

## Success of Dairy Units of Women Farmers in Pallikandam Watershed

The prime activity under the livelihood component in Pallikandam Watershed in Kasaragaod District is dairy farming. A total of 53 cow rearing units were set up by various JLGs with the support of Revolving Fund Assistance (RFA) that could facilitate production of additional 300 litres of milk/day in the area. Majority of the people who set up dairy units are women. Smt. Rohini. P.V, aged 45 and Smt. Shyamala. K aged 52 of Samrudhi JLG at Vengappara area are two successful dairy farmers among them who could prove dairying as a successful livelihood option. Realising the growing demand for milk in the locality, and the need for organic manure for their own farm fields, both of them availed Rs. 40,000/- each as loan from the VWC through JLG under RFA provided by NABARD to start dairy units in March 2013. Cattle sheds were constructed at a cost of Rs. 20,000 each from their own contribution and the cows were purchased from the loan amount. The units proved to be economically viable and with the confidence they developed Smt Rohini and Smt Shyamala availed bank loans of Rs. 2,00,000/- and Rs. 1,00,000/- respectively from the Kodakkad Service Cooperative Bank under DED Scheme of NABARD to increase the number of cows just after four months of setting up the units.

With the RFA loan, Smt. Rohini had purchased one HF breed initially and later on with the assistance from DEDS, she purchased 5 more cows (3 HF and 2 Jersey) to increase the total number of cows to 6. The unit also has 5 calves. At present, five cows are lactating and one is pregnant. Daily average milk yield is 50 litres. Out of this, 45 litres are sold at Olattu Diary Co- operative Society and the remaining 5 litres to the neighbouring families. Total income from sale of milk per day is Rs. 1480/- (@Rs. 29x45 ltrs = Rs.1305 and @ Rs. 35 x 5 ltrs= Rs.175). Total expenses for the maintenance of the cows per day is Rs. 687/- (for 6 kg concentrated feed - Rs. 114, for 20 Kg maize – Rs.360, for 15 kg hay – Rs.195 and for 1 kg calcium- Rs.18). Net income per day is Rs.793/-. Fodder grass and Azolla are cultivated in 20 cents of land to meet the fodder requirements of the cows. Apart from dairying, Smt. Rohini has also a poultry unit with 60 birds, 4 rabbits and 2 goats.



**Smt. Rohini and her son at the dairy farm**

Smt. Shyamala. K is an agricultural labourer. In order to secure an additional income, she had started the dairy unit with one jersey cow purchased with RFA support from the VWC through her JLG. Later, DEDS assistance helped her to add three more HYV cows (2 Jerseys and 1 HF). The unit also comprises 2 calves and 1 heifer. She was fortunate in getting Rs.50, 000/- as grant from Dairy Development Department for improving the cow shed. At present three cows are lactating and one is pregnant. Average yield from the three cows is 32 litres/day. She sells milk at the nearby milk cooperative society and earns Rs.928 a day @ Rs. 29/litre. Total expense for one lactating cow per day is Rs.150/- (2kg concentrated feed for Rs.38, 1 Kg groundnut cake for Rs.37, 1 kg coconut cake for Rs.30 and 3.5 kg of hay for Rs. 45). Her net income per day is Rs.478/-. She cultivates fodder grass so as to feed the cows 3 times in a week. Apart from dairying she has a poultry unit with 20 chicks.



**Smt. Shyamala K at her dairy unit**

For both the above two women farmers, cow dung and urine also provide income apart from the income from sale of milk. The farmers had installed bio-gas plant and the gas is used for cooking purpose to save the expenditure incurred for LPG. They have attended training programmes organized under T&D component of the watershed project and the dairy cooperative society. Centre for Research and Development (CRD), the PFA for the Pallikandam watershed project and Pallikandam VWC had provided necessary facilitation and guidance support to these farmers at various stages of development of the dairy units.