

ANNUAL REPORT 2024–25

Rural Organisation for Social Education (ROSE)

Organisational Overview

Rural Organisation for Social Education (ROSE) is a grassroots development organisation working for social justice, ecological sustainability, and inclusive livelihoods. With more than two decades of experience, ROSE has been consistently engaged in empowering children, youth, women, workers, farmers, and coastal communities through rights-based approaches and community-led development models.

During the year 2024–25, ROSE expanded its interventions in youth-led climate action, women's collectives, sustainable livelihoods, and producer institutions. Special emphasis was placed on linking local actions with global environmental and social goals, strengthening youth leadership, and promoting resilient livelihoods for women and coastal communities.

I. WOMEN EMPOWERMENT:

1. Formation of Women Groups

Since the inception of the organization ROSE is committed for women empowerment with specific focus on rural farm sector women. ROSE is working to empower women for better gender equality and to gain better quality of life with improved economic, health and social well being through training, awareness programmes and economic support. ROSE, enabled the women to form their Self Help Groups (SHGs) and have common activities collectively. Our focus is on gender issues in relation to areas like agriculture, health, food security, livelihoods, and environment, together with emphasis on internalizing the gender dimension in all areas of work. ROSE has facilitated the formation of 182 SHGs that are brought under two geographical units: rural and coastal. The rural women are almost small and marginal farmers and landless while the coastal women are mainly poor fishing communities.

However, these women groups are not exclusively formed for micro-credit and savings as many NGOs are doing. ROSE till date emphasizes that women groups need to equip themselves in farming sector. Once they are capable of influencing the farming sector in a positive way, they could succeed in any development process including micro-credit. With this vision ROSE works with women farmers in the rural belt promoting an alternative farming system that could challenge drought, unfavorable market, and natural resource degradation.

Existing SHGs were strengthened through regular meetings, capacity-building sessions, and exposure to government schemes.

Women were trained on:

- Financial literacy and savings practices

- Income generation and micro-enterprise development
- Legal rights, labour rights, and social security schemes
- Leadership and collective decision-making

SHGs played a critical role in promoting **household food security**, health awareness, and education of children. Women leaders also participated in community-level decision-making processes and acted as change agents in their villages.

ROSE accords importance to leadership building, gender equity, future sustainability, and Social and Environmental education. ROSE has so far formed 182 Women SHGs with a membership of 2845 women, 45 farmers groups and 20 Children’s Eco Clubs, 11 Adolescent Girls Groups and 5 Disaster Task Force Groups and 38 Youth Groups.

2. Youth Development and Climate Action : *(Local to Global Project – Tamil Nadu)*

One of the most significant initiatives during 2024–25 was the continued implementation of the Local to Global Project, supported by Terre des Hommes Germany and implemented by ROSE in partnership with RLHP. The project aimed to transform rural youth into eco-literate leaders, community innovators, and policy influencers, connecting village-level environmental actions to global climate commitments.

Building Climate Knowledge and Leadership

A structured capacity-building process was followed to ensure deep and sustained learning among youth. A core committee of 20 youth leaders (12 girls and 8 boys) met regularly to study climate change, biodiversity conservation, environmental rights, and sustainable development goals. These youth leaders acted as master trainers, cascading their learning to 35 village-level youth groups, covering over 600 youth across multiple districts.

State-level trainings were organised focusing on the State Biodiversity Action Plan (SBAP), climate adaptation strategies, and youth participation in governance. Exposure visits to institutions such as MABIF and IICPT enabled youth to understand climate-smart agriculture, food processing, and green entrepreneurship.



Youth also documented indigenous ecological knowledge by interacting with elders and contributing to People's Biodiversity Registers (PBRs), ensuring preservation of traditional environmental wisdom.

A Climate Library was established at the ROSE office, providing access to books, reports, and IEC materials for youth and community members.

Youth-Led Environmental Action

During the reporting year, youth translated their knowledge into action through village-level environmental initiatives. These included:

- Tree plantation drives using native species
- Seed ball preparation and dispersal
- Water body cleaning, desilting, and awareness on water conservation
- Household-level waste segregation and plastic reduction campaigns
- Promotion of organic kitchen gardens

Special campaigns such as Earth Day, World Environment Day, World Water Day, and the Voice for Green Earth Campaign mobilised hundreds of youth and community members. Youth also actively participated in Global Action Month, connecting local actions to global environmental movements.

These initiatives not only restored local ecosystems but also encouraged behavioural change at the household and community levels.

Youth groups actively engaged with Gram Sabhas, Panchayats, and government departments, submitting memoranda on environmental protection, waste management, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable agriculture. Public hearings and charter of demands were organised, and youth representatives interacted with district and state-level officials.

As a result of sustained advocacy, environmental concerns raised by youth were discussed at higher policy levels, including representation in district and state forums. Youth emerged as recognised stakeholders in environmental governance, moving beyond participation to influence.

3. Promoting Labour Rights and Dignified Work for Women and Young Workers

During the year 2024–25, Rural Organisation for Social Education (ROSE) continued the implementation of the BTC-supported project, focusing on promoting labour rights, safe working conditions, and dignified livelihoods for women and young workers, particularly in the garment and informal sectors. The project addressed ongoing challenges such as unsafe migration, lack of awareness on labour rights, and limited access to support mechanisms.

The BTC project followed a participatory and rights-based approach, placing women workers and youth at the centre of the intervention. The project combined awareness creation, collective strengthening, leadership development, and institutional engagement, ensuring that workers were informed of their rights and supported to access appropriate services.

Capacity Building and Awareness

A major component of the project was improving awareness among women workers and youth on labour laws, minimum wages, working hours, workplace safety, social security schemes, and available support systems. Training programmes, orientation sessions, and group meetings were organised at the community level using simple, participatory methods.

Special focus was given to safe migration, especially for young women entering urban employment. Sessions covered potential risks, importance of documentation, helpline services, and available government support structures.

Formation and Strengthening of Workers' Collectives

ROSE facilitated the formation and strengthening of women workers' groups and youth collectives, which functioned as platforms for experience sharing, mutual support, and collective problem-solving. These groups helped workers discuss workplace concerns, seek guidance, and support each other in addressing issues.



Regular group meetings enabled women leaders to emerge as community-level facilitators, assisting fellow workers and connecting them with relevant institutions when needed. The collective approach reduced isolation and strengthened confidence among workers.

Youth Engagement and Leadership

Youth played an active role in project implementation. Young women and men were encouraged to participate in awareness activities, peer learning, and community-level discussions on labour rights and decent work. Youth volunteers supported outreach activities, documentation, and coordination of events.

This engagement enhanced youth understanding of labour-related issues and strengthened their capacity to contribute positively within their communities.

Institutional Engagement and Coordination

The project involved regular interaction and coordination with factories, local authorities, labour-related departments, and civil society networks. Interface meetings and consultations were organised to share workers' concerns and promote better understanding of labour standards and workplace responsibilities.

Where required, ROSE supported workers in accessing grievance redressal mechanisms, counselling, and legal support, in coordination with appropriate institutions.

- Women and youth demonstrated improved awareness of labour rights and workplace safety
- Workers showed increased confidence to discuss workplace issues
- Collective platforms strengthened mutual support and solidarity
- Awareness on safe migration reduced vulnerability among young workers
- Youth emerged as responsible facilitators and peer educators

4. Formation and Promotion of Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs)

Strengthening collective institutions for sustainable livelihoods has been a key focus of ROSE's work. Over the years, ROSE has actively facilitated the formation and strengthening of Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) across agriculture, livestock, fisheries, seaweed, and nursery sectors. These FPOs enable small and marginal producers to collectively access markets, inputs, technical knowledge, and value addition opportunities. With the support of TNSFAC and NABARD, ROSE promoted the following FPOs and successfully run the FPOs.



Pudukkottai Organic FPO

ROSE promoted Pudukkottai Organic FPO with 1,364 farmer members, focusing on traditional paddy varieties and millets. The FPO plays a crucial role in conserving indigenous seed varieties, promoting organic farming practices, and developing value-added products based on traditional rice and millets. Through collective procurement, processing, branding, and marketing, the FPO has enhanced farmers' incomes while safeguarding agrobiodiversity and food sovereignty.



Andakulam Livestock and Millet FPO

The Andakulam Livestock and Millet FPCL, with 750 members, was formed to support farmers engaged in livestock rearing and millet cultivation. ROSE facilitated capacity building on improved animal husbandry practices, fodder management, and millet-based livelihoods. The FPO enables members to

access veterinary services, quality inputs, and collective marketing, thereby strengthening integrated farming systems and enhancing livelihood security.

Manamelkudi Fisheries FPO

ROSE supported the formation of Manamelkudi Fisheries FPO, comprising 300 members from coastal fishing communities. The FPO focuses on fish value addition and marketing, helping fishers move beyond raw fish sales to improved processing, hygienic handling, and better market linkages. Through collective action, the FPO has enhanced bargaining power, reduced exploitation by middlemen, and increased income opportunities for fishing households, particularly women involved in fish processing activities.

Kadalpaasi Farmers Producer Organisation

In response to the growing livelihood potential of marine resources, ROSE promoted Kadalpaasi FPCL,



with 250 members, focusing on seaweed cultivation and marketing. The FPO supports coastal producers through training on sustainable seaweed harvesting, post-harvest handling, and collective marketing. This initiative promotes environmentally sustainable marine livelihoods while creating new income opportunities for women and youth in coastal areas.

Arimalam Nursery FPO:

ROSE also facilitated the formation of Arimalam Nursery FPO, comprising 750 members, engaged in nursery production and marketing. The FPO focuses on raising quality seedlings of fruit trees, timber species, and native plants. By promoting collective nursery production, the FPO contributes to livelihood generation, afforestation, and ecological restoration, while meeting the growing demand for planting materials from government schemes and private buyers.

Case study 1

The ROJA Workers Group – Community Leadership in Action

Kadiyapatti is a rural village where poverty, lack of land security, and unsafe migration of young girls to textile mills had become common challenges. In this context, the ROJA Workers Group, formed with 15 women under the leadership of Ms. Thavami, emerged as a strong community platform addressing labour rights, child protection, and basic infrastructure issues.

One of the group's significant interventions took place during May 2025, when young women working in textile mills returned to the village for the annual temple festival. Traditionally, this period saw girls who had just completed their 10th or 12th standard being persuaded to join mills. Aware of this recurring pattern, the ROJA Workers Group organised a meeting with 28 returning mill workers and held an open, empathetic discussion on the risks of early employment, health issues, unsafe living conditions, and the long-term impact on education.

As a result of this dialogue, the returning workers themselves decided not to take two newly passed 10th standard girls to the mills. The girls remained in the village and are now continuing their education in the 11th standard, marking a meaningful step in preventing unsafe migration and school dropouts.

Alongside this, the group addressed the long-pending issue of house patta in the village. With guidance from a Free Legal Aid Camp organised by ROSE, the group mobilised families, supported documentation, and followed up with officials. This collective effort resulted in 80 families receiving house pattas, giving them long-awaited legal security and access to government schemes.

The group also raised concerns about the safety of the Kadiyapatti Government School, which lacked a compound wall. Through continuous follow-up with local authorities, construction of the school compound wall was approved and completed by October 2025, ensuring a safe and secure learning environment for children.

The journey of the ROJA Workers Group shows how collective leadership by women at the grassroots can prevent unsafe labour practices, secure basic rights, and improve community infrastructure. Today, the group continues to work on child protection, labour rights awareness, and youth empowerment, serving as a model for neighbouring villages.

Case Study 2

Ms. P. Mariyammal, a 22-year-old young woman from Kadiyapatti village, Pudukkottai District, faced severe financial hardship that forced her into textile mill work at a young age. Coming from a daily wage family, she had to discontinue her nursing course and take up employment through an agent. Her experience in mills in Karur and Coimbatore was marked by long working hours, poor living conditions, lack of PF/ESI, and repeated health problems.

After several years of exploitation and declining health, Mariyammal returned to her village with mounting debts and limited options. A turning point came when she joined a youth group supported under the Break the Chain (BTC) project. Through the group, she learned about a free tailoring training programme conducted by ROSE, which opened a new pathway for her livelihood.



Mariyammal successfully completed the training and started stitching clothes from her home. With her earnings, she purchased a sewing machine and now earns around ₹200 per day, contributing regularly to her family's income and savings. Her financial independence has restored her confidence and dignity.

Beyond income generation, Mariyammal actively practices environment-friendly habits such as kitchen gardening and waste segregation. She shares her experiences with other young women, creating awareness about unsafe mill work, workers' rights, and the importance of dignified livelihoods.

Mariyammal's journey from an exploited mill worker to a confident self-employed entrepreneur highlights the power of skill training, youth collectives, and timely support. Her story stands as a strong example of how the BTC project has enabled young women to reclaim control over their lives and futures.

5. Organisational Governance and Financial Management

ROSE maintained strong governance systems during the year. The organisation adhered to statutory compliances, including FCRA and annual audits. Financial management focused on transparency, accountability, and effective utilisation of project funds.

Despite higher programme expenditure during the year, ROSE strategically utilised available resources to ensure continuity of critical community interventions and investments in long-term impact initiatives.

Our Partners in Development

<i>Overseas partners</i>	<i>National agencies</i>	<i>Network partners</i>
❖ AEI - TDH Germany	❖ NABARD – Chennai	❖ CAN - Coastal Area Network
❖ EED Germany	❖ NEAC - New Delhi	❖ CACL - Campaign Against Child Labour
❖ AJWS USA	❖ SVARAJ - Bangalore	
❖ RSWR USA	❖ IFHD – Bangalore	❖ CACT - Campaign Against Child Trafficking
❖ WDP Germany	❖ ANTENNA – Madurai	❖ SIVA - South India Volunteer Alliance
❖ Manos Unidas, Spain	❖ NIN – Pune	
❖ Groots International USA	❖ CSED - Tiruppur	❖ NASVI - National Alliance of Street Vendors India
❖ VGIF - USA	❖ OFAI - Goa	
❖ The Riverside Church USA		❖ UWF - Unorganized Workers Federation
❖ Korea Green Foundation		
❖ Australian Embassy		
❖ Tzedek UK		
❖ ACWW UK		
❖ Miva, Netherlands		
❖ BAF – USA		

II. CONCLUSION:

ROSE has been grateful to our Executive trustees, staff team, the target groups, local leaders, the donors, bankers, NGOs and the government officials, Chartered Accountant for their kind hearted support and encouragement to take the activities get implemented successfully during the year under review. ROSE wishes to express its sincere thanks to International, National and Network partners for their continued support and guidance. ROSE looks forward more understanding, exchange of experiences and share the information and know how gained to disseminate the same to the grassroots.