

A field trip that set the ball rolling for an ambitious village development program



TIDE has been running smokeless village program in remote villages of Karnataka. Through a CSR partnership with FANUC India, TIDE had provided Sarala stoves and initiated a women's livelihood program through stove building in the remote village of Goddadahatti in Kondli Gram Panchayat, in Gubbi Taluk.

Figure 1: Sarala stove at a home in Guddadahotahalli village



Figure 2: Team interacting with community

TIDE invited FANUC team to visit Goddadahatti village in Kondli Gram Panchayat, a three-hour drive from Bangalore, to see the Sarala stoves installed in homes. The team received a very warm welcome. The community was very appreciative of the initiative to make their village and homes smokeless. The team's one-on-one discussions with villagers and witnessing of the living conditions up close led them to believe that much could be done to bring about long term improvements in the lives of the people, especially the women, who lived there.



Figure 3: Smokeless village board



Figure 4: With women stove builders at Goddadahalli

The Plan:

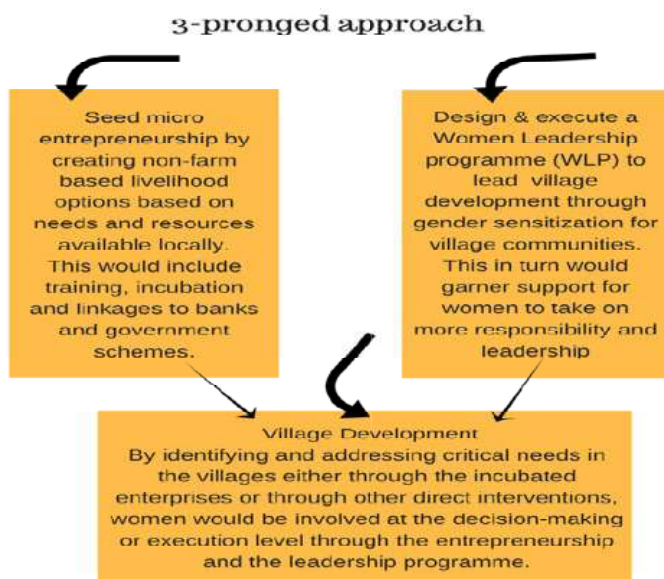


Figure 5: Village development approach

On their return to Bangalore, TIDE took forward the discussion suggesting a more holistic program in the village. With the first hand experience of seeing the conditions and hearing the aspirations, FANUC agreed that the best approach was to capacitate the village, particularly the women to becoming champions of village development, using technology as an enabler. A 3 pronged strategy evolved out of this and a program created.

Hopefully, this could be a template for village development through women empowerment that could be replicated in other Gram Panchayats.

First Steps:



Meeting with Gram Panchayat Members

To ensure the success of the program it was important to first get the support of the Kondli Gram Panchayat. Several meetings were held to get a buy-in after which an MOU was signed to initiate capacity building of the Gram Panchayat focusing on Organization Development through interventions benefitting the community. This began with a baseline survey of villages. Information was gathered on each village. Goddadahatti was adopted as the model village. Focus discussions with youth, women and the elders in the village helped identify two key areas namely, livelihoods and drinking water security, which were

critically lacking.

Micro Entrepreneurship:

The micro entrepreneurship kick started with the stove building program. So far five women have been trained and 50 stoves constructed. Women from the village were taken on an exposure visit to TIDE's Women Technology Park to meet and interact with entrepreneurs trained by TIDE and see various livelihood possibilities for themselves.



Women undergoing paper bag making training

Two more livelihood opportunities were identified based on their interest, skill set and available markets for the finished products. Paper bag making was the first. Five women have completed the training and two women have already started their own enterprise supplying the finished product to local shop keepers.

Ragi, grown locally, was the second option selected. Products made from it like huri hittu and malt are in demand. Training began this month (March) for the women interested in pursuing this.



Women trying their hand at making Areca leaf sheath plates

One woman from the village was keen to pursue production of Areca leaf sheath plates & bowls. She has completed her training and TIDE is helping her with her bank loan application to purchase the machine.

Five others are keen to learn tailoring. TIDE is trying to link them with a government scheme to arrange finance and talking to SELCO to find out the feasibility of purchasing solar sewing machines.

Women leadership program:

An expert group consisting of members from diverse fields was invited to TIDE to take inputs on starting a Women Leadership program. A broad framework was laid down and curriculum structure worked out. Named MANASVINI meaning "Proud" or "Good", it is envisaged as a combination of class room discussions, field activities, exposure visits, and training. TIDE's WTP will serve as the central hub, hosting the women participants when required and as a training centre. The program is scheduled to start in the 1st quarter of 2018.

Drinking water security:



Collecting water samples

A comprehensive survey was done on water demand and supply in the village. Water tests carried out at three bore wells and in households across the village showed hardness above permissible limits. Water drawn from some locations also showed E Coli contamination. The village has access to water ATM installed by the state government 2 kms away. However, distance and other social issues prove to be a deterrent with residents preferring not to use the facility. TIDE has piloted home level filters for field testing. A community level water ATM has been identified as the best solution after evaluating various

options. The PDO and GP members have been part of this process and have pledged some in-kind contributions including land, NOC, etc for the water ATM. By April 2018, a water ATM will be in operation.

More entrepreneurship trainings and incubation of enterprises, launch of the Women Leadership program MANASVINI and installation of water ATM scheduled for the months ahead. Goddadahatti waits in anticipation...and so do we!