

Nucleus Foundation offers Development Practitioners a range of Services

This, the 30th issue of our Newsletter will give you an insight into our present activities and varying services. Each project is custom made, and we follow stringent standards in maintaining the quality of the programs. Mutual rewards ensure sustainable solutions; this is why we constantly promote partnerships that are beneficial to all parties including project teams, beneficiaries, service providers and other stakeholders.

Facilitating business development and market linkages for IOM

Development of the cashew sector in Mannar

The latest developments in promoting the cashew industry among women in the Mannar district took looks very promising. With renewed energy and motivation after their training program on cashew processing the women of Sinna Karisal and Periya Karisal have obtained Rs 200,000/- to buy raw cashew for processing. The funds have been released by NECORD program to support the initiatives of these women who have been provided with technical and entrepreneurial skills development under the Nucleus program supported by IOM.

A picture speaks a thousand words: the difference in the processed cashew before and after training.



Before

After

Situational Analysis for rice sector in Batticaloa

Nucleus completed a situational analysis of the rice sector in Batticaloa as the preliminary step in supporting IOM beneficiaries engaged in the rice sector. This analysis identifies the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of the sector in the region and included key informant interviews and focus group discussions with beneficiaries and others engaged in the industry. The findings will be shared with all stakeholders at a workshop in the next days and their ideas and inputs obtained before deciding on the next steps. It is planned to engage all the players in the sector in a mutually beneficial partnership.



Entrepreneurship and Business Planning

The program was conducted for CRADA an organisation supported by IOM and engaged in rehabilitating those affected by substance abuse. Staff and inmates of CRADA participated in a four day workshop where they developed business plans in piggery, bakery, manioc chips production and chilly cultivation. Technical skills development programs are also planned in order to equip CRADA with the necessary skills to make these business plans a reality.

Empowerment, Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management

The program was conducted for a Womens' Rural Development Society in Thalai Mannar also supported by IOM. Most of these women are engaged in the fisheries industry as their livelihood. It is hoped that empowering them to think and act in a more entrepreneurial manner would enable them to increase their income earning opportunities.

Executing sustainable measures for Income Generation: GTZ REPSI

The program assigned to Nucleus by REPSI during the last 3 months of the project was successfully concluded amidst many challenges. It was a race against time as Nucleus carried out a series of interventions in the dairy, coir, fisheries, rice, bakery, agriculture, milk processing and poultry sectors in Potuvil, Vavuniya, Kinniya, Jaffna and Batticaloa. These activities were designed to ensure that the technical capacities of REPSI beneficiaries were strengthened to ensure that project interventions had the desired outcome of generating income. Lessons learnt indicate that all development projects should have;

1. an appropriate exit strategy
 2. a practical monitoring system
 3. accurate beneficiary analysis
 4. effective knowledge management
 5. clear transparency and accountability
- so that the envisaged outcomes of the project are achieved.

Building Peace through inter ethnic business linkages: supported by FLICT



Ambewela Visit



Coir field visit

Many activities took place under the program supported by FLICT. The Nucleus engaged in the dairy sector visited the Ambewela farm in Nuwara Eliya. A field visit was organised for a group of coir producers. The carpenters and welders Nucleus groups received their certificates for the technical training programs they participated in at a special awards ceremony. The printers met to discuss more activities. This project supported by FLICT promotes inter ethnic business linkages with a view to conflict transformation and peace building.

A context mapping and relationship analysis workshop was facilitated for Nucleus entrepreneurs engaged in this program. This is in the context of an action research project undertaken by FLICT to identify how the business network created through the Nucleus program promotes change within the entrepreneurs in the region and achieves the goal of breaking down isolation, division, prejudice, and polarization between ethnically segregated business groups.



Certificate awarding

Printers meeting

Conducting Focus Group Discussions for Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) and YA TV

The *Sri Lanka Today* programme has been produced and broadcast by Young Asia Televisions (YATV) since 2003 supported by SDC. The programme aims to provide a platform for activists and groups that the mainstream media tends to marginalize, to talk about peace and the resolution of the conflict. Nucleus is conducting a series of focus group discussions to present the program to a sample of viewers and obtain their feedback about it with a view to evaluating its effectiveness in reaching the specified audience.



The first FGD at the Nucleus office in Kandy

The first and second FGD took place in Kandy and Colombo respectively and two others are planned for August. The Nucleus Foundation would like to Thank SDC and YATV for this opportunity and appreciate the positive feedback received for the assignment.

Supporting Spanish Red Cross/ Sri Lanka Red Cross Society to Implement Nucleus

The Spanish Red Cross implements a livelihood recovery programme in the Galle district for tsunami affected persons. The project is now in its final stages and Nucleus supports Spanish Red Cross to mobilise these beneficiaries into Nucleus groups that will form a support network and empower them to develop their enterprises. Nucleus has implemented activities including training programs, field visits and financial services forums. The activities for the agriculture, garment, cinnamon and groceries sectors have provided the groups access to local government authorities, micro finance providers and other public and private support agencies to obtain support to develop their enterprises.

Nucleus: Using a group SME promotion approach to achieve Local Economic Development

Nucleus made a presentation at the recently concluded LED conference in Colombo. The gist of the presentation incorporated into three power point slides was that through the Nucleus approach Entrepreneurs in working groups share problems, ideas and experiences, support learning networks within sectors, undertake activities to upgrade their enterprises and/ or influence framework conditions, foster inter regional and inter ethnic business linkages, thereby contributing the local economic development. Nucleus also helps to identify competitive sectors and analyse value chains mobilising entrepreneurs across different stages of the value chain to address gaps and exploit opportunities. The positive feedback to the presentation indicates that conference participants recognised Nucleus as a practical tool for developing local economies.

The Nucleus Foundation invites development practitioners to share ideas and experiences by sending feedback to our activities.