"...today it is the duty of every thinking being to live, and to serve not only his own day and generation, but also generations unborn by helping to restore and maintain the green glory of the forests of the earth."

There should be at least two women members from every Small Group during the Node meeting.

Women members where are you?

TIST does not see any women members during the Node meetings or even during quantification. It is a known fact that women members are very active in planting trees - like cleaning the field and removing the weeds, ploughing, planting, watering, etc. When you all can do all these tough job, why should not you all attend the Node meetings and know what is happening in the Node meeting.
The women members in Kenya have taken few forward steps and started to attend the Node meetings and other activities. TIST India is looking forward the same activities from the women members of TIST India too.

**Ponniamman Small Group of Molachur**

This Small Group has recently joined TIST India. They belong to Sokandhi Village. Their Node center will be Kandoor. The members of this Small Group have dedicated 5.6 acres of their dry land for tree planting activity. They have 7000 teak seedlings in polythene bags for transplanting, which would be done immediately after this monsoon. 700 mango trees were planted recently along with 300 teak trees. Large spacing is given between each mango trees to plant teak trees. They also have few drumstick trees. Sakthi Small Group of Molachur introduced this Small Group. TIST extends a big thanks to Sakthi Small Group.

**Sign the GHG agreement and take the Voucher payment.**
Every Node center should have minimum 40 Small Groups to form a Cluster. There are several villagers at Molachur area who are just idling by keeping their land waste. The members of Molachur are requested to advise these villagers to join TIST and get benefited.

Name Plate for the Groves

For more than two years TIST is emphasizing the Small Groups to put up a name plate for their groves. Only Sakthi Small Group of Molachur have put a name plate. From the next quantification cycle, your quantifier will not quantify your groves if there is no name plate for the groves and this may affect your voucher payment as well. TIST requests all the Small Groups to immediately put up a name plate for every groves.
Venkat Small Group of Mel Kodungalur

This Small Group has joined TIST India about 3 months back. They belong to Ulundhai Village. Their Node center will be Mel Kodungalur. The members of this Small Group have dedicated 2.5 acres of their dry land for tree planting activity. 2 months back they have planted around 7000 eucalyptus trees in their groves and out of which 6683 trees are available now. Very few Small Groups have eucalyptus trees in Mel Kodungalur, this group is one in that. They also have 80 neem trees in their grove. The members of this Small Group are regular in attending the Node meeting. They would be getting their first voucher payment during December 2006 after signing the GHG agreement.

As TIST emphasizes to plant minimum three types of species by each Small Group in the ratio of 30:30:40, this group should show few thousand more trees other than eucalyptus or casuarinas to get their voucher payment.

Land Regeneration – Removing Velikathan

Velikathan is a tough wild plant, which has grown into huge trees in most of the areas of Tamil Nadu. The situation in some villages in Kanchipuram and Arakonam areas is worse, as Velikathan has spread all over the village. The thorny branches and the heat produced by Velikathan executes all the surrounding trees / plants. Let us uproot the Velikathan and regenerate the land, so that, the human friendly trees like tamarind and neem trees can be grown in those lands.

Are you ready with your seedlings for transplanting? – Its raining
Kamatchi Small Group of Mel Kodungalur

This Small Group started their show with just casuarinas trees couple of years back. Presently, there are 9,311 casuarina trees in their grove name called Kamatchi. The casuarinas trees have grown more than 7 feet in height. The members take good care of their casuarinas groves. Presently, they have started few hundred teak seedlings as a start-up to show multiple species of trees. These seedlings would be planted in the borders of the existing casuarinas groves and in a new groove. The members of this Small Group do not fail to attend the Node meeting, that too, minimum 2-3 members attend the meeting.

From the Desk of Rama Narasimhan, Director, TIST India (President of Inner Wheel Club, Adyar)

I am Rama Narasimhan, the president of the Inner Wheel Club (IWC) of Adyar. I am also a director on the board of TIST India. Since both of these organizations are involved in community development, I thought why not there be a collaboration between them. So I discussed this with my fellow IWC members and they were all excited too. We came up with the idea to raise funds so that we can donate good quality seedlings to the Small Groups of TIST India.
TIST Groups are currently raising seedlings in their own nursery using the training provided by TIST. However, group members have expressed the desire to plant hybrid seedlings of fruit trees that can then yield good quality fruits in the future. We decided that this would be a great help for the Small Groups and we raised the funds to buy seedlings.

By working with the TIST coordinator Mr. Joseph Rexon we selected Small Groups in Mel Kodungalur village to be the recipients of these seedlings. Mr. Sridhar, who is a prominent TIST Small Group member from Mel Kodungalur, and Mr. Lokesh, who works as a Data Quantifier with TIST, were given the responsibility to purchase the seedlings from a government nursery. On September 8th, seven IWC members including myself traveled about 2 hours from Chennai to arrive at Mel Kodungalur. We were warmly welcomed by a big gathering of villagers who were TIST Small Group members. The group members were very happy to see us and appreciated that people from Chennai have taken interest to help them. The group members first asked us to plant some of the seedlings ourselves in their plots. The remaining seedlings were distributed to the group members in that village.

Inner Wheel Club Tree Planting Project

இன்னர் வீல் குகு மரத் பூங்கா செய்தல்
We then discussed with the group members about how they are benefiting from the TIST program. Hearing from them helped us see clearly the benefits the group members were getting from the TIST program. The group members were very knowledgeable about tree planting and its benefits to them and the environment. IWC members also learnt from the group members about a tree species that is used for Vaasthu purposes (mention tree species name here).

The group members asked us to make visits like this in the future as that will help spread awareness about TIST and tree planting to other areas. We were given a warm send off with farm fresh Narthangais and Drumsticks grown in natural manure. All IWC members were very grateful for the wonderful hospitality of the group members. We have shared the details of the visit to the TIST village and what we learnt from it with other members of IWC. We are also planning to publish the details of our visit and about the TIST program in a Rotary souvenir.

My goal is to continue to raise money for such efforts that help the rural poor and improve the environment at the same time. Traveling to the villages around Chennai shows the degree to which our great state has been deforested. The villagers are living in drought conditions that are affecting their livelihood and health. These villagers need additional sources of income and more rain. Planting trees through programs like TIST provides both of those.
Rewards & Awards for women members

Write an article on “TIST Tree Planting Activity” and win exciting gift. Women members should come forward to the Node meeting and they should give their article to the TIST staff in person, only those articles will be taken for the competition. Women members start writing the article; a special gift is waiting for the winners, which would be given during Pongal. Make this Pongal a special one with TIST gift.
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