

CHENCHU LIVELIHOOD ENHANCEMENT PROJECT (CHELE)

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Report

**Prepared for
Centre for People's Forestry (CPF)**

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

NAGARJUNA SAGAR SRISILAM TIGER RESERVE AND LIVELIHOODS OF CHENCHU COMMUNITY

Nagarjuna Sagar Srisailam Tiger Reserve (NSTR)¹ was established in 1978. It spreads in an area of 3570 square kilometres encompassing five districts viz., Mahaboobnagar, Kurnool, Prakasam, Nalgonda and Guntur². The area is predominantly inhabited by Chenchus³, which is a primitive tribal group, followed by Lambada and Erukala. The Forest Department has formed the Eco-Development Committees (EDCs) in NSTR by organizing members primarily from tribal communities for involving them in protection and conservation of bio-diversity.

The Chenchu tribe was recognized as one of the primitive tribal groups in 1975 (GOI 1985-90). The Chenchus are listed as Scheduled Tribe in Andhra Pradesh under Scheduled Castes and 168 P. Scheduled Tribes Lists Modifications Order, 1956. They are mostly found in the districts of Kurnool, Mahaboobnagar, Prakasam, Rangareddy, Nalgonda and Guntur districts of Andhra Pradesh. The distribution of the Chenchu population is presented in Table 1.1. The total population of Chenchus is 41787 (as per 2001 census). The baseline survey conducted by Centre for People's Forestry (CPF) in 2007-08 indicates that 10834 members (3009 households) were living in five districts of NSTR area. From this it may be construed that almost one-fourth of Chenchu population is living in NSTR area.

Table 1.1: Distribution of Chenchu population in Andhra Pradesh (2001)

Name of the District	Mandals	Habitations	Households	Population
Prakasam	7	81	3136	13321
Kurnool	13	40	2036	7915
Guntur	6	48	1643	6376
Nalgonda	5	15	291	1069
Ranga Reddy	7	31	799	2700
Mahaboob Nagar	10	123	2766	10406
Totals	47	338	10671	41787

One of the important livelihood activities of Chenchus is collection of 'wild honey'. Some of the Chenchu families living in Srisailam Tiger Reserve Area earn a substantial

¹ It is the only 'Tiger Reserve' in Andhra Pradesh.

² These districts are part of four forest divisions - Mahabubnagar falls under Achampet division, Kurnool in Atmakur division, Prakasam in Markapur division and Nalgonda and Guntur in Nagarjuna Sagar division.

³ The Chenchus are mentioned in Manusmriti (Chapter X.48). An ecological meaning is sought to be attributed to the word 'Chenchu' meaning "a person who lives under a chettu" (tree) (Ayyappan 1948). The Chenchus are one of the aboriginal tribes of Andhra Pradesh.

portion of their income from honey harvesting. However, the traditional honey collection methods being followed by the Chenchus are considered to be unsafe, adversely affect the bees, forest and the general ecosystem. Even the consumer point of view, the honey thus harvested is not hygienic. Owing to risks involved in honey collection, the youth in particular are not very enthusiastic about getting involved in this activity. Furthermore, there is a decline in the availability of colonies and yields from existing colonies due to unsustainable practices in vogue. If the present state of affairs continues, it would lead to, in the long run, a decline in the natural regeneration of forest in general and forest ecosystem in particular. This is because the contribution of honey bees to natural regeneration by serving as pollinators for cross-pollinating species would be adversely affected.

There is not much support from the government in addressing livelihood concerns of the Chenchus in general and honey harvesters in particular. It may be noted that institutions like Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA)⁴, Girijan Cooperative Corporation (GCC) and Forest Department are implementing the programmes for the development of the tribal communities. These programmes are not reaching to the Chenchus, more so those living in the remote habitations, (1) as the interventions are mostly confined to the fringe hamlets; (2) officials seldom make a visit to some of the remote tribal habitations due to perceived threat from naxalites; and (3) shortage of staff in the Forest Department, GCC and ITDA.

CHELE PROJECT

Keeping in view of the concerns of Chenchu community, especially honey harvesters, and conservation of forest in NSTR, Centre for People's Forestry (CPF) has initiated a project in NSTR in collaboration with concerned government departments. While designing this project, similar experiences in other parts of India were studied and learnings were incorporated. These experiences have amply demonstrated that by adopting sustainable honey harvesting practices, the yield of honey can be enhanced to more than two times of the present level; and that this activity can be a most potential avenue for employment generation among tribal youth.

The primary objective of the project is to improve livelihoods of Chenchus living in the NSTR; and creating enabling conditions for greater participation of Chenchus in the protection and conservation of bio-diversity of NSTR. The specific objectives of the project are as follows:

⁴ ITDA was established for the development of Chenchus - a primitive tribal group.

- To organise Chenchu honey harvesters towards sustainable harvesting of wild honey;
- To provide support services to honey harvesters in taking up scientific honey harvesting methods and sustain the same;
- To encourage Chenchu families, especially women, to take up value addition to Non-timber Forest Produce (NTFP) such as Adda leaf, Amla, Tamarind and soap nut;
- To train and build Chenchu tribal youth as local level resource persons to address various needs of Chenchu community (resource monitoring, extension, capacity building, marketing, etc);
- To improve access to government programmes among Chenchu community through effective coordination between concerned government departments and NGOs; and
- To enhance understanding on existing gaps between policy/implementation guidelines and field realities

Activities: The activities taken up by the project between 2006 and 2009 are discussed in table 1.2. In the first year, it carried out the preliminary work i.e., baseline survey, cluster formation,⁵ placement of community level resource persons and organising Chenchu NTFP collectors through awareness campaigns in the NSTR area. In addition, a ToT was conducted on sustainable honey harvesting practices in order to take up trainings to honey harvesters in the project villages.

From the second year onwards, the project started organising trainings on sustainable honey harvesting and value addition for selected NTFP such as tamarind, soap nut, adda leaf and amla. The discussions with NGO partners revealed that 919 honey harvesters under CHELE project and 324 NTFP collectors were trained as on December 2009. In addition, CPF has provided training to 440 honey harvesters from Chittoor, Mehaboanagar, Kurnool and Prakasham districts with the funding support of GCC-TRIFED; of which 50 were Chenchu honey harvesters. Thus, CPF has achieved its proposed target of providing training to 1000 honey harvesters.

Simultaneously, efforts were also made to strengthen relations between community and different government departments (focusing on ground staff and officials). The process was facilitated with involvement of NGO partners. In recognition of the need for support services (i.e., training, resource material, tools kits and information) to honey harvesters,

⁵ Based on contiguity and operational convenience four to five villages were grouped into a cluster. Each of the clusters was looked after by field organizer.

two support service centre were initiated, one each in Achampet and Dornala. The project also organised series of trainings and exposure visits to the project staff and community level functionaries in order to capacitate them on project implementation and needs of the community.

Table 1.2: Broad interventions of the CHELE Project

Year	Activities
2006-07	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 29 wild honey harvesters across the state (including 7 members from Chenchu Community) were nurtured as Master Trainers on sustainable honey harvesting through 20-day Trainers training • Field Organisers were identified, trained and placed in 20 clusters (each cluster comprising of 5 villages)
2007-08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained 213 Chenchu honey harvesters (from 6 clusters) in sustainable honey harvesting • Trained Chenchu women in value addition to Tamarind (34), Amla (179) and Addaleaf plate making (94) • Formed 14 CEGs at cluster level by organising those trained in NTFP value addition. • Provided identity cards and insurance facility to all chenchu harvesters who attended training in sustainable honey harvesting • Started process for setting up support service centres at Achampet and Dornala. • Resource monitoring volunteers were trained, provided kits and involved in resource monitoring in July 2007 with the technical support of ATREE • Organized exposure visit and orientation program to the CHELE sales facilitators. • Organized meeting with honey harvesters to orient and motivate them on formation of Chenchu honey harvester's cooperative society.
2008-09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained 357 honey collectors from 12 clusters in sustainable honey harvesting practices • Organized training to 8 Chenchu women from Mannanur and Billakalu village in Adda leaf cup making (50-100 leaf cups were made by each person during training). • Supplied 2 leaf cup making machines with installed capacity of 150 cups per hour - One unit each at Mannanur and Billakalu villages. • Trained 67 women in value addition to tamarind with the involvement of GCC staff • Trained 92 women in value addition to Amla with the involvement of GCC staff • Carried out resources monitoring in 4 clusters by involving 96 volunteers. • Initiated honey harvesters dress stitching unit at Achampet support service center. 5 Chenchu women from Banala are trained and involved in the stitching unit (these women are expected to sell and repair honey harvesters dresses)
2009-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained 320 honey collectors in sustainable honey harvesting practices in NSTR area • Stitching units(Achampet and Dornala) at SSCs have produced and

	<p>marketed 130 dresses for honey harvesters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two CEGs (working on adda leaf) were strengthened by providing revolving fund – to use it as a working capital for production and marketing of adda leaf plates • Documented honey colonies by using GPS in potential areas within NSTR
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Institutional arrangements: CPF has been implementing this project since December 2006 with the support of SDTT (Sir Dorabji Tata Trust). The project is being implemented in collaboration with APFD, ITDA and GCC. The field operations of the project were facilitated by the partners NGOs namely CONARE⁶ and CHRDR⁷ under the close guidance, supervision and technical support of CPF. The project has nurtured 20 field organizers, who work closely with communities at cluster level. Each NGO has two field coordinators to oversee the project implementation and monitor the project activities.

The project has organized the trained members (honey harvesters and NTFP collectors) into Common Enterprise Groups (CEGs) at village level. CEGs function with support and guidance of field organizers and the project team. The project has also promoted a Master Trainer, a Sales Facilitator and a resource monitoring agent at the cluster level. The master trainer provides practical orientation on techniques and practices related to safe and sustainable honey harvesting in the field to trainees for four-days, besides participating in classroom sessions for three days along with external resource persons. The sales Facilitator works closely with NTFP collectors during their transaction with GCC in procurement centres. The resource monitoring agent leads a team comprising of five Chenchu NTFP collectors in each village to document the availability of forest resources.

Technical Support: CPF has provided technical support to partner NGOs by using support from Centre for Bee Development and ATREE foundation. The team of CPF for the project included the Director, Senior Programme Officer and the Project Coordinator. In addition, the project receives inputs from IEC desk, Sustainable forestry, Participatory forest management, and finance and administration for effective implementation.

The project has worked closely with APFD, ITDA and GCC at the division/district level at different stages of the project implementation. CPF has constituted a project steering committee to guide the project. The committee members include Field Director, NSTR, ACF-Bio-diversity NSTR, Project Officer (ITDA), Divisional Manager (GCC), the Senior Programme Officer SDTT, the Director of CPF, and Chief Functionaries of CHRDR and CONARE. The Field Director of NSTR is the convener of the committee.

Project Villages: As stated above, the project has been implemented in all the Chenchu habitations in core and buffer villages of NSTR. It covers about 92 villages in NSTR, which includes 65 core villages and 27 buffer villages.

⁶ CONARE- Conservation of Nature and Rural Awakening

⁷ CHRDR- Centre for Human Resource Development

IMPACT STUDY

CPF has commissioned Poverty Learning Foundation to carry out the impact study on the interventions made by CHELE project between 2006 and 2009. The objectives of the study are: (i) to assess the impact of the project on the socio-economic conditions and livelihoods of Chenchu households in NSTR, with special emphasis on honey harvesters; and (ii) to capture learnings emerging from the project interventions in the last three years

Sample and methodology: As part of impact assessment, information was collected from 200 households who were involved in the project activities (hence forth referred as Experiment group). In addition, the study also collected information from 100 households who did not participate in the project activities (hence forth referred as Control group). The sample households for experimental and control groups were selected from core⁸ as well as buffer⁹ villages (table 1.3).

Table 1.3: Sample Size

Type of villages	After project period	
	Experimental group	Control group
Core villages	107	65
Buffer	93	35
Total	200	100

Furthermore, the study has gathered information related to institutional collaboration/convergence that have taken place at **micro, meso and macro levels** by conducting Focus Group discussion with EDC and field staff, and interviews with officials of various departments at different levels.

⁸ The Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act, 2006 in the Section 38 V (4) defined the Tiger Reserve which includes the core or critical tiger habitat and the buffer or the peripheral area. As per the Section 38V (4)(i) of the Act, the **core** is defined as “core or critical tiger habitat areas of National Parks and sanctuaries, where it has been established, on the basis of Scientific and objective criteria. Such areas are required to be kept as inviolate for the purposes of tiger conservation, without affecting the rights of the Scheduled Tribes or such other forest dwellers, and notified as such by the State Government in consultation with an Expert Committee constituted for the purpose”,

⁹ The buffer is defined as “**buffer** or peripheral area consisting of the area peripheral to critical tiger habitat or core area, identified and established in accordance with the provisions contained in Explanation (i) of Section 38 V (4), where a lesser degree of habitat protection is required to ensure the integrity of the critical tiger habitat with adequate dispersal for tiger species, and which aim at promoting co-existence between wildlife and human activity with due recognition of the livelihood, developmental, social and cultural rights of the local people, wherein the limits of such areas are determined on the basis of scientific and objective criteria in consultation with the concerned Gram Sabha and an Expert Committee constituted for the purpose,”

Time Period: The baseline period is 2006, before the project was initiated. The data were also collected in 2009 after implementation of three-year project. In this report, based on the data collected from these two time points, the outcomes of the project are analyzed.

Action areas and outputs: The project worked out action areas based on detailed situation analysis. These actions are expected to lead to specific outcomes and impacts (table 1.4)

Table 1.4: Project outputs and impacts

Objectives	Expected outcomes	Indicators
1. To organise Chenchu honey harvesters towards sustainable harvesting of wild honey	1000 honey harvesters would be organised into Common Enterprise Groups (CEGs) in 115 EDC/VSS areas	Number of honey harvesters organised No. of CEGs formed and strengthened
2. To provide support services to honey harvesters in taking up scientific honey harvesting methods and sustain the same	1000 honey harvesters will have received training, kit (protection gears and tools and equipments) and identity cards Service centres are established by involving women for providing support services to honey harvesters Trained honey harvesters are practicing scientific honey harvesting methods	Type of services provided by service centre No. of women involved as service provider in service centre; and income earned Type of trainings, meetings and extension support received by honey harvesters No. of honey harvesters received training No. of honey harvesters received kit and identity cards No. of honey harvesters who are using kit and practicing scientific methods Income earned per season by trained honey harvesters No. of trained people encouraged other honey harvesters on the importance of scientific methods No. of honey harvesters trained and used as master trainers No. of members got their tools repaired in service centre and service charge paid
3. To encourage chenchu families, especially women, to take up value addition of NTFP such as Adda leaf, Amla, Tamarind and soap nut	About 700 NTFP collectors are organised into CEGs CEG members will have received training on value addition techniques and tools	No. of NTFP collectors organised into CEG CEGs formed for each NTFP No. of women trained on value addition techniques and received tools No. of CEG members who are

	CEG members will have started producing value added products	aware about sustainable collection of NTFPs No. of CEG members who have taken up producing value added products No. of CEGs negotiated with GCC for sale of products Income of members involved in NTFP collection and production of value added products
4. To train and build chenchu tribal youth as local level resource persons to address various needs of chenchu community (resource monitoring, extension, capacity building, marketing, etc)	20 youth are trained and placed as field organisers to conduit between community and government departments, 20 youth are trained and placed as sales Facilitators at GCC procurement centres to reduce gap between GCC and NTFP collectors , 20 youth are trained and placed as resource monitoring agents to periodically monitor forest resources 20 youth are trained and placed as Master trainers to propagate scientific honey harvesting methods	No. of tribal youth trained and placed as Field Organisers, Master trainers, resource Monitoring agents and sales facilitators No. of resource persons involved in their respective roles No. of chenchu families received support from resource persons in terms of field guidance, information sharing and linkages with government
5. To improve access to services among Chenchu community through effective coordination between concerned government departments and NGOs	Improved interface between Chenchu community and Forest department/GGC, ITDA, etc. Improved interaction between different stakeholders Improved income and quality of life among families targeted by the project	No. of steering committee meetings held Type of issues identified and acted upon by the government officials Government officials participation in trainings, awareness meetings and resolving community level issues Type of activities taken up by partner NGOs towards building collaboration with government and community Support received from government in implementation of the project- infrastructure and resource for support service centre, and

		trainings/meetings No. of chenchu households got EGS cards, FRA land titles, government programmes/resources etc. No. of households participated in forest development activities No. of families have access to education and health facilities
6. To enhance understanding on existing gaps between policy/implementation guidelines and field realities	Issues for advocacy are identified	Assessment of Needs and priorities of community through micro-studies (e.g., FRA status, honey harvesting, etc) Resource material prepared to communicate people concerns to other stakeholders Key issues identified for policy advocacy

STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT

The report is presented in five chapters, including this chapter. In the chapter 2, the changes brought about by CHELE in honey harvesting is discussed. The economy of Chenchus is analysed in chapter 3 in order to capture other livelihood concerns and priorities of Chenchus. There was discussion on community participation and programme management aspects in chapter 4. And finally in Chapter 4, the lessons emerged from the implementation of the project in the last three years were presented.

CHAPTER 2: CHANGES BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE PROJECT IN HONEY HARVESTING

PROFILE OF SAMPLE HOUSEHOLDS

Chenchus, being traditionally food gatherers, have of late pursuing more than one economic activity. The government have been trying to provide alternative employment opportunities through the ITDA by distributing agriculture land to the landless people, providing financial assistance for livestock rearing, income generation activities and other items of developmental programmes. The interaction with officials as well as with neighbouring villages, and development interventions led to a transition process, though slow, from folk society to peasant society life practices.

- *Sale of minor forest produce:* The most important change in the economic position of Chenchus is the transition from gathering roots, tubers and wild fruits for consumption to the collection of minor forest produce on a large scale for sale. The entry of Chenchus into a cash economy has come out mainly by the activities of Girijan Cooperative Marketing Society
- *Wage labour:* Chenchus started engaged in wage labour as Forest Department used them as forest labour.
- *Cultivator:* The first efforts to turn food gathering Chenchu into plough-cultivator were made in 1930s. Attempts to develop permanent cultivation have yielded only patchy results¹⁰. Nonetheless, this gave way to growing grain crops on small plots near the huts, shifting cultivation and farm based agriculture.
- *Livestock rearing:* Traditionally, Chenchus were not involved in rearing of livestock. Very few chenchus reported to have owned buffaloes in 1940s. Over a period, cultivation and livestock rearing have gained importance in the livelihoods of Chenchus.

The demographic profile of the sample households (from the experimental group) shows that there are more males (52%) than females (48 %); and slightly lower percentage of women in buffer villages. The average household size worked out to be 4.3. The age composition of the sample household members indicates low life expectancy- only less than 10% of the household members were above 40 years.

The proportion of illiterates was very high. Among the literates their education levels could be termed low, as most of them did not cross high school. The study also reveals that the attainment of literacy levels between the age group of 6-14 years is significant. (Of the 224 members in

¹⁰ Although large amounts of government funds have been spent for welfare of Chenchus, the number of schemes aimed at transforming the economy is very small. In fact, well-intended innovations could not be sustained because the Chenchus were mentally not adjusted to economic pursuits different from their traditional way of gaining livelihood.

this group only 8 are illiterate or non-school going.) Further it is observed that Tribal Ashram schools have contributed a lot to attaining literacy levels among Chenchus.

More than a third of households were residing in katcha or temporary houses. The housing status in the buffer villages is better than core villages. Of the 200 households, 94% had accessed at BPL cards which includes 88% of AAY cards. It is a matter of concern that 6% of the households do not have access to PDS. About 10% of households have accessed the social security programmes (i.e., old age pensions) from the government. The profile of the control group presents similar pattern as the experimental group¹¹. A more detailed socio-economic profile of the sample households is presented in appendix 1.

HONEY HARVESTING

As discussed earlier, CHELE project aims at improving the existing methods adopted for honey collection so that apart from removing the risks in the activity, the extraction of honey can be done in a hygienic way and at the same time the yield rates can be improved up on. The project trained 919 members in improved honey collection methods and 324 members in value addition to selected NTFPs. The implementation process was time consuming, at least in the first year, as there was considerable hesitation on the part of Chenchus to participate in the project activities.

Training to honey harvesters: The project has trained members on improved honey collection methods. The trainees comprise of climbers (40%), helpers (35%), extractors (12%) and those acting as guide in honey collection. The percentage of the female trainees within the sample is 3%. It is encouraging to note that the project has mobilised a few women despite the fact that their involvement is limited to a support role in honey harvesting. More than half of the sample members (trainees) covered by the study were illiterates; and three-fourths of the trainees were in the age group of 21-40 years. The remaining members are either below 20 years (10%) or in the age group of 41-60 years.

Table 2.1: Characteristic features of trainees (%)

Particulars		Experiment		
		Core	Buffer	Total
% of illiterates among trainees		52	56	54
% of female trainees		3.7	1	3
Age of trainees	<=20	11	9	10
	21-30	37	42	40
	31-40	33	38	36
	41-60	18	9	12
	>61	1	2	2

¹¹ The important condition in drawing the sample for control and experimental groups is that the sample households for both the groups must represent similar socio-economic characteristics. Therefore, from the data we can say that the study has satisfied this condition.

Formation of CEGs: The trained members were organised into Common Enterprise Groups (CEGs) in each village. It may be noted that 98 CEGs were formed by organizing trained honey harvesters. The CEGs were provided with honey collection kit. In addition, 10 CEGs were formed by organizing, women trained in NTFP value addition.

Providing accidental insurance policy: The trained harvesters were enrolled in Janatha insurance policy by the project. As per the design, the project pays insurance premium in the first year; and in the subsequent years, the CEG members should renew the policy. The study shows that 68% of the members have already insurance bonds, this percentage being higher in buffer villages. The discussion with CPF revealed that all the trained members were enrolled into the policy immediately after the completion of the training; and that as and when CPF receives insurance bonds from the company, it hands over to the partner-NGOs for distribution. Most probably, others will also receive insurance bonds shortly. When enquired the harvesters about their willingness to renew the policy on their own, 60% of them gave affirmative responses. Interestingly more members in core villages wanted to renew this policy when compared to buffer villages.

Promoting sustainable honey harvesting practices: The honey harvesting practices promoted by the project includes using sting protection dresses, removing only ripen portion of comb and hence collection from the same comb at least two times in a season, extracting honey by opening layer in a comb (and avoiding squeezing) and wearing hand gloves (and washing them after use). After training, the project extended backup support to trainees by deploying community level resource persons.

Participation in honey harvesting: In a sample of 200 households covered in the study, some households did not participate in honey collection due to ill health etc. As a result, only 191 households participated during the pre-intervention period while in the post intervention period the figure has shrunken to 184. From 191 households, in all, 249 members participated (with single member each 138 households, with two members each 48 households and three members each 15 households). In the post intervention period, as many as 229 members participated (the distribution being households with single member each 143, two members each 74 households and three members each 12 households).

Adoption of practices by harvesters: More honey harvesters learning the correct use of tool kit and collection methods. Both in core and buffer villages, a majority of the honey collectors were aware of the practices and prescribed norms to be followed under sustainable honey harvesting method.

- According to trainees, CHELE project brought positive changes in honey harvesting and hygienic practices. A majority of the members have adopted suggested practices (table 2.2). It was also reported that trained members are not only following safety measures and hygienic practices, but are also motivating and guiding un-trained members to follow these practices.

- The trainees used to extract honey from each comb only once in a season before the project intervention. Subsequent to receiving training, the members were using protection dress and harvesting comb twice in a season (80%) by removing only ripen portion of the comb (95%) after the project intervention. The reasons cited for non-compliance by some of the trainees were lack of interest from honey harvesters and in a few cases it was also due to lack of proper follow-up and handholding support from the CHELE team. There is not much variation between core and buffer villages in adopting the practices promoted by the project.

Table 2.2: Practices followed by honey harvesters

Particulars		Experiment			Control		
		Core	Buffer	Overall	Core	Buffer	Overall
Sting protection dress	Before	0	0	0	0	0	0
	After	94	97	96	0	0	0
Same comb used twice in a season	Before	0	1	1	0	0	0
	After	86	74	81	-	-	-
Same comb used three times or more in a season	Before	0	0	0	0	0	0
	After	3	16	9	-	-	-
Removing only ripen portion of comb while harvesting	Before	2	2	2	0	0	0
	After	94	95	95	-	-	-
Extraction of honey by opening layer in a comb	Before	2	2	2	0	0	0
	After	95	96	96	-	-	-
Wearing of hand gloves while harvesting and extraction of honey	Before	14	2	9	0	0	0
	After	96	97	97	-	-	-

- Earlier harvesting used to be carried out mostly in night, but with supply of string protection dress the harvesters have started taking up activity during early hours of the day also.
- The non-trainees (the control group) continue to harvest each comb once by removing entire comb. It is evident from the table that none of the control group members were using sting protection dress; and all of them were harvesting each comb only once in a season. While harvesting honey, they removed entire comb and extracted honey by squeezing.

Benefits accrued by members: The trainees reported that these practices were helpful in minimising damage to colonies and bees. In the words of people that the benefits accrued by following practices suggested by CHELE are: “minimizing wastage at the time of collection, improving quality of honey collected through hygienic practices and increase in income with better price.”

- The trained harvesters reported increase in the average number of colonies covered by households in year after project intervention (table 2.3). At the aggregate level, on an average each household covered more than 44 colonies in a

year before project period, which increased to 54 after the intervention. The increase in terms of the number of colonies covered is higher in core villages when compared to buffer villages.

Table 2.3: Colonies covered and honey harvested per annum

Particulars		Experiment			Control ¹²		
		Core	Buffer	Overall	Core	Buffer	Overall
Average no. of colonies covered	Pre	39	51	44.49			
	Post	49.65	59.31	54.13	31.05	38.46	33.64
Average no. of visits / HH	Pre	7.89	9.45	8.59			
	Post	6.94	6.21	6.6	9.70	12.0	10.57

- Thus, the average number of colonies covered per household in a year has increased 20% in experimental group, the percentage being higher in core villages. On the contrary in the case of control group, there is 23% decline in the average number of colonies covered which is higher for buffer village. It can be construed that **promotion of sustainable practices by CHELE has reduced damage to bees as well as colonies, which in turn contributed to conserving colonies.**
- The trainees have also reported that they were now able to cover more colonies in short duration of time and hence reduction in number of visits in a year. They felt that the sting protection dress and other tools have reduced preparatory work involved prior to harvesting (i.e., collection and lighting fire to generate smoke and drive away bees). In other words, the practices promoted by the project have not only reduced drudgery involved in honey harvesting but also increased efficiency.

Honey yield: Honey is harvested in two seasons viz., June-August and December - January in a year and accordingly data in respect of the number of times the honey is harvested, quantum of honey harvested and the corresponding income the households derived in both the seasons are obtained. Besides, area-wise (in terms of core and buffer areas) disaggregated results are also shown in table 2.4 and what follows is the discussion of the results emerging from the analysis.

- **June-August:** At the aggregate level, each household (from experimental group) harvested more than 14 kilograms before project intervention. The GGC data (as also discussion with community) show that there is a general decline in quantum of honey collected in 2009. Yet each household from experiment group could collect same quantity of honey after the intervention by following sustainable practices. The harvesters in the core area are better placed with an average

¹² Baseline data (for 2007) are not separately collected for control group as care was taken to see that it matches with experiment group in all respects, except for the fact that experimental group is exposed to intervention, but control group not. Because of this reason for computing percentage increase in the variables selected in respect of control group, base figures for experiment group are taken into account.

collection of 15 kilograms as compared to the corresponding figure of 13.66 kilograms in the buffer area.

Table 2.4: Particulars of honey harvesting

Particulars	Experiment			Control		
	Core	Buffer	Total	Core	Buffer	Total
June –August						
Average quantity of honey collected/HH(in Kgs)	Before	14.33	14.58	14.45		
	After	15.05	13.66	14.41	14.02	14.20
Average rate /kg	Before	108	97	103		
	After	160	138	150	129	107
December –January						
Average quantity of honey collected/HH(in Kgs)	Before	9.95	14.23	11.84		
	After	13.08	13.13	13.11	12.08	12.73
Average rate /kg	Before	108	102	105		
	After	161	153	158	137	115

- The price for honey the harvesters get is a function of to whom they sell. The rate at which they sell is reported to be varying considerably across buyers- Rs.80 in the case of GCC while for traders or tourists, the price varies between Rs.160 - 300 depending up on the time of selling. Independent of the area, each harvester gets Rs.103 per kg before the intervention and this figure swells to Rs.150 after the intervention. Similar trends are also in evidence between areas. Further, regardless of the area, the post intervention period registers higher prices when compared to those in the pre-intervention period.
- **December-January:** In this season, at the aggregate level, the post intervention period has an edge over the pre-intervention period. (Each harvester gets 1.27 kilograms of honey more in the post intervention period as compared to the pre-intervention period- the actual values are 11.84 and 13.11 kilograms respectively). Similarly, the core area registers significant increase. But in the buffer area, the reverse is the case.
- As is to be expected, the price hike is quite conspicuous in the post intervention period. Independent of the type of buyer, the harvester gets an income of Rs.158 in the post intervention period, higher by Rs.48 than the figure for the pre-intervention period. This trend is true of the areas too and in relative terms, the core group appears to be benefiting more in terms of the price differential (Rs.53 increase over the pre-intervention figure).
- **The trainees have performed better than non-trainees in terms of the average honey collected per household and average price they got per kilogram.** There was slight decline in buffer villages during the June-August as a majority of the households were involved agriculture activities and made only a fewer visits

during this period. In general, the impact was found to be higher in the core villages (more so during December-January) than the buffer villages.

- At the same time, **the average rate at which honey was sold recorded 45% increase in the case of trainees and just 11% in the case of non-trainees**, implying that the project inputs towards improving hygiene and quality of honey along with marketing support fetched them better price.

Income from honey harvesting: There is a significant increase in return from honey harvesting from pre-intervention to during the project intervention. The income earned per household averages Rs.1379 in the pre-intervention period at the aggregate level. The analysis shows that there is 53% increase in income for trainees and 20% in the case of non-trainees, owing to better prices during post-project period. The core area is better placed in this regard in comparison to the buffer area (the percentage increases are 70 and 36 points respectively).

Table 2.5 Income from honey

Particulars	Experiment			Control		
	Core	Buffer	Total	Core	Buffer	Total
Before						
Average income /HHs	1334	1428	1379			
After						
Average income /HHs	2268	1937	2116	1739	1494	1651
Incremental impact of the project on average income/HH	70	36	53	30	5	20

There were 29 % of the sample households with Rs.1001- Rs.2000 per annum, closely followed by 28% with Rs.2001-Rs.5000 and 27% with less than Rs.1000 (table 2.5). The rest of the sample households (16%) earned more than Rs.5000 per annum from honey harvesting.

Table 2.6: Distribution of the sample households by income from honey (after the project intervention)

Annual income (in Rs.)	Core	Buffer	Overall
Up to 1000	29	25	27
1001-2000	23	38	29
2001-5000	31	22	28
Above 5000	17	15	16
Total	100	100	100
N=	99	88	187
Average income	2268	1937	2116

Challenges faced by the project: The twin concerns that the project has set to address was the decline in number of honey harvesters and also the decline of yield from honey hives. It emerged from discussion with trainees that the training courses have brought back youth into this activity. While it is possible to improve yield from honey hives with

introduction of sustainable practices, it is also necessary to encourage plantation, cropping practices and ecological conditions for conservation and protection of bees. The analysis shows that the project need to keep the following aspects in designing its future interventions.

Decline in number of honey collectors: The number of honey collectors has reduced from T0 to T1 in a majority of villages where FGD was conducted (Table 2.4). There is, however, an increase in the number of harvesters in Appapur. It was reported that CHELE has trained youth in this village; and the master trainer has motivated and sustained the interest of the trained members in the activity. The number of harvesters remained the same in Vadderayavaram. The reasons cited by the people for the decline in honey harvesters are as follows:

- Reduction of members involved in honey collection in some of the households after the project. It was reported that six members have discontinued due to health problems, do not want to take risk and lack of interest.
- Experienced and well informed harvesters have either died or become old (not capable to climb tress and harvest honey) in a majority of villages.
- There are also members who discontinued honey harvesting due to harassment and problems created by the forest department and police.
- Some how youth are not interested to participate in honey harvesting due to availability of other easier options; and discouragement from elders.
- The decline in honey harvesters is also due to reduction in availability of honey because of climate variability (i.e., droughts, low rainfall).
- It was reported that Chenchus have of late been participating in AP-REGS activities, which in turn has marginally reduced their time in collection of forest produce.

Decline of honey yield: The decline in the average honey collected per member was due to reduced yield from honey hives. It was reported that climate variability has negative influence on flowering. In such circumstances, bees either migrate or travel to agriculture fields in search of pollen. At times bees get killed by attempting to collect honey from agriculture fields, where high quantity of chemical pesticides is used. And there is every possibility for reduction in bee population and thereby reduction in yield per comb. The average honey collected by a harvester depends not only on number of combs covered, but also yield rate per comb¹³. Therefore, the average honey collected by a member has reduced despite increase in number of colonies covered from baseline period to after the project period only because of low yield from hives.

¹³ It is possible that harvester will have to climb down without any honey in the case of some of the combs covered by him/her.

Firming up the practices: It is not clear from the reflection of people that whether yield rates per comb increases with change from one time collection to two times in a season. This needs to be studied in detail by systematic data collection for selected honey hives.

CHAPTER 3: CHENCHUS' ECONOMY

This section examines the livelihoods of Chenchus, taking into account the availability of natural resources and productive assets. For this purpose, the data pertaining to the experimental group was used, as there is no need to make comparative analysis between the experiment and the control group.

Livelihoods portfolio of Chenchus: Chenchus economy is transforming in a slow pace with efforts made by government over the last five decades. As a result, the livelihood activities of the sample households includes NTFP collection, wage labour, agriculture, livestock rearing and self-employment in non-agriculture activities.

- NTFP collection and wage employment have emerged as important sources of livelihood for Chenchus (table 3.1). In recognition of the importance of the NTFP collection for Chenchus, the project has trained women members in value addition to soap nut, Adda leaf, Amla and Tamarind.
- 37% of household members were engaged in agriculture and 38% in livestock rearing activities. Notwithstanding the general scenario of underemployment and unemployment, about 23% of household members were involved in non-agricultural pursuits (23%). While 11% of household members were involved in seasonal migration, 7% of them have salaried jobs.

Table 3.1: Livelihood strategies of sample households

Particulars	Experiment		
	Core	Buffer	Overall
Agriculture	30	44	37
Livestock	36	40	38
Wage	98	99	99
Migration	5	17	11
NTFP	93	89	91
Salary	8	4	7
Others*	21	25	23

NTFP Collection: The tribal groups living in the forest area are entitled to the forest produce excepting the timber and these (produces) include honey, amla, fruits, leaf etc. In this section, the analysis focuses on other important NTFPs, as a detailed analysis on honey harvesting was made in chapter 2. .

- **Trends in NTFP use:** The trends were captured through specially conducted FGDs in 12 habitations. The main trend observed was a general decline in honey, soap nut, Adda leaf and Amla over the past 20 years (Table 3.2). The decline is

mostly attributed to degradation of forest. People reported decline of NTFP due to reduction in the number of plants and yield rate per plant. Therefore, collection of NTFP now involves travelling long distances and staying more days in the forest.

Table 3.2: Trends in resource use in surveyed villages

Product		Average produce collected per annum (in quintals)/habitat	10 years ago			20 years ago		
			1*	2*	3*	1*	2*	3*
Honey	Core	19.25	4			1		2
	Buffer	32.1	7		1		7	1
Soap nut	Core	0.30	1		1	1	1	
	Buffer	40.1	8			8		
Adda leaf	Core	1.85	2				2	
	Buffer	8	2		2	2	1	1
Amla	Core	34.3	4				4	
	Buffer	69.9	7		1		7	1
Tamarind	Core	8.2	3				3	
	Buffer	49	7			1	6	

Note: 1- more than current level, 2-Much more than current level, 3- Same as current level

- **Training to women:** The project, besides providing training on improved honey collection practices, has also trained 324 women in value addition to NTFP products. These trainings were focused more on NTFP collection methods, mostly emphasizing aspects related to age at which fruit/leaf to be harvested, etc. Further, a few members were trained in value addition. The trained women were organised into 10 CEGs, at cluster level.
- **Supply equipments:** Selected Chenchu women from Mannanur and Billakalu villages were trained in Adda leaf cup making. The project has supplied two leaf cup making machines with installed capacity of 150 cups per hour - One unit each in Mannanur and Billakalu villages. Though the members reported of involving in production of leaf cups, a majority discontinued as there was no follow-up on material supply and marketing support.
- **Collection of other NTFP:** Almost all the sample households were involved in NTFP collection. As it happened in honey collection, there is also slight reduction in the number of households involved even in the case of other NTFP products. The trainings were mainly focused on re-orientation of women on regeneration-friendly NTFP collection methods. While Chenchu women, in general, were following collection methods suggested in the training, they find it not gainful in the case of a few practices as the time taken is longer and that in the absence of marketing support it is losing proposition. And in the process they will also end up collecting less (probably with improved quality), but have to sell for same price.

- **Income from NTFP:** The average annual income earned from NTFP is Rs.7818 per household (including income from honey), which is being higher in buffer villages. It could be seen that 29% of the sample households with an annual income of Rs.2001-Rs.5000 per annum, followed by quarter each with less than Rs.2000 and more than Rs.10000. The rest of the sample households (20%) in the income class of Rs.5001-Rs.10000. It may be noted that one-third members in buffer villages have reported of earning more than 10000 per annum as against 19 % in core villages.

Table 3.3: Income from other NTFP

Distribution of HH by Income Size Class (Rs. Per annum)	Core	Buffer	Overall
<2000	27	24	26
2001-5000	33	24	29
5001-10000	20	19	20
>10001	19	33	25
N=	99	83	182
Average annual income/HH	7005	8786	7818

- **Sale of produce:** The NTFP products were sold to GGC, traders and tourist (table 3.4). Almost equal proportion of members were selling to GGC and traders. A few are selling to tourists. The price offered by GCC is higher than trader for different products. However, people are getting better price by selling to tourists.

Table 3.4: NTFP sold to different agencies by rate

NTFP	Sold to	Core		Buffer		Overall	
		%	Avg price/kg	%	Avg price/Kg	%	Avg price/Kg
Soapnut	GCC	47	8.53	65	9	56	8.8
	Trader	47	7.82	33	8.4	41	8.7
	Tourist	6	9.75	2	8.5	4	8.5
Adda leaf	GCC	32	8.6	48	8	10	8.3
	Trader	64	7.6	52	8	16	7.7
	Tourist	4	7.5	0	0	1	7.5
Amla	GCC	29	7.9	60	8.7	42	8.4
	Trader	49	8.5	32	10	42	8.9
	Tourist	22	10.9	8	10.8	16	10.9
Tamarind	GCC	24	21	42	26	30	23
	Trader	69	17	58	14	65	16
	Tourist	7	19	0	0	5	19
Honey	GCC	27	80	51	81	38	80
	Trader	27	155	36	160	32	158
	Tourist	46	174	13	173	31	174

LAND RESOURCES: About 40% of the sample households do not have any land and this incidence is highest in core villages. At the aggregate level, the average landholding works out to 3.92 acres. However, the analysis shows that core villages are better placed in terms of average land landholding (table 3.5).

- **Small and marginal farmers:** A majority of those owning land are either marginal farmers (24%) or small farmers (24%). The remaining households were semi-medium farmers (11%) and medium farmers (<1%). While the percentage of medium farmers and small farmers were higher in core villages, marginal farmers were higher in buffer villages.

Table 3.5: Land owned by sample households across land holding groups (%)

Land holding size (in acres)	Core	Buffer	Overall
No land	43.0	37.6	40.5
Up to 1 acre	3.7	8.6	6.0
1.01 -2.50	14.0	22.6	18.0
2.51-5.0	27.1	20.4	24.0
5.01-10.0	12.1	9.7	11.0
10.01 +	0.0	1.1	0.5
Total	53.5	46.5	100
Average landholding (in acres)	4.19	3.64	3.92

- **Land kept fallow:** About 39% of the farmers owning land have kept their lands fallow and the incidence is highest in core villages. The reasons cited were lack of bullocks, land not suitable for cultivation as it required development before put to use, lack of capital, etc. At least 5 members have leased-out the land – 4 in core villages and 1 buffer villages. The total extent of land leased-out is 21 acres (one acre in buffer area and the remaining in core villages). None of the members have leased-in land.

Table 3.6: Land kept fallow

Particulars	Core	Buffer	Total
No. of farmers	29	17	46
Area (in acres)	118.75	89.2	207.95
Average area/farmer	4.09	5.25	4.52

- **Gross income from agriculture:** The average gross annual income from agriculture is Rs.9690, which is higher in buffer villages. Over one-fourth of the households get an annual income of less than Rs.2000, followed by 23% with Rs.5001-Rs.10000 and 21% with RS.2001 –Rs.5000. The rest of the sample households (14%) earned more than Rs.20000 per annum from agriculture.

Table 3.7: Annual Gross Income from Agriculture

Distribution of HH by Income Size Class	Core	Buffer	Overall
<2000	28	24	26
2001- 5000	16	24	21
5001-10000	28	20	23
10001-20000	15	17	17
>20000	13	15	14
N=	32	41	73
Average annual income/HH	9387	9927	9690

CPF has conducted a detailed enquiry for sub-sample of 10 households for different crops to capture cultivation cost per acre (as the present study did not gather this information) and found that on an average the farmer has been incurring Rs.4036 per acre towards inputs (seed, pesticides and fertilizers), land preparation (plough labour), wages, etc. From this data it can be concluded that on average the net income per acre is Rs.2410. It may be noted that there is no paid out costs in the case of wage employment, livestock and NTFP. Hence, the net income from agriculture is lower than all other activities.

LIVESTOCK POSSESSION: In a total group of 200 study households, 26% of the households have small ruminants (mostly goats), followed by backyard poultry (18%), cows (9.5 %) and buffaloes (6 %). The ownership of small ruminants by a large proportion of households as compared to other kinds of livestock indicates its importance of the sample households. Further, as compared to she-buffaloes, cows were owned by a slightly higher number of households, which indicates that their priority was agriculture rather than milk production. On the whole the households in buffer villages are better placed in terms of the average number animals possessed for all the category of animals.

Table 3.8: Livestock possessed by the sample households

Particulars	Core	Buffer	Total
No. of members having cows	6	13	19
No. of cows possessed by the sample HH	19	110	129
No. of members having Buffaloes	9	2	11
No. of buffaloes possessed by the sample HH	16	4	20
No. of members having Goats	32	19	51
No. of goats possessed by the sample HH	215	395	610
No. of members having backyard poultry	14	21	35
No. of birds possessed by the sample HH	84	200	284

At the aggregate level, 38% of households had possessed some livestock or the other, this percentage being marginally higher in buffer villages. The average annual income of households from the livestock is Rs.4962 and it is higher in buffer villages (Rs.6730). It could be seen from the table that there were 28 % of the sample households with an income of Rs.1001- Rs.2000 per annum, followed by 22% each with an income of

Rs.2001-Rs.5000 and 5001-Rs.10000. There are 16% of households with an annual income of above Rs.10000 - a majority of these households were from buffer villages. The rest of the sample households (16%) were with an annual income of Rs.1001-2000.

Table 3.9: Annual Income from Livestock activity

	Core	Buffer	Total
<1000	31	24	28
1001-2000	26	5	16
2001-5000	18	27	22
5001-10000	23	22	22
Above 10000	3	22	12
Total	100	100	100
N=	39	37	76
Average income/HH	3284	6730	4962

PARTICIPATION AS WAGE LABOUR: As is evident from the data on household income sources, labour emerged as one of the important contributors to the household income. Almost all the households were involved in wage employment. The average income from this activity is Rs.3183 and it is higher in core villages. One important scheme which provided direct benefit to Chenchus in accessing wage employment is APREGS. There were 30% of the households with an annual income of Rs.2001-Rs.3000, followed by a one-fourth with an income of Rs.3001-Rs.4000. About 22% households were with an income less than Rs.2000. There were 9% of households with an income more than Rs.10000 per annum.

3.10: Annual income from wage employment

	Core	Buffer	Total
<2000	18	27	22
2001-3000	24	38	30
3001-4000	28	22	25
4001-5000	16	10	13
>5000	14	3	9
Total	100	100	100
N=	105	92	197
Average income	3548	2766	3183

Other livelihood activities: Other livelihood activities involved by the sample households were migration and non-farm activities. The incidence of migration was reported by 21 households out of 200 and that too mostly in buffer villages. A majority of them reported to be going to places only within the Mandal or district during the period June-December. The average earning on account of migration is Rs.7150. It is found that on account of I.T.D.A. activities a small percentage of Chenchus were able to get full-time employment in different services, and a few could depend on petty business activities.

Table 3.11: Average income from other livelihood activities during 2008-09

Source	No. of HH	Average annual per HH	%
Migration	21	7150	19
Others*	45	4722	13

* **Bamboo, fuel wood, basket making, fishing, broom sticks, stone tools, etc**

Income size class distribution: On an average, the sample households obtained an income of Rs.19712 per annum (table 3.12). It is evident from the table that the contribution from honey collection is about 11 per cent to the total household income, the percentage being higher in core areas.

Table 3.12: Distribution of households by income size class

Income size class (Rs. Per annum)	Core	Buffer	Overall
Up to 10000	36	29	33
10001-15000	21	23	22
15001-20000	15	10	13
20001-25000	3	10	6
25001-30000	5	9	7
Above 30000	21	20	21
Total	100	100	100
N=	107	93	200
Average income	19389	20084	19712
Proportion of Income from honey	11.69	9.64	10.73

The distribution of sample households by annual income size class is presented in table 3.12. It could be seen from the table that there were about one-third of households with less than an income of Rs.10000 per annum, followed by 22% with Rs.10001-Rs.15000 and 13% with Rs.15001-Rs.20000. There are 21% households with an annual income of above Rs.30000. The rest of the sample households (17%) lie in the income class of Rs.20001-Rs.30000. It is learnt that the current criteria for BPL is an income up to Rs.20000 per annum in rural areas of Andhra Pradesh. Viewed against this criterion, it could be seen that the proportion of BPL households was 68 % of the sample households.

CHAPTER 4: COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Facilitation of community participation is an important aspect of the project management. At least in the first year, there was considerable hesitation on the part of Chenchus to participate in the project activities. In spite of several years of ITDA work, the community organisation does not reach a stage where community can take initiative to demand their rights and entitlements from the government. This is evident from the following analysis:

Membership in Local Institutions: At the aggregate level, 65 per cent of the households reported membership in GCC, the percentage being slightly lower in core villages. However, only 14% of members had accessed GIRI card, which enable them avail accidental insurance, loan facility and bonus from GCC. The analysis further shows that the percentage of members who had accessed GIRI card is lower in buffer than core villages. When enquired about the benefits of GIRI card only 27 % of the members gave affirmative response (and half of them are not fully aware of its).

- Perhaps keeping this in view, CHELE project has promoted Janatha insurance policy. It is encouraging to note that 68% of the members enrolled themselves in this scheme; and this percentage is being higher in buffer villages. When enquired about their willingness to renew the policy on their own, 60% gave affirmative responses. Interestingly more members in core villages wanted to renew this policy when compared with buffer villages.

Table 4.1: Institutional membership

Particulars	Experiment			Control		
	Core	Buffer	Total	Core	Buffer	Total
% of households having membership in GCC	63	67	65	57	51	55
% of members having GIRI card	18	8	14	15	9	13
% of members who were aware about benefits of GIRI card	27	28	27	26	23	25
% of households having membership in SHG	50	75	62	47	57	51
% of members covered by Janatha insurance	66	70	68	NA	NA	NA
% of members willing to renew Janatha Policy	65	54	60	NA	NA	NA

- Despite greater success of Self-help movement in Andhra Pradesh, only 62 % of the households had membership in SHGs. There is a considerable variation on aspect between core (75%) and buffer villages (50%). At least three reasons were reported for the above scenario: (i) some members did not join groups as they

were not aware of it's benefits (ii) newly married have not joined groups; and (iii) some groups got disintegrated due to non-functioning, more so in buffer villages.

Support received from government: Further we obtained information on the support received by the members from various government programs (table 3.22). About 74% of the households had accessed APREGS card, while 54% each reported of getting land rights under FRA and 67% admitted children in residential schools. It may be noted that 52% were reported receiving support in relation to NTFP; and least support was received from the government in relation to honey collection. When enquired about receiving identity card only 23% gave affirmative answer. It should be noted that the identity cards were issued in the initial phase of project and hence about 76 % of the sample households did not receive cards.

Table 4.2: Support received from government/other agencies (%)

Particulars	Experiment			Control			Project impact		
	Core	Buffer	Overall	Core	Buffer	Overall	Core	Buffer	Overall
APREGS card	72	76	74	72	68	71	0	8	3
FRA land title	53	55	54	53	37	48	0	18	6
Honey harvesting	9	8	9	7	3	6	2	5	3
Other NTFP products	45	60	52	14	11	25	31	49	27
Identity card by CHELE	30	14	23	0	0	0	30	14	23

Indebtedness: A majority reported that they rely on moneylender, relatives, traders, SHGs and GCC for credit. Very few reported access to bank credit. About 50% of the members borrowed loan and only 65% of those who have taken loan repaid some amount or other (table 3.22). Importantly SHGs have extended loans to 42% households. The money lenders and traders were second important source of borrowing. About 13% of the households borrowed from institutional sources such as banks (6%), ITDA (4%) and GCC (3%).

Table 4.3 indebtedness of the sample household

Particulars	Core	Buffer	Total
No. of members	48	49	97
Average amount borrowed/HH	8767	8177	8469
Average amount repaid/HH	6496 (28)	5811(35)	6116 (63_
Average amount due/HH	6013 (39)	5276 (41)	5635 (80)
Source from which loans are borrowed (%)			
SHG	49	35	42
Bank	4	8	6
Money lender	28	21	24
Trader	4	12	8

ITDA	2	6	4
GCC	0	6	3
Relatives	13	12	13

Support service centre (SSC): To overcome the institutional exclusions as discussed above and empower Chenchus to demand their due share from the development programmes, the CHELE started two centres - one each at Dornala and Achampet. The objectives of the centres are:

- To create resources and support systems for carrying out the community based trainings, technology transfer and supply tool kits.
- To act as an information centre and create a platform towards organising the Chenchus and improving their negotiation skills with government and other stakeholders.

Activities: The Forest Department has provided premises on the request of CPF. The primary activity of the centre is stitching and repair of sting protection dress for honey harvesters. In addition, the centre premises are used for monthly review meetings of CBOs, partner NGO and CPF, training of master trainers and dialogue meetings with GCC, ITDA and FD.

Stitching centre: CEG was formed in each centre by organising five women members from Chenchu community. The group members were trained on designing and stitching of sting protection dress for 60 more than two months. Each centre was provided with infrastructure and material related to stitching sting protection dress. Both the centres have started stitching and supplying sting protection dresses to honey harvesters (appendix 2).

Community level resource persons: The project has invested in the last three years into developing local resource persons who can catalyze the development among Chenchus. The local educated youth became the personnel of the programme. Except for the two coordinators, all the field organisers were recruited from among local village youth.

- The field organizers were involved in sharing the information and organising villagers. They need to be involved (by providing necessary capacity building support) more in strengthening CEGs and facilitating linkages between CEGs and government programmes. There is a need to strengthen role of field organisers through capacity building and effective monitoring in order to play vital role in various functions as indicted in table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Role played by the field organisers

Function	Role of EDC	Remarks
EDC strengthening	None	Invites EDC members to CHELE meetings
CEG strengthening	None	The organizers are involved in addressing issues concerning CEGs in their own villages.
Field guidance	None	In a few villages, initially, guidance was given to CEGs on grading of NTFP products
Information	Inform CEGs about the project meetings, visits, etc.	Information given on mobile to one member in a village, who in turn will share pass on it to other members.
Use of kits	Evolving norms for use of kit Repair of kit from SSC	Norms are not clearly defined in a majority of villages A majority of CEGs are repairing kits on their own
Linkages with other programmes	Pro-active role in some villages	In some villages the organizers work closely with EDC in mobilization of government programmes – Housing and APREGS (Vatavarlappalli), ITDA loans (Appapur). Also mobilized community to participate in trainings of kovel foundation and Banjara foundation (Chilakacherla gudem).

(Source: FGD with EDC and CEG in selected villages)

- The sales facilitators supported NTFP collectors during transaction with GCC. They participated in GGC on day to day basis, educate members and improve functional relations between people and GGC. After initial enthusiasm, the sales facilitators stopped participating as very few NTFP collectors were making scheduled visits. However, GCC officials are interested to engage local youth for collection of NTFP from villages on commission basis. The project needs to fine-tune its strategy related to sales facilitators keeping this in view.
- The master trainers were primarily involved in trainings. However, a few master trainers have also been playing a pro-active role in identification of new colonies, providing time information to CEG members, encouraging harvesters on sustainable practices and motivating non-trainers. And they are doing so only in their own villages (They are not playing such role in adjoining villages).

Participation community based institutions: EDC is a focus of interventions by the Forest Department. At present, the project invites the president and a few active members of EDC to its meetings. The role played by EDC in the implementation of CHELE is given in table 4.5. It was reported that EDC president participates in the project meetings and in the selection of members for trainings. However, there is a need

to educate Chenchu members and enhance their participation in EDC¹⁴ functions and decision making process. In the long run, it is also useful to involve EDC in the CHELE project, which would help in mobilising local leadership role in strengthening SSC.

Table 4.5: Role of EDC in CHELE project

Function	Role of EDC	Remarks
EDC meetings	Not organized regularly	organizes meetings only when forest officials come to village
Knowledge about CHELE	EDC chairperson is aware about CHELE	Participates in CHELE meetings
Selection of Community level resource persons	Not played any role, except in very few cases	Project informed EDC after selection in some villages
Sharing information in GB/EC meetings	None	No discussion on CHELE in EDC meetings
Utilization of kits	None	The kit is to be returned to EDC president after use in Chintala
Acting on decisions taken in steering committee	None	
Promoting janatha insurance	None	No knowledge about the scheme (except in case of EDC member is also in CEG)
Delivery of other services	EDC is involved,	Extending support to Kovel foundation, Banjara, Nandi foundation

(Source: FGD with EDC and CEG in selected villages)

¹⁴ EDC has members from all communities whereas CHELE project is only for chenchus. “Too much involvement of other communities in activities related to chenchus is not desirable” was the opinion of FD,ITDA and GCC and of chenchus.

CHAPTER 4: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Nagarjuna Sagar Srisailem Tiger Reserve (NSTR) is predominantly inhabited by Chenchus, which is a primitive tribal group. Wild honey collection is one of the important traditional livelihood activities of Chenchus. The traditional honey collection methods are considered to be unsafe, as they adversely affect the bees and forest ecosystem.

Owing to risks involved in honey collection, the youth in particular are not very enthusiastic about getting involved in this activity. There is also a decline in the availability of colonies and yields from colonies due to unsustainable practices. Keeping in view the concerns of honey harvesters and conservation of bio-diversity in NSTR, Centre for People's Forestry (CPF) has initiated a project, CHELE, in collaboration with concerned government departments. Poverty Learning Foundation has carried out an impact study to understand changes brought out by CHELE in the last three years among Chenchus, particularly honey harvesters.

OVERALL FINDINGS

Profile of sample households: There are more males (52%) than females (48 %) in the sample households. The age composition of the sample household members indicates low life expectancy- only less than 10% of the household members are above 40 years. The proportion of illiterates was very high. However, the attainment of literacy levels between the age group of 6-14 years is significant.

More than a third of households were residing in katcha or temporary houses. The housing status in the buffer villages is better than core villages. It is a matter of concern that 6% of the households had no access to PDS. About 10% of members have accessed the social security programmes from government.

Project activities: The project has carried out the preparatory work in the first year. The implementation process was time consuming, at least in the first year, as there was considerable hesitation on the part of Chenchus to participate in the project activities.

- Organised trainings (919 members) on sustainable honey harvesting and value addition to NTFP (324 members). The trained members were organised into Common Enterprise Groups (CEGs) at village level. Efforts were also made to strengthen relations between community and different government departments.
- NTFP collection and wage employment have emerged as important sources of livelihood for Chenchus. There is a general decline in honey, soap nut, Adda leaf and Amla over the past 20 years. More than one-third of household members were dependent on agriculture and livestock rearing activities. About 23% of household members were involved in non-agricultural pursuits. Very few are dependent on migration (11%).

Honey Harvesting: The practices promoted by the project includes using sting protection dress, removing only ripen portion of comb and hence collection from the same comb at least two times in a season, extracting honey by opening layer in a comb (and avoiding squeezing) and wearing hand gloves (and washing them after use).

- The trained members were organised into Common Enterprise Groups (CEGs) in each village. So far 98 CEGs were formed and supplied with tool kit for safe and sustainable honey collection.
- About 23% trained members have also received identity cards to minimise harassment by officials and police. The trained honey harvesters were enrolled in Janatha insurance policy by the project. When enquired about their willingness to renew the policy on their own, 60% gave affirmative responses.
- More honey harvesters learning the correct use of tool kit and collection methods. Both in core and buffer villages, a majority of the members were aware of the practices and prescribed norms to be followed under sustainable honey harvesting method.
- CHELE brought positive changes in honey harvesting and hygienic practices. The trainees were using protection dress and harvesting comb twice in a season (80%) by removing only ripen portion of the comb (100%) after the project intervention.
- The benefits accrued by following the practices were minimizing wastage at the time of collection, improving quality of honey collected through hygienic practices and increase in income with better price.
- The trained members are not only following safety measures and hygienic practices, but are also motivating and guiding un-trained members to follow these practices.
- After training, the project extended backup support to trainees by deploying community level resource persons. The trained harvesters reported increase in the average number of colonies covered by households in year after project intervention. The increase in terms of the number of colonies covered is higher in core villages.
- There is significant increase in return from honey harvesting from baseline period to after project intervention. There is 53% increase in income for trainees and 20% in the case of non-trainees, owing to better prices during post-project period. The core area is better placed in this regard in comparison to the buffer area (the percentage increases are 70 and 36 points respectively).
- The number of honey collectors has reduced from before project to after project intervention. Over a period this issue may be addressed, as the project is expected to promote participation of youth to in honey harvesting. Further, it needs consolidate its efforts by strengthening CEGs and involving them in the promotion of plantation and ecological conditions for protecting honey bees.

Collection of other NTFP: People reported decline of NTFP availability due to forest degradation. As a result, collection of NTFP now involves travelling long distances and staying more days in the interior forest. During the same period NTFP prices have gone up due to factors like inflation. Almost equal proportion of the members was selling to GGC and traders. A few are selling to tourists. People are getting better price by selling to tourists and traders.

Other Livelihood Activities: As is evident from the data on household income sources, labour emerged as one of the contributors to the household income. Almost all the households are involved in wage employment. The average income from this activity is Rs.3183.

- The incidence of migration is low. A majority of them reported to be going to places only within the Mandal or district.
- Analysis of source-wise average household incomes show that income from agriculture is Rs.9690, livestock Rs.4962, wage employment Rs.3183 and NTFP Rs.6548. The income from all these activities was found to be higher in buffer areas when compared to core villages.
- On an average, the sample households obtained an income of Rs.19712 per annum. Share of income from honey to total household income is about 11%, the percentage being higher in core areas.

Support service centres: Facilitation of community participation is an important aspect of the project management. The community organisation does not reach a stage where community can take initiative to demand their rights and entitlements from the government.

- 65 per cent of the households reported membership in GGC, the percentage being slightly lower in core villages. 62 % of the households had membership in SHGs.
- 14% of members had accessed GIRI card, which enable them avail accidental insurance. Perhaps keeping this in view, CHELE project has promoted Janatha insurance policy.
- About 74% of the households had accessed APREGS card, while 54% each reported of getting land rights under FRA and 67% admitted children in residential schools. It may be noted that 52% were reported receiving support in relation to NTFP; and least support was received from the government in relation to honey collection.
- SHGs have extended loans to 42% households, while 13% of the households borrowed from institutional sources such as banks (6%), ITDA (4%) and GCC (3%).

To overcome the institutional exclusions as discussed above and empower Chenchus to demand their due share from the development programmes, the CHELE started two Support service centres. In order to strengthen the centre, the project needs strengthen Stitching centre, Community level resource persons and promote greater participation of community based institutions such as EDC.

CONCLUSIONS

- The social profile of the Chenchus clearly suggests (e.g., low-life expectancy) that positive changes in their livelihoods are possible by simultaneously focusing socio-cultural aspects such as building shared interest and collective actions, nutritional and health education, and eradicating alcoholism.
- The study has clearly shown that Chenchus have started diversifying their livelihood portfolio. As a strategy it is important to give equal importance to evolving livelihood activities such as agriculture, besides focusing on honey harvesting. The project, therefore, needs to expand its framework by making use of the following opportunities:
- About 40% of the sample households do not possess any land and this incidence is highest in core villages. Further, about 39% of the farmers owning land have kept it fallow and the incidence is highest in core villages. The project should explore opportunities created by Forest Right Act (FRA) and AP-REGS in addressing these issues. What is needed is that the project will have to initiate pilots on land development, creation and use of water resources and improving agriculture in selected villages; and thereby influence ITDA to scale up these activities.
- Although about 37 % of the households are involved in livestock activity, its productivity found to be low. The potential of livestock activity needs to be utilised without unduly worried about failures in the past.
- The project has improved access to government programs. EDC and community level resource persons have worked together and mobilized government resources viz., strengthening SHGs, enrolling school dropouts, linkages with ITDA/APREGS, land patta and insurance claims. The membership of households in local institutions and access to government programmes has indicated the need for inclusive development. The project work institutional process in order to provide inclusive membership in institutions, programmes and community based institutions.
- The project has already established two Support Service Centres (SSCs). Work on this aspect should get priority in the next stage of project. As part of this, the role of community level resource persons will have to be strengthened through capacity building and effective monitoring.
- As discussed earlier, there is reduction in NTFP availability. Therefore, the project needs to encourage plantation by linking to APREGS. It is also necessary to work on next generation issues related to honey harvesting such as processing, packing and marketing.
- People reported that GCC doesn't purchase products like raw amla, wax without honey, etc. Hence, the project needs to facilitate linkages with buyers for such products.
- An important learning that has emerged from the project is that any scheme aiming at transforming economy of Chenchus would have to extend over a very long period during which systemic guidance and handholding are required, as Chenchus being used to hand-to-mouth existence of food gatherer and hunter

Appendix 1: SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF SAMPLE HOUSEHOLDS

All the households covered by the study belong to Chenchu community, a primitive tribal group in Andhra Pradesh. The basic unit of Chenchu society is the nuclear family, consisting of a man, his wife and their children. Table 2.1 shows the distribution of sample households across NSTR. As discussed in previous chapter, the study covered 200 households who were exposed to the project interventions (Experimental Group). In addition, the study also covered 100 households who were not exposed to the project interventions (Control Group). As can be seen from the table, in the case of experimental group almost equal number of households is drawn from core and buffer villages. At the same time, in the case of control group about two-thirds of households were drawn from core villages due to non-availability of untrained honey harvesters in buffer villages.

Table 2.1: Distribution of sample households

Division		Experimental	Control
Atmakur	Core	14	8
	Buffer	29	6
Markapur	Core	41	27
	Buffer	13	1
Achampet	Core	52	30
	Buffer	46	24
Nagarjuna Sagar	Core	0	0
	Buffer	5	4
Total	Core	107	65
	Buffer	93	35

The profile of sample households is analyzed here in terms of housing status, access to PDS and composition of household members by genders, age educational status and occupation status which will enable us to understand the socio economic background of those benefiting from the CHELE project.

House type and possession of ration cards: Regarding the housing status of sample households from experiment group, about 63% were residing in pakka houses and 5% in semi-pakka houses. While 30 % were residing in katcha houses. The worst scenario was observed in the case of 3% households who are residing temporary houses. The percentage of households residing in katcha houses is higher in core villages (39%) when compared with buffer villages (19%). As expected, the housing status in the buffer villages is better than core villages (Table 2.2). The housing status of the control group shows almost similar pattern. It may be, however, noted that the proportion of households residing in temporary houses are marginally higher in the control group when compared to experimental group.

Table 2.2: Access to housing and PDS (%)

Particulars	Experiment			Control		
	Core	Buffer	Total	Core	Buffer	Total
Housing (%)						
Katcha	39	19	30	35	23	31
Pucca	57	69	62	54	60	56
Semi-pucca	2	8	5	9	6	8
Temporary	2	4	3	2	11	5
Ration card (%)						
Anthyodaya Anna Yojana	89	86	87	81	71	77
White card	7	6	7	8	12	9
No ration card	4	8	6	9	17	12
Pink card	-	-	-	2	-	2
Pensions	10	10	20	4	2	6

With regard to access to ration card, it was found that 94 % of the sample members had accessed at BPL card which includes AAY card (88%). It is a matter of concern that 6% of the households had no access to PDS. The percentage of BPL card holders is lower in control group than experimental group; and the percentage of households without ration cards is higher for control group.

Gender and age group composition: The household composition indicates that there were more males (52%) than females (48 %) in the sample households – and slightly lower percentage of women in buffer villages. The average household size worked out to be 4.3, being higher in buffer villages. However, the sex ratio is higher in the control group compared to experiment group. In fact, there are more females than males in core villages with the sample households. Contrary to this, in buffer villages the sex ratio was found be least.

Table 2.3: Distribution of the sample households by sex (%)

Particulars	Experiment			Control		
	Core	Buffer	Total	Core	Buffer	Total
Gender composition (number)						
Male	228	207	435	130	80	210
Female	213	188	401	137	61	198
Average HH size	4.12	4.24	4.31	4.1	4.0	4.0
Sex ratio	934	908	921	1005	762	943

The age composition of the sample household members indicates that at the aggregate level children (below five years) constituted about 15 % of the household members, while the aged (above 60 years) accounted for just one percent, being slightly higher in buffer villages when compared to the core villages. This clearly shows that life expectancy is much lower than state average for tribal groups. Almost similar pattern is noticed in the case of control group.

Table 2.4: Distribution of household members by age (%)

Age group	Experimental			Control		
	Core	Buffer	Total	Core	Buffer	Total
0- 5	14	16	15	13	10	13
6-10	15	17	16	17	18	17
11-20	22	19	20	20	18	19
21-30	21	23	22	26	28	27
31-40	17	16	16	15	16	15
41-50	8	6	7	7	10	8
51-60	3	2	3	1	1	1
60 +	1	2	1	0	1	0
	100	100	100	100	100	100

Educational Level: The education level of the sample households indicates that the proportion of illiterates was very high. Among the literate their education levels could termed low, as most of them did not cross high school. The study also reveals that the attainment of literacy levels between the age group of 6-14 years is significant. Of the 194 members in this group only 34 are illiterate and non-school going (14.91 per cent). Further it is observed that Tribal Ashram schools have contributed a lot in attaining literacy levels among Chenchus.

Marriage: The Chenchus

Table 2.5: Distribution of household members by education level (%)

Particulars	Experiment			Control		
	Core	Buffer	Total	Core	Buffer	Total
Education Profile (%)						
Illiterate	38	36	35	42	46	44
Primary	49	46	49	42	45	43
Upper primary	9	7	9	9	4	7
High school	4	8	6	6	4	5
Pre University	0	3	1	1	0	1
Degree	0	0	0	0	1	0
Education of 6-14 age group	93	99	96	83	88	85
Illiterate	7	1	8	11	5	16
Literate	92	124	216	55	38	93

Experimental Group

Occupation profile: Chenchus, being traditionally food gatherers, of late pursuing more than one economic activity. The working status household members' from experimental group shows that NTFP collection is the single largest occupation in which 31.7 % of members were engaged, the percentage being higher in core villages. The next important occupation is agriculture, which accounted for 11.0 % of the members, followed by non-agriculture labour (9%) and agriculture labour ((4.7%). There were a few salaried employees in the sample households, but mostly in low-paid occupations. While 1% of members cannot work, 0.5 % was engaged in household work. Students constituted 28.7 % of the members while 10.6 % were under aged to go to school.

Even in the case of control group NTFP collection emerges as a single largest occupation. In this group, non-Agriculture labour occupied second position followed by agriculture labour and agriculture. Thus the profile of the sample households indicates that buffer villages appear to be better placed in terms of percentage households living in pakka houses, etc.

Table 2.6: **Distribution of household members by working status (%)**

Particulars	Experiment			Control		
	Core	Buffer	Total	Core	Buffer	Total
Occupation Profile (%)						
Agriculture labour	4.1	5.3	4.7	6.8	14	10
Agriculture	7.7	14.7	11.0	6	12	8.1
Can not work	0.9	1.5	1.2	1.9	1.4	1.7
Children below 5 years	10.9	10.4	10.6	11.7	4.9	9.3
House wife	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.8	2.1	0.5
Non-agriculture labour	8.6	9.3	9.0	9	13.4	10.5
NTFP collection	37.9	24.7	31.7	33.5	31.8	29.4
Salaried	1.8	0.3	1.1	3.4	1.4	2.7
self employment	2.0	1.0	1.6	1	0	0.2
Studies	25.5	32.3	28.7	26.7	28.9	27.5
Social security programmes (%)						
Pensions	10	10	20	4	2	6

Access to social security programmes: It may be noted that 10% of members in experimental group and 6% in control group have accessed the social security programmes from government. The reason for very less proportion of households accessing pensions is that there are not many people in the age group above 65 years (which is eligibility condition for accessing old age pensions).

APPENDIX 2: FUNCTIONING OF STITCHING CENTRE WITHIN SUPPORT SERVICE CENTRE

Under CHELE project, Support Service Centres (SSCs) were established at Dornala (July 3, 2009) and Achampet (March 10, 2008) by CHRD and CONARE respectively. The centres are located in one of residential quarters of Forest Divisional Office in Dornala and Achampet. The Forest Department has provided space on free of cost at the request of CPF. In both the places, the centre started stitching units. To this end, a group was formed¹⁵ by organising five women members from Chenchu community. At least 50% of the group members are literate – two in Dornala and three in Achampet. Thus groups in both the places have opened a bank account. One member has dropped out from each group. The member in Dornala has left the group as she got married and moved to her in-laws village. Whereas, the member in Achampet (Ms. U. Anjali) left the group, after undergoing 75 days of training, since she got employment as cook in AP Residential School in her own village (Banala) - she says it is more remunerative and secure.

Table 1: Achievements of SSC

Particulars	Dornala	Achampet
No. of group members	5	5
No. of members who left the group	1	1
No. of days of training	60	60
No. of additional days of training	18	15
Infrastructure provided	Two stitching machines Other tools (plastic stool, scales, tapes, drilling machine, etc) Cloth material	Two stitching machines Other tools (plastic stool, tapes, drilling machine, etc) Cloth material
Wok completed by group	24 dresses fitted with helmet 50 gloves, Repaired 5 dresses 9 dresses without helmet fitting.	30 dresses with helmet fitting 60 dresses without helmet fitting.
Income earned	Rs.2250 per member for two months – amount is not received yet.	Rs.11875 for the period of 18 months (July 2008-October 2009). Of which each member received only Rs.4375 so far

¹⁵ The group in Dornala was formed by mobilising SHG members from this location. On the other hand, the groups in Achampet was formed by drawing SHG members from Banala, which is located 14 Kms from the centre.

The group members are trained on designing and stitching of sting protection dress of dress. For this purpose a tutor was arranged in both the places¹⁶. Although it was proposed to train members for 60 days, the number of days members trained was 90 days in Dornala and 78 days in Achampet. The reason for extending training period in Dornala was to provide skills on stitching of coats, dresses (Punjabi), blouses, etc. On the other hand, the extension of training period became necessary due to change of tutor and learning gap thereof.

Each centre was provided with infrastructure and material related to stitching sting protection dress - two stitching machines, scissors, scales, tapes, registers, cloth material, etc. However, the centre in Achampet did not receive scales; the members were reported of facing problems in designing dress, as a result. The discussion with the members revealed that there is no effort to link the centre with related government programmes.

The primary activity of the centre is stitching and repair of sting protection dress for honey harvesters. In addition, the centre premises are used for monthly review meetings of CBOs, partner NGO and CPF, training of master trainers and dialogue meetings with GCC, ITDA and FD. The centre is also used for storing kits.

Current arrangement within the group is that two members stitch dresses, while other two cut cloth material; and they exchange roles alternative day. The group members say that they do not get repair work (dress and gloves) because the honey harvesters themselves will repair their dresses. The material cost per dress is (including helmet) is roughly Rs.1250. The project purchased dress from the group @1750/ per dress. The work done by groups so far in both places is as follows:

- The group in Dornala had stitched 15 dresses during training period. After training, the group stitched 20 sting protection dresses (helmet fitting is also part of the dress stitching) and, have undertaken repair of 5 dresses and 50 gloves.
- The group in Achampet had stitched five dresses during training period. After training, the group stitched and distributed 30 sting protection dresses with helmet fitting (the work of helmet fitting is outsourced to outsiders @350 per dress). The group has also stitched another 60 dresses and is about to outsource work related to helmet fitting.

Income earned: The group members in Dornala received stipend @ Rs.80 per day during the training period. (Each member received Rs.2400 as stipend per month.) They contributed Rs.300 per month to group savings. In addition, each member will earn @ Rs.1125 per month for the work done since the completion of training (i.e., for two months), if their payment is settled. (The groups are yet to receive payment for work they have done.). It was found that the trainer and the group members were quite active.

¹⁶ The trainer was given honorarium of Rs.3000 per month.

On the other hand, the members in Achampet received stipend @ Rs.70 per day (and Rs.2100 per month). And it was decided to pay Rs.500 per dress. In fact, the group members received amount for stitching a dress even during training period. In addition, each member is eligible to get Rs.11875 towards service rendered for 18 months (July 2008-October 2009). Thus, on an average each member has earned Rs. 660 per month. So far each member received Rs.4375. The balance amount will be paid once the dresses are distributed by the project.

Institutional arrangements: The centre was managed under the overall guidance of partner NGO – CHRD and Conare. All the running costs of the centre are met by the project. The partner organisations supplies dress material to group (by using the project funds) and pays stitching charges to members (@Rs.500 per dress). It distributes the dresses after fixing helmet (charges paid is Rs.200) to honey harvesters in the project villages.

Sustainability: The group in Dornala wanted to improve their income by taking up stitching and marketing items like petty coats and blouses, besides sting protection dresses. They are exploring option of supplying school uniforms (of AP Residential). They were of the view that they need two more machines (one machine for each member) once they get above work. What is also required is to train and provide additional skills.

The earning of the members in Achampet is not encouraging. However, CPF is extending similar methods of Sustainable practices to honey harvesters in Nabarangpur district, hence it is likely that Stitching units at Dornala and Achampet get orders from Orissa for stitching 300 dresses. This is likely to improve the group earning.

Constraints: The group members in Dornala have been facing problem as there is no electric connection. There is pressure from husbands in the case of a couple members to discontinue from the activity.

The members in Achampet reported the following problems: (i) members have stopped coming to the centre in the last one and half months as there is no dress material; (ii) they did not receive payment in the last four months for the dresses completely stitched as well as partially stitched; and (iii) not able to meet travel cost from Banala to centre, which is about 20 per day. As a result, the members have started participating in wage labour including EGS. The members wanted payment to be made at least once a month.

Suggestions

The group in Dornala wanted support till it reaches a stage of sustainability. It was felt that an exclusive staff member is required to oversee operations of stitching centre including proper material supply and marketing. Other needs expressed by members include training on blouses, other dress products and embroidery work, financial and marketing support and payment of wages at least once in a month.