

SHG WOMEN'S SUCCESSFUL FORAY INTO A NON-CONVENTIONAL LIVELIHOOD

- A Case Study of Mahalaxmi Self-help group from Chapiri village.

Mahalaxmi self-help group is from the village Chapiri of Kalyandurg mandal. The group has 10 women members from economically backward farmer and farm labor families, with just 2 to 5 acres of dry land. These families depend on non-farm income generation activities. Considerably, as rainfed agriculture is not remunerative, particularly with such small land holdings.

During 2007-08, the crop yields were very good, which created a huge labour demand for groundnut harvesting and threshing works. At the same time the labourers in villages had a choice to work in NREGS works, which were highly remunerative compared to the low agricultural labour wages. So, the demand for labourers skyrocketed in villages.

"I earned Rs.2,500/- from thresher during last season. More over I was able to thresh my groundnut free of cost, which would have costed me Rs.3,000/-. Hence my net income is Rs.5,500/-. I am very happy that I get income in every season."

Nagamma, Member Mahalaxmi SHG.

In this back drop, Mahalaxmi SHG approached AF staff with an income generation proposal to purchase and rein a groundnut thresher. Considering the demand, AF also felt that it could be a feasible income generation activity because (a) mechanical threshing is economical compared to manual job and (b) it is



much more faster. So, AF under its livelihood support programme provided an incentive of Rs.6,700/- per family to jointly establish and manage a thresher. All these families pooled up their incentives, added their own contribution of Rs.23,000/- and purchased a thresher for Rs.90,000/-.

The thresher was rented out for 35 days during harvest season @ Rs.1,200/- per day.

the daily expenditure for thresher operator, labour and fuel came to Rs.500/- per day, and each family got a net income of Rs.70/- per day. So each family earned Rs.2,450/- during the season. Thus, a sustainable off-farm livelihood is created because of SHG women's initiative and AF's support.