



VIDIYAL (Centre for Social Interaction)
Strengthening the Rural Economy since 1986
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ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18

1.Introduction

VIDIYAL is a Civil Society Organisation (CSO) working since 1986 to promote Agriculture and Women development in the Bodinayakannur, Chinnamanur, and Uthamapalayam blocks of Theni District, Tamil Nadu, India. VIDIYAL is organizing the people for collective action through sustainable, community-based Self-Help Groups (SHGs), Joint Liability Groups (JLGs), Farmer Producers Companies (FPC) facilitate access to development programs and skill workshops, lobby and advocate for the rights of rural communities, and coordinate with local NGOs, Banks, Institutions, and Governments. VIDIYAL leverages the potential of technology to provide life-long learning opportunities for rural community members.

Vision

VIDIYAL envisages a state of model community living at which the poor and marginalized people will be Socially, Politically, Economically empowered.

Mission

Organizing the people, providing Education and creating opportunities to enable them to solve their problems by themselves for sustained development.

2. The major activities for the year :

- a. **Strengthening the activities of Vidivelli.**
- b. **Strengthening the activities of vanavil**
- c. **Upscaling L3F in Four Districts.**
- d. **Open Education Resource (OERFEDTNL3F)**
- e. **Promoting the business of Theni District Farmers
Goat producer Company Ltd.**
- f. **PRA on Community Water purification**
- g. **Collaboration with samunnati**
- h. **Major events and trainings.**

The details of the activities:

2.a . Strengthening the activities of Vidivelli :

VIDIYAL has been promoting women's SHGs since 1996. VIDIYAL encourages rural women to organize themselves around savings and self-help groups (SHGs) to improve their decision-making power and enable them to create their own development strategies for addressing their socio-economic challenges. The SHGs came together as a federation called VIDIVELLI. It strengthens self-help groups and a micro-finance movement among more than four thousand women in 25 villages. Every month on 23rd they will meet and discuss their promotional activities. In the meeting they will discuss about the Credit requirements, details of SHG monthly follow ups, Issues in the Village level and Panchayat Level Federations, etc. A selected representative from each village will participate the meeting. Since May 2000 till now 330 monthly meetings were conducted. During the year Rs.1.35 crore is linked for credit to 500 members through ICICI.



2.b.Strengthening the activities of Vanavil :

Since 2014 Joint Liability Groups (JLGs) were also promoted with the support of NABARD and JLGs are federated as VANAVIL.

The Federations provide guidance and counseling to ensure the success of the SHGs, and JLGs. To strengthen their activities providing the continuous support and liaisoning with banks, government departments, community-based organizations, NGOs and other institutions. The Federations encourage education among female children, campaign against the negligence of female children, encourage social security schemes, disseminate information to conserve natural resources, facilitate the growth of women's Social-enterprises, manage fair price shops, offer community water purification services, and provide guidance and counseling to address women's issues, etc.,



2.c. Upscaling L3F in Four District

a. Life-Long Learning for Farmers (L3F) - Innovation

VIDIYAL and Commonwealth of learning(COL) Canada, supports VIDIYAL to implement L3F initiatives since 2007. The L3F project is to define a new pathway in project and programme management. **The vision of the project is to evolve a self-replicating and self-sustaining programme in Lifelong Long Learning among Rural community using modern ICT.** The project thus becomes a testing ground for an innovative idea, in which various stakeholders in order to meet their own agenda, come together and participate in the initiatives. One of the important partners in such an initiative could be the banking sector. The banking sector in the developing world is looking for strengthening the rural credit established a cooperative network amongst various agricultural and veterinary universities in India to provide women with the knowledge and business skills necessary for goat-rearing and cow-rearing micro-enterprises. Learning was conducted through voicemails sent to mobile phones. This program was incredibly successful. The women improved the productivity of their enterprises through better understanding of breed selection, feed, health management, and animal care. The women are now less dependent on external support because they are able to use their increased knowledge to create self-sustaining social enterprises.

During the period Vidiyal upscaled the Life Long Learning for the farmers in Theni, Madurai, Virudhunagar and Karur in Tamilnadu, India. As per the agreement the activities such as Strengthening the capacity of 20 NGOs from 4 Districts on L3F reaching around 4000 members and enrolling 4000 for mobile learning and upscaling L3F with stakeholders, Building the capacity of 5 Farmers Producers Company (FPC) Leaders and Linked with 1000 farmers in mobile learning, Strengthening the capacity of Theni Goat



FPC , Promotion Of OER and out reaching Learners, uploading learning materials through social media - You tube and face book, Gender Mainstreaming, etc.

Vidiyal linked 7064 farmers for the credit linked learning. The total Credit is INR 1741.61(in Lakhs) from 5 Banks namely ICICI, Indian Bank, Canara Bank, State bank of India and Primary Agricultural Cooperative banks (PACB) and 4 Non Banking Financial Institutions(NBFI) namely Annetena trust, NABFINS, Annanya and Sammuniti . The major credit support are from ICICI Bank. 6654 farmers are linked for the Mobile learning among them 127 farmers are provided voicemails from IKSL and 6527 farmers are linked with Mvaayoo. Nearly 225 farmers are entered in learning through the smart phones on FPC, livestock

management through Vidiyal's face book and You tube. Vidiyal upload some of the ODLs in Video in the farmers smart phones.

2.d. Open Education Resource Federation Tamil Nadu L3F(OERFED-TNL3F) :

Based on Vidiyal's L3F experience Vidiyal has entered into an agreement with Commonwealth of Learning, Canada to develop and provide and share quality learning to farmers through Open Educational Resources (OERs) in the form of text, voice mails, video format etc. OER is a type of educational materials that are in the public domain or introduced with an open license. The nature of these open materials means that anyone can



legally and freely copy, use, adapt and re-share them. OERs range from textbooks to curricula, syllabi, lecture notes, assignments, tests, projects, audio, video and animation. OER helps improve Farmers education and knowledge across the globe. They are important for developing countries like India and for the target group like the literate and semi literate men and women farmers, the farmer learners access to classrooms based training programs are lacking or limited.

A team of Vidiyal staff conducted the need assessment of the farmers. The team through conducting Focus Group Discussions (FGD) and interviews collected the farmers learning needs. Then 70 Needs were identified and contents were prioritized. The team conducted **10 Focus Group Discussions in 10 different villages in Theni district** , also conducted **Learning Need Assessment survey with 50 Farmers in 7 Villages and Open ended Survey**



with 21 Farmers from 12th September to 9th October 2017. Out of the 70 in the list 50 were prioritized. Through the FGD and personal interview 70 needs were identified in different themes, namely 1. Goat rearing, 2.Milch animal, 3.Fodder Cultivation 4.Agriculture 5.Farmers producer Company (FPC) 6.Theni Goat FPC 7. Banking Services, 8.Micro enterprises, 9. L3F Success story.

The list of 50 learning contents was finalized in a workshop with all three L3F partners (VIDIYAL, Rediyarchatram Seed Growers Association, Kannivadi, Dindigul Dt and Arul Anandar College , Karumathur, Madurai) to avoid repetition, in the workshop we also finalized the mode of the learning materials like text based, voice based or you tube and the number under each category.

The details of the prioritized Contents are Uploaded in L3F pedia.

Details of OER contents					
Srl.No.	Subject	Nature of the contents			Total
		Voice mail	Text	Video	
1	Livestock				
	a. Goat	5	5	1	11
	b. Milch animal	5	0	2	7
2	Agriculture	5	10	1	16
3	FPO	3	5	1	9
4	Financial inclusion	2	0	1	3
5	Micro enterprises	0	0	3	3
6	Success stories of L3F	0	0	1	1
	Total	20	20	10	50

Vidiyal uploaded the learning materials on www.vidiyalcso/l3f/pedia website which is linked with L3Fpedia the federation website owned by the three L3F project partners. Vidiyal is one of the partners and Board member in OERFED-TNL3F..

To ensure gender sensitivity of the contents, the team had discussion with women groups and their needs were identified also before finalized several of the contents were shared with women group leaders and experienced women farmers.



Metadata development : List of key words which appears in the title and frequently were listed and prepared as a list of meta data for all 50 contents. The meta data list includes words in English – Tamil and Thanklish.

2.e. Promoting the business of Theni District Farmers Goat Producer Company Limited

Vidiyal facilitated and promoted Theni District Farmers Goat Producer Company Limited on 16.09.2015 with 1050 farmers among them 1017 are women and 33 men support of NABARD through CCD, Madurai. The investors are from Vidivelli and Vanavil Federation. Vidiyal initiated to give the capacity of the shareholders and directors through different type of trainings and exposures. Vidiyal encouraged to involve in business by establishing village meat shops and 10 sales outlets and to provide livelihood support and economic benefits to small and marginal farmers and to encourage their participation in emerging high-value markets with prime focus on exports.

With the support of Commonwealth of Learning Canada build the capacity of the farmers through exposure :

Field Exposure to Balavikasa and Mulkanur between 25th February to 1st March 20

1. **Balavikasa** : SOPAR-Bala Vikasa in Warangal, Telengana State is a non-profit organization devoted to sustainable development in India. Their approach is to help communities help themselves by providing rural villagers with the tools and resources they need to transform their lives. They also encourage Canadians to get involved with international issues as global citizens. They have been working tirelessly toward these goals since 1977. 40 Years of Dedicated Service in Sustainable Community Driven Development.



2. **2. Mulkanur women Cooperative Society, Khareem Nagar Dt, Telengana State :**

On 28th February 2018 we visited Mulkanur women cooperative society. Mr. Venu Madhavan, Manager Mulkanur Cooperative Society guided us in the Organisation. He coordinated with us has suggested to complete the visit to diary plant. Mr. Sambath took us inside and shared their process details. Our directors were felt charged/energized to know that this unit is running by the women committee. Their happiness was felt by their purchasing of the value added products of the unit. Milk Peda, Milk cake, Sweet lassi, Ghee & butter milk.



Mulkanur cooperative Society is the vision of a leader **Sri Viswanath Reddy** who imbibed the principles of cooperation and service, the Core Philosophy of Mulkanur Women's Mutually Aided Milk Producers Cooperative Union is Collective Action and matchless services to clients and members. In keeping with Core philosophy, they continually strive to introduce new services and products in the market year after year – products and services which aim at highest quality with affordable prices. It is an 'Excellent services to clients and members at all cost', not only mean the words but they actually practice it every-day in day-to-day operations. The rewards accrue in the form of repeat orders, loyal client base and increased membership.



The Lessons learned in bullet points, which Vidiyal could use for the better management of market of goat Rearers Company:

1. Every member has to take business with the FPC.
2. Services and benefits only to the members.
3. Members expressed to increase their activities participation in the FPC.
4. Orient other members to involve in the FPC's activities.
5. Introduction of Insurances of the members and their livestock.
6. Initiation to take the Community Water purifications.

Management: The major lessons learnt and try to practice here:

1. Initiation to expand the FPC's Business.
2. The management of the women Milk society and the involvement of the Directors.
3. To develop sustaining model villages with the support of Village level Federations.
4. Extension of the Development and welfare activities for the women and Children.

Marketing: The major lessons learning and try to practice here:

1. Expansion of Goat sale and Goat meat Business.
2. Proper management of the established Village outlets.
3. Planned to Install 10 Community water Purification plants in 10 Villages with the Community.
4. Plan to provide 100% Business support to the FPC Shareholders.
5. To provide the Life Security of the members introduced the RISK FUND SAVINGS. – A member has to pay RS.365 as savings per year for 10 years. If there were any life RISK the Company compensate Rs.10,000/- and Rs.5000/- compensation to members of 60% of disability due to accident.

2.f. PRA on Community Water Purification

The service area of Vidiyal is located at the foot-hill of Western-ghat. It is a rain – shadow area; the western side of the ghat is Idukki District of Kerala state, receiving copious rainfall. Hence scarcity of rain leads to water related issues of difference dimensions mainly social unrest, disputes among neighborhood, drudgery, loss of precious time considerably, water borne diseases, considerable amount of money spent on getting protected water and loss of wage income. Local bodies which have the authority/responsibility in providing potable water adequately to all households in the project villages fail to ensure the supply due to frequent visit of drought and gaps in management. Due to climate change, the issue is becoming very serious day by day. In this context to have a quick understanding of the depth of the problem and to assess the possible solutions, a rapid survey was organised by Vidiyal between 15th and 30th March 2018. The process include Participatory Rural Appraisal(PRA) and individual survey in 21 villages in Chinnamanur and Bodinayakanur Blocks of Theni District. The major findings of the survey are presented below.



1.The Key findings

- ❖ Inadequate and irregular water supplies are the main issues. The supply is twice in a week, once in 3-5 days and sometime alternative days.
- ❖ Quality of water differs widely; varying from salty taste, mixed taste. Respondents felt the water is not quenching the thirst. In some areas dust and oil floating water is distributed.
- ❖ The local bodies are failing or unable to address the problems; not



immediately attending to repair and maintenance works; substandard pipes, ruptured wires, burning out motors, non stocking of accessories are some of the issues. Further, there is lack of transparency.

- ❖ Due to lack of rain water harvest system / practices. The level of ground water has depleted alarmingly. Hand pumps, motor pumps have become dysfunctional at most of the locations.
- ❖ Water borne diseases - cold, cough, Diarrhea, Cholera, Jaundice, Dengue, Renal coli and fever spread and affect all age groups.
- ❖ Due to inadequate and uncertainty in supply of water, villagers store water in plastic drums, big vessels, and cement tanks – most of the places kept open for want of lid or cover leading to growth of mosquitoes and worsened quality of water.
- ❖ Due to inadequacy in supply, many families draw water from the wells at nearby agriculture fields – whatever be the quality;
- ❖ some people purchase can water for drinking though it is priced Rs.30 to 40 per can of 20 liters
- ❖ Regarding water requirement of livestock some get water from wells of agriculture land; many use available stored water; sometime without verifying the quality; even unclean / unfit water is fed to cattle, due to which there were reports of deaths of livestock.
- ❖ Some families boil the water



2.The key solutions suggested by the villages are

1. Periodically clean the water sources
2. Involve SHG leaders and youth volunteers in ensuring cleanliness of overhead tanks and repair and maintenance activities of local bodies
3. Giving awareness to the public in ensuring personal hygiene keeping vessels neat and clean, close the vessels with lid, etc.
4. Remove the motor pump used for house service connection and punish the culprits (a conflict in sharing the available water)
5. Prevent the illegal sand – mining
6. the most important solution is take serious efforts to establish community water purifying plant
7. Strengthen the people institution / organization, empowering communities and ensuring their active and total participation
8. "Let us attempt to emerge as a model in community oriented, community owned and managed purified quality drinking water system".

3. Expect the following impact of community owned, maintained and managed water purifying system is implemented

- Make Affordable and potable water easily accessible even at the door steps.
- Improved general health
- Less expenditure for maintenance of health
- Proud and happiness in participatory management

- common villagers will have access to information and expertise in running community water purification system
- Reduction of unrest / disputes in dealing water issues at community level itself.
- Water users will empower as key stakeholders
- Replicable model emerged
- Stakeholders strengthened in working with Govt. and related line departments.

2.g. Collaboration with Samunnati

6.Samunnatti a Non Banking Financial Institution (NBFI) is motivated with the concept of L3F. They visited with Vidiyal to some of the NGO Partners in all Four Districts. The NBFI is convinced about the credibility of the NGOs and positive about extending credit support to farmers groups working with the NGOs and FPOs. **Samunnatti is also willing to build the capacity of the NGOs to adopt the L3F Activities with the support of Vidiyal.** It supported the Theni Goat FPC's Business Plan to review and modify involving the Directors the directors of the Company and also supported to release a guide book for profitable microenterprises of goats and sheep.



2.h. Major events and trainings

1. Invited by Isha, a spiritual centre at Coimbatore who were interested to promote Farmers Producer Company in and around Coimbatore to give training on L3F and FPC on 01.02.2018 . They are interested to take up Vidiyal's Goat FPC model to Vidharba area in Maharashtra State in India.
2. Shared the L3F Concept on 20.02.2018 with JHON DEER a tractor Company adopting a village Thenkarai near Madurai under its CSR program. Helped them to realise the importance of Social capital and promoting Farmers Producer Company for the farmers benefit.
3. On 28th February 2018 Vidiyal was given the **"Best Social Entrepreneur Award"** at the Global Social Entrepreneur Program 2018, for their contribution in achieving social goals through innovative and sustainable business by Hand in Hand, Chennai and NABARD.
4. Benefits of L3F and Vidiyal's experience is shared to a National level NGO called EKTA parishat. They were working among the Tribals in nationwide. Vidiyal made them to realise that ODL learning and the methodology is more useful to enhance the knowledge, skill and empowerment of the farmers.
5. Theni Mahalir Thittam Project officer with his 5 members team visited Vidiyal on 21.03.2018 and interested to take up L3F with their PLF members under Pudevazhu Thittam Scheme of the Tamil Nadu State.
6. Vidiyal Supported RSETI, Karur, Theni and REUDSETI, Madurai to get the trainees for their Regular training programs through Voicemails and from the L3F NGO partners of the area.

7. **SPPD an NGO in Karur District** is also interested to promote three FPOs one in Karur District, two in Trichy District. They have Registered a FPO in the name of **AINDHINAI with 1000 farmers**. We conducted a series of three meetings with the farmers and orient the Directors of the FPO. 100 farmers are linked for the mobile learning. On the basis of the experiences slowly want to promote three more FPOs in Trichy District in different produces.
8. **Actiff an NGO in Batlagundu** Registered a FPO in the name of **KODAIARASI with 300 farmers on spices**. They were concentrated on Spices like coffee, pepper cultivated in Kodaikanal hills. The farmers are scattered in fifteen villages in the hills. So they find difficult in consolidating the farmers. Initially they started to work with 300 farmers and slowly the number of farmers can be increased.

3.Other Major Activities implemented by Vidiyal :

3.a. ICT in Women Conciliation Centre: Strengthening e- governance to Life Long Learning Project – ICT Adaptation

The farming is getting the benefits due to the project activities through mobile phones and Village knowledge Centres (VKC's). The VKCs played the intermediary role to help the women to get support services and guidance through different experts. VIDIYAL promotes self-directed learning and strengthen the horizontal transfer of knowledge through structured mobile phone conversations among women, and help rural women identify their eligibility in various development programs of the state and central government in the name of ICLIS (Indian Citizens Eligibility Systems).

3.b.T. Meenatchipuram Watershed Development Program and Creation of the Village Watershed Committee - Scheme Convergence

With the support of National Agricultural Bank for Rural Development (NABARD) initiated establishing water conservation structures and for the project implementation in 1000 hectares of lands. Land development, water conservation measures, livelihood supports are carried out through Village Watershed Committee (VWC) with farmers, landless peasants, women, and other stakeholders for the sustainability of development activities, and to improve water conservation. The VWC enables rural communities to develop their skills for greater social and economic empowerment and access to credit from local banks.

3.c. Open and Distance Learning to Promote Seed Production Technology – ICT in Extension Management.

With the support of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the University of Guelph, and the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University(TNAU), implemented "**Open and Distance Learning for Seed Production Technology**" to improve the seed-production technologies and building the capacities of

2,000 farmers to enhance their livelihoods, reduce poverty, and provide a better quality of life conducted field demonstration plots and train other farmers in the seed production of local staples with expert supervision, ODLs such as voice message, print and multimedia training materials for the participants.

3.d. Community Drinking Water Purification Plant

A self-sustaining community drinking water purification plant was began in 2008 at the VIDIYAL office campus. It is managed by the self-help group enterprises. It is successfully being run with the support of the members of VIDIVELLI and the general public in the surrounding villages. 5000 liters of water are supplied to members each day. The provision of clean drinking water has reduced health problems, relieved women of some of the burden of fetching clean water, and given women more time to devote to other activities.

3.e. National Environmental Awareness Campaign on Climate Change

Since 1996 VIDIYAL has been organizing the National Environmental Awareness Campaign (NEAC) with the support of The Ministry of Environment and Forest, Government of India through the CPR Foundation and the Chennai Peace Trust. This year we conducted the Awareness Campaign to the Farmers, Youth, School children. The activities of promoting Kitchen Gardening, Making compost from the Waste, tree plantation activities, etc. Nearly 200 Farmers and 500 School Children took participation in the program.

3.f. Women Legal Conciliation and Mediation Centre :

VIDIYAL helped establish, and continues to maintain, a legal guidance and counseling centre. The Women Guidance and counseling Centre was initially established with the High Court of Chennai in 1997. The Munisiff-cum-Magistrate assigns an advocate to the centre. Every Saturday, a lawyer from the local court comes to VIDIYAL to help people with their legal problems, and to assist them in filing a case if necessary. VIDIYAL has also helped set up paralegal counseling centers through Tamil Nadu, where local women are trained by local courts as paralegals who can provide advice to their communities. VIDIYAL has also assisted in the establishment of Women Police Stations, to encourage women to report cases of domestic violence and sexual assault.

3.g. Community Health

VIDIYAL promotes community health initiatives through campaigns on HIV/AIDS awareness, anemia awareness, and maternal and child health awareness. They conduct workshops in schools to educate

young boys and girls on proper nutrition, hygiene, health management, and disease prevention. Yoga and naturopathy workshops were conducted for youth and rural women to promote healthy living.

3.h. Youth Welfare: Vocational Skill Development

Since 1991, VIDIYAL has given vocational skill development training to adolescent girls and boys to improve their self-employment opportunities. These need-based skills training sessions are provided for a variety of trades.

4.Honors and Awards :

- The Manthan Award was given to VIDIYAL on December 3, 2011.
- VIDIYAL received third place for the year 2012 for the ICT based activities in WIN awards.
- VIDIVYAL also received the MBillionth Award for its Life-Long learning for Farmers (L3F) initiatives.
- Received Common Nexus Award from Commonwealth Country Head in June 2013.

- ICT Led Social Innovation by a Non Profit Organization VIDIYAL, Theni Dt. Tamilnadu Won the NSIF Award for the year 2015 from NASSCOM.
- Vodafone Foundation and Nasscom Foundation announce Vidiyal as one of the five winners for 'Mobile for Good Awards 2015'.

- Hand in Hand India's Best Social Entrepreneur Award 2018 for your contributions to the economic development of women farmers by training them through Mobile on 28.02.2018.



5.Supporters

VIDIYAL would like to express heartfelt gratitude for the contributions provided by the supporters. VIDIYAL looks forward to welcoming the same level of support in future years.

FUNDING SUPPORTERS	Networkers, CO-NGOs and CBOs	TECHNICAL SUPPORTERS
<p><u>GOVERNMENT</u> NABARD, Chennai ICTD, GOI, New Delhi NISG, Hyderabad TNAU, Coimbatore Ministry of Environment and Forest, Govt. of India, New Delhi</p> <p><u>NGO</u> <u>Anarde Foundation, Gujarat</u> PEACE Trust, Dindigul TNVHA, Chennai DEEPS, Dharmapuri</p> <p><u>FOREIGN</u> Commonwealth of Learning, Canada Melania Foundation, The Netherlands UNDP, India Office, New Delhi. CIDA, Canada through Guelph University, Canada Mrs. Margaret Wyndorps of German Indian Society Ms. Jade Chong Smith, Canada.</p> <p>Corporate NASSCOM and Vodafone Foundation.</p>	<p>VANI, New Delhi, CNRI, New Delhi, TNVHA, Chennai. VIDIVELLI women SHG Federation, Rasingapuram NASSCOM Foundation MISSOIN 2007. CANG Network CAG, Chennai. IFFCO, Madurai. TNAU, Coimbatore TANUVAS, Chennai RSETI, Theni. FLCC, Theni, IOB, Theni, ICICI, Madurai. CCD, Madurai</p>	<p>Arul Anandar College, Karumathur, Madurai district IIT, Chennai IFFCO – AIRTEL, Chennai. MSSRF, Chennai. IKSL, New Delhi NIBM, Pune. ICRISAT, Hyderabad. MVAayoo, Hyderabad.</p>

6. Conclusion :

Vidiyal has been striving to achieve its tasks with the support, the participation, involvement of Community for their sustainable development. Vidiyal treat the Community as the partner for the social Change. The success of Vidiyal is building the Social capital and proves with its achievements.