

# Contents

	Page
• Preamble.....	2
• Enterprise development.....	5
• Village Organic certification.....	8
• Institution development and local governance.....	10
• Revival of traditional agriculture with indigenous communities.....	12
• Non timber forest produce conservation and developmentProject.	18
• Water project.....	21
• Apiculture project.....	26
• Honey hunters in the Nilgiris Biosphere Reserve.....	29
• Accounts.....	31
• Staff Profile : People at Keystone Foundation during 2004.....	35
• Visits, Visitors, Events and Study Tours during the year 2004.....	44
• Workshops.....	50
• Trainings.....	51

## Preamble

2004 was a year with significant differences. The evaluation in December 2003 led to the change in organizational structure, management and designing new roles and responsibilities within the overall ambit of the new mission and goal of Keystone Foundation. Simply how did the process unfold?

- December 2003 Evaluation - changes in organizational structure, focus on social and gender issues and re-organize the thematic areas which converge to the mission and objectives of the organization and not a piece-meal activity-based approach which did not bring in the required synergy (this feeling generally happens after 10 years of work - you suddenly realize that you have gone on the road for a long time, may be you needed to stop to look around and wander..)
- February 2004 Tribal Stakeholders meeting - the three main outputs of their one-day brainstorm with 50 tribal elders was - that they still need a menu of options for income generation - for example more village value addition units, in other words greater creation of asset and family income. Secondly the tribal group suggested pro-active support and facilitation from Keystone on the cultural revival of Irulas and Kurumbas in the Nilgiris. Youth today in these communities feel distanced from their traditional norms and practices - they have expressed the need for specific revival steps - for example as simple as organizing training for people on traditional musical instruments or making these instruments for villages. This is a new area for Keystone to get into. As a first step we want to engage with Cultural revival activities within the Institutional Development and Local Governance programme - which looks at the traditional systems of governance where culture is a smooth lubricant. Thirdly they would want us to play a role in Advocacy with the Government mainly the Forest Department - to become partners in Conservation and Eco-development initiatives.
- March 2004 stakeholders with the full Keystone team - this was facilitated very effectively to bring out what each one of us understood of the mission of Keystone Foundation - why we are

doing, what we are doing? Long debates over two days brought out the basic principles of what we stand for and what are the large responsibilities in the field of environment and development that we need to undertake.

- All the above three - the evaluation, the tribal stakeholders and the team stakeholders culminated into a pot full of ideas up to the brim. To give it literally a fresh start - the three of us (again...) carted all the papers, the files from 1993, the notes from the beginning and the latest churnings up the hill in to the woods of Korakundah. For three days we were amongst the tall trees, the skies so close, the organic stretches of tea in mountain environments - we dreamt, debated, argued and came out with our new vision - the second tree fall gap. With this vision we also placed each of our staff in distinct positions with visible areas of interventions and designations.

As we write this - today it is 10<sup>th</sup> of December 2004. We dreamt of a path and a new approach - but the difficulties have come rapidly in - as water gushing through a crag and forming a rill and then big erosion since the early part of this year. This is a challenging time and we are graying fast enough to realize that all problems cannot be turned into opportunities - some should be left behind and we should probably go around them.

On the difficult side, the Integrated Beekeeping Project funded by Danish Beekeepers Federation has been terminated since October 2004 officially, but no funds came in since January 2004. This was a situation, which looking back is good for the overall direction and health of the organization - the beekeeping project has had intrinsic difficulties to integrate with the other efforts and work-culture at Keystone.

Almost all the other projects are coming to an end in March 2005 - hence, the final reports, analysis and way forwards for all the projects have been discussed, agreed and disagreed. One thing that was unique this year was the attitude of the entire team of ownership, of being together and working with each other.

Sitting for meetings in the villages for discussions on local governance, setting up a solar pumping unit in remote Boothanatham village in the Sigur plateau, designing the new green shops, making a transect through gooseberry lands, painting a plant full of information on indigenous

insights or organizing the accounts and reporting confidently to an audit - all these have brought the team closer and stronger. Institution development - hands-on has taken place and each one of us have grown in character, measured assessments and wanting to do even bigger and bolder things with good experience strapped on our backs.

We wish to thank all our donors, partners and supporters during 2004, some of whom are:

1. The Swallows in Sweden, Lund
2. The Ford Foundation, Delhi
3. Swiss Development Cooperation - Inter Cooperation, Bangalore
4. IUCN - The Netherlands Committee, Amsterdam
5. Nilgiris District Administration, Government of Tamil Nadu
6. Coimbatore District Administration, Government of Tamil Nadu
7. Tamil Nadu Forest Department
8. Trustees, Advisors & Friends of Keystone Foundation

We look forward to a brand new year 2005 - the 365 days of 2004 have been intense and demanding. It is almost many years of learning squeezed into one. However, we have enjoyed every moment. It has made our mission for the future of "enhancing the Quality of Life and the Environment with Indigenous Communities using eco-development approaches" within imaginable reach.

The Keystone Team

22<sup>nd</sup> December 2004

Kotagiri, The Nilgiris  
Tamil Nadu

## ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

After the evaluation in January, when the winds of change were crossing the marketing division, they brought in a completely fresh outlook and focus to the marketing activity.

Marketing division was rechristened as Enterprise Development (ED) wing. It widened the canvas for the activity by which it was not enough to just take the products to the market but focus on areas of availability, self-sustenance of the Green Shops, and support for the village production centers throughout the year by providing adequate orders for products.

The prime focus is on developing the village production centers into independent profit centers run entirely by the village communities themselves. The task of bringing in more visibility to the products by widening the network of dealers and retailers moved at a moderate pace due to the limited availability of honey during the current season.

This year there was an unprecedented drop in the inflow of honey due to untimely rains. It dropped from the 5 tons during 2003 season to just above 1 ton for 2004, which put the ED activities on the back foot.

Nevertheless it provided the opportunity to develop markets for other products like coffee, pepper and amla (Nellikai). Amla candy and Nellikai mouth fresheners found favour with the customers and were in high demand throughout the year.

The dependence on honey had reduced comparatively during the year as the contribution to the total turnover from honey came down to about 50% from 70% year before in spite of increased volumes.

Outsourcing of organic products from other organizations was started earnestly as a strategy to increase turnover for the Green Shops as also to provide marketing support to organic products.

During February, it was decided to revamp the Green Shop in Coonoor to make it more spacious and interesting. The work was undertaken during May, due to heavy untimely rains it took 30 days to complete the renovation, and immediately the results started showing by increased sales.

Sales improved throughout the year and ED achieved the highest ever turnover of the month during May. Evenly spread of improved product mix over all the products, helped ED to overcome the negative impact of reduced honey inflow.

Towards the end of the year, interesting developments like availability of honey from Madhya Pradesh, Dammer honey from Wynnaad and Cardamom from Munnar range, have widen the scope of our outsourcing basket of raw materials and products.

Trials for improving packing and eliminating plastic were underway and took quite sometime to start with. This effort will be carried over to the next year with use of local materials and minimal use of non-ecofriendly packing materials- as per the ethical goals of ED.

The need to develop more new products and variants for the market was keenly felt. To build up volumes and increase the range of products in-house is the gap to be filled in the forthcoming year.

Green Shop at Kotagiri, which received scant attention during the year due to the fast paced changes taking place in the Hive veered back into focus once the contract period of three years for the shop was about to expire during November which forced ED to look for alternative locations due to poor visibility inside the shopping complex in which the Green Shop was housed and also due to stagnant sales. A small shop in the middle of the busy Johnston square area was rented out and plans are on to give a facelift to the shop to achieve prominence and to improve local customer base.

The introduction of billing software, which is under progress (the test run is through), will help in streamlining of ED activities and in making billing in Green Shops faster.

ED is now looking up at breakeven point for the current financial year with the following figures.

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**ED's progress at a Glance: January- November  
2004**

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*All figures in Rs. '000*

<b>Sales:</b>	<b>: Rs.1,670</b>
High: Nov 2004	: Rs.197
Low: Jan 2004	: Rs.84
<b>Purchases:</b>	<b>: Rs.673</b>
Honey	: Rs.207
Beeswax Items	: Rs.123
Forest Produces	: Rs.36
Coffee	: Rs.1
Pepper	: Rs.6
Silk Cotton	: Rs.22
Spices	: Rs.72
Others	: Rs.206
<b>Outstanding Position</b>	<b>: 2.24</b>
<b>Operating margin</b>	<b>: 20%</b>
<b>Supplier Base</b>	<b>: 16</b>
<b>Dealer Base</b>	<b>: 38</b>

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Team:

The people who lend the human face to the enterprise are- Helen, Suganthi, Susheela, Selvi, Moorthy, Vinoth, Sam and Mathew.

## Village Organic Certification

In 2003, Keystone took the initiative of getting two tribal villages certified with IndoCert, which is the certifying agency situated in Kerala which uses IFOAM standards as the basis of certification with few modifications to suit Indian Standards.

In fact, it has a dual system of Indian Standards and European Union Standards in which after two consecutive years of achieving Indian Standards the certificate is upgraded to European Standards.

The primary aim of this certifying agency is to bring down the cost involved in certifying by Western agencies to more affordable levels. Keystone opted for group certification and decided to get the entire village certified as organic. By experience, we found that due to remoteness of these villages they have largely remained organic as it unviable to put chemical inputs and the few cash crops that they raise in their land have remained organic.

During 2003, the certification of Vellaricombai village was completed, with partial success. IndoCert awarded *INCONVERSION* certificate to this village with one year with one-year observation period before full-fledged Organic status. The cost involved in this exercise is Rs.10, 535.00 that was paid by Keystone on behalf of the villagers. However, due to failure of monsoon and continued drought conditions we could only procure about 15 kilogram of Pepper, the only produce that was of any market value, and the effort of recouping the expenses proved futile.

Since, the in conversion certificate had a validity period of 18 months extending up to 07.01.05 we decided to take up the recertification exercise during mid June 2004. The important point here is that IndoCert certified Keystone as the operating agency and issued the certificate in Keystone's name. Keystone, agreed to maintain the Internal Control System, as the villagers themselves do not have the ability and education.

The most dismaying fact is, once we initiated the process of recertification of Vellaricombai village, we were rendered ineffective by the prohibitively high rate of Rs.16, 989.00, almost 50% higher than the year before. (*The form for recertification was much simpler compared to the original application for certification.*)

By this time, Alternative Certification was taking hold, Mr. Mathew John had attended IFOAM's International Seminar on Alternative Certification in Brazil, and this cost overrun for recertification was the prompt for adopting our own certification methodology.

After elaborate discussions, it was decided to continue with Internal Control Systems but in a much simpler manner suited to our own villages. (The discontinuation of Indocert certification process had no adverse effect amongst the villagers for it was not affecting their daily livelihood concerns and for the Keystone also it did not affect significantly because of the low volume of the produce and export not being its primary market, at the moment).

Keystone, eventually decided to design its own forms and records for collection of data for its own Internal Control System, and put P. Susheela on the job of collecting information from three villages namely, Vellaricombai (where existing records were validated once again), Vagapanai, and Banglapadigai.

Apart from the farm records and inspection forms, it was felt that a charter as the basis for certification was required. It was also decided to get an assurance from the farmer to adhere to organic principles and to actively adopt organic methods of cultivation for improved yield and quality. At present, farm records are being maintained and data about crops, seasons, diseases and yield is collected to correlate on a yearly basis.

Keystone, is aiming at issuing Organic Certificates to these three villages after a period of one year or upon satisfactory developments and more importantly after imparting necessary training and providing necessary inputs.

In the long run and upon completion of this first phase of certification successfully, Keystone hopes to take this process to all the villages where it is taking up developmental activities and get international recognition through IFOAM's alternative certification initiatives.

## **INSTITUTION DEVELOPMENT & LOCAL GOVERNANCE**

### **Introduction:**

During the inauguration/dedication of Keystone campus and the celebration of completion of 10 years, in the stakeholders' workshop the indigenous people have raised concern over the erosion of culture and tradition and strongly felt the need to revive the traditional institutions and local governing bodies. The same idea was reinforced during the evaluation of Keystone activities, the program for both the Kurumba and Irula communities named as Institution Development, and Local Governance was started on 12.07.2004.

### **Objective:**

Any development or progress should not only benefit the individual but should also contribute to the development of the entire community.

### **Planning:**

It was originally planned to have a series of village level meeting under the aegis of elders and separately for the younger generation to express their views also. However, later separate meetings for the respective communities were geographically divided into Kotagiri and Coonoor taluks.

### **Meetings conducted:**

Altogether 8 meetings were held for the Kurumba community in both Coonoor and Kotagiri of which, 6 meetings were held for the Irula community in Kotagiri taluk alone. Generally, the response and interest for these meetings were high in all areas.

The major achievements of these series of meetings were that the people had taken the initiative and elected Mudali, Mannukaran, Jathikaran for their respective Seemai (boundary).

### **People's opinion and response:**

- To continue with the traditional food practices, culture and language, an institutional setup is important.
- The need to have Mannukaran and Jathikaran to conduct the rituals during festivities, celebrations and traditional farming was keenly felt and the revival of this system gave an opportunity to identify and elect them.

- Marrying rights within communities, maintaining proper marriage relations for the generation to come will have to be properly understood and held in respect and this can only be ensured by these institutions which will have to educate the younger generation about the importance of this system

**Plans for the future:**

All the development initiatives by governmental as well as non-governmental organizations should be through and with full acceptance of the traditional institutions and should be towards the development of both the individual and the entire community.

**Team:**

The people trying to unravel and understand the institutional intricacies are- Kunal, Susheela, Bala, Sneh, Leo & Pratim

## **REVIVAL OF TRADITIONAL AGRICULTURE WITH INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES IN NILGIRIS: Land Development**

### **Land Development Programme- IC/ SDC**

#### **Introduction:**

Revival of tribal traditional agriculture in Nilgiris, the programme has begun in 7 villages in Kotagiri taluk during 1998-and extended to Coonoor in 2000. Over a period of five years, several attempts were taken up to raise food crops in fallow land, food security, improve nutritional conditions, high value crops & diversity, rural technologies, soil , promote organic inputs, conserve soil moisture stabilize soil strata, demarcation of tribal lands from forested areas and conservation of indigenous knowledge.

#### **Purchase of fruits and spice plants from outside:**

The villagers have learnt the nursery techniques and over a period of time were able to produce plants like coffee, lime, silk cotton, areca, pepper and silver oak of their requirements in village nurseries. However, there were limitations to produce few kinds of spice and grafted fruit plants due to non-availability of seeds in appropriated seasons and good plant stock. These conditions lead us to source such plants from State Horticulture farms and private nurseries in Mettupalayam.

#### **The list of plants: Sourced from outside:**

Name of plant	No. purchased/ Ordered	Value in Rupees
1. Clove	1,250	7,500
2. Nutmeg	80	1,920
3. Cinnamum	720	3,600
4. Pomogrante	650	3,250
5. Nelli/Amla	125	2,750
6. Tamrind	158	3,871
7. Durian	30	900
8. Cocoa	1,000	0
9. Vanilla	100	1,000
10. Orange-ordered	2,000	0
11. Sappotta	97	2,182
12. Malayan Apple	20	120
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,230</b>	<b>27,039</b>

Addition to the above, plants like coconut and guava also have to be procured from out source.

### The Participatory Monitoring Evaluation (PME) exercises in project villages:

2004 is a crucial year for the land development project- with continuous efforts hundreds of acres were brought to cultivation and income is generated. Where now, all activities to be stabilized and the community needs for self-maintenance by end of this year.

#### Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation:

Since the project is coming to an end it is important to analyze and understands the impact of the programme amongst the indigenous communities.

The LD team had followed 4 criteria and cut-off period (Before the project and after the project implementations) to scale the impact of the activities in Banglapadigai & Semmanarai in Kotagiri taluk, Veeracombai & Nedugalkombei in Coonoor taluk:

1. Food diversity and security
2. Crop diversity and land resource pattern
3. Impact of soil and Moisture conservations measures
4. Innovations applied in projects



PME is an important aspect/tool for effective implementations and scale



Food Diversity Exercise

the realities where, not only the land development project benefits but also other developmental project too. The exercise was imparted to the LD team in a workshop organized by IC/SDC PSMU in Karnataka during January 2004.



### **Farmers training:**

Two day training, on the preparation of Compost, Vermicompost, Bio pesticides (repellant) and Panchkaviya-a growth promoter, was conducted by Mr. Velan of Liesa net work, Trichy in Semanarai and Banglapadigai. The training has added manure to their traditional methods of compost making skills amongst villagers & enhanced the implementation.

### **Hands on training in compost making in Semanarai**

#### **a. Composting in progress**



#### **b. Preparation of Vermicompost**



### **Establishing Farmers Groups to save and revolve for self-financing:**

Participatory - contributions was an important component practiced in every activity with different ratio for all through the project period. In many occasions, villagers have purchased tools, hosed pipes and Agri-film (for lining tanks) on credit and clear the debts through wage work. Through this system, every farmer has gathered respectable value of farm implements, roofing material etc. Considering the need and future, savings & revolving concept was emphasized regularly in several meetings and trainings. Hence, the project is under consolidation phase (financial support from IC/SDC will be over by March 2005) - it is crucial to create self-supportive systems to meet essential need of the farmers. In 9

villages, farmers have organized groups- they pay weekly subscription ranging from Rs. 10-25 regularly into an account in either a Bank or Post Office. These groups are supported with **Project contribution**; subsequently the savings generated by the 'weekly subscription' will be borrowed as interest free loans by members for various land based activities. The transaction will be carried out by two persons- one project field assistant and the other- a representative of the farmer group. The villagers in Veeracombai, Pudurcombai, Neeralacombai and Kilcoupe have not yet decided to create savings and revolving account, due to their low Family strength.

The Status of Revolving Fund Initiatives						
S.No.	Name of the Village	Name of Group	Fund Contribution (Rs.)	Materia l Contrib ution (Rs.)	Savings (Rs.)	Total (Rs.)
1.	Semanari	Mariamman Makkal Kulu	17,335	16,664	11,385	45,384
2.	Vagapani	Masaniamman Makkal Kulu	23,308	10,692	4,075	38,075
3.	Banglapadigai	Kamaraj GSNK	11,092	22,908	6,720	40,720
4.	Samaigudar	Munyal Muniappan GSNK	11,814	186	2,450	14,451
5.	Kokode	Parathorai Mariamman SN	11,815	185	4,900	16,900
6.	Thalamukai	Kaliyammal SNK	33,763	237	3,810	37,810
7.	Kolithorai	Billai ouvoo SNK	9,060	2,940	1,445	13,445
8.	Vellaricombai	Bellarai SNK	11,042	958	2,000	14,000
9.	Nedugalkombei	Attavarai SNK	17,844	16,156	2,020	36,020
<b>Total</b>			<b>1,47,073</b>	<b>70,926</b>	<b>38,805</b>	<b>2,56,805</b>

### **Sustainable Income Generation through Land Development**

#### **Work in Pillur Area:**

This project has been supported by the District Administration, Coimbatore, and work being implemented by Keystone foundation along with Karamadai Block Development Office. The villages selected from Pillur area are Keelpillur and Neeradi comprising of 36 & 11 families with land holding of 72 and 11 acres respectively. The project aims at income generation through agriculture, soil and moisture conservation with horticulture crops for sustainability.

The land has been brought under cultivation with diverse crops like maize, saamai, ragi, beans, black gram, horse gram, etc. in Neeradi village with constant follow-up and planning of the project. In Keelpillur, since the

acreage is more, the work has been progressing at much slower pace due to insufficient work force.

This project has been a new experience to work with the government officials. The activities within the project period will be the installation of solar pumps and completion of the planned

<b>Village: Keelpillur</b>				
<b>S.No</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Work Progress</b>	<b>Amount paid (wages, Rs.)</b>	<b>Assets Acquired</b>
1	Earthen bunding	14,374 m	4,42,178	Saving- Rs 21,858.5
2	Trenches	451 no.	30,369	Tools- Rs 5,800.
3	Land clearing	255 man days	17,850	

<b>Village: Neeradi</b>				
<b>S. No</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Work Progress</b>	<b>Amount paid (wages. Rs.)</b>	<b>Assets Acquired</b>
1	Earthen bunding	3,655 m	53,202	Savings- Rs 6,618
2	Trenches	71 no.	818.55	Tools- Rs 5,200.
3	Land clearing	144 man days	10,080	

### **SANFEC: South Asia Network for Food, Ecology and Culture**

It is an 18-month Study project in four areas of agricultural practices. 16 tribal farmers are participating in the programme to provide information on Economical, Social and Ecological benefits from four different kinds of agriculture practices. The following are the module to be followed in each village, on an extent of one-acre land.

1. Samaigudar village for cultivation of millets
2. Banglapadigai village for cultivation of Vegetables
3. Vagapani & Vellaricombai for Mixed cultivation-two farmers from each village
4. Nedugalkombei & Semanarai for cultivation of Tea.

A monthly record of the Farmer's household data, farm details, inputs and out puts will be recorded for a period of 12months. The ecological information also will be gathered.

### **Out come of the project:**

The result of the study will help to identify which practice is viable for indigenous community and its sustainability. These findings will be shared in farmer's Hubba in December 2005.

### **The Challenges Ahead:**

1. The farmer groups have to govern land based activities- but how a weaker farmer also will get benefited equally through revolving funds.
2. How the activities withstand with changing weather conditions
3. The organic way of continuation
4. Establishing tribal vegetable sale out let in the Hill for Fair price, right now the market is in Mettupalayam

### **Team:**

People behind looking in to the delicate linkages of sustainable development of the key livelihood resource, the land have been- Ravindran, Sivaraj, Nagaraj, P. Chandran, Mullai, Leo and Sneh

## NON-TIMBER FOREST PRODUCE CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

### **Ecological Assessments:**

The beginning of the year saw us tracking NTFP gatherers to look at harvesting methods. This year only Eecham (*Phoenix humilis*) was collected in large amounts from the Kotagiri area. Nellikai (*Phyllanthus emblica*) the other major NTFP crop had not fruited much and people did not prefer to spend time on the collection as they had to travel larger distances to get the fruit. The low level of fruiting has been for two years now maybe because of the low rainfall. Two sets of harvesters operate in our area. One is the newly formed VFC/SHG (VFC -Village Forest Councils formed by the Forest department, which give collection rights to the SHG-Self Help Groups who bid for the collection). The other set of harvesters are the traditional groups, which stay at the site, collect the raw material, make it into brooms and sell it to the local market.

Our resource assessment was also extended into Coonoor areas more intensively this year. The terrain is very steep and the early and abundant monsoon has also made fieldwork difficult.

We have created a good GIS database of Kotagiri and Coonoor areas. We have made maps, which give baseline information on the quality and type of the forests, with the location of the adivasi villages and the socio economic details of the villages.

### **Value Addition:**

Our value addition units in Semenarai and Banglapadigai have been running well. The relatively new Banglapadigai Village Unit, which was started in August 2003, employs 4 women regularly. They are involved in drying and packing NTFPs and organic farm produce. These 2 units have generated 1,726 person days of work in a year and a sum of Rs. 86,316 has been paid as wages in the village.

The units sell the produce to the Keystone marketing unit. The cost price of products, go back to a revolving fund, which will be used to continue production activities after the project period. Already the Semenarai unit has a fund of Rs. 1, 47,649.00 and Banglapadigai has a fund of Rs. 8,165.00. Both the units have separate bank accounts.

Semmanarai village unit hosted 10 adivasi trainings for 9 groups from in and around the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve.

#### **Nurseries:**

This year our nurseries were planned with the people's needs in mind. We went to all the 9 villages and had a discussion on which forest species we should raise and in what numbers. We got a list of 21 species and these have been raised in our nurseries. Number of saplings rose are 20185. This year our nursery in Samaigudal has been the best in terms of diversity - 10 species. Germination rate of 45.73 % and maintenance. Overall germination rate has been 49.88 %. The good rains we received from June have seen the people just come to the nursery on their own initiative and take the plants they had asked for and planting them, after which our staff checks up and makes the payments.

#### **Information:**

Two informative posters of threatened trees of our area were printed for distribution. The seed collection has reached a total of 250 seeds the total number of seed collectors has been 5. We have collected information for our flora of the Kotagiri/Coonoor slopes. The first draft with 40 plates was prepared and sent to reviewers. We are aiming to finish the compilation of at least 200 plants by the end of the year. A small publication in the local Kurumba language is also ready about the medicinal plants of the Kurumbas.

#### **Meetings:**

In early June we had called for the Steering Committee Meeting, the Forest Department officers were unable to attend due to unforeseen changes. However, they set another date for the end of June. Both meetings were very productive and we had some useful discussions.

Keystone organized a meeting with hill area VFC, FD (Forest Department) and NGOs of Tamil Nadu in November 2004 to facilitate a discussion on the problems and strengths and a way forward for the newly formed VFCs.

#### **Trainings:**

Senthil Prasad attended a 3-week course on GIS at NRSA, Hyderabad.

### **Exposure visits:**

Rajendran, Anita visited forest nurseries in Valparai, Kodaikanal and Palni. Balasubramanian attended a 10-day artist workshop in Kerala organized by the Lalit Kala Academy.

### **Team:**

The natural resource managers have been- Rajendran, Balasubramanian, Senthil, Moorthy, Anita and Sneh.



## MICRO IRRIGATION AND DRINKING WATER PROJECT IN BOOTHANATHAM TRIBAL VILLAGE BY USING SOLAR ENERGY

### **Introduction:**

Bootha(i)natham, is a tribal village situated in Sigur Plateau. 23 Irula families and 20 Sholigars families (population 167) live together in three clusters. 9 families have been living for three generation and the remaining moved in during 1991. Earlier to this, they were living scattered on the periphery of Moyar village and edge of the forest. The state government has built 35 houses during 2001 - 2004 and remaining 7 families still live in the thatched houses. In 1960, few Irulas had sold their **patta** land to non-tribals; their heirs are living in Boothanatam even today.

### **Status of land:**

Boothanatham has 103 acre of rain fed land. The land is dry, rocky and shallow soil with few forest tree species. 7 acre of land is as revenue and 96 acre were allocated by forest department in 1989. However, the village is administered by the Mudumalai Wildlife Warden and erected solar powered electric fence in 2002, it is inoperative and damaged due to various reasons.

### A village group meeting



Traditional Crop after Solar Pump has  
been installed: Winter bean & Gram

### **Social Attitude:**

The village is located at the edge of Sigur plateau in the north. The Moyar gorge is the dividing line between Boothanatham and the Karnataka side. Most of the Irula and Sholigar families have their relations in Karnataka, which is a linkage for seasonal migration and wage opportunities. Few Sholigars are excellent honey hunters who are collecting honey from both the states. The community's income is solely dependent to wage gathering through cattle herding of Moyar non-tribal,

NTFP collection from forest, agricultural laborer and construction laborer. Hence, it is very difficult to find a soul in the village during the day hours except few elderly people and children.

**Keystone's Intervention:** In December 2002, we have visited this village to collect information on honey collection and beekeeping; only few were interested in beekeeping at that time. Since then a working relationship and rapport has been established, and 13 women and 17 men have attended 16 day beekeeping training in Valithottam Resource Center and 10 colonies are working at present.

The trainees have visited Kotagiri and the production centre in Semanarai, which has enhanced their interest to work with NTFPs. Addition to these 4 men, & 2 women were trained in value addition honey, wax and NTFPs.

#### **Water: The Priority for domestic use and cultivation**

The land has no water source or water arrangement, whatsoever. The Moyar village Panchayat has provided a one-inch iron pipe connection to supply drinking water an hour daily from Moyar town, which is also unreliable. On the southern side of Boothanatham village, a perennial stream is flowing inside the reserve forest and wildlife reserve, which flows in to river Moyar. Due to weak financial status, lack of irrigation machinery and rain failure few Irula families have leased their land to non-tribal men from outside. The lessees are pumping water from the stream, to cultivate market-oriented crops like garlic, cabbage, bean and capsicum.

#### **Micro irrigation and drinking with non-traditional resource:**

In Boothanatham there are two savings and credit groups formed by villagers themselves one by men and another by women. In the group meeting the members decided and applied to Keystone Foundation for the support to procure a diesel motor water pump drinking water and micro-irrigation requirement.

The villagers pointed out that they have to resort to the wage seeking and migration mainly due lack of critical land utilization/cultivation resources.

#### **The Task:**

The village, is situated in Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary, bordering Sigur Reserve Forest, hence, it was not appropriate to opt for diesel-powered pump due to noise pollution, emission, leaking or spill of oil or diesel etc. The electric powered pump using the Tamil Nadu Electricity Board grid and paying monthly electricity bills was an expensive proposition and not an affordable proposition for the community.

A survey was conducted, to find out the volume of flow of the stream, and what would have been the impacts to wild life, reverine and other life forms etc, if the water were to be pumped. Also look in to the estimations on the basis of expected water use for drinking and other domestic use and the micro-irrigation based on other aspects like topography, duration, technology and required power and capacity of pump. The analysis based on the above information was very much favorable for a solar powered water pump, which was also environmentally sound/ friendly.



View of solar panels, well and the flow of water by solar energy



**The Necessary permissions and Procedure:** Tamilnadu Forest Department

With village maps, survey information, analysis and findings we had a brief discussion with Mr.Ashok Upreti, IFS, - the Warden, Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2004. Considering the demand of villagers and technology proposed by us he granted the permission for the solar powered water pumping system. The above system was procured under TEDA subsidy scheme. The Moyar Range Officer had visited the site and found the construction and the installation satisfactory.

<b>Boothanatham Solar Powered Drinking cum Micro-irrigation System Cost: At a Glance</b>			
<b>Activity/items procured</b>	<b>Total value (Rs.)</b>	<b>Contribution/ Subsidy (Rs.)</b>	<b>Project Cost (Rs.)</b>
1.Cost of the pump	4,12,418	1,,80,000	2,32,418
2.The cost of HDP pipe & Rings	10,317	---	10,317
3.Transport -pipe, rings, pump Etc.	4,936	---	4,936
4. Labour to unload	1,200	1,200	---
5. Digging well-by villagers	2,800	2,800	---
6. Laying pipe-by 40 villagers	240	---	240
7. Solar panel installation	260	---	260
8. Digging ground level tank	1,400	1,400	---
9. Agri film for tanks	8,230	---	8,230
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,41,801</b>	<b>1,85,400</b>	<b>2,56,401</b>

**Water users Committee and responsibilities:**

The Women and Men Group have taken responsibilities of operating the water pump, sharing of water amongst all members, collection of weekly contributions for the credit group, lending agricultural support in terms of seed, establishing nurseries for horticultural plants. At present, crops like winter bean, horse gram, and maize are being grown.

**Project support on Agriculture activities:**

A village seed bank is formed; the villagers have barrowed 80 kg of winter bean seeds. After the harvest, twice the volume seed will be

returned to the group, which will be the revolving seed bank of the village.

**The Challenges Ahead:**

- a. All villager households should be involved in cultivation without conflicts
- b. The pump should be maintained regularly, e.g.-weeding & desilting around the pump
- c. All 103 acres to be brought under useful cropping
- d. Wage based migration should be stopped
- e. Food and ecology of the village should be sound as soon as possible
- f. Leasing of land to non-tribe should not happen again

Team: **Leo, Justin, P. Chandran, Sneh, Senthil**

## APICULTURE PROJECT

Apiculture project has faced ups and downs in the year 2004. The main focus of work was Capacity Building of the villagers through packaged training on Beekeeping with the target of Sigur : Men - 137 , Women - 101 , Pillur : Men - 69 , Women - 101. From the training interested and skilled women were selected as village women coordinators.

In addition to the above mentioned training, exposure trips to Semmanari village was arranged at the end of each package to broaden the vision and ideas of the trainees and to motivate them in working hard to a sustainable living. Posters and training modules for information and beekeeping training have been developed.

Integrated activities approaches have been started after the evaluation of the organization. The activities were initiated by giving seeds for Agriculture, value addition training in NTFP products, like- amla candy & fruit processing, and irrigation facilities in Pillur & Sigur areas. More preference was given to the trainees who came for beekeeping training. Honey hunters from Pillur and Sigur have been trained for sustainable honey harvesting techniques.

Land development project has been started from the month of February in Kilpillur & Neeradi.

The apiary was established to increase the number of colonies, as a result Sigur has 103 colonies & 46 colonies in Pillur (22<sup>nd</sup> December 2004) with supporting bee flora. Apart from the above activities there has been a study on indigenous bees, the *Apis dorsata*. Under this study, each fortnight data has been collected for the arrival and departure of bee colonies; the size of combs, direction, etc. Data formats have also been prepared to collect information on Florea and Dammer bees. Floral databases for 97 millineries plants have been completed. The database contains information of bee flora, which will be useful for beekeepers, extension workers, and private entrepreneurs interested in beekeeping. The information carries a description of each plant includes botanical and vernacular names, habit, habitat, distribution, flowering season, flower

description, nectar and pollen information, chemical and physical information of honey etc.

A minor research study on pollens was done by Vijayalakshmi, an M.Phil student of A.V.C College, Myladudurai, Kumbakonam, Tamil Nadu. The study can be correlated to the beekeeping activities in villages.

The follow up and updating of hive status are being done in the old beekeeping sites by the staffs.

**Training and Trips:** The team had been given a workshop on value added honey products and an exposure trip to Marthandam, to learn more viable techniques in beekeeping.

#### **Constraints:**

- Involvement of Target group is less and low output from hives,
- Wild life problems (bears) which destroyed the hive in old beekeeping sites,
- Spread of diseases (TSBV),
- Rain failure has caused changes in the vegetation pattern so the honey production has been low,
- Donor's approach has made a disintegrating affect that has affected our project and strength,
- Discontinuing training- the link broken suddenly between staff and the trainees,
- Change in responsibility of field staffs,
- Hive design are the limitation of the project.
- Even though initial work has been started with Kattunaickens in Mudumalai sanctuary and Todas of the upper area due to various reasons it has been slowed down.

In spite of all these constraints the apiculture team was able to bring about changes to the lives of the targeted group and help it move forward through the integrated activities of the project.

#### **Future Plan**

**Income generation:** Integrated project with other activities of the organization.

**Research:** Indigenous honeybee's information, Bee pollination studies, Dammar beekeeping, Diseases control measures, Strain improvement in apiaries.

**Networking:** Training - Government agencies, Private/NGO sectors.

Keystone as nodal agency for Apiculture training-  
recognition by Government.

**Team:**

The worker bees of the colony are- Robert Alexander Leo, Amutha G, Chandran M, Justin raj, Mani, Mullai P, Murugesh, Shiny Mariam Rehel.



## Honey hunters in the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve

A programme that helped us to discover new areas in the neighborhood and learn of the issues facing the Biosphere Reserve, hold discussions with adivasi communities in the region and learn from their knowledge on bees and the forests. This year the team traveled to

1. Wynnaad
2. Nilambur
3. Palamalai
4. Bandipur
5. Nagarhole

At every place information was collected on the status of *Apis dorsata*, the pressures on the forests and the overall environmental/developmental issues of the area. The team enquired in detail about the methods and techniques used for honey harvesting, boundaries of collection, methods adopted for extraction and places for sale. All this information will be collated into a report and maps generated at the end of the project period.

During this year several groups of *adivasis* from Gudalur, Wynnaad, Palamalai and Sathyamangalam came for training/exposure trips to Keystone. It was heartening to see that these trips helped them realize the importance of the resources they access and the need for improving harvesting to get better income and conserving the bee population.

Areas and people identified in 8 places in the Western Ghats, mainly the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve and initial survey of these areas and establishing contact with honey collectors, managers of forest co-operatives, forest department personnel. Till date 22 trainings have been organized mainly for honey gatherers and to women Self Help Groups - Oonimoola, Anaikatty, Boluvampatty. Extensive Maps, Satellite Images and GIS database has been created on the area and its people.

More training has been planned for the Karnataka groups. Few more areas will be studied & contacts will be established. These include- Attapadi, Silent Valley, Nilambur and Mudumalai. Intensive training will be undertaken with select groups from different areas, to franchise the technology if possible, and a stakeholder's workshop is being planned for January 2005 to bring together indigenous people, traders and the Forest Department.

The extensive work through this program, which brought to light issues that the honey hunter has to handle, mostly alone. The collection areas most often lie in protected areas where collection is not permitted, and still happens. Then how do we address the issue of sustainable harvests. We have called this the 'legal' and 'illegal problem'. The forest departments in the three states have different approaches and the political boundaries, which do not stop the gatherers. If a produce cannot be traded in one state it is only a matter of hours to walk across to the next state where the trade is permitted. On the ground we also felt a lack of peoples' institutions to work with on issues related to natural resources and livelihoods. Presence of such institutions would help to break the nexus - traders/co-operatives/forest departments.

While there is a possibility to replicate the Keystone model in other areas within the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve we need to build in basic information and resource maps of the area. This would help to build a base for future work and opportunities to address the issues mentioned above. We have been able to start a dialogue with Government/Forest Departments in Tamil Nadu and Kerala. The Forest department in Kerala has shown a lot of interest in training the VSS members at Keystone.

We look forward to the stakeholders meeting planned for January 2005 and want to use that as a compass to chart our way forward...

## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS 2003-2004

There are three Accounts maintained for Keystone Foundation [refer Chart-1]. This can be broadly classified into two major heads, namely - Foreign Contribution [FC] and Indian contribution [IC]. The Indian Contribution Account is further sub divided into the Enterprise Development [ED] Account (earlier Marketing Account) and the Rupee Contribution Account. The nature of these accounts is briefed in the respective heads.

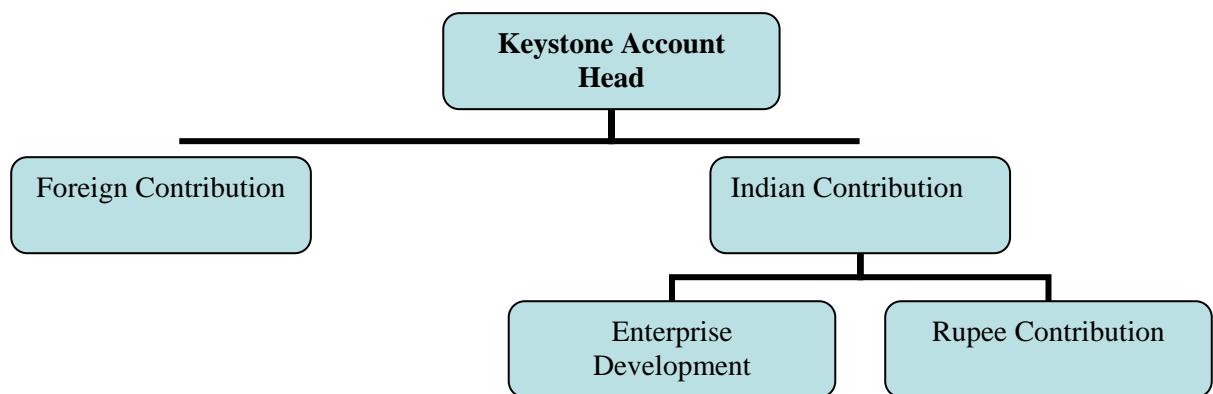


Chart-1

### A.FOREIGN CONTRIBUTION [FC] ACCOUNT:

This account mainly relates to the grant-in-aid received from foreign sources [donors]. During the financial year 2003-2004, the income and expenses under various projects were as under in the Foreign Contribution account:

Rs. In '000

S. No	Projects	Donors	Funds received	Other Income	Revenue Expenditure	Capital Expenditure
1	Conservation &Development of NTFPs and LEAF Project - Bastar	Both Ends	228.51		102.73	
2	Conservation &Development of NTFPs in the Western Ghats.	Global Green Grant Fund			22.20	
3	Land Development Project	SDC-IC	1231.60	3.57	1358.37	3.04
4	NTFP	Ford Foundation	2242.92	48.75	1640.82	402.10
5	Honey Hunters Network	IUCN	803.30	9.28	964.81	306.95
6	Integrated Apiculture	DBF	2245.18	21.90	1778.61	997.20
7	Basic Needs Project	Swallows	1153.98	7.48	1164.20	21.71

Apart from the above, an amount of Rs.68, 638 is available under the head '*Protsahan Nidhi*' to be utilized for the development of tribal girl children and to provide medical support for the indigenous people.

The Capital Funds of FC account is Rs.8.272 million comprising of Fixed assets Rs.4.848 million, Current Assets Rs.0.353 million and Cash and Bank balance Rs.3.071 millions.

#### B.ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT [ED] ACCOUNT:

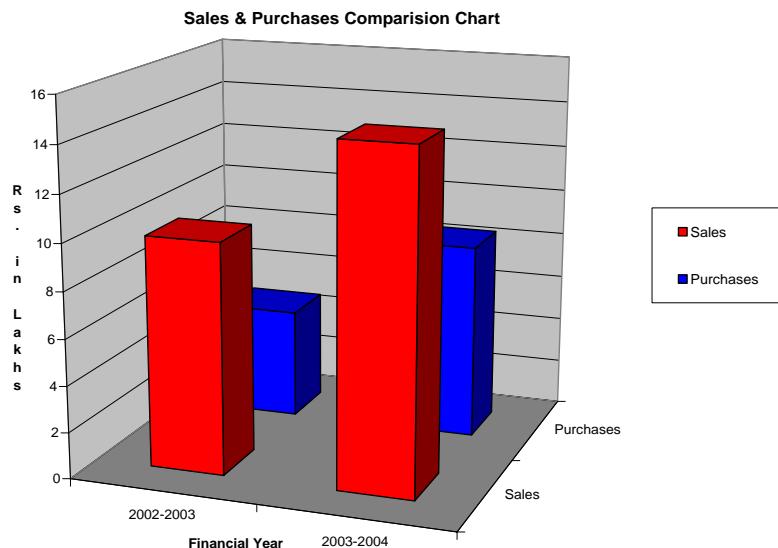
This is an internal generation account. Keystone works for the upliftment and sustainable income generation of the Indigenous communities. Hence, here at Keystone we give a higher procurement rate for the produce raised/ harvested/ collected by the indigenous communities and market it. In addition to this, products from other

NGO's and Organic Products are purchased and sold. All these transactions are accounted for in the ED accounts.

The ED accounts for the financial year 2003-2004 shows an improved position as reflected in the trading account highlighted in Table below:

<b>ED Financial Performance: Financial Year 2002-2003 &amp; Year 2003-2004 (Rupees in '000)</b>		
<b>Particulars</b>	<b>2002-2003</b>	<b>2003-2004</b>
<b>A. Income</b>		
Sale of Tribal Products	995.79	1449.67
Closing Stock	244.57	467.73
<b>Total A</b>	<b>1240.36</b>	<b>1917.40</b>
<b>B. Expenses</b>		
Opening Stock	343.46	244.57
Purchases	476.59	845.95
Processing Expenses	22.14	54.03
Marketing Expenses	47.21	114.45
<b>Total B</b>	<b>889.40</b>	<b>1259.00</b>
<b>C. Gross Profit: [A] - [B]</b>	<b>350.96</b>	<b>658.40</b>

Though the above table shows a higher Gross Profit, it is mainly due to the support given by the grant-in-aid. Except Purchases, major portion of the expenses are spent from the allocated budgets of the Foreign contribution account, namely, Swallows and Ford Foundation. The increase in Purchases and Sales over the years can be seen in Graph below:



### *Graph*

The Capital Fund of ED amounts to Rs.1.269 million represented by Fixed Assets Rs.0.032 million, Current Assets Rs.0.611 millions and Cash and Bank balance Rs.0.626 million.

### **C. RUPEE CONTRIBUTION [RC] ACCOUNT:**

Another division of the Indian Contribution account. Here funds are mobilized by way of donations, consultancy, training and sale of Honey Hunters of the Blue Mountains CDs and Honey Hunters of Tamil Nadu Book. An amount of Rs. 58,722.00 was received in the reporting year. The major utilization under RC contribution account during the financial year was:

Rs. 65,000.00 towards purchase of Solar Heater and  
 Rs. 45,000.00 was spent for Campus Inaugural Expenses.

This account has a Capital Fund of Rs.0.987 million comprising of Fixed assets Rs.0.874 million, Current Assets Rs.0.015 million and Cash and Bank Balance Rs.0.098 million.

*People*  
Who made  
Keystone Foundation  
'Tick / Move / Sway'  
During 2004

1. *Jaishankar*: Assistant - Apiculture: He is quiet and loves to take things easily. Jaishankar from T. Pudukadu village in the North Eastern Slopes of Nilgiris is a beekeeping trainer. Jaishankar, an Irula has developed good skill as a beekeeper in this area. He is not with us anymore as he found the project responsibilities difficult to cope he is back in his village doing his own things. Joined: October 2002. Left: October 2004.
2. *Murugesh*: Assistant - Apiculture: He is also a beekeeper trainer for the tribal hill villages in the Kotagiri area. A Kurumba boy he uses his local knowledge of traditional beekeeping and learns appropriate techniques to manage wild honeybees better. Murugesh has married this year to Rani and lives in Kolithurai. They recently had a daughter. He is developing his skills as an extension and training person. Murugesh is soft spoken and shy and dances very well.
3. *Mani*: Assistant - Apiculture: The second person in the Apiculture team, Mani a Kurumba hails from Semmanarai village and has been with Keystone since the beginning (almost 10 years). Mani is soft-spoken and sometimes difficult to get him to do assignments. He primarily is responsible for beekeeping activities in the tribal villages of Kotagiri area. Mani lives with his wife Pappa and has two kids who enjoyed their first trip to the ocean this year at Mangalore.
4. *Cathorine*: Officer - Accounts & Audit: Though she has joined only this February, she has picked up her work and become familiarized with Keystone accounts and audit procedures very quickly. Cathorine is an asset to the organization, period. She constantly is trying to make up her mind on future studies, marriage and other pursuits. We hope Keystone will remain as one of her passions.

- 5. Justin:** Supervisor - Beekeeping: The good news is that Justin is getting engaged to Usha from Nagercoil on December 27<sup>th</sup>, 2004. Justin is one of the senior and dependable staff. He has learnt to work under difficult conditions. He is in-charge of beekeeping in the Sigur area - which is one of our important intervention zones. Justin is quiet and likes to work with few people. He has adapted to the Nilgiris and has made this place his home.



- 6. Amutha:** Supervisor - Apiculture: She has yet to make her mark in Keystone, having joined in October 2003. She is interested in wild bees such as *Apis dorsata* - their habitat, their behaviour and ecology. Amutha is an MPhil student from AVC College Mayiladuthurai. She is still trying to adjust to the Nilgiris and Keystone's way of working.



- 7. Shiny:** Supervisor - Botany: She joined with Amutha together and has made a small niche for herself in flora at Keystone. She loves to work with plants and stares at pictures of pollen, petals, roots and leaves for long hours - sometimes in the field and often in the computer. She works in projects that have to do with understanding field botany and plant ecology. She is interested in plant - animal - man interactions and hopefully will gather good skills and knowledge in the coming years.



- 8. M. Chandran:** Assistant - Apiculture: One of our oldest staff - Chandran hails from Keelkoupe village and works as a beekeeping extension and trainer in the Pillur area. He has very good skills in beekeeping and tribals love to attend his classes on practical beekeeping and enjoy his timely jokes. Chandran is married to Kanaga and has a daughter Kavitha. Chandran needs to upgrade his skills further not only technically but as a good village coordinator in the coming years.



- 9. Teena:** Supervisor - Information Systems: One of the bright girls in the organization who came in the beekeeping project. Her skills were of information gathering and processing, storage, retrieval and data analysis. Very efficient but landed her in personal problems and had to leave. What a pity. Joined October 2002, Left June 2004.

10. *Vasu*: Supervisor - Campus: Vasu is one of the most important links in the Keystone chain of command. He is primarily a gardener - without his touch the campus will not have a good atmosphere. He also has multiple roles - driver, tea-maker and overall man Friday. Vasu is sensitive to our work and to all that goes on around. If Vasu is happy it shows - in his tea, in plants, in the lawn and everywhere.
- 
11. *Hari Bahadur*: Security: Hari keeps awake when we are all sleeping. He guards the campus with all his might. Today he is happy that more dogs have come to keep him company and protect it. Now, you must be wondering this is a real unsafe place - with guard dogs and security. No, we just have one Hari who is interested in our work and likes to come around in the evenings to see what each one is up to. He is especially happy when some stay back to work at nights or stay in the campus after a long tiring field trip.
- 
12. *Balasubramaniam*: Assistant - Indigenous Knowledge: Bala has made remarkable strides in progress during this year. He is almost a different Bala. A Kurumba young man, who is deep into documentation through digital camera, adobe photo-shop (drawing plants), making a power point presentation. He is also active in the new Institutional Development & Local Governance project organizing meetings in the village, discussing traditional governance issues and how to move forward. Bala has matured through engagement - we hope he will blossom even more in the coming years.
- 
13. *Mullai*: Officer - Community Development: As we write this, Mullai has decided to move ahead in life and work. She joined us on September 2002 in the beekeeping project and left end of December 2004. A practical person who wants to do things on the ground with people. She has got a good experience in two years on how to work with people of different kinds. Though a background in Chemistry, she became interested in Development and from pure beekeeping she looked beyond at integrated activities in the Pillur area of our project. We wish her all the best for her future.
- 

14. *Mohanraj*: Officer - Technical: Mohanraj was a bird of passage. He came for a short while and then flew away to his passion of conservation of wildlife. He was with us from September 2002 to May 2004, during this period he did a lot of things. Training, GPS, GIS. This year after the evaluation he decided he had been in this nest for too long and moved. He is in touch with Keystone still for assignments and where we need his help for training. Mohanraj with his age brought to the organization a sense of external stability, we have liked him around when he was there.

15. *Leo*: Coordinator - Implementation: 2004 has been a stormy year for Leo. The beekeeping project from Denmark terminated suddenly - this was close to his heart, he has lost the project and a friend. But he does not show it in his face or his character. He has moved on and taken it positively and learnt a lot from these situations and opportunities. Leo also has single-handedly managed the Pillur Government supported Land Development Project. He is learning the ropes fast how to be patient and get your work done sticking to principles come what may. We wish him all the very best for the future - he is bound to grow more and take more responsibilities.



16. *Vinoth*: Assistant - Enterprise Development: One of the senior staff of ED, which was earlier known as Marketing. ED has a mandate to look at not only forward linkages - marketing but also backward linkages through village value addition units. Vinoth has come forward to perform in this space. He goes to Semmanrai and Banglapadigai - our two tribal villages where value addition unit functions. He trains tribals on value addition of homestead natural products. Vinoth is married to Mary Helen and has a daughter named Lavanya. He works quietly and is observant.



17. *Susheela*: Assistant - Enterprise Development: Though she works in the ED she has this year been more and more into IDLG (Institutional Development & Local Governance) with Kunal (one of our new staff). She is keen to bring her own people on board - the Kurumba and Irula community so that they benefit from development that is relevant in all aspects. Susheela has shown some rare qualities of understanding her people in "changed" contexts of culture, socio-economic paradigms and ecology. We



wish her many more years of clearer aptitude and application to this important work.

18. *Selvi*: Assistant - Enterprise Development: If you happen to visit Keystone at 6 30 pm - when most have left, you will find this small, young Kurumba girl tapping in the computer learning different programs. She works hard and independently. Selvi works with Susheela, Vinoth, Sam & Miller at the Hive - where she packs, stores, filters, makes vouchers and is an important functionary to make the place tick.

19. *Kunal*: Officer - Institutional Development & Local Governance: He is a Punjabi from W.Bengal studied MBA at the Indian Institute of Forest Management, Bhopal and works with tribal communities in Nilgiris. Sheer interest and high perseverance brought him to Keystone. The credit goes to him to show that he is really keen on eco-development work with indigenous communities. He has brought together the IDLG momentum from concept to village action - though small it has begun. His illness and now his father's illness has been taking too much of time. We wish him and his father a speedy recovery so that he can dive into this work with full zest and enthusiasm (he has them in surplus).



20. *Moorthy*: Supervisor - Production: He has implemented the concept of village value addition units almost single-handed. Moorthy is an inspiration to many youngsters in the village and at Keystone. He works with dedication and is humble at the outputs that emerge. Being the eldest in the organization he brings maturity, humour and a sense of calmness to the chaos that goes around in the production systems - orders, deadlines, quality control, peoples' problems, forest department, traders'.

21. *P Chandran*: Supervisor - Land Systems: A Kurumba young staff who has become a matured, responsible person at Keystone. If one gives the opportunity they take it and shine - he is an example of this trend. Chandran has been to Italy this year with Miller and Mathew. Probably the only tribal in the Nilgiris this year to go for an International Meet on Traditional Foods and their role in Culture. Chandran works in the Land development project and is also an active member in the Human Resources Committee.



He is shy and quiet. He also got married and has a son. We wish him many more years of growth and experience to take the work to his people.

22. *Nagaraj*: Supervisor - Land Systems: Nagaraj is an invisible



person. He works behind the scenes and sometimes through different ways. His work is in Land development where he has learnt to network with Government and local people quite effectively. Nagaraj hails from Nedugalkombei village - an area with a lot of challenges of landscape and personalities in the village. Nagaraj needs to broaden his knowledge and skills and move from routine monitoring work to constructive assignments that will enable him to progress significantly.

23. *Senthil*: Supervisor - Environment: Senthil's high point this



year was his training at NRSA, Hyderabad. He is our only GIS person today. He has accumulated good skills of mapping with GPS - tracing correct boundaries in villages and interacting closely with Forest Department. Senthil works in the NTFP Project with a close-knit team; he has good communication skills and is adept at moving with local Government officials. Senthil needs to broaden his knowledge base to Natural Resources Management using technical tools and methods for better understanding of processes and dynamics.

24. *Anita*: Coordinator - Action-Research: How do you call a



person who joins in the NTFP project for just over 2 years and then decides to settle here by building a house next door? Some decision, some commitment. Anita has learnt a lot in a very short time. This year she was only doing transects on gooseberry land and running off, till she started working with people and taking organizational decisions. From an external person she has homed in to an in-house confidante. As an action-research coordinator she needs to sharpen her skills and insights and broaden her perspectives to ask the right questions in methods, research and practice. It is not easy, but she is on the right path.

**25.** *Sam*: Coordinator - Enterprise Development: A Badaga from the Nilgiris - Sam brings a rare combination of local knowledge and marketing ideas into Keystone. He is bright with a sharp analytical mind for economic systems but has to learn to work with people and stay at a job for a fairly long duration. He has joined us in February this year and has risen fast to head the ED team. Has been instrumental in reviving the Green shops. But Sam has a long way to go, to keep his cool and sail through difficult situations. We are certain that he will arrive and his character will mature to take more challenging tasks ahead.



**26.** *Sara*: Administration-in-charge - she wanted to join the IPS (Indian Police Service) but changed her mind and is now a firm administrator at Keystone. Her voice booms. Her demeanor scares the hell out of people. She is hot when she is on her seat. Now this is Sara - we need an effective person at that position; she is doing well and is trying hard to replace her reputation of being hard, tough and straight talking to a person who people would love to flock around... Sara has carried her responsibilities this year with confidence, though she has a long way to go to be an administrator with a difference - understanding local needs for the larger goals. We are sure she will be there sooner than later.



**27.** *Ishwar*: Accountant, a native of Nilgiris from Coonoor - he has joined recently as an Accountant and works with Catharine. Ishwar is learning about development project accounts quickly.



**28.** *Sneh*: Director Programmes - 2004 has been a year that she cannot forget. Organizational restructuring has changed her forever - only time will say if it is for the good. She has been traveling like a water-spider - fast, not too much time in one place, just over the surface, below rocks, wet and dry areas. Just a sample - Vietnam, Leh, Srinagar, HD Kote, Bastar, somewhere in Orissa, etc. Sneh has yet to figure out a clear role at Keystone - she liked to do everything, with all the details at her command - now she has been told to leave that space for others, but she has still not found her right niche for engagement. She is still a burning lamp for so many people in the organization - she will implement, do it, ask her, and bounce



ideas if it is right... We / I hope that 2005 will be a year where "Aha, it falls all right, right here, clear and simple - change is good, I think always..."

29. *Mathew*: Director, Administration & Finance & Enterprise Development - his passport is filled with visas this year. We are proud to announce that Mathew has been selected as a Member from Asia for the IFOAM (International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements) Alternative Certification Commission. He has been for meetings to Brazil, Bolivia, Italy, Germany and what not. This year Mathew has been made free - and is blossoming with his newfound love - the organic alternative certification business for small and marginal farmers / people. To a great extent, Sara, Catharine and Sam have helped him to fly out of these rammed earth walls of accounts, vouchers and mundane stuff. He still does that but from a different perspective.



30. *Pratim*: Director, Donors, Networking & Organizational Development -after having written these 7 pages about 35 people I feel totally spent. Creativity oozes out of my system - and some one says I have VD (no, not what you think...) but verbal diarrhea. My year has been full of ups and downs. Challenges that one must make it happen - and the challenge lies in doing. Let the honeybees bless me with more honey (bitter and sweet) as I continue on my pilot seat at the Jenugoodu.

31. *Rajendran*: Assistant Land Systems - a quiet, shy tribal boy who works with establishing nurseries in the remote villages - promoting NTFP crops and medicinal plants. He is documenting his experience in a book on how to establish a village nursery. He does his work diligently and does not get into controversies. He also got married this year to Chitra. The new NTFP project from 2005 will give him better opportunities to interact with people, learn new skills and gain good experience.



32. *Sivaraj*: Assistant Land Systems - An Irula young man from Banglapadigai village who works with Land development issues. He has traveled to several places this year through his project and study tours. He is endowed with skills of bringing together people and is an important second-generation person in the



organization. Sivaraj understands "how the pieces add up to the whole" in any development process he uses his local knowledge and links up to external expertise effectively - for example for a poly-line tank or a seed bank. He has a lot ahead of him and we wish him a future of growth and learning.

33. *Miller*: Supervisor - Enterprise Development: Italy-returned Kotagiri man. This is how he is known nowadays after visiting Turin for a Slow-Food meeting. How appropriate. Miller loves food and loves to do things quite slowly. This year has been tough on Miller Ashok. The re-organization meant that his reporting lines changed and he has to deal with lot more people than before. Something old stalwarts - always feel - those were the days... He works in the ED with Sam, Vinoth, Selvi and Susheela and is trying his best to work out in efficient and harmonious ways. The challenge lies with him to take people along and work with all, he has the capacity and time will show where he will be.



34. *Helen* - Supervisor - Enterprise Development: Helen is our lady at the Green Shop, Kotagiri. She visits the office only once a month for the staff meeting therefore people tend to forget her. She has been trying her level best to increase the sales and with the ED team she has shifted the shop to a central location at the Johnston square. There are some interesting ideas to make the shop become a hub of activity and information for local schools and citizens interested in environmental education and popular campaigns.



35. *Suganthi* - Supervisor - Enterprise Development: Suganthi has made her mark this year. Already she is well known as the person in-charge of the Green Shop at Coonoor, which is located in a key place at Bedford square. She is also an active member in the Human Resources Committee and a sounding board for many staff members who have problems in work, in life and so on. Suganthi has matured tremendously and has the ability to take up bigger responsibilities in the future.



## **Visits, Visitors, Events & Study Tours during the year 2004**

### **January**

1. Mr. T. Ramaswamy (Ret. Joint Secretary to GOI) Advisor - Keystone Foundation on fund-raising ideas, permissions from the Government and exchanging ideas and approaches.
2. Mr. Laxmanan, owner Palaniappa Estate, Nilgiris at Keystone for exploring the possibility of pollination services through beekeeping
3. Mr. Sreedharan & Team from SDC-IC auditors for the project at the site to review finance and accounts
4. Swallows Friends South Asia Meeting, Mumbai
5. French Student Mr. Charleton at Keystone interested in our work with Honeyhunters & Beekeepers
6. Shifting of Registered Office and Income Tax file from Pondicherry to Kotagiri, Nilgiris District by Mathew

### **February**

1. Keystone Campus Inauguration - Prof. C. L Gupta, Advisor, Keystone Foundation, Mrs. Shipra Gupta, Trustee, Keystone Foundation, Mr. Somnath Sen, Trustee, Keystone Foundation.
2. Mr. Muruganandam, IAS Collector, Coimbatore & Mrs. Supriya Sahu, IAS Joint Secretary, Health, Government of Tamil Nadu give inaugural speeches
3. Network Friends - Rupa Mukherjee, Ramakrishna Kukkila, Shrikant Joshi, Ajit Chaudhary from Hyderabad and Delhi at Keystone for the Inauguration
4. Prakash Kashwan, Ford Foundation, New Delhi for the Tribal Stakeholders workshop and the Inauguration
5. Dr. Christoph Guttermann from Austroprojekt, Vienna for the Inauguration
6. Strategic Meeting for Future Ventures & Collaboration with Dr. Christoph Guttermann, Director, Austroprojekt, Vienna, Somnath Sen, Director, Taru Leading, New Delhi & Keystone
7. Visit to Thanal, Trivandrum by Mathew for enterprise development

March

1. THADCO, District Manager Mr. Swaminathan from Ooty to Keystone Foundation for discussion on project support for Kurumba Youth Painters' Enterprise
2. Scottish Geographer, Ms. Elieda with Rev. P. K Mulley, Advisor, Keystone at the campus for discussions on common interest
3. Pratim at Chennai to meet PCCF, Mr. J.C Kala, IFS & Mr. C.K Sreedharan, IFS Chief Conservator of Forests on the need for collaboration, networking and exchange with Tamil Nadu Forest Department & Keystone Foundation
4. Pratim for meeting at Chennai with Mrs. Gariyali, IAS - Secretary Social Welfare on training opportunities by Keystone to SHGs
5. Pratim meeting at Chennai with Mr. Balamurugan, IAS - MD, THADCO on project support for Kurumba Painters Enterprise
6. Pratim meeting with CEO, Khadi & Village Industries Board, Mr. K. A Mathew, IAS for working with KVIB

April

1. Visit by Mathew to Brazil & Bolivia on alternative organic certification for small farmers & field visits to villages in Bolivia
2. Visit of Premkumar & Ashok Alur for yearly review of SDC-IC funded Land Development Project
3. Pravada team - NGO from Bidar, Karnataka working on community development an land issues to see Keystone's work
4. Sneh participates in a Meeting with Adivasi NTFP gatherers in Atalguda, Malkangiri district, Orissa
5. Bjorn Forsberg from Swallows at Keystone
6. Block Development Officer, Kotagiri and Extension Officer, Kotagiri at Keystone for discussing training and exposure programmes

May

1. Jury for award on Agricultural Biodiversity to Keystone Foundation 'SANFEC' (South Asia Network for Food, Ecology & Culture) Team from Mumbai to evaluate Keystone's work in Revival of traditional agriculture

2. Senthil to National Remote Sensing Agency (NRSA), Hyderabad for training
3. Swallows meeting in Trichy
4. Bjorn Forsberg, Swallows at Keystone to discuss the Water Project and prepare LFA

June

1. UK Trip by Pratim - presented a paper at the International Congress on Ethnobiology "Change, Displacement & Human Welfare" , University of Kent, Canterbury, UK
2. Pratim visited Dr. Nicola Bradbear, President, Bees for Development, Monmouth, Forest of Dean in Wales, Traditional & Cultural spaces in Welsh country
3. Pratim visited Centre for Development Studies, Overseas Development Group, University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK and met Dr. Janet Seeley and her colleagues.
4. Organic Fair in Coimbatore - Samraj
5. Mathew attends Organic Farmers Association of India meeting at Kraka Dona Farm, H D Kote, Karnataka
6. Madhu Ramnath for reviewing Bala's flora book
7. Annual Audit by our new Audit Firm, Srivatsan & Gita, Coimbatore, conducted by Sivakumar and Santhanaraman

July

1. Tamil Nadu Forest Department & Keystone Foundation Steering Committee - Dr. T. Sekar, IFS, Coimbatore Circle, Mr. Ulaganathan, DFO, Nilgiris North Division, Range Officers - Sholurmuttam, Kotagiri & Coonoor and Mr. B. J Krishnan, Advisor Keystone Foundation.
2. DBF Audit by Grant Thornton India, Mumbai - Mr. Ritu Raj
3. Sneh goes as Volunteer with LeDEG (Ladakh Ecological Development Group), Ladakh, J & K to work on income generation activities, marketing, appropriate technologies with renewable energy, etc. Visited SECMOL, Save the Children met with Sonam Dorje and his team

August

1. Gender Sensitization Training for Keystone team by Dr. Janet Seeley, Overseas Development Group, University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK

2. Ajay Nair, World Bank, Washington to see Keystone's work and discuss the Tamilnadu Empowerment & Poverty Reduction Project
3. Visit by Kevin & Gopa from DFID, Delhi
4. Additional Collector, S.J Chiru, IAS at Keystone
5. UK Students at Keystone - give a lecture about their development work at UK
6. Visit by Vijayakumar, SDC-IC, Bangalore for review of accounts and fieldwork

## September

1. Cecilia Thapper, Swallows Sweden at Keystone
2. Dr. A. J. James & Dr. Nitin Rai for the CEL study at Keystone
3. Pratim to Delhi for CEL (Conservation, Enterprise & Livelihoods) meeting
4. Pratim to Trichy for a brainstorm with NGOs, people and the Government on the proposed World Bank supported Tamilnadu Empowerment & Poverty Reduction Project
5. Keystone Staff Tour with families to Mangalore, Belur, Hallibedu & Mysore
6. Exposure trip by the Beekeeping team to Marthandam.

## October

1. Heide Mitsche, Austroprojekt, Vienna to discuss new project ventures, see Keystone's work for collaboration
2. Terra Madre, Italy - Mathew, Chandran & Miller to participate in the "Slow Food" International Workshop in Turin
3. Sam, Catharine & Pratim to Bangalore for CEL Initiative
4. Sam NTFP presentation at KKID, CBE
5. Dr. Perialwar Irula Tribal expert at Keystone for discussions on possibility of new project ideas
6. Dr. Jane Carter from SDC-IC for PME at Samaigudal village
7. IFFADD at Semmanarai
8. Anita to Chittoor, AP for assignment from DCA-Delhi.
9. Irula Krishna 'Kappai' old friend of Keystone from Semmanarai village passes away

## November

1. Environment & Development Affinity Group of Ford Foundation meeting at Ooty & Workshop on "Community-based Environmental Enterprises" Field trip to Semmanrai, Banglapadigai & Samaigoodal to learn from the field aspects of Village enterprise, Institutional mechanisms and Ecological monitoring.
2. Dr. Ganesan Balachander, Representative The Ford Foundation, Delhi with other Ford Foundation Program Officers and Senior Staff from FF offices at New York, Cairo, Bejing, Jakarta, Vietnam & invitees from ATREE, VGKK and former Director of CHIRAG at Ooty for the workshop
3. Chief Conservator of Forests, Participatory Forest Management, Kerala Forest Department, Mr. Unnikrishnan, IFS with forest staff to Keystone on joint collaborations
4. Sam presentation at Ahankara, Chennai
5. Pratim to Delhi on the final workshop for the CEL Initiative
6. Sneh to Vietnam for NTFPs-EP meeting
7. Swallows Lund office visit to Keystone - Bosse, Liana, Claus, Cecilia
8. Preparatory meeting for Organic workshop - IIRD, Aurangabad organized at Keystone Foundation
9. Visit by Hivos team, Wily Doumas, Netherlands, Bishwajeet Ghosh, Bangalore to Keystone Foundation for updating themselves on the NTFP-EP and also know about Keystone
10. Talk by Damean, Australian expert on exotics of Nilgiris organized by Kotagiri Wildlife Association

## December

1. Board of Advisors Meeting:

Dr. C. L Gupta: Science & Technical

Mr. T. Ramaswamy: Finance, Government, Administration

Mr. B J Krishnan: Legal & Environment Policy

Rev. Philip K Mulley: Culture, Anthropology, Local Contexts

2. Mrs. Supriya Sahu, IAS Joint Secretary Health, Govt. Tamil Nadu

3. Maheshwar Dayal, IPS - SP, Nilgiris District at Keystone Foundation with his friend Abhijeet to see our work and interact
4. Advisory Board Meeting - CLG, TR, BJ, PKM with entire staff of Keystone
5. Pratim to Chennai on an assignment "Tribal Development Plan & Strategy" for the Tamilnadu Development Corporation for Women Ltd on the World Bank assisted Empowerment & Poverty Reduction Project - workshop, meetings with Forest Department and World Bank people.

## **Workshops**

1. Workshop on "Value Addition in the Villages" by Mr. Mogens Jensen & Dr. Lise Hansted, Danish Beekeepers Association, Denmark to the Beekeeping Project, Jan 2004
2. Workshop on Honey Quality organized by APEDA in Rajmuhundry Mathew invited as Resource Person, Jan 2004
3. Participatory Monitoring & Evaluation Workshop, Kolar, Karnataka, Jan 2004
4. Pratim & Anita at Bangalore on Ford Foundation supported Action-Research Study on "Conservation, Enterprise & Livelihoods", Jan 2004
5. Tribal Stakeholders Workshop, Feb 2004
6. Keystone Foundation Staff Stakeholders Workshop facilitated by Bharat Krishnan, Mar 2004
7. Pratim to Ford Foundation, Delhi for the "Conservation, Enterprise, Livelihoods" Study. Discussion on the Honey group, Mar 2004.
8. Workshop at Delhi on "Mountains & Vulnerable Communities" organized by The Ford Foundation, Pratim participates, Mar 2004
9. Workshop on "The Role of Village Forest Councils on Forest Management in Hill Areas of Tamil Nadu" organized by Keystone Foundation and Tamil Nadu Forest Department with support from The Ford Foundation, New Delhi at the Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding, Coimbatore, Nov 2004
10. Workshop in Sevagram, Wardha, Maharashtra on "Outcome Mapping" by SANFEC, Dec 2004
11. Gums & Resins Workshop at Nilambur organized by Keystone & NTFP-EP, Dec 2004
12. Gums & Resins Workshop on Sustainable Harvest & Marketing at Academy of Development Sciences (ADS), Karjat, Maharashtra organized by Keystone & NTFP-EP, Dec 2004

## TRAININGS AT MANDAKAL

S.No	Date		Trainees	No. Attended	Remarks
	From	To			
1	17.04.2004	17.04.2004	Prawonda ISPCOD-K Project	9	Visit to know about Keystone
2	29.04.2004		From Kodaikanal	12	Value addition training in bee wax products and sustainable Harvest Methods
3	06.08.2004	06.08.2004	From UK	6	Visit to have an overview of Keystone
4	18.08.2004		Staffs and Students Sarala Birla Academy, Bangalore		Training on Honey hunting
5	07.10.2004		Palamalai Tribals	11	Honey Collection and Value addition training
6	12.10.2004		Staff & Students, American International School, Chennai	30	Exposure to the activities at Keystone
7	12.10.2004	14.10.2004	Mahalir Thittam	7	Training on Honey processing and Beeswax candle making
8	21.10.2004	21.10.2004	Staffs & Students Stanes HHS, Coonoor	150	Exposure visit to Keystone
9	06.11.2004	06.11.2004	Members Ford Foundation		Visit
10	09.11.2004	09.11.2004	Forest Department Kerala	9	CCF – Value addition Meeting
11	18.11.2004	19.11.2004		4	Meeting on Organic Agriculture
12	24.11.2004			4	
13	26.11.2004	27.11.2004	Sigur region Tribals	4	Value Addition training
14	09.12.2004	10.12.2004	Arakkadu Tribals – Honey Hunters	10	Honey Hunting training at Mandakal and Semmanarai village
15	13.12.2004	16.12.2004	Farmers from Mananthuwady	15	Organised by CCF, Kerala, training on value addition at Mandakal and Semmanarai Village

**Details of Trainings Conducted for Outsiders**

S.No.	Group Name	Village	Male	Female	Date and (Days)	Training Place
1	SHG.	Onimoola		3	28.8.03 to 31.8.03 (4)	Semmanarai
2	Beekeeper	Pillur	20		22.12.03 to 23.12.03 - (2)	Semmanarai
3	B.Padi women	B.Padi		4	29.12.03 1.1.04 - (4)	Kotagiri
4	Women group	Sem.		8	22.12.03 to 24.1.04 (18)	Kotagiri
5	Honey hunters	Ramaranai	7		23.2.04 to 24.2.04 (2)	Kotagiri
6	Beekeeper	Valaithootam	12	11	25.2.04 (1)	Valithottam
7	Honey hunters	Kuliada	10		18.3.04 to 19.3.04 (2)	KTG. Sem.
8	Beekeeper	Annaikatty	3	3	24.3.04 to 25.3.04 2	KTG. Sem.
9	Beekeeper	Kilpillur		19	29.3.04 (1)	Kilpillur
10	Honey hunters	Kannevadi	14		31.3.04 to 1.4.04 (2)	KTG. Sem.
11	SHG.	Thondamuthur		30	5.4.04 to 8.4.04 4	Thondamuthur
12	Beekeeper	Pillur	14		14.4.04 (1)	Kilpillur
13	NGO	Kodaikanal	1	9	27.4.04 to 29.4.04 (3)	KTG. Sem.
14	Honey hunters	Patheri	11		3.5.04 to 4.5.05 (2)	Semmanarai
15	Beekeeper	Valaithootam	10	20	5.5.04 (1)	Valithottam
16	Beekeeper	Poochamarathur	6		13.5.04 to 14.5.04 (2)	Kotagiri
17	SHG.	Kallarpudur		24	17.5.04 to 20.5.04 (4)	Kallarpudur
18	Beekeeper	Valaithootam	5	7	15.6.04 (1)	Valithottam
19	Beekeeper	Pillur	6	8	21.6.04 (1)	Kilpillur
20	Beekeeper	Valaithootam	13	23	29.6.04 (1)	Valithottam
21	Honey hunters	Palamalai	11		7.10.04 to 8.10.04 (2)	KTG. Sem.
22	SHG.	Kolikarai		7	12.10.04 to 14.10.04 (3)	Semmanarai
23	Beekeeper	Valaithootam	1	3	26.11.04 to 27.11.04 (2)	Semmanarai