

Agricultural Development & Training Society (ADATS) Bagepalli 561 207 **5th Effects Monitoring Report**

Period: 1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008
5th Consortium Project Numbers: Icco IN 094101 & EED 20060213
“Coolie Sangha Building in North Kolar District”

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THE PROCESS

WORKSHOP ON STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

From 15 to 17 April 2008, a 3 day long Strategic Review workshop, facilitated by Ajit Mani of Intervention (India) Pvt. Ltd. was conducted for all ADATS Staff. We reflected on the ADATS/Coolie Sangha Vision, Mission, major changes in the work environment. We made a SWOT Analysis and derived Strategic Priorities.

		Internal Environment	
		STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
External Environment	OPPORTUNITIES	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>INVEST</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure transparent and honest implementation of EGA, using our 23 year long experience under the total control of respective work gangs Capture PRI Bodies through electoral contest Ensure corruption-free delivery of State Welfare Resources Develop more pro-poor CDM Projects Facilitate the induction of large-scale manufacturing units and industrial capital in Coolie Sangha Villages through Coolie Sangha Strategic Partnerships Leverage carbon resources for large scale shift from field crops to tree crops 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>DECIDE</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain citizen vital documents for each individual in Coolie Sangha Expand existing credit programmes within Coolie Sangha (CCFs, Women's Fund, etc.) into full-fledged Livelihood Programmes (Management & Technical); and appoint specialised and management staff to provide fresh impetus and technical guidance
	THREATS	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>DEFEND</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Each Village CSU will evaluate rituals and customs to determine whether it is divisive or unifying practice Take direct action against politicians and caste leaders who split voters on caste lines Ensure accountability of Coolie Sangha Winners in PRI and prevent their being co-opted Use political clout of Coolie Sangha and allies to keep Government officials under check 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>DAMAGE CONTROL/DIVEST</u></p>

This exercise was a precursor to this Effects Monitoring exercise. It was immediately taken each and every Cluster Meet where elected Functionaries and ordinary CSU Members discussed each of the 12 points threadbare.

WORKSHOP ON MONITORING METHODOLOGIES

On 12 and 13 May 2008 we held a 2 day workshop to discuss monitoring methodologies. Every single Main Effect and Sub Effect was examined to see if we were able to elucidate authentic and believable primary data in the Cluster Review Meets. For this, we had to pore through 3 earlier Effects Monitoring Reports.

After much deliberation we decided that the audience for this 5th Report should be the primary stakeholders themselves. It is Member Coolie families and their elected Functionaries who should, at the end of the exercise, know where exactly they stand and where they would like to go.

After this workshop was completed, our IT Professionals wrote new code and visited the existing pages in our digitized monitoring system to ensure that all the new data points were captured. We were ready to actually start the 5th Effects Monitoring exercise.

CLUSTER REVIEW MEETS

85 Cluster Review Meets participated in this exercise. Besides the elected Cluster Secretary, Women's Committee Member, CSU Representatives, Cheque Signatories, Village Health Workers, Balakendra Teacher and newly selected Village Level Workers, 5-10 longstanding CSU Members from each village also participated. The concerned Field Worker and Mahila Trainer sat with them, but unfortunately Case Workers could not attend due to work pressure.

For the next 4 weeks, they gathered on their appointed Cluster Meet day, but did not transact normal business. Review Meets started at about 1 pm and went on till 6-7 pm. Mid week, very many special CSU and Mahila Meetings were held to make headcounts and get more accurate data. ADATS Staff took thousands of copies of a variety of OnLine Reports that the Cluster Review Meets pored through.

There were initial glitches due to confusion. E.g. We wanted to know the number of Harijana Mid Day Meal cooks who were called to cook for various public and private functions. Instead the Cluster Review Meets counted the number of events for which Harijana cooks were called to prepare food. This did not help us find out how many Harijana cooks were actually called and how many weren't.

Some of the data did not stand too close a scrutiny. They did not properly total up. But we decided that the process was empowering and should continue, without bothering to gather just statistically defensible figures.

Once a week, everyone met at the Monday Situation Meeting to swap stories and methodologies. After the meeting got over, Field Workers and Mahila Trainers entered their findings into our digitized monitoring system. Our IT Professionals were once again on their toes, improving the pages and fixing bugs. This process lasted for a full month, till 15 June 2008.

RECORDING LESSONS LEARNT

Lessons learnt by the Cluster Review Meets were reported by the respective Area Teams. We requested Dr. Anita Ravishankar, Sociologist, to kindly sit with each team of Field Worker, Mahila Trainer and Case Worker to record these into our database. She then consolidated the Cluster level recordings into Area and Taluk levels. This process took 14 whole days from 19 June to 3 July 2008.

While facilitating the Area Teams, Dr. Ravishankar was able to make them reflect and distinguish between their own observations and what the Cluster Review Meets themselves felt/said. This reflective process was very enabling for ADATS Field Staff to hone their own analytical skills. In order to retain the flavour and authenticity of what transpired in these sessions, we have tried to keep these sections intact, making only grammatical corrections.

In an immediately following 3 day long Strategic Planning workshop we held from 16 to 18 July 2008, all this learning was factored into our situation analysis, to formulate our next 10 year Strategic Plan.¹

¹ Later this year, these will be placed in a Problem Tree, reversed into an Objectives Tree, and a 4x4 Project Planning Matrix will be constructed.

A. EXPERIENCE OF UPPER CASTE MANIPULATION ENDED

ACTIVITIES

As explained in our 2nd 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.

Rating the Effects/Results

Two-third the Cluster Review Meets rated their Results as very positive and one-third slightly better than the year before last. This, in spite of not being fully satisfied with, for example, the fact that Harijana cooks had not been appointed under non-reserved general categories. This shows that they have rated their efforts and learning (a kind of a “feel good factor”) and not actual Results obtained.

85 Cluster Meets rated their Results:

Very Positive	58	68%
Slightly Better than last year	27	32%

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

Primary Data

The most striking indicator is that the 131 Harijana cooks *continue* to be called to cook at private functions and for temple functions. Year before last, this was because of concerted CSU efforts. Now it appears to have become a matter of fact. This is substantiated by the fact that cases of inter-eating in private houses has shot up significantly.

	Year Before Last	Reporting Year	
Cluster Review Meets who monitored this Sub Effect	66	85	
Total No. of Govt. School Cooks in the Cluster	673	691	Cooks
No. of Harijana (AK & AD) Govt. School Cooks in the Cluster	137	131	Cooks
No. of Vadde (Bovi) Govt. School Cooks in the Cluster	59	54	Cooks
No. of Gorika (Valmiki) Govt. School Cooks in the Cluster	145	121	Cooks
No. of Sugali Govt. School Cooks in the Cluster	6	7	Cooks
No of Muslim Govt. School Cooks in the Cluster	25	37	Cooks
No. of Private Functions where Harijana Cooks (not all SC/ST) were called to cook	53	60	Events
No. of Public Functions where Harijana Cooks (not all SC/ST) were called to cook	81	107	Events
No. of Temples where Harijana Cooks (not all SC/ST) were called to cook	68	62	Events
Cases of Harijana cooks abused within the school compound	26	0	Case
Cases of Inter-Eating in Private Houses	945	2,805	Cases
No. of Clusters with no Harijana (not all SC/ST) Cooks at all	11	15	Clusters
No. of MLA Visits & Govt. Functions where Harijana Cooks (not all SC/ST) were called to cook	N.A.	30	Events

A.2. Cases of inter-Caste marriages

Primary Data

Far fewer marriages took place this year as compared to the year before last. But a greater proportion of them were simple marriages that took place in village temples and in front of houses.

Once again, there were more inter-Caste marriages where the brides were from a higher Caste. This is a definite indicator that these are “genuine” marriages. We cannot term the remaining (where grooms were from higher Castes) as sordid arrangements to “spoil” lower Caste girls for a few years and then abandon them. Nevertheless one cannot turn a blind eye to the fact that this was exactly what has happened all these years. Not many years ago, men from feudal families commonly had a Harijana or Tribal “wife” on the side...

For the very first time, we started to monitor the number of Hindu-Muslim marriages that took place without any conversion to Islam or Hinduism. Though the data is too small to make any conclusion, it has nevertheless made the Cluster Review Meets sit up and think.

	Year Before Last	Reporting Year	
Cluster Review Meets who monitored this Sub Effect	66	85	
Total No. of Marriages that took place in the past 1 Year	1,423	1,293	Marriages
No. of Simple Marriages in Village Temples and in front of Houses	882	991	Marriages
No. of Marriages performed according to Rituals and in Marriage Halls	438	262	Marriages
No. of Marriages Registered with the Sub Registrar	80	61	Marriages
No. of Inter-Caste Marriages that took place in the past 1 year	39	38	Marriages
No. of Inter-Caste Marriages where Girl was from Upper Caste	24	27	Marriages
No. of Inter-Caste Marriages where Boy was from Upper Caste	14	12	Marriages
No. of Hindu-Muslim marriages without any Conversion	-	4	Marriages

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

Primary Data

The data is a bit fuzzy with a larger number of Clusters counting less number of Coolie Youth who are in city jobs this year, when compared to year before last. However, we have chosen to not correct it. The actual exercise of counting, reflecting and learning lessons that can spur action plans is far more important than getting statistically defensible figures – i.e. we recognise that the process is empowering and thereby valuable in itself.

When compared to year before last, there seem to be as many school-completed Youth in city jobs as there are in the villages. This has serious demographic consequences which we will critically explore in another Strategic Planning exercise in August/September 2008.

	Year Before Last	Reporting Year	
Cluster Review Meets who monitored this Sub Effect	66	85	
No. of Schooled-completed Youth who are in City Jobs	1,816	1,931	Youth
No. of School-completed Youth who are NOT in Jobs	1,453	1,858	Youth
No. of Youth who came back from City Jobs after 3-6 months and are now Unemployed	346	318	Youth

No. of Youth who came back from City Jobs and started their Own Businesses in the Village	129	104	Youth
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A.4. Cases of single Coolie women and Coolie widows setting up petty businesses

Primary Data

There is no significant change in the data from year before last to this reporting period.

	Year Before Last	Reporting Year	
Cluster Review Meets who monitored this Sub Effect	66	85	
Total No. of Young & Brave Single Women in the Cluster	1,361	1,331	Single Women
No. of Single Women who were running Successful Businesses Last Year	374	371	Business Women
No. of Single Women who are still running those Businesses	322	283	Business Women
No. of Single Women who Stopped running their Businesses	79	57	Failed Businesses
No. of New Single Women who have Started Businesses This Year	263	89	New Business Women

Factors that Contributed to this Result

- Unity of the Coolie Sangha, where core values are very strong and regular meetings are held at village, Cluster and Taluk levels.
- Strong ideology of the Coolie Sangha which gives importance to the marginalised and the underprivileged, reinforced by the monthly BCS Meetings and each and every CSU and Mahila Meeting.
- Rising educational levels which have brought in a new thinking in Coolies – schooled Coolie Youth who are employed in the cities are major change agents. Influence of city culture has led to a reduction in importance given to Caste, coupled with an economic upgradation of status.
- Government policies like the Atrocities Act have instilled a fear in the upper Castes. Reservation has given a sense of power to Coolies. The Mid Day Meal scheme has provided plenty of opportunity to interact with other Castes.
- Inter-dining and joint celebration of common festivals have allowed Coolies to come together in a very human way.
- Skill and IT Training sessions have introduced a common culture by which Youth transcend Caste and other parochial feelings.
- Single women have the unstinting support of Mahila Meetings. Increasing economic opportunities in the form of businesses openings destroy Caste feelings.
- Education of Coolies, particularly women, has given them a broadened perspectives to life. Such an outlook has also been influenced by TV and Newspapers.

Lessons Learnt

BAGEPALLI

Though SC/ST cooks as a whole are almost 50% of the Mid Day Meal scheme cooks in government schools, Harijans alone comprise only 15%. Some Clusters without any Harijana Mid Day Meal cooks felt quite ashamed of the fact during the Effects Monitoring Meetings. They declared that when a

vacancy arose, they would appoint only a Harijana to fill up the post, even if there was no Govt. specified reservation for SC/ST. They realised that this may cause problems with a parochial bureaucracy, but were prepared to struggle and demonstrate their pro-Harijana stance. This had to be done more as a political statement. They felt that a “show” should be made of inter-eating.

Similarly, joint celebration of common festivals should be encouraged.

When conducting the Effects Monitoring, all the Clusters counted the number of simple and traditional marriages – 89% and 11% respectively. Reflections on these numbers has had a profound effect on them. They have internalized the need for Simple Marriages which are registered with the Sub Registrars at respective Taluk headquarters. Perhaps we can say that this is due to reluctance to over-spend and get into debt. But the more likely reason can be ferreted from their response to other Indicators. It appears that they have equated Simple Marriage with Choice Marriage and intuitively feel that this is the surest way to reduce the experience of upper Caste oppression.

They also expressed that “Mass Marriages” should be opposed since these are just political stunts by leaders. A whole lot of under-age marriages take place in these events with an “indirect blessing/sanction” of officials and leaders. Therefore, their collective sub-consciousness tells them that these “Mass Marriages” do nothing to attack Caste.

Parents should respect their adult children’s decisions, particularly when it comes to inter-Caste marriage.

Some Coolies are definitely moving away from Caste practices. This has not just a “showcase effect” on others, but also makes everyone think deep. Recently a marriage took place between a Muslim girl and a Harijana boy . The couple had not got converted. In fact the question of conversion did not arise at all . Each have retained their own religion. Perhaps this is a small indicator to show that Caste does not operate all that pervasively when in Coolie-Coolie relationships.

The collective sub conscience of the Coolie Sangha believes that education and employment in non-Caste based jobs is one way through which Caste impediments can be broken. For this they have taken to getting their children educated – both boys and girls. Perhaps this is one way of justifying what they never had, but are today in a position to give their children. Their children are growing up in more open systems where education and employment are seen as stepping stones to climb to the next level.

It is this collective sub conscience that agrees to support widowed single women, putting aside traditions. The tendency would be to, and rightly so, say that they are now just like the upper Caste women. However, that is almost like sanskritisation and that would not fit in with the Coolie ideology. Of course what is immediately and overtly seen for a comparison is the upper Caste woman. But care should be taken to see that they are not and should not be ghettoized into belonging to a particular Caste group.

CHICKBALLAPUR

Coolies feel that Caste is not important and cannot be overtly observed. Among Coolies, relationships of super-ordination and subordination based on Caste do not exist, as there is a lot of inter-eating and intermixing during private and public functions. Celebration of common festivals and children’s programmes have also eroded Caste feelings.

Youth do not believe in Caste as they are exposed to a city culture. Educated and employed CSU Members do not adhere to Caste traditions. This has come out of a realisation that economic improvement makes one have less of Caste affinity. Exposure to the city have made Coolies adopt modern lifestyles and usher in a modernisation process and they seem to have become urbane and have an influence not only on their families but also on others. CSU Members feel proud that there are very few dropouts among their children and in this way are getting into a more inclusive stream.

Coolies are realising that emulating the upper Castes and having elaborate and grand weddings are a waste of expenditure when the same can be done in a simple way with registering the marriage. This would provide safety for the couples avoiding complications that could arise later on.

Single women have set perfect examples when they have defied traditions to come out and enter productive work. Today they are confident and leading better lives with the help of the Coolie Sangha and have influenced others too.

Harijan cooks cooking in public functions have been accepted. In fact Coolie children want only Harijana cooks. This is ample proof to say that Caste is a way of learned behaviour and the right kind of socialisation would render it unimportant. In places where there are no Harijana cooks, they would be appointed as and when a vacancy arises.

The fact that Coolies are not averse to inter-Caste marriages is seen in their acceptance to children going in for choice marriages.

The Coolie Sangha ideology also seems to have had an effect on the upper Castes as it is observed that the lower Castes have not been kept out of the main areas in the villages.

CHINTAMANI

Economic development for Coolies is of prime importance. This goal is sought to be realised in two ways: (a) fighting Caste oppression by taking recourse to laws through the force of the unity of the Coolie Sangha, and (b) bringing in a revolution from within themselves

Inter-dining and joint celebration of common festivals is an example for others, and to themselves that prescriptions and proscriptions pertaining to Caste are man made and necessarily need not remain so. Appointment of Harijana cooks in schools and calling them to cook at private and public functions proves this point. Besides, this is a great way to counter the growing communal problem.

Supporting inter-Caste marriages, if and when they take place, and seeing that marriages are registered are ways that the Coolies have found to reduce the distance between Castes. But they are very clear that they would oppose mass marriages as they are public shows where many an under-aged girl is married off.

Similarly, single widowed women who were earlier neglected, also because of Caste prescriptions, have been supported and encouraged to come out in the open, leaving aside traditions, to enter into the normality of life. The CCF veto power that the Coolie Sangha has vested on women has made them to lead economically strong and independent lives. Seeing them, other non-CSU families are amazed at what a little rationality and reasoning could do to transform these otherwise wretched lives.

Education and skill trainings have been great Caste equalisers. They have given enough opportunities to interact and socially mix, as well as develop a healthy respect for each other. Coupled with this is the exposure of Coolie Youth to city life. They have been exposed to urban winds of change and many of have adopted modern lifestyles in dress and appreciation of varied cuisines. In turn, they have been able to influence others who have stayed back at home.

Today, Coolies are convinced that they are in no way less than anybody else. Upper Caste manipulation is fast receding into the background. When it does raise its ugly head, they always have the law to fall back on.

SIDDALAGHATTA

For Coolies, Caste is fast becoming unimportant. They genuinely believe that inter-dining, joint celebration of festivals, appointment of Harijana cooks, etc. are good ways of reducing Caste feelings. This is what makes them to say that a Harijana will get appointed as the School Mid Day Meals scheme cook when a vacancy arises, irrespective of whether the post is reserved for SC/ST or not. In a notable role reversal, Harijans claim that they monitor whether the upper Castes maintain cleanliness.

Coolies believe that humanism is more important than Caste. For this a modern outlook is needed. For private functions, people of all Castes are invited. Irrespective of the Caste they belong to, people are helped out. This is why they believe that Caste identities are becoming less. Of course, the older generation seems to hold on to Caste but Youth care less for it. CSU Members are particular that old traditions should not be taught to children.

They believe that rigid holding on to Caste is bad for economic development. Adopting modern ways of life like dress, cleanliness, etc. are important to get rid of Caste. Youth feel that certain traditional practices reinforce Caste. Their exposure to cities, and skill training sessions where Youth of different Castes stayed together, have helped them adopt a modern culture which is seen in the pattern of dressing and eating food that is different from what they are used to. This common experience and influence of the city have made Youth stand together united. Their parents are also getting influenced by them. They have become confident to interact with others. Harijana girls feel more confident about inter mixing and interacting with others.

Simple marriages have been accepted because they have realised that they are more sensible and can reduce unnecessary expenditure, thereby freeing them from indebtedness. Coolies are not averse to inter-Caste marriage either. Whenever it occurs, they see to it that nobody is humiliated on account of belonging to a lower Caste. They have also realised the importance of marriages being registered from the perspective of the security of the couples.

Single widowed women who believed in Caste traditions earlier no longer do so. They have come out in the open and entered into various businesses. They have gained confidence in themselves. They have learnt to stand on their own feet. This would never have been possible without Coolie Sangha support.

Families are becoming modern, because of the exposure of Youth to the cities. Education and employment have given Youth a different status. They are able to influence their parents also. Today they have become confident to interact with others because of their improved economic status. They do not have feelings of belonging to a low Caste. Coolies are able to leave out occupations which were ascribed by Caste.

Coolies are convinced that it is political leaders who play Caste politics. As long as this understanding is there, it will be difficult to divide Coolies on the basis of Caste. They are convinced that if upper Caste manipulation has reduced, it is because of the Coolie Sangha Ideology. It is this that has given them an identity based on the work they do, and not on the Caste they are born into. There is a revolution taking place in the Taluk where even upper Caste non-CSU families are slowly discarding Caste practices. This could, of course, be attributed to fear of the Atrocities Act, changing social norms, etc. But, in a way that is hard to substantiate, the change appears to be an internalized one, a change of heart influenced by the Coolie Sangha. If Coolie suspicions are right, then the change is bound to be deep and lasting.

GUDIBANDA

Being marginalised and economically disabled for a very long time, it is natural for Coolies to now think in terms of developing themselves economically. In achieving this goal they strongly feel that Caste considerations are impediments. This has been realised more by Youth who, with new found skills, have managed to get themselves jobs in the cities. An urban exposure and climate has given them ample opportunity to realise that in the process of climbing the social and economic ladder, Caste should be left behind. This urban exposure has made them adopt modern attitudes and lifestyle and they definitely have an influence in the way their parents think about Caste.

It is just not the city that has this sort of an influence, but the skill trainings, celebration of children's festivals that have given plenty of opportunities for Youth to live together and bond across Caste and gender divides.

Inter-dining and celebration of common public as well as religious festivals have also made the young and the adult Coolies to experience relationships which are above narrow parochial spaces. This broadening of thinking has also come as part of a larger learning as a member in Coolie Sangha and being convinced of the ideology of humanism where narrow considerations of Caste, Class and gender do not have a role to play. It is this ideology which has convinced Coolies to support widowed women to cast aside Caste and religion supported prescriptions and enter into normal adult dealings. Coolie Sangha's support today has seen single women take up economic ventures to stand up confidently and independently in their lives

Attitudes towards marriages have also changed – CSU Members have realised the folly of having elaborate marriages and entering into loans and debt. They are convinced that simple marriages are a sensible alternative that would avoid unnecessary expenditure. This is the reason they are beginning to respect the choice of Youth while selecting their marriage partners. They also believe that every marriage needs to be registered to avoid any future complications.

While reservation seems to be a political tool to fight the upper Castes, Coolies are helping the marginalised to enter the mainstream by taking decisions that Harijana cooks would be appointed in vacancies meant for the general category.

B. STATE WELFARE RESOURCES ACCESSED

ACTIVITIES

Struggle for Employment Guarantee Act (EGA) works

After speaking about it in all the village CSUs for more than a year, 12,000 Member Coolies signed a memorandum thanking Smt. Sonia Gandhi for enacting the EGA and requested the Hon'ble Prime Minister to notify our district under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. Every single one of them knew exactly what the EGA was, the NGO struggles that preceded it for over 2 decades, its intention, potential to transform the lives of small and poor peasants, and the economic rationale behind monetising human labour for building, repairing, maintaining and replenishing the "invisible" infrastructure needed to make rural India tick.

On 20 February 2007, 5 huge and simultaneous EGA Rallies were held at as many Taluk Headquarters. A staggering total of 26,000 Coolies assembled at their respective Taluk Headquarters and, at the exact same time, presented their memorandums to the respective Tahsildars for forwarding to the Government of India. The mood was upbeat and victorious. The 5 *Moffusil* towns were deeply moved by their display of discipline and organisation, and the Coolie Sangha earned the respect and support of neutral townsfolk.

60 representatives held a major Press Meet at the Bangalore Press Club to explain why it was so important that the district be notified under EGA. Unfortunately, hardly a single newspaper got it right. None had bothered to find out what exactly the recently enacted law, which gave every rural household in India the *constitutional right to work* for 100 days every year, was all about. They were caught in their imagery of schemes and programmes doled out as charitable largesse to the rural poor. While they could grasp time-bound alleviative measures, they couldn't imagine a permanent entitlement to employment. They were certain that the Coolie Sangha had it all wrong. After all, how could this grouping of semi-literate poor have studied such a huge and comprehensive Act? The very idea that rural people actually had a *right* that they would enforce was way beyond their conceptualisation. The very few journalists who had heard about the EGA were biased and had already made up their minds that this was a populist move, bad for fiscal discipline, and a sheer waste of money.

Coolie Sangha Functionaries then met with very senior central government leaders who were far more sympathetic. Some of them, who were particularly close to the Prime Minister, saw a huge potential in thousands of Coolie families making a grassroots demand for the EGA. They intuitively knew that the EGA would be honestly implemented in this district and promised to follow it up.

2½ month down the line, patience was running thin. We had heard nothing from New Delhi and the summer heat was getting to everyone. Moreover ADATS had, on principle, decided that DLDP works would not be undertaken from 2007 onward, since such huge State resources were waiting to be tapped.

On 9 May 2007 five simultaneous strikes were held, once again at the Taluk Headquarters, to pressurise the officials to follow up on our memorandum. This time, the mood was a curious mix of sombre anxiety, anger and frustration. Then followed 2 trips to New Delhi to once again impress upon the politically powerful. Almost 10 months later, on 28 February 2008, the Hon'ble Finance Minister notified the entire country under EGA when presenting his union budget.

It would be a wild stretch of fertile imagination to attribute this to the Coolie Sangha. But the popular perception is hugely different. There is not a single person in this district who is not of the firm conviction that the EGA has come about because of ADATS contacts and Coolie Sangha struggle. The link they make between the global and the local, even if fantastic, is still incredible. The Coolie caste-class ardently believe that it is they who brought in the EGA. Blame for delays are squarely placed at the feet of hapless *Ryot* and landlord obstructionists who do not want wage rates to rise or Coolies to progress. The sense of ownership that the poor have over the EGA is unbelievable.

The Coolie Sangha's socio-political strength and presence in village society soared by many points. 5,000 copies of the official Gazette notification and an FAQ prepared by the government were printed and distributed to all 500 villages. Cluster level sessions were held to read out these documents to the elected CSU Representatives. 10 longstanding CSU Members from each village also attended, along with many non-CSU persons. Gram Panchayat officials approached Coolie Sangha Functionaries for more information on this groundbreaking new law that will have far reaching implications on the village polity.

Other Issues & Struggles

ADATS Field Staff supported village CSUs in very many local level strikes and agitations with guidance and RTI applications. They also guided them on strategies to change corrupt and inefficient School Betterment Committee Presidents, Milk Collection Society Presidents, rectify government hostel mismanagement, etc.

Before leaving for the day's appointed Cluster Meet, Field Workers spent their mornings to accompany visiting Cluster Functionaries to various Taluk offices. They assisted them in sorting out problems with regard to Old Age & Widow Pension applications, obtain land documents, deal with irresponsible Revenue officials, obtain hostel seats for High School and College children, and to the government bus depot to change timings and create new routes so that students could reach High Schools on time. They also accompanied them, when necessary, to Police Stations. They argued their case with Banks and mainstream Finance Institutions.

Unfortunately, no systematic Customer Demands & Satisfaction (CD&S) surveys were carried out during this reporting period.

Rating the Effects/Results

In spite of recording far less State benefits this year, half the Cluster Review Meets feel that Results have been very positive and the other half feel that things were slightly better than the previous year. This could very well be because of the astounding success they sincerely believe they have had in bringing the EGA to the district.

84 Cluster Meets rated their Results:

Very Positive	41	50%
Slightly Better than last year	41	50%

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

Primary Data

Due to the political uncertainty that Karnataka went through for most of this reporting period, the number of government works accessed fell to about half what they were able to access the year before last.

	<i>Year Before Last</i>	<i>Reporting Year</i>	
Cluster Review Meets who monitored this Sub Effect	62	84	
Total No. of Govt Works approved in the Clusters this year	2,197	1,311	Works
Total Budget Allocated for all these Works	198,871,812	120,387,100	Rupees
Actual Amount Spent on these Works this year	150,304,862	83,706,000	Rupees
No. of Works done Without Corruption	970	481	Works
No. of Works done with a Little Corruption	661	475	Works

No. of Works done with a Lot of Corruption	428	240	Works
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B.2 Taluk-wise details of poor families brought under welfare umbrella

The number of individual social benefits also fell proportionately. 90% of them managed to get these benefits without paying any bribes. Unfortunately, perhaps because of an unseemly anxiety, 10% of the applicants for social benefits did pay bribes. They were the ones with little faith in group efforts. Some were in an undue hurry. Petty village officials managed to threaten them and instil the fear of rejection .

	<i>Year Before Last</i>	<i>Reporting Year</i>	
Cluster Review Meets who monitored this Sub Effect	62	84	
No. of Families who got Social Benefits Without Corruption - Pensions, Ration Cards, Houses, Electricity, etc.	4,930	2,336	Families
No. of Member Coolie Families who got Social Benefits after Paying Bribes	490	265	Families

Factors that Contributed to this Result

- Good CSU Members elected as Gram Panchayat Members helps access various schemes. In Clusters where they are politically active, Coolies are able to check corruption in the execution of government works, even when not a single CSU Member has won a GP seat.
- Coolies are represented in the School Betterment Committees and this helps them get good information on various State facilities available from the Education Department.
- Information given by ADATS.
- The RTI Act is a powerful tool that Coolies threaten to use against corrupt officials. This increases bargaining power and makes officials more transparent when implementing schemes.
- Good CSU Representatives and Functionaries organizing direct action like strikes, demonstrations and rallies, insisting on open Gram Sabha meetings, distribution of pamphlets to inform Voters on different government programmes, forcing GP officials and PDS ration shop keepers to post information on notice boards, etc..
- Strategic relationship cultivated with national political parties resulting in MLA support for Coolie Sangha efforts, except in Bagepalli and Gudibanda Taluks.
- Village CSUs dropping out acts as a deterrent in accessing facilities.

Lessons Learnt

BAGEPALLI

Coolies now believe that they have equal if not more rights in society. These rights have been achieved through the collective struggle of all the CSU Members. They strongly believe that it is the holding of elected posts in political bodies like the Gram Panchayats that enables them to access entitlements. They also realised that all alone, through the individual efforts of a handful of Coolies, this would have been impossible. Theirs is a collective strategy to get into the system and face the enemy from within. It is this determination, along with good Functionaries and CSU Representatives that has allowed them to monitor government works and check on allotted budgets. There is a growing realisation that in order to be really effective in this chosen strategy, coverage needs to be in-

creased with emphasis placed on the return of Cancelled Member families and dropped-out village CSUs. For this, the working of mature and efficient Functionaries is vital.

The general impression in this Taluk is that Coolie women should be supported to contest Gram Panchayat seats, as they are less corrupt. Moreover, these women would come back to their Mahila Meetings and talk about matters raised in meetings. Women's "other regarding behaviour" can definitely enhance governance. The world over, it has been proved that where women's influence in public life is high, corruption is low. A higher proportion of women than men believe that corrupt actions can never be justified. As far as Coolie women in Bagepalli are concerned, 3 decades of group conscientisation and struggles coupled with growing ownership rights have had a powerful influence on their ability to influence the development process.

At the same time, the Coolie Sangha needs to keep in mind that government welfare schemes for the poor is decreasing as the country moves into a neo liberal market economy. Coupled with this, is opportunistic politics that negatively effects the quality of governance. Taluk Coolie Sangha meetings need to take cognizance of such matters. The decision of the Coolie Sangha to contest seats meant for general categories is a very sensible and mature one. This is one way to get into mainstream society without been "labelled" as a representative of a particular Caste-class category.

The role played by a rise in the general level of education is vital. It is education that makes CSU Members more confident to face the bureaucracy. Their zero tolerance policy towards corruption is a good public face to present to society at large. It gives leadership and credibility over the village at large. This and the ease with which RTI has been used makes the Coolies strong to face the government machinery.

CHICKBALLAPUR

Coolies are aware of their rights and this awareness has been used to get what is theirs by right. The representation of the CSU Members in the GP and the educated youth have enabled them to access what is rightfully theirs and to monitor the works done, the budget that is allotted and to stop corruption. For this the RTI Act has been a powerful ally that has been and could be used against corrupt contractors and officials.

For the future too Coolies will have to contest and capture the GP, TP and ZP even if the seats are for the general category and should wrest power from the hands of the useless political leaders.

Their fight against corruption has won a lot of respect in society for CSU Members.

CHINTAMANI

Coolies have realised that getting into political decision making structures is a sure way of getting access to resources that the government has to offer. Democratic decision making through discussions in the CSU and Mahila Meetings has helped them to choose the right candidates to contest in the decentralised structures. Thanks to their presence in the Gram Panchayats, CSU Members have been able to follow up on all the government programmes - work allotment and the budgets. The working of the RTI and ability of the Coolies to use it appropriately has ensured a corruption free completion of works undertaken by the Gram Panchayats.

What needs to be mentioned here is the spin off effect the Coolie Sangha has had on the rest of society. Even where CSU Members were not in the Gram Panchayat, other non- CSU Gram Panchayat members, in consultation with the village CSUs, have got the works done!

Coolies, and rightly so, have taken a zero tolerance policy to corruption. They say with confidence that they have been able to wipe out corruption completely at the local level. But they are sceptical of corruption that exists at a higher plane. This is what makes them say that corruption in the EGA will not be tolerated at any cost.

Being politically inclined, the Coolies have decided that all elections would be contested in future, even in places where they did not have confidence to do so till now. After intense discussions in the

CSU and Mahila Meetings, they will decide to support educated and aware CSU Members, even if seats are unreserved - i.e. open to the general category.

SIDDALAGHATTA

The unity of Coolie Sangha, along with presence they have in the Gram Panchayats, genuine Gram Sabha meetings, have been responsible for getting many government works done without corruption. This has come with a realisation that that the poor have to get what is rightfully theirs, and they have the confidence to get it with the support of Coolie Sangha.

While support gives one confidence to move forward, it is the reality of capturing the political structures that makes it possible to have access to State resources. In most Clusters, there is a carefully cultivated and well crafted relationship with political leaders. This has increased the bargaining power of village CSUs. It has also helped gain good information on government programmes and reduce corruption in the works undertaken. The corruption survey undertaken 2 years back still reverberates in the memory of leaders and bureaucrats.

Even when Coolies have not been able to capture political structures by winning elections, they have been able to get works done. This speaks volumes about the ingenuity and determination of Coolie Sangha in getting works done. The altruistic nature of Coolies is seen when CSU Members who become Gram Panchayat members help non-CSU villages get benefits.

The RTI Act is a very powerful tool which CSU Members have made full use of. This has been done with the knowledge that decentralisation has given them powers, unlike earlier when power was concentrated in the hands of a few political leaders.

For the future Coolies feel that entire Gram Panchayats and the Taluk Panchayat need to be captured by CSU Members. For this to happen, educated Youth should be made to contest these seats even if they are open for the general category. Another mark of maturity is the Coolie Sangha stand that instead of always being at loggerheads with government officials and thinking of them as enemies of the poor, strategic relationships need to be cultivated.

GUDIBANDA

One of the numerous ways to enter the mainstream, particularly for the marginalised is to access the welfare resources that the government doles out. In taluks like Gudibanda, where the majority of the poor do not have access to information about these resources, Coolie Sangha strategy of entering actively into political structures like the GP, TP and ZP and the SDMC is a very sound and sensible one. Realising this importance, Coolies have contested seats in the GP and won on the basis of their ideological moorings. This has helped to a very large extent to a) access information about resources b) to understand the nature of works to be done c) to know the budget that is allotted for each of these works.

Armed with this information and the strength of Coolie Sangha unity Coolies have been successful in getting works done without paying any bribes. Of course having good educated representatives and functionaries at Coolie Sangha level and the democratic discussions that take place in the meetings and in the Gram Sabhas that are conducted regularly also have helped to get for Coolies what is rightly theirs.

Coolies today realise that the RTI is a very powerful tool in their hands that can and will be used to combat corruption and pull up corrupt officials. It is this confidence that makes them indignantly declare that even a grain of corruption in the EGA will not be tolerated.

C. FAMILY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT DELIVERED BY COOLIE WOMEN

ACTIVITIES

Health Camps & Training

3 Health Camps were conducted during the year for early detection of cervical cancer and other reproductive health problems. 2 Eye Camps were also conducted. 7 Health Training sessions were held for VHWs and Balakendra Teachers from as many Areas.

Every single month, young mothers came with their mothers-in-law to undergo irreversible Family Planning operations. ADATS provided them with basic medicines, place to stay, transport and logistics to attend special government camps held across the border in Andhra Pradesh.

ADATS vehicles were continually on call, day and night, to haul patients to hospitals and attend to various health emergencies. The Mahila Trainers took many patients to specialised hospitals.

Children in School

16,055 children from 467 village CSUs were supported to attend government schools in their villages in the academic year 2007-08. This activity was managed by as many CSU appointed and paid-for Balakendra Teachers. 83% of school-age children in the 5-16 age group from Active Member families were in school.

Girls constituted 49% of the total High School children. This is a significant Result, indicating that they had crossed the glass barrier of age-at-puberty. Unless parents and Mahila Meetings had nurtured, protected and supported the Girl Child through 7 years of primary and middle school, she could not have got into high school. Their long term and tireless perseverance is unparalleled anywhere in the country.

Gender Disaggregated Details of Children in School (as on 31 March 2008)

	Children	Boys	Girls	SC/ST	Middle	Upper
Primary School (1 to 5)	5,249	33%	50%	50%	54%	29%
Middle School (6 to 7)	3,469	22%	51%	49%	52%	29%
High School (8 to 10)	5,254	33%	51%	49%	51%	30%
PUC	1,412	2%	56%	44%	48%	36%
Degree	394	2%	72%	28%	45%	41%
Diploma/Other	275	2%	75%	25%	43%	37%
Total	16,055	52%	48%	52%	18%	31%

A whole lot of activity processes were involved in getting these Results. These include the listing and enrolment of school going children by the Mahila Meetings, admission, re-admission, awareness raising and pursuit of measures to prevent drop-out and under-age marriages, training Balakendra Teachers, conducting every evening Balakendras, need assessment and allocation of Sangha Funds for scholarship, giving top-up grants where village bank balances are low, conducting annual sports, coaching classes, etc.

Since ADATS has a separate Strategic Plan and LogFrame for this programme, a separate Effects Monitoring will be conducted in August 2008 to assess Results under 9 Main Effects:

- A. Gender Equity established for the Girl Child & disadvantaged groups
- B. Government School Infrastructure Improved
- C. Quality of Teaching Improved
- D. Parent Participation Improved
- E. Range of extra-curricular activities in Government Schools Increased & Implemented

- F. Children retained in Government Schools
- G. Individuality and self assertion improved in Coolie Children
- H. Coolie Children learn to learn at *Balakendra* centres through creative approaches
- I. Health and wellbeing of Children assured

Please visit <http://www.adats.com/documents/book8/> for earlier Effects Reports on children.

Like Skill Training

To date, a total of 1,194 Coolie youth have attended a total of 43 Life Skill training camps, staffed by 2 full time Instructors. Of them, 1,157 youth (597 boys and 560 girls) have successfully completed their month long programme.

61% of them were ranked as good and proficient using a wide range 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 28% was just moderate and 11% were not so good.

4 “campus interviews” were held for factory owners from Bangalore to come and interview our trainees. We did a bit of sprucing and most Youth were selected.

The ADATS/Velcan Bagepalli Biogas CDM Project

In the last Effects Monitoring Report we mentioned this new activity undertaken with carbon resources to the tune of € 1.1 million to build 5,500 biogas units for as many Coolie women. As on 31 March 2008, a total of 5,477 units were fully commissioned. We had spent a total of Rs 60.83 million to date.

It was mostly the ADATS Case Workers who actually implemented this programme. But in 5 of the 16 Areas, where Case Workers were new and inexperienced, Field Workers and Mahila Trainers actually controlled the inventory, supervised masons, ensured construction quality, etc. Bottlenecks were jointly solved by the entire Area Team comprising Field Worker, Mahila Trainer and Case Worker.

Daily Usage monitoring to calculate emission reductions generated by this CDM Project is done by Balakendra Teachers. Mahila Trainers check their monthly records for authenticity and feed the information into our digitized database to automatically calculate CERs generated. The Bagepalli Biogas CDM Project now holds the distinction of being the first one of its kind, the world over, where CERs have actually been issued by the Executive Board of the UNFCCC to be traded in the EU-Emission Trading System (carbon market). This gives a huge boost and credibility to other grassroots NGOs who wish to implement pro-poor and pro-rural CDM Projects like domestic biogas, photo-voltaic lamps, fuel efficient wood stoves, solar water heating, etc.

Biogas CDM Project of the BCS

Toward the end of this reporting period, we were ready to undertake yet another biogas CDM Project, this time with the Bagepalli Coolie Sangha as project proponent. We will build 18,000 more units in another 500 villages.

Field Staff went to all the villages where we had not built biogas units under the just completed Bagepalli Biogas CDM Project and made lists of those who had empty space near their kitchens and a few heads of cattle to feed the digesters. They then assisted in making a kerosene baseline study to study the efficiency of stoves and current consumption levels.

A fresh PDD was written, host country approval received, and the project is currently under validation. Negotiations are on with Carbon Investors to secure full forward funding. Please visit http://www.adats.com/cdm/bcs_biogas.php for more details.

Rating the Effects/Results

Two-third the Cluster Review Meets feel that they had very positive Results and the remaining said they did slightly better than the previous year. In the case of Women and the Girl Child, this is substantiated by primary data. E.g. A greater percentage of young mothers have had the courage to undergo irreversible family planning operations after just one child, showing their faith in the ability of the Coolie Sangha to ensure that new born children survive.

But in the case of Children, such a rating is strange since a large number of children have dropped out, just when this Effects Monitoring exercise was underway, due to parents not paying Sangha Tax and renewing current year family memberships. Perhaps Coolie opinion will be impacted during the next round of annual effects monitoring.

85 Cluster Meets rated their Results:

Very Positive	54	64%
Slightly Better than last year	31	36%

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

Primary Data

As compared to year before last, there were less cases of domestic violence reported from a larger number of Clusters. The popular claim that husbands are now afraid to raise their hands seems to be substantiated. But the proportion of cases that the Mahila Meetings claim to have stopped remains the same at about three-quarter.

ADATS has always advocated that the real and lasting solution to the problem of wife beating is legal separation and divorce. While the percentage of separations remains the same as year before last, divorces have reduced. One reason, of course, is fear of leading a single life without the support of any sort of husband. The other can be found in traditional notions of loyalty to their husbands. And finally, the age old question as to whether it was, this time around, an accident, something that occurred when he didn't have control over his senses, an "it will never happen again" incident?

As a collective group of women, the Mahila Meetings threaten to use laws like the Domestic Violence Act. But at the individual level, the effected woman invariably backs down when push comes to shove. As a cohesive group, when engaged in honest reflection, Mahila Meetings realise that their claims to have "stopped" domestic violence are suspect. The sad truth is that there are two types of husbands – those who beat their wives and those who don't. The cruel reality is that some men consider it their marriage vow given right to exert macho control and brute superiority over wives.

	Year Before Last	Reporting Year	
Cluster Review Meets who monitored this Sub Effect	62	85	
Cases of Domestic Violence reported during this year	326	228	Cases
Cases of Domestic Violence Stopped	250	169	Cases
Husbands and Wives Separated on advice of Mahila Meeting	73	47	Separations
Legal Divorces obtained during the past one year	20	9	Divorces

C.2. Trends in Index of Women's Health

Primary Data

A far less number of reproductive ailments were reported this time, by a larger number of Clusters.

- The proportion of these that were treated locally by VHWs has increased from 26% to 35%. This is a good sign, indicating that VHWs are getting to be better in their health related work.²
- Year before last, only 27% of patients brought to the Health Camps were found to be serious enough to warrant hospital treatment. This indicates that a whole lot of “panic” cases were brought by inexperienced VHWs
This year, the proportion has risen to 53%
- Read together, these figures indicate a definite improvement in the health delivery capacity of the VHWs.

Year before last, 49% of the births were in the village. This year it has dropped to 48%. This is a hotly debated indicator. Some argue that it augurs well for more deliveries to be conducted in hospitals. Others dispute it.

The number of Family Planning operations has drastically dropped. Could this be because the vast backlog of women with 3 and more children has been cleared in the previous years? We are not certain. Due to these huge differences in the total number of operations, we cannot say with certainty whether the percentage of young mothers getting operated after just 1 child is really increasing. Nevertheless, even when seen as an absolute number, these 212 young mothers are to be commended and showcased!

	Year Before Last	Reporting Year	
Cluster Review Meets who monitored this Sub Effect	62	85	
No. of Women who Reported Reproductive Ailments in the Mahila Meetings	1,757	1,290	Reported Ailments
No. of Women with Reproductive Ailments Treated Locally by VHWs	464	455	Cases
No. of Women with Reproductive Ailments brought to Health Camps by VHWs	1,179	580	Cases
No. of Women with Reproductive Ailments taken to City Hospitals after Health Camp	319	309	Referred Cases
No. of Child births that took place in the past 1 year	1,534	1,158	Births
No. of Child births conducted by the VHW in the Village	750	553	Village Births
No. of Child births conducted in Govt and Pvt Hospitals	778	604	Hospital Births
No of Mother and/or Child Deaths during Child birth during the past 1 year	63	42	Mother/Child Deaths
No. of Young Mothers who underwent Family Planning Operation after 1 Child	295	212	Women
No. of Young Mothers who underwent Family Planning Operation after 2 Children	1,087	631	Women
No. of Young Mothers who underwent Family Planning Operation after 3 or more Children	4,939	320	Women
No. of Women not able to do their normal household/outside work for more than 1-2 months in the last year (Bad Health Indicator)	N.A.	210	Cases
Cases of Women who suffered the insult of not being able to cook for their families because there was no Rations, Fuel wood	N.A.	166	Cases

² It must be noted that while the Village Health Workers are strong feminists, admirably effective in empowering women, not all of them have good health skills.

and/or Water for 1-2 days (Poverty Indicator)			
Cases of Women who have no say in their Family Expenses, Loans, etc. (Powerlessness Indicator)	N.A.	328	Cases
Cases of Women who expressed they could not support their Daughters in their choice of marriage	N.A.	55	Cases

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

Primary Data

We were not able to gather good primary data for this Sub Effect since the ADATS Case Workers could not be involved in this Effects Monitoring exercise.

C.4. Trends in School Enrolment

Secondary Data

83% of School Age Children (i.e. 5-16 age group) from Active Member families in functioning CSUs are currently in school. Success rate has fallen to 66% because of heavy membership cancellation which has the tragic consequence of their children no longer being supported by the villages CSUs.

13 Year History of the self-financed Child Support Activity (March 2008)

	Total		Boys		Girls		SC/ST		Middle		Upper	
Supported by Coolie Sangha	42,979	100%	22,824	100%	20,155	100%	23,216	100%	8,126	100%	11,637	100%
Left after Primary School	9,704	23%	4,775	21%	4,929	24%	5,601	24%	1,992	25%	2,111	18%
Left after Middle School	4,787	11%	2,528	11%	2,259	11%	2,697	12%	973	12%	1,117	10%
Left after Completing School	8,791	20%	4,803	21%	3,988	20%	4,878	21%	1,705	21%	2,208	19%
Left after College	3,642	8%	2,346	10%	1,296	6%	1,766	8%	596	7%	1,280	11%
Still in School	16,055	37%	8,372	37%	7,683	38%	8,274	36%	2,860	35%	4,921	42%
Failed to fully Support	14,491	34%	7,303	32%	7,188	36%	8,298	36%	2,965	36%	3,228	28%
Successes	28,488	66%	15,521	68%	12,967	64%	14,918	64%	5,161	64%	8,409	72%

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

Primary Data

The data indicates that preventing under-age marriage continues to be a serious agenda in the village CSUs and Mahila Meetings. It would be foolish to not do so. Gender achievements are not irreversible and could recur.

	Year Before Last	Reporting Year	
Cluster Review Meets who monitored this Sub Effect	62	85	
Total No. of Marriage-age Girls (over 18 years) in the Cluster	2,318	2,120	Girls
No. of Marriage-age Girls who are in College	1,095	1,034	Girls
No. of Marriage-age Girls who are in Jobs	305	253	Girls
No. of Marriage-age Girls who are doing petty businesses	95	57	Girls

No. of Marriage-age Girls who are at Home	838	785	Girls
No. of Attempts at Under-Age Marriage Stopped	78	53	Cases
No. of Under-Age Marriages that could not be Stopped	19	10	Cases

C.6. Optimum Performance of Mahila Meeting women elected to and serving Grama Panchayat in each Taluk

Primary Data

Perhaps due to membership cancellation and villages dropping out, the number of women Gram Panchayat Members from CSU families that the Cluster Review Meets could count has dropped when compared to year before last. But more worrisome is that the percentage of them who were active has drastically dropped. Dummies who act at the behest of their husbands has increased.

	<i>Year Before Last</i>	<i>Reporting Year</i>	
<i>Cluster Review Meets who monitored this Sub Effect</i>	<i>62</i>	<i>85</i>	
No. of Women GP Members who are from Active CSU Member Families	145	119	GP Members
No. of Women GP Members who are from Cancelled CSU Member Families	41	35	GP Members
No. of Women GP Members from Active & Cancelled CSU Member who are Active in GP Meetings	117	74	Active GP Members
No. of Women GP Members from Active & Cancelled CSU Member who are Dummies	52	63	Dummy GP Members
No. of Women GP Presidents & Vice Presidents from Active & Cancelled CSU Member families	30	25	Adhyaksh & Upa Adhyaksh

Factors that Contributed to this Result

- Various laws and policies of the government, like the Age at Marriage Act, Domestic Violence Act, etc. have helped women protect themselves and gain more self esteem.
- Responsive Mahila Meetings where Coolie women hold open discussions regarding their health and domestic situation.
- Daily Balakendras that keep an eye on the health of children on an everyday basis.
- Responsive VHVs who are in close contact with Coolie women and look after their health needs. Training they receive has also been a factor which makes them fairly professional.
- Government Hospitals, PHCs, Health Camps, etc., along with responsive ANMs, have been of help.
- A responsive ADATS that rushes to the help of pregnant women during emergencies.
- Assistance given to access the government Family Planning facilities.
- Food provided by the Anganwadis and school Mid Day Meal scheme has improved the nutrition level of children.
- Yashaswini Health Cards.
- Having more women CSU Members elected into the Gram Panchayats has given strength and support to the others to manage their problems.
- Domestic biogas plants make Coolie women's reproductive labour so very easy.

Lessons Learnt

Mahila Meetings have inspired Coolie women not just to think of themselves as individuals, but also as a group. This has made them address both, individual problems as well as problems that affect women as a whole. They realise that different solutions are needed to suit the nature and intensity of each problem. Women see that though domestic violence is institutional, solutions have to be addressed at the micro level. Protesting against cases of domestic violence and seeking particular solutions has won a lot of respect for Coolie women from the rest of the village society. Similarly orphaned, destitute and widowed women have also been supported, not just by the Mahila Meetings, but also by the entire village CSUs.

Mahila Meeting have provided a collaborative space for women to come together and openly discuss issues. Domestic violence and harassment which earlier used to be confined to the private spaces of homes, and which statistics reveal happens in 1 out of every 2 homes in India, has stepped out into the open, thanks to Coolie Sangha and its ideology. Mahila Meetings have to a large extent been able to identify the various forms of domestic harassment, and not wife beating alone. They have been able to control and prevent these. This in turn has given a lot of security and confidence for the women. Besides, the Domestic Violence Act also acts as a check on the men, though it has thus far never actually been used to book a husband. Most importantly, men and women both seem to realise the need for a decent life without drunken brawls. They see that this will adversely affect their children. An effective minority group has trod new paths and have set an example for the rest of the non CSU families. This has led to a lessening of domestic violence amongst them too.

Insofar as health is concerned, the Mahila Meetings have achieved what no State welfare scheme has been able. Frank and open discussions have made women more aware of their health and their bodies. This is amply proved by their conviction that they need to go to doctors instead of relying on superstitions or quacks, both of which put lives in danger.

Health Camps, good VHVs, and responsive government health institutions have helped in the early detection of diseases. These, coupled with a bare minimum support from ADATS, like the ambulance service, have contributed to lessening mortality rates of women and children. The fact that women understand the need to go to hospitals for delivery is itself ample proof of the level of maturity and understanding they have.³

It is with this same level of understanding that they have preferred small families in their own, as well as their children's interest. They have become good health managers when they realise the need to save money for childbirths. Coolie women state that they have the right to decide on the number of children they want, and when to have them. There is an awareness of the need to reduce family size and women voluntarily go in for family planning even if it is a daughter who is born. This shows that the traditional preference for sons is gradually disappearing. They also have basic knowledge on children's immunization. On the one hand, these suggest that they have faith in the survivability of their children. On the other hand, is a hint of a cohesive strategy to couple one-child-families with inter-Caste choice marriages in order to eventually break the hold of Caste and parochialism.

Women have realised that education and employment are the only ways to improve and upgrade their status. This realisation is seen in the support and importance they have given to educating girls and giving them skill upgradation prior to marriage. They want them to stand on their own feet and become economically independent. They believe that this is the only way that husbands will treat wives with more respect. They are determined that their daughters should not suffer like them. They have stopped holding puberty ceremonies which are an embarrassment and an insult to young girls, akin to putting them for display in the marketplace.

³ We need to look at this in relation to the fact that a majority of child births in India take place at home, and this has led to post natal complications as well as infant mortality

The biggest effect of this silent revolution can be seen overtly in two ways. Firstly, many non-CSU families are beginning to give importance to their health. Secondly, the usually apathetic government health institutions like PHCs, ANM Centres and Anganwadis seem to pitch in their share of the effort. The Coolie Sangha has been able to make these institutions respond to the health needs of the poor by participating in Health Camps and/or by just being there in the hospitals. Their efforts, along with that of Balakendras Teachers, is responsible for bettering the health of children.

When Coolie women say that there is no gender inequity, they seem to be genuine. Girls are treated better at home. Because they have realised the need to educate and train their daughters with skills to make them stand on their own feet. Moreover, they have understood the folly in marrying off girls at a very early age. They believe that 22 years, and not the legally prescribed 18 years, is an ideal age for marriage since their bodies would be strong enough to take on reproductive functions. The fact that the opinion of girls is sought and choice marriages are not looked down upon is ample proof to demonstrate that girls are thought of as individuals. This has helped them to enter into new areas of work, outside their homes, thereby giving them an identity to lead courageous and decent lives.

Young women have realised the need to get educated and develop skills before getting married. Girls are learning to take more decision making responsibilities, and this new role is accepted by all. Coolies families are conscious that girls need to be given a share in the family property and more choice in matters concerning their own marriage.

Coolie women have also been able to beat the usual cliché that women are not politically inclined. They have been responsible individuals and leaders in the Gram Panchayats. They plan to contest even more seats in the next elections, on general seats not reserved for their sex. The fact that Coolie women are getting a lot of respect today is a visible reality, supported by the fact that a Coolie woman's nomination for a general seat was supported by the entire Panchayat; she was elected unopposed! Women Gram Panchayat Members have given a lot of support to Coolie women. Mahila Meetings should take elections more seriously and make sure that women who support the cause of women and the Coolie Sangha, those who are socialised into the Coolie Sangha ideology, should be made to contest.

Coolie women, instead of being passive recipients of welfare, can be seen as dynamic promoters in the social transformation process. Through the Mahila Meetings, supported by the Coolie Sangha ideology, visible economic, social and political transformations have taken place, and these by itself are important ends in the development process.

There are two areas of dissatisfaction among Coolie women. Firstly, in spite of the legal provisions, most marriages are not getting registered. Secondly, many women are unable to claim their share in property simply because land documents are not in order.

Women's Fund loans and grants, given many years ago, have made many economically independent. Coupled with all other forces, it has resulted in a better bargaining power at home. Many Coolie women are consulted on important decisions pertaining to their children, loans and other economic matters. A lot of women are entering into new areas of work which hitherto were the prerogative of men. Although this is seen as a giant leap to making them economically independent, there is a need to carefully scrutinise and see if we are unnecessarily over burdening them. True gender equality can come about only when work (both domestic and productive) is shared by men and women. There needs to be a move towards role reversal. This would considerably lessen the burden on women and put her on the road towards empowerment.

It is important that we do not get carried away by appearances. There is often a temptation to showcase the successful and gloss over those women who have not made it. We need to count hard numbers and make this new utopia a reality for all women.

Coolie women today seem to be a happier and more confident lot, entering new vistas of productive labour with a lot of financial freedom and independence, knowing how to invest and use their money judiciously. Moreover, practical gender measures like domestic biogas has brought in a big change in their lives. It has not only improved their health, but has also put a lot of time in their hands – a resource which they seem to use wisely and sensibly.

E. DIVERSIFIED INCOME FLOWS ESTABLISHED

ACTIVITIES

Coolie Credit Funds (CCFs)

In this reporting period, 1,812 loans amounting to Rs 4.39 million were given out by 105 village CSUs. While far more village CCFs developed “lender confidence” to give out loans when compared to the year before last, the actual number of loans as well as amounts lent out is only half. This suggests a very cautious behaviour on the part of the village CSUs.

Another 1,266 loan instalments amounting to Rs 2.93 million were repaid by as many borrowers from 150 villages to their respective CCFs. Once again, we see a drop in the number of active village CSUs, number of instalments and a heavy drop in the actual amounts repaid. This indicates that Member Coolie families have seriously internalised the complex CCF Recovery Plan they evolved 3 years back to set right their CCF Overdue problem. Please find a detailed description in our 2nd Effects Monitoring Report (April 2005) <http://www.adats.com/documents/book3/0324/>

CCF Loans & Repayments in the past 3 years (as on 31 March 2008)

Period	Loans Given Out			Instalments Repaid		
	CSUs	Loans	Amount	CSUs	Repayments	Amount
This Reporting Period (2007-08)	105	1,812	4,392,450	150	1,266	2,393,112
Year Before Last (2006-07)	55	3,674	8,311,690	119	5,299	12,222,505
Year Before Last (2007-08)	193	3,628	7,450,554	313	5,435	6,782,192

Rating the Effects/Results

A little over half the Cluster Review Meets rated their Results as slightly better than the previous year, a few said there was no change, and 39% felt it was very positive. This appears to be a reflection on the performance of credit giving mechanisms like mainstream financial institutions, their village CCFs, and overall credit availability, rather than Member families’ preparedness and ability to undertake petty business ventures. Primary data does not show any substantial increase in this regard.

84 Cluster Meets rated their Results:

Very Positive	33	39%
Slightly Better than last year	46	55%
No Change	4	5%

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

Primary Data

	Year Before Last	Reporting Year	
Cluster Review Meets who monitored this Sub Effect	49	84	
No. of Self-Employed Business Units that were running Successfully Last Year	228	189	Units
No. of Youth who were in those Self-Employed Business Units Last Year	447	366	Youth
No. of those Self-Employed Business Units that are still running Successfully Today	186	189	Units

No. of New Self-Employed Business Units that have Started This Year	100	43	Units
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E.2. Increasing proportions of employed women in non-traditional employment in successive cohorts (batches)

Primary Data

	Year Before Last	Reporting Year	
Cluster Review Meets who monitored this Sub Effect	49	84	
No. of Women who were in Non-Traditional (Male) Jobs Last Year	778	705	Women
No. of those Women who are still in those Non-Traditional (Male) Jobs This Year	686	595	Women
No. of New Women who have taken up Non-Traditional (Male) Jobs This Year	272	178	New Women

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

Primary Data

As already mentioned when commenting on A.3., the data for year before last and this do not stand too close a scrutiny. Yet we have decided to total the figures exactly as they have been recorded by 84 Cluster Review Meets.

	Year Before Last	Reporting Year	
Cluster Review Meets who monitored this Sub Effect	49	84	
No. of Coolie Youth who are in City Jobs Today (cumulative)	1,709	1,881	Youth
No. of Girls who are in City Jobs Today (cumulative)	381	359	Young Girls
No. of SC/ST Youth among those who are in City Jobs Today (cumulative)	633	771	SC/ST Youth
No. of Muslim Youth who are in City Jobs Today (cumulative)	104	112	Muslim Youth

They realised that “Youth” is not a single, monolithic category. The table below shows the various segmentations and their estimate of the usefulness of these segments for the Coolie Sangha:

CATEGORY	SC/ST	Middle	Upper
1. School Finished and now in City Jobs	V. Useful	+/-	Very Selfish
2. School Finished and in Village – Positive	+/-	Useful for Sangha	Very Few
3. School Finished and in Village – Negative	Spoil their lives	Try to spoil Sangha, mostly fail. Sangha does not trust them	
4. School Dropout in Village – Employed	Normal Members		
5. Youth in Mofussil Colleges			

There are educated youth, uneducated youth, those who remain in villages and those who go to cities. Youth in city jobs have a good impact on the Coolie Sangha. The SC/ST Youth support their family in at least 75% of cases. This is a higher rate than in the case of upper Caste youth.

Youth who have dropped out of school and remain in the village are good for the Coolie Sangha. They have no opportunity to be bad. Touts don't want them. They are already involved in economic pursuits. As parents get old, these youth become CSU Members. Youth in city jobs will never become members.

The Coolie Sangha/ADATS will be preparing a strategic plan for the Youth to incorporate this source of energy into the organisation. This is the reason that the Main Effect "D. Social Change Actively Introduced by Coolie Youth" was not monitored in this 5th Effects Monitoring Exercise.

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

Secondary Data

We still don't see that major shift away from Crop Loans to borrowing for petty business ventures. This in spite of a whole lot of people, especially Coolie women and Youth, borrowing from all sorts of sources to run their businesses. The reason is low lender confidence brought about by the CCF Overdue problem.

The reason why many village CCFs have a low lender confidence, in spite of a whole lot of villages and borrowers being in the clear, is that they are not fully convinced that a genuine fiscal discipline has set in. Authentic self discipline in money matters comes about only through a strong sense of ownership. This is a tough call to make, and they are not prepared to take a gamble. Those without Overdue may possibly be putting on a "purer than thou" act only in order to themselves take the money and run. It is probable that they resent the fact that the other person managed to not repay, while they themselves had to cough up. It may be envy playing up, piqued at not getting a chance. Only when village CSUs are convinced that prospective borrowers are not trying their pot luck, do they liberally release CCF loans.

Rising interest rates, decreasing availability, and the hassles of documentation when trying to access institutional finance should act as a spur on village CSUs to set right their CCFs. Please see E.7. and E.8. below.

CCF Utilisation Pattern (as on 31 March 2008)

Loan Purpose	Amount borrowed		No of loans	
Crop Loan	60,367,498	38%	36,398	61%
Agriculture	6,296,386	4%	1,860	3%
Cattle	30,826,816	19%	10,525	18%
Trade & Entrepreneurship	61,881,123	39%	8,588	14%
Consumption & Others	1,212,991	1%	1,923	3%
Total	160,584,814	100%	59,294	100%

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

Secondary Data

Repayment Rates are at 86.98% which is once again a marginal improvement over year before last. But by no means can we claim that the CCF Overdue problem is over. However, considering that the CCFs are such a huge and widespread alternate credit structure spread over 484 functioning village CSUs and 427 dropped-out villages, any recovery is bound to be slow and painstaking.

When focussing on a serious problem, we usually tend to gloss over those who perform well. It should not be forgotten that 389 village CCFs have zero or very little Overdue. Another 160 village CCFs have manageable Overdue. Together they account for 60% of the village CCFs.

	Village CSUs	Member Families	Overdue Amount	
Zero CCF OD	241 (27%)	0	0	0%
Less than Rs 10,000 OD	148 (16%)	635	858,340	4%
Between Rs 10,001 and Rs 20,000 OD	160 (18%)	1,456	2,452,536	12%
Between Rs 20,001 and Rs 40,000 OD	198 (22%)	2,602	5,735,096	28%
More than Rs 40,000 OD	164 (18%)	4,039	11,779,889	57%
Total	911 (100%)	8,732	20,825,861	100%

If we look at the actual CCF amounts Overdue, the problem is far more acute. There seems to be little chance of 53% of the Overdue amount with Cancelled Members in dropped-out villages ever coming back. Another 22% with Cancelled Members in Functioning village CSUs is in the red, but it is likely that active CSU Members can exert sufficient pressure on them to slowly recover these dues.

	Overdue by Active Members			Overdue by Cancelled Members		
427 Dropped CSUs	-	-	-	4,355	11,040,697	53%
484 Functioning CSUs	2,328	5,160,345	25%	2,049	4,624,819	22%

Our digitized monitoring system uses very complex algorithms to examine various facets of borrowing as well as lending, taking as well as repaying, and calculates CCF performance as under:

Performance	Village CSUs
Excellent	53
Very Good	87
Good	176
Not Good	487

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

Primary Data

When compared to year before last, far more Cluster Review Meets reported far less Bank Loans that Member Coolie families had accessed this year. So too with loans from Farmer Societies, Stree Shakthi groups and other sources.

There is a definite shrinking of mainstream resources available to the poor. Moreover, these are all government prodded schemes that Bankers are thoroughly unconvinced of the need to pay more than lip service. The finance sector does not even pretend to be pro-poor any longer.

	Year Before Last	Reporting Year	
Cluster Review Meets who monitored this Sub Effect	49	84	
No. of Bank Loans availed by Coolie Families this Year	875	456	Bank Loans
Rupee Value of Bank Loans obtained this Year	38,321,632	10,559,000	Rupees
No. of Coolie Families who availed Coop Society Loans this Year	76	80	Society Loans

Rupee Value of Coop Society Loans obtained this Year	1,716,000	1,567,000	Rupees
No. of Coolie Families who availed Other Loans this Year	348	158	Other Loans
Rupee Value of Other Loans obtained this Year	18,724,500	3,739,000	Rupees
No. of Women who Availed Stree Shakthi Loans this Year	2,572	1,883	Stree Shakthi Loans
Rupee Value of Stree Shakthi Loans obtained this Year	15,265,050	15,171,000	Rupees

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

Primary Data

This time, it is year before last's data that is a bit fuzzy and does not stand to arithmetic scrutiny.

But it is enough to see that, with a decline of feudalism, Nagu has lessened. This is a highly exploitative barter system whereby small peasants pay twice or even three times what they borrow in terms of seeds, and acts as the economic basis for Patron-Client relationships..

Not so with Vaddi or Usury. 47% of borrowers still pay a horrible interest rate of 36% per annum on unsecured hand loans they borrow to raise crops and finance petty businesses. 36% pay an interest of almost 60% p.a. and another 17% pay a usurious interest more than 72% p.a.

The actual number of families who mortgage their lands under Bhogyam has dropped considerably. These odd cases are habitual borrowers with very little fiscal discipline and absolutely no self-esteem. Village CSUs tear their hair in despair whenever they discuss such cases.

	Year Before Last	Reporting Year	
Cluster Review Meets who monitored this Sub Effect	49	84	
No. of Coolie Families who went in for <i>Nagu</i> (exploitative barter) to put their Crops last Year	40	56	Families
No. of Coolie Families who borrowed from Ryots/Traders on <i>Vaddi</i> (cruel Usury) to put their Crops last Year	1,423	880	Borrowers
No. of Coolie Families who borrowed from Ryots/Traders on <i>Vaddi</i> to do Business/Trade last Year	628	482	Borrowers
No. of Coolie Families who agreed to pay a <i>Vaddi</i> rate of Rs 2-3 per Rs 100 per month	922	636	Borrowers
No. of Coolie Families who agreed to pay a <i>Vaddi</i> rate of Rs 4-5 per Rs 100 per month	510	487	Borrowers
No. of Coolie Families who agreed to pay a <i>Vaddi</i> rate of Rs 6 or More per Rs 100 per month	265	232	Borrowers
No. of Coolie Families who Mortgaged (<i>Bhogyam</i>) their lands to Ryots under Bhogyam this Year	68	34	Mortgages

Factors that Contributed to this Result

- Youth in city jobs send money back home and take other village Youth to the cities.
- A controlled and safer choice migration wherein Coolies go to Bangalore in search of jobs during the off season.
- Coolies have been involved in petty business and exploited local resources like tamarind picking, selling evening snacks, etc.
- Loans from Banks, Stree Shakthi, SC/ST corporation, TRYSEM, Milk Collection Societies, etc. More than half the village CSUs have made maximum use of their CCFs. But unfortunately, the bad performance of the other half tends to rob the limelight.

- More women are involved in family income activities like the purchase of milch cows and rearing sheep.

Lessons Learnt

Skill training given to Youth have helped them in finding employment on nearby cities and towns. Harijana Youth in particular have been able to get into jobs they otherwise would not have dreamt of. This has given them confidence. Skill trainings has ensured employment to both boys and girls. They feel that armed with skills it is possible to find employment anywhere, either in the city or village. Money that the Youth send home have really enabled augmenting of household income. This money has been used to clear debt and even invest on land. Getting appropriate skills is what needs to be given importance in the changed economy. Some more new skill trainings need to be given for new opportunities that keep arising in the market economy, be it local or global.

Education, skill trainings, as well as the CCFs have been responsible for many Coolie women to enter into non-traditional occupations that were earlier done by men. Not only have they proved their worth as financial managers, they have also become economically independent. Enabling women to enter into paid work will have immense ramifications on Coolies lives. An immediate effect that can be seen overtly – none of their lands have been put under the traditional mortgage system of *Bhogyam*.

That income diversification is a reality among Coolies is true and seen in the determination that they have to earn more. Youth particularly have the confidence to work and come up in life. Loans have been taken by some to do cooperative business, but unfortunately the CCFs have not been extensively used because of default by a few. Many found collective ventures better than individual ones as it involved less investment and had the security of the group to fall back on. However, the seasonal availability raw materials was a restrictive factor. Increase incomes have helped these families to live decently instead of depending on wage labour alone.

Although the Stree Shakthi groups have come to the aid of women who wished to do petty business, they realise that it is a group without any ideology and does not have the capacity to hold them cohesively. CSU Members have realised that CCF is the best source of loan for them, as it frees them from all sorts of dependencies. They realise the advantages of CCFs and how important capital rotation is for income augmentation. Not only is there no interest or security, but it is also accessible by all. But because of overdue and non repayments, many are not able to benefit from their village CCFs.

This realisation may be spurred by the fact that banks refuse to give loans to those whose land documents are not in order. Now they have realised the importance of holding clear land titles. CSU Members today realise that documents like land records and ration cards need to be maintained, not just because it allows them to access loans, but more so because it provides another form of identity and citizenry in the modern world.

At the same time, pressure brought on Banks to make richer borrowers pay back their loans. The same Bank Managers who curse the poor for not repaying, tend to support these rich defaulters. This should not be tolerated.

Coolie women have been enabled to enter into non-traditional occupations like brick making, running small shops, and other petty ventures. Income diversification can happen only if all enter areas of productive work irrespective of Caste, class or sex. Backed by the Coolie Sangha, they have become good business managers confident of leading decent lives like anybody else.

In some villages, the CCFs are rotated well. This has made those CSU Members credit worthy and banks are willing to give loans because of an evident discipline that has come insofar as repayment is concerned.

All said and done, it is to the credit of the Coolies that today have a discipline concerning money and they have the confidence to borrow. This is one reason they have been borrowing from the available lending agencies. They have gained confidence because of the repaying capacity of most of the CSU Members.

A few Coolies have been able to access various opportunities for employment through welfare schemes of the government corporations. While one does not grudge Harijans being able to get what is rightly meant for them, one wonders whether this would lead to a reinforcing of Caste identities. Using Caste is a Catch-22 situation. Perhaps these are the issues that the Coolie Sangha has to debate on in future.

There are many girls who have been able to find work in the cities and have been a help to their families. While this is something to be admired, care has to be taken that they do not work under exploitative conditions. These are aspects that many young women may not dare talk about and therefore go unnoticed. Thus Coolie Sangha, and particularly the Mahila Meetings, need to be concerned that the positive aspects of employment are not negated by the exploitation of women working in the unorganized sector.

Both, men and women entering into productive work, has also helped increase income and economic status. The enterprising nature of Coolie women is seen in businesses they run on their own.

A huge difference between these Results and results obtained in gender (women and Harijans) is that these are not all across the board achievements got by a vast majority of Coolie families. While more than half the schooled Youth are able to get city jobs, loans are accessed only by a fraction of Coolies. Of them, only a small proportion succeed in their new businesses for any length of time.

F. COOLIE LANDS SYSTEMATICALLY CONSERVED AND CULTIVATED

ACTIVITIES

Dry Land Horticulture

Immediately after last year's memberships stabilised with Sangha Tax payment in January 2007, every single Coolie landholding was visited by our Field Staff and the centre reading of each plot was taken using a GPS recorder. These latitude and longitude readings, when entered into our database, generated accurate maps of where each plot was. We needed to enable Member Coolies switch over from Field Crops to Tree Crops on 18,000 hectares of land.

An independent team was set up to go around collecting data on every single sapling planted since 1996. Our IT Professionals made a module to capture historical data like date of planting, species planted, number of saplings, their present girth and height, etc.

We found that we had, through *ad hoc efforts* of the past 12 years, planted 93,728 saplings on 3,017 acres (1,221 hectares). Of these, only 55% had survived.

But trees had established, with more than 80% of the planted saplings surviving for more than 2 years, only on 212 acres (86 hectares). So actual Results, measured in terms of permanent switch from Field Crops to Tree Crops, had occurred only on 5% of participating landholdings.

- When we look at this Result in a segmented manner, Women headed households, Middle Caste households and those who owned between 1.1 to 2 acres of land had fared better.
- Male headed households, Upper Caste families, those who had not renewed their CSU Membership, and families with more than 4.1 acres of land had fared worst.

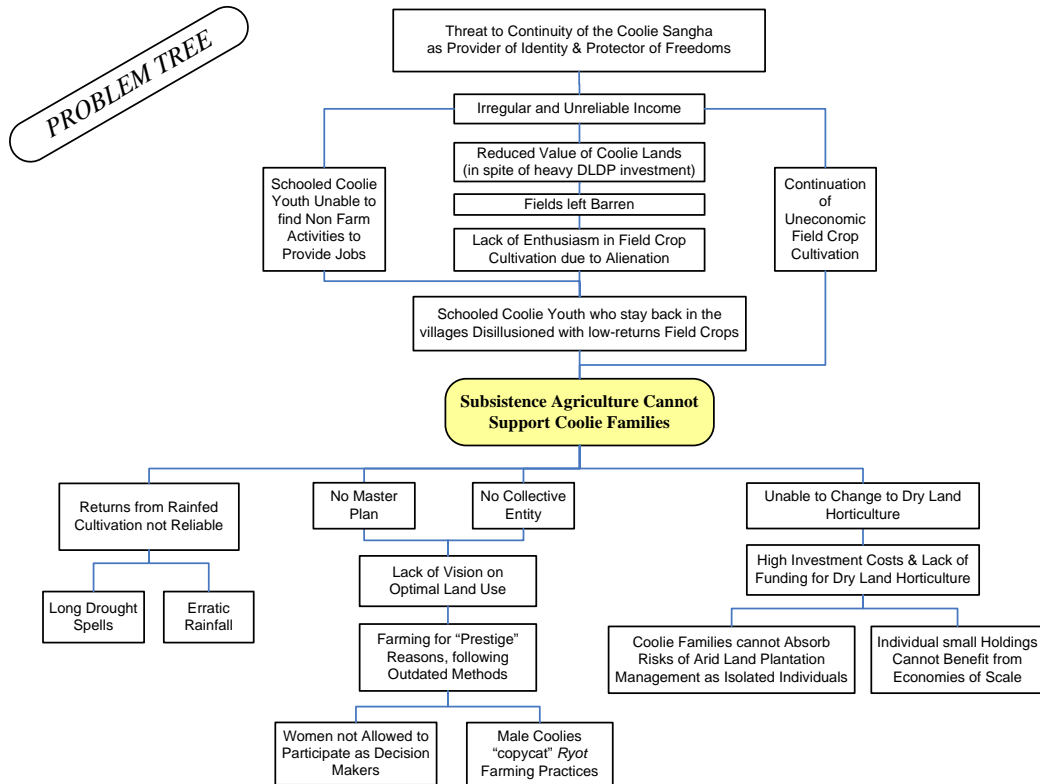
CATEGORY	PARTICIPANTS		OUTPUT		OUTCOME ⁴			
	Families	Holding	Planted	Saplings	Survived	Established		
Men	650	3,392 ac	2,226 ac	69,532	37,310	54%	130 ac	4%
Women	236	1,063 ac	791 ac	24,196	14,321	59%	81 ac	8%
SC/ST	560	2,602 ac	1,788 ac	52,637	28,264	54%	125 ac	5%
Middle	130	641 ac	422 ac	12,255	7,054	58%	68 ac	11%
Upper	196	1,212 ac	807 ac	28,836	16,313	57%	19 ac	2%
Active	621	3,234 ac	2,180 ac	75,526	44,197	59%	175 ac	5%
Cancelled	265	1,221 ac	837 ac	18,202	7,434	41%	37 ac	3%
0.1 - 1 ac	15	15 ac	15 ac	790	332	42%	0 ac	-
1.1 - 2 ac	113	223 ac	216 ac	8,714	5,454	63%	17 ac	8%
2.1 - 3 ac	158	469 ac	413 ac	13,352	6,759	51%	33 ac	7%
3.1 - 4 ac	174	684 ac	561 ac	16,773	10,289	61%	46 ac	7%
4.1 - 5 ac	122	600 ac	436 ac	12,176	6,468	53%	24 ac	4%
Over 5 ac	304	2,463 ac	1,374 ac	41,923	22,329	53%	91 ac	4%
Overall	886	4,456 ac	3,017 ac	93,728	51,631	55%	212 ac	5%

The main reason for this low Survival Rate and poor Result was because no watering support had been provided. These were results propelled entirely by a political will to switch over from an unsustainable and subsistence cultivation.

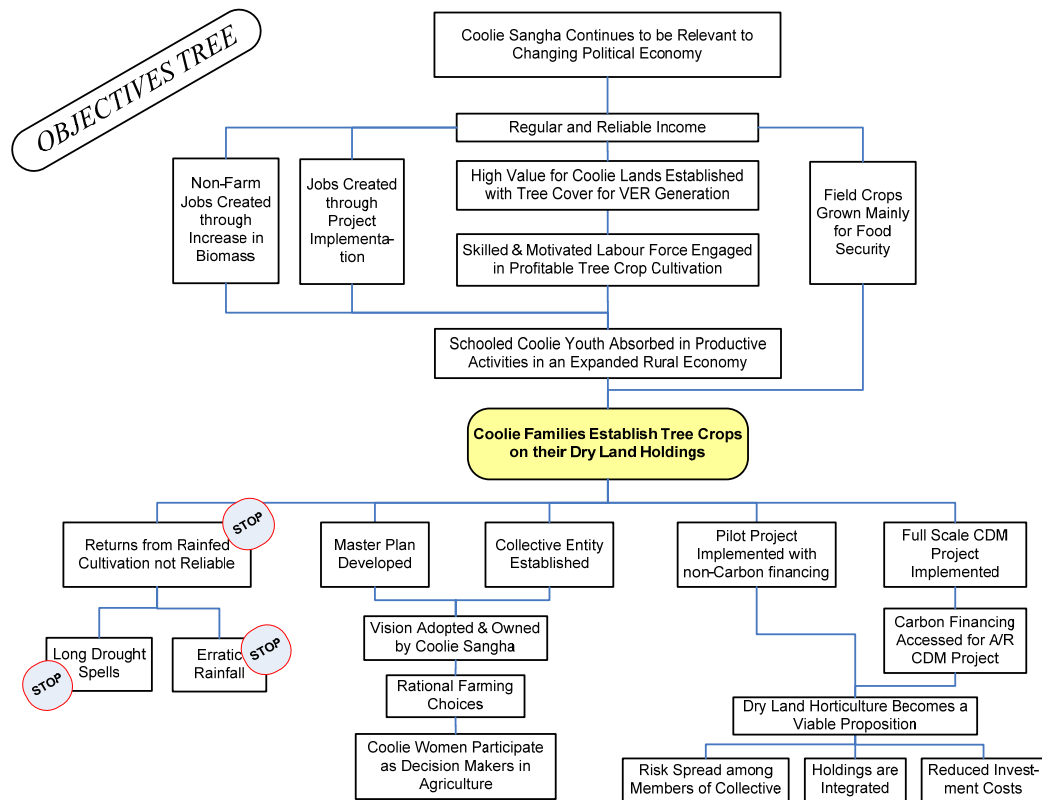
⁴ Over 80% Survival Rate, for more than 2 years, on each one's holding

Strategic Planning

In April 2007, we held a series of workshops and developed a Strategic Plan, facilitated by Ajit Mani of Intervention (India) Pvt. Ltd. We spelt out our Team Vision & Mission, made a Situation Analysis, Stakeholder Analysis, Importance/Influence Matrix, SWOT Analysis, identified Core Strategies and listed our Strategic Priorities. Finally, we were able to build a Problem Tree:



and reversed it to make an Objectives Tree:



A/R Validation

Armed with this clear understanding of the situation, we decided to bring out our Afforestation/ Reforestation CDM Project from the back burner and proceed with validation.

In May and June 2007 we prepared our CCBA documentation. The emphasis in this registration is on the climate, community and biodiversity aspects of the project. Please visit <http://www.adats.com/cdm/ccbadoc.php> for more details.

In July 2007 we contracted TÜV SÜD, München, to validate the project. However, the second visit of the Validators has been postponed till we establish proper tenure records for each Coolie landholding. This involves a very painstaking and time consuming activity to scan the *Pahanis* and *Kathe* records of each and every plot. Polygon readings have to be taken of the multiple corners that each plot comprises of, in order to calculate exact area and delineate the distinct parcels of land where the A/R CDM will be implemented. All this will take us till at least the end of this year. Please visit <http://www.adats.com/cdm/ccba.php> for more details.

Marcus Fund of SCATEC AS

We explored non-A/R CDM options as well. An attempt was made to mobilise resources from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation – rejected. Another attempt was made to mobilise EU Funding through an Icco led consortium of 5 Indian NGOs – this application was so generic and of such poor quality that it was never submitted.

However, a private foundation set up by a Norwegian businessman showed interest and we were able to procure funding for a limited pilot project. 24,703 saplings were planted by 148 families on

582 acres in 29 villages in 2007. Survival Rate for these plants is 51% in spite of watering support. This shows that there are still huge lacunae in our project implementation design. We realised that merely providing Field Tanks and arranging for hand pouring of water was not enough. We need a full time Horticulturist and Extension Workers to develop/implement good tree growing practices.

The Rockwool Experiment

In May 2007, Icco brought a team of scientists from TNO, the Netherlands, under a Corporate Social Responsibility programme. TNO is a large body of scientists that attempts to bridge the gap between applied science and technology on the one hand, and industry on the other. They were willing to give scientific solutions to practical problems we identified. One of the 3 issues we requested them for assistance was to somehow reduce the quantity of water that had to be hand poured during the first 2 years of the sapling's life. This would mean a huge savings in terms of money as well as labour since the newly planted saplings needed to be watered twice a week, every week, for 7 summer months. If we could reduce the quantity of water from 30 litres per watering to, say, 10 litres, and/or from twice a week to once, this would drastically reduce the cost of establishing trees on dry lands. This experiment, using a water absorbing substance called Rockwool, is well under way and the TNO team has already made 2 more visits.

Rating the Effects/Results

The Cluster Review Meets have assessed Results obtained vis-à-vis their agriculture and cultivation in a very mixed manner. Two-third say that it was very positive and 27% that it was slightly better than the year before last. But far more interesting are the 5 Clusters who say there was no change, that it was slightly worse than the year before last and even very negative.

This, in spite of a fair amount of rainfall in 2007 and crop yields being not all that bad. Is this because they see very little future in the continuation of subsistence cultivation? Are the demographic shifts in their composition, with an increasing number of schooled Youth disinterested in traditional agriculture negatively impacting cultivation?

Perhaps such a mixed rating is because Member Coolie families have not come to grips with the rapidly changed political economy. They are unable to clearly place their lands and cultivation in the emerging framework. Except for an almost whimsical feeling that land ought not be sold off since it is an asset that has to be passed on to children (who may not want it). Such pangs of doubt and confusion is only to be expected when a seemingly obsolete mode of production begins to give way to mainstream economic forces, in spite of all the intuitive wisdom a people may possess as to the advisability of modernisation.

85 Cluster Meets rated their Results:

Very Positive	57	67%
Slightly Better than last year	23	27%
No Change	2	2%
Slightly Worse than Last Year	2	2%
Very Negative	1	1%

F.1. Increased Average Income from DLDP lands

Secondary Data

Unfortunately we did not capture yields for the cropping year 2007 in our database due to an organisational oversight and technical glitch. We have taken steps to ensure that this does not recur.

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

Primary Data

Unfortunately we do not have good data for year before last. But this year's Effects Monitoring exercise shows that 106 families actually sold off their lands, 17 others attempted to but were stopped either because of CSU opposition, or simply because deals didn't come through. The Cluster Review Meets were able to count 111 Ryots (middle and rich peasant families) who sold off their lands in the past 12 months.

	Year Before Last	Reporting Year	
Cluster Review Meets who monitored this Sub Effect	45	85	
No. of Coolie Families who actually sold their lands during the past 1 year	N.A.	106	Cases
No. of Coolie Families who attempted to sell their lands during the past 1 year	N.A.	17	Cases
No. of Ryots who sold their lands during the past 1 year	N.A.	111	Cases

Factors that Contributed to this Result

- Many years of DLDP works has contributed to an increase in the productivity of Coolie lands.
- Even a few families taking up Dry Land Horticulture has opened everyone's eyes as to how valuable land can be.
- People coming from outside to enquire about the lands has artificially increased market rates and created a new breed of "Real Estate Agents". Some Clusters close to the National Highway, and Bengaluru International Airport experience a sharp rise in land prices. Similarly, the proposed Science City in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh has also increased the value of land in a few other Clusters
- However, Coolie land sales are low (and totally non-existent in many Clusters) because of a realisation that this is bad.

Lessons Learnt

Many years of continuous DLDP works has made Coolie lands productive and yields have increased. While some would like to continue growing food crops, others plan to start/increase the area under dry land horticulture – i.e. tree crops. The idea seems to add to the food security while also be able to get sustainable incomes.

Developments taking place in the market economy have increased the market rate for their lands. Lured by money, some Coolies have sold their lands and not benefitted from it. For the rest, this has been a lesson not to sell off their lands. They have realised that anything but land can be bought.

CSU Members are determined not to sell their lands because they know that their status, dignity and identity in village society comes from holding on to their lands - properties that have come from their ancestors, and need to be kept for their children.

G. CRITICAL PROJECT OUTPUT : COOLIES UNITED ACROSS ALL DIVIDES

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

ACTIVITIES

CSU & Mahila Meetings

More than one-half the functioning CSUs meet very regularly on a fixed day every week, rain or shine. A woman from each Member Coolie family continues to attend her separate *in camera* Mahila Meeting on another fixed day of the week.

But the regularity of about one-third the village CSU and Mahila Meetings has waned. The first reason that jumps to mind is an increasing number of “opportunistic” Members in these newer CSUs who are interested in getting together only for material and non-material benefits.

However, there could be a kinder and more forgivable reason. Our 9 year long efforts to introduce a results oriented management culture, coupled with the sheer socio-political strength and presence we command, has sent a different message on the very character of the people’s organisation. Older Member Coolie families, who have internalised a sense of history, see management as an *add-on* to the brute strength they have obtained through unity. Newcomers, on the other hand, do not see the Coolie Sangha as a forum where small and poor peasants come together for no reason at all, merely to draw strength from one another and express solidarity.

Whatever be the reason, the ecclesiastical nature of village CSUs, where meetings used to be held with a religious regularity, is certainly missing in some of these newer villages. This does not auger well for the Coolie Sangha. It’s agenda to project itself as a primary institution and poise itself as a keen contender to Caste as provider of Identity will come under threat. If this continues, the Coolie Sangha could soon slip to the position of a secondary social institution.⁵

The malice is not contained to new village CSUs alone. We clearly see early signs of an organisational lethargy setting in. A few of the older village CSUs are simply tired. Instead of holding a perfunctory CSU or Mahila Meetings, they skip it altogether.

When institutional structures and discipline slip up, it is a sure pointer to Relevance. We have to seriously reconsider the changed material milieu. Times have changed and people have less time. Families are dispersed and thousands of Coolie youth are in city jobs. The main breadwinner is often not physically present to represent his or her family in the CSU and Mahila Meetings.

Coolies find themselves in an uncertain world where there are no guarantees. The political economy has suddenly changed from semi-feudal to capitalism. In this changed political economy, unity and discipline are still vital for the poor to contend with wider society. But the form and content of that unity can no longer be mere anti-feudal rhetoric. The Coolie Sangha strategy requires revision to cope with the current situation.

Many a slip-up in efficacy can be directly traced to irregular village meetings arising from a lack of realising that Unity is still needed, albeit a new form of it. Be it a wrong CCF decision where loans are passed without due consideration to utilisation and repayment, not carefully assessing a patient’s requirement and releasing timely assistance, selecting a wrong Village Level Worker, or simply not nipping a problem in the bud. Sporadic meetings negatively impact membership as well. Bursts of pent-up grudges and disgruntlement, built over a long period, have to be addressed when the village CSU does meet, normally at the time of membership renewal and/or when disbursement of benefits are decided upon.

⁵ While a Secondary Social Institution serves a particular purpose for it’s members (e.g. Milk Collection Society, Football Club, etc.) the Primary Social Institution is one that provides identity to it’s members.

Cluster Meets

Weekly Cluster Meets, on the other hand, are held with a clockwork regularity and hardly ever cancelled. In most cases, elected Cluster Secretaries and Women's Committee Members are able to run these "working meetings" from about 2 pm to 6 pm on a fixed day every week.

All the elected CSU Representatives of each village that comprises the Cluster, Village Health Workers, Balakendra Teachers and newly appointed Village Level Workers attend these meetings.

Field Workers and Mahila Trainers attend 60-80% of Cluster Meets.

Taluk Executive Committee Meetings

These meetings of all the elected Cluster Secretaries and Women's Committee Members, once a fortnight at their respective Taluk headquarters, are held fairly regularly. But even here, a little toning up can be done to make them more efficient "working meetings".

Taluk Coolie Sangha Meetings

All the elected Functionaries and CSU Representatives met for 2 days every month, on a fixed weekend. 50 such meetings were held in the reporting period, averaging 10 per Taluk. These parliament-like meetings were conducted by elected Taluk Secretaries and there was no let-up. Besides debating on the lengthy Cluster Reports, they discussed a range of wider issues affecting the Taluk as a whole and the Coolie caste-class in general. These are the fora that conveyed the visible presence of the Coolie Sangha to the population at large.

Income Declaration & Sangha Tax payment

December is the month when CSU Members sit together to declare their annual income from various sources. January is when they cough up an agreed percentage as Sangha Tax to renew current year membership. 31 January is a sacrosanct cut-off date, and none are admitted into the village CSUs mid-year.

In a very rare display of cohesive wisdom⁶ the January 2008 monthly Taluk Coolie Sangha Meeting at Bagepalli rejected all Income Declarations of the past 14 years, terming them as bogus and ordered that the data be expunged. If the purpose was just to mobilise an average of Rs 200-220 as "membership fee" from each family, then we needn't go through this torturous 2 months of perfunctory pretence, and make a sham of matters.

They declared that the highest form of unity in village society was a total and complete sharing of personal finances. If it was not possible for CSU Members to reveal all their income sources and amounts to one another, all other talk of Coolie Sangha unity was meaningless. The Coolie Sangha, they declared, was ideology driven and gave Identity to its members. It was not a functional grouping of convenience to merely obtain protection and grab material/non-material benefits. Without a committed membership, it would not be possible to face any of the emerging challenges in a rapidly changed political economy.

The other 4 Taluk Coolie Sangha Meetings discussed this radical action of the Bagepalli forum and decided to follow suit. The Coolie Sangha was adamant. They were hell bent on "cleansing" the people's organisation and creating a "committed membership".

⁶ Please see our Application Coolie Sangha Formalisation at <http://www.adats.com/documents/book2/0205/> where we speak of the Individual, the Collective and the Cohesive and go on to say:

"Only a cohesively organised lot, capable of astute societal analysis, with the strength which comes from the large numbers that sustain serious efforts, the in-built discipline to instil confidence in its members to follow complicated strategies, can find the difficult paths and actualize spaces for themselves in the maze of subtle possibilities which capitalism unwittingly opens out for its victims."

In February 2008, everyone was asked to re-declare their honest incomes and reveal all their sources. Fresh minutes were recorded in the CSU Minutes Books, new forms were filled in, and the data was re-recorded into our database.

The March 2008 Taluk Coolie Sangha Meetings relaxed the customary Sangha Tax rate of 5% and reduced it to 2% of declared Income. There was a mad scramble by everyone to pay up but, in the end, the overall average reached only 1.21% of declared income, with many families saying that they would pay the balance later in the year.

Losses were severe. 4,066 families who were members the previous year decided not to declare their incomes at all. Another 1,235 families declared, but did not to pay up to renew their current year membership. But there were surprising developments too. 354 brand new families joined the CSUs in their respective villages. Another 440 families renewed their membership after a gap of several years.

It would be a gross exaggeration to state that all the elected CSU Representatives were equally vehement in these far-reaching and sweeping decisions. They were carried along by a close-to-crazed minority. But such is the power of the cohesive, when a determined creative minority can make a huge audience take the morally correct stand, casting caution and compromise to the winds, and not be overtly concerned with the petty gains and losses of the very same individuals who comprise that collective. This is why, many years back we termed cohesive expressions as class aspirations.

[Analysing Income Declaration & Sangha Tax payment](#)

Our IT Professionals made a detailed gender analysis of these declared incomes, categorising them under sex, number of earning family members and landholding, for SC/ST, Middle and Upper Caste families.

Gender Analysis of Declared Income

Family Category	SC/ST Families			Middle Families			Upper Families			Total		
	Families	Declared	Average	Families	Declared	Average	Families	Declared	Average	Families	Declared	Average
Male headed Families	7,338	139,750,533	19,044	2,509	49,254,151	19,630	4,422	98,426,736	22,258	14,269	287,431,420	20,143
Women headed Families	916	13,651,423	14,903	267	4,351,084	16,296	482	8,735,365	18,123	1,665	26,737,872	16,058
Total	8,254	153,401,956	18,585	2,776	53,605,235	19,310	4,904	107,162,101	21,851	15,934	314,169,292	19,716
No Earning Member	77	953,105	12,377	26	398,020	15,308	38	562,148	14,793	141	1,913,273	13,569
1 Earning Member	901	14,073,177	15,619	313	5,067,559	16,190	559	10,546,530	18,866	1,773	29,687,266	16,744
2 Earning Members	3,832	70,767,953	18,467	1,370	26,893,192	19,630	2,392	51,595,614	21,570	7,594	149,256,759	19,654
3 Earning Members	1,746	33,026,747	18,915	537	10,824,017	20,156	950	21,261,225	22,380	3,233	65,111,989	20,139
4 Earning Members	948	18,827,708	19,860	313	6,412,454	20,487	515	11,717,861	22,753	1,776	36,958,023	20,809
5+ Earning Members	750	15,753,266	21,004	217	4,009,993	18,479	450	11,478,723	25,508	1,417	31,241,982	22,047
Total	8,254	153,401,956	18,585	2,776	53,605,235	19,310	4,904	107,162,101	21,851	15,934	314,169,292	19,716

Landless	1,529	28,966,092	18,944	751	14,517,190	19,330	1,460	30,981,710	21,220	3,740	74,464,992	19,910
0.1 to 1 acre	440	7,275,182	16,534	84	1,433,807	17,069	135	2,595,659	19,227	659	11,304,648	17,154
1.1 to 2 acres	1,585	26,728,015	16,863	356	6,339,258	17,806	455	8,474,855	18,626	2,396	41,542,128	17,338
2.1 to 3 acres	1,568	27,948,382	17,824	442	7,870,502	17,806	675	14,427,473	21,374	2,685	50,246,357	18,713
3.1 to 4 acres	1,281	24,045,487	18,770	400	7,546,730	18,866	644	14,446,595	22,432	2,325	46,038,812	19,801
4.1 to 5 acres	752	15,212,341	20,229	281	6,100,011	21,708	518	11,074,020	21,378	1,551	32,386,372	20,880
> 5 acres	1,099	23,226,457	21,134	462	9,797,737	21,207	1,017	25,161,789	24,741	2,578	58,185,983	22,570
Total	8,254	153,401,956	18,585	2,776	53,605,235	19,310	4,904	107,162,101	21,851	15,934	314,169,292	19,716

Based on this gendered analysis, they applied some natty algorithms to determine who had declared an “honest” annual income and found that only 51% of the membership had done so. Male headed households were generally more honest than women headed ones. SC/ST, Middle and Upper Castes were almost uniform in the percentage of honest income declarers.

Quality of Income Declarations

	Honest		Average		Dishonest	
Male Headed SC/ST	3,911	53%	328	4%	3,099	42%
Women Headed SC/ST	385	42%	135	15%	396	43%
Male Headed Middle Castes	1,321	53%	81	3%	1,107	44%
Women Headed Middle Castes	117	44%	29	11%	121	45%
Male Headed Upper Castes	2,262	51%	142	3%	2,018	46%
Women Headed Upper Castes	198	41%	57	12%	227	47%
Total	8,194	51%	772	5%	6,968	44%

Insofar as sources of declared incomes were concerned, SC/ST families showed more income from Coolie work and Upper Caste families from farming and agriculture. The average declared family income was Rs 19,717 with SC/ST families recording a little less and Upper Caste families a little more.

Sources Income

Income Category	SC/ST Incomes		Middle Incomes		Upper Incomes		Total	
Coolie	53,059,887	34%	13,264,944	24%	18,290,484	17%	84,615,315	26%
Farming & Agriculture	55,596,596	36%	21,255,331	39%	53,893,361	50%	130,745,288	41%
Off Farm Ventures	22,492,496	14%	8,688,864	16%	19,597,647	18%	50,779,007	16%
Petty Business	7,468,383	4%	4,850,517	9%	6,412,107	5%	18,731,007	5%
Salaries & Stipends	8,815,117	5%	3,099,538	5%	5,486,330	5%	17,400,985	5%
Other	2,800,877	1%	725,373	1%	1,313,912	1%	4,840,162	1%
Carbon Offsets	341,275	0%	177,425	0%	335,525	0%	854,225	0%
Transport	2,118,055	1%	381,200	0%	1,305,080	1%	3,804,335	1%
Artisan	592,350	0%	1,075,393	2%	497,155	0%	2,164,898	0%
Services	116,920	0%	86,650	0%	30,500	0%	234,070	0%
Total	153,401,956	100%	53,605,235	100%	107,162,101	100%	314,169,292	100%
Families	8,254		2,776		4,904		15,934	
Average Family Income	Rs 18,585		Rs 19,310		Rs 21,852		Rs 19,717	

While only a handful of families claimed they had annual incomes of less than Rs 6,000 the majority fell under the Rs 12,000 to 18,000 bracket. However, we have no way to compare these figures with the past 13 years since incomes declared from 1994 to 2006 now appear to be totally false and under-stated.⁷

Per Capita Family Income

Income Level	SC/ST Families		Middle Families		Upper Families		Total	
Below 6K	108	1%	36	1%	37	0%	181	0%
Between 6K & 12K	1,668	20%	529	19%	654	13%	2,851	10%
Between 12K & 18K	3,308	40%	1,066	38%	1,724	35%	6,098	20%
Between 18K & 24K	1,755	21%	562	20%	1,098	22%	3,415	11%
Between 24K & 36K	1,024	12%	412	14%	952	19%	2,388	6%
Over 36K	391	4%	171	6%	439	8%	1,001	2%
Total	8,254	100%	2,776	100%	4,904	100%	15,934	100%
		51%		17%		30%		100%

All this data was generated Cluster-wise and shared with the Member Coolie families in deep and reflective meetings for many weeks.

Rating the Effects/Results

The most authentic rating by the Cluster Review Meets appears to be for this Main Effect. The below table mirrors objective performance assessment done by our digitized monitoring system, using un-sparing algorithms.

83 Cluster Meets rated their Results:

Very Positive	33	40%
Slightly Better than last year	33	40%
No Change	7	8%
Slightly Worse than Last Year	6	7%
Very Negative	4	5%

G.1. Time Series Increase of CSU Membership

Secondary Data

CSU Membership dropped to a low of 14,609 Coolie families in March 2008 when as many of them declared their annual income and paid Sangha Tax in 484 village CSUs. They constitute a total of 53,789 adults and 20,210 minors.

⁷ So much so that we will have to repudiate many claims on income improvement made in earlier Effects Monitoring Reports.

CSU Membership (as on 31 March 2008)

Phase of Coolie Sangha building	Village CSUs		Active Member Families		Coverage	Inactive	
1st 3 year Formation	40	4%	1,173	8%	62%	341	1%
2nd 3 year Formalisation	29	3%	954	7%	49%	274	1%
3rd 3 year Consolidation	25	3%	927	6%	25%	590	2%
Independent CSUs	390	43%	11,555	79%	32%	9,267	39%
Functioning CSUs	484	53%					
Dropped out villages	431	47%			-	13,529	56%
	915	100%	14,609	100%	19%	24,006	100%

5,217 (36%) of these family memberships are in the names of Coolie women who represent their respective families in the village CSUs. But there are only 1,519 (10%) families that are completely women headed – i.e. there are no male relatives in the 23-60 year age group. The Cluster Review Meets discussed these figures at length, for their respective villages, and concluded that the remaining 26% were Coolie women who had actually wrested control over their families from male relatives – husbands, fathers, brothers, grown-up sons, etc.

The coverage of the entire population of the region (i.e. all 915 villages) is 19%. But within the functioning villages, coverage is 34%.

51% of CSU Members are Harijans and Tribals, 18% belong to Middle Castes and 31% to Upper Castes. While 37% of the SC/ST population are attracted by the Coolie Sangha, only 29% of the Middle and 32% of Upper Castes join village CSUs.

Caste composition of CSU Members (as on 31 March 2008)

Member Families	Percent in CSUs	Caste Group	Total Families		Ethnic Cover
7,486	51%	Scheduled Castes/Tribes	20,055	46%	37%
2,582	18%	Middle Castes	8,971	21%	29%
4,541	31%	Upper Castes	14,363	33%	32%
14,609			43,389	100%	34%

All the above numbers and percentages are much less impressive than the year before last. This is because of a heavy membership loss of more than 4,500 families and 45 village CSUs that occurred due to a tightening up on the Income Declaration and Sangha Tax payment processes in the Coolie Sangha.

Insistence on honest declaration of annual income and payment of full Sangha Tax has dropped membership figures very sharply.

- There are only 14,609 Tax paid Member families this year, as against 19,118 the year before last.
- Actual Sangha Tax collections dropped to Rs 3.48 million, down from Rs 4.54 million the year before last.
- But in spite of an insistence on full Tax payment, the figure stayed at a steady Rs 238 per family due to the drop in Tax Rate from 5% to 2% and less than full compliance.

Time Series Information on CSU Membership

Sangha Tax Paid	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
No of village CSUs	485	495	556	434	498	529	484
Total families who paid up	10,532	13,471	16,573	13,308	16,752	19,118	14,609
Loss in previous year membership	4,322	1,967	2,239	5,693	858	782	5,301
Cancelled families who renewed membership after a gap	744	1,660	1,526	863	1,661	853	440
Brand new families who joined for the very first time	1,853	3,246	3,815	1,565	2,641	2,800	354
Total Sangha Tax paid (Rs)	2,183,528	2,913,064	3,551,497	2,795,881	3,832,514	4,541,607	3,478,487
Average Sangha Tax paid (Rs)	154	189	190	204	228	237	238

G.2. Increase in Decentralised Sangha FundsSecondary Data

This year, in spite of a severe loss in membership, we have had a 9% growth in the accumulation of Sangha Funds. This is because the drop in membership will reflect in 2008-09 collections and be reflected in the next stocktaking exercise.

- Rs 6.62 million was collected in the form of Sangha Tax and other voluntary contributions. Rs 4.36 million was the bank interest earned on the decentralised village Fixed Deposits
- Rs 0.86 million was spent by the village CSUs on pensions, medical aid, basic medicines for first aid, etc. Another Rs 2.66 million was given out as scholarships for school going children. Rs 0.83 million was spent on salaries and stipends for Coolie Sangha Functionaries. The rest was on various administrative expenses of the village CSUs.
- Rs 8.53 million was placed as fresh Fixed Deposits in the names of respective village CSUs who had unspent balance in March 2008.

The decentralised village level corpus now stands at Rs 68.32 million.

Growth in Sangha Fund Balances

	31 Mar 2003	31 Mar 2004	31 Mar 2005	31 Mar 2006	31 Mar 2007	31 Mar 2008
Village Fixed Deposits	31,179,217	36,997,717	42,443,417	42,443,417	54,625,000	61,043,200
Village SB Accounts	5,389,848	6,046,805	6,274,335	12,331,701	7,002,869	6,313,348
Taluk Fixed Deposit	450,000	450,000	450,000	450,000	450,000	450,000
Taluk SB Account	1,688,578	11,216	27,447	41,826	449,004	515,233
Total	38,707,643	43,505,737	49,195,199	55,266,944	62,526,874	68,321,781
Increase from pre-Year		12%	13%	12%	13%	9%

But this overall figure tends to cover up the situation in newer village CSUs where they did not honestly declare their annual incomes and pay Sangha Tax – villages where they have a quite unnecessary shortage of cash to spend on children's schooling and health.

849 (93%) village CSUs and 34,546 (89%) Member Coolie families have participated in the Sangha Tax process over the past 14 years. Our digitized monitoring system calculates performance as under:

Performance	CSUs who participated		Functioning Village CSUs	Dropped Villages	Members who paid Tax		Active Members	Inactive Families
Excellent	431	51%	409	22	22,072	64%	12,694	9,378
Very Good	55	6%	38	17	2,103	6%	899	1,204
Good	78	9%	34	44	2,832	8%	951	1,881
Not Good	342	40%	3	339	7,539	22%	65	7,474

G.3 Positive leadership continuity Index

We have started measuring two new indicators for this Sub Effect. 43 village CSUs dropped out because they were over dependent on 1-2 “Good Leaders” who left their villages. Another 45 currently functioning CSUs are in that danger.

	Year Before Last	Reporting Year	
Cluster Review Meets who monitored this Sub Effect	-	83	
No. of Dropped Out CSUs that were dependent on 1-2 “Good Leaders” who changed/left	N.A.	43	CSUs
No of Functioning CSUs that are now dependent on 1-2 “Good Leaders” and currently in danger	N.A.	45	CSUs

Factors that Contributed to this Result

- Insistence on “honest” Income Declaration has sharply dropped 2008 membership figures.
- CSUs and Mahila Meetings forged a great unity through their struggles to get the district notified under EGA and subsequent actions to implement it.
- Older CSU Members reinforcing the Coolie Sangha ideology.
- Pragmatic and respectful alliance of the Coolie Sangha with national political parties has been a great morale booster.
- Village CSUs intervene in all and every problem that arise in the village. They have been able to attract the neutral population into its support base. Such is the respect that the Sangha commands.

Lessons Learnt

Perhaps some of the most profound and insightful learning in this Effects Monitoring exercise has been with regard to this Main Effect.

Coolies firmly believe that it is commitment to the Coolie Sangha ideology that bonds them. Though they all share a similar socio-economic background, the binding together across Caste, Class and Sex divides is astonishing when viewed against mainstream mechanisations that keep them splintered. Regular meetings help them reinforce this ideology. Along with this, good functionaries and committed members have an influence in contributing to the unity and keeping Members in conformity. This Coolie ideology gets itself reinforced in the Taluk Coolie Sangha meetings, Cluster Meets, CSU and Mahila Meetings. These are crucial instruments that weave an unshakeable bond.

At a more crass and functional level, they realise that what they cannot do alone, they can achieve through the group. Yet, the motivation for most of them to remain in the Coolie Sangha is the ideology itself and not material and non-material benefits they gain.

Coolies have realised that irregular meetings, dishonest declaration of annual Income, less than full payment of Sangha Tax, too much dependence on 1-2 Functionaries, are factors that can make the groups fragile and fragmented. A collective learning is that all CSU Members need to be taken into confidence and given equal importance.

Older members have been a source of strength to the Coolie Sangha when they take upon themselves to socialise newer members into the ideology. This transmission of culture is done voluntarily and has been responsible for holding the Coolie Sangha together, even in the midst of countervailing dynamics. The responsibility is so complete that the older CSU Members go and sit in Youth meetings and guide them through their activities.

Coolies are aware that the few who have become economically mobile need to adhere to norms, rules, and principles. Otherwise they would fall. Firstly, they would not have a fall back mechanism or safety net when something goes wrong – it being so easy for business ventures to fail. Secondly, their selfish indifference would have weakened the unity of the village group as a whole and made it fragile – because of their selfish behaviour, they may have destroyed the very village CSU that they will later desperately long for.

The Coolie Sangha ideology has to be reinforced. It is this pursuit of a committed and sincere grouping that causes membership cancellation and even entire villages dropping out. At the same time, there is a quiet determination to get these families and villages back into the fold. This determination is balanced with the conviction that only those with a belief in the ideology should be taken back. The ability of the Member Coolies to understand both sides of the coin and work their way through a dilemma is remarkable.

Care has to be taken that the CSU Members are not influenced by local leaders and touts of political parties. Every decision has to be taken democratically. There should not be an overt dependence on 1-2 CSU Members. If need be, elected Functionaries and CSU Representatives should be changed frequently.

Coolies are convinced that political visibility is much needed. This is as much to show the outside world as for themselves. They are prepared to contest all the seats in the Gram Panchayat, irrespective of whether seats are reserved or not. At the same time they are mature enough to sound a note of caution that CSU Members, when they get elected to the Gram Panchayats and access power, should not be allowed to work against the Coolie Sangha. They should be made to remember that they are representatives and not stooges of any political party.

At a more pragmatic level, there is a concern that some Coolie Youth who are employed in nearby towns will be unable to attend weekly meetings and this has perhaps contributed to irregularity in meetings and a general weakening. If this is true for a large number of village CSUs, then it will have repercussions on the Coolie Sangha itself. This is a matter that needs to be addressed in the monthly Taluk Coolie Sangha meetings.

Gudibanda was very different from the other 4 Taluks. All their social expenses on community health and children's education were hitherto met with liberal grants from Save the Children, New Zealand. This stopped when the 11 year project got over. ADATS was worried that the village CSUs would not be mature enough to manage the change. Though there still are some points of worry like heavy membership losses, they claim to have the tenacity to pull through.

H. STAFF & FUNCTIONARIES EMPOWERED TO DELIVER RESULTS

ACTIVITIES

ADATS Staff

85 Staff Members (57 men and 28 women) work full time in ADATS. We have 3 problems.

- a. ADATS was severely understaffed during this reporting period, with existing Staff carrying additional responsibilities. The just completed Biogas CDM Project, for example, was implemented without appointing a single staff and with zero admin/overheads.
- b. It is getting to be more and more difficult to get senior staff to work in NGOs due to huge opportunities in the cities. Enrolment into the Masters in Social Work course with a specialisation in Community Development, for example, is so low that many colleges have outright cancelled the course. So too for posts like IT Instructors, Programmers, Systems Administrators, etc.
ADATS doggedly sticks to its own recruitment policy and refuses to raise salaries to so-called competitive levels.
- c. The sex ratio in senior and specialised staff was totally warped.

We extensively discussed these problems in the 3 day long Strategic Review Workshop that preceded this Effects Monitoring exercise, but were not able to arrive at any strategy to attract city educated people to work at ADATS. We realised that overworked and understaffed is pretty much a universal description of development workers the world over. We could not allow external exigencies to change our stripes.

Instead, we decided to continue upgrading our existing Staff, most of whom have come up from the rank and file of the Coolie Sangha. This will not be without problems – spoken English is going to be a big stumbling block.

When absolutely necessary, we will contract external consultants, rely on pro bono assistance from well-wishers, and/or outsource. However, we recognised that for specialised staff like Horticulturists, etc. we will have no option but to pay upscale market rates.

Category	Number		Men	Women	SC/ST	Middle	Upper
Senior Staff	11	13%	100%	0%	27%	45%	27%
Admin Staff	5	6%	40%	60%	0%	60%	40%
Field Staff	48	55%	69%	31%	44%	12%	44%
Specialist Staff	3	3%	100%	0%	0%	67%	33%
Support Staff	20	23%	50%	50%	30%	35%	35%
Total	87		68%	32%	34%	26%	39%

Coolie Sangha Functionaries

The Coolie Sangha has 2,789 elected functionaries (1,183 men and 1,606 women).

Category	Number		Men	Women	SC/ST	Middle	Upper
Balakendra Teacher	506	18%	0%	100%	50%	18%	32%
Cluster Secretary	82	3%	98%	2%	57%	15%	28%

Village Health Worker	468	17%	0%	100%	65%	17%	18%
Representative	870	31%	82%	18%	60%	17%	24%
Cheque Signatory	404	14%	1%	99%	59%	16%	25%
Women's Committee Member	72	3%	-	100%	67%	12%	21%
Elected Trustee	6	0%	67%	33%	50%	17%	33%
Village Level Worker	381	14%	99%	1%	56%	16%	27%
Total	2,789		45%	55%	60%	17%	26%

Field Workers & Mahila Trainers

Overworked Field Staff were able to attend only 60-80% of the 5-6 Cluster Meets that each Area Team looks after. Every single day, they have a dozen pressing things to do at the Taluk headquarters. Besides attending to individual Member Coolies who come with various family problems, they accompany Functionaries to different Taluk offices. Newer Field Workers tend to attend all the Cluster Meets in order to familiarise themselves with their Area, and also because they need to themselves assess if the Cluster Functionaries are strong enough to manage on their own.

After finishing with a 4-5 hour long Cluster Meet, Field Staff “visit” a few villages. It is quite some time since they actually sat in at a normal CSU or Mahila Meeting from start to end. Instead they “make the rounds” when something has to be quickly communicated, a list needs to be made/updated, data needs to be corrected, etc. At least once every month, they also spend long evenings, well past midnight, to hold a Panchayat between two warring groups. Dozens of visits have to be made to each and every village whenever a large direct action is organised and people have to be mobilised. But these do not count as CSU or Mahila Meetings.

There are seasonal tasks which call for intense visits on an every evening basis:

- Every single village has to be visited in the month of December to help Member Coolie families declare their annual incomes, and immediately thereafter in January to help collect/pay up Sangha Tax.
(this year, due to special circumstances described earlier, this process took 4-5 months)
- Mahila Trainers visit every single Mahila Meeting in June every year and sit with them for hours to prepare child scholarship lists.
- Field Workers sit with village CSUs to make the Crop Loan lists every June/July with the onset of rains.
- Village CSUs and Mahila Meetings meet more than once a week in April and May every year, to gather primary data for the annual Effects Monitoring exercises.
(the actual exercise is carried out in 5-6 Cluster Review Meets spread over 2 months, and not at the village level)

These “seasonal visits” also send out a wrong signal – that the Coolie Sangha is a forum that needs to meet only at times of need.

Performance Salaries

The system of Performance Salaries is now an established fact at ADATS and the Coolie Sangha.

Field Worker and Mahila Trainer salaries are calculated using 15% weightage for functioning villages, 20% for current membership, 10% for socio-political presence, 10% for Sangha Tax performance, 25% for CCF, 19% for CD&S and just 1% for the now discontinued DLDP.

Area Field Worker & Mahila Trainer	Villages	Members	Presence	Sangha Tax	CCF	CD&S	Salary
Krishna Reddy & Radhamma	24	979	5.8	7.3	3.0	3.7	Rs 5,830 each
Muniraju & Govindappa & Narasamma	31	1,038	6.0	7.9	3.0	3.1	Rs 6,002 each
Govindappa & Narasamma	33	1,129	6.4	8.2	3.6	3.8	Rs 6,763 each
Venkataravanaswamy & Sujatha	31	881	6.2	6.5	2.3	4.3	Rs 5,681 each
Prasad Kumar & Rathnamma	24	746	6.3	7.7	2.6	3.5	Rs 5,362 each
Muniyappa & Jamuna	33	765	5.9	7.3	3.1	2.5	Rs 5,477 each
Ramachandra Reddy & Bhagyamma	39	1,273	5.9	7.4	2.6	2.3	Rs 6,000 each
Venkataravana & Aruna	33	975	5.8	6.3	2.0	2.3	Rs 5,029 each
Venkatesh	31	945	6.4	7.7	2.4	4.0	Rs 5,877 each
Venkatarayappa & Rathna	26	836	6.5	7.9	3.2	2.6	Rs 5,568 each
Sreenivasappa & Neelamma	29	699	5.9	8.0	3.4	3.4	Rs 5,850 each
Narayanamma	29	968	6.0	6.9	2.4	4.1	Rs 5,778 each
Venkatarayappa & Rathnamma	29	923	6.1	6.4	2.7	4.2	Rs 5,856 each
Shahtaj Unnisa & Venkatakrishnappa	35	897	5.5	6.9	2.4	4.1	Rs 5,762 each
Aswathappa & Gangarathnamma	23	549	5.0	5.0	2.3	2.5	Rs 4,253 each
Surendra Kumar & Laxmidevamma	26	826	6.0	5.3	2.2	2.9	Rs 4,904 each
Total	476	14,429	96	113	43	53	Rs 180,000

Similarly, Cluster Secretaries are also receive performance salaries depending on the number of villages they cover, membership strength, etc.

Creating a new Cadre of Village Level Workers

Immediately after receiving the EGA notification, each and every one of the 484 village CSUs quickly selected an educated Youth as their Village Level Worker. This (mostly male) cadre would be trained to be full time workers to assist Member Coolie families prepare citizen documents needed to access government benefits – i.e. ration cards, voter id's, school certificates, etc. They would also help each family obtain perfect land records, take GPS readings of the polygons that comprised their holdings, calculate the exact area, enter these readings into our digitized database and prepare tenure records for the A/R CDM Project. They would also assist Member Coolie families in their dealings with government officials at the Gram Panchayat level, update and authenticate family-wise data in our digitized monitoring system, etc.

But what was really on everyone's minds was the need for a full time worker in each and every village CSU to kick-start the EGA. Even a first reading of the official Gazette notification and FAQ showed that there were quite a few ambitious tasks that needed to be done before EGA works could begin:

- Every single family had to fill out an Application Form and hand it over to their Gram Panchayat Secretary
- Ration Cards and/or Election ID cards had to be photocopied
- Stamp sized Photographs had to be taken of every single adult within the family
- Bank/Post Office accounts had to be opened
- Job Cards needed to be rechecked for discrepancy before being distributed
- Job Applications had to be made by work gangs comprising 10 or more Job Card holders, asking for particular works
- The actual implementation of EGA works had to be monitored with Attendance Registers

If these VLWs turned out to be any good, they could pitch to be Gram Panchayat appointed VLWs in their respective villages. There was provision for this in the EGA, and their stipends would thenceforth be paid by the government.

A Permanent Trustee of the Coolie Sangha, who has worked as an ADATS Field Worker for 30 years, has been asked to conduct training/orientation sessions. For the next 6-12 months, VLWs from each Taluk will come for 2 days every month to our Training Centre. 151 VLWs from Bagepalli will be trained on the 1st Wednesday and Thursday of every month, 122 from Chintamani in the 2nd week, 90 from Siddalaghatta in the 3rd week, etc.

They will reflect, debate and discuss on issues like Coolie Sangha history, struggles against feudalism, democratisation, governance, and a range of socio-political topics. They will be taught to use progressive laws like the Right to Information Act, Domestic Violence Act, etc. They will be imparted skills to write petitions, applications, make business plans, source institutional finance for petty ventures, etc.

They will also share what they have done in their respective villages the previous month. Their Trainer will assess performance and suitability and weed out the inefficient/disinterested after every session and the village CSUs will have to re-select a fresh candidate.

The intention is that we should, within a year, have a male cadre of full time workers in every single village CSU, complementing efforts of the female cadre comprising Balakendra Teachers and Village Health Workers.

Workshops & Training Sessions

- ADATS hosted 3 CDM Meetings for grassroots NGOs who wished to understand the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and how to tap carbon resources to undertake climate mitigation and adaptation projects.
- These were followed by full day project visits by 2 NGOs who have subsequently begun writing their PDD's
- We have had more than 50 visits by groups from India and abroad this past year to study the Bagepalli Biogas CDM Project and explore further carbon resource mobilisation.
- All ADATS Staff attended a half day workshop on financial inclusion. This is a special project we have introduced to appoint Rural Bankers in each and every village, supply them with a mobile-phone-like instrument which allows basic banking transactions like depositing and withdrawing moneys, making bank payments for basic purchases, etc. to be carried out by semi-literate village folk in their respective villages.
This project is on the verge of taking off.
- Just before the commencement of this 2-3 month long Effects Monitoring exercise, in mid April 2008, all ADATS Staff attended a 3 days Strategic Review Workshop facilitated by Ajit Mani of Intervention (India) Pvt. Ltd.

- After a month's gap, during which time the strategic priorities were shared in each and every Cluster Meet, another 2 days workshop was conducted on data collection methodologies in mid May 2008.
- In July 2008, after all the primary data had been gathered, Dr. Anita Ravishankar, Sociologist, Mangalore University, spent 15 days to sit with each Area Team and help them make sense of the lessons learnt at each Cluster.