



SPEECH

Society for People's Education and Economic Change (SPEECH)



Annual Report 2022 - 23

ANNUAL WORK REPORT FY 2022-23

Introduction

SPEECH is a secular, non-profit development organization established in 1987, primarily to strengthen Human concerns in civil Society at large, to address issues that hinder the growth process. Strengthening grassroots democracy and Good Governance by facilitating participation and promoting self-sustainable development of the vulnerable sections from rural Tamil Nadu are the prime visions of SPEECH. As a development organization, SPEECH commits itself to releasing human potentials of the weaker sections through a wide range of activities conducted by the communities themselves. Its approach is highly development issue-based, countering biases stemming from caste, religion, linguistic, or community identities. It recognizes the need for a two-way process of transformation, enabling both top-down and bottom-up approaches to strengthen democratic principles.

Vision

Strengthen human concern in civil society at large and to address issues that hinder growth process of the vulnerable, besides strengthening grass root democracy towards promoting sustainable development

Mission

To build an internal system for child protection, gender and social inclusion that is coordinated, integrated and holistic.

Organization Objective

SPEECH aims to:

Enable the underprivileged to release their human potentials and achieve sustainable use of locally managed resource bases, fostering a user-friendly service delivery system.

Partner with the developmental efforts of weaker and vulnerable sections for holistic improvement in society.

More specifically, SPEECH aims to:

- Facilitate self-actualization among agricultural laborers, small and marginal farmers, women, and children below 18 through partnerships and federating them towards building grassroots organizations and interest groups.
- Build awareness of exploitative and suppressive forces and enhance faith in democratic principles of Good Governance.
- Revive indigenous traditional knowledge and practices in various sectors, including health and agriculture, to conserve nature and sustain the treasure for future generations.
- Protect child rights in line with the UNCRC, enabling children to enjoy their childhood.
- Conduct action research activities to provide feedback on field realities and viable approaches into policy processes.
- Capacity building of various development actors and stakeholders at all levels by convening and facilitating training activities aimed at efficient service delivery.
- Respond to emergency situations including war victims, communal violence, and natural calamities/disasters, with special reference to the vulnerable (children and women) through relief and rehabilitation support activities.
- This holistic approach underscores SPEECH's commitment to fostering sustainable development and social justice in rural Tamil Nadu.

SPEECH Operational Coverage

1. Retrieving Hope for Child Rights Project (CB)

Kariyapatti, Narikudi, Aruppukotai and Thiruchuli Blocks

Total Coverage of the Villages: 34

Total population of the village: 15,900

2. Restoring Rights of Young women (BAT)

Narikudi, kariyapatti and Thiruchuli Blocks

Total Coverage of the Villages: 30

Total population of the village: 18,750

3. Restoring Rights of Adolescent and Young women (APF)

Kariyapatti, Narikudi, Aruppukotai and Thiruchuli Blocks

No of Villages: 40

Total population of the village: 24,586

4. Integrated Child Protection scheme – (Child Line) Virudhunagar District Project

Sivakasi, Sattur, Narikudi and Thiruchuli and Virudhunagar Blocks in Tamil Nadu

Total coverage of the panchayat: 58

No of Villages: 190

Total population of the village: 1,38,915

RETRIEVING HOPE FOR CHILD RIGHTS - Supported by Children Believe



Overview

The "Retrieving Hope for Child Rights" program, generously supported by Children Believe, aims to dismantle barriers to education, ensure children live in healthy and empowered communities, advance child rights and participation, promote equality for girls, and partner with children and youth for change.

This initiative achieved significant milestones during the fiscal year 2022-23:

1. Child Rights and Education:

- Establishment of three new Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) buildings, ensuring pre-primary education for 150 children.
- Renovation of an ICDS center in K.Pudhur, facilitating enhanced educational facilities.
- Successful mainstreaming of 5 irregular and dropout students into formal education.
- Remarkable progress in education, with 88% of children from program villages transitioning to higher education.



Community Empowerment and Gender Equality:

- Mobilization of two tuition center buildings by Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), enhancing educational access.
- Formation of four kabaddi teams comprising 120 members, advocating against early marriages and promoting gender equity.
- 44 Dalit women trained as tailors, becoming successful entrepreneurs, thus promoting economic empowerment and gender equality.

2. Health and Well-being:

- Installation of 20 new solar street lights in child-accessing areas, improving safety and well-being.
- Provision of water and sanitation facilities in 3 villages, benefiting 220 children, including 53 Dalit children.
- Resolution of corporal punishment issues for 14 children, ensuring their well-being and educational continuity.



3. Child Protection and Advocacy:

- Conduct of an Early Forced Child Marriage (EFM) awareness program, reaching 1200 children from 9 schools.
- Prevention of child marriages, with no reported cases in the district, indicating successful advocacy and protection efforts.
- Streamlining of Makkalai Thedi Maruththuvam Thittam, ensuring access to essential health services for vulnerable communities.

4. Capacity Building and Partnerships:

- Training of 34 women as work site facilitators, enhancing their capacity to contribute to community development.
- Involvement of government officials from relevant departments in training programs, fostering partnerships for sustainable development.

Restoring Rights of Adolescents and Young Women's



Objectives of the Program

- Empowering Communities and workers to prevent them from entering forced/bonded work
- Promotion of worker collectives, social security and grievance redressal mechanisms
- Building community level governance and eco system to promote labour rights and also prevent forced/bonded labour

This initiative achieved significant milestones during the fiscal year 2022-23:

Education and Child Development

- Supported 1251 children through 40 community resource centers equipped with learning materials
- Re-enrolled 32 dropout children into schools, including 14 child laborers and 5 children working in mills
- Formed 80 adolescent girls and boys groups to prevent child labor, child marriage, school dropouts, and substance abuse

- Conducted awareness programs in 40 villages on the consequences of child labor, child marriage, drug and mobile addiction
- Facilitated children's participation in school competitions and cultural programs

Health Initiatives

- Established good rapport with Village Health Nurses (VHNs) and Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) for referring and following up on children's health needs
- Conducted periodic medical check-ups for adolescents and mill laborers in collaboration with hospitals like Apollo and Meenakshi Mission
- Identified and addressed respiratory, heart, anemia, and menstrual issues among adolescents and mill workers

Community Empowerment

- Facilitated the formation of 14 Higher Education Committees, supporting 162 vulnerable children with a community contribution of Rs. 1,41,320
- Supported the formation of 23 new Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and 54 existing SHGs, providing training on account keeping, bank operations, and income-generating activities
- Enabled Community Action Group (CAG) members to write 122 petitions on adolescent and child-related issues, with 32 issues resolved
- Facilitated contributions from the community, including identifying dropout children, supporting children's programs, and resource center infrastructure





Government Collaboration

- Maintained good rapport with the District Child Protection Unit (DCPU) and facilitated 29 scholarship applications for single-parent children
- Conducted training for Village Administrative Officers (VAOs), Revenue Inspectors, and Panchayat Raj Institution (PRI) members on child marriage, sexual abuse, child safety, and child-friendly villages

Social Welfare and Security Schemes

- Facilitated access to various social welfare schemes, including unorganized labor welfare (338 beneficiaries), other identity documents (6161 beneficiaries), bank accounts (158 beneficiaries), and skill training programs (68 beneficiaries, with 32 employed)

Through these initiatives, the organization has contributed to the empowerment of adolescent girls and young women, while promoting education, health, livelihood, and social security in the operational area.

**Society for People's Education and Economic Change
(SPEECH)**

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