

GREENING THE LIVES – MANA BHOOMI

A Case Study of K. Uma

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| Name | K. UMA |
| Age | 45 years |
| Husband's Name | Lakshmanna |
| Children | 1) Sai Ram - 21 years 2) Akhila - 9 years |
| Village | Kurugunta |
| Mandal | Anantapuram |
| District | Anantapuram |



Umadevi is the daughter of Subbanna, and Chinna Lakshamma - the residents of Rudrampeta village in Anantapur Rural Mandal. She is among the 5 children which include 4 girls and a boy. The family was an economically poor one dependent of daily wage employment.

At the age of 17, she got married to Mr. Lakshmaiah, a native of Utnoor in Adilabad district of Telagana state (erstwhile state of Andhra Pradesh). Lakshmaiah was a tailor by profession, and she started her life as a house-wife. Husband Lakshmaiah was a chronic heart patient, but was not in any kind of trouble as he was leading a happy life till they had their first child Sai Ram.



Umadevi at the Farmer Producer Organization (FPO) which is exclusively run by the women

However, time has a lot to say in anyone's and everyone's life. The life of Umadevi took an unexpected turn, when her mother-in-law died. Having heard the news about the death of his mother, Lakshmaiah went into a shock and collapsed at the corpse of his mother and breath his last. "This is the worst moment in my life" recalls Umadevi about that heart breaking incident. She lost her mother-in-law, who was aged, but she also lost her husband - an unexpected and incredible incident in her life.

Under these traumatic conditions, she came back to Rudrampeta as there were no one to take care of her in Utnoor. She started living in her parents house. But, after the marriage of her brother, she could not stay there as a few misunderstanding started propping-up in the family.

So, she moved out with her son and settled in Y.S.R. Colony, Kurugunta. She struggled a lot to lead a dignified life along with her son. At this juncture, she came across Mr. Hanumappa, who was a professional cook. She married him with the hope that he will stand beside her in her sorrows and happiness and she will find a good support in her life.

"My life with Hanumappa went of very well" recalls Umadevi "until we had our daughter - Akhila. But, after this the real face of Hanumappa started coming out." Hanumappa started neglecting Umadevi and the family. He developed illegal affairs with other women who come across in his profession of cooking in the functions and events. He even started troubling her to give him money that she earned working here and there to run the family. He started torturing her both physically and mentally. "I bear all this for the sake of my children" says Umadevi. But her patience ended when he grabbed the 3-month old child from her lap and took her away to sell her to somebody.

This is the situation at which she came across REDS. She met Ms. Bhanuja and explained her situation and her sufferings in the hands of Hunumappa and about the future of her two children. "I am really thankful to Bhanuja madam" says Umadevi as gave her the support that she was very badly longing for. A police complaint was lodged against Hanumappa with the support of REDS, and during the police enquiry he expressed his wicked suspicion about the character of Umadevi. He finally agreed to give a part of his income every month and refused to live with her. "This was another very worst stage of my life" says Umadevi recalling her bitter suffering for getting remarked by her husband.

At this juncture REDS extended her a financial support of Rs.1000/- every month. She was enrolled as a member of Collective Farming group where all the single women have come together and started making their life a 'self-dependent' one. She was provided with a bicycle. "I am getting adequate greens and vegetables from this Collective Farming Field - which we call as 'Mana Bhoomi', and whatever is excess for my share, I sell them in the neighbouring colonies" says Umadevi about how she makes some extra income for the family. In addition, she is also getting an amount of Rs.100/- after working in the field.

According to Umadevi, support of REDS through 'Mana Bhoomi' collective farming is of immense support for all the women suffering like her - particularly the single women who need a supporting hand in the present society.



Umadevi on her bicycle selling vegetables to make an additional income for the family

"I am very much thankful to REDS and Bhanuja madam. She gave me the support I needed during the worst moments in my life. She helped not only me, but several women like me ... I am very much indebted to her ! She is always there for me to guide me and to give me suggestions I don't have any words to thank her for all this!!