

# Vaan Muhil Annual Report 2018 -2019

Vaan Muhil has carried out a number of activities during 2018-2019 under three programs

- 1. Towards Eliminating Modern forms of Slavery in Textile sector in VirudhuNagar District, with the support of the Freedom Fund and Lush Fresh Handmade Cosmetics.**
- 2. State level activities against modern slavery, human trafficking and bonded labour, supported by the Freedom Fund**
- 3. Digital Literacy program to enhance livelihood opportunities for rural young women in Tirunelveli District with the support of Google TATA project and Voice Foundation**

Vaan Muhil has achieved a lot through community based interventions for the survivors at grassroots level in VirudhuNagar and Tirunelveli district and through meaningful engagement with policy makers at state and national levels in 2018-2019.

## Towards Eliminating Modern Forms of Slavery in Textile sector in Srivilliputhur and Vembakottai blocks in VirudhuNagar district

With the support of the Freedom Fund, Vaan Muhil has been involved in the following five areas:

- I. Adolescent Empowerment Programs**
- II. Community Support Groups – Livelihood Support Programs**
- III. Engagement with the Mill Management**
- IV. Capacity Building for Program Staff**
- V. Networking and Campaigning**

### I. Adolescent Empowerment Programs

#### 1. Functioning of CRCs in the villages

CRCs in our working villages continue to serve as platforms for providing spaces for children to get involved in beyond class room activities and to create awareness on our thematic focus, i.e, Child Rights, Women Rights, Human Rights and Labour Rights. The facilitators take special efforts to enhance quality education through regular follow up of their progress and provide inputs to protect adolescents and children from high risk exploitative situation. As a result of CRCs in the villages, the children develop their personality, critical thinking, awareness on social issues and interpersonal relationships.



## 2. Health Camps

Vaan Muhil project team organized eight one day health camps for adolescent girls and young women in eight villages during one year. Out of the total (695) who attended the camps, 634 were adolescent girls and current and ex mill workers from 25 villages in two blocks. Girls were referred to various hospitals for further treatment by the doctors after the medical camps. The project team had a tie up with the Meenachi Mission Hospital, Madurai, and Hanumantha Homeopathy Clinic, Sivkasi for these medical camps. The medical team created awareness among the adolescents on adolescent period and health related issues for them. The adolescent girls were able to understand the problems of their adolescent period and benefitted out of these medical camps. The Community Support Groups extended all possible help to the project staff to organize these medical camps in their respective villages.



## 3. Career guidance courses

The project team organized seven one day career guidance courses for girls and boys studying secondary school. 869 students benefitted out of the career guidance programs organized in the academic year. Study materials for competitive exams were also distributed to the boys and girls, who are interested in preparing the TNPSC exams. Special coachings were organized in a couple of villages for the interested AB groups to prepare for the exams. The students were given motivational inputs as to their future career after +2 exams and they were given a number of graduate courses that they can choose after +2. These courses are also helpful to them to set a goal in their life and clear plan for their future.



## 4. Exposure visits and Summer Camps for AG girls and CRC children

The project staff took extra effort to organize exposure visits for AG girls and special summer camps for CRC children in the academic year. The exposure visits to new centres of learning for the girls have been very useful to widen their thinking and the special summer camps in a number of villages for the CRC children. These camps include yoga, drawing competitions, arts from waste program, spoken English coaching and artificial jewellery making sessions in villages. A Total of 539 students benefitted in the special summer coachings.

A number of exposure visits were planned to children from the working villages to nearby towns, in some cases to far off places like Kodaikanal, Madurai, Kanyakumari, Thekkadi, Achankovil(kerala) and Tuticorin shipyard. The nearby places included Thiruvannamalai Temple, Saneevinadhar Temple, Andal Temple, Madha Temple, Srivilliputhur Rajapalayam Park and Alangulam Cement Factory.

### 5. AG groups strengthening through refresher trainings / FBC

The Facilitators conducted refresher trainings on Film Based Curriculum for adolescent girls and these trainings further reinforce the key messages that were given during the FBC trainings last year. These regular meetings pave way for meaningful interaction with adolescent girls about the messages in the sessions after viewing 'Call Me Priya'.



The FBC training to the AG groups and the key messages that are given through training slowly work among the AG girls. "Call me Priya" film made a profound impact on the girls, particularly those mill workers, who identify themselves in the character of Priya in the film and explore to find out solutions for their problems.

## II. Community Support Grups – Livelihood Support Programs

### 1. FBC Training to CSG members

Film Based Curriculam trainings to CSG members have been organized by project staff in all working villages and the members are eagerly taking part in the trainings. The CSG members, after attending the



trainings, begin to understand the various dimensions of mill work, involving the adolescent girls and young women. They are able to understand the aspirations of these working adolescent girls, besides the hardships and ordeal they undergo in the mill during working hours. "Call me Priya" creates ripples in their minds and the members begin to grasp the overall issue, revolving around mill related work and its far reaching implications. The visuals carry clear message to the audience than a series of lectures. After the film, they are able to raise questions to the facilitators about modern

forms of slavery in textile sector, basic information about workers' rights, minimum wages, working hours.

## **2. Linkages to Government Schemes and services**

The facilitators have taken efforts to make linkages with Government schemes and services during the reporting period. Out of the total number of applied for various benefits, 646 beneficiaries from 35 villages have benefitted through various linkages to Government Schemes and services and maximum number of beneficiaries are from Chellampatty, Sevalpatty, Puthusennel Kulam, Noorsahipuram, Lakshmiapuram, Keezhanmarinadu, Edayapottalpatty, Perumpalcheri and Kurichiyarpatti from both blocks. The facilitators spent their time in meeting the Government officials and concerned departments to get the benefits / schemes.

## **3. Vocational and skill development training**

With the view of rehabilitating the adolescent girl workers and survivors of bonded labour, Vaan Muhil project staff have supported 34 deserving young women for vocational and skill development during the reporting period. Besides, interested boys and girls have taken certificate courses supported by Panchayat Union Office. The project staff take extra effort to explore employment opportunities for these trained adolescent girls, after the training period.

## **4. Strengthening Self Help Groups**

Efforts are on to strengthen the Self Help Groups that were formed last year in our working villages. Totally 52 women SHGs are functioning in the working area and 30 of groups received bank loans to the tune of Rs.75 lakhs. These group members including survivors of mill work or female family members, have been supported with training inputs on group formation, book keeping and linkages with financial institutions. Anbu Self Help Group in Kurichiyarpatti has received Rs. 6 Lakhs loan from Union Bank of India and the facilitator played a key role in keeping the group members together and guide them in right direction. Her support has been a great help to the group members.

## **5. Microenterprises Development**

Totally 33 women from the working villages have benefitted from the working villages have benefitted out of the support for Micro enterprises during the reporting period. With this minimum support that Vaan Muhil provides to them has been helpful to initiate the micro enterprises in their own villages and staff take efforts to make linkages with Government and other financial institutions to assist them to get more credits.



## 6. Increase in the awareness level on labour rights among Community Support Groups

Refresher training on film based curriculum for CSG members and parents have been organized to recall the learnings of the previous years. Regular meetings were organized for Community Support Groups to drive the message home, i.e, labour rights, meaning of bonded labour, sexual harassment, importance of girl child education and the role of CSG members in preventing young workers from entering high risk exploitative work situation. By way of creating awareness on labour rights and Vaan Muhil's interventions, four page IEC materials in simple Tamil were developed and distributed among the members so that those who are able to read the contents can go through the same. Similarly AG girls are able to raise questions about the Wages, working hours, safety measures, health and working condition inside the mills.



## 7. Taking up common issues as a follow up of interface meetings

Totally 14 interface meetings were held in one year in various villages, namely Perumpalcherry, Lakshmiapuram, P.Thiruvengatapuram, Kothankulam, Subramaniapuram, Puthusennel Kulam, Thulukkankulam and Chellampatty. Government officials and other stakeholders were invited for the interface meetings by the project staffs so that concrete issues were discussed in the meetings. The field staff, along with concerned CRC facilitators and CSG members planned for the meetings in advance, meeting the SHG members and identified the key issues in the villages and prepared the people accordingly ahead of the meetings.

Besides, petitions were submitted to the officials for Need for separate ration shop, Construction of (Health) sub centre, Proper link roads and better transportation facilities, Construction of common toilets, Removal of TASMAL shops, Better drinking water facilities, Improved Library facility, Repair of bridges, Improved drainage facilities, Better implementation of Government schemes, Improved waste management, OAP pension, disability assistance, and bank loans for SHGs from the people. The officials were able to explain to the people about their role and the possibilities of the demands being met by them.



A couple of demands were met after a series of meeting with the officials as follow up of the interface meetings. For instance, link road between Chellampatty – Kurichiarpatty - Korukkampatty which was in a very bad conditions was repaired as a result of interface meeting. This report on the damaged road was also published in a daily after the meeting.

## 8. Meaningful Observance of Important days

Some of the important days were meaningfully observed by the Adolescent girls groups and community support groups in the working villages. Besides Republic Day(26<sup>th</sup> Jan 2018), May Day (01<sup>st</sup> May 2018) the Independence Day (15<sup>th</sup> August 2018) and Gandhi Jeyanthi (2<sup>nd</sup> October 2018), wherein special Grama Sabha Meetings were conducted in many villages and good many AG girls and CSG members took active part in the meetings, important days such as Kamarajar Birth day (15.07.2018), which is celebrated as Education Day in Tamil Nadu, Anti Human Trafficking Day (30.07.2018) Teachers Day (05.09.2019) International Human Rights Day (10.12.2018), Children's Day (14.11.2018), International Women's Day (08.03.2019) were meaningfully observed, wherein CSG members and villagers actively participate. This kind of observance creates awareness on the topics / themes among the village people and makes them involved in relevant themes / issues. Most of these important days are quite relevant to our thematic focus, particularly on girl child protection, bonded labour, human trafficking and modern forms of slavery.



## III. Engagement with the Mill Management

### 1. Legal Support

Totally 14 workers received their PF dues from their mills. Out of the 14 that received the PF dues, five got the amount directly from the mills, while the remaining nine received from the PF office. The project staff assisted one victim's family to approach the mills to receive the ESI pension benefits and has supported the other victims to draft petitions to the State Women Commission and to the District Legal Services Authority, Srivilliputhur. In the cases of two deaths in the mills that our team took up to the Public Hearing Chennai, petitions were sent to the State Women Commission once again to intervene in their matters so that the victims could get the remaining compensation amount at the earliest and FIR be registered against the mill for the deaths occurred in the mills. The State Women Commission had sent letters to the Superintendent of Police, Vidudhu Nagar on 19.02.2019, directing the SP to register an FIR against the mill. The petitioners have approached the SP office along with the project staff, seeking direction to the mill.



## 2. Fact finding reports

- A mill worker from Kanyakumari district working in Minister White Textile near Srivilliputhur died in a mysterious condition. There was a wordy duel among the mill workers in the textiles, which resulted in a murder of a co worker. On collecting the details after the murder of the mill worker, real facts relating to working conditions in the mills were highlighted in the fact finding report. The project team follows up the case, which is pending before Malli Police Station in Srivilliputhur.
- A young women mill worker from K.Thottiapatty within the limits of Vanniyampatty Vilakku near Sriilliputhur, belonging to Arunthathiyar community, was continuously sexually harassed by Esakkiraja from a nearby village. Unable to bear the shame, she hanged herself at home, when no one was there. As soon as the news reached the police station, the police officials arrested the accused immediately and remanded him to judicial custody. But the question here is why should she hang herself. She must be bold enough to lodge a criminal complaint and put the accused behind the bars, instead of having lost her life unnecessarily. The project staff make use of her case to educate the adolescent girls, who have suicidal thought, after this kind of incidents.

## 3. Initiate dialogue with mill owners

The project staff made several attempts to enter the mills in Srivilliputhur area continuously during the year. A handout on the need of ICC, the nature and composition of the ICC inside the mill has been prepared by the project team to explain to the mill management about the functioning of the ICC.



## 4. Formation of Migrant workers groups



These supports along with regular visits to their areas will be organized.

Three migrant workers groups have been formed in Srivilliputhur and Vembakkottai blocks during the year. The project staff have been in touch with the migrant workers groups in Keezhanmarainadu in Vembakkottai block and Edayankulam in Srivilliputhur block. They have collected preliminary details about their living and working conditions in the mills. The staff have listed out the required support to the migrant workers groups in the two blocks, mainly awareness creation, educational support to their children and health camps. These

## 5. DLSA follow up on the Hostel Registration in the Mills

As a result of our continuous engagement with the DLSA on the enforcement of Hostel Registration Act in the mills in Virudhu Nagar district, followed by our petition to the DLSA in 2017, the Secretary, DLSA has directed the District Social Welfare officer, Joint Director (Industrial Safety and Health) in Virudhu Nagar and Sivakasi to ensure whether all hostels in Textile mills are properly registered under the Act and to report to the DLSA about this. We are following it up and approaching the DLSA for further action, in case of non-compliance by the mills. *The Secretary, DLSA has sent circulars to the District Social Welfare Officer, Joint Director (Industrial safety and Health) in Virudhu Nagar and Sivakasi, quoting Vaan Muhil's intervention, report and demand put forth.* More hostels in the mills have been registered with the instructions from the DLSA but Vaan Muhil could not get the full details from the officials as to the number of Hostels registered under the Act.

## 6. Participation of CSG and AG members in Grama Sabha Meetings

The active participation of CSG and AG members in two Grama Sabha Meetings (January 26, Republic Day and May Day) during the reporting period helped the communities to raise their voices and grievances in the local governance (Athikulam Deventhri and R.K Pudur). They were able to raise important issues relating to basic amenities such drainages, repair of road, construction of public toilets,



construction of small bridges / check dams, cleaning of villages and so on (Thulukkankulam, Lakshmipuram and Acham Thavithan). They also demand the govt officials for inadequate funds allotted to their village and improper use of funds for construction of Toilets (Pulipanpatty and Rasapatty). In Noorsahipuram the CSG members and AG girls brought the non-repair of roads and land patta issues to the knowledge of the District Collector when he visited the village. In Edayapottalpatty village, the CSG members highlighted the issue of manual scavengers and

collecting garbage / distribution of dustbins to all areas in the villages.

## VI. Capacity Building for Program Staff

### 1. Staff orientation and Monthly reviews

Vaan Muhil organized orientation programs once in a Quarter and regular monthly reviews to evaluate the performance of the project staff and CRC facilitators. Two orientations were conducted for the staff during the reporting period. Inputs were given to them on workers' rights, child right and

women rights in the orientation programs and sharing of the CRC facilitators in the monthly review meetings helped the project staff to work out details for future planning.



## **2. ALC visits and 3-E Tool Workshops in Madurai and Dindigul**

Vaan Muhil staff gained knowledge out of the two workshops conducted by ALC for all partners (12<sup>th</sup> May and 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2018 in Madurai). The detailed workshops on 3-E Tool made our project staff understand the tool to evaluate the external environment and to analyze the factors involved in and finally to reach out a conclusion before they select an activity or a trade. Many doubts were clarified by the resource persons as to how far these trades and livelihood options were viable and sustainable and how to practically apply the tools to different traders under livelihood, skill development and enterprise promotion towards the implementation of the project activity in the following year. The practical sessions with more exercise were useful to our project team to carry out our activities in the Quarters to come.

## **3. Legal Training for Partners in Dindigul**

The one day legal consultation for all FF partners in Dindigul on 19.05.2018 was helpful to identify our needs, gaps and strategies in terms of legal interventions for our focus groups in our working villages. The resource persons could clarify all the doubts that the partners raised in the program and to consolidate all the points that came up in the discussion. The one day interaction was a prelude to all possible legal interventions to the mill workers and other community members in our working villages. We were able to list out possible areas of interventions with the support provided by the team.

## **4. Three days training on Financial Management in November in Namakkal**

The three day training on Financial Management by CPA in November in Namakkal was very helpful to all partners and Vaan Muhil learnt a lot on various related topics such as financial policy, budgeting, internal control systems, accounting, recording of transaction, legal compliances, reporting and auditing. The intensive training by CPA Auditors gave us updated information related to above mentioned topics and legal requirement that are needed for NGOs. The group exercises and case studies presented to us were very good in learning these things and these exercises made the sessions were lively, participatory and enriching.

## **5. Facilitators' conference in VirudhuNagar**

The second district level conference for all facilitators of the four Freedom Fund Partners in VirudhuNagar district was held at VirudhuNagar Town on 07.12.2018. The conference provided a

platform for all facilitators to share their work experiences, practical difficulties and best practices in the implementation of the project. The inputs on Sexual harassment at work place given by Dr. P. Bala Murugan were very useful to all facilitators and the participation of the members from DLSA and other departments in the first session was a motivation for the facilitators. The cultural programs performed by the facilitators in the afternoon brought more joy and closeness among them.



## 6. Follow up of SDGs and Labour

As a follow up of the one day consultation on SDGs, oneday statelevel workshop was organized by TamilNadu Alliance in Madurai on 17.05.2018 and Vaan Muhil took part in a series of consultations and follow up activities in Chennai, initiated by SDG Watch. Concrete action plans were worked out to highlight goal 8.7 and corresponding targets in goals 1,2,4,5 and 16. As partner of Campaign Against Camp Coolie System, Vaan Muhil took active part in a couple of district level programs on SDGs and distributed the posters, prepared by CACCS on SDGs during the reporting period.

## IV. Networking and Campaigning

### 1. One day District level Conference for CRCFacilitators/ Volunteeres in Sivakasi on 17.06.2018

The one day district level conference, organized by the four Viridhu Nagar FF partners in Sivakasi on 17.06.2018 for all facilitators and volunteers provided platform for them to share their best practices in their working villages, discuss the challenges they face in the field and their grievances they have in the working areas. The sharing of facilitators from other partners was a very good learning for our facilitators and they also had an opportunity to speak about their achievements, best practices and challenges. The input session on ESI and PF benefits by the resource person in the morning session was a solid input to all facilitators, who could understand the entire benefits of ESI and PF for the mill workers.

### 2. Taking part in IWG meetings in Kolkotta

Vaan Muhil has taken active part in two Interim Working Group meetings held in Kolkotta during this reporting period. Taking part in the national level consultations / meetings, particularly on the Trafficking of Persons Bill gave us an overview of the developments that are taking place at national level and to have the feeling of our contributions to the national process in an important legislation that is very much connected to the present work and focus groups. The cross learning and sharing has been really useful to the nature of work in the working villages on eliminating modern slavery in Textile Sector. The different strategies worked out in the IWG for the speedy passage of the Trafficking Bill give

us strength and perspectives in terms of policy advocacy and meaningful engagement with the policy makers at the national level.

### 3. One day Orientation on SDGs for all partners in Madurai

A one day orientation program on SDGs was organized for all FF partners other NGOs working for the rights and welfare of the adolescent girls / young women in Madurai on 17.05.2018, wherein Vaan Muhil staff actively took part. They could learn various SDGs, relevant targets and the corresponding global indicators that are evolved by the Inter Agency for SDGs and the national indicators evolved by the Central Govt / Niti Agaog. The participants felt the need for working on certain important SDGs and to focus on areas of interventions specific to working people / target groups. Concrete action plans were worked out to focus on target 8-7 and relevant other targets in goals: 1, 2, 4, 5, and 16. There has been a state level effort going on involving a number of NGOs and academics on SDGs. Vaan Muhil has been part of the state level process on this theme (Labour).

### 4. Active involvement in the Statelevel Public Hearing in Chennai

Vaan Muhil was actively involved in the one day Public Hearing on the safety of young women mill workers in Textile Sector, organized by the Tamil Nadu Women Commission in Chennai on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2018. As part of the Campaign, Vaan Muhil took a lead role in assisting the Women Commission and the organizing committee for the Public Hearing and to provide logistical support to all work. Vaan Muhil took efforts to take 13 cases to the Public Hearing and prepared all the petitions, depositions to be submitted to the Tamil Nadu commission.



### 5. Taking Part in the International Conference on Goal 8.7 in Bangkok



Vaan Muhil had the privilege to take part in the international conference on NGO Alliance 8.7 focussing on human trafficking and modern slavery, held on 3 – 5 December 2018, at Bangkok. Nearly 60 CSOs took active part from 25 countries across the globe and discussed the modalities on strategies to materialize Goal 8.7. All the Indian partners felt the need for a collective effort on the issue and to involve all stakeholders who are working on this area in India. The active participation of Indian NGOs in the forum has resulted in a formation of a separate

WhatsApp group for the CSOs working on the issue.

## 6. Signature Campaign on TOP Bill

As a follow up of the Interim Working Group meetings on the Trafficking of Persons Bill 2018, Vaan Muhil has been fully engaged in collecting signatures from the people in the working villages in Srivilliputhur and Vembakkottai blocks in Virudhu Nagar district in November, keeping the Winter Session in mind. Vaan Muhil collected 4000 signatures from the community members in working villages and be active part of the Campaign Against Camp Coolie System in the Post Card Campaign in Quarter 4 and prepared letters to the Rajya Sabha MPs. Nearly 1800 letters were prepared and couriered to the Rajaya Sabha MPs from Tamil Nadu by the end of November. As FF Partner, Vaan Muhil was able to keep up the momentum on this issue during the Winter Wession. Vaan Muhil took the lead in this particular campaign in VirudhuNagar district and organized a press meet in the headquarters on 27.11.2018.

## 2. Statelevel Campaign Against Camp Coolie System

In order to build a supportive environment for protecting the rights of adolescent workers in the Textile and Garment industries in Tamil Nadu, Campaign Against Camp Coolie System has undertaken the following activities, which could be categorized into four areas.

1. Strengthening Constituencies at district level (to address the issues of labour exploitation in Textile industry)
2. Strengthening Govt Mechanism (on prevention and response to the issue of labour exploitation in Textile sector)
3. Documentation and dissemination of information related to thematic areas
4. Participation of CACCS in state and national efforts and initiatives as part of TNA

The major activities in the reporting period include preparation and participation in the State level Public



Hearing on the safety of women workers in Textile industries, District level campaign efforts on the Trafficking of Persons of Bill and media engagement on this issue, CSO coordination and National level lobbying efforts for the Trafficking of Persons Bill and seeking the support of the MPs on the Labour Codes, mainly meeting the MPs from Tamil Nadu, as part of TNA initiative. It is worth mentioning here that CACCS has taken genuine efforts to strengthen the campaign

partners through collective efforts at district level and the CSO coordination, besides taking active part in all initiatives and programs, taken up by TNA.

### 1. Post Card Campaign on TOP Bill

With the CACCS partners and other CSOs at district level, the Campaign was able to strengthen the CSO coordination in nine districts during the reporting period. The CSO coordination at district level that was established by CACCS in the previous Quarters, was very useful to take up the State level campaign on Trafficking of Persons Bill. Most of the partners have been very active in the post card campaign on the Trafficking of Persons Bill, which was passed in the Lok Sabha in July last year but waiting for the approval of the Rajya Sabha for quite some time. CACCS partners were keeping up the momentum in at least seven districts, namely *VirudhuNagar, Tirunelveli, Thoothukudi, Trichy, Karur, Theni and Ramanathapuram* in November and December 2018. In addition, CACCS partners could reach out to new districts, namely *Madurai, Salem, Cuddalore, Tiruppur and Coimbatore*. Totally 15 NGO partners in the twelve districts were actively involved in the campaign and collected 29,500 post cards across the state, besides nearly 5000 letters were dispatched to the Raja Sabha MPs, seeking their support for the passage of the Bill.



### 2. Press Meets at district level

Press meets were organized in five districts on the post card campaign with the help of CACCS partners, under the banner of CACCS and TNA in November 2018. Each of the lead partners in the districts took efforts to organize the press meets in the districts (*VirudhuNagar, Trichy, Karur, Ramanathapuram and Tiruppur*) and the collected post cards in each district were displayed in front of the media persons during the press meets so as to impress the policy makers and the public that various stakeholders at different level are involved in the Campaign and to send a message to the policy makers that communities at the grassroots level demand the passage of the TOP Bill during the Winter Session. Detailed press notes were prepared by the Secretariat for the press meets to explain to the media persons on the dynamics of the post card campaign and the need for a comprehensive legislation to address the issue of trafficking.

### 3. Awareness on the TOP Bill among college and school students in the districts

The CACCS partners took efforts to reach out College and school students in seven districts (*Ramanathapuram, Trichy, Karur, Tirunelveli, Thoothukudi, Dindigul and Madurai*) and involve the student community in the post card campaign on the TOP Bill. At least 5000 students have been involved in the post card campaign on the TOP Bill.



Inputs were given to the students as to why the campaign demands for early passage of the TOP Bill by the policy makers. Handbills were prepared on the salient features of the TOP Bill and a small explanation on the need for the passage of the Bill in the Rashya Sabha, were widely distributed among the students during the post card campaign.

#### 4. Sensitization to CSOs, Trade Union leaders and other stakeholders in the districts

Efforts were taken by the campaign partners at the district level to sensitize the Civil Society organizations, Trade Unions, Women groups and community leaders, explaining to them about the key provisions of the TOP Bill and how trafficking issue would be meaningfully addressed and crimes of Trafficking could be reduced considerably, if a comprehensive bill of this sort becomes a legislation in today's context. Many community leaders and women groups raised several questions on the bill and aspects of Trafficking issue and the partners could explain to them.

#### 5. State level Public Hearing in Chennai

As part of strengthening the Govt mechanism in prevention and response system to the issue of exploitation, Campaign Against Camp Coolie System, took the lead in assisting the State Women Commission to organize the one day state level Public Hearing on the safety of young women workers in



Textile sector, in Chennai on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2018. The Public Hearing was the major event that CACCS was actively involved in, along with its partners.

Detailed preparations were held for the Public Hearing, involving the partners and other NGOs from eight districts. Identifying cases for Public Hearing and classification of categories were done by a team of activists, supported by CACCS before the Public Hearing. The team sat with the Chairperson of the Tamil Nadu State Women Commission and other members in the Commission, to work out case details

for the one day event and other logistics for the same, well ahead of the Public Hearing. The petitions of the victims and other supported documents were compiled together by the team and sent to the Jury Panel and the experts before the Public Hearing so that they could read the documents compiled and come prepared for the hearing.

#### 6. Documentation Unit

With the functioning of documentation unit in the Secretariat, CACCS was able to collect information related to thematic focus and could disseminate the same among our partners and other NGO members. Thanks to the documentation unit, CACCS was able to send materials immediately for post card campaign to all partners and translated contents to all MPs of Trafficking of Persons Bill.

Subscription of magazines and dailies and classification of articles and analyses on labour rights and other related topics continued during the reporting period.

**7. Distribution of Posters to all Partners, NGOs and other stakeholders**

The three sets of posters that were published on TOP Bill, Child Labour and SDGs, were distributed to our partners and NGOs in southern Tamil Nadu. The posters on SDGs were in great demand and CACCS was able to reach out many and the posters were well received by the partners. Besides NGOs, who have been associated with the Campaign, other stakeholders, particularly colleges also received the posters and made use of it.



**Digital Literacy Program for Rural Women**

With the support of TATA Google project and Voice Foundation, Vaan Muhil carried out digital literacy program for rural women in Tirunelveli district in order to enhance the livelihood opportunities for them through mobile apps. With the distribution of mobile handsets to 99 young women instructors from different parts of the district, who were trained in use of mobile application relevant for enhancing livelihood opportunities, Vaan Muhil could reach out 60028 rural women in 387 villages from 19 blocks in Tirunelveli district in 2018 – 2019.



Many of the trained young rural women have started micro enterprises / small trades in their own villages, after the training and some of them produce phenyl, soap oil, handicrafts, artificial jewellery and kids wear / garments, which are being sold in the local markets. They have also established links with local SHGs and schools and with their contacts, these young women entrepreneurs could make an additional living. In addition, there have been trainings for school and college students on the use of mobile apps for better employment opportunities.



**VAAN MUHIL**

15, Kavitha Nagar, MaharajaNagar Post, Tirunelveli – 627 011, Tamil Nadu, S.India

Phone: +91 – 462 – 2521771 Email: vaanmuhil@gmail.com

**Project Office:** Vaan Muhil, 5A, South Car Street, Madavarvalagam, Srivilliputhur – 626 125