

# ANNUAL REPORT 2009-2010

## BRIGHT LIGHT SOCIETY

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### ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

Bright Light Society is a non Profit, non Sectarian and Non Governmental Organization registered under the Tamilnadu Societies Registration Act 27 of 1975. Further, BLS has obtained clearance from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India under the Foreign Contributions Regulation Act 1976 and has been granted 80G under the Income Tax Act 1961. BLS is committed to empowering the downtrodden and marginalized poor women belonging to Dalit and Tribal communities. The development activities carried out during that financial year 2009-2010 are described in the following paragraphs.



### NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT AWARENESS CAMPAIGN:

With the financial assistance provided by the Ministry of Forests and Environment through CPR Foundation this Environment Awareness Campaign was held from 20.02.2010 to 22.02.2010 in 5 villages in Namagiripet Block of East Namakkal District. The rally was attended by women self help group members and volunteers who distributed hand bills, held village meetings, sang awareness songs and interacted with the public highlighting the dangers of global warming and how 1 degree Celsius rise in temperature will bring down 10% of the total agricultural production worldwide. Messages to grow trees and plants wherever possible, stop burning solid wastes, but decompose them into organic manure were spread throughout the campaign.

### **COMMUNITY STRENGTHENING PROGRAMME**

The women self help groups which were promising to change the situation of poor women through economic empowerment have started losing their focus on social development to consolidate the gains. Therefore, the community strengthening programme was thought of in order to draw the attention of the SHG members to realize and recommit themselves to bring about social development in their SHGs, families and communities through ongoing education, fighting for equality, against violence, corruption, family disputes, female feticide and infanticide. These programmes were conducted on 12.08.2009 and 10.09.2009 in Valapadi community centre.



Mrs.K.Muthulakshmi, and the SHG coordinator, Ms.Revathi, were the resource persons.

### **DE-ADDICTION TREATMENT CUM REHABILITATION CENTRE**

This Centre is being run in Rasipuram in Namakkal District in a rented building. Addiction to alcoholism and drugs increasing at an alarming rate ruining many a family pushing them to desperate situations. Unfortunately, there are more poor people who are victims of this disastrous calamity. Considering the seriousness and extent of this problem there must be more De-addiction Treatment and Rehabilitation Centres in Tirupur District. This centre in Uthukuli is a real blessing as it is helping the poor families to get rid of this accursed disease.

This Centre is managed by a Coordinator supported by a team of Social Workers, Counsellor, Part time Doctor, a full time Nurse and a watchman. When a patient is admitted he is counseled to realize that

he has a disease and it could be cured completely if he honestly follows the treatment and other prescribed activities. The staff by their concern and care make the patients feel confident of coming out of their problem.

During the reporting period 285 people were admitted, 240 persons recovered fully and there were 45 relapse cases who are being followed up by the social workers.

### **HOME FOR THE WIDOWS:**

Alcoholism and drug abuse coupled with hard physical labour, malnutrition and lack of access to timely and quality medical services lead men in the lower economic strata to premature deaths leaving their wives widows, and their children orphans. The HIV/AIDS has contributed its share leaving the women to fend for themselves. Such families have no social security or insurance whatsoever to support the women when they are widowed. The only asset these women have is their labour. As long as they are able to work, they could manage to buy their food. But once they could work no more, they are entirely forced to depend on the charity and mercy of others. There are so many procedures to avail the widow pension announced by the Government. Hardly less than one third of the eligible widow are able to access this support. The 400 rupees given is hardly enough for a few days and there are mal practices and cheating in allowing the entire amount reach the beneficiary.

Because of the above problems and being unable to watch the plight of the helpless widows BLS has started a Home for the Widows in Uthukuli where it has been working for more than 12 years. The Home is run a rented building and there are 20 widow inmates at present. They are provided with food, medical care and simple recreation facilities besides arranging some vocational training in tailoring, candle making, snacks preparation etc., for those who are willing and able to learn. BLS has arranged a counselor to visit the home once a week a talk to the women and help those who have problems. Most of them find it very helpful talking to each other as they have more or less the same problems.

### **COMMUNITY BASED OLD AGE HOME**

With the breaking down of the joint family system where caring for children and elderly people was a joint responsibility of every one, the elderly people are the most affected. The consumer culture, erosion of social and moral values and the influence of love and sex in the modern media are forcing the younger generation to shirk their responsibility to care for their parents in their old age. They just forget how much they struggled and what sacrifices their parents had to go through to bring them up. BLS has been keeping in touch with aged persons who are not cared for by their children. Wanting to alleviate the problem of such at least to some extent, BLS has started a day care Home for the Aged persons with the support of the local



community in Tirupur. Presently there are 18 elderly persons benefiting from the program.

### **ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME**

The countries and people who raise a big hue and cry about the Environmental degradations and global warming are the very ones who are continuing to do the things that make the situation worse. Those who hold conference and summits to discuss about global warming do so in fully air-conditioned buildings which produce harmful gases. Similarly, the countries which express concern about atmospheric pollution are the ones having the maximum number of vehicles. The paradox of the issue is that those who contribute the maximum to undo the problem. However, this has to be done the least to global warming and climate change have to do in the interest of everyone. BLS pays special attention to creating awareness among is target committees about the environmental problems contributing to global warming and climate change and to teach them about



different environment friendly activities like tree plantation, kitchen gardening, conversion of solid waste into organic manure, re-use and recycling of things avoiding the use of plastic bags and burning of unwanted things, etc.,

The BLS staffs conduct Environment Awareness classes for the children in schools in the project area and encourage children to plant tree saplings in the school premises and develop a flower garden whenever space and water are available.

## **CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

Early childhood education and care is visibly absent in poor families, although it is very essential component in the growth and development of a child and for its future performance, because 85 to 90% of the brain development takes place between 0 to 6 years of a child. Realizing the importance of this BLS is running crèches mainly to provide supplementary nutrition, medical checkup and to learn



the rudiments of education and socializing with other children. Besides, it helps the children to get into the habit of going to school which will reduce the trauma when they actually start giving to a regular school.

The Creche run in Uthukuli in Tirupur has 25 children and they are supplied eggs twice a week and are given nutrition mix prepared by a women SHG to supplement their diet. These children are from agriculture labour families and this crèche is a welcome arrangement for them as their children are in safe hands and they are taken good care of.

## **WOMEN TRAINING PROGRAMME**





For women SHG members Entrepreneurship Development programmes are conducted regularly to prepare them to undertake viable income generation activities in order to enable them earn an additional income for their families. BLS organized Economic development program, micro finance program. The SHG members were taught about pickle and papad making Rice Business, coir making at Uthukuli.

## **CONCLUSION**

Bright Light Society is committed to improve the living conditions of its target communities through well planned interventions. There is so much more to be done to bring about the changes we aspire. A lot of resources are required and BLS is hopeful that it would be able to access those resources and use them for the betterment of the communities it is committed to. We thank all those who helped us to carry on with our mission last year.

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