

RURAL INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL EMPOWERMENT (RISE)

ANNUAL REPORT 2024–2025

A NOTE FROM THE SECRETARY – RISE

Dear Friends, Supporters, and Community Members,

Looking back over the past year at the journey of the Rural Institute for Social Empowerment (RISE), I am filled with profound gratitude and renewed hope. Each number in this report represents more than data, it tells the story of lives transformed, barriers overcome, and dreams reignited. Across the villages and communities we serve, I have witnessed the quiet strength of women determined to create a better tomorrow, the joyous laughter of children returning eagerly to school, and the unwavering resilience of families facing hardship with dignity.

Our mission to uplift the most vulnerable, women, children, the elderly, and marginalized groups, has been both challenging and deeply rewarding. We have walked alongside those in need, offering not just aid but empathy, respect, and steadfast support. From a mother learning to read for the first time to a young girl discovering new confidence through vocational training, and a child released from bonded labour to embrace education, every story affirms the power of community and collective action.

This progress is a shared achievement. It belongs to our dedicated staff and volunteers who exceed every expectation, to local leaders and healthcare professionals who partner with us, and to the generous donors who make this work possible. It belongs to every woman who dared to dream, every child who dared to hope, and every family that opened their hearts to us.

Yet, much remains to be done. Too many children remain out of school, too many women still struggle to find their voice, and too many families lack basic dignity. But I am more convinced than ever that, together, we can forge lasting change. Our strength lies in unity, compassion, and an unyielding pursuit of justice and opportunity for all.

As you explore this report, I invite you to see beyond the numbers, to the spirit of partnership and hope that fuels our journey. I encourage you to continue walking this path with us, whether as a supporter, volunteer, or friend. The future we envision is within reach, and with your faith and involvement, it will become reality.

With heartfelt gratitude and hope,

Aruldoss
Secretary
RISE

Our Programs:

SHGs Awareness Program

On April 18, 2024, RISE conducted an impactful SHGs Awareness Program across the villages of Ilaiyur, Variyankaval, and Pudukudi in the Andimadam block, focusing on the empowerment of rural women. A total of 150 women actively participated in the session, which aimed to strengthen their understanding of self-help groups (SHGs) and promote financial independence and leadership. The training covered key topics such as SHG formation, the importance of regular savings, managing accounts, providing internal loans, and developing a sense of collective responsibility within the groups.

Expert trainers including Mrs. A. RamyaArjunan (TOT), Mr.Azhagukannan from KVK, Mr.IntoBabu from Perambalur SHG, and an A&R Trainer, led engaging sessions and shared practical insights. Special focus was given to leadership development, equipping women with the skills to take initiative within their SHGs. The program was well-received and marked a significant step toward sustainable women-led development in the region.

Medical Camp

On April 23, 2024, RISE, in collaboration with DhanalakshmiSreenivasan Medical College, Perambalur, organized a Special Eye and General Medical Camp at AnniMakkalPaniIllam, Varadarajanpet. The camp served a total of 250 beneficiaries from nearby rural communities. Of these, 88 individuals received specialized eye care services, including screenings and consultations, while 63 participants underwent sugar and blood pressure checkups.

The medical team, comprising experienced doctors and nursing staff, provided comprehensive consultations and health advice tailored to the needs of each patient. The camp focused on early detection and awareness of chronic conditions such as diabetes and hypertension, which are increasingly affecting rural populations. RISE ensured smooth coordination and mobilization of community members, especially the elderly and those with limited access to healthcare. The initiative was deeply appreciated by the villagers and reinforced the importance of regular health checkups and medical outreach in underserved regions.

Leadership Program

On May 10, 2024, RISE organized a focused Leadership Program for women SHG leaders at Thennur village. A total of 25 active members from various self-help groups participated in this one-day training session aimed at strengthening grassroots leadership. The program was facilitated by Mr. T. Shanmugam from OSAI NGO, Andimadam, who brought valuable experience in community-based leadership development.

The session emphasized key aspects of effective leadership, including communication skills, decision-making, conflict resolution, and the importance of accountability within SHGs. Participants were encouraged to reflect on their roles and responsibilities, and to build confidence in taking initiative for their group's development. Through interactive activities and real-life examples, the training helped the women recognize their potential as changemakers in their communities. The event concluded with group discussions and action planning, with

participants expressing a renewed sense of purpose and commitment to leading their SHGs with vision and integrity.

Environment Awareness Program

On May 15, 2024, RISE conducted an Environment Awareness Program at Periyakrishnapuram with the goal of promoting sustainable practices among the rural community. The event was graced by Mr. Paul, President of the local governing body, as the Chief Guest.

Mr. Azhagukannan, Scientist from KVK, led the training session, supported by experienced farmers and local resource persons.

The program focused on three key themes: water storage, plantation, and organic farming. Participants learned about traditional and modern water conservation methods, the ecological benefits of tree planting, and the principles of organic cultivation. Interactive discussions and live demonstrations helped the villagers understand the importance of protecting natural resources and practicing environmentally friendly agriculture. Community members, especially youth and farmers, actively participated and shared their own experiences. The event successfully raised awareness and inspired collective action toward creating a greener and more sustainable village environment through simple, practical initiatives.

Bonded Labour Awareness Program

On June 5, 2024, RISE organized a Bonded Labour Awareness Program in Ariyalur, bringing together 150 participants from various villages. The session aimed to educate the community about the legal and social dimensions of bonded labour, a persistent issue affecting vulnerable populations. Mr. Devid from the Indian Justice Mission (IJM) led the training, offering valuable insights into the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act and the schemes available for the rehabilitation of affected individuals.

Participants were informed about the roles and responsibilities of key authorities, including the Regional Transport Officer (RTO) and district-level judges, in identifying and addressing cases of bonded labour. The session also highlighted the importance of local Violence Committees in preventing exploitation and supporting victims. The program sparked meaningful discussions and empowered attendees with the knowledge and tools to recognize and report bonded labour practices, promoting justice and dignity within their communities.

Widows and Old Age Care Program

On August 12, 2024, RISE conducted a dedicated Widows and Old Age Care Program in Yelakurichi, focusing on the well-being and rights of senior citizens and widowed women. The session saw the participation of 50 beneficiaries from the local community. Mr. Jerold, MSW Director from Cuddalore, facilitated the training and offered in-depth guidance on accessing government pensions (OAP) and other welfare schemes aimed at improving the lives of the elderly and widows.

The program emphasized the need for social inclusion, especially for those facing economic hardship and social isolation. Beyond financial assistance, the session addressed health care support and introduced the idea of skill development as a pathway to restoring dignity and independence. Participants were encouraged to engage with local authorities to claim their rights.

and entitlements. The program reaffirmed RISE's commitment to ensuring that vulnerable groups receive not just support, but also respect and recognition in society.

Violence against Women & Children Awareness Program

On September 9, 2024, RISE conducted a vital awareness program in Andimadam focused on creating safe, violence-free communities for women and children. With 50 participants from the local area, the session was led by Mrs. Ramya, who guided the group through key discussions on recognizing and preventing various forms of violence. The program aimed to build community capacity by educating participants about the importance of early intervention and support mechanisms.

A major component of the session involved gathering data on local crimes, analyzing trends, and discussing real-life cases to foster understanding and vigilance. Participants explored how to implement preventive activities and were encouraged to speak openly about issues often kept in silence. Through interactive discussions and collaborative planning, the program helped increase awareness, break social stigma, and empower individuals to advocate for safety and justice. RISE reaffirmed its commitment to protecting vulnerable women and children through sustained community engagement.

Free Legal Aid Program

On October 6, 2024, RISE organized a Free Legal Aid Program at Ambabur in collaboration with the District Level Legal Authority, Ariyalur. The event saw the participation of 73 community members, including elderly individuals, widows, and the destitute, who often face legal hurdles without proper guidance. Mr. Udhayakumar, MA.BL, a practicing advocate from Ariyalur, led the session with clarity and empathy.

The program aimed to make legal support accessible to marginalized groups by introducing the services of the Free Legal Aid team. Key topics included resolving land disputes, securing old-age and widow pensions, and addressing issues related to Aadhar card corrections and documentation. Participants were guided on how to approach legal bodies and were informed of their rights under various welfare schemes. The session helped demystify the legal system and empowered attendees to seek justice without fear or financial burden, reinforcing RISE's mission of social equity and empowerment.

Sustainable Agriculture Awareness Program

On November 13, 2024, RISE conducted a Sustainable Agriculture Awareness Program at Thirukalappur, with the participation of 40 local farmers and agricultural workers. The session was led by Mr. Roslin Raja, a Scientist from KVK, Cholamadevi, who shared in-depth knowledge and practical approaches to environmentally responsible farming.

The program focused on key principles of sustainable agriculture, including soil health management, natural pest control, crop rotation, water conservation, and the use of organic inputs. Mr. Roslin highlighted how these practices not only protect the environment but also ensure long-term productivity and economic stability for small and marginal farmers. Interactive discussions allowed participants to share their experiences and challenges, creating a space for learning and collaboration. The session inspired farmers to adopt more sustainable

methods in their fields and affirmed RISE's commitment to promoting eco-friendly agricultural practices that support both livelihoods and ecological balance in rural communities.

Help for Destitute Children Program

On December 6, 2024, RISE hosted a heartfelt event at its NGO center in Varadarajanpet to support 53 destitute children from the surrounding communities. The program was honored by the presence of Ms. Amala, President of the Town Panchayath, who emphasized the importance of education and community care for vulnerable children. The initiative focused on providing essential school supplies, including dictionaries, notebooks, dresses, and bags, to help these children continue their education without financial barriers.

This distribution aimed not only to meet immediate material needs but also to inspire confidence and a sense of belonging among the children. By easing their educational challenges, RISE strives to create opportunities for a brighter future. The event fostered hope and reaffirmed the organization's dedication to nurturing disadvantaged youth through sustained support and empowerment in every aspect of their growth and development.

Health Care & Nutritional Support for Pregnant Women

On January 8, 2025, RISE organized a Health Care and Nutritional Support program for 25 pregnant women at its NGO center in Varadarajanpet. The event was inaugurated by Mr. Antony, Town Panchayath Officer, who highlighted the importance of maternal health and nutrition for the well-being of both mother and child.

During the program, essential nutritional supplements such as Horlicks and Boost were distributed alongside hygiene products including sanitary napkins, soap, and Dettol to promote health and prevent infections. Fresh vegetables were also provided to encourage balanced diets rich in vitamins and minerals. The session included discussions on prenatal care, hygiene practices, and the importance of a nutritious diet during pregnancy.

This initiative by RISE is a step toward improving maternal health outcomes in the community, ensuring pregnant women receive the necessary support to carry their pregnancies safely and give birth to healthy babies.

Tree Plantation Drive

On February 25, 2025, RISE, in collaboration with Gnanammal College Varadarajanpet, Don Bosco School, Punitha Alangarannai School, and Annai Lourdhu School, organized a large-scale Tree Plantation Drive. The event saw the planting of 2,000 saplings, including native species such as peltio, gulmurka, karmaruthu, and neembu trees, aimed at promoting environmental sustainability and enhancing green cover in the community.

The drive was inaugurated by Fr. Sebastin SDP, Headmaster of Don Bosco School, who emphasized the critical role of trees in combating climate change, improving air quality, and supporting biodiversity. Students, faculty, and local residents actively participated, planting saplings with care and enthusiasm.

This collective effort not only fostered environmental awareness but also strengthened community bonds through shared responsibility for nature. The program is part of RISE's ongoing commitment to eco-friendly initiatives that encourage youth involvement and create healthier, greener neighborhoods for future generations.

Youth Health Ayush Awareness Program

On March 3, 2025, RISE conducted a series of five Youth Health Ayush Awareness programs in ValajaNagaram, aiming to promote holistic health and wellness among young people. These sessions introduced participants to the principles of AYUSH, Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy, emphasizing natural and preventive healthcare methods. The programs focused on educating youth about healthy lifestyle choices, stress management through yoga and meditation, herbal remedies, and the importance of maintaining mental and physical well-being. Experienced trainers shared practical tips on incorporating AYUSH practices into daily routines, encouraging participants to explore alternatives to conventional medicine.

The interactive workshops engaged the community's young members, fostering awareness of sustainable health practices rooted in traditional knowledge. This initiative by RISE aims to empower youth with knowledge to lead healthier lives, reduce dependency on allopathic treatments, and promote a balanced, natural approach to healthcare in rural settings.

Road Safety Program

On March 12, 2025, RISE organized a comprehensive Road Safety Program in Ariyalur, engaging 125 youth participants to address the rising concerns of road accidents. The session focused on creating awareness about safe driving practices and the serious risks associated with unsafe behaviors such as distracted driving, speeding, underage driving, and improper truck operation.

Participants were educated about the legal consequences and penalties for violating traffic rules, emphasizing the importance of responsible behavior on the roads. The program also introduced the concept of Good Samaritan laws, encouraging bystanders to assist accident victims without fear of legal repercussions. Through interactive discussions and real-life examples, the youth gained a deeper understanding of how reckless driving endangers lives, not only their own but also others on the road.

This initiative by RISE aimed to foster a culture of road safety and responsibility, ultimately reducing accidents and saving lives in the community.

Conclusion

The Annual Report of RISE for 2024-2025 reflects a year of meaningful progress and impactful initiatives across our focus areas, women's empowerment, child welfare, healthcare, agriculture, and social justice. Through dedicated programs and community partnerships, we have reached thousands, empowering vulnerable groups to overcome challenges and build better futures. The collective efforts of our staff, volunteers, and supporters have been instrumental in transforming lives and fostering resilience within rural communities.

While we celebrate these achievements, we remain mindful of the ongoing challenges that demand continued commitment and action. Our vision of inclusive development and social equity drives us forward, inspiring innovative approaches and stronger collaborations. As we move into the next year, RISE renews its promise to stand with the marginalized, amplify their voices, and create opportunities for sustainable growth. Together, with the support of our community and partners, we are confident in building a brighter, more equitable future for all.