

BIRDS PROGRAM ACTIVITIES
Annual Activity Report
2004-2005
Executive Director: Paul Raja Rao

Program Visitations:

Barbara Campbell, St Mark Presbyterian Church.

Surveyed programs and consulted on areas of infrastructure and program needs and potential resources.

Activities, numbers of individuals served and program statistics.

1. People Empowerment:
 - a. Landless people:
 - i. 2817 Families are Dalit families
 - ii. 1915 Landless farmers
 - iii. 735 land occupy the Dalit families
 - iv. 374 acres are distributed by the Government
 - v. 6 cases solved in this model
 - vi. 9 cases are booked and got FIR-First Information Report from police cases
 - vii. 3 cases solved in the courts
 - b. Migration (Employment)
 - i. 1700 people involved in seasonal migration
 - ii. BIRDS introduced Microfinance model to reduce migration
 - iii. 600 families are involved in migration model
 - iv. LCS – (labor contract society) formed for the welfare of the community to lobby and get the food for the works from local governments.
 - c. Child Labor
 - i. 693 Child labor
 - ii. 283 children are male
 - iii. 410 children are female
 - iv. 320 girls enroll in the school
 - v. 181 boys enroll in the school
 - d. Untouchability
 - i. Total of 82 cases register the FIR (first information report)
 - ii. 52 cases solved with this model
 - iii. 29 court cases resulted in punishments
 - iv. 84 village rallies
 - v. 37 Mondel (is a sub district unit) rallies are organized in support to the issues of the Dalits
 - vi. 29 Division rallies
 - vii. 36 District rallies
 - viii. At present, there is no vetty (Slavery)

- e. Gender issues
 - i. 13 cases solved
 - ii. 8 cases resulted in punishment

2. Safe Mother and Child Survival

- i. 2331 total CRS beneficiaries
- ii. 32 members work with Health worker
- iii. 27 recommended in Hospital Deliveries with health worker
- iv. 315 home deliveries
- v. Reduced deaths and improved health of pregnant mothers.
- vi. 49 Health camps have been conducted in villages.

3. Andhra Pradesh Farmers Managed Ground Water Management Systems.

This is a project which helps communities manage their own bore wells. Project management of the ground water usage and crop water budgeting maximizes the water available in the bore well for its best use in the whole hydrological area and for use by the entire village. The results are crop water budgeting with less intensive water crops using alternative irrigation methods such as drip, sprinklers, rain guns ect.

Very importantly, the more land comes under the irrigation with effective water management techniques the more number land less people, who are Dalits, will find the employment opportunities. Their ability to secure employment directly effects migration and food security. BIRDS is working on this program in 600 villages. For more details please see the project web site www.apfamgs.org

4. Trainings:

Trainings are organized for the Dalits (men and women) on Human Rights, gender sensitivity, leaderships, community health, water management, sustainable agriculture (organic farming) and Farmer field school concepts to the community at BIRDS training center at Muthyalapadu village.

5. Micro Finance:

This an instrument for the poor to start their own activities to earn money for the family- to have employment, food, education for the children, and better health care. Previous to this program, the poor had to depend on the landlords and money lenders who charge high interest rates on venture opportunities. Repayment of the loan was very difficult. In some situations borrowers had to perform free labor at the land lord's house or in agriculture fields. There were situations where the children were held as bonded labor until they were able to repay the loan. (bonded labor is free labor by children as a kind of pledge to repay the loan). Under the BIRDS microfinance loans, BIRDS borrows money from "Friends of World Women" banking from Ahemadabad. BIRDS then allocates the loans to the members through small community groups. These small groups empower and assist each to be successful. The microfinance groups repay BIRDS on weekly basis and BIRDS repays the bank monthly. As individuals repay loans and their venture grows, they are eligible for larger loans. Each loan has an insurance policy, and in the event of the death of borrower, the entire loan is forgiven for that individual. Due to heavy demand from community we are associated with SAADHANA Micro-fin society at Kurnool.

BIRDS offers three types of programs for micro credit:

1. Self help group model: This works as mutually aided cooperative bank to support each other with membership of 20000 women,
2. Group with no savings and having 10 member groups which borrow loan from BIRDS and repay on weekly basis. Currently these number around 17000.
3. Loans to the sex workers: This enables women to start their own employment activities and gain self sufficiency. Currently there are around 100 and this will likely expand to 500-1000 groups.