



ISST Newsletter

Vol.6

No.1

January – March 2009

ISST newsletter seeks to provide information on research and action programmes being conducted by the institute. The newsletter is available on ISST's website.

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's overall aim is research for social

change with focus on work and well-being from a gender perspective. In recognition of its work, ISST has been conferred NGO Consultative Status by the United Nations.

Projects at ISST

Completed Projects

Evaluation of STEP Projects in Sanidhya Samiti, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh for Handicrafts, Report submitted to Ministry of Woman and Child Development, Government of India, March 2009

Ongoing Projects

The Policy Research Environment and Policy Research Organizations in South Asia

ISST has undertaken a research project entitled, 'The Policy Research Environment and Policy Research Organizations in South Asia'. The overall objective of the project is to better understand nature of policy organizations (PRO's) in South Asia. The study includes a set of papers, scientometric analysis, and roundtables with leading researchers. These stand-alone pieces will also inform and support the generation of a conceptual framework to understand and assess the performance of policy research organizations in South Asia. The project is supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada.

Urban Poor Livelihoods in the National Capital Region: Emerging Trends

ISST is conducting a study in the National Capital Region (NCR), Delhi broadly on livelihood issues of urban 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 and IT-enabled services. The proposed study is situated in the context of growth patterns on the one hand, and the regional plan for the NCR on the other.

The research team had reviewed relevant literature and data and visited selected parts of the city to get an initial sense of the issues and conditions of work facing domestic workers and low-end IT workers. Currently a questionnaire survey is going on in Delhi and four other NCR towns. The questionnaire survey is supplemented by in-depth interviews. In its next phase, the research team will start analyzing the primary data. It is expected that the findings from this study will help in strategizing some long term intervention for the poor in these sectors. ISST is in touch with other civil society organizations, working in these fields. This project is being sponsored by Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, Mumbai.

Examining the NREGA – Women’s Participation and Impacts in Himachal Pradesh and Kerala

ISST has been invited to collaborate with the Institute of Development Studies, Sussex in connection with the project “Social Protection in Asia Phase (SPA) II: Examining the NREGA – Women’s Participation and Impacts in Himachal Pradesh and Kerala”. SPA is a research, advocacy and network building programme funded by the Ford Foundation and the IDRC. The current study addresses the following themes: the current developmental potential of the NREGA in the study areas; the link between the women’s groups and NREGA implementation and building institutions for extending social protection, in particular the role and ability of the Panchayats. It is expected that the study would help in building institutions for extending social protection. The study has already completed its first phase of field work in Palakkad district, Kerala. The second phase of the field study will be resumed in the month of March, both in Palakkad and in Sirmaur district (Himachal Pradesh). Currently, a review of secondary literature is being carried out at ISST.

Revisiting Education for All 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, Uttaranchal, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh over the last ten years. The study also intends to do a citizens’ report on the current state of elementary education in these states. In addition to that, ISST has carried out a few

case studies of good practices in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. The final report from the project is under preparation. Recently the project has been extended further for another year in order to undertake further analysis. The study is supported by the International Development Research Centre, Canada.

Empowering Adolescent Girls as future leaders and Trainers

ISST has undertaken an evaluation on Empowering Adolescent Girls as future leaders and trainers for “Indian Academy for Self Employed Women”. The study will assess the impacts of the trainings being imparted to the adolescent girls of Ahmadabad city. The study consists of two phases – baseline and end line. The base-line survey has already carried out in Ahmedabad. The findings are being analysed currently. The end line study will be carried out after one and half year from the baseline study.

Baseline Study to assess the impact of SEWA’s work in Delhi

ISST has completed a baseline study sponsored by SEWA Bharat, Delhi to assess the impact of SEWA’s work in Delhi in the areas of capacity building and promotion and protection of livelihoods with street vendors, construction workers and home-based embroidery workers. SEWA had started working with these workers in five different parts of Delhi, namely Jahangirpuri (North Delhi), Raghbir Nagar (West Delhi), Sundarnagri (East Delhi), Rajiv Nagar (East Delhi) and Anand Vihar (North-East Delhi). ISST has conducted a base-line survey in those areas through questionnaire survey and case studies. The survey and interviews were supplemented with the discussions with SEWA Bharat activists on various issues like advocacy, representation efforts and achievements. A report has been prepared on the basis of this study. An end-line survey will be conducted after a year to study the impact of SEWA Bharat intervention.

Evaluation of Doosra Dashak

ISST has completed a baseline survey of the Doosra Dashak programme in three blocks in Rajasthan, sponsored by Sir Dorabjee Tata Trust, Mumbai. A report on the findings has been submitted. The report includes information on education, health, youth, community participation, people’s rights and public institutions and livelihood issues. An end line survey will be conducted after two years to see the impact of Doosra Dashak programme in these blocks.

Women's Contribution to GDP

ISST has been assigned by the ILO's sub regional office in New Delhi to prepare a background paper on Women's contribution to GDP. The paper would be a part of the high profile National Conference on women's work to be held jointly by ILO and ISST.

OUTREACH PROGRAMME OF ISST

Ever since its inception in 2000, ISST Community Outreach Programme in East Delhi has established a strong relationship with the community through its activities with the community members. It continues to empower the youth through information, education and dialogue and reaches out to them 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 the last three months, discussion groups were organized on Good Behaviour, Democracy and RTI and Swaraj. Adolescent boys and girls from the neighbouring communities, coordinators, peer educators and volunteers of the community centre participated in the lively discussion. The young members initiated the discussion by sharing their thoughts on and meaning of "good behaviour". The discussion session concluded on the note that one has to be courageous to accept one's faults and those who accept are the ones who can change themselves. In the next group discussion on 'Democracy and RTI', the children initiated the discussion, they shared what democracy means to them and in the group discussion on RTI, the children were made aware of what is RTI, what problems they face and where to use right to information and how to write? On the discussion on Swaraj, the discussion was centered around the meaning, understanding and importance of Swaraj. The discussion session concluded with the note that despite all difficulties a person should be honest in whatever he does and should remember that an honest person faces a lot of problems.

Life Skills Workshop

A three day Life Skills Workshop was organized by two students of AIIMS. The topics that were addressed as follows: decision making, conflict management, critical thinking, communication and interpersonal relationship and coping and self management skills. Role play method was used to understand this better and on the concluding day a quiz was also organized to find out how much the participants understood and to apply the techniques that were taught during the workshop.

Workshops/Seminars Conducted by ISST

ISST-IDRC Roundtable on Policy Research and Policy Research Environment : ISST-IDRC Roundtable on Policy Research Organisations and Policy Research Environment was held in Galle, Sri Lanka on January 21, 2009; in Puducherry, India, on January 24-25, 2009; and in Kathmandu, Nepal on March 5-6, 2009.

Workshops /Seminars Attended by ISST

Ratna M. Sudarshan

- Board of Trustees meeting, National Foundation for India, New Delhi, January 7, 2009.
- Inaugural Conference: Law and Social Sciences Research Network, JNU, New Delhi, January 8, 2009
- Release of Annual Status of Education Report (Rural) 2008, January 13, 2009.
- ISST-IDRC Roundtable on Policy Research Environment in Sri Lanka, Galle, January 21, 2009.
- ISST-IDRC Roundtable on Policy Research Environment in India, Puducherry, January 24-25, 2009.
- International Workshop on Social Protection Policies for the Urban Informal Sector across South Asia, Developing Countries Research Centre, University of Delhi, January 30, 2009.
- Talk on Gender Issues to Friends of Pathfinder International (USA), New Delhi, February 5, 2009.
- Workshop on Women's Empowerment, organized by Women and Child Development, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh, Bhopal, February 11, 2009.
- Expert Consultation on the 2009 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development, United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women, Copenhagen, Denmark, February 17-19, 2009.
- 'Facing global and local challenges: the new dynamics for higher education', sub-regional conference of South, South-West and Central Asia on higher education, UNESCO and NUEPA, New Delhi, February 25-26, 2009.

- First meeting of Managing Committee for National Resource Centre, Mahila Samakhya, at IIPA, New Delhi, March 3, 2009.
- ISST-IDRC Roundtable on Policy Research, Kathmandu, March 5-6, 2009.
- ASER Centre: Future Directions, March 16, 2009.
- Round Table on Home Workers in Global Supply Chains: Towards building a collaborative approach, organized by SEWA Bharat, March 28, 2009.

Madhuri Karak

- Round Table on Professional Support for the NREGA with Social Science Research Institutions, Ministry of Rural Development. November 11, 2008.
- National Consultation on ‘*Strengthening Women’s Voices in Budgets and Policies*’, organized by CGBA and the Ministry of Woman and Child Development. November 12 - 13, 2008.
- ‘*The International Mobility of Talent: Trends and Development Implications*’ by Anthony P. D’Costa, organized by the Institute for Human Development. January 16, 2009.

Recent Publications

Reports:

- ***Evaluation of Doosra Dashak Programme in Laxmangarh and Pindwara Blocks, Rajasthan***, submitted to Foundation for Education and Development, Jaipur.
- ***Report on Baseline Study for Impact Assessment of the Project Empowering Adolescent Girls as Future Leaders and Trainers***, submitted to SEWA Academy, Ahmedabad.
- ***Health Needs of Beedi Workers in Murshibad district, West Bengal: Report of the Baseline Survey in Sanmatipur, Murshibad***, Report submitted to SEWA Bharat.
- ***Evaluation of STEP Projects in Sanidhya Samiti, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh for Handicrafts***, Report submitted to Ministry of Woman and Child Development, Government of India, March 2009.

Newspaper Clippings:

- *Moving Towards an Inclusive Social Security System*: Newspaper Clippings on Social Security in India 2008.
- *Growth of Microfinance in India: Some Innovative Initiatives* (Newspaper Clippings on Microfinance in India 2008).

Staff News

- Ms. Mubashira Zeidi left the organization in March 2009
- Ms. Bidisha Chaudhury joined ISST as Research Associate on April 1, 2009

Compiled and edited by Rajib Nandi

Send your comments and suggestions to rajibnandi@isst-india.org

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ISST Newsletter

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April – June 2009

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change with focus on work and well-being from a gender perspective. In recognition of its work, ISST has been conferred NGO Consultative Status by the United Nations.

Projects at ISST

Ongoing Projects

Rapid Assessment Study of the Impact of the Financial and Economic Slowdown on the Handicrafts Industry in Sanganer, Rajasthan

ISST has completed this rapid assessment study for ILO, New Delhi. Two sectors, namely the hand-printed textile and hand-made paper have been studied under this project. The study is based on detailed interviews with the entrepreneurs of block printing and hand-made paper industry at Sanganer and workers both at unit level and home-based. Apart from this, representatives from block printers' Association and Federation of Rajasthan Handicraft Exporters were also interviewed. Secondary data published by the concerned ministries have been used in the study. A consultation with the stake holders represented by the government, workers, employers, entrepreneurs, trade union leaders, and scholars was organized in Jaipur as a part of the ILO initiative to deal with the economic slowdown. A draft report of the study has been submitted to ILO, New Delhi.

Baseline and End line Study for Street Vendors in Ahmedabad City

ISST has undertaken a baseline study on Street Vendors in Ahmedabad under project, "New Strategy of SEWA: To Save the Livelihoods of women street vendors in the Era of World Class Cities". SEWA has organized 57110 vendors in Ahmedabad city with an objective to save the vendors' livelihood and to bring them in the main stream. To assess the impact of SEWA's work on the socio-economic and working conditions of street vendors in

Ahmedabad city in the areas of capacity building and promotion and protection of livelihoods with street vendors, Mahila SEWA Trust has commissioned the ISST to conduct an impact study through baseline and end line research survey.

Impact of Micro Finance to Women on Reduction of Domestic Violence: Case Study in Haryana

Several studies have confirmed that domestic violence is widespread in India. The provision of micro finance to women is a way of 'empowering' women. ISST has undertaken this study with the objectives to investigate whether there is any evidence to support the view that micro finance to women reduces the incidence of domestic violence, and if so under what circumstances. In the light of the high importance placed upon micro credit and SHGs in the current policy and planning framework, it is believed that more information in the context of north Indian states would be useful. The study has conducted on a small sample of individual members from 12000 SHGs in the state. A detailed questionnaire was developed by the Ministry of Women Child Development, Govt. of India to canvass to women SHG members. Canvassing a questionnaire may not be enough to capture the sensitive issues, hence focused group discussions and in-depth interviews were carried out with the women in each of the study locations. The three districts selected to conduct the survey were Rewari, Ambala and Jajjar. A total of 202 women (SHG) members across three districts in Haryana were interviewed. Data Analysis is under progress. This study is sponsored by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Govt. of India.

Institutional Strengthening and Support: IT Up-gradation, Training, Research and Dissemination

ISST has received an Institutional support grant from IDRC for a set of activities including IT Infrastructure up-gradation, IT training with the intention of building up research and dissemination capacities at the Institute. ISST is also undertaken a study to assess the kinds of IT related interventions that are present in Bangalore which reach out to low income groups and especially children, and what if any are the gaps that exist. The objective of this study would be fulfilled through secondary information available - published and unpublished data and literature on the subject. This will be supplemented by a field survey of selected training programmes in the city and interviews of key informants. A small sample of trainees will be interviewed to understand the effectiveness of programmes and pathways to work.

The Policy Research Environment and Policy Research Organizations in South Asia

ISST has undertaken a research project entitled, 'The Policy Research Environment and Policy Research Organizations in South Asia'. This project includes various activities designed to develop better understanding of the nature of policy research organizations in South Asia and the varying environments in which they function. A set of background papers have been commissioned and three Roundtables held with heads of organizations from five countries in South Asia. The project is supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada.

Urban Poor Livelihoods in the National Capital Region: Emerging Trends

The study examines livelihood issues with special attention to obtaining a gendered understanding and a focus on informal work for the poor and migrated population. The study specifically looks 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 and low-end IT work. More than one thousand households have been surveyed under each category adopting a representative sampling method. Apart from this, case studies have been done to supplement the findings from the survey. It is expected that, findings from the present study will lead to action and strategizing some long term policy interventions that would directly benefit the groups of workers studied. This project is being sponsored by Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, Mumbai.

Examining the NREGA – Women's Participation and Impacts in Himachal Pradesh and Kerala

ISST is contributing through this study to the research programme Social Protection in Asia' (SPA) Phase II co-ordinated by IDS, Sussex and supported by the Ford Foundation and IDRC. SPA is a research, advocacy and network building programme. The ISST study will explore the likely reasons behind varying levels of women's participation, wider impacts of the programme, and the various ways in which local contexts influence outcomes. The study has already completed the field works in Palakkad district, Kerala, and Sirmaur district, Himachal Pradesh. A review of secondary literature is also carried out at ISST.

Revisiting Education for All

Revisiting Education for All (REFA), a field-based study of the schooling situation in rural India, entered its third year and initial findings from the study have been shared through seminar presentations. ISST Bangalore has completed qualitative studies in the south of India looking at innovative initiatives in education. The project is a collaborative venture between Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST), New Delhi and researchers based at

Collaborative Research and Dissemination (CORD). The project is supported by IDRC, Canada.

National Consultation on ‘Current Employment Strategies and Women’s Work’

ISST will partner the ILO and provide technical inputs towards organizing the National Consultation. A background paper on Women’s Contribution to the GDP will be prepared/ commissioned by ISST. This project is *sponsored by ILO, New Delhi*

Empowering Adolescent Girls as future leaders and Trainers

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Baseline Study to assess the impact of SEWA’s work in Delhi

ISST completed a baseline study sponsored by SEWA Bharat, Delhi to assess the impact of SEWA’s work in Delhi in the areas of capacity building and promotion and protection of livelihoods with street vendors, construction workers and home-based embroidery workers. ISST has conducted surveys and interviews which were supplemented with the discussions with SEWA Bharat activists on issues like advocacy, representation efforts and achievements. An end-line survey will be conducted after a year to study the impact of SEWA Bharat intervention.

Evaluation of Doosra Dashak

ISST has completed a baseline survey of the Doosra Dashak programme in three blocks in Rajasthan, sponsored by Sir Dorabjee Tata Trust, Mumbai. A report on the findings has been submitted. The report includes information on education, health, youth, community participation, people’s rights and public institutions and livelihood issues. An end line survey will be conducted after two years to see the impact of Doosra Dashak programme in these blocks.

OUTREACH PROGRAMME OF ISST

Ever since its inception in 2000, the activities and areas of work of ISST Community Outreach Programme in East Delhi has been expanding. It continues to empower the youth through information, education and dialogue and reaches out to them 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 the last three months, discussion groups were organized on 'Friendship' and 'Honesty'. Adolescent boys and girls from the neighbouring communities, coordinators, peer educators and volunteers of the community centre participated in a series of lively discussions. The young members initiate the discussion by sharing their thought. The discussion session of friendship concluded on a note that a true friend will always show you the right path. In the group discussion on 'Honesty', they shared what honesty means to them. The discussion session concluded that despite all difficulties a person should be honest in all occasions. One should remember that an honest person might face lot of problems.

Summer Camp

Like previous years, this year also a month long Summer Camp was held at Saathi Youth Resource Centre. During the Summer Camp, a theatre workshop, a henna workshop and a dance workshop were organised. The youth and children enjoyed the workshops.

New Initiatives of ISST:

ISST Community College

ISST Community College is a new collaborative initiative with Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) that will offer two programmes: Six month Certificate Course in Computer Education and Six month Certificate Course in Functional English Language. The certificates will be awarded by IGNOU on successful completion of the course. IGNOU's initiative of Community College is an alternative system of education which aims to empower individuals through appropriate skills development leading to gainful employment in collaboration with the local industry and the community. It's expected that community colleges will help in developing skills towards employability particularly for the marginalized and underprivileged sections of society. The courses will start from July 2009.

Jan Shikshan Sansthan Resource Centre:

This year in August, Saathi Youth Resource Centre will start offering mobile repair training programme in collaboration with Jan Shikshan Sansthan to the youth of the community.

Workshops/Seminars Conducted by ISST

- **Gender Policy Forum (in association with India Habitat Centre) Casuarina Hall, IHC, 15 May, 2009**

State, Market, Family: The Care Regime in India: The fifteenth session in the series of talks under gender Policy Forum, jointly organized by ISST as India Habitat Centre (IHC) was held on 15 May 2009 at Casuarina Hall, India Habitat Centre. The key speaker for this forum was Prof. Rajni Palriwala, Department of Sociology, Delhi School of Economics. The Discussants were Dr. Elizabeth Hill, Sydney University and Ms. Sudeshna Sengupta, Mobile Creches, Delhi.

- **Stake Holders Meeting on the Effects of the Global Financial Slowdown on Sanganer Handicrafts Cluster, (in association with ILO, New Delhi) Om Niwas, Jaipur, 17 June, 2009.**

Workshops /Seminars Attended by ISST

Ratna M. Sudarshan

- Inception workshop on baseline exercise for Mahila Samakhya, April 27, DFID
- International Seminar on Comparative Contexts of Discrimination: Social Exclusion and Equal Opportunity Policies in Asia, Indian Institute of Dalit Studies, 8 May 2009.
- Launch workshop of National Youth Readership Survey, NCAER and NBT, May 18.
- Interaction with NFI interns, May 19.
- Community Learning: a workshop, Almora 22-24 May, organized by Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Paryavaran Shiksha Sansthan (Uttarakhand Environmental Education Centre, UEEC), dolcelab (Lab for Design of Learning Collaboration, and Experience) and by the US-India Educational Foundation (the Fulbright Commission).
- Talk on 'Promoting Gender Equality in India' at DU-ORF Summer Workshop, Observer Research Foundation, June 29.
- Social Protection in Asia: Experiences, Lessons and Barriers to Extension, 1-2 June, and SPA Annual Research Workshop 3-4 June, Hanoi, Vietnam. Organised by IDS, IHD and ISDS.
- Delhi City Consultation for Inputs on Delhi City to UN HABITAT The State of the World's Cities Report 2010-11, June 27, organized by Society for Development Studies.

Rajib Nandi

- Fourth Expert Group Meeting on Dealing with the Effects of Economic slowdown, organized by ILO, at Ministry of Labour and Employment, Shram Shakti Bhavan, Rafi Marg, New Delhi. 24 June 2009

Recent Publications

Research papers:

Ratna Sudarshan

- Child Labour in Industrial Outworker Households in India (with Mario Biggeri and Santosh Mehrotra) published in EPW, March 21, 2009 Vol. XLIV, No. 12

Newspaper Clippings 2008:

- Newspaper Clippings on: Right to Education, NREGA, Violence against Women in India.

Staff News

- Ms. Ammel Sharon joined ISST Bangalore in May 2009 as Research Associate
- Ms. Sudhamani Nalini joined ISST Bangalore in June 2009 as Project Leader

Compiled and edited by Rajib Nandi

Send your comments and suggestions to rajibnandi@isst-india.org

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WIEGO Law Project: Issues Paper on Domestic Workers

ISST had undertaken an assignment from SEWA Bharat, Delhi to write an 'Issues Paper' on Domestic Workers. The paper focuses the key issues that have emerged in the sector of domestic workers and documents labour specific legislations in order to develop a platform of legal demands. The overall goal of WEIGO (Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing) project is to make a significant contribution to the development

of an enabling legal environment for informal workers that promotes work and economic opportunity, labour rights, benefits and protection. The paper has been used in national level stakeholder consultation in July 2009, organized by ILO.

Evaluation of Doosra Dashak

ISST has completed a baseline and end-line survey (April 2007 to April 2009) of the Doosra Dashak programme in three blocks in Rajasthan which is supported by Sir Dorabjee Tata Trust, Mumbai. The project is focused on creating youth activists in villages who will be future leaders in the community. The baseline and end-line evaluation has been done in Bap, Kishanganj and Pisangan blocks of Rajasthan. The evaluation report has been submitted to Foundation for Education and Development, Jaipur.

Documentation of the training programme organized by Mahila Samakhya Karnataka

ISST Bangalore was commissioned to document the state level capacity building training programme “*Enhancing the role of women in strengthening democracy*” from 20th to 22nd July 2009 at Bangalore organized by Karnataka Mahila Samakhya. ISST has submitted the report to Karnataka Mahila Samakhya in July 2009.

Ongoing Projects

Documentation of the Experiences of UKSN Women’s Groups in Uttarakhand

The objective of this study is to document the experiences of Uttarakhand Mahila Parishad (Uttarakhand Women’s Federation), a network of around 450 women’s groups (Mahila Sangathans or Mahila Mangal Dal), spread over seven districts of Uttarakhand. The Parishad is a part of the larger network under the umbrella of Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Paryavaran Shikshan Sansthan (Uttarakhand Environment Education Centre), which has been working in the hill villages of Uttarakhand since 1988 along with community based organisations in different regions.

Based on interviews and discussions with women’s groups in villages in 14 villages in Kumaon and Garhwal, and with community organisers from May 2009-August 2009 the study explores the process of formation of groups; their endeavours in the spheres of natural resource management; accessing government services; resolving conflict; political participation; bringing about social change and change in gender relations. It attempts to capture the strategies and challenges in the process of organisation and the evolution of groups over the years and highlight the unique aspects of the functioning of groups in

different villages. The duration of this study is from April to December 2009. The study is sponsored by Rajeshwar and Susheela Trust.

Impact of Micro Finance to Women on Reduction of Domestic Violence: Case Study in Haryana

The provision of micro finance to women is a way of ‘empowering’ women. ISST has undertaken this study with the objectives to investigate whether there is any evidence to support the view that micro finance to women reduces the incidence of domestic violence, and if so under what circumstances. In the light of the high importance placed upon micro credit and SHGs in the current policy and planning framework, it is believed that more information in the context of north Indian states would be useful. The study has conducted on a small sample of individual members from 12000 SHGs in the state. A detailed questionnaire was developed by the Ministry of Women Child Development, Govt. of India to canvass to women SHG members. Canvassing a questionnaire may not be enough to capture the sensitive issues, hence focused group discussions and in-depth interviews were carried out with the women in each of the study locations. The three districts selected to conduct the survey were Rewari, Ambala and Jajjar. A total of 202 women (SHG) members across three districts in Haryana were interviewed. Data Analysis is under progress. The findings of the study would be presented in a workshop on 30 November this year. This study is sponsored by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Govt. of India.

National Consultation on ‘Current Employment Strategies and Women’s Work

ISST partnered with ILO to provide technical inputs towards organizing the National Consultation on current employment strategies and women’s work on July 6-7, 2009. A background paper on Women’s Contribution to the GDP was commissioned by ISST. The papers and the conference report are being finalized. This project was *sponsored by ILO, New Delhi*

Revisiting Education for All

Revisiting Education for All (REFA), a field-based study of the schooling situation in rural India, entered its third year and initial findings from the study have been shared through seminar presentations. ISST Bangalore has completed qualitative studies in the southern states of India looking at innovative initiatives in education. The project is supported by IDRC, Canada.

Baseline and End line Study for Street Vendors in Ahmedabad City

ISST has undertaken a baseline study on Street Vendors in Ahmedabad under project, “New Strategy of SEWA: To Save the Livelihoods of women street vendors in the Era of World Class Cities”. SEWA has organized 57110 vendors in Ahmedabad city with an objective to save the vendors’ livelihood and to bring them in the main stream. To assess the impact of SEWA’s work on the socio-economic and working conditions of street vendors in Ahmedabad city in the areas of capacity building and promotion and protection of livelihoods with street vendors, Mahila SEWA Trust has commissioned the ISST to conduct an impact study through baseline and end line research survey. ISST has already submitted the report of the baseline survey to SEWA in September 2009. The end-line survey would be conducted in 2011.

Institutional Strengthening and Support: IT Up-gradation, Training, Research and Dissemination

ISST has received an Institutional support grant from IDRC in February 2009 for a set of activities including IT Infrastructure up-gradation, IT training with the intention of building up research and dissemination capacities at the Institute. ISST completed a weeklong training programme on applications of Windows Vista and Microsoft Office 2007 from 24 July to 3 August 2009 at ISST’s Habitat Centre office for its staff members. The training was conducted by the Career development centre of HCL Infosystems Limited. ISST also organized a three-day training workshop on Free and Open Source Software and Linux with assistance from Sarai, CSDS, Delhi between 11 and 13 September 2009 at Saathi Centre, Kalyanpuri for the young and adolescent members of the centre. As a part of the project, ISST Bangalore is presently engaged in carrying out a Study of IT sector programmes for the Youth from Low Income families in Bangalore. Mapping of the training institutions of Malleswaram area is being done and questionnaires are administered to elicit information regarding the youths from low income families. Another set of questionnaire is being used to carry out interviews with the working youths from the low income group in the IT sector. In connection with this various NGOs in Bangalore have been visited.

The Policy Research Environment and Policy Research Organizations in South Asia

ISST has undertaken a research project entitled, ‘The Policy Research Environment and Policy Research Organizations in South Asia’ with support from IDRC, Canada.. This project includes various activities designed to develop better understanding of the nature of policy research organizations in South Asia and the varying environments in which they function. A set of background papers have been commissioned and three Roundtables held

with heads of organizations from five countries in South Asia. The project will continue till May next year.

Urban Poor Livelihoods in the National Capital Region: Emerging Trends

The study examines livelihood issues with special attention to obtaining a gendered understanding and a focus on informal work for the poor and migrated population. The study specifically looks 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 and low-end IT work. More than one thousand households have been surveyed under each category adopting a representative sampling method. Apart from this, case studies have been done to supplement the findings from the survey. It is expected that, findings from the present study will lead to action and strategizing some long term policy interventions that would directly benefit the groups of workers studied. The findings from these two studies would be presented in a two-day workshop in November this year. This project is being sponsored by Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, Mumbai.

Examining the NREGA – Women’s Participation and Impacts in Himachal Pradesh and Kerala

ISST is contributing through this study to the research programme Social Protection in Asia’ (SPA) Phase II co-ordinated by IDS, Sussex and supported by the Ford Foundation and IDRC. SPA is a research, advocacy and network building programme. The ISST study will explore the likely reasons behind varying levels of women’s participation, wider impacts of the programme, and the various ways in which local contexts influence outcomes. The study has already completed the field works in Palakkad district, Kerala, and Sirmaur district, Himachal Pradesh. A review of secondary literature is also carried out at ISST. The study continues till June 2010.

Empowering Adolescent Girls as future leaders and Trainers

ISST has undertaken an evaluation on Empowering Adolescent Girls as future leaders and trainers for “Indian Academy for Self Employed Women”. The study intends to assess the impacts of the trainings being imparted to the adolescent girls of Ahmedabad city. The study consists of two phases – baseline and end line. The base-line survey carried out in Ahmedabad in 2008. The end line study is currently being completed.

Baseline Study to assess the impact of SEWA's work in Delhi

ISST completed a baseline study in September 2008 sponsored by SEWA Bharat, Delhi to assess the impact of SEWA's work in Delhi in the areas of capacity building and promotion and protection of livelihoods with street vendors, construction workers and home-based embroidery workers. ISST has conducted surveys and interviews which were supplemented with the discussions with SEWA Bharat activists on issues like advocacy, representation efforts and achievements. An end-line survey will be conducted after two years in 2010 to study the impact of SEWA Bharat intervention.

OUTREACH PROGRAMME OF ISST

Ever since its inception in 2000, the activities and areas of work of ISST Community Outreach Programme in East Delhi has been expanding. It continues to empower the youth through information, education and dialogue and reaches out to them in a variety of innovative and interactive ways like discussion groups, workshops, theatre groups, film club, non-formal education, computer training etc. Recently, ISST has opened ISST Community College, which is affiliated to Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) and a Gender Resource Centre under the scheme of Delhi government.

Discussion Groups

In the last three months, discussion groups were organized on Friendship, Reservation and Corruption. Adolescent boys and girls from the neighbouring communities, coordinators, peer educators and volunteers of the community centre participated in the lively discussions. The young members initiated the discussion by sharing their thought on and meaning of "friendship and who is a true friend". The discussion session concluded on the note that a true friend will always show you the right path. In the next group discussion on 'Reservation', the children initiated the discussion, they shared what reservation means to them. The third session was on "Corruption". During this discussion session, the facilitator motivated the children to write a complaint to Food commissioner as they complained of not getting ration in proper quantity which is also of very poor quality.

ISST Community College

ISST Community College is a new collaborative initiative with Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) that will offer two programmes: Six month Certificate Course in Computer Education and Six month Certificate Course in Functional English Language. The certificates will be awarded by IGNOU on successful completion of the course. IGNOU's initiative of Community College is an alternative system of education which aims to empower individuals through appropriate skills development leading to gainful employment in collaboration with the local industry and the community. It's expected that community

colleges will help in developing skills towards employability particularly for the marginalized and underprivileged sections of society. The course on Functional English has been started from July 2009.

Jan Shikshan Sansthan Resource Centre:

This year in August, Saathi Youth Resource Centre conducted a mobile repair training programme in collaboration with Jan Shikshan Sansthan to the youth of the community. This was an initiative of ISST to offer vocational courses to children and youth from underprivileged sections of the society. Twenty-three boys attended this course at Saathi Saathi Centre, Kalyanpuri.

Workshop on Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) and Linux:

A three-day workshop on Linux and Foss was organized at Saathi Centre, ISST, Kalyanpuri between September 11 and 13, 2009. The logistics of the workshop was organised by ISST while the training part was handled by Sarai, a programme under Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) conducts research and action in the field of information, media and urban society. Around 15 participants, mostly the peer educators of ISST community centre participated in the workshop. The workshop was a new experience for the participants. They understood that Linux and Free and Open Source Software are able to provide a platform for them where they can explore the world of computer applications freely and legally. The participants showed a lot of interest and aptitude to know about the FOSS philosophy its advantages. They were also interested to learn the new software and applications like GIMP and Open Office.

Workshops/Seminars Conducted by ISST

- **Workshop on Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) and Linux:** The three-day training workshop was organized by ISST with Sarai, Delhi at Saathi Centre, Kalyanpuri. 11-13 September, 2009.
- **National Workshop on National Rural Employment Guarantee in India - lessons from Implementation:** The two-day national workshop was organized by Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi and Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST), New Delhi under the Social Protection in Asia (SPA) Programme at Bangalore, 8-9 September 2009.
- **National Consultation on current employment strategies and women's work:** The two-day national consultation was organized by ILO and Ministry of Labour and Employment in partnership with ISST in New Delhi, 6-7 July 2009.

- **Gender Policy Forum (in association with India Habitat Centre) Casurina Hall, IHC: 4 August, 2009**

Her Earnings ‘Endowments’: An Exploration of Asian Wives’ Contribution to their Household Income in the United States: The sixteenth session in the series of talks under gender Policy Forum, jointly organized by ISST as India Habitat Centre (IHC) was held on 4 August 2009 at Casuarina Hall , India Habitat Centre. The speaker for this forum was Dr. Veena S. Kulkarni, Assistant Professor of Sociology, Dept. of Criminology, Sociology and Geography, State University, Arkansas, USA. The Discussant was Dr. Lekha Chakraborty, Fellow, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, New Delhi.

Workshops /Seminars Attended by ISST

Ratna M. Sudarshan

- Preparatory meeting for developing Family Development Index, Samajik Suvudha Sangam, Govt of NCT of Delhi, New Delhi, 3 July 2009.
- National Launch of 2-year Associate Degree Programme in Community Colleges, IGNOU, Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi 4 July 2009.
- Board of Trustees meeting, National Foundation for India, Delhi. 14 July 2009.
- National Consultation with Civil Society on Domestic Workers Issues, ILO, 15-16 July 2009.
- Consultation on Gender in Microfinance: Issues and Challenges, Indian School of Microfinance for Women, at ICSSR, New Delhi, 20 July 2009.
- Academic Council meeting, Institute of Marketing and Management, New Delhi, 21 July 2009.
- ‘Home Based Workers’ presented at seminar on ‘Addressing Urban Poverty in India: Opportunities and Challenges’, Oxfam India, New Delhi. 29 July 2009.
- National seminar on universalisation of social security scheme, organized by Social Security Association of India and FES, Kolkata, 31 July 2009.
- Workshop to launch the DFID/ESRC Joint Scheme for Research on Poverty Alleviation, 4 August 2009
- ‘Selected Issues from IDRC-ISST Roundtables on Policy Research Environment and Organisations’ and ‘Policy research and Practice in India’, presented at Linking Research with Policy: South Asia Regional Workshop, organized by Forest Action, Kathmandu, 6-7 August 2009.
- Uttarakhand Mahila Sangathan Meeting, Almora, 10-11 August 2009.
- Opening Session of National Conference of Ministers of Environment and Forests, 18 August 2009, New Delhi.
- Panel discussion on “*From Outlays to Outcomes: Getting Development from Development Expenditures*” organized by The Centre for Development Finance and The Accountability Initiative, 25 August 2009.
- ‘Local contexts and impact on women: Kerala and Himachal’, presented at Workshop on ‘NREGA and Women’s Empowerment’, IHD, New Delhi. 31 August 2009

Sudhamani. N

- Enhancing the role of women in strengthening democracy: state level capacity building training organized by Mahila Samakhya Karnataka. Bangalore. 20-22 July, 2009.
- Health and health rights, organized by the Women's Unit of ISI, Bangalore. 25 July 2009.
- Jana Arogya Andolana Karnataka's (JAAK) meeting: Discussion on to carry out a quick study on the status of health centers in Bangalore. 8 August 2009.
- Two-day workshop on NREGS at NIAS, Bangalore organized by ISST and IHD. 8-9 Sept. 2009.
- 'Gender and Violence against Women' for the youths and PRI members of the ICPRD project at Channapatna. 21 September, 2009.

Shrayana Bhattacharya

- Civil Society Consultation on Domestic Work in India, organized by ILO July 2009
- Government Consultation on Domestic Work in India, organized by ILO August 2009
- Annual Conference on Feminist Economics, Boston, USA, June 2009.
- Home Based Work: Impact and Challenges, organized by Homenet South Asia and FES, September 2009.

Ammel Sharon

- Women Leaders in Panchayats in Karnataka, Workshop organised by Mahila Samakhya, Bangalore, July 2009.
- Daughters of Fire: The Indian Court of Women on Dowry and Related Forms of Violence Against Women, organized by Vimochana and Asian Women's Human Rights Council in partnership with other women's groups, 28 July 2009
- National workshop on National Rural Employment Guarantee in India: Lessons from Implementation organized by Institute of Human Development and ISST (New Delhi), Bangalore, 8-9 September 2009.

Recent Publications / Reports

Sudhamani. N

- Documentation of the training programme "Enhancing the role of women in strengthening democracy" organized by Mahila Samakhya Karnataka

Meera Pillai and Radha Ramaswamy

- Qualitative studies of selected educational initiatives in South Indian States (Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh). Report was prepared under the project Revisiting Education for All (2006-09), supported by IDRC, Canada.

Newspaper Clippings 2008:

- Newspaper Clippings on: Right to Education, NREGA, Violence against Women in India.

Staff News

- Ms. Madhuri Karak left ISST in August 2009.
- Ms. Bidisha Chaudhury left ISST in September 2009.

Compiled and edited by Rajib Nandi

Send your comments and suggestions to rajibnandi@isst-india.org

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ISST newsletter seeks to provide information on research and action programs being conducted by the institute. The newsletter is available on ISST's website.

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's overall aim is research for social change with focus on work and well-being from a gender perspective. In recognition of its work, ISST has been conferred NGO Consultative Status by the United Nations

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Completed Programmes

Urban Poor Livelihoods in the National Capital Region: Emerging Trends

ISST has completed a study that examines livelihood issues with special attention to obtaining a gendered understanding and a focus on informal work for the poor and migrated population. The study specifically looks 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 and low-end IT work. More than one thousand households have been surveyed under each category adopting a representative sampling method. Apart from this, case studies have been done to supplement the findings from the survey. It is expected that, findings from the present study will lead to action and strategizing



some long term policy interventions that would directly benefit the groups of workers studied. The findings from these two studies were presented in a two-day workshop in November this year. This project was supported by Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, Mumbai.

Impact of Micro Finance to Women on Reduction of Domestic Violence: Case Study in Haryana

ISST has completed a study with the objectives to investigate whether there is any evidence to support the view that micro finance to women reduces the incidence of domestic violence, and if so under what circumstances. In the light of the high importance placed upon micro credit and SHGs in the current policy and planning framework, it is believed that more information in the context of north Indian states would be useful. The study was conducted on a small sample of 202 women SHG members in three districts of Haryana, viz. Rewari, Ambala and Jhajjar. A few case studies were also undertaken to facilitate an in-depth understanding of the issues pertaining to domestic violence. It appeared, from the analysis, that micro finance may not have helped in reducing the incidence of domestic violence but it

certainly helped in enhancing the status of women in the family and in the society. It



helps women to take care of her family at times of financial crisis. The finding of the study was presented in a workshop on 30 November 2009. The study was sponsored by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Govt. of India.

Documentation of the Experiences of UKSN Women's Groups in Uttarakhand

The study documenting the work of the experiences of the Uttarakhand Mahila Parishad (Uttarakhand Women's Federation), a network of around 450 women's groups (Whole Village groups or WVGs), spread over villages in seven districts of Uttarakhand was completed and submitted to Dayal Trust and Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Paryavaran Shikshan Sansthan, Almora.

The women's groups are a part of the larger network under the umbrella of Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Paryavaran Shikshan Sansthan (Uttarakhand Environment Education Centre, USNPSS), based in Almora which has been working in the hill villages of Uttarakhand since 1987 in partnership with community based organisations (CBOs) in different regions. The data was collected over a period of four months from May 2009-August 2009. Focus group discussions were conducted with women's groups in



fourteen villages along with semi-structured interviews with women individually as well as CBO workers in the villages. Interviews were also conducted over two days at a state level meeting in Almora where around 50 women from different regions in the state participated. Through narratives collected from villages and CBO workers, the study reflects on two decades of formation and functioning of the women's groups at the village level, the process of organising, interactions in the network –between

women from different villages, regions, CBO workers and USNPSS. It charts the above in the context of the organisational history and vision and highlights some of the tensions, challenges and opportunities in the process

of organising. The narratives also articulate some of the larger socio-economic changes that have occurred in the villages and the role of the women's groups in moulding some of these changes.

Workshop : Who Cares for the Child? Gender and the Care Regime in India

ISST and UNICEF India jointly organized a three-day residential workshop from 7-9 December 2009 at the Hotel Claridges, Surajkund, NCR Delhi. The workshop convened to look into the wide range of issues that influence the provision of "quality care" for children in the context of both the high levels of child malnutrition and child deaths in India, as well as the major care burdens that women, in particular, have to carry with respect to care responsibilities in the family. Despite the grave situation of children with respect to survival and development, child care continues to be viewed as a child welfare issue, rather than an issue central to development and gender equality. The key issues debated in the workshop focused on



identifying successful policy arguments and entry points in support of a woman's right to be supported as care provider, informal and national and state policy spaces for interventions in care, policy and public discursive blind spots, the diversity of care requirements and implications for the 'shape' of 'universal' coverage.

Revisiting Education for All

Revisiting Education for All (REFA), a field-based study of the schooling situation in rural India, has been completed. The initial findings from the study have been shared through seminar presentations. ISST

Bangalore has completed qualitative studies in the southern states of India looking at innovative initiatives in education. The project is supported by IDRC, Canada.

Ongoing Programmes

Baseline and End line Study for Street Vendors in Ahmedabad City

ISST has undertaken a baseline study on Street Vendors in Ahmedabad under project, "New Strategy of SEWA: To Save the Livelihoods of women street vendors in the Era of World Class Cities". SEWA has organized 57110 vendors in Ahmedabad city with an objective to save the vendors'

livelihood and to bring them in the main stream. To assess the impact of SEWA's work on the socio-economic and working conditions of street vendors in Ahmedabad city in the areas of capacity building and promotion and protection of livelihoods with street vendors, Mahila SEWA Trust has

commissioned the ISST to conduct an impact study through baseline and end line research survey. ISST has already

submitted the report of the baseline survey to SEWA in September 2009. The end-line survey would be conducted in 2011.

Institutional Strengthening and Support: IT Up-gradation, Training, Research and Dissemination

ISST has received an Institutional support grant from IDRC in February 2009 for a set of activities including IT Infrastructure up-gradation, IT training with the intention of building up research and dissemination capacities at the Institute. As a part of the project, ISST Bangalore is presently engaged in carrying out a Study of IT sector programmes for the Youth from Low Income families in Bangalore. ISST research team has mapped the training institutions of Malleswaram area and a questionnaire has been administered to gather information

regarding the type of courses conducted, duration and fee structure as well as their involvement in job placement. Another set of questionnaire is currently being used to carry out interviews with the working youths from the low income group in the IT sector; in connection with this various NGOs working with low income groups have been identified and with their help interviews with the working youth is in progress. The study would be completed in February 2010 with a dissemination seminar at Bangalore.

The Policy Research Environment and Policy Research Organizations in South Asia

ISST has undertaken a research project entitled, 'The Policy Research Environment and Policy Research Organizations in South Asia' with support from IDRC, Canada. This project includes various activities designed to develop better understanding of the nature of policy research organizations in South Asia and the varying environments in

which they function. A set of background papers have been commissioned and three Roundtables held with heads of organizations from five countries in South Asia. The background papers are available online at ISST website. The project will continue till May 2010.

Examining the NREGA – Women's Participation and Impacts in Himachal Pradesh, Kerala and Rajasthan

ISST is contributing through this study to the research programme called 'Social Protection in Asia' (SPA) Phase III coordinated by IDS, Sussex with a support from the Ford Foundation and IDRC, Canada. SPA is a research, advocacy and network building programme. The ISST study will explore the likely reasons behind varying levels of women's participation, wider impacts of the programme, and the various ways in which local contexts influence outcomes. The study has already



completed the field works in Palakkad district, Kerala, and Sirmaur district, Himachal Pradesh. Recently, field visits were carried out in Mahikheda and Nichalagarh villages in Abu Road Block of Sirohi district in Rajasthan. Structured questionnaire was canvassed at the household level to illicit information from the head of the household

or equivalent. To get a better understanding of the data, a few focus group discussions were also carried out with the male and female NREGA workers, panchayat members and others. Presently the research team is analyzing the data. A report based on the analysis will be completed by March, 2010.

Empowering Adolescent Girls as future leaders and Trainers

ISST has undertaken an evaluation on 'empowering adolescent girls as future leaders and trainers' for Indian Academy of Self Employed Women (SEWA). The study intends to assess the impacts of the trainings being imparted to the adolescent girls of Ahmadabad. The study consists of two phases- baseline and end line. The baseline survey was carried out in April'08 and the baseline in September'09. The

report is under preparation. The report will be finalized by March, 2010.



Baseline Study to assess the impact of SEWA's work in Delhi

ISST completed a baseline study in September 2008 sponsored by SEWA Bharat, Delhi to assess the impact of SEWA's work in Delhi in the areas of capacity building and promotion and protection of livelihoods with street vendors, construction workers and home-based embroidery workers. ISST has conducted

surveys and interviews which were supplemented with the discussions with SEWA Bharat activists on issues like advocacy, representation efforts and achievements. An end-line survey will be conducted after two years in 2010 to study the impact of SEWA Bharat intervention.

Brief Review of the Equal Remuneration Act [ERA], 1976

ISST has undertaken a quick study on Equal Remuneration Act [ERA]. The study will analyze different cases filed under ERA and conduct a comparative study with Minimum Wages Act. Under this study, trade union leaders and lawyers will be interviewed to get an understanding of the issues related to

implementation of ERA. ISST would organize a consultative meeting to present the findings of the study and seek recommendations from different stakeholders. The study is being sponsored by ILO, New Delhi.

Gender and Participatory Development: Evaluation Concerns

ISST is carrying out the above project with a grant from International Development

Research Centre (IDRC), Canada. The objectives of this project are to organize a

workshop with an aim of improving evaluation processes so that they are sensitive to gender concerns and contribute

to better understanding of the processes of social transformation that development projects are engaged in.

A study of the Bachpan Programme at Community Centre, ISST

ISST Community Outreach Programme in East Delhi runs a bachpan programme for children who are below six years of age. The programme aims to provide an enabling environment for children's overall development through non formal education and prepares them to join mainstream school. The aims of the present study are to

explore the extent to which the programme helps mothers (i.e. taking up employment, free up time for house hold chores, etc.); to document the efficacy of the programme and to explore further scope of improvement. The interviews and observations have been conducted. The study will continue till April'10.

Outreach Programme of ISST

Adolescent Resource Centre

ISST expanded its areas of work and activities in the east Delhi through the inception of ISST Community Centre in the year 2000. Ever since, the ISST community centre continues to empower the youth through information, education and dialogue and reaches out to them in a variety of innovative and interactive ways like

discussion groups, workshops, theatre groups, film club, non-formal education, computer training etc. The community also runs a programme named 'bachpan' for the children below six years of age. Recently National Foundation for India started supporting part of the Adolescent Resource Centre.

ISST Community College

ISST Community College is a new collaborative initiative with Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) that offers two programmes: Six month Certificate Course in basic Computer Literacy and Six month Certificate Course in Functional English Language. The certificates will be awarded by IGNOU on successful completion of the course. IGNOU's initiative of Community College is an alternative system of education which aims to empower individuals through appropriate skills development leading to gainful employment in collaboration with the local industry and the community. It's expected that community colleges will help in developing skills towards employability particularly for



the marginalized and underprivileged sections of society. The course on Functional English has been started from July 2009. Over 30 students are enrolled currently for this course. The course on basic computer literacy would be started in January 2010.

Gender Resource Centre

ISST has been selected to start a Gender Resource Centre – Suvidha Kendra, a government initiative for women. The Gender Resource Centre of Delhi government has been started in collaboration with the Voluntary organizations in the context of growing influx of migrant population, mounting growth of slums/resettlement colonies, adverse sex ratio of girls, low female work participation rate, high incidences of violence and crime against women, disturbingly high prevalence of anemia amongst women along with other areas of

vulnerabilities such as RTI/STI, TB, reproductive errors, malnutrition etc. Essentially the Centre is expected to take care of all dimensions related to women empowerment in a holistic manner. In keeping with the Bhagidari (Partnership) the project attach Multi stakeholders collaboration with the involvement of stakeholders. ISST has started working in several locations like Kalyanpuri, Kichripur and Mayur Vihar, Phase-II. ISST's Gender Resource Centre also running two vocational courses on Beauty Culture and Cutting and Tailoring.

Workshops/Seminars Conducted by ISST

Workshops

Workshop on Impact of Micro-finance in Reduction of Domestic Violence against Women

The one-day workshop was organized by ISST, on November 30, 2009 at India International Centre, New Delhi. The workshop was attended by the government officials from Delhi and Haryana, activists, scholars and others. The initiative was supported by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Govt. of India

Urban poor livelihood in the National Capital Region - emerging trends:

Workshop on Research Findings and Policy Implications : The two-day workshop was organized by ISST with support from SDTT, Mumbai on 4-5 November, 2009 at Vishwa Yuvak Kendra, New Delhi. The workshop on Domestic Workers - livelihood strategies and policy concern was held on November 4; The workshop on IT/ITES workers in Delhi NCR was held on November 5, 2009.

ISST-IHC Gender Policy Forum

Measuring Gender Empowerment – What Policy Implications?

The seventeenth 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 6 November 2009 at Casuarina Hall, India Habitat Centre. The speaker of this forum was Dr. Abusaleh Shariff, senior Research fellow (Labor Markets and Social safety Nets), International Food policy Research Institute,



Delhi. The Discussant was Dr. Aasha Kapur Mehta, Professor of Economics, Indian Institute of Public Administration, Delhi.

Workshops /Seminars Attended by ISST

Ratna M. Sudarshan

- Eighth Executive Committee Meeting, Jharkand Mahila Samakhya Society, Ranchi, October 15, 2009.
- Mid Term Workshop On Policies For Ensuring Food Security In South And South-East Asia, (discussant), IFPRI, New Delhi, October 21, 2009.
- Roundtable discussion organized by UNIFEM, New Delhi, November 4, 2009.
- Third National Conference On The Implementation Of The Protection Of Women From Domestic Violence Act 2005, Inaugural Session, Lawyers Collective, NCW and UNIFEM, New Delhi November 13, 2009.
- National Conference on Competition, Public Policy and Common Man, Competition Commission of India and CII, New Delhi November 16, 2009.
- Wrap-up meeting of the Joint Review Mission, Mahila Samakhya, New Delhi, November 17, 2009.
- Impact Evaluation seminar (by video conference) at IDRC, New Delhi, November 20, 2009.
- 'Climate for a New Consensus: Policies for a Fairer Globalization' conference organized by CENTAD, New Delhi, Nov 24, 2009.
- Seminar on *A Comparative Perspective on Poverty Reduction in Brazil, China and India* by Dr. Martin Ravallion, NCAER, New Delhi Nov 26, 2009.
- Workshop on 'Who Cares for the Child? Gender and the Care Regime in India' organized by UNICEF and ISST, Surajkund, Dec 7-9, 2009.
- *Roundtable Discussion On Women, Work And Care*, organized by UNICEF New Delhi Dec 15.
- Advisory Group meeting for *National Youth Readership Survey-2009*, NCAER Dec 16, 2009.
- 'The Challenge Of Gendering Economics', organized by Institute of Economic Growth, Dec 17, 2009.
- Panelist at session on 'Time for a second Green Revolution: what will it take?', Ideas India 2009, Aspen Institute India, Dec 17, 2009.
- Meeting of the National Technical Resource Group on Migrants, NACO, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Dec 29, 2009.

Sudhamani. N

- Workshop on "Developing training module for elected women representatives" organized by Action Aid at SCM House, Bangalore. December 7, 2009.

Swati Gupta

- Conference on 'The challenge of gendering economics' organized by IEG on 17th Decemeber'09.
- Seminar on 'Affirmative Action, "Women" and Politics in South Africa and India' by Shireen Hassim, organized by CWDS and JNU on 25th November'09
- 20th J.P. Naik Memorial Lecture on 'Governmentality, Democracy and Capitalist
- Development: From the Politics of Transition to the Politics of Exclusion' lectured by Prof. Kalyan Sanyal, Professor of Economics in Calcutta University, Kolkata; organized by CWDS on 12th November'09
- "PROBE Revisited" Dissemination workshop on 26th October'09

Divya Sharma

- Who Cares for the Child? Gender and the Care Regime in India. Organised by ISST and UNICEF, Surajkund, Delhi NCR, 7-9 December, 2009
- IDRC India Social Science Research Award 2009 Presentation Seminar. New Delhi. 19 December 2009.

Presentations made at Seminars / Workshops**Shrayana Bhattacharya**

- **Domestic Work in Delhi** on 4 Nov, 2009 in the workshop of Urban Poor Livelihood in NCR Delhi, sponsored by SDTT, Mumbai.

Rajib Nandi

- **Low-end IT/ITES workers in Delhi** on 5 Nov, 2009 in the workshop of Urban Poor Livelihood in NCR Delhi, sponsored by SDTT, Mumbai.

N. Sudhamani and Ammel Sharon

- **Study of IT Sector Programmes for Youth from Low Income Families in Bangalore** on 5 Nov, 2009 in the workshop of Urban Poor Livelihood in NCR Delhi, sponsored by SDTT, Mumbai.

Ratna Sudarshan and Rina Bhattacharya

- **Impact of Micro Finance in Reduction of Domestic Violence against Women** at Workshop on Impact of Micro-finance in Reduction of Domestic Violence against Women, November 30, 2009 New Delhi.



Recent Publications / Reports

Reports:

- Meera Pillai and Radha Ramaswamy – *Qualitative Studies of Selected Educational Initiatives in South Indian States (Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh)*, November 2009. Report submitted to IDRC, Canada.
- ISST – *Socio-Economic Baseline Study of Street Vendors in Ahmedabad*, January 2010. Report submitted to SEWA Union, Ahmedabad.
- ISST – *Study on Impact of Micro Finance in Reduction of Domestic Violence against Women*. December 2009. Report submitted to Ministry of Women and Child Development, Govt. of India.

Staff News

- Ms. Swati Gupta joined ISST in October 2009.
- Ms. Jaimala Sharma has joined ISST's GRC-SK Project in October 2009.
- Ms. Vinita Sharma has joined ISST's GRC-SK Project in October 2009.
- Ms. Gunjan has joined ISST's GRC-SK Project in October 2009.
- Ms. Priya Verma has joined ISST's GRC-SK Project in October 2009.
- Ms. Jyoti has joined ISST's GRC-SK Project in October 2009.

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