

Report on visit to ISLAND Trust – June 2010

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I visited the ISLAND Trust between 2nd and 4th June to monitor the Climate Change project supported by Tamwed. I interacted with the Director and the staff, visited three areas where the project is being implemented and got updates on the finance.

The ISLAND Trust has been implementing an Adivasi Development Initiative (ADI) project in 25 villages with the financial support of another agency. Island Trust has integrated the Tamwed supported Climate Change project with the ongoing ADI project, but restricting the latter project to 20 villages with 495 families (list attached) ranging from 6 families in Kolatti to 64 in Mettukkal..

Awareness Creation

At the start of the project in October, 2009, the ISLAND Trust organised a public rally and a meeting in Ooty. Around 1,000 participated in the rally which included students from schools and colleges, farmers' leaders, Forest Department officials and NGO staff. Tamwed Secretary and I also participated. The event included a rally, cultural programme, presentations and lectures on global warming and its adverse impact as well as action needed at community and Government level to reduce the severity of the problem.

On April 22nd - World Earth day, the Trust conducted a seminar on Climate Change at its centre at Kothagiri at which NGO leaders, representatives from the Consumers Forum, Junior Chamber members and environmentalists participated. The Trust joined hands with the Forest Department and Horticulture Departments in creating awareness about their programmes. Women Panchayat presidents and ward members were also given awareness in three meetings the Island Trust had with them. Besides, 33 night school students were taken on a tour to a wildlife sanctuary for environmental awareness. In four schools awareness seminars were conducted. At community level the awareness was created through meetings in project villages.

The ISLAND Trust participated in the Fruit and Vegetable Show organised by the Government in Kothagiri by having a stall to create climate change awareness among visiting public and bagged a prize. Island Trust distributed pamphlets at the summer flower show at Ooty on the theme. Both the events took place in May, 2010.

Staff training

The ISLAND Trust has conducted three one day orientation training to all Island Trust staff on Climate Change in which 13 participated. Similarly village leaders were also given orientation. Two of the field staff was given training on video recording interviews with people.

Baseline

The ISLAND Trust applied a questionnaire to know the awareness level of people on Climate Change. The analysis of the response showed that all the 100 persons interviewed were aware of the problem, but only 60% of them vaguely knew the real reasons for the Climate Change and none of them said they had consciously taken any action at community level. Repeat survey has not been conducted as yet.

Distribution of Seedlings

It is reported that the Trust has distributed 6,000 tree saplings (mainly orange, plums, lemon, jack and bottle brus) in 17 Adivasi villages to 450 families. In addition, from the Forest Department, tree saplings for shade were procured and distributed. For promoting tea cultivation, polythene bags and technical advise was provided to create nurseries at household level. In two Adivasi schools 200 tree seedlings were distributed. In Kothagiri, 500 Self Help Group Women were given one seedling each, mainly for firewood and timber.

Visit to the villages

I visited Sedikal, Kandipatty, Mallikoppaiyur and an Adivasi school at Karikaiyoor.

In **Sedikal** I saw the seedlings being distributed, but still to be planted (waiting for rainfall) and a nursery of tea plants. There are 25 families in the tribal village and I met half of them at an evening meeting (photo attached). They seem to be happy, with all their children in school and modest income from land. They recently secured a certificate from revenue authorities for ownership of land (65 acres) although forest department still not willing to part with the land as they claim it is forest land. The struggle is on. They are not very clear about the reasons for Climate Change, but experience it and willing to participate in activities to reduce impact.

In **Kandipatty**, I observed a few tree seedlings planted, a nursery raised and interacted with male youth group members (14) on Climate Change, their involvement and their other activities such as savings & credit and working with Panchayats. Island Trust had distributed 1150 fruit seedlings and another 125 seedlings from the Forest Department. Four farmers were given vegetable seeds.

In **Mallikoppaiyoor** also I met farmers' leaders, women and observed their agriculture activities. Here also Island Trust had distributed 400 tree seedlings and vegetable seeds to 6 families.

For **Karikkayoor Adivasi Residential High School**, the Trust distributed 80 fruit and forest tree seedlings of which 63 have been already planted. An awareness meeting was also conducted for students up to 10th Standard on Climate Change.

Staff

The ISLAND Trust manages the Project without appointing any new staff, but utilises the services of existing staff. Balasubramanian who has worked with IT for the past 20 years and who hails from the project area is the part time coordinator is assisted by two field staff who are also from project villages and from tribal communities.

Finance

The accounts are presented in Tally which is convenient. The accountant works part time for the project, so the project need to make some provision for her work.

I have shared these issues with the Director. In the concluding session I had with staff and the Director, I mentioned the project has done extensive work on awareness creation and suggested the project could monitor closely planting and maintenance of seedlings distributed to mitigate the problem at the community level which the senior staff agreed.



ISLAND TRUST – TAMWED
CLIMATE CHANGE INTERVENTION PROJECT
WORKING VILLAGES – KOTAGIRI BLOCK

S.No	Name of the Village	Panchayat	No. of Families
1.	Anthiyarai	Kadinamala	20
2.	Kothimukku	Kadinamala	19
3.	Nanthipatti	Kadinamala	7
4.	Kandippatti	Kadinamala	43
5.	Kolatti	Kadinamala	6
6.	Koppiyoor	Kadinamala	25
7.	Kumaranmudi	Arakkodu	12
8.	Mallikoppiyoor	Arakkodu	32
9.	Bangalapadigai	Arakkodu	37
10.	Sedikkal	Denadu	30
11.	Selarai	Arakkodu	23
12.	Paambarai	Arakkodu	11
13.	Kurukuntha	Denadu	14
14.	Mettukkal	Kengarai	64
15.	Nattakkal	Kengarai	21
16.	Kokkodu	Arakkodu	14
17.	Vakkanamaram Pudur	Arakkodu	28
18.	Vagappanai	Kengarai	43
19.	Thumpibettu	Kadinamala	7
20.	Kongattu Pudur	Konavakkarai	39
	Total		495