



# ISST Newsletter

Vol.4

No.1&2

January – June 2007

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*This ISST newsletter seeks to provide information about research and action programmes being conducted by the institute. At present the newsletter is available on our website. Suggestions are welcome.*

The Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST), a non-profit non-governmental organization, was set up as a society in 1964 and registered as a Trust in 1980. ISST attempts to bridge the gaps between

research, action and policy debate, with a focus on issues concerning the poor, especially women. ISST positions itself at the interface between research, action and policy.

## ***Projects at ISST***

### ***Completed Projects***

#### **Women's Work through Magnifying Glass**

ISST has submitted a research report entitled, 'Through the Magnifying Glass: Women's Work and Labour Force Participation in Urban Delhi', to ILO, New Delhi. The study has assessed women's paid work force participation rate in urban Delhi across income strata and the reasons behind their decision to work or not to work.

ISST has collaborated with the ILO and conducted a survey in Delhi which threw light on the extent, nature and constraints on women's work in a contemporary urban situation. The study has explored further the dynamics of female labour in terms of demand and supply in a particular section of people. The study also attempts to provide an estimation on women's labour force participation especially in the informal economy. The study imposes the need to understand the changing context within which labour market decisions are made and explore the dominant role of family and kinship structures to determine women's work life choices.

#### **Evaluation of STEP Programme**

ISST had received a grant from Ministry of Women and Child Development, Govt. of India to evaluate the STEP (Support for Training and Employment) programme. The STEP programme was initiated in the Seventh Plan by the Department of Women and Child Development as a centrally sponsored programme, which emphasized the critical need to increase and improve

employment opportunities for women. The programme was intended to make an impact on the sectors identified, by enabling a critical mass of women to begin to play a more role in these sectors. Under the present evaluation study, a sample of projects and beneficiaries has been selected from 7 states. States were selected so as to include those which had received substantial amounts of STEP funding, and to include different geographical regions. The present evaluation is based on interviews with recipient institutions, project managers, beneficiaries and experts. Apart from the fieldwork, relevant documents and available evaluations have been studied. A seminar was organized by the Institute of Social Studies Trust on May 9, 2007 in New Delhi to draw a wide range of suggestions for strengthening of STEP programme. The final report of this evaluation with all suggestions and recommendations has been submitted to the Ministry.

### **Case Studies of Home-based Workers in Bihar, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh**

ISST has documented a few case studies of home-based work in India for Homenet India and UNIFEM, New Delhi. The study has focused on the nature and conditions of work in the selected trades; social and economic insecurities faced by the workers in these trades. ISST has carried out this research with grassroots organizations working with home-based workers in the states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Punjab. The trades covered in this research are: box making at Lucknow; appliqué work at Rampur; zari-zardosi at Bareilly; bidi rolling in Samastipur and Begusarai; mala, flute and chappal making at Patna and the embroidery work at Patiala. As a part of the dissemination strategy, a documentary film, titled, '*Our Hands at Work*', has been made on these trades and the women involved in these trades. Apart from that, a brochure has been prepared for disseminating the relevant issues of the home-based workers.

### **Employment, Informality and Poverty: Comparative Research in China and India**

The overall objectives of the project is to foster greater understanding on issues of informal employment among Chinese and Indian scholars and practitioners. The specific objectives of the project are: to facilitate dialogue and intellectual exchange between Chinese and Indian participants through the conduct of a study tour in India and a workshop in Harvard; to establish a network of Chinese and Indian scholars and practitioners, including young researchers, for the development of research capacity and policy advice on the informal economy.

ISST in partnership with NCAER, SEWA and GIDR organized a study tour around the theme "Employment, Poverty and Informality: India and China" with a focus on informal employment and institutional environments between 3 February and 11 February, 2007 in New Delhi. The Chinese group also paid a short visit to SEWA in Ahmedabad during this period. This project was supported by the IDRC, Canada and co-ordinated by ISST.

### ***Ongoing Projects***

## **Women and the NREGA: Implication for Migration, Decent Work and Gender**

This study has been carried out in the selected sites of Orissa and Rajasthan, where the EGA (Employment Guarantee Act) has been implemented. The study tries to understand the interaction between EGA, local development, decent work and migration with special focus on gender concerns. Capacity building through discussions and workshops is another objective of this project. The study also analyzes the impact of the NREGA on the local economic development, migration, skills, development path for women, occupational health and safety concerns and other decent work elements.

A household survey was conducted to address these issues including women's reproductive work and the impact of the increased participation in paid work by women. A questionnaire had been prepared and translated in Oriya and Hindi respectively for Orissa and Rajasthan. The first round analysis of the survey data is already over, and a report has been prepared.

A number of suggestions have been made on how the scheme could be improved. The suggestions have been made on the need for more work, more days of work and higher wages. The study also made some specific suggestions including mode of payment, training, better measurement of work, greater participation of people in planning. The project is being sponsored by ILO.

### **Progress of South Asian Women**

ISST has been commissioned by United Nations Development Fund for women (UNIFEM) to prepare a comprehensive analytical report mapping and situation and status of women on the twelve critical areas of concern identified in the Beijing Platform for Action between the years 2005 to date as a background document for the sixth South Asia ministerial Meeting Commemorating Beijing to be held in New Delhi in September 2007. The objective of the report will be to provide conceptual clarity and in depth analysis in a comprehensive and crisp document-in addition to detailing a progress report of South Asian women in a few selected key areas in the context of Millenium Development Goals (MDGs).

### **Revisiting Education 2006**

This study named 'Revisiting Education for All' seeks to capture the changes in the delivery of elementary education among India's disadvantaged children in the states of Bihar, Chattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Uttranchal, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh over the last ten years. The study also intends to do a citizens' report on the current state of primary education in these states. The study explores the perceptions of parents, teachers and children about their problems and about the impact of changes. A large cross-sectional survey had been designed along with a few qualitative case studies. The survey was conducted both in the schools

and the households, on a sample of 125 randomly selected villages in the selected states. The survey was facilitated by 3 NGOs in particular (i) Uttarakhand Sewa Nidhi, almora, (ii) Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samiti, Bhopal, and (iii) Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samiti, Dhanbad. Several training workshops were conducted before the survey. In all, information collected from at least 250 formal government primary schools, and 125 upper primary sections. At present, the data analysis is going on. The study is supported by the International Development Research Centre, Canada.

## **Evaluation of Doosra Dasak**

Sir Dorabji Tata Trust (SDTT) and Foundation for Education and Development (FED), Jaipur assigned ISST to evaluate Doosra Dasak programme. The overall evaluation will undertake a baseline survey and an evaluation in respect of the 3 blocks in which Doosra Dasak is being implemented. The evaluation study will include the following parameters: Coverage, Education, Health, youth, community participation, people's rights and public institutions and livelihood issues.

### ***OUTREACH PROGRAMME OF ISST***

ISST's Community Outreach Programme in this area is six years old. During this period ISST has established a strong relationship with the community. The key area of focus has been empowerment of younger people in the community through information, education and dialogue approach. ISST reaches out to children in a variety of innovative and interactive ways like discussion groups, workshops, theatre groups, film club, non-formal education, computer training etc. The computer literacy programme has been gaining much popularity amongst the youth in the community. Since ISST has a comprehensive six month basic computer education module which has helped a number of children to acquire basic skill jobs.

During May and June this year, ISST organized a Summer Camp at its newly established Kalyanpuri centre. During the period several workshops were organized to help children learn something new and interesting, which would increase their knowledge about various issues and enhance creativity. ISST Community Centre with help from Mr. Lakhinder Nayak, Mr. Tarun Bose and Mr. Sharad Sharma carried out a six-day workshop with the children between 19 and 24 May to develop their interest in the power of the comics. More than 50 children joined the workshop on the first day and 22 of them remained for the entire workshop and passionately participated in this creative endeavor. At the end of the workshop 44 wall poster comics on a range of issues were displayed. The workshop was organized with assistance from World comics India, Delhi. A detailed report has been prepared at ISST by Ms. Deepika Singh.

The SAATHI centre at Kalyanpuri Police station celebrated its open day on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2007, to mark the end of 2 months summer camp organized for children who are a part of ISST'S Community Outreach programme. The centre was decorated with the creative items prepared by the children during the camp. It included greeting cards, glass paintings, painted mud pots with

Tulsi plant, posters, comics which were made during the comic's workshop. The children came well dressed and were very enthusiastic about performing the cultural programme in front of Delhi Police Commissioner and other guests. The programme started at 9am and wound up at 5.30 pm. The children performed various programmes during the day as and when visitors came and in between watched Meena movies on the Television. The younger children sang few group songs, and then Nakshatra (theatre group) performed the play "Kuch to poocho?" on the issue of RTI. The adolescent group who has been taking English lessons participated in public speaking and 4 girls and 4 boys spoke their minds on various social issues in English, which was well appreciated. There were few songs and small skits performed by some children on the spot. Several guests visited the exhibition during the day and encouraged the children for their efforts. The lunch was sponsored by the Delhi Police for the children.

### ***New people at ISST***

The following people have worked or joined ISST as consultants / volunteers / interns:

Dr. Rajeshree Dutta Kumar (January – June 2007)

Ms. Deepika Singh (Since March 2007)

Mr. Nakul, Intern (June – August 2007)

Ms. Aditi Suri, Intern (June 2007)

### ***Workshops/Seminars Conducted by ISST***

23 January, 2007: IHC-ISST Gender Policy Forum, Casuarina Hall, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi

The ninth session in the series of talks under the Gender Policy Forum invited Dr. Ravinder Kaur, Associate Professor, Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi. Dr. Kaur made a presentation titled, '*Imported Wives and Desperate Bachelors: Social Consequences of Female Foeticide in Northern India*'. In the absence of Dr. Nitya Rao, Lecturer in Gender Analysis and Development, School of Development Studies, University of East Anglia, U.K., the original discussant for the above presentation, Ms. Shrayana Bhattacharya of ISST presented a brief account of Dr. Rao's research conducted in Jharkhand on migration of young women.

25 April, 2007: IHC-ISST Gender Policy Forum, Casuarina Hall, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi

In the tenth session in the series of Gender Policy Forum talks, Dr. Shalini Grover, post-doctoral fellow from Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi made a presentation 'Marital Discord and Public Forums: Women's Arbitration Court in New Delhi' from her doctoral thesis at University

of Sussex, UK. The session was chaired by Prof. Patricia Uberoi, Institute of Economic Growth. Ms. Bulbul Das, Advocate, the Supreme Court, New Delhi discussed on the presentation.

9 May, 2007: Workshop on the Evaluation of the STEP Programme, India International Centre, New Delhi.

ISST, Delhi organized the final workshop on the evaluation of the STEP programme, sponsored by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Govt. of India. The workshop was attended by the Secretary of the Ministry of Women and Child Development, senior officers from the ministry and other ministries, senior officials of various state milk federations, NGO activists and academicians. Various policy initiatives were discussed in the workshop. The participants suggested useful policy measures for restructuring of the STEP programme.

### *Workshops /Seminars Attended by ISST*

#### *Ratna M. Sudarshan*

- Presentation: ‘Social security for women home based workers in South Asia’ at Women, Work and Poverty: Policy Conference on Home Based Workers of South Asia, SEWA and UNIFEM, New Delhi, 19 January 2007.
- Rural Employment Guarantee Schemes and their Impact on Children in South Asia Workshop organized by UNICEF, 25 January 2007.
- Panel Discussion on NCAER report, ‘Examining Employment Figures in the Handloom Sector’, organized by All India Artisans and Craftworkers Welfare Association, Feb 22.
- National Consultation on Self-Help Groups, Gender and Development, organized by Nirantar, Feb 23, 2007
- Book launch of ‘Asian Informal Workers’ edited by Santosh Mehrotra and Mario Biggeri, organized by ILO, March 22, 2007.
- National Advisory Committee Meeting of RECOUP project, CORD, March 23, 2007
- Ethics Committee Meeting for PROH study, March 28, 2007.
- "Informality, Poverty and Inequality: The Labour Force in China and India", WIEGO, Harvard University, March 31 - April 4, 2007
- Feminist Economists Working Group, First Meeting, Planning Commission, April 18, 2007

- Workshop on Gender, Migration and Citizenship, IDRC, April 26, 2007.
- National Launch of Global Report 'Equality at Work', ILO, May 10, 2007.
- National Consultation on Gender Development at Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development, Sriperumbudur, May 16, 2007
- ADB Stakeholder Consultations – Mainstreaming Gender, May 23, 2007.

### ***Deepika Singh***

- Conference on 25% Reservation of Seats in Private Schools in Delhi, National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA). 28 March, 2007.
- Workshop on ISO-26000, Corporate Social Responsibility at National Science Academy, New Delhi, organized by BIS & VOICE. 16-17 April, 2007

### ***Rajib Nandi***

- The National Seminar on Interlinking of Rivers at India International Centre, New Delhi. Organised by Development Alternatives and CEFS, New Delhi 15 January, 2007
- Conference on Sustainable Development and Livelihoods at Delhi School of Economics, organized by Centre for Development Economics, Delhi University. 7-8 February, 2007

### ***Shrayana Bhattacharya***

- Conference on 25% Reservation of Seats in Private Schools in Delhi, National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA). 28 March, 2007

## ***Recent Publications***

### **Books**

- **Ratna M. Sudarshan and Suchi Pande** (eds.) *Ensuring Public Accountability through Community Action: A Case Study in East Delhi*, published by ISST, New Delhi, 2007
- **Swapna Mukhopadhyay** (ed.) *The Enigma of Kerala Woman: A Failed Promise of Literacy*, published by the Social Science Press, New Delhi, 2007

### **Articles**

- **Ratna M. Sudarshan** “Vocational Training for Women in Informal Employment”, in Jandhyala B.G. Tilak edited, “Women’s Education and Development”, published by Gyan Publishing House, New Delhi, 2007
- **Ratna M. Sudarshan** (with Jandhyala B.G. Tilak) ‘Private Schooling in Rural India’ in Abusaleh Shariff and Maithreyi Krishnaraj edited ‘State, Markets and Inequalities: Human Development in Rural India’, published by Orient Longman, New Delhi, 2007.
- **Swapna Mukhopadhyay** and **Rajib Nandi**, ‘Unpacking the Assumption of Gender Neutrality: Akshaya Project of the Kerala IT Mission in India’, published in Gender, Technology and Development, Vol. 11 (1), January – April 2007.
- **Rina Bhattacharya**, ‘Gender and Employment in the Context of Globalisation: Some Facts and Figures’, in Rehana Ghadially edited *Urban Women in Contemporary India: A Reader*, Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2007.

#### Working Papers

- **Sophie Woehling** and **Shubh Sharma**, ‘The Playground: A Place full of Interactions and Diverse Expectations’, March 2007.

#### Unpublished Reports

- Case Studies of Home-based Workers in Bihar, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh, Report prepared for UNIFEM, New Delhi.
- Evaluation of the STEP (Support for Training and Employment) Programme, Report prepared for the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Govt. of India
- Through the Magnifying Glass: Women’s Work and Labour Force Participation in Urban Delhi, Report prepared for ILO, New Delhi.

#### Newspaper Clippings

- Violence against Women 2006: Compiled by Akila Ramesh, ISST, Delhi
- Employment Guarantee Act 2006: Compiled by Akila Ramesh, ISST, Delhi
- Social Security Measures for Organised and Unorganised Sectors 2006: Compiled by Akila Ramesh, ISST, Delhi
- Newspaper Clippings on Business Process Outsourcing 2006: Compiled by Grace Fernandez and Krishna Karanth, ISST, Bangalore.



- Newspaper Clippings on Violence against Women 2006: Compiled by Grace Fernandez and Krishna Karanth, ISST, Bangalore.

*Send your comments and suggestions to [rajibnandi@isst-india.org](mailto:rajibnandi@isst-india.org)*

*Coordinated by Rajib Nandi*

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# ISST Newsletter

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No.3

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## *Projects at ISST*

### *Completed Projects*

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### *Ongoing Projects*

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## ***OUTREACH PROGRAMME OF ISST***

ISST's Community Outreach Programme established a strong relationship with the community in this area in last six years. The key area of focus has been empowerment of younger people in the community through information, education and dialogue approach. ISST reaches out to children in a variety of innovative and interactive ways like discussion groups, workshops, theatre groups, film club, non-formal education, computer training etc.

In the months of July, August and September three meetings of the discussion group were organized. The first discussion focused on the Right to Information Act as a tool in the hands of citizens in a democratic milieu. It began with details on when and why the RTI Act was enacted. In the beginning children gave conventional/ obvious definitions of democracy like 'by the people, for the people, of the people'. The concepts of citizenship and public accountability were discussed. Participants also shared their experiences with the use of the RTI Act.

In August the meeting of the discussion group was arranged at SAATHI Centre, Kalyanpuri. The discussion was initiated by elucidating the difference between material pleasure and happiness. All participants shared experiences that gave them joy like travelling, going back to their village, meeting people, helping others, working hard, music, theatre, dance etc. During the course of the discussion the relationship of happiness with contentment, initiative, conscientiousness, wealth, interpersonal relations and a positive disposition was talked about. Everyone present talked about the meaning of happiness for them.

The meeting in September had an informal discussion on family and relationships. Responsibility towards one's family was discussed. The reasons behind the increasing incidence of divorce or separation were discussed. Different gender role stereotypes were talked about, possibly not broken or done away with but definitely questioned and offered alterations to.

A visit to the Mother Dairy plant in Delhi was also organized for children in September. Fifty children accompanied by five volunteers and educators of ISST community Centre made this visit. Here, the children were shown a film on the entire procedure involved in the milk production, right from the villages where it is collected to its pasteurization. Children also got to see the insulated tankers used to transport milk from the villages to Mother Dairy. The daily requirement of milk for different age groups was also shared. Children also enjoyed with relish the ice cream and flavoured milk they were treated to.

Amita Joshi and Manju Negi, Coordinator and Field Coordinator of ISST Community Centre respectively, developed a module under the Bachpan Programme, for identifying the level of understanding of children and interventions required. Various activities to increase concentration and motivation among children suited to our context have been initiated. These involve building blocks made of waste wood, enactment of famous children's stories by children themselves using props like masks, matching exercises etc.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> September, members of the ISST Board of Trustees visited SAATHI Centre. On this occasion, different events were put up including a play titled 'Andha Kaun' by the Nakshtra Theatre group and songs by the little children from the community. Independence Day celebrations included staging of the play '*Kuchh to poochho ji*' by *Nakshatra*,

The Coordinators of the ISST Community Centre made a visit to Indira Camp in Kalyanpuri to talk to residents about the importance of savings and encourage them to utilize the services at the Kalyanpuri branch of the State Bank of India. However, it was found that the people from the slum were denied any cooperation by the bank officials in opening a bank account. Most of the people were unable to collect the application form from the bank. Whereas, it was reported during the discussion that people go to the brokers for opening the bank account, who charge Rs. 200 per account. The manager of the East Delhi branch of the bank was met in this regard. A complaint will be logged by the people of Indira Camp against the Kalyanpuri branch since other methods like persuasion and dialogue seem to be failing.

### ***Workshops/Seminars Conducted by ISST***

#### **Informal Meeting of Group of Feminist Economists**

ISST organized a two-day informal meeting of Feminist Economists at India Habitat Centre. The meeting was sponsored by IDRC. A special committee of Feminist Economists was set up by the Planning Commission, Government of India in recognition of the potential that the economists have in making a plan in developing or designing development policy.

#### ***Forthcoming Event***

10 October 2007: IHC-ISST Gender Policy Forum, Casuarina Hall, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi

The eleventh session in the series of talks under the Gender Policy Forum invited Dr. Nilima Chitgopekar, Associate Professor, Jesus and Mary College, Delhi University will speak on "Durga".

### ***Workshops /Seminars Attended by ISST***

#### ***Ratna M. Sudarshan***

- Fourth India Policy Forum lecture on 'Economic reforms, External opening and Growth: China and India' by Prof T.N. Srinivasan, NCAER, July 17, 2007.
- Informal Meeting of the Group of Feminist Economists, July 28-29; 27-29 August, 2007.
- Presentation at Planning Commission, 29 August, 2007.
- 'Gender and Education', talk to trainees at the Management Development Programme on Incorporating gender Concerns in Public policy, Indian Institute of Public Administration, September 12, 2007.

- Meeting of Core Committee on SAARC Gender Data Base, UNIFEM Kathmandu, September 17-18, 2007.
- National Seminar on Women and Migration, Centre for Women's Development Studies
- Sponsored by the National Commission for Women, 19 - 20 September, 2007.

### ***Rina Bhattacharya***

- Convention on Legislative Co-ordination for Action on women's Issues. Organised by CSR, New Delhi. 17 August, 2007.
- Panel discussion on 'Eliminate discrimination not the Girl Child', organized by YUVA – A CRY Volunteer Group. New Delhi, 24 September 2007.

### ***Rajib Nandi***

- M.N. Srinivas Memorial Lecture, Dept. of Sociology, Delhi School of Economics. 17 July, 2007.

### ***Shrayana Bhattacharya***

- 16<sup>th</sup> annual conference on Feminist Economics, International Association for Feminist Economics, Bangkok, Thailand, June 29 – July 1, 2007.
- National Seminar on Women and Migration, Centre for Women's Development Studies
- Sponsored by the National Commission for Women, 19 - 20 September, 2007.

## ***Recent Publications***

### Articles

- The view from Abu Road: A grass-roots look at the impact of the National Rina Bhattacharya and Ratna M. Sudarshan. (published in The Mint: The Wall Street journal on 31 August, 2007)

### IEC Booklet

- Home-based Work: Case Studies and Policy Recommendations. Sponsored by HomeNet India and UNIFEM. (available on request)

Reports

- ISST Annual Report 2006-2007

*Send your comments and suggestions to [rajibnandi@isst-india.org](mailto:rajibnandi@isst-india.org)*

*Coordinated by Rajib Nandi*

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## *Projects at ISST*

### *Completed Projects*

#### **Progress of Women in South Asia 2007**

ISST has prepared a comprehensive analytical report on progress of South Asian women in the critical areas of concern identified in the Beijing Platform for Action. The report briefly illustrates the status of women and their progress in the context of changing economic scenarios and social policies in eight south Asian countries. It delineates, the strides made and the challenges that persist in relation to the advancement of women, particularly in relation to economic and political empowerment of women, violence against women, disaster preparedness, health and education, which had been flagged as priorities. The report will be officially released during the sixth South Asia ministerial Meeting Commemorating Beijing to be held in New Delhi in January 2008. The project has been sponsored by UNIFEM, South Asia Region office. The report is available online at <http://www.unifem.org.in/>

#### **Towards Inclusive Development**

Social inclusion is about reducing inequalities between the least developed groups of people and the rest of society, by ensuring that support and policy benefits reach to those least advantaged groups of people. ISST had been commissioned by UNDP, India to be a part of an advocacy report and contributed in its gender component. ISST has submitted a report “*Ensuring Inclusiveness from the Gender Perspective in the UNDP Country Programme for India (2008-2012)*” to UNDP in December 2007. The report discusses the status of women in seven UNDAF focus states of Bihar, Chattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. The report is prepared on the basis of desk reviews of existing studies and data.



## **A study on beedi workers in West Bengal**

SEWA is working towards organizing *beedi* workers in Sanmatipur gram panchayat in Murshidabad district of West Bengal. ISST is partnering with SEWA-Bharat to conduct a baseline survey. ISST has undertaken to formulate the questionnaire, train the investigators and analyse the data. The report will be given to SEWA-Bharat by the end of February 2008.

### ***Ongoing Projects***

#### **Revisiting Education for All 2006**

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ISST has been evaluating the Doosra Dasak programme in Rajasthan run by Foundation for Education and Development (FED), Jaipur and sponsored by Sir Dorabjee Tata Trust, Mumbai. The overall evaluation proposed to undertake a baseline survey and an evaluation in respect of the 3 blocks in which Doosra Dasak is being implemented. ISST already submitted a report contains the baseline survey findings carried out between July and August 2007. The evaluation study includes the following parameters: Coverage, Education, Health, youth, community participation, people's rights and public institutions and livelihood issues.

#### **Workshops to share research findings with home-based Workers**

ISST had undertaken a research study on the home-based workers in selected sectors in the states of Bihar, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh. The findings have been published in a user friendly brochure in English and Hindi with a note on policy implications. Now it is proposed to hold one-day long workshops in those three states to share the findings directly with the home-based workers. The workshops will help to enhance the capacity of partner organizations in the respective states to communicate and lobby for issues concerning home-based workers.

## **Forthcoming Projects**

### **Urban Poor Livelihoods in the National Capital Region: Emerging Trends**

ISST is going to undertake a study in the National Capital Region (NCR), Delhi broadly on livelihood issues of urban and rural poor in the context of growth, regional plan and migration. The study proposes to analyze current and emerging employment opportunities, quality of employment with special attention to obtaining a gendered understanding with focus on informal work for the poor and migrated population outside the traditional networks. The study will closely look at a sector within informal care economy i.e. domestic work and a sector that is continuously growing to offer employment opportunities i.e. IT-enabled services. It is expected that, findings from the proposed studies will lead to action and policy interventions that would directly benefit the group of workers studied and indirectly contribute to a more pro-poor and growth oriented policy and planning in the NCR.

### **Evaluation of STEP Project in Himachal Pradesh**

ISST is going to evaluate Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP) project being implemented by H.P. State Handloom and Handicrafts Cooperative Federation Ltd., Kullu. The proposed concurrent evaluation, on behalf of ministry of Women and Child Development, will assess whether the project has been implemented as per the STEP guidelines and its impact on the handicrafts sector in Himachal Pradesh in general and on women in particular.

### ***OUTREACH PROGRAMME OF ISST***

ISST's Community Outreach Programme established a strong relationship with the community in a few East-Delhi neighborhoods in last six years. The key area of focus has been empowerment of younger people in the community through information, education and dialogue. ISST reaches out to children in a variety of innovative and interactive ways like discussion groups, workshops, theatre groups, film club, non-formal education, computer training etc.

#### *Discussion Groups*

In last three months discussion groups were organized on gratitude and politeness, democracy and the Right to Information Act. It began with details on when and why the RTI Act was enacted. In the beginning children gave conventional/ obvious definitions of democracy like 'by the people, for the people, of the people'. The concepts of citizenship and public accountability were discussed. Participants also shared their experiences with the use of the RTI Act.

#### *Empowering Out of School Adolescents through Life Skill Education Program*

ISST with the Modi Care Foundation will be organising a Life Skill workshop with adolescent participants at *SAATHI Centre*. The workshop is expected to produce master trainers in the community who would work in their neighbourhood and train the peer educators.

#### *Theatre Group: Nakshatra*

The third theatre workshop by Rohit Tripathi from National School of Drama (NSD) was organized in October 2007. The workshop was initiated with different mental and physical exercises for the participants and it concluded with the preparation of a play. An introductory and ice breaking session was organized with children. A few games were played with the purpose of augmenting the confidence of children on stage. The weeklong workshop helped the members of Nakshatra to be more innovative and experimental. On the third day, all the participants were asked to prepare a play on a particular theme. On the fourth day, the children were given the script for a play and asked to put up a performance. The fifth day began with a reading of the script of a play '*Vaise to sab kushal mangal hai*'. The play talks of the inequalities in our society and how these can be done away with. In last two days, the participants staged the play in front of a small audience.

#### *Book Binding workshop*

The workshop was taken by a 14 year old boy, Shaan-e-alam, who is regular visitor at ISST's community centre. Book binding has been a source of earning for him for a while now. Shaan-e-alam talked to the children about the significance of books in our lives and thus the need to value and maintain them. He explained the whole process of binding books on the white board. The actual process of book binding was executed and completed by all the participants with Shaan-e-alam. The whole workshop was carried out in an interactive and cooperative manner. The rationale behind organizing the workshop was that binding the library books on their own will give the children a sense of ownership and responsibility towards the books. It will also be an added skill that can be used to earn some money. This workshop also augmented Shaan-e-alam's confidence and helped him better value his skill. Eighteen girls and five boys took part in the workshop.

#### *Activities on Free-ship Quota Scheme*

Our field workers have been pro active in mobilizing community people to avail the 20% reservation in the schools for children from economically backward families. We also record the experiences to understand the situation after one gets admission under this reservation policy. Volunteers of ISST Community Centre intend to file complaints with the Deputy Director of Education against schools which have been creating impediments in the successful implementation of the Freeship Quota scheme with nursery admissions this year.

#### *Study on the delivery and quality of education in MCD schools*

Our field educators have also been encouraging other families for enrollment of their children in MCD schools. Nevertheless, despite more and more children going to school and high and increasing enrolment rates, dropout from these primary schools remains alarmingly high. We have been looking into this issue, too, through visits to these schools and interaction with

teachers, children and parents. However, earlier these interventions were not being made in a systematic and sustainable manner. ISST with JOSH, a youth group, has decided to take up the issue in a more holistic and efficient way through an action study on the delivery and quality of education in MCD schools. The present intervention will seek to reveal, understand and critically analyze the role of the different stakeholders, viz. government, school authorities, teachers, parents and students. The action research will cover six schools, in the area of Kalyanpuri, Vinod Nagar and Trilokpuri. An application under the Right to Information Act has also been filed with the MCD, looking into the functioning of the Parents Teachers Associations and teachers' training. The planned budget for MCD primary schools for the year 2007-08 and 2008-09 and a list of guidelines for functioning of PTAs were also procured from the Education Department of the MCD.

### *Community Profile*

ISST Community Centre is presently working on drawing a profile of the neighbourhood of Kalyanpuri, the resettlement colony, slums and institutions and facilities. The process started with preparing a blueprint and holding focus group discussions with the adolescent and adult participants at Saathi centre. Delhi Police has been contacted for maps, crime charts and other information. In addition, Municipal Corporation of Delhi, the Office of the Local Counselor, the Election Office has been contacted for the voters' list, and local schools, dispensaries and NGOs.

### ***Workshops/Seminars Conducted by ISST***

The eleventh session in the series of talks under the Gender Policy Discussion Forum, jointly organized by Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST) and India Habitat Centre (IHC), was held on 10th October, 2007, at India Habitat Centre.

**Dr. Nilima Chitgopekar**, Associate Professor, Department of History, Jesus and Mary College, Delhi University presented a review of the varying forms, depictions and manifestations of the goddess 'Durga' through her study of ancient Hindu scripts and texts. **Ms. Ratna Sudarshan**, Director of ISST, discussed the important role of incorporating religion into studies pertaining to women's work and time use within the country.

### ***Forthcoming Event***

#### **ISST-IHC Gender Policy forum Series**

A panel discussion on

#### **New Age Gender: Masculinity and Gender in the 21st Century**

**Dr. Radhika Chopra** Reader, Department of Sociology, University of Delhi

**Mr. Rahul Roy** Film- maker

February 25, 2008, Casuarina Hall, India Habitat Centre, 6.30 P.M

*Workshops /Seminars Attended by ISST*

***Ratna M. Sudarshan***

- Launch of ICRIER-OECD Survey of the Indian Economy, October 9, 2007. New Delhi
- Awareness Creation Workshop for Gender Audit of National Energy Policies, IREDA, 10 October 2007. New Delhi
- UN Expert Group Meeting on "Enhancing social services policies to strengthen family well-being in Asia and the Pacific", Emerging Social Issues Division, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), 17 to 19 October 2007. Bangkok
- Experience of Local Self-Government: India and Norway, symposium organized by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, 29 October 2007. New Delhi
- Discussion on Inclusive Growth with Prof Nick Stern, NCAER, October 29, 2007, New Delhi.
- Policy Workshop on Impact of Macroeconomic Change on Employment in Retail Sector in India, organized by ILO, November 1, 2007. New Delhi.
- 'Globalization, Informal economy and Social protection' presented at workshop on Globalization, the state and civil society: economic inequality or social opportunity?, National Foundation for India, November 6, 2007. New Delhi
- 'Women's work and well being: some experiences in programme implementation' at Seminar Six: Work, Voice and Body in the Global Economy, ESRC Seminar Gender Work and Life in the New Global Economy, Gender Institute, LSE, November 9, 2007. London.
- National Convention, People's Budget Initiative, Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability (CBGA) November 15, 2007. New Delhi
- Conference on London and Delhi: Unlocking Opportunities, Mayor of London's office and CII, November 19, 2007. New Delhi.
- Planet Cities: accelerating the economic benefits and the quality of life of cities by tackling climate change and environmental issues, NCT Delhi, Mayor of London's office and TERI, November 20, 2007. New Delhi.
- India Roundtable on SAARC Gender Database, November 21, 2007. New Delhi
- Dr Sushila Nayar Literacy Award Presentation Ceremony, All India Committee For Eradication of Illiteracy among Women, November 29, 2007. New Delhi
- Speaker in Gender Panel, All India Mayors Conference, organized by the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation, December 8-9, 2007. Chandigarh
- Technical seminar, Prof R. Nagaraj, 'Key Issues facing Labour Market in India', ILO, December 21, 2007. New Delhi

### ***Rajib Nandi***

- National Dissemination Seminar: NFHS-3, October 11, 2007. New Delhi
- Partners for Prevention: Working with Boys and Men to prevent Gender based Violence, UNIFEM, December 7, 2007. New Delhi

### ***Shrayana Bhattacharya***

- Seminar-“Gender and Trade: How to Engender India’s National Foreign Trade Policy”, organized by CUTS International, 30 November 2007. Lucknow.

## ***Recent Publications***

### Articles

- “Reflections on Gender, Social Norms and the Conditions for Change” by Ratna M. Sudarshan in *The Journal*, Psychological Foundations Trust, New Delhi. Vol IX (2), September 2007.

### Reports

- Progress of Women in South Asia 2007, published by the Institute of Social Studies Trust with a support from UNIFEM, New Delhi. December 2007
- Baseline Study in Baap, Kishanganj and Peesangan Blocks in Rajasthan for the Doostra Dashak Project. Prepared by ISST and submitted to Foundation for Education and Development, Jaipur and Sir Dorabjee Tata Trust.
- Ensuring Inclusiveness from the Gender Perspective in the UNDP Country Programme for India (2008-2012)

*Compiled and edited by Rajib Nandi*

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