' as they are rich in minerals, fiber, amino acids, and slow release of glucose. They are capable of reversing non-communicable diseases.

A video documentary on Mothi Millet Foods, a small

millet-based entrepreneurship venture of S. Sivakumar at Dhadampatti village of Virudhunagar district, was screened at the event. The video highlighted various small millet food products such as varieties of cookies, health mix, readymade pongal, sambar, chappati, puttu, halwa mix, flakes, sweets and snacks made in an ethical way.

Salome Yesudas, a consultant in small millet consumption promotion, began her presentation with the quote, ‘Beyond calories, food is an art of senses’. She said that 57% of the consumers preferred small millets for health benefits, 17% for weight loss and 26% for taste. She emphasized the effective use of technology for dissemination of small millet recipes and added that labelling small millets as ‘Climate-smart eco-food’ would attract the younger generation.

A video on small millet recipes from small millet women groups of Jawadhu Hills was screened for the audience. Saravanan of Small Millet Foundation, in his concluding remarks, said 2023 would be observed as the International Year of Millets, with a vision to increase public awareness on the health benefits of millets.

**Workshop on Community finance for strengthening and sustaining Jeevidam**

The focus of the workshop was on how to generate finance from the community to sustain the livelihood of poor people to enable them to come out of poverty, said M. Palanisamy, Programme Leader, DHAN Foundation. Jeevidam was involved in the conceptualization and promotion of FPOs from 2017 and so far more than 100 FPOs had been set up. Among them, 70 were registered under the Companies Act. DHAN was planning to promote over 50 FPOs with the help of various partners.

M. Shanmugam, Team Leader, Kalanjiam Foundation, explained the factors contributing to the strengthening of community finance in federations. Community finance included people’s contribution, share capital from FPO members, Kalanjiam Development financial services, premium paid towards insurance services, the contribution paid in cash for rehabilitating water commons, and endowment for maintaining them, besides the savings of members. Sustainability was assured with active community involvement in paying equity, capital investment and donations so as to charter the growth path of sustainable thematic federations of the development programmes implemented by DHAN Collective in four different contexts

Invited professionals from DHAN’s field locations/regions narrated their experience of seeding the concept of community finance and ensuring the sustainability of federations.

**Convention on Community institutions for Inclusive growth in coastal context**

The event started with an explanation of Community Swaraj and its expressions across the federations

promoted by CALL Programme. It went on to discuss the inclusive growth of traditional fishermen and their families with a focus on promoting community institutions steered by the principles of social development, financial development, and environmental development.

In his lead paper presentation, S. Singarayar detailed DHAN’s experience in the coastal context in impacting the lives of coastal communities. Post-tsunami, DHAN initially developed a model, the rehabilitation phase, to rehabilitate the coastal communities, which were severely affected by the tsunami. Subsequently, restoration, conservation and sustainability phases followed. The impact on the coastal area is in the form of 37 renovated village ponds, 1050 farm ponds, 85 tanks, and the creation of dead storage in 62 tanks to increase the water level.

Livelihood development for coastal communities received greater focus by which a greater change in their economic development happened. A few lead questions were thrown to the forum to reflect on strengthening federation collectives and advancing livelihood infrastructure and localized initiatives.

The guest speakers from the Department of Fisheries explained the various schemes available for the coastal communities to initiate income generating activities by availing a subsidy of 30%.

The forum passed resolutions for strengthening federation collectives by following systematic processes at all levels. In order to advance livelihood infrastructure, the forum resolved that 75% of the credits should go to livelihood credit only. Mainstreaming people institutions with disaster risk reduction also emerged as a resolution.

**Workshop on Professional Action in Community Swaraj: Best Practises and Way forward**

The workshop was organized with the participation of the alumni of The DHAN Academy, development practitioners and students.

A. Gurunathan, Director, TDA, in his introductory address, said professionals passing out the academy had been enabling the community to develop their own freedom of choice at all levels. The young professionals played an important role in the development of Community Swaraj by forming community organizations in different contexts across 25 States. He wanted the alumni to connect with their alma mater to share their knowledge through lectures, seminars and case writings.

G. Srinivasan, Programme Advisor, in his keynote address, made up a case for knowledge on Community Swaraj to be spread across the world. In view of urbanisation, a large number of people moved out from villages to urban areas searching for livelihood activities. Hence, it was very difficult to distribute amenities and entitlements to all people equally. Technology, he said, should be utilized for

developing the required systems and methodology for the distribution of resources to achieve Community Swaraj.

More development organisations like DHAN Foundation should be promoted to work with the community, provide training on different aspects of development and make them independent and self-empowered. Professionals from development organisations were capable of facing the challenges and working with the community at the grassroot level for the development of Community Swaraj. TDA alumni from Karnataka, Rajasthan, Odisha and Uttar Pradesh presented the outcome of their professional action and spoke about the importance of following the best practices, arrive at consensus and utilization of communication technology for the development of the community. Participants unanimously decided to develop context-specific indicators to measure the levels of Community Swaraj. Periodic monitoring would help them to formulate appropriate professional action to bring sustainable growth and development in the community, they said.

### Workshop on Community Swaraj: Gandhian thoughts in Development action for Community Swaraj

Chief guest Dr. S. Venkatachalam of the Department of Gandhian Research and Philosophy, Madurai Kamaraj University, attributed the irreversible changes in the

environment to the society's negligence of social and cultural values and ignorance of heritage. He condemned the attitude of house owners of not accepting tenants of other religions, castes, or professions even after 75 years of independence. He said community virtues had changed because of external pressure but bad qualities that hindered development remained unchanged.

Major life events shared by him portrayed the existence of an inferior mindset against minorities and religious discrimination among communities, which were against Gandhian ideals.

Urumathan, Secretary, Grama Nirmadhana Sangam, spoke about the hurdles to imbibing Gandhian principles in daily life. He felt that due to technical developments and drudgery in the use of khadi people tended to move away from Gandhian way of life.

N. Janakiraman, COO, DHAN Foundation, shared his experience on DHAN's working ideology in various dimensions. He added that an exclusive attempt had been made to document how Gandhian principles had been incorporated in development practices by DHAN.

Sub-group discussion by Vayalagam, Kalanjiam and Neithal members identified that key values like honesty, transparency, simplicity, self-reliance, leadership and collaboration were predominantly getting expressed in the DHAN system.

