

## COLLECTIVE FARMING - GROWING HOPES AND CONFIDENCE

### A Case Study of TANNER DHANALAKSHMI



Name	Tanneer Dhanalakshmi
Age	33 years
Husband's Name	Tanneer Madhavarao
Children	1) Mahesh - 16 years 2) Pradeep - 14 years 3) Nayan - 6 years
Village	Kurugunta
Mandal	Anantapuram
District	Anantapuram

Dhanalakshmi comes from Singaraya Konda village near Ongole town in Prakasham. She is the youngest and only daughter in the 3 membered family Mr. Chinna Koteswara Rao, and Adilakshmi. The other two being sons.

At the age of 15 years, she got married to her relative Madhavarao. At the time of her marriage Madhavarao was 19 years old.

For some time, they spent in Hyderabad as daily wage employees - as constructor labours. However, they did not fix at one place and started moving to different places like Bangalore, Gooty, Garladinne, Kalyandurgam etc., depending on the availability of wage employment.

Their married life resulted in having 3 children, that too at a very early age. Unfortunately, all the 3 children were born with chronic thyroid problem. Out of these 3 children 2 were Intellectually disabled. The family suffered a lot - on one side with the health problems of their children, and with the low income that they are earning, which is not at all sufficient both ends to meet.

"At this stage we shifted to Kurugunta village" says Dhanalakshmi, they took a house for rent in in N.R. Colony. Their situation turned grim as the husband also fell sick and could not attend to the wage employment woks. He could hardly attend a couple of days in a week, while rest of the time he suffered with severe health problems. Her sufferings worsened as the neighbours also started ill-treating her and her children for their physical and mental status.

This is the situation when the family was identified as vulnerable family by REDS staff during the visit to the village. "I was guided to REDS office located in Anantapur" recalls Dhanalakshmi about her meeting the Chief Functionary Ms. Bhanuja. "She was very kind and patient to listen to me. I explained her we all even thought of committing suicide to escape from these problems" says Dhanalakshmi. However, the words of solace given by Ms. Bhanuja, gave her

confidence and made her to think about the fate of the children if she takes such a vague decision. "Madam comforted me and asked me to stay strong in such situations, because as a mother of 3 children, I have more masterly responsibility to safeguard them and take care of them more than any others" recalls Dhanalakshmi. These words of comfort made her to gain confidence and think in a positive way about life.

Ms. Dhanalakshmi says that this meeting of her with Ms. Bhanuja was a turning point in her life. REDS has involved her as a member in the Collective Farming, which is taken up by involving single women in Kurugunta village. Thus, she is involved into some wage-earning work where she works for herself and makes an income. "I am also paid an amount of Rs.100/- per day which helped me to take care of the family" says Dhanalakshmi.

Now, she and her family feel comfortable about their days - they feel that they have someone who can listen to them, give them the confidence, and feel their suffering and plan for their happiness.

*"I am a member of this 10 membered Collective Farming Team. We are cultivating adopting to the Natural Farming technique. The greens and vegetables cultivated in this are consumed by us. My family and myself as very much thankful to REDS and*



Dhanalakshmi involved in the preparation activities – seed selection for Mana Bhoomi



Dhanalakshmi involved in the Ghana jeevamrutham preparation