

Women Empowerment Program



Supported by

Anahata Stiftung
Germany

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Project Implemented by

PRABHATH RURAL DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY

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Prabhath Rural Development Society (PRDS) focuses on the socio-economic empowerment of women and children from disadvantaged backgrounds. With support from **Anahata Stiftung** of Germany, the organization launched a Women Support Centre in Kothacheruvu in January 2010.

After a recruitment process, a counselor, three mandal organizers, and an office assistant were hired. The new team began its work by conducting village-level surveys and observing the daily lives of villagers to understand their challenges. Staff also received training at the Anantapur Counseling Centre and the local Women's Police Station to prepare for their roles.

STAFF TRAINING PROGRAMME: WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

With support from Anahata-Stiftung.de, PRDS organized a one-day training on women's empowerment for its new staff on January 28, 2010. Led by advocate Ms. M. Sireesha, the training aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of gender-based violence, legal protections, and available resources. The team was briefed on various legal provisions, including the Domestic Violence Act, IPC Section 354, and laws related to dowry harassment and polygamy. The program successfully equipped staff with the knowledge needed to support women facing violence.

KEY ACTIVITIES AT THE FIELD LEVEL

The PRDS team conducted various field-level activities to raise awareness about critical social issues. They distributed pamphlets and held awareness campaigns, legal and gender awareness camps, and film shows in villages and educational institutions. A health camp was also organized in Bonthapalli village, and PRDS collaborated with local police to prevent child marriages. Through these efforts, villagers became aware of the services offered by PRDS, which led to an increase in people seeking help from the center.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATION & ENGAGEMENT

PRDS staff successfully collaborated with police officers and lawyers to resolve critical cases and family disputes. The police department was particularly supportive in the effort to abolish child marriages. The organization also regularly met with village leaders and community representatives to gain their support and work collectively to solve community problems. Additionally, students from the tailoring center helped spread awareness about PRDS's services through word-of-mouth.

Key Outcomes: Through various campaigns, villagers became well aware of PRDS and its services, particularly the free tailoring course and support related to the Domestic Violence Act. The center successfully helped resolve numerous family disputes and other community problems by providing timely support. By building trust and a strong network, PRDS established itself as an accessible and reliable resource for people facing personal and social challenges.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATION

On March 21, 2010, PRDS hosted a meeting and celebration at the Rural Development Trust School in Kothacheruvu to commemorate International Women's Day. The event brought together community members and guests, including advocate Dr. Nirmala Reddy and Sub-Inspector Mr. Ismail, to discuss women's empowerment and rights. Speakers encouraged women to unite, fight against gender-based violence, prioritize education and health, and utilize official support systems like the police.

Key Discussions & Messages: Dr. Nirmala Reddy stressed that victims of gender-based violence who do not seek help are, in effect, perpetuating the abuse. Mrs. Parvathamma addressed gender discrimination within households and led attendees in an oath to treat both boys and girls equally. Mr. Prabhakar Reddy highlighted PRDS's ongoing efforts, including the tailoring center and counseling services. Sub-Inspector Mr. Ismail emphasized the power of unity and offered the full backing of the police department to those in need.

TAILORING TRAINING PROGRAM

Prabhath Rural Development Society established free Tailoring Training Centers in Kothacheruvu and Puttaparthi in March 2010 to empower poor and needy women. A total of 68 women and girls were enrolled, with 40 at the Kothacheruvu center and 28 at the Puttaparthi center. The program's syllabus, initially a two-month plan, was extended to six months to ensure participants, many of whom are uneducated, could master the skills needed for self-employment. The curriculum included learning how to cut, sew, and perform minor machine repairs.

Training in Tailoring

The tailoring program was launched in March 2010 at two centers in Kothacheruvu and Puttaparthi to provide free training to poor and needy women. The program aimed to enable them to earn a living and supplement their family income. Outreach was

conducted through pamphlets and personal contact. Ms. Mary was the instructor at the Kothacheruvu Centre, while Ms. Bhargavi was the instructor at the Puttaparthi Centre. The training syllabus, initially planned for two months, was extended to six months to ensure comprehensive learning and mastery of skills.

During the reporting period, two batches of students completed the six-month tailoring training, with 60 students in the first batch and 70 in the second. A formal ceremony was held on September 9th to present certificates to the graduates. PRDS staff also conducted a survey to identify 20 of the most economically disadvantaged pupils and petitioned the Mandal Development Office to secure free government-supplied sewing machines for them.

PHOTO DOCUMENTATION





