

ST. JOSEPH'S LEPROSY PATIENTS SOCIETY
P.B.NO.2, KALASAPAKKAM – 606751
T. V. MALAI – DIST
ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31-03-2022

Introduction

Ever since the foundation of St. Joseph's Leprosy Patients Society, the founders are very keen in undertaking programs and activities for the benefit of the downtrodden people in the villages of the service area. In doing this the organizers have been laying special emphasis on the welfare and development of women and children. Over the years, the organization has developed as an organization that is totally devoted to the welfare of persons affected by leprosy and their family members in the villages of the of Kalasapakkam block in Thiruvannamalai district in Tamilnadu State, India. This is in very much compliance with the dreams of the founders of STJLPS Rev. Fr. Schlooz & Mr. P. John.

STJLPS wishes to add here that all the activities and programs of STJLPS reflect the vision of the organization that reads as "Transformation of communities that would accept leprosy as any other disease and treat persons affected by leprosy and their families on equal footing with others in communities". Towards the realization of the above end, the organizers and staffs of STJLPS do their level best to undertake training, education and awareness programs for different groups of people to provide correct and complete information about all aspects of leprosy that include removal of misinformation and stigma attached to the disease. Some of the programs undertaken by STJLPS include programs on awareness creation, skill development, capacity building, leadership development, self-help promotion etc. In the recent past, STJLPS has extended its activities to include general disabilities, mental retardation and cerebral palsy etc. as the prevalence and incidence rates of leprosy have come down.

It is customary for STJLPS to record its sincere and heartfelt thanks to the state government for enabling the organization to continue to organize the Special School for the Mentally Retarded and Cerebral Palsied children. STJLPS also wishes to record its heartfelt thanks and regards to all that have contributed both monetarily and otherwise and have enabled the organization to undertake charitable and welfare activities for the benefit of people in need.

Activities carried out by STJLPS

- Participation in all health and development activities organized by government departments in the service area villages of STJLPS in Kalasapakkam Block. The participation is in relation to mobilizing people to avail the services extended by the government departments.
- STJLPS has the realization that self-help groups of women have come to stay in all parts of the country and render positive services to people in their villages. They have become change agents in their respective villages. In view of this realization, STJLPS has been organizing awareness

programs on the importance of the adoption of self-help principles in day-to-day life. STJLPS has motivated the rural poor women to become members of self-help groups of women and engage in saving and credit practices.

- From the beginning, the organizers and members of STJLPS has the realization that it is absolutely necessary and important for the girl children to have higher education/professional education in this highly competitive world. They have the realization that the only way for parents to help their daughters to sustain in their lives is to provide higher education/professional education. In view of this realization, the staffs and committee members of STJLPS have continued to motivate the families to provide for the education of their children. During the current year, the committee members of STJLPS have been bearing the expenses involved in relation to the cost of books, notebooks and other stationeries, dress materials etc of 56 girl children. These are non-budgeted activities.
- Help rendered to 13 persons affected by leprosy, and 7 otherwise disabled persons to secure government maintenance grant.

Food expenses

STJLPS during this year expended 413812 rupees to provide free distribution of rice throughout the year to 127 poor families of leprosy affected and other disabled families that involved an expense of 413812 rupees.

Free Distribution of clothes

STJLPS had distributed clothes to 134 males and 176 females that involved an expenditure of 111949 rupees. 310. The beneficiaries are very much thankful to STJLPS for this humanitarian help.

Medical treatment expenses

It is the common practice of many rural families to postpone treatment of any illnesses that occur to them. This is mainly so with rural women. One of the many reasons for postponing seeking treatment from qualified medical practitioners is lack of money to spend on the expenses involved in treatment. It is the common sight that poor families seek qualified medical help only when the problem becomes very serious. Under the circumstances, STJLPS during this year has provided money for the treatment of 48 persons and the total money involved on this count is 78764 rupees.

MCR Footwear

As in the previous years, during this year also STJLPS had arranged for the distribution of MCR footwear to 198 persons that involved a total expenditure of 80376 rupees.

Leprosy Awareness Medical Camps

STJLPS had organized Leprosy Awareness Medical Camps in 52 rural villages in Kalasapakkam Block. STJLPS had spent a sum of 285030 rupees towards this program. Through the organization of these medical camps, 920 males and 789 females of different age groups and from both sexes were provided complete information on all aspects of leprosy that included compassion for leprosy affected persons.

The programs have really benefitted the younger age groups of people who have no knowledge base about leprosy. Other topics that were taken up for discussions included cause and spread of leprosy, early symptoms of leprosy, availability of modern medicines to cure the disease, wrong ideas and notions concerning leprosy, complications of the disease, actions need to be carried out for eradication of leprosy etc.

Eye Camp

During this year, STJLPS was able to organize Eye Camps in 5 interior rural villages. Sufficient publicity was made to make people know about the event. The staffs of STJLPS went in an auto rickshaw with the Public Address System and made announcements. The need for this publicity is to make people in the neighborhood villages who need this service could come and avail the services. A total of about 421 men and women were examined for eye problems and treated by PHC doctors. 47 women and 32 men were given lenses free of cost. 7 men and 9 women who had cataract problem were referred to the government hospital for cataract surgery. On follow up, all of them were found to have recovered completely and have eye sight.

Tree Planting

The organizers of STJLPS believe that it is important for people to realize the importance of planting more and more trees, as this is the only way in which people could contribute in safeguarding the eco system and the environment. Hence in view of this realization, the organizers of STJLPS continue to plant seedlings of shade giving and fruit giving trees in public places every year. During this year also the trustees had arranged to plant 250 saplings in 10 villages of the service area. Each program was preceded by recital of messages on promotion of trees and against cutting of live trees for making money. In addition to this STJLPS had arranged for education programs for school children in 5 primary schools, 3 middle schools and 1 high school and followed up with the distribution of tree planting and shade giving tree saplings to 780 school children for planting them in their houses and in their fields. These activities involved an expenditure of 122745 rupees.

Special Programs

As in the previous years, during this year also STJLPS had arranged for the celebrations of national and international days like World AIDS Day, International Women's Day, International Children's Day, World Environment Day, Independence Day, Republic Day etc. As part of these celebrations STJLPS had arranged for rallies, exhibitions, debates and public meetings for creation of awareness on the subject and sensitize the general public about the need for and importance of celebrating these national and international days.

Covid-19/Corona prevention education programs were organized for members of women self-help groups and youth groups in 15 rural villages in the block. STJLPS had expended 56500 rupees for these programs.

Special School for the mentally retarded children

STJLPS continues to organize the Special School for the 37 children affected by mental retardation and cerebral palsy and some disabled children. The services are rendered by 4 qualified Special Teachers. The program is receiving help from the government.

Vazhi Kattum Thittam

STJLPS continues to organize a program of the government known as the "Vazhi Kattum Thittam" in Tamil language – its English equivalent is "a program that shows the way". This program include activities that enable the differently abled to access facilities and schemes provided by the government; regular home visits of all families in their respective villages.

Conclusion

What we have done looks very small. In terms of the number of activities, indeed, what has been done is only small. We are slow but are steady. We have always wanted to pay attention to the quality of whatever we do. In this respect we are not lagging behind for we have done things to the satisfaction of our conscience and to the satisfaction of the people. STJLPS takes this opportunity to thank all those who had extended monetary help to STJLPS to implement the above-mentioned programs and activities and these include international as well as contributors at the local level. At this juncture STJLPS places on record its sincere and heartfelt thanks to the staffs of the organization for doing their level best in implementing all the above-mentioned programs. It is also the duty of STJLPS to place on record its thanks to all the formal and informal leaders, leaders and members of self-help groups of women, teachers and children in the area schools and youth groups in the villages for extending cooperation and support to STJLPS' staffs and program.