

# WESWA Trust Annual Report for 2010-2011

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## **Forward by WESWA Managing Trustee L. Rajesh Kanna**

Honorable Executive Members,

I take great pleasure in presenting the 2010-2011 Annual Report of the WESWA Trust, which gives a brief account of the major activities carried out during this period. WESWA has successfully completed fifteen years in its long service mission.

While undertaking many tasks, many challenges and hardships confronted us. Yet WESWA has faced them all boldly and continued its service. Our thanks go out to the support of our friends, partners and well-wishers. While thanking them all, I take much pleasure in presenting this annual report of our activities for the 2010-2011 before this honorable Executive Committee of WESWA for its approval and further guidance.

Yours truly,

L. Rajesh Kanna  
WESWA Managing Trustee

The following shall be the first trustees of these presents:

No.	Name and Address	Qualification	Designation
1	L. Rajesh Kannan s/o A. Lakshmanan 1/28 Amman Kovil Street Viralimalai 621 316	B.Sc., B.Ed PGDCA	Managing Trustee
2	P. Renuga w/o Paramasivam (late) Kaniyalampatty Viralimalai 621 316 Pudukkottai	B.A.	Financial Trustee
3.	G. Sangeetha d/o R. Ganapathy North Street	MSc. B.Ed.	Executive Trustee

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	Thirugokarnam Pudukkottai 622 002		
4.	P. Amuthavalli w/o S. Palaniappan Amman Kovil Street Viralimalai 621 316 Pudukkottai	M.A.	Executive Trustee
5.	N. Geetha w/o Nallusamy (late) Amman Kovil Street Viralimalai 621 316 Pudukkottai	B.A.	Executive Trustee

- The above Management committee members are not related by each other.
- No remuneration and reimbursement has been given to any board members.
- No international travel has been taken place by any volunteers, staff or board member.

WESWA is accountable and transparent to the community served, the state the public, the donors the staff, the volunteers, and concerned others.

### ***Introduction***

**The Weaker Section Welfare Association (WESWA)** is a not-for-profit organization engaged in education, empowerment and promotion of rural and Dalit ('untouchable') communities for socio-economic development of the region, bridging the digital divide for their sustainable livelihood and social development. Our organization plays a catalytic role in enhancing the reach and results for economic and social benefits to rural and Dalit communities through collective actions and networks, mainly through increasing the viability component and through promoting sustainability. WESWA has successfully completed numerous projects for the poorest of the poor rural communities that benefit the villagers living in remote poor villages.

**Our Mission: To understand, synergize, promote, and educate to empower marginalized communities for their socio-economic development.**

Our activities are detailed under these program categories implemented during 2010-2011:

1. Tribal Development
2. Women's Development
3. Youth Motivation program
4. Stigma and Discrimination of HIV/AIDS victims
5. Organic Farming and Sustainable Agriculture
6. Naturopathy Health Awareness
7. Consumer Awareness and Rights
8. National Environment Awareness Campaign (NEAC)
9. Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) for Persons With Disabilities (PWDs)
10. Self-employment training
11. Child Health and Rights program
12. Residential School for dropouts
13. Capacity Building for panchayat women leaders
14. Reproductive and Child Health (RCH)
15. Resource Centre
16. Global Giving online fund raising
17. NGO networking

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## **1. Tribal Development**

Since WESWA has been targeting special groups of marginalized hill tribe communities in Pachamalai in Trichy District for tribal empowerment and provision of basic needs with the support of the Department of Social Forestry by providing hand pumps for drinking water, books and other educational materials for school students, with special attention to the development of tribal women's SHGs. WESWA organized a five day seminar on 'Basic Rights of Tribal Communities' for the village of Seekuparai to promote sustainable development for tribal women and their children. This year we plan to set up socio economic activities for women SHGs including seminars, advocacy and lobbying and campaign activities on organic farming and sustainable agriculture, legal rights, land issues and other issues of special concern to tribal communities.

## **2. Women's Development**

Women's status in Pudukkottai District remains extremely low. Poor Dalit women suffer social, economic, and political discrimination. As children they do not receive the same nourishment or medical treatment afforded to their brothers. Their education rarely goes beyond primary school. Their marriages are arranged for them and they have no choice about where they live or how many children to have. They do more work than their husbands but receive only half the pay. Men dominate even their participation in local politics. As Dalits, they are made to sit on the floor and not on chairs.

So far WESWA has promoted 153 SHGs among poor rural and Dalit women with 2,448 members in Viralimalai, Annavasal, Marungapuri Block areas. Regular training is imparted to build their skills in micro-finance, enterprises development, management, problem solving and collective development approaches. All 153 SHGs with 2,448 women have undergone training on savings and credit activities and awareness education seminar on leadership, accounting, legal aid, women's rights, and also the various issues and problems with the support from the Indian Overseas Bank, Viralimalai and Illuppur branches. Totally 50 trainings were conducted and also guidance for income generation activities for sustainable development.

These SHGs are platforms for other WESWA programs. The money is used to provide small loans for emergency purposes. As the group fund grows, women are lent amounts big enough to start small businesses, freeing them from irregular and poorly paid agricultural labour. Relative economic security greatly increases women's confidence in our experience, and this leads to a much greater involvement in village life.

## **3. Youth Motivation Programme**

WESWA organized a seminar September 17<sup>th</sup> to Sep 30<sup>th</sup> 2010 for International Youth Service Day for school students with social perspective promoting village development, with an awareness rally and a door to door campaign with handbills by the volunteers to promote the environment and ecology protection. From this program youths acquired new knowledge and ideas for village service activities.

After this project implementation the youths' involvement to solve local problems on community based activities. WESWA also promotes men and youth SHGs that motivate savings and credit management. Thirty men and youth SHGs formed in 20 villages involving 15 to 25 members in each group. In order to create awareness and opportunity for self-employment and other purpose among the rural people, youth leadership and awareness camps were conducted in which 200 youths participated.

## **4. Stigma and Discrimination of HIV/AIDS**

WESWA has an ongoing program for the prevention and intervention of HIV/AIDS for the past seven years among various stakeholders in Viralimalai, Annavasal Blocks of Pudukkottai District. Over the last three years we have worked to counter the denial, stigma, and discrimination of HIV/AIDS victims, and created an enabling environment for HIV-positive persons with the support of the Department of Health Services. Thirty villages have been selected for this project with the main target

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groups being village volunteers, youths leaders and members, SHG leaders and members, community and religious leaders and families of HIV/AIDS-affected persons, and general public also.

During this reporting period, 95 positive persons were identified, of whom 20 persons died. The surviving 75 persons are getting the counseling. Peer educators and supportive groups were formed and motivated for the support of HIV/AIDS-positive persons. These educators reached different sections of the rural population through a number of HIV/AIDS awareness programs, with distribution of materials and cultural programs. To study the project, focus group discussions were held among selected persons from peer health educators, outreach workers and barbers; these focus group discussions revealed that the program has been effective.

## ***5. Organic Farming & Sustainable Agriculture***

WESWA has trained and qualified experienced staffs through the Low External Input and Sustainable Agriculture (LWISA) Network of Trichy for the successful implementation of organic farming. SCORE is an active member from the last five years and encourages farmers to engage in organic agriculture and sustainable development activities.

Ten rural villages and four tribal villages were selected for this project implementation. Seven orientation trainings were conducted for farmers on organic agriculture, soil erosion, land degradation, ground water level, seed collection, compost making, and usage of sustainable agriculture. Thirty farmers' cooperatives were formed for 500 small and marginal farmers involving and getting benefit that improves the agriculture. The kitchen garden and rainwater harvesting system were included in this program. Our volunteers planted 500 tree seedlings with the support of Tamilnadu Afforestation Program (TAP) of the District Social Forestry office in Pudukkottai.

## ***6. Naturopathy Health Awareness***

WESWA also organized a naturopathy health education and awareness program among the general public and SHG women in Viralimalai. We successfully organized six programs in various villages with the support of the National Institute of Naturopathy, Pune (Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Department of AYUSH, Govt. of India).

The content of the seminar included naturopathy and yoga, sustainable and natural food items, avoidance of poisonous foods and fast foods, problem of women health and hygiene, etc. A qualified naturopathy health science doctor with good experience and service from the Sudhakar Natural Cure and Research Center & Hospital, Salem lectured at the seminar. The many participants who attended from different villages acquired useful knowledge to improve daily life in their villages.

## ***7. Consumer Awareness of Rights***

Rural consumers are easily exploited by marketing people with sub-standard products, under-weighted products, expired products, etc. This exploitation is also found in agricultural commodities and medicines. In order to alert rural people to these dangers, consumer awareness meetings are regularly conducted in the villages, particularly among SHG women, youths and general public. In this reporting year, 50 SHG's were given training on consumer awareness, lectures on standards, scales, pricing and consumer rights. 25 seminars were arranged for rural women on subjects such as consumer rights. Consumer councils were formed at Viralur and Velur areas. Nearly 250 enrolled themselves as members in consumer forum and continue to derive benefits. IEC materials were provided to all participants and to the general public.

## ***8. National environment awareness campaign (NEAC)***

WESWA has been conducting its environmental awareness campaign continuously since 1998 with the support of the Ministry of Environment & Forestry, Government of India through CPR Foundation of Chennai and Regional Resource Agency PEACE Trust of Dindigul. This year's theme was solid waste management, including waste recycling process, medical waste management, vermin compost making, kitchen gardening, etc.

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Totally 250 participants attended this program including SHG women, youth, school students and farmers from 12 villages in Viralimalai Block area. Awareness rallies, tree planting, and door to door steps were also conducted. IEC materials were distributed included messages on sustainable livelihood and natural resource management, ecology protection and environment development, etc.

## ***9. Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) for Persons With Disabilities (PWDs)***

Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) service to Persons With Disabilities (PWDs) is one of our important new programs with support from the Tamil Nadu Voluntary Health Association (TNVHA). SCORE is a district facilitation center for disabilities registered with Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI), Govt. of India.

We conducted a three day orientation training for NGO staff and child care workers about 'Early Intervention of Disability' including their rights, government schemes, and public cooperation etc. Five staff members of WESWA underwent a special training on disability at the WESWA head office. This training was given in five sessions for a total of ten days. This was the preparatory training to undertake the CBR activities in a professional way.

The trained staff persons were first inducted to conduct a census survey in Viralimalai block to identify and list the persons with disabilities. After identification, they prepared a fact sheet and case studies about each disabled person. Thus a basic data sheet was prepared and documented for the forthcoming rehabilitation services.

## ***10. Women's Self-Employment Training***

WESWA conducted self-employment trainings for poor and Scheduled Caste women in tailoring, greeting card making, embroidering and modern dress making. This year 90 girls from Viralimalai Block were trained in tailoring through a six month course.

After completion of the training the girl graduates can earn at least Rs.900/- per month. 25 girls were trained in two batches for three months on greeting card making and embroidering. In total 200 women and girls were trained and over 60% of the trained women are now producing greeting cards for sale at a good price. In the future WESWA plans to open a sales shop in Viralimalai main bazaar with the support of Indian Overseas Bank of Viralimalai.

## ***11. Child Health and Rights Program***

WESWA gives the utmost importance to health and education activities for children and mothers to prevent and cure childhood diseases. Among the target group in general, mother and child care has the most importance, for they are the most vulnerable section of society. Pre-natal care for mother and child is given by qualified doctors and nurses who are in charge of this program.

Women were given counseling for family planning awareness and the imperative of breast feeding, personal and environment hygiene, healthy habits, preparation of simple and nutritious food availing local grains. Health awareness meetings were regularly conducted for the women SHGs meetings in all ten target villages.

WESWA initiated a new concept of 'Neighborhood Children's Parliament' with the guidance of NCN Network of Pudukkottai. SCORE helped to facilitate the creation of twenty 'parliaments' formed at the village level for children's clubs. The 'ministers' elected with the active involvement of all members included a prime minister, a speaker, an education minister, a health minister, a sanitation minister, an environment minister and a public affairs minister. The elected ministers will be working to solve the village problems and issues with members' support.

## ***12. Residential School for Dropouts***

WESWA conducts a comprehensive Residential School for dropouts and non-school going children from the villages of Annavasal Block with the support of the Government of India.

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Altogether fifty children have studied in this school and as a result 40 children have enrolled in formal schools. The age group 11-14 imparts skills in developing to 3<sup>rd</sup> standard to 8<sup>th</sup> standard levels of formal school system. The education materials, uniform dresses and skill training were provided by the government. The educational tour and talent oriented training games were arranged for better education needs, build character and self-esteem, and strengthen their ability, through skills and mental discipline, to succeed in life.

### **13. Capacity Building and Legal Aid for Panchayat Women Leaders**

WESWA has organized capacity building for elected women panchayat women representatives in Pudukkottai District rural and Dalit areas with the motto “We govern” for self-administration and social justice. Totally 1,500 women representatives participated including 50 participants from WESWA. The Central Government Minister and Parliament Standing Committee member Hon’ble Mr. Sudharsana Nachiappan M.P., judges, women activists, Pudukkottai District Panchayat President Muthusamy, NGO leaders and state level speakers delivered special addresses. The empowerment of women leaders is the process by which women gain power and control over decisions and resources that determine the quality of their lives. It recognizes women not as victims or beneficiaries, but as key actors for development.

### **14. Reproductive and Child Health (RCH)**

Our organization has identified nine villages for our Mother and Child Health care program. We have organized nine Health Awareness camps in the target villages covering 500 women. Pregnant women, mothers, and children benefited from these health camps. The SHG women and adolescent girls involved in this program are getting free medicines and resource materials. Their personal problems such as STD, HIV, STI, RTI and doubts are clarified by doctors and social workers. In addition, IEC materials and posters, pamphlets, handbills and stickers were distributed to villagers. And also we celebrated Breast Feeding Week on August 1<sup>st</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> 2010 at the District Health Office with training about ANC and PNC care, child health status, immunization, breast feeding and supplementary foods.

### **15. Resource Centre**

WESWA operates a Resource Center with the support of local companies in Viralimalai. This center is intended for poor and disadvantaged people for their rights and basic needs related resources. Farmers, students, and SHG women, and the general public benefit also. Various resources books, magazine, newsletters and government and private welfare schemes and so many resources with information’s have included WESWA have planned to set up Block Resource Centres in all villages once weekly with need based information for poor people.

### **16. Global Giving Online Fund Raising Project**

WESWA participated in an online fund raising program through Global Giving’s Open Challenge Our four projects are on display on Global Giving’s Open Challenge fund raising pages ([www.globalgiving.org](http://www.globalgiving.org)). These projects are:

1. ID No: 4285 Healthy noon meals and training for 3,000 pregnant women in selected villages.
2. ID No: 5051 Livelihood training for untouchable girls in India
3. ID No. 6323 Care free from starvation nutrition for 100 needy kids in India
4. ID No: 7019 Literacy and Health course for 40 untouchable women

Total amount raised: US\$ 830

### **17. NGO Networking**

WESWA promotes the networking of 25 local NGOs in five districts of Tamil Nadu under the name of ‘HEAL Network’ to undertake and coordinate HIV/AIDS prevention and control activities. The heads of NGOs in the network met three times this past year to discuss the current status of HIV/AIDS and health related issues and problems in concern NGO’s working areas.

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SCORE is an active member of the following network bodies:

- Rehabilitation Council of India
- Global Giving Open Challenge
- UN-Habitat Youth Fund
- District Social Forestry committee member
- District Task Force
- Committee member for PNDDT Act.
- District FNGO for Reproductive and Child Health (RCH)
- Agriculture Man Ecology (AME) of Bangalore.

WESWA works in coordination with District Nehru Yuvakendra, Pudukkottai District and District Rural Development Agency of Pudukkottai District for various awareness and development programs.

## ***Summary and Appreciation***

WESWA has proudly completed its 15<sup>th</sup> year of its long service mission with the substantial financial support of social organizations, government departments, and individual donors. WESWA also secured valuable moral and physical support from its well-wishers, friends and board members when it faced problems.

I take this opportunity to thank all our donors and Mr. Patrick Harrigan of USA, social worker and advisor, and the Global Giving team, who stood on our side in all our activities and service mission. Last but not least, I extend my heartfelt thanks to WESWA's office bearers and committed staff for their cooperation and dedication to achieve our objectives in this reporting year. While thanking all of you, I sincerely seek your support and cooperation also in the coming year to fruitfully continue our service and to undertake more and more serviced programs.