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**ABSTRACTS**

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# DEVELOPMENT OF OORANIS (TRADITIONAL WATER RESOURCE) AND RECHARGING OF WATER AQUIFERS IN RAMANATHAPURAM DISTRICT, TAMIL NADU

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Natural Resources Development Project, NARDEP is a part of the service activities carried out by Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari. Traditional water source development for drinking water is one of the thrust areas of activity, which is being implemented with the support of CAPART, New Delhi. Ramanathapuram district in Tamil Nadu, one of the project areas is known for frequent droughts and water scarcity as well as salinity problem. The Administration has attempted various measures like setting desalination plants to provide assured and safe drinking water but the situation remains pathetic in many pockets.

Madukulattur Block is one such area with brackish water sources only, where the Kendra has involved the local people in developing the traditional "Oorani" (surface water pond) for providing protected drinking water. The fenced and protected surface water source with draw well having filter bed channel to collect turbidity free water, recharge tube wells directing rainwater and flash floods in new Oorani to improve the water quality of existing tube well source and mass awareness campaign are the activities which proved successful. This has to be proved effective in controlling salinity and providing drinking water cost effectively.

The flash flood surface water collection and roof water harvesting provided fresh water surface at local areas. The recharge tube wells inside the pond is a milestone in storing the rainwater in underground and easy way of extraction. With scientific understanding of subsurface flow pattern, and active participation of people, more and more useful schemes can be implemented by Govt. as well as by other voluntary organisations.