



‘Pennungal Adayalappeduthunna Bhoopadangal’ (The Maps marked by Women)

“ I was going to the phase of a permanent depression, when Kudumbashree supported me and brought back to my life. I got married during 2006. For repaying the debts till then and for meeting the expenses of my marriage, we had to sell the house in which I was born and brought up. It was a time during which, everyone believed that marriage is the safe destination that a woman could reach and so there was no resistance towards the decision of selling the house. For a woman like me, who was one among the frontline leaders of a college like Maharajas, a state level champion in school athletics, one who was active in the house as well as the society till the last day before marriage, had witnessed a strange situation in my husband’s house.”- Uma Abhilash.

“ I entered into the social service activities as Saksharatha Prerak in the Panchayath.

After that when Kudumbashree was formed, I changed my area of action to that. NHG formation was the main activity then. Kudumbashree didn’t have acceptance during the initial days. But now this organization is a model for other states and even to the world. Nowadays, meeting a non-Kudumbashree family would be a matter of astonishment for people.”- T.M Usha.

We had elaborated about Kudumbashree National Resource Organization (NRO) functioning in 19 states of the country. We had also explained about the experienced NHG members from Kerala functioning there as Mentors in the previous ‘Making an Impact’ Articles. 13 Mentors of Kudumbashree viz., Ms. Uma Abhilash, Ms. T.M Usha, Ms. Pree-tha T.B, Ms. Eliyamma Antony, Ms. Mini V, Ms. Chinnamma John, Ms. Manju. P, Ms.



Asha Rajendran, Ms. Maya Suresh, Ms. Jibi Vargheese, Ms. Shamla Shukkoor, Ms. Shelbi P. Sreeba and Ms. Vijayalakshmi has now published their experiences in the form of a book. We have cited a few parts from the book named as 'Pennungal Adayalappeduthunna Vhoopadangal' (The Maps marked by Women), which is published by Green Pepper Publica. The strength, the work experience and the insights earned through the activities of Kudumbashree NRO until now is dealt in this book. Each article in this book reflects, how Kudumbashree reach out to women and help make changes within them.

Appreciations to all the 13 members including Uma who is inspiring every others by publishing their experiences as a book. Those who wish to buy the book may contact the mobile number 9447558558. The book can also be bought through www.pusthakakada.com. Some of the important instances from this book is given below:

From the article of Ms. Uma Abhilash, who is also the editor of the book:

"For me, who had worked in various other places, Kudumbashree gave a different experience. There weren't any colleagues who competes each other. There were only women who stood together for each other as sisters. Mr. K.K Ravi, Mission Coordinator who cares and loves us like a father. It was then we thought about the new group formation. A few of us together formed a group and named it as 'Awake'. If they hadn't shown that generosity to include me in that group, the journey to the new Uma will not have been this easy.

Then, I had started travelling to some districts in Kerala for extending training. How much the distance be, I used to travel only in bus as I was fearful about travelling in trains. I didn't even

knew, what was a platform then! I used to go to every districts. Now, I feel like I should have visited the best sceneries of those places, to which I had travelled for imparting classes. It is those women who came to take part in the trainings that made me think differently about the general life of women in Kerala."

From the Article of Ms. T. M Usha:

"On reaching there, I felt like a star was shining inside my head. I did understand anything. Even thought of returning then. It might be on seeing my helplessness, the officials offered me the help of consultant who knew Hindi for helping me. Going to a place, where the language and life is totally unknown and working together with the people over there to become one among them is a challenge. That was indeed a testing period.

In the initial days, I couldn't get a house for rent. So temporary stay was arranged in a house, where a few people who knew Hindi lived. The people from the block itself was selected for entrepreneurship development. Those people who were selected for this was from very poor backgrounds. Most of them were widows. They were allowed to have food only after finishing the household chores.

Out of them, I could not forget Ms. Manjula from Devihal Panchayath. She got married in the age of 17 to the son of her father's close relative. Manjula's life was in pain after marriage. She had to do the household chores all alone. Her mother-in-law used to abuse her and attack her physically. Her husband was in support of this act. As the days were passing, the issues increased. When the torture of her mother-in-law became unbearable, she shifted to a new house. But Manjula's husband expired after some time. And she became a widow in the age of 19..."