

Annual Report 2018 - 2019



Introduction

Though the unemployment rate for women has started falling as per the labour ministry, women's Labour force participation rates are still lowest, and women are still disproportionately represented in the informal sector. Even when we say women are being empowered to work in the male dominated society, equality between men and women in the unorganized sector needs far more encouragement.

Even now Women receive lower returns for their labour as compared with their male counterparts. Our studies indicate that safety of women at their workplace is still overlooked as least important by their employers. However, IRFT chooses to continue promoting livelihood opportunities for women to contribute towards the economic stabilities of their households and by sensitizing both men and women towards gender justice.

2018 – 2019

Names of the Project

- M&W Mack Ltd, UK
- Fair Wear Foundation – FWF
- Agrocel Industries Ltd. – Contract Workers
- Fair Labour Association – Syngenta Ltd.
- David Jones - Orbit Leathers P Ltd.
- Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited - ONGC
- Better Cotton Initiative – BCI



Developing a more sustainable Indian Table Grapes Industry – Year 3

Total no. of people benefited 336

Male workers 103

Female workers 233

Total nos. of:

Grape growers 7

Permanent farm workers 35

Migrant farm workers 70

Pack house operators and employees 150

Front line workers 11

Children of labourers 30

15 women groups, produced compost 'Premal Mati' at the rate of 350 kilos per cycle.

Home banking services initiated through adult financial literacy classes to ensure that women could revive the Pradhan Mantri Jhan Dhan Yojana Savings Account, and understand the need to save for the future. Each of the beneficiaries could save at least Rs.150 per month and revive their Bank Accounts.



Premal Mati – Organic soil enricher produced by the pilot group of women. 'Malti and Mangala' the key women of the pilot group, were officially assisting IRFT to train nine new groups formed and to motivate six older groups formed in year II. They served to be chief motivators visiting the new groups after the factory work hours, after 9.00 p.m. during the packing

season and were chief coordinators of the project in year III. Significantly, their husbands assisted them on these visits as in rural India, women were not free to visit another home beyond sunset, without the presence of a male chaperone. **Male support from the village was the biggest achievement in such a women centric project.** All fifteen groups showed evidence of male presence during meetings for the compost project **and both children and husbands attended in solidarity and support of the initiative.**



Malti and Mangala Mentor Trainers

Mobilization of 14 groups after the first pilot group of ‘Premal Mati’ (Loving Soil) has been an effortless success. The additional word of mouth encouragement by the lead group of Naitale women and the success story of ‘Premal Mati’, had women groups clamouring to come forward and request that they can be considered for replicating the ‘Premal Mati’ production, in their own community.

What started as an innocent livelihood project has taken on a different dimension year on year during the term of three years. **The receptiveness to this initiative by all stakeholders of the supply chain led IRFT to believe that this project needs to be documented not just as a success story but a living throbbing reality of empowerment, mindset change and community engagement going beyond just the scope of livelihood enhancement of a small workforce attached to seven growers.**

Continuous Improvement Monitoring (CIM) - The understanding that some growers were not so serious about our CIM programme. IRFT re-engineered their approach and increased their visits so as to teach the concept of being audit ready and having genuine intent to change. **A Non-audit approach was very different from the audit certification process and this attempt to bring about a serious mindset change on compliance, resulted in making some progress with the growers who were initially not serious.** Though a challenge but with persistence right up till end of the project, the IRFT chief was relentless in convincing the growers to fulfill all compliances.



IRFT did a Research Study on the ‘Implementation of the Sexual Harassment of Women at the Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act 2013’ in the Garment Segment of India for Fair Wear Foundation.

IRFT interviewed male and female garment workers from the three locations, Tirupur, Bangalore & Delhi NCR the garment hubs of India, along with the factories management and non-governmental organizations, to get a holistic and unbiased view of the industry. IRFT also presented the data received at Fair Wear Foundation National stakeholder Roundtable 2019 held in New Delhi.



Focused Group Discussions with Creative Tools to sensitively help women discuss about Sexual Harassment and Abuse in the workplace



These tools helped women to talk freely and open up on abuse in their workplaces



Factory Workers Engagement

IRFT's intervention has enabled contract workers to create an environment of 'A home away from home'. The workers have been encouraged to live with each other with a feeling of togetherness and as one family- 'our factory family'. **The main motive was to help them maintain cleanliness within their residential settings without enforcing rules and regulations on them, rather through their own free will.**



'My home' well decorated



Displaying clothes on clothes rack
Importance of drying clothes neatly



Hangers for all to stack clothes neatly



Decorating the entrance to the
factory home

The training tools developed after taking into account the needs and wants of the workers within their dormitories, have enabled them to try to live with more discipline than before, for example, Clothes Rack, Hangers, Outdoor Mats, etc were given to bring about a feeling of being cared for. A sense of ownership of the quarters is an evident behavior change adopted by workers due to the IRFT's intervention with them. A system of periodic rewards was to encourage them to continue this changed behavior for a prolonged period, and ultimately turn this new behavior into a daily habit.



IRFT was contracted by FLA to conduct an Independent External Monitoring (IEM) of farms producing products (such as Tomatoes, Okra etc.) for FLA affiliated companies in Maharashtra (India) based on principles of Fair Labor and Responsible Sourcing for Companies with Agricultural Supply chain.

After studying the previous year's IEM reports and corrective actions plans, unannounced visit is made to the commodity suppliers and Farms, to meet different stakeholders and to interview them. This is to identify the gaps (noncompliance and best practices) and to report the breaches of FLA Code of Conduct and the applicable local labor laws. The objective is to compare, with supporting evidence (i.e. necessary document as per FLA), what should have been done (i.e. Benchmarks) and what is being done (i.e. Implementation) in the supply chain and highlight the gaps.



A SEDEX initial & follow up audit was conducted for Orbit Leather based On ETI base code.



Public Pvt. Partnership. An Agreement between ONGC, IRFT & Sampurna (e)arthEnvironment Solutions Pvt. Ltd. Solid Waste Management System for Kadeshwari slum Community in Bandra.



Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited - ONGC

Project Inauguration:

Mr. S. Gopinath, Executive Director-Head Regional Office and Mr. R. K. Sharma, Group General Manager from ONGC and MCGM officials inaugurated the project as well observed solid waste segregation units on 31st August, 2018, at Kadeshwari slum, Tabela, Bandra, about 20 km from ONGC Bandra office.



Sanyukta Shakti (संयुक्त शक्ती) demonstrated their commitment and ownership towards project sustainability by presenting a speech in front of the dignitaries.



Skit by Community Children

Eight children acted and sang during the 20 minutes skit with the aim to deliver key messages on poorly managed waste practices, need for waste segregation and beautifully portrayed how youth can get involved in waste segregation initiatives.



3rd Party Verification Audits of three Implementing Partners of BCI.