

## **Agricultural Development & Training Society (ADATS) Bagepalli 561 207 3<sup>rd</sup> Effects Monitoring Report**

*Period: 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006  
4<sup>th</sup> Consortium Project Numbers: Icco IN 094091 & EZE 20040209*

### **INTRODUCTION**

This 3<sup>rd</sup> Effects Monitoring Report is structured a little different from the previous one. One year back, we gave a detailed Baseline on each Sub Effects indicator, which described the history and recent past. We then relied upon secondary data to bring out the Results or Effects.

This time around, the emphasis was on Primary Data collected from 71 Cluster Review meetings. These meetings were held once a week, every week, in each Cluster, for 6 weeks. Elected functionaries and active Member Coolies discussed each Sub Effects indicator and gave their frank and honest appraisal supported with a wealth of detail which the respective Area Field Worker, Mahila Trainer and Case Worker captured.

These 426 review days, conducted in April and May 2006, were a thrilling experience. All other work literally came to a stop for one day a week, every week, in 71 Clusters.

A comparison of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Effects Monitoring Reports reveals that Member Coolie families have taken comments and conclusions made a year back very seriously. We had, for example, then said that *ad hoc* efforts to place youth in jobs had to become more structured. This has happened with a vengeance.

The same is true with regard to increasing CSU membership without compromising on ideology, improving the performance of Coolie Sangha women elected to the Gram Panchayats, consciously encouraging inter-caste marriages, stopping under-age marriage, increasing the number of girls in college, encouraging more SC/ST and Muslim youth to take up jobs in the cities.

Coolie Sangha response to comments made with regard to the CCFs have been mixed. While lender confidence has certainly improved since the village CCFs meticulously followed the recovery plan we have suggested, the Overdue problem still looms large. It keeps the overall quality of the loan portfolio low.

Not all 71 Clusters discussed each and every one of the 37 Sub Effects indicators. In fact, some of the indicators were not discussed at all. We either left them out completely, or provided some secondary data from our computerised database.

The whole of June was spent in recording these discussions into our database. This was a laborious process. Still more arduous was to collate the Cluster Results into Area, Taluk and Super Results. But the final output is a pure pleasure, even if we say so ourselves!

We have deliberately not cluttered this 3<sup>rd</sup> Effects Monitoring Report with too many comments or interpretations. Instead, we have allowed our primary stakeholders' statements to speak for themselves.

In September 2006, we added the Activities to this report.<sup>1</sup> This was a 1 week exercise involving only ADATS Staff.

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<sup>1</sup> Though the format of an Effects Report places Activities before Effects, it is always advisable to list Activity Processes after the Results have been enumerated.

- Each of the 16 Area Teams (comprising a Field Worker, Mahila Trainer and Case Worker) listed, month-wise, what exactly they did in order to achieve the Results they have obtained – the “What did you do?” step.
- Then they collated these activities Area-wise and totalled them.
- They were then cross-checked with secondary data in our daily monitoring database.
- As a final step, Activities were attributed to the different LogFrame Outputs or Objectives.<sup>2</sup>

## A. EXPERIENCE OF UPPER CASTE MANIPULATION ENDED

### ACTIVITIES

As mentioned in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Effects Monitoring Report (April 2005), the ADATS/Coolie Sangha LogFrame does not list any direct Activities to achieve this Objective. Instead, the ending of upper caste manipulation is a cumulative Result of all other project activities.

#### A.1. Cases of Harijan School Cooks called to cook at village functions

### EFFECTS

70 Cluster Review meetings counted a total of 506 mid-day meal cooks in government schools that their children attended. They made detailed inventories of the caste of each mid-day cook. 113 of them are Harijans, 20 are Bovis and 88 are Valmiki (44% SC/ST). 5 of them are Muslims.

Except for 8 Harijana cooks, the remaining 105 had cooked at various village functions and even in upper caste Hindu temples, Gram Sabha meetings, Stree Shakti meetings, private weddings, engagements, and even a new temple dedication ceremony. People from all castes attended these functions and ate together. Caste is gradually taking a back seat in most villages since a lot of young boys and girls are going to college and moving about in towns.

Many Cluster Review meetings expressed that they had dreamt of a casteless society and said that their fond wish had come true. Inter-eating at marriages, receptions, festivals and other functions has become a common practice in all but a very few villages. Braham priests solemnise Harijana weddings and then eat with all other castes, sitting in the same row. But when a Harijana woman does not cook well, no one will call her. Everyone felt that was only fair.

Many of these Harijana women can cook really well. One of them cooks so well that she was called to cook at a private function of an upper caste *Ryot* house. This is not so common. Most people who inter-eat at functions still practice caste in their homes.

This is the next agenda that the Coolie Sangha wants to adopt –encourage inter-eating in private homes. Though inter-eating at common functions has become so common, it is not so in individual homes. Perhaps due to older people who still followed caste and untouchability. This can no longer be tolerated.

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<sup>2</sup> We have already mentioned, in our previous Effects Monitoring Report, that Activities should not be attributed to Sub Effects or Results Indicators. Attaching Activities to Sub Effects Indicators would amount to “fidgeting” with the Indicator or “managing the Indicator”

But this rosy picture should not hide the 8 cases where Harijana cooks were never called to cook at any function due to strong caste feelings. Getting them appointed as mid-day meal cooks was in itself a long drawn out struggle for a handful of CSUs.

In 2 villages, there was severe opposition to the appointment of a Harijan as a mid-day meal cooks. Upper caste parents did not allow their children to eat food with other children in school. When government officials tried to compromise, CSU Members refused to budge and the Harijana cooks were appointed, as per law. Now all the children are eating together.

One Cluster Review meeting reported an odd case. Once, when a Valmiki woman (ST) prepared food, an upper caste man refused to eat and threw it back at her. Everyone abused him and sent him out. Others sat and ate with relish.

One of the cooks who is never called is too old, is not clean and, moreover, doesn't cook too well. Another because she doesn't cook too well. The remaining 6 because there are strong caste feelings in their villages.

Everyone gave credit to the Mahila Meetings for having brought about this sea change. Some said inter-eating during DLDP works, for the past 20 years, was a major contributor.

Only 1 Cluster Review meeting realised, during this Effects Monitoring exercise, that they have done nothing proactive to get Harijana mid-day meal cooks appointed. They expressed shame and remorse.

“We have seen these women cook in the school. They are economical and efficient and also cook well. When we used to call professional cooks, we had problems of theft and pilferage. Now caste is not so important when we call someone to cook during ceremonies. During these ceremonies, we have seen people of different castes and religions eating together. Our children come home and tell us how well they cook. When all our children are eating at schools, how are we different? For us, caste and cooking are not related. If they can cook tasty food, we call them!”

Some Clusters have no Harijana cooks at all. This is not because of caste feelings. In one case, 2 applications from Harijana women were rejected for want of minimum qualification and proper certificates. In another case, a non-CSU Gorika woman who is a physically challenged got the support of all CSU Members to be appointed as school mid-day meal cook.

But still, CSU Members and elected functionaries from Clusters that did not have Harijana cooks realised that appointing them was actually a political statement which sent out a strong message of integration. They said they were foolish to look at only the practicality of matters.

In Clusters very close to *Moffusil* towns, there are other factors besides caste. Efficiency and tasty cooking are important for being called to cook at public functions. This job has been highly professionalized and many full-time cooks are available in these towns. Even in towns, for example, one such professional cook from Gudibanda Town is a Harijan and she is called to cook at domestic ceremonies of even non-CSU persons.

## A.2. Cases of inter-caste marriages

### EFFECTS

826 wedding took place this last one year. 425 were simple marriages performed in village temples, at mass marriage functions, and in front of the brides' houses. 1 of them was a registered marriage. The rest were performed according to rituals, in function halls. The average

cost of a simple wedding is Rs 1 K, as opposed to traditional ones where minimum expense is Rs 10 to 15 K.

52 of these simple weddings were inter-caste marriages, some between Harijana grooms and upper caste brides. 69 Cluster Review meetings who monitored this Sub Effects indicator have made detailed caste-wise lists of each of these couples. 6 were love marriages within the same caste – i.e. the boys and girls themselves found their partners. Seeing this new trend in the Coolie Sangha, even a non-CSU Harijana girl married a Bhajantri boy.

Sometimes, the couple don't seek their parents' consent and stay away from the village for 6 months. CSU Members convince their parents and bring them back to the village. In actual reality, most CSU parents have no objections. But the young people are too scared.

Only one Cluster has discussed the matter and decided that all the marriages should be registered, irrespective of whether they are choice or arranged marriages, inter-caste or within the same caste.

Often, there was stiff resistance to these inter-caste marriages from casteist villagers who had no business to interfere in the first place, especially if it was a lower caste groom "polluting" an upper caste bride.

2 Cluster Review meetings said they had been focusing more on simple marriages till now, and hadn't actively indicated the Coolie Sangha's preference towards inter-caste marriages. This could be the reason why many more young people who fell in love with partners from other castes did not go ahead to tie the knot.

All the Cluster Review meetings said that they saw families in crisis because of big and expensive weddings. They had either sold or mortgaged their lands. They lived in debts. They also expressed that once families got used to the idea of simple weddings, registered under law, they could invest on their daughters, send them to college, buy them a sewing machine, or help them put up a petty shop in town, or whatever. These investments would give them a lifelong income. Mental barriers that investing on girls was "a waste of time and money" would disappear.

Most Cluster Review meetings made a physical count of youth of marriage age. Of the 1,043 youth of marriage age, 563 are boys and 480 are girls. They understand that simple and inter-caste marriages are becoming more common. Parents have no objections if their children marry according to their own choice. They say they open to this culture, and also realize that these couples will, in any case, get the support of the Coolie Sangha – so why oppose and create an unnecessary scene?

A few said they understood that they couldn't stop young people from falling in love and getting married according their wishes. But they still hesitated.

In theory, parents have no objection to inter-caste marriage. But when it actually occurs in their homes, there will naturally be some pain and resistance. Since this is a new phenomenon in the villages and they traditionally haven't had inter-caste marriages, they just don't know how they would react when it actually happens to them! But there is always the Coolie Sangha which seems to have thought it through.

In any case, most Coolie youth are interested in studying and getting jobs rather than getting married. Adults welcome this. They want their girls and boys to have a stable income. They realize that girls need to be educated and not married off at an early age.

### A.3. Cases of Coolie Youth entering skill-based jobs

#### EFFECTS

By the reckoning of 70 Cluster Review meetings 1,582 schooled Coolie Youth should have gone outside for jobs this year, but only 1,028 did. 37 came back home due to various problems like not being able to adjust to city life, etc.

Only 3 Cluster Review meetings reported that all the schooled and skill trained youth from their villages had gone for jobs.

They are working in various factories, courier companies, STD booths, as salespersons, shop assistants, drivers, security guards, carpenters, photographers, parking attendants, etc. A small number are also running their own petty businesses in the city!

The one who went this past year earn an average of Rs 2.5 to 3 K a month and most of them send home Rs 800 to Rs 1 K every month to their families. The ones who went in previous years earn much more. Their families live better in the villages, have financial security, and most of them have made investments like CB cows, post office savings, etc. In dire emergencies, youth in jobs can take salary advances of Rs 1.5 to 2 K and send home some money.

Some families said they were not interested in the money. They wanted their youth to first get some discipline in their lives. Before going for jobs to the city, these youth did not have any identity or respect in their villages. Now that all of them have settled well in their lives, they have a good image and respect in their villages. They act as a link between the city and the villages. They are a great help to those who need to go to city hospitals, government offices, etc. Seeing their lifestyle, very many more youth are ready to go for jobs to the city and are waiting for the right opportunity.

Some Coolie youth get ideas to start their own business units in the village. One of them, after working for 4 years in a garments factory, got together with 6 others, bought 8 machines and they have started their own business.

Coolie youth know they cannot depend on agriculture alone and survive in the villages. Some parents admitted that they had made a big mistake in not sending their children for various skill training. They are now regretting and suffering.

Coolie youth who have not gone for jobs themselves discussed this Sub Effects separately and said:

“We did not realise the gravity of education when we were in school. We either dropped out or failed and discontinued to work as Coolies. Now, after seeing those who are financially doing well, we feel that we too should have done better at school and learnt some skill. They get more respect than us. The way they speak, dress and discuss issues is so different. They are so civilized. In their homes, their families are eating well and doing things that we can't.”

### A.4. Cases of single Coolie women and Coolie widows setting up petty businesses

#### EFFECTS

70 Cluster Review meetings made lists of 706 single women in their villages. About half of them are widows and the other half deserted by their husbands. 486 of them are engaged in economic activities. The remaining do Coolie work and barely survive, just like any other woman without male support in any other village.

These 486 women own CB cows, rear sheep, run petty shops, tea stalls, and chit funds, are Anganwadi workers, mid-day meal cooks, tailors, trade in flowers, vegetables, dried fish, cloth, chicken and broomsticks, sell milk, work in flour mills, cultivate their own fields, etc. with capitals of Rs 2 K to Rs 5 K each. Many of them do head-basket trading from village to village with a daily turnover of Rs 500. Some of them have taken loans of Rs 2 K to 10 K from the SC/ST Corporation, Stree Shakti groups and State Bank of India.

Most of these women are confident of running their businesses profitably. Some do fail in their ventures for reasons such as poor maintenance, not covering their cattle under insurance, etc. In spite of these failures, all of them have become role models for Coolie women.

Earlier, these “fallen” women never used to be called for any village functions or marriages. Now they get respect and recognition, and are treated as human beings. A handful of single women went off with boyfriends to start life outside the villages. The Cluster Review meetings presume that they are doing well, but don’t really know.

All these women have an identity and self respect in their villages. While taking group decisions in the villages they are also involved. Their opinions are heard and importance is given. They have proved that without the help of a man, they can lead a happy life.

Many said they were better off now than when their husbands were alive or living with them. They used to ill treat them and waste their moneys on drinking, gambling and womanising. Most of the time, it was the women who supported their families.

Coolie women say they belong to a group which is pro-woman. They are confident of starting ventures and even borrowing moneys. When they have to stay back overnight in some other villages or town, they are sure that their children will be looked after by their Mahila Meetings. Not only that, they can go to any village CSU and stay in any Member Coolie's house without any expenses.

Seeing these women, many non-CSU single and even married women have also started doing various small businesses in the weekly market (santha) with capitals of about Rs 2 K each. Even those who have husbands have started their own businesses where there is no male involvement. They are ardent supporters of the Coolie Sangha, though not members.

At first, when these women went out of their villages on business, they were called names and ill treated. Slowly when they started doing well and making profits, their status improved. Their children’s schooling was never interrupted. These same women started getting respect in the villages.

“Earlier, we have experienced dirty looks from local men, who also called us names. Since we started to live our lives on our own, we have gained self-respect and dignity. We are not sacred of society and know that our Mahila Meeting will support us to live with self respect. We do not have to fear anyone.”

They are not looked upon as village whores and there is no finger pointing at them. They have proved that a woman can live without a man. Coolie women have faith and confidence in all and every matter. They are capable of facing various day-to-day problems. They command respect in village society. They do not depend on others.

“We are living like men in the society.”

## B. STATE WELFARE RESOURCES ACCESSED

### ACTIVITIES

#### CD&S Surveys

Customer Demands & Satisfaction surveys were conducted in 387 villages where Member Coolie families recorded their pressing needs. Another 62 villages were not interested. 45 of these were new village CSUs where the concept had not yet been internalized. In a handful of villages, Member Coolie families refused to place their “demands” before the meetings because they felt that earlier CD&S agendas had been a sham with hardly any of their demands being acted upon. In a couple of cases it was because Cluster Meets rejected “over ambitious” and unrealistic demands made by Member Coolie families.

On the whole, we can conclude that the CD&S surveys cannot be made/implemented when there is negligence on the part of elected functionaries.

A total of 5,401 demands were placed before the CSU Representatives and Cluster Secretaries. They liaised with government offices to meet these demands for Old Aged Pensions, Ration Cards, Government houses, free electricity, widow pensions, land title, etc.

ADATS Field Staff monitored their efforts in the fortnightly Executive Committee Meetings. These were genuine *monitoring* meetings where Cluster Secretaries and Women’s Committee Members swapped and shared information on *how* they went about getting problems solved. Together, they made larger strategies for protests like strikes, printing pamphlets and disseminating information, etc. ADATS Field Staff used these forums to gather data and entered progress into our computerised database once every fortnight.

At the end of the Monsoon Agenda 2005, 46% of Member Coolie demands could be met. Success rates were highest in Old Aged, Health and Civic Benefits issues. They were lowest in giving Safety Net and Agriculture.

**Table 1 : CD&S – Monsoon Agenda 2005**

Action Points	Demands	Success
<b>Agriculture</b> Insure crops, plant saplings, insure cattle, get subsidies from the government, develop kitchen gardens, get/follow up on temporary title deeds, send for training, etc.	514	88 17%
<b>Child Care</b> Arrange for jobs, get hostel seats, bus passes, change bus timings, readmit dropped out child, arrange special tuitions, solve government school teacher problem, contest school betterment committee elections, arrange for skill training, computer training, get disability pension, start an Anganwadi, repair Balakendras, care for orphans, blind children, etc.	458	181 40%
<b>Business Opportunities</b> Start rearing cattle with their own funds or CCF loan, start/expand a petty trade, clear CCF overdue, apply for a bank loan, etc.	282	119 42%
<b>Justice</b> Solve land disputes within/outside the family, solve cases outside Courts	226	56 25%

and police stations, assist in civil and criminal cases, release mortgaged lands, etc.			
<b>Old Age</b>	524	278	53%
Make/follow up Old Aged Pensions, give share of land to parents, arrange extra OAP from Sangha Funds, get Senior Citizen bus passes, etc.			
<b>Health</b>	1,025	554	54%
Arrange children's Health Camps, send women for cancer check-up and treatment, family planning operations, eye camps, get a Doctor to staff a government PHC, arrange for VHW training, etc.			
<b>Women in Family</b>	355	138	39%
Register land as joint property, get a woman share in her parent's property, stop domestic violence, counsel husband-wife problems, solve petty credit needs, arrange widow pensions, build bathrooms, help a widow remarry, help a young girl marry, assist in simple marriages, etc.			
<b>Civic Benefits</b>	1,951	1063	54%
Make/follow up on house application, repair houses, get free electrifications, roads and drains, water taps, street lights, clean drains, apply for ration cards, start a milk collection society, contest local body elections, etc.			
<b>Safety Net</b>	66	2	3%
Arrange for temporary shelter, give safety net from Sangha Funds, get driving license, etc.			
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,401</b>	<b>2,480</b>	<b>46%</b>

### Issues & Struggles

17 village level issues arose from foul play in local body elections to village cooperative societies. 37 larger skirmishes occurred during the Taluk Panchayat elections. 44 cases of irregularity in government school functioning were tackled by the CSU and Mahila Meetings. 27 Cluster demonstrations were organised to improve government health delivery system. This reporting period also witnessed 57 land issues against local *Ryots*.

23 Member Coolies were assisted with legal aid when false criminal cases were foisted against them. These resulted in counter-cases also and all are pending with various police stations. The village CSUs and Mahila Meetings tackled 3 cases of sexual assault – fortunately, none of them were actions of caste oppression *per se*.

9 larger Taluk level strikes/protests were organised this past one year.

### **B.1. Trend and details of rent-free welfare resources acquisition, Rupee Terms, Taluk-wise**

#### **EFFECTS**

69 Cluster Review meetings made lists of 1,036 government works worth Rs 265.81 lakhs that were taken up in the past one year in villages with functioning CSUS. These included drains, mini water tanks, cement roads, pitching works, street lights, compound walls for Anganwadi centres, government school kitchens, school toilets, free houses for the poor, toilets,



bore wells, Bhagya Jyothi lighting, rainwater harvesting structures, and social benefits like Old Aged Pensions and Ration Cards.

All of them asserted that they were able to access resources from the Gram and Taluk Panchayats quite easily since they had CSU Members elected to these local bodies. They were also able to ensure that these works are executed without much corruption.

They felt it a big achievement that they could control their electoral allies even after victory. This is because all Coolie Sangha functionaries are aware of different schemes and budget details. Also because the village CSUs are prepared to fight for their rights.

“Previously, this was not possible and no one was answerable. Now we come to know of the works even before others. Even the MLAs and government officials don’t know about the EGA as much as we do! We don't have to believe the touts any more. We also inform non-CSU people about government schemes so that their works can also be done on time, without corruption.”

But they were not able to stop corruption at higher levels, because of a total lack of information on schemes controlled by the Zilla Panchayat and the MLA.

Most Clusters is said that corruption was controlled at the GP level, but not at the TP and ZP levels. In Clusters where the Gram Panchayats are controlled by coolie members, corruption is reduced to almost zero.

Even in Clusters where CSU Members have won no seats in the Gram Panchayat, attempts at corruption are stopped because of the local strength of the Coolie Sangha. But in some Clusters where local body elections were contested and lost, Member Coolies face political opposition – their claims are deliberately and wantonly opposed.

Many Cluster Review meetings said had total control over the Gram Panchayat and they could access plenty of resources from the government with zero corruption.

Others gave a mixed picture. They said that Ration Cards, Old Age Pensions and other social benefits reached only CSU Members without bribes. Non-CSU persons still had to pay kick-backs. They felt they have not really stopped corruption.

Control over local bodies was not the only way that corruption was fought. CSU Members fought with the Junior Engineers and forced them to be accountable. They said they could not just sit back and expect local bodies to work well just because they had won the elections – they still had to fight for their rights.

Clusters that did not take the Panchayat Raj elections seriously have deep regrets. They are now paying the price for their political apathy.

## C. FAMILY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT DELIVERED BY COOLIE WOMEN

### ACTIVITIES

#### Mahila Meetings

Mahila Meetings continued to be held with a high regularity on a fixed evening every week in each and every functioning village CSU. There were a whole lot of procedural requirements of various programme activities like the CCFs, DLDP, Children’s Programme, Health Programme, etc. that they had exclusive prerogative over.

As a result, the conducting of weekly Mahila Meetings were somewhat “forced” on Coolie women. We were afraid that this would lead to perfunctory or token meetings. This did not

happen. Instead, the Mahila Meetings continued to be political, ensuring not only that Coolie women's rights were projected and protected, but ensuring that all other aspects of gender justice were taken kept in the forefront in anything and everything that the village CSUs did. Mahila Meetings continued to do an excellent job in monitoring the (largely self-financed) children's schooling and reproductive health activities of the Coolie Sangha.

#### VHW Training

12 training sessions were held in the Taluk headquarters for 198 newer Village Health Workers. These sessions were attended by 183 women Cheque Signatories also. As a result, both got exposed to health as well as financial management systems.

#### Children in School

18,526 children from 435 village CSUs were supported to attend government schools in their villages in the academic year 2005-06. This activity was managed by as many CSU appointed and paid-for *Balakendra* Teachers. 65% of school-age children (in the 5-16 age group) from Normal Member families were in school. Girls constituted 47% of the total High School children, registering an impressive rise of 3% over what was reported last year.

**Table 2 : Gender Disaggregated Details of Children in School (as on 31 March 2006)**

	Children	Boys	Girls	SC/ST	Middle	Upper
Primary School (1 to 5)	7,268	39%	50%	50%	59%	24%
Middle School (6 to 7)	3,912	21%	51%	49%	59%	24%
High School (8 to 10)	5,794	31%	55%	45%	56%	27%
PUC	994	5%	62%	38%	51%	36%
Degree	437	2%	71%	29%	55%	33%
Diploma/Other	93	1%	83%	17%	44%	34%
NFE	11	0%	64%	36%	55%	27%
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,526</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>26%</b>

75% of Marks Cards and Promotion lists of all these children were entered into our computerized database in April 2005. Another 24% were entered in May, since school teachers from outside the region had gone on leave without issuing marks cards. A very small number were delayed till June – i.e. after the new school year started!

Less than 25% of College students' marks cards could be entered in May 2005. This was because the colleges were situated far and *Balakendra* Teachers and Mahila Meetings found it difficult to pressurise them to give the records on time. Another 60% were entered in June and the remaining 15% in July 2005. As a result, there was some delay in the village CSUs extending scholarship benefits to Coolie youth in college. Classes started in mid June, but benefits reached these youth only in August 2005.

The next task was to get Primary School children free benefits from the government school Teachers. Though there was a delay of several months, the Mahila Meetings made sure that every single benefit actually reached the eligible children.

Then it was needed to make scholarship lists for children in different classes. Amounts varied according to the classes they were studying in. 20% of the eligible 13,100 children would get benefits from Save the Children, New Zealand. Scholarships worth Rs 5.3 million had to be given out from the Sangha Funds of each village CSU for the remaining 10,475 children.

Lists were made, each case further scrutinised by the Mahila Meeting, and children were brought in batches by their *Balakendra* Teachers and Village Health Workers to receive the

scholarship amounts and immediately purchase books, bags, geometry boxes, clothes, etc. at the respective Taluk headquarters. Though they were very strict that no Fathers should come anywhere near the Taluk headquarters on those children's distribution days, a few drunkards did land up and there were a few untoward scenes when children refused to part with their moneys...

**Table 3 : Scholarships given out from Sangha Funds in the 2005-06 school year**

	Number of Children		Amount
Eligible for Scholarship	13,100	100%	6,618,300
Less: Children in SCNZ Programme ( <i>i.e. not from Sangha Funds</i> )	2,625	20%	1,344,150
Therefore can give	10,475	80%	5,274,150
Cash Scholarships given out from Sangha Funds	8,955	85%	4,458,400
Kept pending for various reasons	1,520	15%	815,750

The Coolie Sangha's child related activities did not stop with the distribution of benefits. Balakendra Teachers held the every evening games and classes in their respective villages, held sports and other competitions, and themselves attended 2 days of residential training every single month. The Mahila Meetings kept a strict vigil on the functioning of government schools, including secret attendance registers on government school Teachers (to punish the teacher truants!), became members of the School Betterment Committees and made sure that provisions for the mid-day meal scheme were utilised properly. Children themselves attended the every evening *Balakendras*, special coaching classes, etc.

Please see our special Effects Monitoring Report on this activity at <http://www.adats.com/documents/book8/0808/>

#### Like Skill Training

To date, a total of 764 Coolie youth have attended a total of 28 Life Skill training camps, staffed by 2 full time ADATS Staff. Of them, 740 youth have successfully completed their month long programme.

Of them, 219 were trained during this reporting period through 8 batches. Not all of them fared equally well. 69% of them were ranked as good and proficient using a wide variety of parameters including IT and email skills, English, maths, science, sports and games, song and dance, team spirit, gender sensitivity and personal hygiene.

The performance of the remaining 33% was just moderate and 9% were low.

**Table 4 : Life Skill Training Batches (April 2005 to March 2006)**

Batch No:	Start Date	End Date	Completed	Low	Moderate	Good	Proficient
18	05-Apr-05	06-May-05	35	29%	14%	57%	
19	12-Jun-05	13-Jul-05	28	18%	36%	46%	
20	11-Aug-05	15-Sep-05	31	3%	39%	55%	3%
21	28-Sep-05	29-Oct-05	18	6%	33%	61%	
22	10-Nov-05	12-Dec-05	19		21%	79%	
23	27-Dec-05	29-Jan-06	20		30%	70%	
24	01-Feb-06	02-Mar-06	35		17%	83%	
25	20-Mar-06	22-Apr-06	33	6%	70%	21%	3%
<b>Total</b>			<b>219</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>1%</b>

### Health

8 cancer detection camps were conducted at various ADATS campuses in the Taluk head-quarters. Besides these, ADATS Mahila Trainers took Coolie women to the regular private health camps at Kaiwara. A total of 739 Coolie women attended these camps during this reporting period. 480 of them received simple medication and 138 had to be operated upon for various reproductive ailments, including prolapsed uterus.

121 women (16%) were false alarms – Village Health Workers had brought them for check-ups. This number (of false alarms) is steadily declining with VHWs receiving more training and experience.

11 cases of HIV/AIDS were also identified during these camps. All of them received medical care, but 3 of them died.

9 eye camps were organised for the elderly. 689 senior citizens attended from the village CSUs. 100 of them were operated upon for cataract and the remaining received simple treatment.

451 Coolie mothers underwent family planning operations after 1 or 2 children.

### Biogas Units

A totally new activity was undertaken in the second half of this reporting period. ADATS was able to project the functional unity in the village CSUs and the implementation capacity of the Coolie Sangha to attract Carbon Resources to the tune of ₹ 1.1 million to build 5,500 biogas units for our Member Coolie families.

As on 31 March 2006, a total of 2,166 were under construction and 127 fully commissioned. We had spent a total of Rs 6.3 million to date.

**Table 5 : Timeline Progress on Biogas Unit construction (as on 31 March 2006)**

	Oct '05	Nov '05	Dec '05	Jan '06	Feb '06	Mar '06	Total
Marked	4	54	196	537	1,265	110	<b>2,166</b>
Excavated		16	143	327	1,089	215	<b>1,790</b>
Commissioned				10	58	59	<b>127</b>
CER Agreements						116	<b>116</b>
Spent (Rupees)			745,652	1,661,485	2,278,791	1,594,652	<b>6,280,580</b>

### C.1. Proportion of cases of intervention in domestic violence successfully resolved by Mahila Meeting

#### EFFECTS

69 Cluster Review meetings documented 262 cases of domestic violence that occurred this year. 238 were small matters and have been solved by the respective Mahila Meetings. 24 were more serious problems, tackled by Cluster Meets. Half of these were solved and 6 been ended in Police Stations and Court cases/divorces. Another 6 complicated cases are still under discussion.

The police did not automatically register cases, investigate and punish the erring men. It requires a lot of struggle, including strikes, sit-ins etc. to convince the police to “interfere in private matters” and take action against the “poor men”.

All these disturbances arose from wife beatings, attempted second marriages, affairs with other women, etc. All the cases of wife beating were severely dealt with and stopped forthwith. Second marriages went up to the Cluster level for solution. Affairs were difficult to stop, but fear of the Mahila Meetings is a powerful force to prevent blatant injustice to first wives.

Many were cases of wife beating by drunkard husbands who demanded that their wives support their drinking habits. Some were petty quarrels and misunderstandings that went out of hand. Sometimes it was in-laws who wanted to dispose off a dead husband's property without giving the widow her share. One was because, after 3 childbirths, the woman got operated without her husband's permission.

Property disputes were more difficult to solve. Sometimes the Mahila Meetings deliberately forced the issue to police and Courts of law. This was enough for the man to give up. But in one tragic case, the husband took poison and killed himself after the Mahila Meeting hauled him to the police station.

The Cluster Review meetings have recorded each case in tragic detail, and how it was resolved. Coolie women said they had no personal secrets. Everything is kept in the open in the Mahila Meetings. So why not in the Cluster Review meetings also?

Their men have realised this and know that, if worse comes to worse, the Mahila Meetings will take them to Court. Everything is discussed in the Mahila Meetings and women learn a lot from one another. Women are cheque signatories, Balakendra Teacher and VHWs who practically control everyday working of the village CSU. These are not just namesake positions. They are sources of real power.

In issues like when women lose their properties, the CSUs are a powerful force in preventing injustice. They also have ADATS for extra support whenever it is needed. Most men realise that they are only wasting money by drinking excessively. They realise that broken marriages are not good standards to set for their children.

The reasons for failures were classical cases of drinking and wife beating almost every single night. In one such case, the frustrated CSU finally sent him out of the village.

"In our Cluster, we cannot claim that domestic violence has completely stopped. Without our knowledge, many cases are going on. Many are temporarily solved for a few days in their houses itself. Only the serious cases are exposed. Nevertheless, petty case of drinking and wife beating occur practically every night. Even after Mahila Meeting warnings, raising of hands and women has not stopped."

"Because of constant pressure from Mahila Meetings, men are scared to abuse their wives. But there will always be small disturbances."

The Mahila Meeting appears to be strong in most Clusters, even if cases of domestic violence do still occur:

Very many non-CSU women approached the Mahila Meetings to settle domestic violence. In fact, their numbers are more than CSU women because, in the Coolie Sangha, women now dare to question their husbands in all and every matter. This has happened because of continuous discussion on domestic violence in the Mahila Meetings.

All 69 Cluster Review meetings were unanimous in their opinion that domestic violence was not just conflicts between husbands and wives. Sending a woman or young girl out of the

house during her menstrual periods and keeping her separate is also a mental abuse. Puberty ceremonies are not acceptable.

“We advise even non-CSU Member not to do these things. To the best of our knowing, 23 girls reached the age of puberty this year. None of them were kept outside their home and no ceremonies were performed. When our relatives from other villages come to invite us for such ceremonies, we refuse to accept and advise them too not to perform these rites. Seeing our girls who are going to school, others have also started to follow us.”

## C.2. Trends in Coolie Women's Health

### EFFECTS

Not a single one of the 69 Cluster Review meetings actually discussed trends.

Instead they made detailed lists of 797 women who had reported reproductive ailments during the past one year, how many of them were taken to the ADATS health camps, referred to major hospitals for surgery, treated with simple medication, etc.

Then they recorded 276 childbirths that had taken place this past one year – 168 conducted by their VHWs in their respective villages, and the rest taken to various government hospitals, once again by their VHWs who felt that they couldn't handle suspected complications.

Then they listed 1,782 young mothers who underwent family planning operations this past year, after having just one or two children.

164 elderly Coolies were sent by the Mahila Meetings to various eye camps. Some of them were treated primarily with tablets, but the vast majority were operated for cataract and provided with spectacles.

Only after this laborious listing did the Cluster Review meetings speak of Results. It was clear that Coolie women wanted to use these numbers as a SMART indicator of Results.

“Through regular pre-natal checkups we know when a pregnant women needs to be hospitalised. This is why mother and child are healthy and there has not been a single case of mother or child dying this year.”

“In our Cluster there are only a few serious cases of reproductive health ailments, because women are free to talk about their bodily problems. They tell the ADATS Mahila Trainer in the initial stage itself, before complications set in.”

“With the regularity of the Mahila Meeting, we are able to keep our women healthy and strong. Overall, general health of our women has improved. We are aware of our body problems as we can openly talk about it in the Mahila Meetings and can get proper advice and treatment in time. We feel healthy now.”

Cases such as prolapsed uterus and breast cancer are now discussed openly in the Mahila Meeting. Prevention of death, in their minds, seems to be the biggest preoccupation:

“Earlier, women were shy to talk about their body parts and reproductive ailments. This has changed completely. We speak very openly in the Mahila Meetings. We are not afraid that we will die unattended.”

“Not talking about these illness have killed so many of us women. Now we have a group who not only listens to our woes, but also try and solve them.”

“Our husbands and other family members were not interested in our health. We too never told them of our illnesses. Our husbands started having affairs with other women when we fell sick. When camps were held at ADATS campus, we used to discuss with one another how each of us got cured with minimum medication. This increased our confidence to confide in the Mahila Meeting and in getting treated.”

“We have been neglecting our bodies, pretending to be able to silently suffer. We got married early, had many children and, most importantly, our mothers did not teach us to be clean! We realise that we need to train our daughter in these matters and not be shy about it. At least we are not dying with these sicknesses as we used to earlier. We have our VHWs to take us to camps and hospitals whenever required.”

“Death has been controlled.”

Coolie women are amazed at the level of ignorance that once prevailed, just a few years back:

“All of us go through reproductive problems some time or the other. When ADATS started holding camps, we were still not open to go have a check up out of fear. We knew we should get treatment, but dared not. We asked some private and government women doctors what were the causes for these ailments. But no one gave us proper answers.”

“We used to lose our lives as we were scared to go to any doctor. We are now aware that these are common ailments that all women go through at some point of time in their lives. We also did not have the means to get ourselves checked. We are assured of a healthy life because of the Mahila Meeting and the benefits we get as CSU Members.”

But sometimes, the Mahila Meeting might have failed in identifying health problems when women keep their ailments secret. To the best of their knowledge, such situations have arisen in just 2 Clusters, where the Mahila Meetings feel terribly guilty and responsible:

“Another 2 have silently suffered and reported only just recently. Even last week, they came for the health camp and ran away before they could be checked up. This is our failure.”

“We have a woman who was adamant and refused to take treatment for her first degree cervical cancer when it was detected 2 years ago. She wanted to go the temple, go for native treatment, etc. instead of taking proper treatment. Now she has only a few days left. We feel sorry for the family, but we have learnt a good lesson...”

One Cluster Review meeting said they want more training for their VHWs:

“We feel that our VHWs are not trained enough. We need ADATS to conduct training as early as possible.”

### C.3. Trends in Index of Children's Health

#### EFFECTS

Not a single one of the 49 Cluster Review meetings that discussed this Sub Effects indicator directly spoke about trends.

Once again they listed out, in mind-boggling detail, what they did in terms of checking up all children in the *Balakendras*, treating so-and-so with simple medication, taking so-and-so to the hospital, etc. Even towards the end of these laborious listings, they did not really go into the Effects or Results in quite the same way as they did with women's health.

But they spoke of their trust in the Mahila Meetings to take care of their children's health; that as long as the CSUs run a children's programme (the reference here was not to an exter-

nally funded activity, but to their own self-financed one) nothing bad would happen to their children.

“Though there are lot of government schemes with regard to children's health, they are not being implemented. In the *Balakendra*, children are de-wormed, given oral supplements and treated immediately. This has reduced our expenses to a great extent. School attendance has improved. More importantly, our girls have better health now.”

“We never used to take our children to hospitals even when they fell ill for various reasons. But now, every year, even if they are healthy, they are given a general health check up. If there is an epidemic, our VHWs and Case Workers get a doctor to our Cluster and make sure that all are treated. Now we have started attending to our children's health needs immediately. Our attitude towards them has changed. Our faith in the Mahila Meetings has increased. We know we can depend on our group.”

“Of course some children get high fever and other problems. But when treated immediately, they get well very fast.”

#### C.4. Trends in School Enrolment

##### EFFECTS

##### [Secondary Data](#)

**Table 6 : 11 Year History of the self-financed Child Support Activity (March 2006)**

	Children		Boys		Girls		SC/ST	Middle	Upper
Supported by Coolie Sangha	41,794	100%	22,174	100%	19,620	100%	100%	100%	100%
Left after Primary School	7,583	18%	3,686	17%	3,897	20%	19%	21%	14%
Left after Middle School	3,440	8%	1,830	8%	1,610	8%	8%	9%	7%
Left after Completing School	5,517	13%	3,149	14%	2,368	12%	13%	14%	13%
Left after College	1,936	5%	1,295	6%	641	3%	4%	4%	6%
Still in School	23,318	56%	12,214	55%	11,104	57%	55%	53%	59%
<b>Failed to Fully Support</b>	11,023	26%	5,516	25%	5,507	28%	27%	30%	22%
<b>Success</b>	30,771	74%	16,658	75%	14,113	72%	73%	70%	78%

Secondary data, with irrefutable MoVs in the form of marks cards, promotion lists and study certificates collected every year, for the past 20 years, shows that 93% of School Age Children (i.e. 5-16 age group) from Normal families in functioning CSUs are in school. The figure for retention (not just enrolment) from 1st Std. through 10th Std. and college is 74%.

##### [Primary Data](#)

Perhaps because this has become such a standard operation practice (SOP) in the village CSUs and Mahila Meetings, the 54 Cluster Review meetings did not really discuss trends. Our Field Staff were also not able to persuade them to reflect on how much easier or tougher it had gotten, over the years, to keep children in school.



Instead, they listed children who had dropped out and almost discontinued. They described, how the Mahila Meetings re-admitted 98% of them back into school.

Some parents acted really irresponsible and started sending their children to graze cattle. Some mothers actually kept their daughters back to do house work! *Balakendra* Teachers reported these cases and the Mahila Meetings took serious action against these parents and re-admitted all the children to school.

In one case, a child was readmitted after his father's death, when his mother went off with her boyfriend and his older sister got married. The Mahila Meeting collected food grains, clothes and money and persuaded his aged grandmother to look after the boy. Now he is going to school and his grandmother is happy.

Many said that attempted dropouts stem from neglecting parents who face financial, migration, or health problems. But such cases rarely occur because parents are very scared to withdraw children from school. They know they will get badly insulted in the Mahila Meeting if they dare.

“Drop out is not a problem in our villages. If many are dropping out, then we can't have control over the situation. But when 1 or 2 happen, it becomes so obvious, everyone is pointing it out. It becomes an embarrassing situation for the child and for the family.”

“We parents fear that the Mahila Meeting will punish us. Yet we are happy that if some thing happens to us, there is the Coolie Sangha and Mahila Meeting to look after our children.”

“There are lots of government schemes to retain children at school, but other children are dropping out and there is no one to ask them. It becomes their private matter, unlike in our case where the Mahila Meeting will rebuke us very badly.”

And generally parents are very grateful towards Mahila Meetings for their commitment with children:

“Parents know that if something happens to them, their children will be taken care of.”

### C.5. No. of early marriages in each Taluk Programme

#### EFFECTS

67 Cluster Review meetings listed every single marriage that took place in the past one year. All but one of the 228 brides who got married from different villages this year. 227 of them were well over the legal age of marriage.

Only 1 under-age marriage was conducted this year. This matter was discussed in the Mahila Meeting and they suspended the family's membership in the CSU. There were 11 more attempts at early marriages which were stopped, 1 in a non-CSU family.

Many were emphatic that there was not a single case of under-age marriage in the past one year. So much so that some of them said they felt this Sub Effects indicator was quite redundant.

The 67 Cluster Review meetings then made inventories of girls who were over 18 years of age and what they were doing. 481 girls who are over 18 years of age and still unmarried. 259 of them are in college, 84 are working in various jobs and factories, and the remaining are at home.

Coolie youth, both girls and boys, have themselves decided that they have to either be well educated or hold onto a job before getting married. They don't want to depend on anyone.

During discussions, some girls who were present accused a few mothers of having got their daughters married off at a young age, many years back. Now these girls have been deserted and are totally dependant on their parents.

The credit for stopping early marriage should go to the Mahila Meetings who pressurise that laws of the land be implemented. Left to themselves, government officials, politicians and the police would take a very lenient view of this heinous crime.

The Mahila Meetings go so far are to supports girls whose parents force them to get married even after they have crossed 18 years of age! Even in arranged marriages, they insist on the bride's consent. Puberty ceremonies, which publicly announce that a girl has matured and is now marriageable, have completely stopped. They are no more considered civilized.

### C.6. Optimum Performance of Mahila Meeting women elected to and serving Gram Panchayats in each Taluk

#### EFFECTS

65 Cluster Review meetings counted 168 women GP Members in various Gram Panchayats covering villages with functioning CSUs. 50 of these women are CSU Members. Of these only 2 are dummy candidates with their husbands taking all the decisions.

By and large, the non-CSU women GP Members are influenced by their husbands, while those from the CSUs are independent. They discuss with their Mahila Meetings, get works sanctioned and oversee implementation.

48 CSU women who have won seats in Gram Panchayats take their own decisions, sometimes even independent of other male GP members. They also inform voters on what happens in the GP meetings through their Mahila Meetings. Since Mahila Meetings are active on a day-to-day basis, these GP members get to know lots of information like the EGA and other programmes from their Mahila Meetings. This has improved their bargaining capacity within the GP.

“When men tried to influence their decisions, they were side tracked and the women made their own beneficiary lists. We have noticed that men have started respecting women's decisions.”

Only 17 non-CSU women GP members are good. They too attend all the meetings and take independent decisions. The remaining 101 non-CSU women, without a single exception, are dummy candidate and their husbands look after everything.

“They are like dolls in a show case. Some of them attend Gram Sabha meetings, but are quite useless.”

So too are 2 women from the CSUs. Another one started off to be like that, but quickly changed because of Mahila Meeting pressure. Sometimes, when the CSU and Mahila Meetings select uneducated women who are too old, just because they have a winning chance, they pay a heavy price.

It is not easy for women Gram Panchayat women to function independently. They are under terrific pressure from male dominated local politics.

“The Vice President of our GP, who is from our CSU, did not attend the first Gram Sabha meeting. The other 2 women GP Members insulted her and asked her to stand firm.”

In Gram Panchayats where CSU candidates have not won any seats, most of women GP members are dummy candidates, and decisions are made by other male GP members or by their husbands. Authority is totally usurped by men, even if it is vested in token in the names of women.

“We are dissatisfied and ashamed but, because of our electoral failure, there is nothing we can do.”

## D. SOCIAL CHANGE ACTIVELY INTRODUCED BY COOLIE YOUTH

### D.1. Increasing trend in Proportion of Coolie Sangha Functionaries who received Training in the Youth Forum

#### EFFECTS

63 Cluster Review meetings listed youth who were Coolie Sangha functionaries. The numbers have definitely increased since last year.

They pointed out the difference between these young leaders and the older ones. Earlier, aged CSU functionaries behaved like leaders. Proper information was not given to ordinary Members. Now, many Coolie youth go to colleges, towns and cities, and bring new ideas into the CSUs. They inform everyone about government works sanctioned from by the Gram and Taluk Panchayat. When management systems were introduced in the Coolie Sangha, it was easier for young functionaries to understand the concepts and implement them.

Coolie youth are articulate and can face any political leader or *Ryot*. They support the village CSUs during issues and struggles with all the information that is required to argue well. Not just the boys, even Coolie girls participate effectively.

Some of these Coolie youth have got elected to the Gram Panchayats. They are more active than other GP members who sometimes look up to them for guidance. They have become role models.

But only if the village CSUs are strong will Coolie youth continue to be loyal and hardworking towards their people and ideology. Otherwise they too can get corrupted by the mainstream. It is the CSU and Mahila Meetings that should prevent them from acting like heroes.

“Our youth have to be constantly reminded that being in power can change a lot things for ordinary people.”

Because they are young, they still believe in struggle to resolve problems, as opposed to compromise. They manage election campaign and get CSU candidates elected to the Gram Panchayats. They put a stop to rigging in Taluk and Zilla Panchayat elections. College going youth who are not elected functionaries in the Coolie Sangha, do a lot of liaison work for their Members in the Taluk offices.

### D.2. Decreasing trend in average age of Coolie Sangha Members

#### RESULTS

Only 9 Cluster Review meetings discussed this Sub Effects indicator. Of 1,156 Member families in their village CSUs, 333 are represented by family members who are less than 35-40 years old.

Some took 40 years as the cut-off age to define youth, some others fixed 35 years. But all of them said they have a strong inclination to gradually change the entire membership to younger family members.

### D.3. Equal Proportion of female functionaries among all Youth Forum trainees who become functionaries in Coolie Sangha

#### RESULTS

47 Cluster Review meetings discussed this Sub Effects indicator. But they did not talk about elected functionaries at all. Instead, just as they did last year, they provided sex break-up of youth in college, those who attended residential training, and those went to the city for jobs.

Of 777 Coolie youth attending college, 310 (40%) are girls. Of 281 who underwent IT and Life Skills training, 138 were girls (49%). Of 228 Coolie youth who went to the city for jobs this year, 99 are girls (43%).

These figures show that while Coolie families do give a fair amount of importance to the education of girls and sending them to residential training programmes, there is still some reluctance about their daughters going to college and to the city for jobs.

Those parents who did send their girls to the city say, rather tongue in cheek, that they have more faith in their daughters than those who didn't. They knew their daughters wouldn't bring a bad name for them – perhaps the others were not so sure.

Some Cluster Review meets, however, stated that there is no sex discrimination. Some others are quite ambivalent. Functionaries stated that they wanted to fight sex discrimination, but the figures failed to show results.

Girls themselves don't want to either get married or sit at home anymore. If they are restricted, they will report to either the Mahila Meeting or the *Balakendra* Teacher and the family will be put to public shame.

“They are not in our ‘control’ any more” many parents said, but without any remorse, “They are going to colleges, out to town, and learning new things and getting new ideas.”

### D.4. Enhanced Self-Esteem of Coolie Youth

#### RESULTS

Only 22 Cluster Review meetings discussed this Sub Effects Indicator.

They said their youth had been exposed to various Life Skills like IT and other training imparted by ADATS. They also have vocational skills. They attend colleges. All of them have improved their conceptualisation skills. In the CSUs, young people are given important jobs like identifying candidates to stand for GP elections and canvassing for them. This has improved their self-esteem.

They are given chance to express new ideas in the CSU Meetings. This has made Coolie youth feels that they are “wanted” by the community.

“Girls who attend youth camps stay overnight with boys in villages and towns. How can this happen unless we have complete confidence in our girls? They attend residential camps that are a month long. Even coaching classes last for many weeks. They learn new ideas. All this training, plus our demonstrated confidence in them has boosted their self-esteem.”

The difference in the way Coolie youth behave, when compared to *Ryot* youth, even when on tours and picnics organised by schools and colleges is noticeable. They attend NSS camps and increase their ability to express themselves much better. *Balakendra* Teachers have influenced youth to different ideas, ways of talking and dressing. Coolie girls have started wearing trousers instead of skirts. Others too are being influenced by this change in attitude.

Other children who don't have these facilities are not able to participate well in competitions. Just studying is not enough, good socialisation practises are essential for a healthy development.

When youth mix and mingle so much, learn new things, they don't even behave like villagers anymore. They don't have caste feeling at all. Everyone play and eat together. Even their best friends belonging to other castes.

Earlier, when Coolie children played *kabaddi*, a rough-and-tough game, it was only for boys. – now there are mixed matches. Coolie girls are earning just like boys. They are going out of villages, making new friends and are speaking in English!

When we compare the present generation of Coolie youth with those who had somehow managed to finish 10th Std. before the ADATS programme started, we find that they are not as self-confident as the present day cohorts.

## E. DIVERSIFIED INCOME FLOWS ESTABLISHED

### E.1. No. of self-employment units set up by youth and investment per unit

#### EFFECTS

49 Cluster Review meetings identified 88 batches that have been set up by 325 youth in the past one year.

Being groups, rather than individuals, they say their bargaining power gets enhanced. They run a wide variety of businesses which include both, making as well as trading. They make bricks, run small stone quarries, stitch leaf plates, collect beedi leaves, etc. They also trade in bricks, leather, aluminium vessels, sheep, chicken and pigs. They buy and sell agricultural produce like maize, grapes and tamarind, and even sell popcorn in Kerala.

The working capital in each group varies from as little as Rs 5 K to a high of Rs 35 K. One group has a capital of Rs 50 K. These moneys have been borrowed from relatives, private money lenders and banks. Many groups have tried borrowing from their village CCFs but have not succeeded. This was because of low lender confidence in the Mahila Meetings, and also because their parents themselves are overdue.

These young people make an average profit of Rs 2 to 2.5 K per person per month. They are successfully self-employed. They understand business practices and have motivated other youth to form similar groups. They feel that there are a lot of opportunities in and around their villages and small *Moffusil* towns. According them, there is no need to migrate to cities for jobs. With the unity of a group, they can earn more in their villages than in cities. They can't afford to invest the entire capital needed for a venture to work properly, all by themselves. So when they start a joint business, all investing together, they have many advantages and can make profits.

Earlier these youth were totally dependent on their meagre land holdings. They realized that their lands could occupy them only for 6 months. They wanted to be productively occupied

the other 6 months. So they have diversified into small businesses which do not need huge capital. In time, they will definitely succeed in borrowing from their village CCFs.

These Coolie youth have obtained self-respect in their villages and are economically well settled. They are able to do technical things. Village CSUs feel that with the help of these cohorts of youth, they will be able to achieve many things political, social and economic.

## E.2. Increasing proportion of employed women in non-traditional employment

### EFFECTS

46 Cluster Review meetings identified 337 women in non-traditional employment. They cultivate their own lands, and make canals on the wetlands of *Ryots* (both occupations strictly forbidden for women). They work as masons and tailors. They make bricks and cut stones. They run silk businesses, flower, fruit and vegetable trade, petty shops, cycle repair shops and roadside eateries. They drive bullock carts, and one of them is employed as a police woman. 2 women are power tiller drivers and have their own mini tractors – they are defiant about Hindu culture and want to show that women can do anything they want. On an average, they earn Rs 2 K per month.

These women have improved their self-esteem and now make self decisions. They are the heads of their families. They are the decision takers in all and every matter. Money transaction has been done by these women only who take self decisions in family matters.

All 337 women have proved they can everything that a man can do. Seeing them other women are willing to do such type of works but, as yet, large numbers have not joined them. Even non-CSU women too are becoming bold.

## E.3. Increasing trend in proportions of SC/ST Youth (male & female) among employed youth

### EFFECTS

53 Cluster Review meets counted 645 youth went to Bangalore for jobs this year.<sup>3</sup> 260 of them are Harijans, 91 are Valmiki, 11 are Bovi, 1 is a Sugali, and 2 are Koracha (57% SC/ST). 44 are young Muslims. Only a few Cluster Review meetings have given the sex break-up of these youth, showing that 42% of jobbers from these castes/communities are girls. Only 1 Cluster reported that not a single Harijan had gone to the city for a job.

These youth, some of whom have proved they are better than youth in upper castes, are examples for other young people in villages. They have shown that SC/ST youth can also grab opportunities in cities. The Cluster Review meetings feel Harijans and other lower caste youth are competing equally with upper caste youth. Some of them have proved that they are better than upper caste youth.

Families of these youth have greatly benefited. They receive regular remittances and have respect in the village. They can face emergencies without borrowing. Girls in these families dress differently. They shun their traditional ways. Because they have some extra money, they are also able to help their relatives.

The lifestyle of the families of SC/ST and Muslim youth has changed. They keep their homes clean, paint their houses, etc. Seeing them, other SC/ST and Muslim youth, including girls, want to be employed.

<sup>3</sup> Please note that the total number of youth who went out is 1,028. Not all Cluster Review meetings monitored this Sub Effects indicator, and so a lesser number is presented here.

“We are committed to break out caste ascriptions and dependencies on upper castes.”

“Literacy rate among the lower caste people has increased. Since the government has introduced literacy programmes to improve backward classes, we can grab opportunities and get our children educated. This enables them to compete with upper caste in higher education and in getting jobs.”

Some Cluster Review meetings felt that they had not given enough opportunities to their girls. They were not being groomed to take up jobs. They need education and also independence. The girl child should never discontinue school.

Perhaps these youth could not have got jobs by themselves – they benefited from ADATS training and factory job placement programme. But this is just for now. Soon, with peer support, very many Coolie youth will go to the cities by themselves in the coming years.

#### E.4. 50% or more of CCF Loans utilized for trade & entrepreneurship

##### EFFECTS

The CCFs appear to have come out of the dumps, at least insofar as lender confidence is concerned.

- This the past year, 3,628 loans amounting to Rs 7.45 million by 193 village CSUs. *This alone indicates a healthy recovery since, in the preceding year, only 73 loans worth Rs 4.26 million were given out by 71 village CSUs for common works – i.e. not a single individual loan was given out to an individual Member Coolie family.*
- In this same past one year, 5,435 loan instalments amounting to Rs 6.78 million were repaid by as many borrowers to 313 village CCFs. *This is far less than the numbers for the preceding year which was one where a huge recovery drive for repayment of outstanding loans.*

**Table 7 : CCF Loans & Repayments in the past 2 years (as on 31 March 2006)**

Cumulative Period	Loans Given Out			Instalments Repaid		
	CSUs	Loans	Amount	CSUs	Repayments	Amount
This Reporting Period	193	3,628	7,450,554	313	5,435	6,782,192
Last Year	71	73	4,265,000	420	6,737	12,428,041

In the past one year, 3,628 loans worth Rs 7.45 million were given out for various purposes. Crop Loans topped the list in terms of moneys borrowed (98%) and also in terms of the number of loans (96%).

The drastic drop in amounts borrowed and number of loans for Trade & Entrepreneurship is, under the circumstances, a good thing.<sup>4</sup> When compared to the preceding year, lender and borrower confidence increased this past year.

<sup>4</sup> We explained in the previous report that though a lot of money was earlier lent for trade, this was done through a relatively small number of loans for collective purposes. Entire CSUs borrowed working capital to build government sanctioned group houses, undertake civil contract works, etc. So they don't count as Member Coolie families themselves indulging in alternate professions.

**Table 8 : Coolie Credit Fund Utilisation (April 2005 to March 2006)**

Loan Purpose	Amount borrowed		No of loans					
Crop Loan	7,323,544	(7,882,290)	98%	(63%)	3,595	(4,147)	99%	(96%)
Agriculture	0	(17,000)	0%	(0%)	0	(5)	0%	(0%)
Cattle Rearing	38,900	(103,050)	1%	(1%)	10	(37)	0%	(1%)
Trade & Entrepreneurship	80,100	(4,437,950)	1%	(36%)	21	(138)	1%	(3%)
Consumption & Others	8,000	(27,000)	0%	(0%)	2	(5)	0%	(0%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,450,544</b>	<b>(12,467,290)</b>	<b>100%</b>		<b>3,628</b>	<b>(4,332)</b>	<b>100%</b>	

(last year's figures in parenthesis)

This Sub Effects indicator was chosen to measure the extent to which Member Coolie families used their alternate credit structure to move away from agriculture and into petty enterprise.

This has definitely not happened these past 3 years.

### E.6. Average Repayment Rate by CCF borrowers exceeds 95%

#### EFFECTS

As explained in the previous Report, the village CCFs are a huge operation spread over 827 villages for the past 22 years. Performance figures and Repayment Rates will not change dramatically, unless there is long term and sustained fiscal improvement.

In spite of this, Repayment Rates show a slight climb of 0.35% in the past year, with the giving out of 3,628 loans worth Rs 7.45 million.

**Table 9 : CCF Performance (as on 31 March 2006)**

	1 Year back, on 31 March 2005	31 March 2006
Cumulative loans given	144,688,070	152,138,614
Rotation of Capital	2.42 times	2.51
Number of loans	51,964	55,592
Average borrowing	2,784	2,736
Repayment Rate (100 - OD + Bad / Cumulative)	87.98%	88.33%
Capital at Risk (Overdue / Capital)	29%	29%

But the quality of the loan portfolio calculation follows some very harsh and unsparing algorithms. There is absolutely no change in the overall figures in the past 1 year.

**Table 10 : Quality of Loan Portfolio (as on 31 March 2006)**

	Functioning Villages	Cancelled Village	Overall
<b>Exposed Portfolio Rate</b> (outstanding balance of contaminated loans / total outstanding; ideal = 15%)	51% (48% in March 2005)	60% (61% in March 2005)	56% (56% in March 2005)
<b>Delinquency Rate</b> (total overdue / total outstanding; ideal = 15%)	51% (48% in March 2005)	60% (61% in March 2005)	56% (56% in March 2005)
<b>Recovery Rate</b> (repayments made to date / repayments that had to be made to date)	91% (92% in March 2005)	82% (81% in March 2005)	87% (87% in March 2005)

(last year's figures in parenthesis)



The huge recovery drive conducted 2 years back seems to have had a greater effect on “punishing” Cancelled Members and dropped out CSUs, than on inculcating a fiscal discipline in Normal Members in functioning village CSUs.

**Table 11 : Overdue by Normal & Cancelled Members (as on 31 March 2005)**

	Overdue by Normal Members			Overdue by Cancelled Members		
384 Dropped CSUs (425 one year back)	-	-	-	3,835 (4,421)	9,990,043 (11,666,717)	56% (67%)
502 Functioning CSUs (434 one year back)	2,117 (1,433)	4,487,321 (2,834,870)	25% (16%)	1,430 (1,266)	3,276,184 (2,879,639)	18% (17%)

(last year's figures in parenthesis)

- The share of Overdue by Normal Members in functioning CSUs has risen from 16% to 25%. This is not just a percentage rise. Even their absolute numbers have increased in terms of number of defaulting families and also the amount of default.
- The Coolie Sangha has done far better with the “totally lost” cases (overdue by Cancelled Members in dropped-out CSUs) by reducing their share of Overdue from 67% to 56%, once again in absolute numbers too.
- One year back, we were over-pessimistic in presuming that 75% of the CCF Overdue will be “lost”. As on today, the figures show that this may happen only to 65% of the Overdue amount.
- Provided the Normal Member Families in functioning village CSUs repay their loans! This does not seem to be happening and the volume of CCF Overdue, as well as the pattern (i.e. how much, by whom, etc.) seems to remain the same.

**Table 12 : Extent of CCF Overdue (as on 31 March 2005)**

	Village CSUs	Members	Overdue Amount	
Zero CCF OD	273 (262)	0	0	0%
Less than Rs 10,000 OD	194 (194)	791 (884)	1,056,378 (1,108,653)	6% (6%)
Between Rs 10,001 and Rs 20,000 OD	124 (115)	1,100 (1,031)	1,891,392 (1,739,157)	11% (10%)
Between Rs 20,001 and Rs 40,000 OD	156 (160)	1,034 (2,048)	4,477,851 (4,528,301)	25% (26%)
More than Rs 40,000 OD	139 (128)	3,457 (3,157)	10,327,927 (10,005,215)	58% (58%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>886 (859)</b>	<b>7,382 (7,120)</b>	<b>17,753,548 (17,381,326)</b>	<b>100%</b>

(last year's figures in parenthesis)

This does raise the question as to whether Member Coolie families consider usury-free capital of their very own as an imperative for economic development. Or do they feel that they can bank upon mainstream finances? The questions raised a year back, are as valid today as they then were.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Please see the “Assumptions” in our 2<sup>nd</sup> Effects Monitoring Report

## E.7. Increase in numbers and average size of Mainstream Financial Resources

### EFFECTS

50 Cluster Review meetings recorded a total of 560 people who had borrowed a total of Rs 54.38 lakhs<sup>6</sup> from Canara Bank, Grameen Bank, the government run Primary Land Development Bank, and the SC/ST Corporation. Very few gave sex disaggregated figures, but all of them listed a whole lot of women who availed loans from the Stree Shakti groups that they controlled in their respective villages. Chintamani Taluk gave a caste break-up which showed that 24% of these loans had been taken by SC/ST.

7 Member Coolies with larger landholdings got loans worth Rs 4 lakhs each from Canara Bank to buy tractors. One more has applied, but it is not yet sanctioned.

Most Cluster Review meetings recorded the number of borrowers, loan amounts, where they got it from, at what interest, what purpose, etc. for each of these 560 persons, in great detail. Borrowings have been for CB cows, sheep, bore wells, pump sets, buying land, tractors, sericulture equipment and petty shop.

Many still felt that only *Ryots* and political leaders are able to avail mainstream finances. They didn't have the collateral to get these loans. They understand that banks are not poor, but have other compulsions to lend to them. Most of these loans were not sanctioned easily. They were obtained after long struggles against *Ryots* who tried to block them.

Insofar as Stree Shakti groups are concerned, Coolie women have cleverly used their functional unity to occupy important positions in these village bodies and make them work in favour of the Coolie caste-class

Getting bank loans, as we have just said, was not easy. They got harassed by the bank officials. They realised that it wasn't like operating their own village CCFs, where people's assurance was enough. Yet, they admitted, they had not used their own moneys efficiently.

"4 women and 7 men applied for loans that were cancelled by the Bank Manager. After we protested, we could get these loans re-sanctioned. This would not have been possible if we did not have functional unity."

## E.8. Zero cases of punitive money lending (E.g. *Nagu, Vaddi and Bhogyam*)

### EFFECTS

44 Cluster Review meetings discussed this Sub Effects indicator. Some said that Nagu has been completely stopped. Others do not mention Nagu at all, and so we can presume it has been stopped there too. Some do not mention Bhogyam, but only 1 Cluster Review meeting explicitly claimed to have stopped Bhogyam or the mortgage of lands. The remaining gave concrete counts and details of actual cases of Bhogyam – how Member families got into the trap and how the entire CSU helped them get out. This was through strictly enforced personal finance discipline (making the family save, repay and get back their lands), making voluntary collections and negotiating with the *Ryots* to release the unjustly acquired lands, and sheer reverse coercion!

"In the CSU and Mahila Meeting, we decided that we would never allow any of our Members to pledge their lands."

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<sup>6</sup> The actual figure could be higher since Cluster Review meetings in Bagepelli taluk only mentioned the number of borrowers without providing the amounts borrowed

Vaddi is mentioned in 6 Cluster Review meetings, listing more than 1,000 people – 160 of them have borrowed from traditional moneylenders and the rest from local *Ryots*. Amounts borrowed range from Rs 1 to 5 K. 90 have borrowed at a staggering 5% interest per month, and the remaining 70 at a not much better rate of 3% per month.

We notice that no single village has 2 or 3 types of money lending – it is as if each village specialized in its own type of punitive money lending. We can reasonably suspect that, in most of the villages where Bhogyam is talked about, cases of Vaddi may not occur.

A few Cluster Review meetings said that Vaddi is in extinction, but not because of any positive reasons. Feudal usury was disappearing because *Ryots* did not have enough for themselves – they too were getting pauperised.

## F. COOLIE LANDS SYSTEMATICALLY CONSERVED AND CULTIVATED ACTIVITIES

Dry Land Development Programme works started in 261 villages from February 2005. Rs 17.4 million worth of DLDP Plans were given out for Member Coolies in each village CSU to form work gangs and descend on 7,577 landholdings to do various labour intensive works like clearing rocks, building contour bunds, etc. By the end of that financial/reporting year, in March 2005, 30% of the planned works were completed.<sup>7</sup>

The remaining 70% were implemented in this reporting period, from April to June 2005. ADATS Field Workers visited 5,277 Soil & Water Conservation works worth Rs 4.9 million on as many individual fields/plots, on an everyday basis, to monitor implementation.

In February 2006, fresh DLDP Plans worth Rs 12.3 were given out in 231 villages. In the next 2 months, till the end of this reporting period on 31 March 2006, another 2,285 works worth Rs 4.2 million were completed.<sup>8</sup>

Though they were out every single day, the Field Workers could not visit each and every work, every single day. Small works that were just 1 or 2 days were visited just once, on completion. Longer works of 3-6 days duration were visited twice. They made estimates of actual works done and brought the information back to record into our computerized monitoring system.

New villages, where DLDP works were being undertaken for the very first time, were visited more often. In the older villages, where the DLDP has been implemented for many years, there was a high degree of trust born out of experience and a sense of ownership. Though the Field Workers themselves checked the completed works, they relied upon measurements and reports made by elected Functionaries.

When a Field Worker entered monitoring details at the end of each DLDP work, a pay order was automatically generated and forwarded to the respective Accounts Staff. When 5-6 pay orders got accumulated for a particular village, the concerned Accounts Staff went there to make payments.

ADATS Accounts staff made a total of 7,562 DLDP wage payments worth Rs 12.5 million<sup>9</sup> during this reporting period. They visited the actual work spots, cross-checked the monitored

<sup>7</sup> This reporting period covers 2 DLDP years – April to June 2005 & January and February 2006

<sup>8</sup> The balance of Rs 8.1 million worth of DLDP works will be implemented in the next Consortium Programme Nos: Icco IN0 94101 & EED 20060213

<sup>9</sup> Including spill over payments of Rs 3.4 million from the previous reporting period

data on attendance muster rolls and actual works done, and then made the payments. They ensured that every single rupee was paid to the actual family member who really worked on the field. More than half the wages reached Coolie women, and Mahila Meetings ensured that they stayed in the hands of the woman. All our Accounts Staff got an intimate understanding of the programme, the villages, and individual Member families.

Sometimes DLDP wage payments were held up because of CCF Overdue of more than the permissible Rs 10 K per village. The traditional “carrot and stick” principle got into the play and everyone forced the defaulter to quickly repay.

9 villages with heavy CCF overdue did not get DLDP plans at all. They were quite upset and had to be assuaged. But fiscal indiscipline could not be overlooked.

The average time taken (an efficiency indicator) between the final monitoring visit of the Field Worker and DLDP wage payment by Accounts Staff improved from 11 days at the start of this reporting period to 8 days thereafter.

In some of the newer villages, Field Workers either themselves provided or arranged for external technical advice on the building of bunds and carrying out other Soil & Water Conservation works. In 28 villages, they had to solve silly/serious problems that arose in the work gangs. Often times, these are created when people of the same caste constitute a work gang – classical cases of familiarity breeding laziness and irresponsibility.

In 5 villages, DLDP wage payments were held up for cross-voting during TP elections.

23 CSUs were warned to improve the quality of works and extra supervision was needed in these villages. 14 of these villages did not heed repeated warnings and works had to be stopped/abandoned very early in the DLDP calendar.

## F.1. Increased Average Income from DLDP lands

### EFFECTS

#### Secondary Data

January 2006 saw a record number of Coolie families declaring their annual income. There has been an overall increase of 11% in the average earning of Member Coolie families.

**Table 13 : Sources of Declared Income**

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Coolie Work	37%	50%	39%	37%	33%
Farming	48%	34%	40%	43%	46%
Off-farm Ventures	9%	6%	10%	9%	11%
Petty Business	1%	2%	3%	2%	2%
Salaries & Stipends	2%	4%	3%	3%	2%
Other	3%	3%	1%	2%	1%

**Table 14 : Pattern of Declared Income**

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
< Rs 2K	1%	3%	3%	5%	3%
Rs 2K & 3K	3%	15%	13%	16%	10%
Rs 3K & 4K	11%	42%	33%	33%	28%
Rs 4K & 5K	19%	25%	30%	26%	29%
Rs 5K & 10K	60%	16%	21%	20%	30%
> Rs 10K	6%	0%	1%	0%	1%

### Primary Data

Results for this Sub Effects indicator has been recorded in different ways (number of bags of Ragi or groundnuts by acre, and percentage of cash crops, and average income, and also number of months of food stocks) by 57 Cluster Review meetings who discussed this Sub Effects indicator.

Some said an acre yielded from 6 to 10 bags of Ragi or Groundnuts, while a few claimed it was 10 to 17 bags. Others said they got 25-30% of acceptable cash crop yield, and 50-55% food crop yield.

Yet others said increase average income per acre was Rs 3 K. In 2 Clusters, it increased to Rs. 4-5 K. And some said the agricultural income of families was now Rs 6-7 K.

Every single one of the 57 Cluster Review meeting said they were proud to state that they had 4-6 months of food stocks in their homes.

“We are certain that nobody will go hungry. Hunger will not force any of us to migrate from the village.”

“Last year, for the very first time, we feel we have grown crops equal to the landlords. This was because of continues DLDP works on our lands.”

The DLDP has not been implemented in all the villages for the same number of years. In some villages where it is just a few years old, people who were totally disinterested in their lands, have now started to work on them more seriously after DLDP works started.

These newer villages felt that they were not getting back even their investment from cash crops. So they started growing mainly food crops on their lands. After even a few years of DLDP works, they see a slight increase in the yield of these food crops. They now grow enough food grains to sustain themselves for 6-7 months. Because of these food crops, they feel that their cattle have enough fodder.

But everyone spoke about a permanent source of income from their lands. They saw that only growing tree crops can meet this requirement.

On an average, they are growing 20% of cash crops and 80% of food crops.

Some Cluster Review meetings gave concrete figures. An acre of land now yields 8 bags of Ragi or groundnuts. Their average income has increased from Rs 2 to Rs 3 K per annum.

## F.2. Increasing trend in Average value of Coolie Lands (Wealth)

### EFFECTS

29 Cluster Review meetings discussed this Sub Effects indicator. In most villages where the DLDP had run for 8 to 10 year or longer, they said that Coolie lands were as level as Ryots lands. In villages where the DLDP had not run, mainly in southern Chintamani and Chickbalapur taluks, lands were already level.

There were 5 concrete instances of land sale in the past one year. A CSU Member bought half acre of land from a person in the same village for Rs 12 K, a non-CSU person sold half an acre of land to other villager for Rs 12.5 K, 6 months back, 2 Ryots sold lands very similar to that of the Coolies for Rs 25 K per acre. Only 1 CSU Member had sold 2 acres of land to another CSU Member for Rs 80 K. These transactions give an approximate indication of the value of Coolie lands.

A Member Coolie “borrowed” 1 acre of land from a non-CSU person for 20 K. We don’t know whether this is quite the same as sale.

7 Cluster Review meetings said their villages were situated close to the National Highway. Land value has shot up because the Bangalore International Airport is coming up 50 kms away, and not necessarily because of DLDP investment.

In 1 village CSU, 34 Member Coolie families are growing trees on a total of 64 acres under a 10 years old ADATS pilot project. Land values in that village are same as that of neighbouring *Ryots* – i.e. Rs 15 to 25 K per acre.

Some said they could not measure their lands in terms of money. It was a source of food security.

“Having a piece of land in village is a question of prestige. We don’t want to desert our children by selling lands that their great grandfathers have given.”

## G. CRITICAL PROJECT OUTPUT : COOLIES UNITED ACROSS ALL DIVIDES

It is a little difficult to clearly separate activity processes from results for this critical projects objective. So the reader is requested to please bear with some degree of overlap.

### ACTIVITIES

#### Membership

Coolie Sangha membership reached a record high of 16,752 Coolie families in January 2006 when as many of them declared their annual income and paid Sangha Tax in 504 village CSUs. However, there were a higher number of families who stood as cancelled in functioning as well as dropped out villages.

**Table 15 : Coolie Sangha Membership (as on 31 March 2006)**

Phase of Coolie Sangha building	Village CSUs		Normal Member Families		Coverage	Cancelled	
1st 3 year Formation	56	6%	1,768	11%	104%	155	1%
2nd 3 year Formalisation	18	2%	677	4%	32%	117	1%
3rd 3 year Consolidation	71	8%	2,342	14%	33%	762	4%
Independent CSUs	359	40%	11,965	71%	38%	6,323	34%
Functioning CSUs	504	57%					
Dropped out villages	388	43%			-	11,464	61%
	892	100%	16,752	100%	23%	18,821	100%

These 16,752 families constitute a total of 57,383 adults and 27,636 minors.

6,062 (36%) of these family memberships are in the names of Coolie women who represent their respective families in the village CSUs. The coverage of the entire population of these villages in 23%. But within the functioning villages, their coverage is very high at 39%

55% of CSU Members are Harijans and Tribals, 17% belong to middle castes and 28% to upper castes. While 46% of the SC/ST population are attracted by the Coolie Sangha, only one-third the middle and upper castes join.

**Table 16 : Caste composition of CSU Members**

Member Families	Percent in CSUs	Caste Group	Total Families		Ethnic Cover
9,211	55%	Scheduled Castes/Tribes	20,190	47%	46%
2,915	17%	Middle Castes	8,894	21%	33%
4,626	28%	Upper Castes	13,694	32%	34%
<b>16,752</b>			<b>42,778</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>39%</b>

### Cluster Meets

Each of the 84 Clusters met on a fixed day every week. Elected CSU Representatives, the Village Health Workers and *Balakendra* Teacher from each village that comprised the Cluster met at a central village from about 12 noon to 4 pm to discuss everything done/to be done in their villages.

4,191 of these 4,368 scheduled weekly Cluster Meets were held during this reporting year. The reason for this exceptionally high regularity of 96% was simply because there was so much to discuss and decide. The 177 Cluster Meets that were missed were mainly due to clashes with festival days, when elected Representatives were busy with cropping operations, and during local body elections. About 5% of the Cluster Meets were cancelled due to sheer neglect and laziness.

### Taluk Coolie Sangha Meetings

55 two-day Taluk Coolie Sangha meetings were held in the 5 taluk headquarters during this reporting period. 5 were cancelled.

### Executive Committee Meetings

94 fortnightly Executive Meets of Cluster Secretaries and Women's Committee members were conducted and 26 were cancelled. An approximate estimation shows that 75% of the weekly CSU and Mahila Meetings were conducted in the villages.

The reasons for meeting cancellation are more or less the same as for Cluster Meets – festivals, crops, other preoccupation and neglect.

### CSU Representative Elections

During this reporting year, 117 villages elected new CSU Representative, replacing the older ones. The remaining continued. Sometimes it was because they wanted younger functionaries to represent them. Sometimes it was because the older CSU Representative was tired, or had moved to another village, or was too busy to invest the time and money to attend the very many meetings of the Coolie Sangha.

## G.1. Time Series Increase of Coolie Sangha Membership

### EFFECTS

#### Secondary Data

This year has been a record one for declaration of annual income and payment of Sangha Tax on very many scores.

- Tax paid membership stands at an all time high of 16,752 families, just surpassing the ignominious 2004 level.<sup>10</sup>
- We had the lowest ever loss in pre-year membership.
- The highest number of Coolie families who had earlier been tax paid Members and then taken a break, came back after a gap.
- Actual Sangha Tax collections stands at a record Rs 3.83 million.
- The average Tax paid is at a 12 year high of Rs 228 per Member Coolie family.

**Table 17 : Time Series Information on CSU Membership**

<b>Sangha Tax Paid</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>
No of village CSUs	512	485	495	556	434	498
Total families who paid up	12,257	10,532	13,471	16,573	13,308	16,752
Loss in previous year membership	2,688	4,322	1,967	2,239	5,693	858
Cancelled families who renewed membership after a gap	774	744	1,660	1,526	863	1,661
Brand new families who joined for the very first time	4,123	1,853	3,246	3,815	1,565	2,641
Total Sangha Tax paid (Rs)	1,867,520	2,183,528	2,913,064	3,551,497	2,795,881	3,832,514
Average Sangha Tax paid (Rs)	130	154	189	190	204	228

Secondary data shows that out of 16,752 CSU Members, 2,641 are brand new. Another 1,661 are families who have returned to the fold after being Cancelled for several years. This sudden increase in membership can be explained by a combination of factors. The return of a dropped out villages, the addition of new Members in running village CSUs, and by faith in the Coolie Sangha.

#### Primary Data

Every single one of the 33 Cluster Review meetings that monitored this Sub Effects indicator said that new members and cancelled members, who have now come back, still have to learn about Coolie Sangha ideology. They realised that they were caught in the horns of a dilemma:

“Increase in membership is difficult to obtain if we want committed membership. Yet we will try to increase membership.”

Some counted committed members using homespun indicators:

“120 are Members from the very first day of CSU Formation”

“100 are committed Members from the days of Chennamma’s murder and the false cases that were hoisted against us.”

## **G.2. Increase in Decentralised Sangha Funds**

### **EFFECTS**

#### Secondary Data

This year, we once again had a 12% growth in the accumulation of Sangha Funds. The decentralised village level corpus now stands at Rs 55.27 million.

<sup>10</sup> For a graphic description of problems that arose because of an artificial surge in Coolie Sangha membership, please see our report dated September 2004 at <http://www.adats.com/documents/book4/0417/>



**Table 18 : Growth in Sangha Fund Balances**

	31 Mar 2002	31 Mar 2003	31 Mar 2004	31 Mar 2005	31 Mar 2006
Village Fixed Deposits	23,840,831	31,179,217	36,997,717	42,443,417	42,443,417
Village SB Accounts	7,811,691	5,389,848	6,046,805	6,274,335	12,331,701
Taluk Fixed Deposit	448,614	450,000	450,000	450,000	450,000
Taluk SB Account	290,953	1,688,578	11,216	27,447	41,826
<b>Total</b>	<b>32,392,089</b>	<b>38,707,643</b>	<b>43,505,737</b>	<b>49,195,199</b>	<b>55,266,944</b>
Increase from pre-Year		19%	12%	13%	12%

### G.3. Positive leadership Continuity

#### EFFECTS

We obviously need better MoVs for this Sub Effects! Because all that the 22 Cluster Review meetings were prepared to say was:

"Of 596 functionaries, only 229 are genuinely loyal and ready to sacrifice their entire life for making the Coolie Sangha stronger."

"They are not here for personal benefits. They will work for us day and night. You must remember that we have only the Coolie Sangha and no one else on our side. We feel isolated and this insecurity makes us loyal"

One Cluster Review meeting did not like the Sub Effects indicator, as they understood it.

"All the 12 CSU Representatives are loyal. We refuse to believe that anyone of us is more loyal than the other."

### G.5. Cases of Harijans contesting general seats in Panchayat Raj Institutions

#### EFFECTS

Though discussed in 26 Cluster Review meetings, there was just one solitary case of a Harijana who contested for general seat in GP elections. He lost because the CSU is not very strong in that village. Yet they are planning to give tickets only to Harijans in the next election and to make them GP Members with help of Coolie youth.

### G.6. Cases of Coolie Women contesting general seats in Panchayat Raj Institutions

#### EFFECTS

Once again, 27 Cluster Review meetings discussed this point.

Mahila Meetings from one Cluster fielded a Valmiki (ST) woman for a general seat in the GP elections. All the Coolie youth, Mahila Meetings and village CSUs supported her and she won by a good margin against many men in the fray. They have proved that they can do many things that others can't even dream of.

Another woman who contested a general seat in the GP elections lost because the opposite candidates spent more money than she did. But the Cluster was defiant and said they would do it again.

## H. CRITICAL PROJECT OUTPUT : STAFF & FUNCTIONARIES EMPOWERED TO DELIVER RESULTS

### ACTIVITIES

#### Training Sessions

Staff development took place, in the main, through our weekly Monitoring Meetings – 48 of the 52 were held every Monday at Bagepalli.

In addition, 15 session days of training was held, through 5 three-day batches, for everyone to learn early Indian history, the evolution of Caste, etc.

A special 1 day session was held to learn the history of the Employment Guarantee Act (EGA) and Right to Information Act – two extremely progressive pieces of legislature which were enacted by the Indian Parliament.

A 2 days training session was held on the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) under the UNFCCC in order to strategise how carbon resources could be used for pro-poor, pro-rural development activities.

This was followed up with a 3 week long strategic planning workshop, for 3 days every week, in order to plan for our Dry Land Horticulture Project whereby Coolie families would be encouraged to switch over from timely rain dependent and highly risky cash crops to more hardly tree cropping on their dry lands.