

<b>COVER PAGE</b>	
<b>Organisation Name</b>	Rural Women's Social Education Centre ( RUWSEC )
<b>Organisation Address, Telephone, Fax, Email and Website</b>	<p>Address : 191-A, Nehru Nagar, Vallam Post, Chengalpattu, Kancheepuram District, Tamil Nadu, South India Pin : 603 002</p> <p>Phone : +91 44 - 27420682 / 27420216 Fax : +91 44 - 27420216 Email : <a href="mailto:ruwsec@vsnl.com">ruwsec@vsnl.com</a>; <a href="mailto:kcm_rural08@dataone.in">kcm_rural08@dataone.in</a>; Website : <a href="http://www.ruwsec.org">www.ruwsec.org</a></p>
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<b>Society Registration</b>	No: 61/1981, Chengalpattu, Kancheepuram District, Registered on 24. 10. 1981
<b>FCRA Number</b>	075820066 dated 22. 12. 1984
<b>Income Tax Exemption</b>	<b>12 AA and 80 G certificates available</b>
<b>Experience in working with</b>	State Health departments, Social Welfare Board, School Education Departments and academic research Institutions, Networks and associations, Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathans
<b>Research Experiences</b>	Intervention and action research on Gender, women's issues, sexual and reproductive health, Public health, Community health, Health policies and programmes

## **Background of the Organization and Its Research Capability:**

Rural Women's Social Education Centre [RUWSEC] is a non - governmental organisation working for women's health and reproductive rights for more than 30 years. The organisation is located at Chengalpattu, near Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India.

Achieving women's wellbeing through women's empowerment is the mission of our organisation. Our main focus has been on enabling women to gain greater control over their bodies and their lives, and achieving well being through promotion of gender equality and, sexual and reproductive rights. RUWSEC's overall approach has been to motivate, educate and organise women from poor and marginalised communities to stand up for their rights and become agents of social change. Over the years, our work has included only women, but men and adolescents and young people towards the goal of promoting wellbeing and sexual and reproductive health and rights.

During the three decades of its existence, RUWSEC has implemented a wide spectrum of activities ranging from comprehensive community-based reproductive health education and promotion, community-based interventions to prevent domestic violence against women; and, innovative work with young women and men on gender and sexual and reproductive health and rights. We have been working at different levels; community, schools, colleges and health systems. We have school based life skill education for adolescent students, young women working in factories and youth groups in the villages, we work with public health system towards improving quality of reproductive health care services.

Since 2004, after a three year transition process, RUWSEC reconstituted itself with three core focus areas of work:

- Providing technical and financial support to 'partner' groups constituted by women and men leaders who had been a part of RUWSEC for more than a decade and facilitating their emergence as independent entities with funding support from multiple sources. The idea was to channel the leadership skills and capabilities of RUWSEC's senior workers

fostered through many years of capacity building in RUWSEC into running their own organisations, as a next step in their leadership development.

- Research, training and publication on sexual and reproductive health and rights. Research focusing on issues of priority for grassroots women in our area and aimed at giving voice to their perspectives is a major focus, as also health systems research with a gender and rights framework. Training and publication support is provided to other organizations /groups working on sexual and reproductive health and rights.

A reproductive health services clinic and its services now covers more than 50 villages in Kancheepuram district. The clinic is evolving into a resource centre for health promotion and resource centre for various cohorts like community groups, disease specific groups and health care providers.

### **Experience in Research:**

RUWSEC's research activities over the years have focused on the following three main areas 1) Development of indicators for monitoring RUWSEC's Comprehensive community based reproductive health programme and Maintaining Management Information System (MIS). 2) Action research to assess the effectiveness, impact and community perspectives on various interventions of RUWSEC 3) Women centred research on gender and reproductive health issues.

Since inception RUWSEC have the novel method of starting a newer field activity with a base line survey and completing it with an end line survey. All our base line and end line surveys have been computerised and documented.

We have rich experience in conducting community health and morbidity surveys, in 1987 when we began community health education programme in 48 villages we did a survey and when we expanded our comprehensive reproductive health programme activities to 98 villages in Kancheepuram district, we did another round of survey. Based on it we had developed a comprehensive list of reproductive health indicators. Then follow up health surveys on fixed time intervals were done on certain selected indicators and compare with the baseline data and documented.

In 1988, RUWSEC carried out two studies for WHO, Geneva. One was on a study on the outcomes of using a safe birth kit for home deliveries on maternal and neonatal morbidity, based on a quasi-experimental design with one control area and three different intervention packages. The second was a study in 1989-90 to adapt a story-board on maternal mortality for use with community-based organizations working with women in Tamil Nadu.

We have also involved in training other organisations and groups on conducting community health surveys. A women's group called Grama Pengal Iyyakam a in Madurandagam block was trained to conducting household health and morbidity survey in their project villages. Using the data sets we have written a research a research papers and it was published in Indian journal of Population education (1).

Our organisation is also actively involved in conducting women centred research on gender and reproductive health issues. A qualitative study on women's experiences of utero-vaginal prolapse in Tamil Nadu was undertaken in the year 1998. A qualitative study on process and factors underlying abortion risk behaviour was done in the year 2002. The results of both these studies have been published in "Reproductive Health Matters" (2, 3, 4).

RUWSEC have been networking with like-minded individuals and organisations who are committed to research on women's reproductive health and rights with a women centred perspective and reflects the voices and concerns of socially marginalised groups of women. Under this initiative a reproductive health research network was formed in the year 2002 and they brought out annotated bibliographies on five key issues on reproductive health themes (5, 6).

We collaborated with Centre for health Education and Development [CHED], Chennai and did an intervention study on perspectives and experience of using diaphragm as a suitable method of contraception. The study results was published in reproductive health matters (7).

We did number of impact assessment and intervention studies for different programmes; Life skills education programme for adolescents and youth. Three studies were conducted on the above said themes and was published the first such document was published by population council (8). The second report on integrating gender in life skills education programme for rural

adolescents which explains the experiences of our life skills education programme (9) was presented in the Asia Pacific conference in the year 2003. The recent one was on documentation on the impacts of our life skills education in Tsunami affected coastal districts of Tamil Nadu (10). In all the above mentioned studies we did baseline and end line assessment. Then compare the changes happening at various levels and documented. A special survey on substance use among men was undertaken in 60 villages the year 1999 to assess the impacts of our health education workshops among men (11).

A research study on Inequities in Health in Tamil Nadu was carried out in the year 2003 covering 2225 households in Dharmapuri district. The findings of the study were presented in various national and international conferences (12, 13). The government of India has also quoted our finding in their publication (14). We also collaborated with academic and research institutions in Tamil Nadu and have brought out five research review reports on health inequities in Tamil Nadu using National Family Health Survey -II, National Sample Survey data sets, Reproductive and Child Health Survey data sets (15, 16, 17, 18, 19). With the support of ARROW, Malaysia a research study on “Privatisation and its consequences of Sexual and reproductive health care services” was conducted in the year 2008. This research study has two components; one to document the changes that are taking place in the health sector in four countries in South East Asia, especially to review based on secondary published information the changes that are taking place due to privatization (20). The second component of the study was to document the consequences of privatisation of health care services in India and the changes and consequences of it. This is case study documentation is on Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh (21, 22). Currently, with the support of WHO-Geneva, we have just completed a study on "Understanding women's perspectives on medical abortion". Similarly, a survey on out of pocket expenditure on health care in Tamil Nadu is also completed. Most of our recent research reports and articles are available at our organisation website; [www.ruwsec.org](http://www.ruwsec.org).

### **Assets of our organisation**

We are fortunate to thanks Ford Foundation, New York for granting a Corpus fund of Rs. 2.25 crores and we have an endowment grant of about Rs.45 lakhs. These are in fixed deposits in nationalised banks and we earn annually about Rs. 21 lakhs as interest for the endowment and

corpus fund. The fund is used for institutional strengthening capacity building of community groups and scaling up sexual and reproductive health activities. We have Movable assets of one Care and Two wheelers ( 4 numbers) and Ambulance and Immovable assets of Computers – 7 numbers and one lab tap, have own land of 50 cents and building for our reproductive health clinic in a Village near Thirukazhukundrum, we have also training centres and library.

Last three years audited statement of accounts (2008-2011) is attached in a separate file.

## **Human Resources:**

Currently we have 27 staff members consist of two directors, 5 co-ordinators, 4 project officers, 4 community health workers, 8 technical staff, and 4 admin & other auxiliary staff. additionally we have three consultants and two interns. Then, we have a core group of about 150 individuals (women and men) who have been associated and worked with our organisation at different points of time as community health workers or at various levels like project officers and training officers, and worked under research projects. We call the group as RUWSEC associates and does community level health promotion activities on purely voluntary basis. Profile of our board and core staff members is attached in a separate file.

We have a research consultant cum advisory group of eminent persons who have been associated with RUWSEC for many years and involved in specific research studies. They are associated with various academic institutions and Universities in India. The members of the group are, Dr. TK Sundari Ravindran and Dr. Mala Ramanathan Professors of Achutha menon Centre for Health sciences, Trivandrum, Dr. US Mishra Centre For Development studies Trivandrum, Dr. Renu Khanna, Women's Studies Unit, SAHAJ Gujarat. Dr. Subbiah Professor and Head, Dr. AK Ravishankar, Professor. S. Ramachandran, Centre for population Studies, Annamalai University, Tamil Nadu, Prof. Ravindran, Department of Lifelong learning and extension Gandhigram University, Prof Audinarayana, Professor Social work department, Bharathiyar University, Dr. Roopa Ngarajan, Professor and Head Sri Ramachandra University. Dr. M. Prakasamma, Director, Academy of Nursing Studies, Andhra Pradesh.

## **Our Recent Funding and Programme Partners:**

Our current Donors are Ford Foundation, New York, Asian-Pacific Resource and Research for Women (ARROW) Malaysia, World Health Organisation (WHO) Geneva, Sarathi Foundation, New York, Mahila Sarvangeen Utkarsh Mandal (MASUM) Pune & International Women's Health Coalition (IWHC), New York., we also receive support from individual donors for running reproductive health clinic (Erica & Jane Royston, Switzerland and others). We also collaborated with University of Witwatersrand in doing a research on Privatization of Health care services in India. We have also just completed a research out of pocket expenditure in Tamil Nadu with the support of Oxfam India and PRAYAS Rajasthan.

Being a three decade old organisation, we have been received funding support from a number of donors in the past. Our main donors for the current decade (2000-2009) include Sir Ratan Tata Trust [SRTT], Mumbai, Macarthur Foundation, Chicago, Rockefeller Foundation, Ford Foundation, New York. International Consortium for Medical Abortion [ICMA] Republic of Moldova, United National Children's Fund (UNICEF) Chennai, Centre for Health Education and Allied Themes (CEHAT) Mumbai, Health Watch, New Delhi, CCFD. France, Emmaus Community Welfare Fund (ECOMWEL) Chennai, and University of Witwatersrand, South Africa.

Currently, we collaborated with two academic research institutions in Tamil Nadu; Our Executive Director is a approved research supervisor for M.Phil., PHD scholars, in Centre for population studies, Annamalai University. Currently five students are pursuing research work under his guidance. Then in collaboration with Dept. of Speech Language and Hearing Sciences of Sri Ramachandra Medical College and research centre, Tamil Nadu, we are doing a community based intervention research on speech and hearing disability.

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