CHAPTER IV

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Kamarajar, Former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu said that the family, society and the entire nation will develop only through women’s enlightenment.\(^1\) The development of women was universally accepted inference of concern all over the world. The development of women is indispensable and unavoidable not only for the empowerment and innovation of women folk but also for the progress, prosperity and to the very existence of the world.\(^2\)

The partition of the country in 1947 broke up the union of two complementary economics of India and Pakistan which created several problems relating to the sources of raw materials, and upset the structure of production and consumption and trade in the country. After Independence, the Government in India decided to take active interest in the development of economy. The Government set up the Planning Commission in 1950 to assess the country’s need of material capital and human resources, so as to formulate plan for their balanced and effective utilization. It was set up to develop the country in all fields.

Our Constitution stresses the urgent need for promoting the educational and economic interest of the weaker sections of the people, and as women are handicapped by social customs and traditions they need special attention to help them to play their full and proper role in national life. The Planning Commission has

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\(^1\) Tamilarasu, July 2003, p. 65.

defined three major areas for women’s development: education, health and welfare. In this study, the policies and programmes for women in the Five year plans are categorized under Welfare, Literacy, Employment and Training programmes.

Women Welfare Development during British Grown

When the Justice Party started its administration in the Madras Presidency the Women Indian Association became very powerful. The political policy of this organisation was to work for reforms through the Legislature council. But even before 1920 Women’s organization emerged for female education and welfare activities.³

In 1927 Dr. Muthulakshmi was the centre and focus of attention and attraction in the fort St. George, Madras as the first Women Legislator in British India and the first women Vice-President of the legislative council.⁴ Dr. Muthulakishmi Reddy was also the first women medical graduate and a specialist in women and children’s disease. Also she was a social reformer and a crusader against social wrongs and author of many social reforms.⁵

Dr. Muthulakishmi Reddy secured legislations to abolish Devadasi system, child marriage, to secure medical inspection in all schools and colleges to reduce fees


for secondary education for poor girls to establish children’s hospital and to secure grants for Institution for training adult women.

Devadasi means the servant or slave of god dedicated to the gods of eternal services and wedded to god. Devadasi’s were unmarried Hindu females who had undergone a ceremony of proxy marriage with an idol either in a Hindu temple or to any idol outside. The ceremony was called dedication or Pottukattu. In the name of religion the young girls were exploited. This was a major evil that received serious attention of the social reformers. A bill was passed to abolish Devadasi system and to protect the girls less than 18 years of age in February 1924.

The Madras Seva Sadan was an organisation which gave educational facilities to adult women belonging to the poor class to earn an independent living. It was first started in Mylapore was doing rescue work in the city by admitting helpless women, deserted wives and widows and trained women to take a positive part in India’s social and industrial uplift. As the Government of Madras encouraged the social reformers to perform their work for the empowerment of women. Training was given to become nurses, midwives and teachers. Music was also taught and instructions imported in handicrafts, such as needle work, sewing, cutting and

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6. G.O. Ms. No. 642 (Mis.) Law (Edn), dt. 23 May 1922.

7. G.O. Ms. No. 1731 (Mis), Law (Edn), dt. 07 September 1926.


garment making, weaving, embroidery of every kind including jigna, rattan work and mat making.\textsuperscript{12} This rescue home was started in 1923 by Mrs. Cousin and when she left from India she handed over the institution to Justice Venkatasubba Rao. Then it was renamed as Madras Seva Sadan.\textsuperscript{13}

The need to find a safe abode for shelter and training of young girls for a honourable occupation arose as a consequence of the Legislation to prevent some social evils like child marriages and devadasi system. Dr. Muthulakshmi reddy gave first place to her heart to implement welfare programme for women and children. The consequence of this was the foundation of Avvai Home in 1930, where women and children were given shelter and education.\textsuperscript{14} Avvai home had been started for orphans and destitute children, young girls and women without family support. This home is situated ins the south of Madras in the suburb of Adyar, on the Besant Avenue. The basic principles were to protect the young girl children of both sex from the clutches of poverty and destitution and to educate them to earn their own livelihood. There was no partiality in giving admission to children irrespective of caste, community and religion it extended its help on the idea of secularism.\textsuperscript{15} The Principle of no-caste, non-communal was stressed in the minds of children. Women once neglected now found enlightenment in life.\textsuperscript{16}

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\item \textsuperscript{12} “The Ladies Magazine”, Madras, August 1930, p. 46.
\item \textsuperscript{13} Sundara Rao. \textit{Dowry Problem in Tamil Nadu}, Madras, 1992, p. 72.
\item \textsuperscript{14} Muthulakshmi Reddy., \textit{Autobiography}, Madras, 1964, p. 80.
\item \textsuperscript{15} Avvai Home School Calendar”, Madras, 1990-1991, p. 11.
\item \textsuperscript{16} Muthulakshmi Reddy, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 81.
\end{itemize}
The status of a woman could be ascertained by referring to man’s position in each society, country and its environment. One must take into account the way of life of people in order to known about the position of women. The status of women in Hindu society had been changed from time to time. Women’s position was worsening practically in every sphere, with the exception of some gains in education and employment for middle class women. Middle class women were found at least in least paid jobs, working long hours and bearing full responsibility for the home by fetching fuel and water by doing work in family production units, without being paid for the labour by bringing up children and caring the sick and the aged. There was growing violence, dowry, death and prostitution. This was the stark reality for millions of women.

Society in the Rig-Vedic period was still predominantly pastoral and nomadic. In Vedic society a woman occupied a high position in the society. She had equal rights and enjoyed in choosing her partner. Women were allowed to have education and went to “Gurukula”. They married only after requiring education. The women were considered as an equal partner of a man and all the religious ceremonies were performed along with man. Both enjoyed equal freedom and equal opportunities. In the joint family her authority was accepted and she had full liberty of action. So, women played a more active economic role and participated in rituals and girls in higher society were allowed to undergo “Upanayana” rites also. She had a

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high sense of security due to her right to paternal prop Widows remarried. They were neither disfigured nor prevented from wearing jewels. So, women in ancient time participated equally in all aspects of the family, community and political activities.\textsuperscript{22}

During the Post-Vedic age the position of women gradually began top decline. The period from 500 A.D. to 1800 A.D. witnessed the progressive deterioration in the status and position of woman in the society.\textsuperscript{23} During this period she was under the protective wings of her parents at home, after marriage under the control of her husband and in laws and under the dominance of her son in old age.\textsuperscript{24} Women’s rights were entirely depended on her husband and she was not considered as man’s equal in her own right. The progress of women was neglected like anything. She was depending on others for her livelihood. She was not allowed to do anything on her own pleasure. There was a slow and steady eclipse of her importance both in home and society. They were discriminated against in marriage, marital status and inheritance.\textsuperscript{25}

The decline in the position of Women was visible during the medieval India.\textsuperscript{26} The position of women seemed to be better until the advent of Muslims.\textsuperscript{27} Early

\textsuperscript{23} Giri Raj Shah. ‘The Encyclopaedia of Women’s Studies”, New Delhi, 1995, p. 602.
\textsuperscript{24} Gray. “Indian Woman and the West”, London, 1943.
\textsuperscript{26} Pratibha Jain & Rajan Mohan, “Women Images” New Delhi, 1996, p. 42.
marriages became a rule to safeguard the chastity of girls.\textsuperscript{28} When the British rule began in India the status and the position of Women was at about the lowest level that it had ever reached in the history of the sub-continent.\textsuperscript{29}

The dawn of British rule in India marked the decline of the traditional social set up and the emergence of new social order. The change of political, social and economic condition of Madras Presidency had its impact on the development of women. During the British rule efforts of enlightened social reformers to emancipate women resulted in passing various social legislations.\textsuperscript{30}

The Britishers passed laws against some evils to support Indians who were activated through social reformers like Rajaram Mohan Roy, Easwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Ranode, etc.\textsuperscript{31} Sati was abolished, the age of marriage was raised and facilities were provided for women to acquire education. With the advent of British rule several social legal changes began to take place. The widow re-marriage act of 1856 permitted widows to re-marry and divorcees were also permitted to marry again.\textsuperscript{32} Women were slowly entering the political field as more significant mobilisation however took place after 1920. English education gave a tongue to women’s voice and strength to fight for their right with ability.\textsuperscript{33}

\textsuperscript{30} Sundararaj, Dowry problem in Tamil Nadu, Madras, 1992, p. 72.
\textsuperscript{31} Kiran Devendra, Changing status of women in India, New Delhi, 1994, p. 125.
\textsuperscript{33} Neera Desai, “Review of studies on middle class women in India 1983, Bombay, pp. 136-137.
In 1917, women’s Indian association was formed by Annie Besant and her associates when Home Rule League was at its height and found its main support from Tamil Brahmins of Madras City. Through associations and conferences women slowly exposed to the society, how they were exploited by men for their personal enjoyments. The Women’s Indian Association was started under the presidency of Dr. Annie Besant, Mrs. Dorothy Jinarajadasa and assisted by Mrs. M. Cousins at Adyar, Madras on 8th of May 1917.

Another social reform legislation which was passed by O.P Ramasamy reddiar government was the Madras devadasi (Prevention of dedicational) act 1947. This was an important piece of legislation which removed a dark blot in the administration of Hindu temples. O.P. Ramasamy reddiar period the Madras suppression of Immoral traffic (amendment) act, provided for the detention in vigilance Houses of women convicted under this act and to give a chance to them to learn some art or some other profession and to give them suitable training and instruction subjecting them to disciplinary and good moral influence. In olden days, the women should not cover their upper portion of their bodies with jackets or clothes, nor they allowed to use flowers or saffron pastes.

Dr. Muthulekshmi reddy, the first woman in the Tamil Nadu legislature introduced bills to abolish devadasi system and prostitution, raising the age of marriage and education to the women.41 In 1947, Dr. Muthulakshmi reddy, Smt. Ambujammal presented a memorandum to the Madras Presidency and stated a need for separate welfare department in the Madras Presidency. This was urged, because the number of helpless women and children were on the increase and such people required immediate relief. Experience also proved that to solve such problems, the government should come forward to assume great responsibility in the interests of society, as well as in the interest of the future well being of the presidency.42 O.P. Ramasamy reddiar government aimed to promote, social, cultural, civil and economic welfare of the women of the province. It felt necessary to legislate for the betterment of the women. So, the government passed the Madras suppression of immoral traffic (amendment) act in 1947 and the Madras Hindu women’s rights to Property (extension to agricultural Land) act 194743

Welfare Programmes

The status of women is one of the important measurements for the nation’s advancement. Ideologically woman was considered a completely inferior species to the male having no significance, no personality; socially she was kept in a state of utter subjugation to demand any right, suppressed and oppressed. She was branded as basically lacking the ethical fiber”.44

44. Yashoda Bhat, Beyond the Threshold: Indian Women on the move, Delhi,1995, p.349
Owing to restrictive traditions and customs and social prejudices, the majority of our women are incapable of availing themselves of the rights and opportunities bestowed upon them. Lack of education and economic dependence also act as drags on their development as self-reliant independent citizens. As woman is the pivot of the family, programme for women’s Welfare assume primary importance.45

A welfare state like India has the responsibility to render special services to the weaker section like handicapped, women and children to improve their economic and social condition. After Independence all round efforts have been made to promote welfare of women. Promotion of the welfare of women is one of the most important social welfare programme under implementation. Under the different Five Year Plans, general as well as special programmes were taken up for the welfare of women and also to cater to their special requirements.

Welfare Programmes for Women

The well-being of women and health of children are the all index of the progress of a society and the nation. The women and children together constitute the 75% of the population of nation. The progress of the nation largely depends upon the progress of women and well-being of the children. Realising this, the D.M.K. formulated certain policies as an opposition party and succeeded in implementing them while in power. The present chapter is devoted for detailed discussion on the successful implementation of the welfare programmes for women and children by the D.M.K. Government.

45. Ibid.
The Women’s Welfare Department was established in 1947.\footnote{G.O.Ms.No.33/Public C.I.C., 13 November, 1947.} A full-fledged department with a Director of Women’s welfare was established in 1954.\footnote{G.O.Ms.No.2563/Public P.W.D., 17 August, 1955.} Following the introduction of Tamil Nadu Panchayat Act, of 1958, the three agencies, viz., the Women’s Welfare Department, the State Social Welfare Board and the Women’s Welfare Wing of the department were integrated into a single and unified Department of Women’s Welfare in 1961. The next landmark was the redesignation of the Department of Women’s Welfare as the Department of Social Welfare in 1972 and the Director was referred to as the Director of Social Welfare Department. This department focuses its activities not only on education and rehabilitative aspects of women’s and child welfare but also on Burma and Ceylon Repatriates, beggars and lepers. With every year, the activities of general social welfare services like nutritive programme for pre-school children, pregnant and nursing mother, training and rehabilitation of physically handicapped. The department also managed a home for the judicially interned beggars. Moreover, this social Welfare Department was in charge of conducting community service Centers, setting-up simple cottage industries in the rural areas and training urban youth in gainful trade and some organizations have conducted several studies under the Women’s Welfare branches.\footnote{Welfare programmes for women and children and the physically handicapped, 1975-75, Government of Tamil Nadu, 1975, p.1.}

First Five Year Plan

The First Five Year Plan (1951-56) mentions about the need for the development of women as “Efforts to secure and economic progress will not secure substantial results if women are not placed in a position to make their due contribution
to the life of the family and community” Women should figure more and more in all social welfare programmes, till the existing disparities are set right. Several implementations for the welfare of women, have improved anti-natal and post natal care. The activities of the state in this field should be supplemented on a large scale through voluntary agencies. Village girls should be selected and given training as nurses and midwives, the Village Panchayat. Family counseling should be an important aspect of any welfare service organized for women.

The Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) was set up in August, 1953 during the First Five Year Plan. This Board undertook number of welfare measures through the voluntary sectors. The financial outlay in the First Plan period for Women’s Welfare was Rs.4 crores. The Board was set up to provide various services for women, children and handicapped. The Board also gave financial assistance to the organizations who worked for the welfare of women. The establishment of the CSWB was an important step taken for the welfare of women.

The major programmes of the Central Social Welfare Board are general grant-in-aid, condensed courses for education of adult women, functional literacy for women, crèches for working and ailing mothers, vocational training for women, socio-economic programme for women, working women’s hostel and family counseling. These programmes are taken up by voluntary agencies with financial assistance from the Central Social Welfare Board through State Boards. The Board in

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51. Ibid., p.351.
collaboration with State Governments have organization State Social Welfare Boards throughout the country. The CSWB has assisted total of 2128 institutions out of which 660 are Women Welfare Institutions.\textsuperscript{52} The CSWB was the first organization in post-independence era established to achieve people’s participation for implementation of welfare and development programmes for women and children by NGO’s.

Tamil Nadu has been a pioneer in implementing programmes for the development of women and children. Various welfare schemes have been introduced to improve the living conditions of women and to increase their access to basic essential service like health, nutrition, child care, maternal care etc.\textsuperscript{53} The Government is committed towards the welfare of women and places topmost priority on the programmes meant for their welfare, development and empowerment.

The Tamil Nadu Social Welfare Board was constituted in 1954. It played an important role in the growth and development of voluntary agencies in the state. The Tamil Nadu Social Welfare Board gets funds for its various programmes from the Central Social Welfare Board.\textsuperscript{54} It assists voluntary organizations in a wide range of services in the field of welfare of children, women and the handicapped.


\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., p.15.
The Directorate of Women’s Welfare was formed in 1955 by the Government of Tamil Nadu. Tamil Nadu can legitimately claim that it is one of the states in our country that has accorded priority for Family Welfare Programme in social and health promotion activities. The Family Welfare Programme has been in operation since the First Five Year Plan in Tamil Nadu. Tamil Nadu is the first state which started Sterilization Programme as early as 1956 as a means to control the birth rate.

**Second Five Year Plan**

The Second Five Year Plan persisted in welfare approach so far as women issues are concerned. It recognized the need for organization of women as workers. During the First Five Year Plan the CSWB initiated welfare extension projects, one in each district in the country. By the beginning of 1956 the Board had established 291 Welfare extension projects.

During the Second Plan, the Board set up three welfare extension projects in each district. A programme was set up in the plan for increasing the number of projects to 1320, so as to provide four projects to each district. After the completion of this programme a total of 50,000 villages would have been provided with specially organized welfare services for women and children.

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55. Seminar on uplift of Women in South India in 20\textsuperscript{th} Century and Suggestions for 2000 AD, Mother Teresa Women’s University, Kodaikanal, 1986, p.29.


57. Report of the Second Five Year Plan,

58. Ibid.,
Through the efforts of the Ministry of Health the number of maternity and child welfare centres increased to 4,500 during the Second Plan period. In the states 157 primary health centres and 394 maternity and child health centres were set up during the period. Maternity and Child Welfare Bureau have been established in most of the states.

Under the Second plan, a programme of women’s welfare is being implemented for providing welfare services to socially handicapped person, particularly the women in need of assistance in the Madras state. The Madras state in its Second Five Year Plan included the scheme for the construction of a building for the Service Home, functioning in Madras.

The Service Home at Madras was shifted to Tambaram in September 1956. After-Care Home for women discharged from Correctional Institutions was opened in Vellore in March 1957. The object of the scheme is to provide after care for women and girls discharged from Correctional Institutions pending their rehabilitation. Four district after-care shelters were established in the year 1957-58. Among the four after care shelters each was established at Kancheepuram as Correctional Institution for Girls, another at Karaikudi as Correctional Institution for Women, one at Chengleput as Correctional Institutional for Boys and at Nagercoil as Non-correctional Institutional for Women.

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61. Ibid., p.161.
A state rescue home at Tiruchirappalli was opened. The object of the scheme is to receive minor girls and women committed under the provisions of the Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls Act, 1956 and those who are in moral danger and distress and to afford them facilities for the three “R”s viz. Reception, Reconditioning and Rehabilitation.\textsuperscript{62} The plan also provides for the opening of six vigilance reception centres. These centers provide temporary shelter for women and girls committed under the Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls Act, 1956 during the period of enquiry and trial. The opening of one such centre has been included in the programme for 1958-59. In 1961 Department of Women’s Welfare was formed by combining the work of the Women’s Welfare Wing with that of the State Social Welfare Board and the Directorate of Women’s Welfare.\textsuperscript{63}

**Third Five Year Plan**

During the Third Five year plan the Central Government gave priority to the Women’s Education. Efforts on providing condensed courses for adult women in health, nutrition and family planning continued. Working Women Hostel’s Scheme was sponsored by the Central Social Welfare Board in 1961.\textsuperscript{64} Through this scheme financial assistance is given to voluntary organizations which are willing to set up hostels to provide protected and healthy accommodation at reasonable rates for working women of low income groups. A provision of Rs.7.17 lakhs has been

\textsuperscript{62} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{63} Seminar on uplift of Women in South India in 20\textsuperscript{th} Century and suggestions for 2000 A.D., pp 29-30.

recommended for opening hostels for working women in the states of Gujarat, Madras and Madhya Pradesh, during the Third Five Year Plan.\textsuperscript{65} Mahila Mandal Programme came into being in the year 1961-62 in the rural areas where there were no voluntary organizations to take up the welfare programmes for women and children.\textsuperscript{66}

In the Madras State it was proposed to start four Service Homes in the districts during the Third Plan. It was also proposed to start a Service Home at Coimbatore for women discharged from Non-Correctional Institutions.\textsuperscript{67} A programme was also proposed to start 4 hostels, for working women in Madras City and in some important centers in the District. An Integrated Child Welfare Demonstration Project at Poonamallee was sanctioned and inaugurated in April 1963. During the Third Plan, two Service Homes have been started one at Cuddalore in South Arcot District in 1962 and another at Thanjavur in the year 1964. There were 50 adults and 25 children in each of these Service Homes.\textsuperscript{68}

**Fourth Five Year Plan**

The Fourth Plan (1969-1974) continued the emphasis on women’s education. The outlay on family planning was stepped up, high priority was given to immunization of pre-school children, supplementary diet for children, expectant and nursing mothers. The Fourth Plan included Rs.2 lakhs in its plan outlay at the rate of


Rs.1 lakh for each Service Home towards construction of buildings in the Madras State.  

In 1972 the Department of Women’s Welfare was redesignated as the Department of Social Welfare. Women and Children Welfare Programme in Panchayat areas was another scheme for the welfare of women. There is a Plan outlay of Rs.25.34 lakhs (centrally assisted) and Rs.76.00 lakhs (centrally sponsored) towards this scheme. The first aid, education tour, baby shows, camps and social educational activities were conducted in Madhar Sangams which were opened at the rate of one per Panchayat.

Women’s Welfare Department implemented an important scheme in relation to the care of pre-school children. Already a thousand ‘Kuzhandai Kappagams’ are functioning all over the state where in pre-primary training to children in the age group 2 to 5 is imparted which will constitute the base for formal education at the primary level. It is proposed to open 1000 more ‘Kuzhandai Kappagams’ during the Fourth Plan period. A Child Welfare Division is also sought to be established in the Directorate of Women’s Welfare in this plan. Another new scheme, which is sponsored for inclusion in the Fourth Plan, is one under which grants-in-aid from Government will be given to encourage and support voluntary institutions which runs hostels for working women.

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69. Ibid.


Fifth Five Year Plan

The Planning Commission of Government of India gave priorities to the Welfare of Women, who was in need of care and protection, women from low income families, needy women with dependent children and working women during the Fifth Five Year Plan. The women coming from rural areas and small towns to metropolitan cities are in direct need of accommodation of reasonable rates, to which a scheme to assist voluntary organization in extending hostel facilities for such women was contemplated.

The Integrated Rural Development Programme was introduced in 1976 for the people living below the poverty line to acquisition of appropriate skills in self-employment. Under this programme it is stipulated that 40 percent of the total beneficiaries assisted should be women. The Government also provides programmes for the Welfare of Women in running Service Home in the districts. The Welfare programmes for women and children are proposed to be implemented through ‘Mahalir Mandrams’ and ‘Kuzhandaigal Kappagams’. There was about 13,124 Mahalir Mandrams functioning in the rural areas with a coverage of 2 to 3 lakhs of village women, where in they learn and practice better methods of home maintenance, child care etc.

Women teachers appointed in Primary and Secondary Schools in rural areas, find it difficult to get proper housing facilities. The Government has taken steps to construct quarters for women teachers at the rate of 5 per Panchayat Union and so far

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1510 quarters have already been constructed. There are 5 Service Homes located at Tambaram, Cuddalore, Thanjavur, Tirunelveli and Salem in the year 1978 to cater to poor widows’ deserted wives and destitute women and train them in E.S.L.C. and S.S.L.C and to provide accommodation to working women, a hostel is run by the Social Welfare Department for 25 working women.

**Sixth Five Year Plan**

In the Sixth Five Year Plan a separate chapter was devoted to women’s welfare. This plan aimed to expand the minimum health care facilities and integrate them with the family welfare and nutrition. The National Health Policy was introduced in 1983. It advocates for the development of various health programmes for women and children in the country. The Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas was launched in 1982-83, as a sub-scheme of Integrated Rural Development Programme. The scheme assists groups of women through a package of subsidies and loans. Under the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), special nutrition was provided to pregnant women and nursing mothers. At the end of Sixth Plan, more than 1.2 million such women were receiving benefits under the programme. Provision was made for expanding Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Programme including training of local dais.

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75. Ibid.


A number of schemes were taken up in the social welfare sector to benefit destitute and needy women. By the end of 1984-85, voluntary organizations were assisted in the construction of 344 hostels for working women.\textsuperscript{80} For creating increasing awareness of the role of the women in development and the need for improvement of their status, various media units under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting presented appealing programme on social and economic problems and other related issues faced by Women.

During the Sixth Plan Tamil Nadu Corporation for Development of Women Limited was established by the Government of Tamil Nadu in December 1983 for development of women in the state.\textsuperscript{81} Its registered office is located in Chennai while its area of approach extends to the entire State of Tamil Nadu. The Corporation was set up in order to focus on women’s empowerment, particularly economic empowerment, with a focus on those in disadvantaged situations.\textsuperscript{82}

Control of population by adoption of family welfare methods by persuasion and motivation without resorting to coercion has been the hallmark in the matter of implementation of family welfare programme in Tamil Nadu, which has been one of the states that stood in the forefront in implementing the policy of the Government of India in this regard.\textsuperscript{83}

\textsuperscript{80} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{81} Policy Note 1998-99, Social Welfare and Nutritious Meal Programme Department, p.16.
\textsuperscript{82} Tamil Nadu Corporation for Women Limited. Corporation Brochure.
\textsuperscript{83} Report of Sixth Five Year Plan 1980-85, Tamil Nadu; State Planning Commission, 1982, p.278.
India is a signatory to the Alma Ata Declaration and the South East Asia Health Charter of the World Health organizations and is committed to achieve “Health for all by 2000 A.D.”\textsuperscript{84} Two special donors assisted projects, the World Bank Aided Nutrition Project and DANDIA Project were implemented in Tamil Nadu during this plan for the development of the primary health care and medical services.

The Tamil Nadu Labour Welfare Board is undertaking a number of labour welfare measures which include running of Kinder Garden Schools for Children, tailoring classes for the wives and dependents of workers and formation of Mahalir Mandrams and reading rooms. Tamil Nadu is the pioneer state in implementing an Industrial Nutrition Programme with the assistance of CARE, for the benefit of the families of Industrial workers in this state. There are 31, 627 beneficiaries covered in 95 units under this scheme.\textsuperscript{85}

The poor destitute and widowed women are assisted by the Department of Social Welfare through a number of schemes. These schemes aim to make them self-reliant by creation of self employment opportunities. Hostels for working women are opened in more centres and Service Homes are started in Coimbatore and Madurai.\textsuperscript{86} New scheme was introduced to provide scholarships to children of destitute women who are not otherwise eligible for scholarship under any of the scholarship schemes of the State or Central Government for pursuing college studies and assistance to

\textsuperscript{84} Ibid., p.273.
\textsuperscript{85} Ibid., p.303.
\textsuperscript{86} Ibid., p.311.
children of widows studying in the Higher Secondary Course by way of free supply of books and note books.

**Seventh Five Year Plan**

The long-term objective of the developmental programmes for women would be to raise their economic and social status in order to bring them into the main stream of national development was mentioned in the Seventh Plan’s objectives. Special measures were initiated for strict enforcement of the Dowry Prohibition Act and also to prevent harassment and atrocities against women. Efforts were made to extend facilities for income-generating activities and to enable women to participate actively in socio-economic development. The scheme giving tetanus medicine to mothers and providing proper antenatal care was taken up on a sizeable scale. The health and family welfare services are made available to all women in the reproductive age group.

The Programmes for women under the social welfare sector are meant to supplement the services available to women under other developmental sectors. The Central Social Welfare Board would continue to extend grants-in-aid to voluntary organizations to set up a variety of income generating units under “Socio-Economic programme for the benefit of needy women. A new scheme, namely Women’s Development Corporation, was initiated for promoting employment generating activities by supporting schemes for women’s groups and women form poorer

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sections of society.\textsuperscript{88} A Women’s Development and Monitoring Cell was set up for collection of data and monitoring of plan programmes.

The National Perspective Plan for Women was introduced in 1988 to facilitate mainstreaming of women’s issues in policies and programmes and advocates a holistic approach for the development of women.\textsuperscript{89} The National Commission for Women Act was introduced in 1990. This Act advocates for the safeguarding of the rights and interests of women and prescribes for the establishment of National Commission of Women.

In the State Plan under Madras Urban Development Project one of the components implemented with the World Bank aid is Maternal and Child Health Service Scheme. This scheme is implemented in Villivakkam, Arumbakkam and Kodanaiyur with 150 centres.\textsuperscript{90} This scheme was continued in the Seventh Plan. Grants to Social Welfare Board for assisting Social Welfare Institutions for work in Rural Areas will be continued in Seventh Five Year Plan.

Under the Integrated Child Development Services Scheme Projects under centrally sponsored schemes function in Madras City, Dharmapuri District and Madurai District. Over 30,000 beneficiaries including pre-schools children, pregnant and lactating mothers are being benefited under this scheme.\textsuperscript{91} In each Panchayat 100

\textsuperscript{88} Ibid., p.328.
\textsuperscript{91} Ibid., p.451.
pre-schools have been started. This scheme continued in the Seventh Five Year Plan. One more Service Home at Tirupathur, Ramanathapuram District has been started to benefit socially and economically backward widows and deserted wives between the ages 18-40 years and to train them up to VIII Std.  

The stipend has been enhanced from Rs.50 to Rs.75 for women in the feeding charges of Secondary Grade Teachers Training Centre from the year 1985-86. It has been proposed to give marriage allowances to Deserted Destitutes and Distressed Widows. The marriage allowance of Rs.1,000 to 1000 beneficiaries in the age group of 18 to 30 years towards the purchase of Sarees, Blouse and Thirumangalyam for the bride. This scheme continued through the Seventh Plan. Rs.50.75 lakhs has been provided in the Budget for this scheme.

In 1988-89, an amount of Rs.437.79 lakh was spent on free supply of footwear to poor working women in rural areas. In the same year, Government separately allotted sum of Rs.300 lakh for women’s welfare programme. Under marriage assistance scheme, the beneficiaries were 5,369 daughters of poor widows, 1083 orphan girls and 575 widows for their remarriage. A sum of Rs.501 is given to a pregnant woman below the poverty line every month for a total period of four months (i.e.) two months prior to and two months after the delivery of the child. 1,91,625 women have the scheme.

92. Ibid., p.452.
93. Ibid., p.453.
95. Ibid.
Eighth Five Year Plan

The Eighth Five Year Plan continues to identify certain thrust area’s for women’s development. The plan reiterates that the women must be equal participants at par with men in the national development process. The National Commission for Women was set up as a National Commission for Women Act, 1990.\textsuperscript{96}

The Ministry of Labour has also planned a scheme with the objective of assisting and organizing women workers in the un-organised sector through NGO’s. The National Credit Fund for women was established in 1993.\textsuperscript{97} The fund aims to reach the poorest of the poor and asset less women who are in need of credit.

Mahila Samriddi Yojana was launched on October 2, 1993 as central sector scheme with a view to encourage thrift among rural women. This scheme is being implemented in both rural as well as urban areas. Indira Mahila Yojana was launched on August 29, 1995 in 200 blocks throughout the country.\textsuperscript{98} It is a strategy to coordinate and integrate components of all sectorial programmes and to facilitate their convergence to benefit women.

The Science and Technology related programmes have largely concentrated on developing technologies relevant to the improvement of living conditions for the rural population, weaker sections of society and in particular for rural women.\textsuperscript{99}

\textsuperscript{96} Surendra Singh and S.P.Srivastva, \textit{op.cit.}, p.111.

\textsuperscript{97} \textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{98} \textit{Ibid.}

Nadu has a well established infrastructure to reach women and children such as *Mahalir Mandrams* and noon meal centres. These would be restructured and improved in this plan. The new projects designed in this plan will be flexible, low on cost and preferably handled by voluntary agencies.

The objectives in the area of welfare of women are empowerment of women through collective organization, leadership training and awareness rights and available resources, increase in the income generating ability of women, provision of supporting services that make women more functional and productive, meeting the needs of women in difficult circumstances through counseling guidance, temporary seller and rehabilitation.\(^{100}\)

Certain areas which have not been covered in the past and included in this plan are working women’s hostel for lower income groups, awareness creation on alcoholism, drug addiction and atrocities on women, strengthening of Women’s Development corporation through more meaningful programmes for the economic empowerment of women. Family counseling centres and creches provided for the children of working and ailing women.\(^{101}\) The proposed outlay for women’s welfare is 5837.18 lakhs.\(^{102}\) Service homes are rendering very valuable services for the downtrodden women, providing accommodation by giving education and training them for jobs and the stipend will be increased from Rs.75 to Rs.120 per month for adults and from Rs.60 to Rs.90 per month for children which were given for the

\(^{100}\) Report of Eighth Five Year Plan, Tamil Nadu, p.541.

\(^{101}\) Ibid.

\(^{102}\) Ibid.
inmates of service homes.\textsuperscript{103} This stipend was increased in order to give nutritious food to the inmates. In the Service homes, vocational subjects were started to benefit 1220 adults and 265 children.\textsuperscript{104} Two more service homes were started one at Madurai and another at Coimbatore at the cost of Rs.33.00 lakhs.\textsuperscript{105} The Government assured to assist voluntary organization to set up working women’s hostel for low income groups at Madras, Madurai and Ranipet. The Plan also mentioned about setting up of three hostels with strength of 100 women in Erode and 50 each in Thanjavur and Vellore to be started by Government. The outlay for this scheme is Rs.37.50 lakh.\textsuperscript{106}

During Eighth Plan, 15 family counseling and information centers in the uncovered districts will be established with an outlay of Rs.42.50 lakh. A system for regular monitoring of such welfare programmes requires to be undertaken in order to remove the bottlenecks in the implementation of the programmes and the revitalize the services. With this purpose in view, a monitoring cell will be formed and an audit cell was created at the Directorate at an outlay of Rs.37.50lakhs. For the safe survival of child and safe mother hood, UNICEF assisted Safe Motherhood Projects that are being implemented in North Arcot-Ambedkar, Thiruvannamalai-Sambuarayar and Tirunelveli-Kattabomman Districts.

As regards marriage assistance, the benefits are extended to girls below poverty line who have studied up to VIII std., daughters of poor widows, orphan girls

\textsuperscript{103} Ibid., p.543.
\textsuperscript{106} Ibid.
and widows. So far, 1,22,350 women have benefited under all marriage schemes and out of them 51,777 women benefited under the scheme of financial assistance to girls below poverty line (Moovular Ramamirtham Ammaiyyar Ninaivu Thirumana Udavi Thittam) during the Eighth Plan.\(^{107}\) Cash assistance is given through Muthulakshmi Reddi Ammaiyyar Ninaivu Thittam to pregnant women and so far 15,27,757 women were benefited.\(^{108}\) Annually 3000 sewing machines are given free of cost to poor women and so far, 31,223 women have been assisted. Six Service Homes and Eight Working Women’s Hostels are run in many places by the Government. The following table shows the numbers beneficiaries under VIII\(^{th}\) plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nos.</th>
<th>Schemes</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Financial assistance for marriage to girls below poverty line (Moovular Ramamirtham)</td>
<td>51,777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Cash assistance to pregnant women below poverty line (Muthulakshmi Reddy)</td>
<td>968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Widows Re-marriage (Dr.Dharmambal Ammiyar Thitam)</td>
<td>913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Marriage assistant to orphan girls</td>
<td>327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Marriage assistance to daughters of poor widows</td>
<td>4,816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Free supply of sewing machines</td>
<td>9,675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Inter-caste marriage assistance</td>
<td>2,781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Free supply of text books and note books</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Assistance to poor women for vocational training</td>
<td>4937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Counselling through Guidance bureau</td>
<td>1,06,394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Tamil Nadu women Devt. Project with assistance from IFAD</td>
<td>61,544</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Tribal sub-plan: Tailoring centers</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Report of Ninth Five Year Plan, Tamil Nadu, State Planning Commission.

The welfare policies and schemes of five years plans in the areas of education, health and nutrition have no doubt been significant factors in improving the status of women.

\(^{107}\) Report of Ninth Five Year Plan, Tamil Nadu, p.446.

\(^{108}\) Ibid., p.447
Women’s Welfare Branches

There were 48 Women’s Welfare Branches in the State during the Congress rule in Tamil Nadu. The number was raised to 50 during the D.M.K. rule. Of these, the one at Pammal, Chingleput district and the other at Aziznagar, in South Arcot district were meant exclusively for denotified tribal women. The object of these branches was to educate women in household arts and child rearing practices. The field workers were trained and family surveys were done by the field staff. The organizers of these branches conducted pre-basic classes from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. and undertook house visits to educate women in that particular area from 12 noon to 2 p.m. Crafts training was given to women from 3 to 5 p.m. on alternative in the age group of $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 years. During the house visits, the women were educated in household arts, nutrition and child care, meetings of women were also convened to impart training in useful crafts like tailoring, mat weaving, embroidery, basket making, leaf plates making etc.¹⁰⁹

Each branch had twenty to thirty women members. Once in a month cooking demonstration was conducted by the organizers. These branches were started mostly for people who belonged to the low income group. An approximate sum of Rs. 7,000/- was spent per branch per annum. In these welfare branches, women were educated, free guidance and counseling were done on food values, home remedies, home nursing, sanitation, hygiene, medical aid, maternity and child care. Three-fold programmes were also taken up by these community centers, viz., adult education, adult literacy and encouragement of cottage industries. The members of these

branches also stitched clothes and were able to earn wages to supplement their meager family income.\textsuperscript{110}

In 1976, the Government also introduced Balahar feeding in all 50 Women’s Welfare Branches in the state. These Welfare Branches helped to promote the welfare of women of the lower strata through cooperative social, recreational and cultural activities. Further, the training given to them in spinning weaving, tailoring, basket making and printing made them economically independent to some extent.\textsuperscript{111}

\textbf{Women’s Service Homes}

The second most important social welfare work undertaken by the Department was the running of Service Homes. These Service Homes helped the socially handicapped women including widows and destitute women. The first Service Home for destitute women was started in 1948 at Tambaram. Subsequently, two others were started in Gandhinagar, along with Kasturba Training School. These homes functioned during D.M.K. rule also.\textsuperscript{112}

At Tambaram a separate section was run for the physically handicapped women and children with a sanctioned strength of 30 adults and 20 children.\textsuperscript{113} The other State-aided Service Homes were run at Kasturba Sevikashram, In Tiruchi, Gandhigram, in Madurai District, Avvai Ashram, Sivasailam and Anna Anadhai Illam

\textsuperscript{110}. Tamil Nadu State Administration Report, 1974-75, Madras, p.20.

\textsuperscript{111}. G.O.Ms.No.778, Department of social Welfare, 1 October, 1975.

\textsuperscript{112}. Department of social welfare, 1973-74, Government of Tamil Nadu, p.5.

\textsuperscript{113}. State Report, Government of Tamil Nadu, p.446.
Gragandam. The Central Social Welfare Board sanctioned grants to these voluntary institutions through the State Social Welfare Advisory Board, Madras. In these Service Homes, destitute women of the age group of 18-35 years were taken in. Their children were also taken care of in these homes till seven years of age in case of girls and five in case of boys. Each Service Home contained one general section, one tailoring unit, and a secondary grade Teachers’ Training Course, physically handicapped section and a Readymade Garment Production Unit. Each section had separate staff and they were paid according to Tamil Nadu Government pay scales.

After studying their attitude, the women were coached for the E.S.L.C. examinations or technical examinations in needle work, embroidery, dress making or mat weaving. A stipend of Rs. 50/- per month was given for adults and Rs. 35/- for children. Further, clothing per annum was also given. Some adult women who after completing the E.S.L.C. condensed course desired to pursue their studies, joined voluntary institutions in run S.S.L.C. condensed course with the assistance of the State Social Welfare Board. The Secondary Grade Training Course run in the Service Home, at Tambaram took in such candidates who had completed S.S.L.C. through condensed courses. Secretarial course in short hand and Typewriting had also been introduced as a vocational training for the S.S.L.C. completed girls. Total strength of this section was twenty. Annual grants were also made for vocational training course like photography, Diploma in Commerce, Nursing, Radio and Television mechanism.

Coaching classes for tailoring provided for interested women with an examination conducted by for Tamil Nadu Technical Examination. In Tambaran Service Home, two special wings functioning for the handicapped women and children, another wing established in 1973 and manufactured readymade garments.\textsuperscript{117} For the children of the inmates a separate section was functioned all the Service Homes as mentioned above. Annual expenditure for these Service Homes was amounted to Rs. 3.39 lakhs.\textsuperscript{118}

With a view to impart intensive training simple cottage industries to socially and economically backward women and to enable them to supplement their income, the Congress government started 44 work centers and 7 production units. This was continued during the D.M.K. rule also. In addition, the D.M.K. Government started two sales depots. However, since the rural and urban destitute women had no interest in joining the work centers, the numbers of work centers were reduced from 44 to 36 and the production units were reduced from 7 to 6.

The statistical data of work centres, production units and sales depots.

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<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Works Centres</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production units</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Depots</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Tamil Nadu State Administration Report, 1967-75, Madras, p.60

\textsuperscript{117} Tamil Nadu State Administration Report, 1968, Madras, p.40.

\textsuperscript{118} Department Report, (Social Welfare), 1972-73, p.4.
Hostels for Working Women

The lower middle income group women who worked for a living from their homes and parents found it hard to find accommodation. So the Government to meet this problem decided to run hostels for working women. They also assisted the voluntary institutions which ran hostels through grants-in-aid scheme of the Board. This department founded a hostel in 1967, in Egmore. Its sanctioned strength was twenty five and the annual expenditure amounted to Rs. 25,000/-.

The Government also proposed to encouraged and support voluntary institutions which would run hostels for working women and they proposed to give grants-in-aid for putting up their own buildings.

Mahalir Mandrams

This programme was devised to organize women of rural areas together in ‘Mahalir Mandrams’ regardless of socio-economic barriers. For this purpose, 13,124 Mahalir Mandrams were started at the rate of one for each panchayat. The Convener of the Mahalir Mandrams was usually a local woman who was trained for a month at the Rural Extension Centre at Bhavanisagar or at the Service Home, at Tambaram. These trained Conveners, invited women in their respective ‘Mahalir Mandrams’ and discussed with the local women on various subjects of interest and utility like child care practices, household arts, home economics, kitchen gardening, health, environment sanitation etc. Demonstrations were held on better and hygienic ways of cooking; and adult literacy classes were held. Besides sewing classes were also held in these Mahalir Mandrams. About 10,082 Mahalir Mandrams were

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120. Ibid.
equipped by the Panchayat Unions and the local women were taught to stitch simple garments.\textsuperscript{121}

Among the 13, 124 Mahalir Mandrams, 301 had their own buildings and the rest were conducted either in rent free buildings or in the residence of conveners. A total of 1,076 Mandrams had got themselves registered under the Companies Act and some of them had become eligible to get grants-in-aid from the State Social Welfare Board as voluntary institutions. Some of these Mahalir Mandrams also conducted “Kuzhandaiyal Kappagam” classes for village children and the members participated in many other cooperative enterprises. Besides institutional training facilities were available for training women in the Rural Extension Centres. The below Table shows the details of training and number of women trained.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Name of Training</th>
<th>Training during the said period</th>
<th>Total trained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bala Sevika Training under Demonstration – feeding programme (Composite Programmes)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>General Pre-School Training for Bala Sevika (Regular)</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>803</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bala Sevika Training under Applied Nutrition Programme</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Associate Women’s Training</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Short course for Mukya Sevika and Gramma Sevika under Applied Nutrition Programme</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Training of Mukya Sevikas and Gramma Sevikas under Care-Feeding Programme</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


To promote social education 359 Women’s Club were start at the rate of one per block. About 318 out of 359 clubs were subsidized with radio sets. This incurred

\textsuperscript{121} Tamil Nadu State Administration Report, 1967-68, 1975-76, p.8.
each community development block was allotted an amount of 10,000/- per year for carrying out a minimum programme for welfare of women through the Mahalir Mandrams in thirty villages. The women were encouraged to engage themselves in some socio-economic programmes like dairying with the aid of grants given by the State Social Welfare Board.122

The Government of India envisaged a composite programme for women and pre-school children. The scheme stimulated – spreading nutrition education through the State engaged Mahalir Mandrams. In each block twelve Mahalir Mandrams were to be selected in a phased manner for organizing nutrition demonstration showing how to make use of local foods and introducing balanced menu and -. A grant of Rs. 500/- was made for each Mahalir mandrams.

In order to encourage Mahalir Mandrams and to undertake different areas of economic activites for the welfare of women, cash – of Rs. 1.000/-, Rs. 600/- and Rs. 400/- were made. This scheme was centre-aided one. A committee was formed at block level to screen those applying for the grant. The following table gives the details of centrally sponsored scheme and the amount allotted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schemes</th>
<th>Women’s Welfare (Rs.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic Activity through Mahalir Mandram</td>
<td>1,70,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstration Feeding Programme</td>
<td>7,84,400.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Women’s Workers’ Training Programme</td>
<td>3,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Nutrition Programme</td>
<td>1,89,94,300.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,99,78,700.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Work Centres and Production Units

Under the socio-economic programme, work centres and production units were started by the Department during the second and Third Five Year Plan period for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Denotified Tribal Women with funds from the Harijan Welfare Department. Later these centers were continued for the benefit of all women and have been included in the Department Budget. The main aim of these work centers was to impart intensive training to socially and economically backward women to enable them to supplement their income through these crafts. After the training for three or four batches, each of the work centers was converted into a production unit employing the trained women and paying them wages according to the turnover.

In areas where the centres cannot be converted into a production unit due to the excessively nomadic nature of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, free supply of tools and accessories were given for them to carry on their crafts.

During the D.M.K. rules, new centres were opened exclusively for the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and denotified tribes with funds from the Department of Harijan Welfare and Backward Classes. In 1975, thirty-one work centers and eight production units were functioning throughout the state. About 4,000 women were benefited through the above schemes and the annual expenditure for these centres was Rs. 0.26 lakhs. Here the women were trained for a year with a stipend of Rs. 30/- per month. After training three or four batches, the centre was converted into a production unit and the workers were paid according to the turnover.

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123. Ibid.
over. In addition, some special groups of women have benefited under the schemes of Women Welfare Department like the Burma Repatriates, Ceylon Repatriates, Harijan Women, ex-servicemen and Teacher’s families.

Further, the Department also conducted yearly exhibition through which the activities of the Social Service Department were exposed to the public. These exhibitions also served the purpose of managing to sell the products manufactured by the work, centres, and production units of the Service Homes.

**Widows Rehabilitation**

Widow Remarriage encouraged by announced incentives in the form of National Savings Certificates to husband and wife to the value of Rs. 5,000/- to be held deposit for seven years. The scheme was restricted to destitute widows in the age group of eighteen to thirty. This scheme was announced on the 52nd birthday of M. Karunanidhi, the then Chief Minister (1975) of Tamil Nadu. During the year 1975-76, 92 couples were provided with financial assistance amounting to Rs. 4,60,000.

Further under this scheme, one thousand sewing machines were presented to thousand destitute widows in the age-group of 18-45 who had been trained in tailoring in the institutions run by the Government or other recognized private institutions.

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127. Ibid.
Destitute widows above forty years of age were given pension of about Rs. 20/- per month. In the rural textiles centres about 279 destitute widows were enrolled and trained. Further Rs. 2.79 lakhs were allotted to provide training for the destitute widows.\(^{128}\)

**Family Planning**

In order to help women according to their economic means and to promote the health of women by avoiding unwanted pregnancies and children, the family planning campaign was stepped up by the D.M.K. Government. The Propaganda was done by the Grama Sevikas, Mukhya Sevikas Women’s Welfare organisers, maternity assistants and other technical persons. Family Planning Training was given to Mukhya Sevikas and Grama Sevikas and to all Women’s Welfare organizers in their respective district headquarters.\(^{129}\) Several media like wall paintings, drama, villupattu, bus boards, cinema slides, All-India Broadcasts, seminars, group discussions, family planning advertisements etc., were used to propagate family planning.\(^{130}\)

**Education and Employment Opportunities for Women**

In 1967-68, the number of high schools for girls was thirty six government schools, ninety four District Board, Panchayat Union Schools, thirty four municipal and two hundred and eight aided schools. The total strength of girls in these schools

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\(^{128}\) Social Service in Madras, A Departmental report, 1975-76, Government Tamil Nadu, p.19.


\(^{130}\) Ibid.
was 5,30,499. Every year about 8,000 secondary grade teachers and 3,600 higher grade teachers were trained. In 1959 during the Congress rule the figures numbered only 3,000. During the D.M.K. regime rule (1970-72) there were 5,835 graduates, 27,295 matriculates and 46,052 non-matriculate women teachers. A sum of ten lakhs rupee was sanctioned in 1973-74 for providing quarters for women teachers in rural areas. 1,568 quarters were constructed from the commencement of the scheme.

The policies of the State Government and other educational facilities such as mid-day meals, free uniforms, free schooling up to S.S.L.C., scholarships for the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and economically backward students encouraged women’s education. Another factor which aided women’s education was the free education extended up to S.S.L.C. The next factor which aided women’s education was the announcement of free education up to the pre-university course.

During 1971-72, the female working population of Tamil Nadu was 34,48,950 which constituted 16.96% of the total population. Of these, those employed in the industrial sector, cultivation and agricultural workers accounted for 66.76% and other workers amounted to 34%.

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131. Ibid., 1967-68, p.214
132. Ibid., 1971-72, p.216