



Reg. No. I-750/98

V O S A R D

(Voluntary Organization for Social Action and Rural Development)
Administrative Office, Kumily P.O., Idukki District, Kerala – 685 509

ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

INTRODUCTION

As we approach the momentous occasion of VOSARD's 25th anniversary, we take a moment to reflect with immense pride on the remarkable accomplishments we have achieved over the past two decades and beyond. Throughout these twenty-five years, VOSARD has remained steadfast in its commitment to effecting positive transformations in the lives of marginalized individuals in our operational area. This year has been marked by active engagement as VOSARD collaborated with government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and funding partners. Together, we have endeavored to build resilient communities and mitigate the social and economic setbacks faced by people during COVID pandemic and floods. 2022-23 was an year of encouragement, perseverance, and connection building. With deep gratitude and immense satisfaction in fulfilling our entrusted mission to the best of our abilities, I am honored to present the Annual Report of VOSARD for the year 2022-23.

MAJOR PROGRAMMES/ ACTIVITIES

1. COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION AND EMPOWERMENT

Empowering and equipping families and communities has always been at the core of VOSARD's programs, aiming to guide them towards comprehensive and sustainable development. To date, we have successfully formed 800 Self Help Groups, 33 Clusters, and four Apex Federations, encompassing more than 12,000 beneficiary families. These Apex Federations and Clusters play a crucial role in coordinating the functions of the SHGs. Further strengthening of these Community Based Organizations (CBOs) is an ongoing process that includes: awareness raising, leadership training, skill development, sustainable livelihoods, facilitating microfinance opportunities, and advocating for community issues at various levels. The formation of CBOs comprise a diverse range of members like: men, women, differently abled people, small & marginal farmers, daily wagers, senior citizens, children, and youth. These CBOs serve as a platform for collective action and collaboration, ensuring voices of all community members are heard and represented. Major activities conducted during the year for strengthening of people's organizations are:

- Proper functioning of thrift and credit system was monitored in all the SHGs.
- Bank linkage and follow up of 59 Joint Liability Groups (JLGs) formed in Vathikudy Panchayat. 31 JLGs availed Rs. 62 lakh as subsidy loans from UBI Thoprankudy.
- 50 new SHGs have been formed with the support and guidance of NABARD. Savings and credit system started in all the groups and bank accounts opened. Two of the SHGs have availed bank loan of Rs. 5 lakh each.

- Three training programs for 60 SHG leaders were conducted with the support of NABARD for effective functioning and management of Self Help Groups.
- A leadership cum motivation training for 62 SHG leaders/members was conducted with the support of NABARD at Kochera, Vandanmedu Panchayat.
- The year 2023 was declared as the **International Year of the Millet** by the United Nations. In order to observe the Millet Year NABARD and VOSARD jointly organized a one-day seminar cum exhibition at Kochera, Vandanmedu Panchayat on 17-03-2023 in which 163 people participated. As part of the seminar an exhibition of millets and its value-added products was arranged in the venue. Millet lunch was also served to the participants.

2. COMMUNITY BASED REHABILITATION (CBR) PROGRAMME

- a) District level Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) Programme: CBR programme was initially started in six Panchayats of Idukki district in 2002 with the support of Caritas India and CBR Forum, Bangalore. The program was gradually expanded to 18 Panchayats within the district.
- b) State level CBR Programme: From 2012 onward VOSARD started strengthening of Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs) functioning in eight districts and established a comprehensive network of Disabled Persons Organizations (DPOs) at the state level. This state-level network, known as 'Kerala Confederation of Differently Abled' (KCDA), is a legally registered entity under the Society's Registration Act. The KCDA network a total membership of 9,115 Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) organized in Eight district level federations, 94 Panchayat level federations and 539 village level DPOs.
- c) Local Level Committee (LLC): VOSARD played a lead role in establishing a Local Level Committee (LLC) in Idukki district under the National Trust Act. This committee serves as a platform to provide Guardianship Certificates and facilitate access to the Niramaya Insurance Scheme.
- d) Rehabilitation of Children with Disability: Since 2006 onwards VOSARD has been promoting home based rehabilitation of Children with Disabilities (CwDs) by taking care of their education, surgery, medicine, assistive devices and livelihood needs. Early identification and interventional services were provided to 550 CwDs with the support of CHAI-LF and other agencies so far.

Major interventions during the reporting year are:

- ✓ Medical assessment camp -2
- ✓ Correction surgery -4
- ✓ Aids & appliances-12
- ✓ Niramaya insurance - 365
- ✓ Toilet modification– 2
- ✓ Livelihood support -12
- ✓ Home based physiotherapy - 22 CwDs
- ✓ Care takers training -93
- ✓ Conducted a state level seminar for the Persons with Intellectual Disabilities
- ✓ Observance of 'International Disability Day' and World Disability Day
- ✓ Niramaya Insurance - 194

- ✓ Guardianship Certificates – 290
- ✓ Leadership training to DPO leaders – 80 leaders
- ✓ Formed of a forum for the Women with Disability
- ✓ Conducted a state level NGO meeting at Idukki

3. CARE AND PROTECTION FOR SENIOR CITIZEN

Old age is a sensitive phase; elderly people need care and comfort to lead a healthy life without worries and anxiety. A considerable portion of elderly population is affected by physical morbidities, economic and psychosocial problems. In this backdrop, VOSARD started a programme in 2013 with the support of Misereor, Germany to provide community based care and protection for elderly people. This project aims at improving quality life of the senior citizens and promoting community based care and support services by actively engaging the families and other stakeholders. Besides, this project also protects the rights of the senior citizens, promotes livelihood among the active and semi-dependent senior citizens, guiding them to access health and welfare services and encourage them to participate fully in family and social life. Now, more than 1,386 senior citizens are members of the 95 Elders Self Help Groups (ESHGs) and Seven Panchayat level Federations functioning in seven Panchayats in Idukki district. A replicable model of this project has been started in five panchayats in Thogamalai Block of Karur District in Tamil Nadu from January 2023 onwards. Major interventions made during the year are:

- ✓ New ESHGs formed - 14
- ✓ Conducted leadership and caregivers trainings
- ✓ Organized two medical camps for 205 participants
- ✓ Community health check-up for monitoring blood sugar and blood pressure
- ✓ 168 elders with health problems were linked with PHCs for medical treatment
- ✓ 13 health awareness programs - 414 participants
- ✓ 46 medical volunteers were trained for conducting community health check-up
- ✓ Pakalveedu (Day care centre for senior citizens) – 1 (Erattayar Panchayat)
- ✓ Livelihood support - 32 beneficiaries

4. WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN KANCHIYAR

'Holistic improvement of livelihood of marginalized families' is a project supported by Karl Kubel Stiftung, Germany. It is a 4-year programme started in 2019 with prime focus on women and child development of 800 marginalized families. The project area covers three Wards of Kanchiyar Panchayat and one Ward of Kattappana Municipality in Idukki district of Kerala. The project interventions has contributed for enhancing living standards of the target families. Achievements of the project are:

- ✓ New SHGs formed – 9
- ✓ Strengthening of 50 SHGs, 4 Clusters & Federation
- ✓ Formation of children's clubs – 17
- ✓ Trainings/ Awareness programs – 77
- ✓ Counselling support – 148 beneficiaries
- ✓ Medical camps – 4
- ✓ IGP support – 136 families
- ✓ Water tanks – 31
- ✓ Biogas units – 6

5. FAMILY COUNSELING CENTRE

The Family Counselling Centre under the support and guidance of Central Social Welfare Board and Kerala State Social Welfare Board is functioning since 2004. The centre is supporting the people to overcome the problems encountered by the families and strengthen the institution of family with the required values and capacities. Apart from settling family feuds, the counselling centre is also instrumental in handling adolescent problems, parent-child maladjustment, behavioural problems in school children, cases of substance abuse and suicide tendency etc. The activities carried out during 2022-23 are:

- ✓ Awareness Programs - 20
- ✓ Sub-committee Meeting - 4
- ✓ No. of cases registered – 552

6. SERVICE PROVIDING CENTRE

The Service Providing Centre (SPC) was established in 2008 with the support of Kerala State Social Welfare Board. Its primary objective is to offer free legal aid to women who have fallen victim to domestic violence, ensuring they receive the justice and relief they deserve under the provisions of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence (PWDV) Act-2005. Services of the centre include: awareness raising on women rights, free legal support to women in distress, providing shelter and medical assistance. The SPC rendered following services during the reporting year:

- ✓ Cases registered - 28
- ✓ Shelter provided - 5
- ✓ Medical Assistance - 2
- ✓ Referral Services - 3
- ✓ Awareness programs - 4

7. CHILDREN AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

a) CHILDLINE: It is a project under Integrated Child Protection Scheme of Ministry of Women and Child Development, Govt. of India and we have been implementing the project in Idukki district since 2011. A 24-hr toll free tele-outreach help line (1098) service has been set up at Kattappana and Sub-Centre at Kumily to provide assistance to children in distress particularly street children, neglected and delinquent children and children facing physical, mental and sexual abuse. The main interventions are shelter, medical help, repatriation, rescue, sponsorships, emotional support and child protection at the large context. 877 cases (Collab –491 and Kumily Sub Centre – 386) were registered and need based support services provided during the year.

b) Kaval Project: KAVAL is a project for rehabilitation of the Children in Conflict with Law (CCL) supported by the Government of Kerala. The project aims to undertake psycho-social interventions to ensure comprehensive care and support for the vulnerable individuals. 92 children were given rehabilitation support during the year.

c) **Kaval Plus:** Kaval Plus is an innovative program by the Department of Women and Child Development, Government of Kerala. The beneficiaries of the program are the Children in Need of Care and Protection (CNCP) and survivors of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA). The project aims to provide psycho-social care and support to the children and their families. The project started in 2021 and the following are the main activities held during the year 2022-23:

- ✓ No. of children under CNCP - 44
- ✓ No. of children served under CSA) - 89
- ✓ Counselling sessions - individual and family
- ✓ House visits and follow up support
- ✓ Financial support - 11
- ✓ Education support - 06
- ✓ Medical support – 08
- ✓ Aswasanithi financial assistance-9

d) **Chavara Jyothi Education Promotion (CJEP) Programme:** This program was launched in 2008 with the generous support of CMI St. Joseph Province and several local benefactors. Every year, around 500 financially disadvantaged children are given interest free loan to meet the educational expenses in the beginning of academic year. The repaid amount is revolved to benefit next batch of students in the coming years. Additionally, life skill development training, leadership training, cultural programs, career guidance workshops, and awareness-raising programs are conducted to equip them with essential skills and knowledge. 321 children were supported with Rs. 21.88 lakh during the year.

e) **KELI Scholarship:** In collaboration with the Rajagiri Outreach Service Society (ROSS), Kochi and KELI Association, Switzerland the scholarship is awarded to underprivileged students seeking to pursue professional courses. 21 poor students were supported with Rs. 3 lakh during the year.

f) **CHRYSALIS Project:** VOSARD has partnered with IBS Software Private Limited (IBS) to address educational, health and livelihood needs of poor children. Launched in 2020, the project aims to provide financial support to children and youth below the age of 21, who face challenges in accessing education or healthcare services. 53 children/ youth (Education-36, Health-7, Livelihood-10) were assisted during the year.

8. AWARENESS RAISING ON SUBSTANCE ABUSE

It is a matter of grave concern that the use of alcohol, ganja, and various tobacco products, as well as other narcotic or psychotropic substances, is steadily increasing among young individuals. This issue should be regarded as a pressing social problem, as it often leads to a surge in criminal activities, child abuse cases, suicides, and psychological disorders. In recent years, Idukki district has unfortunately transformed into a hub for illicit trafficking, ensnaring more children and youth in this social evil. VOSARD conducted awareness workshops in self-help groups, children's clubs, schools, and community gatherings, aiming to enlighten individuals about the severe consequences of substance abuse. Additionally, articles published in print media to educate the general population about the gravity of this issue.

9. SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY PROGRAMME

With support of Karl Kubel Stiftung, Germany the programme was implemented in Vandamedu Panchayat during 2006 to 2010 and the programme is still continuing by mobilizing a community fund and managed by Vandamedu Farmer's groups (V-Farm). V-Farm is functioning under the support and guidance of VOSARD. The main activities V-Farm during the year are:

- ✓ Dairy farming - 35
- ✓ Goat farming - 22
- ✓ Rainwater storage tank - 11
- ✓ Kitchen garden – 15

10. WATERSHED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

A watershed development project - supported by Karl Kubel Stiftung, Germany - was implemented in Vathikudy Panchayat during 2014 to 2019 for enhancing capacities of small and marginal farmers by promoting soil & water conservation, sustainable farming practices and livelihood activities. 900 target families of the project were organized into 60 farmers SHGs, three clusters and a federation. The federation named, Vathikudy Farmers Association (VFA) is a registered society that manages the functions of SHGs and clusters. VFA manages continuation of project activities by mobilizing a community fund with the support and guidance of VOSARD. Major activities of VFA during the year are:

- ✓ Establishment of Kitchen Garden - 4
- ✓ Goat farming unit - 17
- ✓ Dairy farming unit - 32
- ✓ Rainwater storage tank - 10

11. YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

We are dedicated to empowering young individuals to become productive and responsible citizens. Our primary objectives include eradicating alcoholism and drug addiction, providing essential employment skills, and fostering a positive mindset. Our comprehensive programs encompass various initiatives such as supporting higher education, offering career guidance, providing skill training, and delivering employment coaching. Major activities conducted during 2022-23 for the promotion of youth development are:

- ✓ Vocational training – 24 persons
- ✓ Employment coaching – 24 persons

12. DISASTER MANAGEMENT

The unexpected torrent rains lashed over the highranges of Idukki and Kottayam districts in 2021 had caused huge landslides and floods. Kokkayar Panchayat of Idukki district and Koottickal Panchayat of Kottayam district were the worst affected area due to huge landslides. Around 150 houses damaged in the floods and landslides. VOSARD could repair/ renovate 21 damaged houses with the support of Christ University, Bangalore.

The outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic has adversely affected living condition of the entire population, especially the people from lower strata of the society. They suffered due to loss of livelihood, lack of food, health care facilities & other basic needs. Disadvantaged people like: persons with disability, persons with prolonged illness, elderly people and widows were suffering a lot for want of daily food, medicine and other provisions. VOSARD could arrange emergency relief to around 500 poor families in association with various agencies.

13. EXPOSURE FOR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS & NGOS

VOSARD arranges block placement, internship and field work practice for students from different disciplines (BSW, MSW, BBA, LLB, MPH, B.Sc Agri, etc.) and universities. It help them to see successful models of professional social work and replicate them in their respective areas. 197 students from various colleges/ universities visited the organization during 2022-23 to do field work/ internship as part of their course curriculum. During 2022-23 two NGOs from Tamil Nadu – TASSOS, Trichy and Jeevanjyoti, Theni – visited VOSARD to know about the project for Senior Citizens.

14. SAMEEKSHA – A CULTURAL FORUM AT KATTAPPANA

VOSARD took the initiative to establish a cultural forum in 2017 and it was named as 'Sameeksha'. It is a think tank of eminent personalities from Kattappana Municipality to promote cordial relationships between different socio-religious groups and associations. Sameeksha upholds human values and works as a platform for creating public opinion in favour of maintaining peace and harmony in the society. Periodical meetings and consultations to take up community building initiatives were held during the year.

15. VOSARD AS A MOTHER NGO

VOSARD envisions a society that values and empowers the underprivileged, including the poor, children, women, persons with disabilities, and others, enabling them to bring about positive transformations in their lives. To achieve this, VOSARD shares its wealth of experience and successful community development models with Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and other Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

Currently, VOSARD is collaborating with seven NGOs throughout Kerala, providing them with professional support and guidance. These partnerships aim to replicate successful social work models in their respective areas. Notable examples include community-based rehabilitation, the implementation of a three-tier system of People's Organizations, and the adoption of resource mobilization strategies. By fostering these collaborations, VOSARD strives to create a more equitable and inclusive society, where marginalized individuals and communities can thrive. Through the dissemination of effective practices and the provision of ongoing assistance, VOSARD and its partner NGOs are working together to bring about sustainable change and uplift those in need.

CONCLUSION

In the fiscal year 2022-23, VOSARD dedicated its priorities for expanding its assistance to a substantial number of individuals in dire need. Achievements of the year was made possible with the generous support of national and international donor agencies, government departments, NGOs, and local benefactors. Their steadfast support has helped to address the pressing need of the people facing challenging times. Their unwavering commitment to our cause serves as a driving force, fueling our determination to address the urgent needs of vulnerable individuals and communities.

The upcoming fiscal year holds great promise for VOSARD as we strive to extend our reach and impact. With the continued support of our esteemed partners, we are confident in our ability to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those who require assistance the most. As we embark on this journey, we remain steadfast in our dedication to transparency, accountability, and efficiency. We understand the responsibility that comes with the resources entrusted to us, and we pledge to utilize them judiciously to maximize their impact.

Kumily
28.10.2023



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dr. Jose Antony CMI', enclosed in a blue oval.

Dr. Jose Antony CMI
Secretary