

## Nucleus Foundation develops the cashew sector in Mannar on behalf of IOM

NEF is implementing this program on behalf of IOM with the aim of engaging women engaged in the cashew sector in a process where they are strengthened in technical skills, entrepreneurship, social empowerment, marketing and business development. These women will be linked with private and government sector service providers and other stakeholders in the industry with a view to improving their livelihoods and generating additional income through the cashew industry for themselves.

Interventions in this program so far have included:

- ▶ Social empowerment and motivation program where the women were motivated to do a self assessment of their situations and empowered to identify their strengths and weaknesses leading to making improvements within their enterprises.
- ▶ Good housekeeping and clean environment where participants became aware about the advantages of keeping a clean environment, find ways to generate income while protecting the environment, learn the best and participate in a clean-up campaign of the WRDS building and prepare it for Cashew Production
- ▶ Technical training program on best practices related to cashew processing where participants were made aware about proper techniques in cashew processing

The positive responses received for these programs indicate that the participants are well motivated and interested in the program that would strengthen their capacities to engage in this highly potential industry.



WRDS members at the training program



Participants learning to use tools for processing

Here are some of the comments made by these women:

*'we could easily understand how to keep the environment of our homes and our village clean and also got the message that how individual behaviour changes can have positive impacts on not polluting the environment, the games made the program very interesting for us.'*

The first kg of cashew that was processed during the training program was "auctioned" to the highest bidder receiving a price of Rs. 1650/- on par with present market rates.

## Printers of the east come together to develop the sector

The Nucleus of printers from Samanthurai hosted lunch for a group of printers from Ampara. It was the first time that printers of the three different ethnic groups came together in one forum to discuss issues affecting their industry, share ideas and experiences. Over 20 printers participated and realised that many of the problems they had thought were insurmountable can be solved by working together. These printers were brought together under the *Entrepreneur Exchange* program implemented by NEF with the support of the Facilitating Local Initiatives for Conflict transformation program (FLICT) where conflict transformation interventions are crafted through creating business linkages between entrepreneurs of different ethnic groups.

Under the FLICT supported program in Ampara Nucleus groups in various sectors including carpentry, welding, handloom, pre school, printing, service centre owners, beauticians etc. are engaged in a well received program prompting inter ethnics and inter regional business linkages with a view to promoting better relationships among entrepreneurs.

## Executing sustainable measures for income generating activities

NEF is implementing this program on behalf of the GTZ REPSI project where sustainability measures are being identified and implemented by NEF in Jaffna, Vavuniya, Kinniya, Batticaloa and Potuvil. NEF consultants are working together with project staff in these areas in implementing this program. Interventions are being carried out in the dairy, coir, fisheries, rice, bakery, agriculture, milk processing and poultry sectors with a host of GTZ partner organisations with the intention of ensuring that the GTZ interventions are sustainable and long lasting.



*Community gardens supported in Valamankerny*

NEF has already carried out a quick study of projects and is now engaged in designing and implementing suitable strategies very fast as the project is due to end in June, so that the efforts, resources and impacts of the project are long lasting. The essence of the program will depend on the beneficiaries taking ownership of the projects because it is only if they realise the advantages that can be derived by these interventions especially in terms of real economic benefits that they will participate in the proposed interventions.

Much of the interventions have involved the granting of tools and machinery to beneficiaries and their organisations. Within the limited time left of the project, NEF is in the process of equipping these beneficiaries with the technical know how and skills required to make the best use of this equipment also concentrating on making it "profitable" to run these units in an entrepreneurial manner rather than as a social welfare activity. It is challenging, but NEF is confident that once the participants realise the economic benefits they can gain by running a business unit they will "buy in" to the concept. The following weeks will be crucial and we will keep you informed of our progress with this project.

## NEF Successfully concludes TOT for Sanasa



NEF designs and executes development projects, primarily related to enterprise and livelihood development taking into account the varying needs of partners and their stakeholders. Each project is custom made, and we follow stringent standards in maintaining the quality of the programs under our purview. We believe in participatory, holistic, innovative and sustainable solutions that cater to the needs of all stakeholders. Mutual rewards ensure sustainable solutions; this is why NEF constantly promotes partnerships that are beneficial to all parties where project teams, beneficiaries and service providers are enlisted into mutually favourable development process. The partnership between NEF and the Sanasa Development Bank is one such mutually rewarding experience. NEF implemented a Training of Trainer program on training, counselling and follow up of small enterprises for staff of Sanasa. The 6 day training program resulted in the development of a Training Manual. The participants of the program developed and implemented training modules for their target groups. These modules will be used among the beneficiaries of the Sanasa programs in the days to come. We would like to thank Ms Samadani Kiriwadeniya, Assistant General Manager International Relations for entrusting us with the task of conceptualising and conducting this training program. We also thank the management and staff of Sanasa and the participants whose commitment and active participation contributed to the program's success.

The Nucleus Foundation would like to convey our deepest condolences to the family and friends of **Jörg Meyer-Stamer** who passed away recently. We had the privilege of working with him and will remember him as an esteemed colleague.