



SACRED

Social Action For Child Rehabilitation Emancipation and Development

సోషల్ యాక్షన్ ఫర్ చైల్డ్ రిహాబిలిటేషన్ ఇమాన్సిపేషన్ అండ్ డెవలప్ మెంట్

A Life story of A. Umadevi

I am Umadevi hails from Kakkulapalli village of Anantapur Rural Revenue Mandal. I became a victim of polio when I was aged 3 years. My parents who were agricultural labourers borrowed money from others for my treatment. My father's brothers got divided and my father got a share of 5 acres. He also had to share the burden of repaying a loan of Rs.1000 at the time of sharing his property. At the age 6 years my parents enrolled me into local government school. My mother used to drop me at the school before going for labour work. I never used to come back for lunch during afternoon because my house was far away from the school. I was crawling and my parents upon the advice given by others got me crutches made of local wood. It helped a lot for my mobility but I used to fall very often due to lack of strength in muscles.



After completing my primary education, I joined high school at Kalyandurg. I completed my 10th class from the same high school and joined intermediate. With a hope that I would get improved mobility, my parents had shown me to a famous orthopedic doctor (BIRDS) hospital at Tirupathi. I got surgery for release of contractures but there was no improvement in my mobility status. My parents had to lose wages for more than 2 months. They again made debts for my surgery and stay at Tirupathi. Though I suffered a lot because of disability, I could overcome suffering because of concern showed by my parents and my younger sister.

At the age of 18 my mother compelled me to get married to her younger brother who was disinclined to accept me as his wife. My husband has 5 brothers who used to dictate terms to him. I was staying with my parents even after marriage. My husband used to come once in two months. I felt sad for marrying a person who was no at all interested in me. My parents used to worry about my future. My society was my parents. Outside world was not known to me because my movements were confined to my house and my interaction was just confined to my family members. an NGO started self-help group in our village and interaction with other disabled persons made me overcome fear, shy & anxiety. My self-confidence and willpower got improved due to interaction with others. The members had chosen me as a

volunteer of disabled for 3 villages. Participation in meetings & trainings improved my communication skills. I got an incentive of Rs.300 for my work apart from travel expenses. I used to forget my personal problems because of my involvement in the activities related to self-help groups of disabled persons. My mother used to compel me to drop my work because others were commenting me. At one time I made up my mind to die due to mental tensions. They were scared because I was staying with my parents even after marriage. My husband never cared even to make an enquiry of welfare & whereabouts.

The real turning point was my interview at Sacred for the post of Animator. I joined Sacred on 4th June 2005. This made me to come to my husband's place. There was lot of resistance to invite me into their system because I was with my parents even after marriage. My husband started scolding because I made an entry into their system. I told them categorically that I am also earning and they should accept me as a member in family. We were forced to leave the house and we took asylum in the newly constructed government house that was built in the name of my husband. We were without food for 2 days. At the end my husband changed his attitude and accepted me as his wife. My parents had given me vessels, cloths & provisions to set up a separate family. I started my career as Animator for 8 villages. My husband also started earning. We purchased a colour television and also got our house electrified. We got gas connection, purchased a cell phone and procured other basic necessities. It created lot of jealousy and my husband's younger brother forced us to pay Rs.3000 that he paid towards the house construction. They had locked our house and compelled us to pay back the dues. We were beaten up by him. I made up my mind to lodge police complaint but the villagers settled the issue temporarily. My husband earns Rs.100 every day and I earn Rs.2000 per month. I am now very happy because we are living independently. I have forgotten the fact that I am disabled. My parents are now happy that I am with my husband. I was commented for not being pregnant even after many years of marital life. I took homeopathy medicine for some time and I am glad to share that I am pregnant. I realized the fact that there will be a result or outcome only when disabled fight for their basic rights. Unless we raise our grievance against the discriminations that we face in our day to day life, we hardly survive in the present day world.

A. Umadevi..