A photograph of an elderly woman with glasses and a young girl in traditional Indian attire, both looking upwards with expressions of awe and wonder. The woman is wearing a pink headscarf and a purple shirt. The girl is wearing a pink headscarf with a decorative headband and a pink shirt. They are both looking upwards with expressions of awe and wonder. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people in similar attire.

“Work is worthwhile  
only if it  
touches lives.”  
-Sadhguru

**Annual Report 2016-17**



India may be on the road to greater financial growth, but almost one third of her 1.1 billion people continue to live below the poverty line, with a large proportion in rural areas.

**Isha Outreach**, the social development branch of Isha Foundation, continues to focus on alleviating poverty in these areas. For the last two decades, we have been transforming the lives of the rural poor through

healthcare, educational, environmental and livelihood programs.

One of Isha Outreach's main projects towards development in rural India is the **Action for Rural Rejuvenation**. In *Sadhguru's words* -

*“Action for Rural Rejuvenation or ARR is an attempt to re-engineer social situations that have gone bad so that human beings can find a conducive atmosphere to blossom. The basic scope and aim of this outreach program is to make people's life situations worthwhile so that they can find their full potential in whatever they are doing. This project is not just aimed at improving the economic conditions of people, though that is one of the major issues which needs to be handled. It is a way of raising the human spirit and inspiring a human being to stand up by himself.”*

As part of ARR Isha has also been focusing on supporting **Farmers Producer Organisations (FPO)** as a means for small farmers to find better prices for their products and also expand beyond their agricultural role.

Isha has also been spearheading a people's movement since 2004, to increase the green cover of Tamil Nadu through **Project Green Hands (PGH)**. Its inclusive social strategy involves people from every sector of society working together towards their shared environmental security and wellbeing.



## OUR MISSION

To achieve community-based, sustainable development by empowering rural and marginalized groups of society to transform their communities while –

- Offering preventive and curative health Care
- Providing children with quality education
- Conserving the environment
- Building sustainable livelihoods
- Reviving indigenous culture and knowledge



# IshaOutreach Initiatives



Action for Rural Rejuvenation

Health Initiatives



Mobile Health Clinics



Isha Rural Health Clinics

Farmers Producers Organization



Yoga and Community Games



Gramotsavam and Rural Games



Project Green Hands

Trees for all

Isha Agro-Movement

Trees for Life

Green School Movement

## Highlights this year

- A new Isha Rural Health Clinic was opened in the Muttathuvayal (a village near Isha), Coimbatore district of Tamil Nadu.

- 



- Unicef collaborates with Isha to conduct Yoga and Games training sessions in 26 Gram Panchayats across rural Tamil Nadu

- Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore and Kiran Bedi - Chief guests at this years Gramotsavam

- 25 of Tamil Nadu's districts take part in Gramotsavam this year

- Paralympics held for disabled first time as part of the Gramotsavam



- Despite the biggest drought in 114 years in Tamil Nadu, PGH managed to **distribute 2.7 Million saplings** were distributed in this year.

- As part of the Villuppuram Green School Movement Project, 40 champion green schools were selected for focussed awareness programs.

- Project GreenHands (PGH) launched the planting season for the year 2016 on June 5<sup>th</sup> - World Environment Day.





## Action for Rural rejuvenation (ARR)

### Statistics

- 7 million beneficiaries
- 4200 villages covered
- 2 million volunteers
- Over 150 rural herbal gardens created
- Over 100,000 people benefited by yoga classes

**Action for Rural Rejuvenation (ARR)** is a multi-pronged, holistic, outreach program which was established by Sadhguru in 2003. ARR's primary objective is to improve the overall health and quality of life of the rural poor through a well-defined philanthropic effort that enhances existing development schemes by supporting indigenous models of health, participatory governance and community revitalization. Through its dedicated team of qualified and trained volunteers, the project is now active in 4200 villages in the South Indian states of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and the Union Territory of Pondicherry.

ARR has been creating waves of positive change in the lives of people in rural areas. Its success can be attributed to its **multi-faceted approach which envelops healthcare, sports, yoga, community development and social bonding.**



### Rural Health

Healthcare is the most important aspect of a productive and enlightened society. With Action for Rural Rejuvenation, Isha Foundation is addressing the needs of rural India. ARR has grass-root level presence in more than 4,000 villages of Tamil Nadu and neighbouring states.



## *Mobile Health Clinics (MHC)*



The MHCs offer free primary healthcare and treat the most common ailments such as diarrhoea, fever, and cough right at the villagers' footsteps.

This means that a villager does not have to travel all the way to the nearest town or city for treatment – something most of them are reluctant to do. Most importantly, the villagers are treated without having to waste a workday – the loss of which, very often would mean the loss of that day's meals.



### *Activities of MHC:*

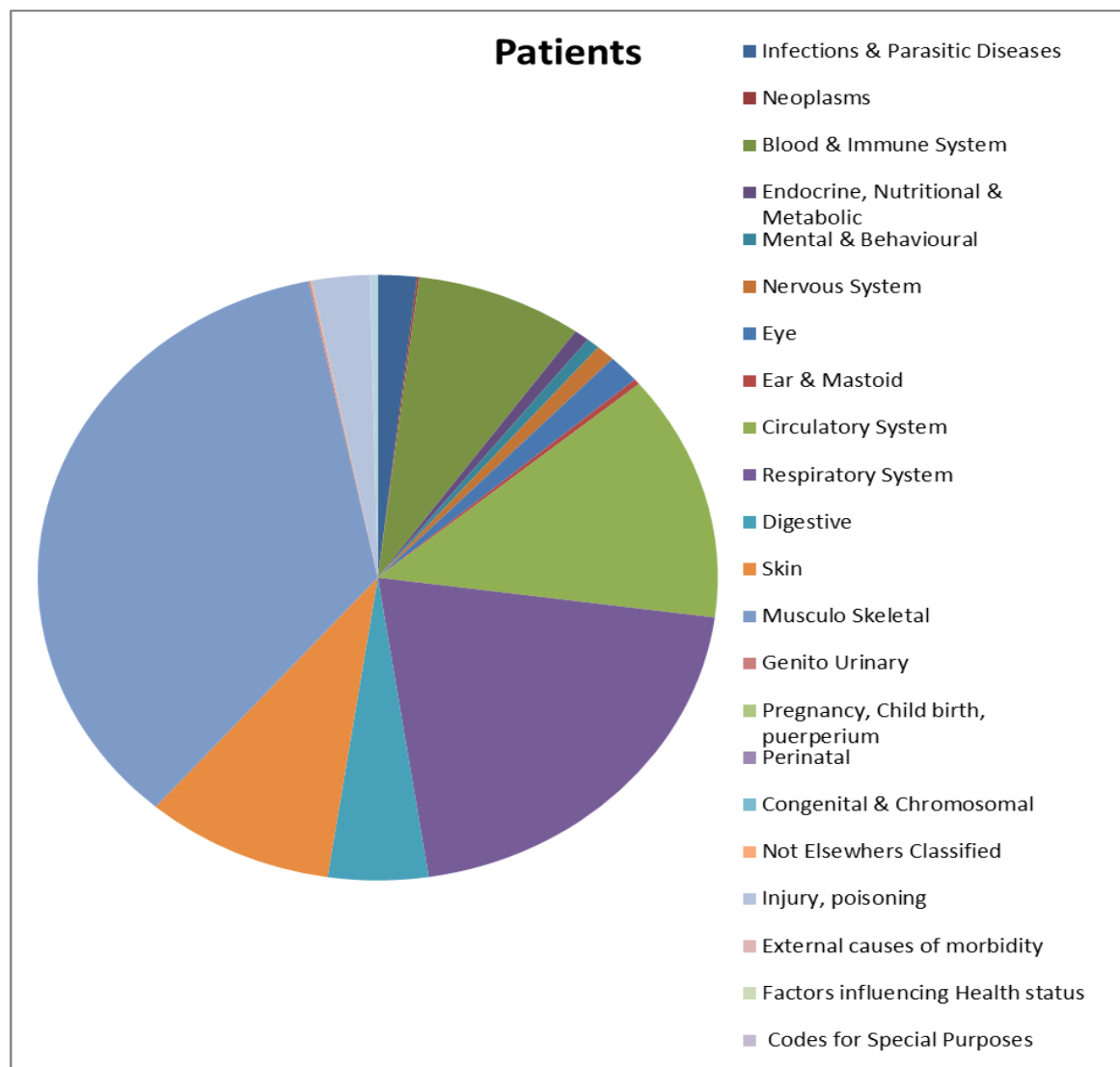
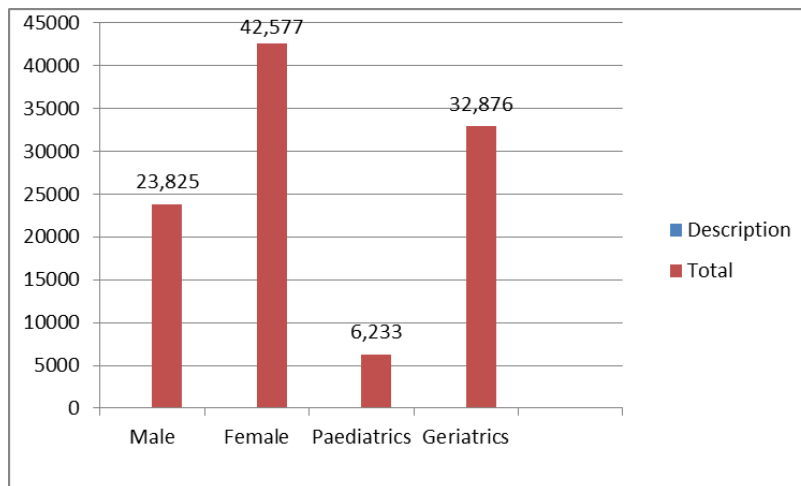
- A) Regular visits to remote villages on weekly basis*
- B) Frequent medical camps*
- C) Flood relief camps conducted whenever needed*



**3 Mobile Health Clinics were functional in 2016.**

### Patients treated by MHC in the year of 2016-17:

<b>Total # of Patients</b>	66696
<b>Male</b>	23825
<b>Female</b>	42577
<b>Paediatrics</b>	6233
<b>Geriatrics</b>	32876



## MHC Sharing

*Namaskaram,*

*My name is Pechiyammal aged 85 years from Boluvampatti, Coimbatore.*

*I am Hypertensive and also Diabetic. I was visiting hospitals in the city for getting treatment and medicines for which I had to travel a lot and depend on others support to take me to those hospitals, as well as purchase medicines for me. When I had no one to support me with money and was not getting assistance to go the hospitals, I would suffer a lot.*

*When I came to know that Isha Free Mobile clinics are coming to our villages and are giving us free treatment and medicines, I was very happy to avail this opportunity.*

*I am now regularly getting treatment and medicines from Isha Free Mobile Health clinic every week. This is boon for people like us.*

*I am very much thankful to Isha for supporting aged people like us.*

*Thanking you.*



## *Isha Rural Health Clinics*



24-hour access to affordable and expert healthcare services.

Each IRHC is equipped with lab, pharmacy and facilities for minor surgery. Each IRHC serves 30 to 60 surrounding villages and treats an average of 60 patients daily.

For complicated cases which need further investigation or treatment, the MHCs often refer patients to **Isha Rural Health Clinics (IRHCs)**. IRHCs are clinics in centrally situated rural locations which serve up to 30 surrounding villages and an average of a sixty patients daily. They provide communities with





## Statistics IRHC

### Alandurai IRHC 2016-17

Month	Villages covered	Total Patients	Average patients/day	Total Tests	ECGs done
April	39	706	24	275	26
May	34	720	23	271	31
June	37	812	27	220	25
July	37	995	33	358	25
August	39	949	31	403	30
Sept	38	910	30	336	38
Oct	39	785	27	303	33
Nov	43	1039	37	263	50
Dec	38	947	31	337	43
Jan	41	987	34	311	22
Feb	43	1000	36	278	19
March	47	1018	33	335	28

Top 3 investigations: Blood Sugar, Urine Sugar and Alb, ECG

### Salem IRHC 2016-17

Month	Villages covered	Total Patients	Average patients/day	Total Tests	ECGs done
April	32	417	17	257	27
May	39	450	17	228	22
June	33	504	19	263	20
July	36	536	21	411	24
August	37	434	16	263	21
Sept	35	422	17	263	25
Oct	40	434	18	299	11
Nov	33	468	18	166	14
Dec	32	362	14	153	7
Jan	33	371	15	186	4
Feb	34	298	13	175	3
March	34	320	13	172	2

Top 3 investigations: Blood Sugar, Urine Alb Sugar, HB

## Various Camps held this year

### Alandurai IRHC

#### Event: Diabetes camp

In association with Dr. Mohan's Hospitals, a Diabetes camp was conducted at the Alandurai IRHC on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2016. People from the nearby villages like Pooluvampatti, Irruthupallam, Mathvarayapuram, Semmedu, Srinivasapuram & Alandurai made use of this camp. Around **66 patients were screened out of which 21 patients were found diabetic & 8 patients were in borderline.**

Diabetic patients were given treatment, advice and diet to be followed whereas patients in border line were given advice and a diet to be followed.



### Alandurai IRHC

#### Event: Dental & General Camp



**category & 24 patients were screened for dental.**

In association with Dr. Poornima BDS and Dr. Murugan MBBS we conducted Dental & General camps on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2016 at Alandurai IRHC.

People from the nearby villages like Pooluvampatti, Irruthupallam, Semmedu, Nathegounden Pudur, Srinivasapuram & Alandurai made use of this camp. Around **67 patients were screened in general**



### **Muttathuvayal IRHC Event: Eye camp**

In association with Aravind Eye Hospitals, Coimbatore, we have conducted an eye camp for the nearby villages to eradicate Cataract during the month of August 2016 in Muttathuvayal IRHC.

Peoples from the nearby villages like Pattiyarkoil Pathi, Semmedu, Muttathuvayal, Mullangadu, Dhanikandi, Madakadu, Gandhi Colony, and Alandurai made use of this camp. **Around 100 patients were screened out of which 9 patients were selected for Cataract Surgery and surgery done.**

### **Event: General camp**

In association with SKS HOSPITAL, General camp was conducted on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2016 in Kullapanayakanur IRHC. People from the nearby villages like Kullapanayakanur, Thippampatti, Samakotampatti Vedapatti, Thumbalpatti, Nulathukombai, Kammalapatti, Kuralnatham, Suriyur and Panamarathupatti made use of this camp. **Around 150 patients were screened.** General patients were given treatment and advice.

### **Kullapanayakanur IRHC**

#### **Event: Ortho camp**



In association with SKS HOSPITAL, Dr. K.Selvaraj, MSD, Ortho, FRCS. Dr. Mailvaganan, MS Ortho, Ortho camp was conducted on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2016 in Kullapanayakanur IRHC. People from the nearby villages like Kullapanayakanur, Thippampatti, Samakotampatti Vedapatti, Thumbalpatti, Nulathukombai, Kammalapatti, Kuralnatham, Suriyur and

Panamarathupatti made use of this camp.

**Around 60 patients were screened, out of which 6 patients were selected for Surgery and surgery performed.**



## New IRHC opened in Muttathuvayal district of Tamil Nadu

A new Isha Rural health clinic was inaugurated in the Muttathuvayal district near Coimbatore this year – 21<sup>st</sup> May 2016





## Salem IRHC Clinic

Event: Annual Day Function and General Camp conducted





## **Farmer Producer Organization(FPO)**



Isha has been focusing on supporting **Farmer Producer Organisations (FPO)** as a means for small farmers to find better prices for their products and also expand beyond their agricultural role. Isha is working closely with farmers of the Velliangiri Uzhavan Producer Company Ltd. in Coimbatore district to create a more sustainable and beneficial situation for them.



Isha Foundation has been providing the farmers with advice and support in incorporating their company, in their agricultural activities, and in the marketing of their produce.



## Overall Benefits 2016-17



- Farmers are harvesting & selling their products without any difficulties
- Compared to outside mediators, farmers are getting more profit by selling their products through VUPCL
- Farmers are solving their field difficulties immediately by VUPCL's proper counselling
- Farmers are availing all types of organic & in-organic fertilizers and pesticides at low cost in their locality
- VUPCL is acting as a bridge between the farmers and Government departments. So, the

farmers are receiving all benefits like trip irrigation Crop insurance, etc.

- VUPCL supports farmers to form liability groups and link with nationalized banks. So, those farmers were benefitted by getting loans with very low interest.
- Farmers produced Azola and used it in their own field
- Coconut retail sales increased through establishing separate unit
- Farmers got knowledge on marketing their agri products
- Farmers educated on banking system
- Farmers avail more inputs at nominal cost
- Farmers' agri products sales increased

## Outcomes 2016-17

Total Number of farmer members	1063
Number of small and marginal farmers	25
Number of BODs (Board of Directors)	13
Number of Cluster Groups	19
Total Cultivation Areas	5810.21
Coconut Facilitated	1538964.3 kgs/Amount – 22261438
Coconut Marketing	671011.71kg/Amount – 14487588
Coconut mattai (Husk) facilitated	Amount – 4785872
Vegetable Marketing	57842 kgs/Amount – 738929
Input shop turn over	7623544
Value addition products- Coconut Oil	737603
Outlet Shop facilitated	1004360
Bolero Pick up	206326
Trainings organized	8
Farmers Trained	215

## VUPCL's Future plans

- Linking with government schemes - Establishing Farm pond, Earthen bund with subsidy
- Train the farmers on regulating water source, increasing yield
- Promotion and training for Coconut yield improvement and intercrop cultivation
- Awareness creation and training on organic farming
- Increasing the yield and produce of Toxin free safe vegetables

## Trainings conducted this year

### Azola Training

This training was organized by FPO at Isha Vidhya School on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2016. **34 farmers were participated in this training.**

Dr. Kamalesan Pillai gave valuable ideas and methods for Azola cultivation. FPO gave free materials like, seeds, Tarpualin sheets to the participants for Azola cultivation.



### Banana business Training



This program was organized by FPO at Isha Vidhya School on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2016. Totally, **41 farmers participated.**

Mr Kathirvel Balaji explained about demand based cultivation and other related techniques.

### Nallakeerai Training

Velliangiri Uzhavan Producer Company (VUPCL) organized a training programme for our farmers in Chennai on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2017.

**20 farmers attended this training.** Mr.Jagan, facilitated this program and explained the techniques of Nallakeerai cultivation, benefits and marketing systems.





## Azolla - Success story

Name: V.Bagiyam , Cluster Name: Semmedu



*My name is Mrs.Bagiyam, I am a member of Sampanki farmers group of Semmedu village (Cluster No.1) initiated by VUPCL. I am doing agriculture in a small level and have four cows, four goats and hens in my farm. Couple of months back, I have participated in 'Azola training' which was organized by VUPCL. It was very useful and I came to know about the benefits of Azola. Following that, VUPCL gave Azola pond liner sheet (9 ft X 6 ft) and seeds free of cost. With the proper guidance of VUPCL, I have started Azola cultivation in my farm. After that, I came to know it was very easy to maintain Azola farm and one does not need to put in too much hard work and extra time. After 15 days itself, I got more than 1 kg azola (daily) and I have started to feed it to my livestock regularly.*

*Before azola feeding, my cattle frequently got sick. I do the milking of the cows myself every day. Daily I got 33 litres (Morning – 18 lt. and Evening – 15 lt.). It was less density milk and buyers gave less money (Rs.24 to 25 per litre) for it. This used to be a source of stress for me, because, I needed to spend more money and time to buy fodder and maintain my cattle.*

*After Azola feeding, I was surprised, and realized the amazing changes that happened in my life. My cattle seem healthy and are protected from diseases. I am getting good quality of milk. Due to this, the buyers have increased the money (Rs.26 to 27 per litre). Now, without any investment for azola farming, I am getting additional income (Rs.2 X 33 litres X 30 days = Rs.1980) per month. My family members have also started to add azola in their daily food.*

*Thanks to VUPCL!*



## ARR - Yoga and Community Games

ARR ensures the **holistic development of villagers** through yoga, sports and wellness programs which enable and inspire the rural populace to take ownership of their life situations.



**Community games** improve self-esteem and health while fostering a healthy spirit of competition and community.

**Yoga programs** provide villagers with holistic practices enabling a proactive approach to well-being.

Participants have reported regular practice of these simple, easy-to-grasp methods has cured chronic diseases e.g. ulcers, asthma, allergies and depression in addition to freeing many villagers from alcohol and tobacco addictions thereby improving their overall sense of wellbeing and joy.

### Yoga for the Rural Community Unicef-Isha Collaboration



Yoga and awareness programs were conducted for the village residents as part of the collaboration project with UNICEF. Totally 66 yoga class sessions were organized in all 26 Gram Panchayats. **About 3,594 participants learnt Upa Yoga in this program.**



Once the villagers were initiated into yoga, they became more open to coming out to play games. Awareness sessions about yoga, games and tournaments were conducted in 26 Gram Panchayats.

Totally 4,540 were impacted through this collaboration, and were involved in yoga and community games.





### Throw ball – Impact story

*My name is Arjunamma. I am residing at Itchapuram village and playing under Itchapuram throw ball team. UNICEF – Isha project has brought games into my life. This changed my life drastically.*

*They motivated and also helped me in making games a part of my life. They also supported us in making our own ground to play regularly, and provided throw ball, net etc. This has helped us to develop good physical fitness and sound health.*

*Before the implementation of this project, I wasn't involved in any sport activities.*

*After my husband died, I wouldn't leave the house and go outside. There was a lot of self and social stigma involved with getting involved in any kind of activity. However, with the continuous motivation of the project staff, I have started playing Throw ball.*

*Now, the scenario was completely changed. My courage to interact with others has greatly increased and the stigma I experienced has gone.*

*Now I am regularly playing games, which has improved my health. I would like to convey my thanks to UNICEF – Isha foundation.*



### Upayoga – Impact Story



*My name is Rathinam. UNICEF – Isha project conducted Upayoga session in our village. Project staff requested me to attend this program. First I refused to participate in this program. Finally, I attended the program.*

*The teacher briefly explained about the benefits of Yoga with Sadhguru videos and also, they taught Upa yoga.*

*I felt very happy to do yoga and I have started regularly to do yoga from the next day of the session. In the beginning, I felt shy to do yoga. But, now I am doing yoga without any hesitation and*

*shyness.*

*I have neck pain for the past three years. After doing yoga particularly Yoga namaskar every day, pain has decreased. I was surprised. Because of this relief, I feel free and am being able to maintain my children and family in a better manner.*

*Thank you UNICEF – Isha foundation.*



## Rural Sports

*“Even the simplest form of sports can bring playfulness into your family and your neighbourhood, into our villages and towns, and make India a playful nation. A ball can change the world.” –Sadhguru*



### Why Sport?

Sports empower individuals, transform communities and inspire populations for positive change. For Isha's Action for Rural Rejuvenation, sport has been the key to inspiring exuberance and oneness in the rural villages. It has become a tool of transformation, weaning villagers away from addiction, breaking caste barriers within the community, bringing women out of the home and empowering them, and reviving spirit and pride in individuals and the village as a whole.



Isha Gramotsavam is a celebration of village life showcasing the essence of rural Tamil Nadu through an elaborate display of rural games, art, drama, dance, music and food specialties. The event highlights the role of sports in rural life by featuring the final rounds of a state-wide inter-village sports tournament. The festival is part of Action for Rural Rejuvenation (ARR).

Prominent aspect of Isha Gramotsav is the finals of the rural games tournament – volleyball for men and throwball for women.



**This year - Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore and Kiran Bedi share  
Inimitable Rural Extravaganza**

**‘880 TEAMS, 10,360 PLAYERS, 25,000 SPECTATORS, 30 ARTFORMS**

*#of districts taking part: 25 (of Tamil Nadu's 32 districts)*

*Age Range: 13-78 year olds*

*Chief Guest: Shri Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore, Union State Minister of  
information and broadcasting and Dr. Kiran Bedi, first woman IPS Officer*



“Gramotsavam is an example of how communities can come together. You don’t need an Olympics to come together. We can have a Gully, Mohalla, town or even state-level competitions to bring people together. **One of the fastest ways of making friends is Sport. It is one area where only merit counts.** It is also an example of how a coach (Sadhguru) can show the way.”

**- Shri Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore  
(Union Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting)**



This was the 12<sup>th</sup> edition of the Gramotsavam, held in the Codissa grounds in Coimbatore. For the first time in the tournament's history, a **volleyball game for the disabled**, in association with the Paraolympics Association of Coimbatore was organized. All local and many national newspapers published this news about rural style Olympics!

## City gets a slice of rural life

P Sangeethal Updated: Sep 8, 2016, 15:18 IST

✉ 🖨 A- A+

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It was a thiruvizha scene straight out of a village-set Tamil film. The Codissa Ground was packed to the rafters and wore a festive look on Sunday. The occasion was the 12th edition of Gramotsavam, a celebration of village life showcasing the spirit of rural Tamil Nadu through an elaborate display of rural art, games, drama, music and food, conducted by the Isha



THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS-05-SEP-2016

03 COIMBATORE MONDAY 05.09.2016

newindianexpress.com

## After 'Swachh', Bedi bats for sports to realise 'Swast Bharat' vision

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
@ Coimbatore

KIRAN Bedi, Lt Governor of Puducherry, plans to make Puducherry healthy by introducing sporting events in the Union Territory. She plans to encourage people to play sports in the heels of her 'Swachh Puducherry' initiative.

Speaking at the Isha Gramotsavam here, Kiran Bedi, said, "Gramotsavam gives me the idea of following up my 'Swachh' (clean) Puducherry initiative with 'Swast' (healthy) Puducherry. After the brown net crosses the ball act. If the Prime Minister comes to know of this, then we could have 'Swast Bharat' after 'Swachh Bharat'."

Isha Gramotsavam is a sport-ing extravaganza for the villages in Tamil Nadu. The finale of the 12th Isha Gramotsavam took place at the Codissa Grounds here on Sunday. The month-long sporting event, that takes volleyball and throwball to the villages of Tamil Nadu, witnessed the participation of 10,000 players from over 4,000 villages.

Other than Kiran Bedi, the guest list included Union Minister of State of Information and Broadcasting, Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore and P Nagarajan, MP Coimbatore.

Union Minister Rathore felt it is great to have an event that has broken age, gender and caste barriers. Gramotsavams saw the participation of people from various



Rajyavardhan Rathore, Sathiguru Jaggi Vasudev, JACOMK MP P Nagarajan and Dr Kiran Bedi, at the Codissa ground in Coimbatore on Sunday | A RAJA CHIDAMBARAM

age groups starting from 15 years to 77 years. He said, "We have one life, we have to do the best irrespective of winning or defeat. This event takes the sporting spirit to the rural areas of the State."

The day-long celebrations also had rural folk performances and food festival other than the volleyball and throwball finals for men and women respectively. Gramotsavam also tried to provide a platform for 40 folk art forms of Tamil Nadu including Jikkattam, Oliattam, Sekkai

Kuchattam, Kikkilattam, etc. These art forms are slowly fading into oblivion.

Jaggi Vasudev, founder of Isha, said that Indians should bring playfulness back, because there is no celebration without playfulness. He said, "Unlike other actions, sports require more intensity of involvement. Hence, everyone should play. You can throw ball or even a potato would suffice."

The finals saw a jubilant Devanayapuram team from Coimbatore winning the trophy

against Gobichettipalayam's Murgan Puthur in throwball, whereas Cuddalore Karunguzhi won against Vellore Lathari village in volleyball.

Speaking to the media, Union Minister of State Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore said that the government is handling the Kashmir matter well, and the talks should also include the opinion of the people from Jammu and Ladakh.

He also appreciated the efforts of Indian shooter Abhinav Bindra, who announced his retirement.

Rathore said, "Bindra struggled to get to this position, and now I hope he will use his knowledge and expertise to train more such world-class shooters."

Gramotsavam gives me the idea of following up my 'Swachh' (clean) Puducherry initiative with 'Swast' (healthy) Puducherry. If the Prime Minister comes to know of this, then we could have 'Swast Bharat' after 'Swachh Bharat'."

Kiran Bedi, Lt Governor of Puducherry



To revive the dying folk arts, **20 ancient folk art forms** involving around **200 artists** from across Tamil Nadu performed at the Gramotsavam.



Isha Vidhya student **Karthikeyan**, who bagged a **gold medal in archery** in Indo-Nepal youth rural games was also felicitated.



When 25 districts of Tamil Nadu come together to play a rural Olympics, the environment is sure to be charged with excitement, with a sportsman's spirit being displayed by one and all! Amazingly, Isha Gramotsavam not only includes more than 10,000 players, but also dissolves the boundaries of gender, age and caste, **bringing all together on a common ground** – or sports field, to be exact!

## Sharings



*Today landlord and labourer play on the same team. Families that have feuded for years now cooperate to win. Friendships made on the court have lasted years – one group of girls who played as a team when they were 13 are now married and settled all over Tamil Nadu, but every year they come back to renew their friendships and play the game.*

### A volunteer shares her experience of coordinating yoga and community games



*Mrs Kavitha Boopathy is currently co-ordinating the Yoga and Community Games programs of Isha Outreach.*

***Kavitha's biggest hurdle has been the reticence of village women to play in front of other community members.** Through Isha, she uses the Isha Inner Engineering program which helped her to overcome her own inhibitions, encouraging girls and women to realize the joy of playing together. **The success has been unprecedented.** For the first time in Tamil Nadu, girls, their mothers (and even their grandmothers) are playing in public competitions!*

*By forming the teams and coaching, she has been able to gradually introduce male coaches and to help organize inter-village tournaments and Isha's State-level "Rural Olympics."*

*In preparation for such events, she also promotes indigenous games like "Kabadi" and cultural events to the amazement of the elderly and the interest of the village youths who cherish their traditional ways.*

*Wherever she goes, Kavitha is welcomed as a relative and a mentor. She has become their "Akka"- an elder sister irrespective of their age. For her part, Kavitha says she is fulfilled to contribute to the revival of the joy and pride in rural communities.*





## Help Us Grow a Greener Tomorrow

*"If you are plant a tree, you are making a statement that you care for the world, the people, and life on the planet, beyond yourself". –*

*Sadhguru*



Project GreenHands (PGH), a grassroots ecological initiative established by Isha Foundation, has grown out of a deep concern for the rapidly changing ecology in Tamil Nadu and beyond. Drawing extensively on community involvement, the project aims to create awareness about the role of green cover through hands-on participative experience.

We intend on enabling the rural millions who struggle with desertification, malnutrition and poverty, to enjoy sustainable levels of self-sufficiency in harmony with living systems. To this end each strata of our society has been mobilized into united action and pooled their

resources towards planting and propagating millions of saplings.

## Objectives

To produce and distribute 3.3 million saplings through 31 nurseries across Tamil Nadu under the model **'Trees for all'**

**Green School Movement** - Second year programme involving 97 Government High Schools and 40 champion green schools to produce 2,000 saplings by establishing nurseries in schools

To enable tree planting in farmlands - 200,000 saplings, as part of **'Trees for Life'** model.

**Isha Agro Movement** - To follow up with farmers who have undergone ZBNF (Zero Budget Natural Farming) training workshop with us.



## Project Achievements

### *Trees for All*

#### 'The year of the drought'

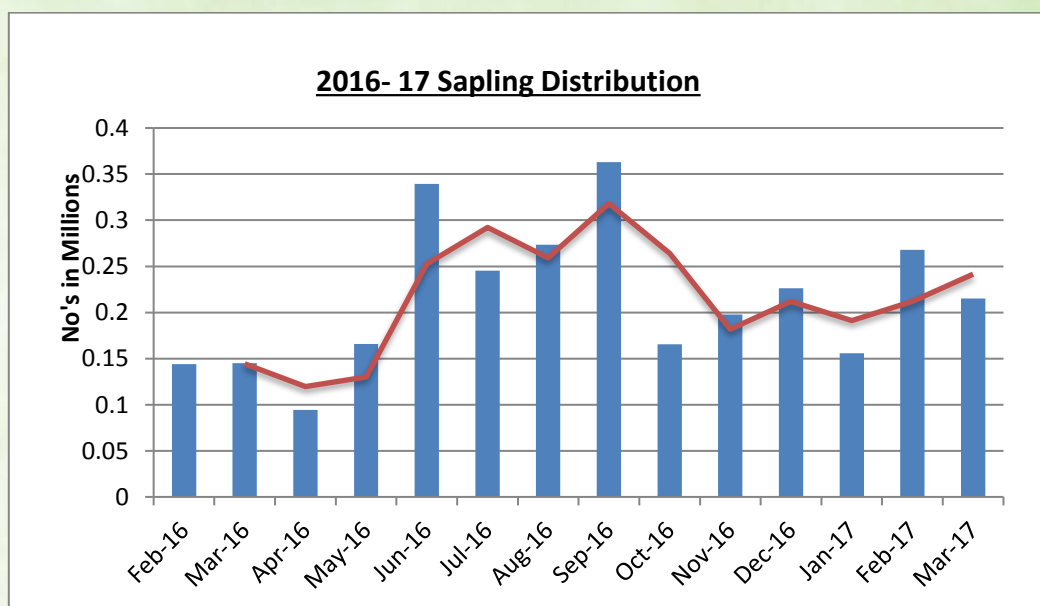


In the first quarter of the year, there were predictions of excessive rainfall in South India. PGH had geared up its production across all nurseries to achieve a target of 5 million saplings by December. However, **the first setback came with the failure of the South West Monsoon**, that is, the June to September rains.

Rains failed in most of the districts which was a cause of concern. PGH slowed down its production to ensure that saplings do not get wasted.

Towards September end, a drought situation was forming in many places in Tamil Nadu. There were reports of bore wells, wells and rivers are drying up. The North East monsoon which is the second leg of the monsoon, that is, October to December also failed completely. With a 62 percent deficit rainfall, the state of Tamil Nadu faced its worst-ever drought in the last 140 years. All districts of Tamil Nadu have had a dry spell with very little/no rainfall at all.

PGH was able to achieve the production target of 3.3 Million saplings but due to drought, sapling distribution was affected to a great extent and **2.7 Million saplings were distributed in this year.**

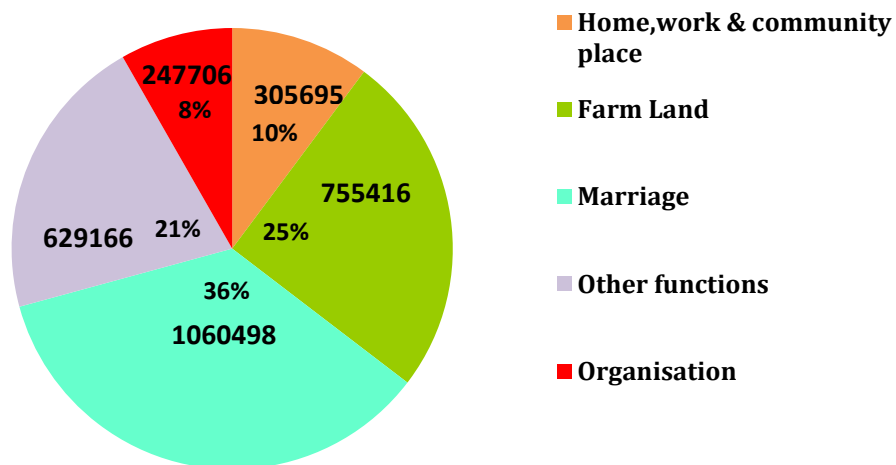




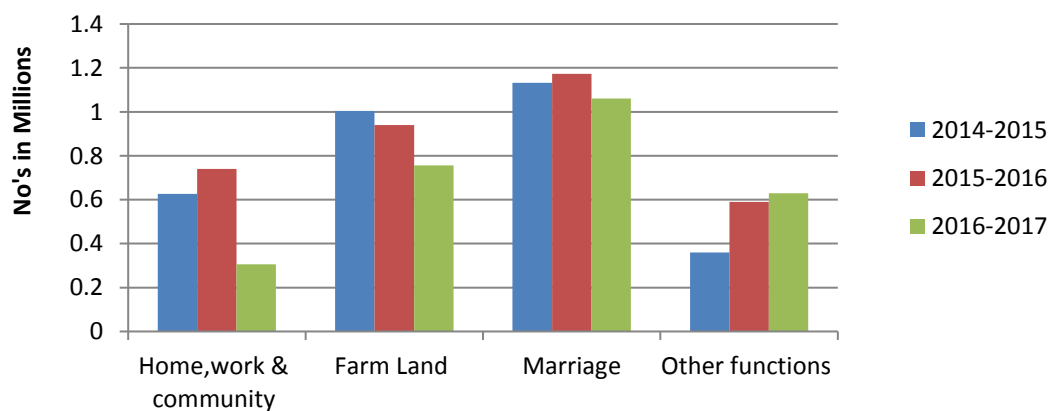
Since 2013, Project Green Hands has been maintaining a register in each nursery to record sapling distribution. Whenever someone is taking a sapling, they are required to share their number, contact details, address and area of plantation. So over the years, we have been able to see the pattern of distribution and identify the major avenues.

This year, we have introduced one more column known as 'organization' to find out how many private and Government institutions are getting saplings from us.

### 2016-17 Sapling Beneficiary Details



### Comparisons of Last 3 years Datas



## *Trees for Life*

Under the 'Trees for Life' initiative, PGH provides tree saplings that are of ecological and economic benefit to farmers. There is a mind block among many farmers that planting trees could affect the growth of crops. So awareness camps are conducted to change the mind-set of the farmers and inspire them to plant saplings in addition to their crop cultivation.

In 2014



In 2015



In 2016



The additional income from the trees and secondary crops can offset the farmer's loss of income from the reduction in his main crop. It can make the farm sustainable and profitable within 5-7 years.

In addition, planting trees in the farm reduces soil erosion, increases its soil fertility, water retention capacity and total available nutrients which then increase the yield of the main crop being planted.



**From April '16 – March '17, PGH agro –forestry team has visited 306 farmlands and a total of 1,87,539 saplings have been planted by farmers. We have taken 39 farmers who have planted 39,786 saplings in 329 acres under our follow-up for the next two years.**

For 22 farmers from last year (2015-16) who are under follow-up, we provided assistance such as manure, coir pit etc., in the month of March 2017.



## *Green School Movement*

**Viluppuram Green School Movement** is the joint initiative of Isha Project Green Hands and Department of School Education – Viluppuram district supported by Pharmazell (India) Private Limited, Chennai.



Out of the 175 schools that participated in this program last year, we have selected 40 champion green schools for focussed awareness programs. Following the success of the project in 2015, **the second year programme was launched on 25th July, 2016 - involving 97 Government High Schools and 40 champion green schools. The children from 137 schools underwent training and took up a target of producing 2,000 saplings through their own school nurseries.**

**Pitchandikulam Forest, Auroville is the knowledge partner for this program.** The students of 40 champion green schools have undergone in-depth awareness generation training program on topics such as identification of butterflies and birds; conducting energy and water audit; knowledge on degradable and non-degradable waste and appropriate management systems etc.



The awareness generation activities included creating a micro bio-diversity park in the school where 100 species of tree seedling will be planted that can be identified by the children. Children also learnt to produce herbal plants and the significance of this taught to them.



In 40 champion schools, 70,219 seeds have been sown; 64,499 saplings have been produced out of which 64,280 saplings have been distributed. In 97 Government High schools, 175,415 seeds have been sown; 1,62,747 saplings have been produced out of which 1,61,119 saplings have been distributed. This year, through this model, 2,27,027 saplings have been produced and distributed by school children.

### *Isha Agro Movement*



The Isha Agro Movement (IAM) has been created by the Isha Foundation to address the deepening crisis currently occurring within the Indian agricultural community. Agriculture, which depends on increasingly erratic weather conditions, employs 68% of India's workforce. This workforce, however, is

becoming increasingly desperate as the combined forces of climate change, inappropriate use of chemicals, de-forestation and land degradation take their toll on the productivity of once fertile lands.

Combining agro-forestry and organic farming techniques with comprehensive training and re-education programs, IAM aims to support and assist the farmers of Tamil Nadu to re-establish the ecological balance of their lands.

Following the 8 day workshop conducted in December 2015, IAM has classified the farmers into 5 zones (East, West, North, South & Central) based on the location. It has facilitated creation of a Whatsapp group among the farmers so that there is constant communication and dissemination of information is happening periodically between farmers. IAM has been conducting field visits to farmlands to observe what has been done in their farm and facilitate wherever is appropriate. Voice over for the video of the 8 day training program is in progress where it can be uploaded on YouTube for public viewing





## ***World Environment Day***

Project GreenHands (PGH) launched the planting season for the year 2016 on June 5<sup>th</sup> - World Environment Day.

**World Environment Day (WED) celebrations were conducted in 27 locations in 14 districts** (Coimbatore, Chennai, Cuddalore, Erode, Trichy, Tiruvarur, Thanjavur, Tirunelveli, Madurai, Karur, Salem, Perambalur, Vellore, Villupuram,) **of Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry.**



Various programs like sapling distribution, awareness rally by school students, tree plantation were organized to create awareness among general public about the need to conserve environment.

**We distributed 8479 saplings by involving 2300 students and 2053 people from across the state.** Many leading Tamil Newspapers covered this story - The Hindu - Tamil, Dinakaran, Dinamani, Dinamalar, Dinathanthi, Makkal kural, Kalai Kathir and Malai Tamilagam.



### *Other PGH Event*



Awareness talk given by Isha Project GreenHands team on environmental conservation in an event organized by Hindustan Lever Ltd., Madurai. 90 saplings and 30 herbal saplings were distributed in the event. More than 150 employees participated in the awareness session.

*“Trees happen to be our closest relatives. What they exhale, we inhale. What we exhale, they inhale. This transaction is on all the time.”*

*-Sadhguru*





**Isha Foundation**, founded by Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev, is a volunteer-run, international non-profit organization dedicated to cultivating human potential. The Foundation is a human service organization that recognizes the possibility of each person to empower another - restoring global community through inspiration and individual transformation.

Isha Foundation is operated by over 2 Million volunteers from more than 150 city-based centers spread worldwide. The Foundation is headquartered at Isha Yoga Center, set at the base of the Velliangiri Mountains in southern India, and at the Isha Institute of Inner Sciences on the spectacular Cumberland Plateau in middle Tennessee, USA.

Together with its active and dedicated volunteer base, the Foundation's activities serve as a thriving model for human empowerment and community revitalization throughout the world.

