



ISST Newsletter

Vol.2

No.1

January – March 2005

ISST is grateful for the responses you have given for the newsletter. As mentioned earlier the newsletter would inform the readers about progress of existing projects, new activities undertaken by ISST and staff news. We would again request all the readers for comments and suggestions for the better improvement of the newsletter.

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.

Ongoing Projects at ISST

Ensuring Public Accountability through Community Action

The project 'Ensuring Public Accountability through Community Action' is in its concluding phase. A draft project report is being prepared which will be presented at the end of project workshop in May 2005. Six background papers have been commissioned, which will be supplementing the project report.

These papers look at issues such as *Governance* and the *Use of Right to Information, Organising around Sacred Spaces in Urban Slums, Networking and*

Interface with the Government, and Legal Aspects for Basic Provisions to Slums, Implications on Health from Lack of Basic Services. The workshop is scheduled for 16th and 17th of May. The focus of the first day will be on the project findings as well as the discussion on the various issues addressed in the background papers. Day two will include sharing of experiences by the partner NGOs in the project, followed by a short film on the project interventions, and an interaction with various government agencies.

Beyond Practical Gender Needs - Women in North-Eastern and Hill States

(UNDP - Planning Commission National Research Programme on Growth and Human Development)

The last three months have brought this project close to completion. A day long workshop was held on 15th February at

the India International Center, where presentations were made by our partner NGOs from Manipur, Meghalaya,

Uttaranchal and Himachal. These are, *The North East Network* from Meghalaya, *Rural Women Upliftment Society* from Manipur, *Uttarakhand Sewa*

Nidhi Paryavaran Shiksha Sansthan from Uttarakhand and *SUTRA* from Himachal Pradesh. The project report is being completed.

Development Gateway

ISST continues to act as Guide to the gender page of Development Gateway. The DG team has prepared and submitted events, news items, articles, documents, calendar events to the page. The highlight currently on display at: www.developmentgateway.org/gender.

Titled as *Women In Public Life-Reducing Corruption?* it also features an interview with *Mrinal Pande*, who is the group editor of Hindi publications for Hindustan Times. The highlight for the month of February was *Women and the Tsunami*.

Social Protection for Home Based Workers in South Asia

HomeNet South Asia is coordinating an action-research project on Social Protection for Home based Workers in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. As most of the home-based workers belong to the most economically deprived sections of society who are scattered and therefore invisible, policies especially on social protection for this sector have been very inadequate.

Discussions and interviews. HomeNet Pakistan has completed quantitative data collection on Home-Based Workers. As part of the field work, the research consultant from ISST visited Bangladesh from 24-31 March and carried out Focus Group Discussions and interviews with home based workers involved in pearl collection sector, pottery sector, weaving and garments and tailoring.

In this regard, ISST is helping the coordinating organisations to carryout the research. HomeNet Bangladesh, HomeNet Pakistan and HomeNet India have completed most of the qualitative research comprising Focused Group

In Nepal due to political turmoil and in Sri Lanka due to the large scale destruction caused by the Tsunami the action-research project had to be postponed. In Sri Lanka, research will be beginning in April.

MIMAP- Gender Network (Phase III)

A Regional Gender Network in South and South East Asia, with Special Reference to Gender Dimensions of Macro Economic Reforms

The first phase of Gender Network was over on December 2004. In the past three months different partner organizations have been busy in data analysis and report writing.

Under the Poverty and Gender Module, the partner organizations in Bangladesh and Pakistan are in the last lap of their data collection. Bangladesh is currently in the process of analyzing the field data in order to prepare the project report.

Under ICT and Gender module, the partner organizations in Vietnam and Sri Lanka have submitted their work-in-progress reports. In Sri Lanka, the field surveys were completed by end of February 2005. Except for Vietnam, where data has been generated, in other countries it is still in progress.

The work has proceeded concurrently on two papers related to the theme of the research. One of these is a critical review of how history has shaped the status of women in Vietnam, and the second is an account of the interface between ICT and Gender in modern Vietnam with a focus on policy issues. It is expected that much of the coming six months will be spent in data analysis and in finalizing the two review papers.

In India, ISST is currently preparing the report on the evaluation of Akshaya Project in Kerala. ISST is also expecting a final set of data from Kerala, before giving the final shape to the report. Work on the Habitat Learning Center (HLC) project is also under way. Almost 170 psychometric tests have been conducted on the children to assess the impact of computer literacy.

In the Gender Modeling Module, ISST is collaborating with Laval University,

Canada. Both the institutions have jointly selected five research proposals. The selected researchers will be invited to present their respective proposals in a PEP Network Meeting at Colombo in June this year for the final selection.

The Gender Network Project coordinator is presently carrying out a part of the research under the module 'Gender, Growth and Inequality' in Brazil jointly with UNDP – International Poverty Research Centre. The second part of this research module is being looked after by Prof. Suresh Tendulkar at Centre for Development Economics, Delhi University.

ISST is planning to publish some of the finding from the three phases of Gender Network Project. The consolidation work has been going on alongside other research. The consolidation of research findings from three rounds of studies undertaken by the Gender Network in Kerala, has already started. The project coordinator is now in touch with a number of senior academicians and activists around the world to consolidate some research findings in the field of Gender and ICT, which has some serious policy implications.

Women in Leadership

A concept paper on Women in Leadership Positions is being written as part of a UNDP- DWCD gender research programme. At present data is being generated through primary and secondary level research. A field trip was undertaken by the team members of the project to the North East, where women

in Meghalaya and Manipur were interviewed regarding the initiatives where women have taken the lead. A field trip to different villages of Kumaon and Garhwal in Uttaranchal was also undertaken where the rural women were interviewed. The interviews included not just the Pradhans or heads of PRIs or

formal structures but also the presidents/heads of the informal groups like Mahila Mangal Dals. A field trip to

Himachal Pradesh will be the next highlight of the project.

New Project

Evaluation of STEP Project: Karnataka Co-operative Milk Federation.

ISST Bangalore has undertaken an evaluation study of the Dairy project under the STEP program which is implemented by Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India. There are Thirteen Milk Unions in Karnataka, of which six are located in Northern Karnataka. Each milk union has several co-operative societies run exclusively by women or by men and women both. The study has selected at least two cooperatives from each union based on the criteria of low procurement

as well as high procurement. The number of co-operatives to be surveyed depends on the number of cooperatives existing in the union. As a part of the study Focused Group Discussions among the women members of the co-operative will be held. The secretaries of the selected co-operatives, and beneficiaries, will be interviewed for the purpose. So far the districts of Kolar, Tumkur, Mysore, Rural Bangalore, and Mandya have been visited and the required data has been collected. The Data compilation is under process.

Completed Projects

Beijing+10-Review for UNIFEM: Progress in South Asia

The final report has been submitted to UNIFEM.

Outreach Programme of ISST

ISST works with two slum communities- Sonia camp and Nehru camp at East Delhi and has been involved in these areas since 2000. The field office of ISST at Vinod Nagar not just includes basic education and traditional income raising activities for women but also intends to provide the slum dwellers a platform where they can express themselves. In the past three months some of the activities which were undertaken are:

(a) ***Technical Training***: Three boys were provided training. Two were trained in

car repairing and maintenance and one was trained in computer hardware. All the boys were sent to *Jan Shikshan Sansthan*. The boys have received the certificates for completing the course. Eight boys and two girls have recently filled in training forms of computer hardware, software and cell-phone repair.

(b) ***Embroidery Workshop (Lucknow Style)***: A workshop was organised between 3^d January-7th January for the young girls and the women. All the

women have learnt a variety of designs with great interest.

On 23rd February a workshop on the Right to Information was organised by the Community Centre, where 10-12 women participated. An activist from *Parivartan*, a Peoples' Group working on Rights to Information also contributed to the

workshop by highlighting some important facts on the concerned act.

Many women have started taking credit from the self-help group. The reasons for the loan are: education of children, travel, medical reasons, festivals or death of a family member.

Activities for Children

Exposure Trip: On 11th February a picnic was organised with the children of Sonia and Nehru Camp. Around 50 children went for the picnic. The children were shown places like Raj- Ghat and Indraprastha Park and also the statue of Mahatma Gandhi.

On 26th February Habitat Learning Centre organised an art competition. The age group which participated in the competition ranged from: 9 to 17 years. Around 20 -22 institutions were a part of the workshop. All the participants to the workshop received certificates which really encouraged them.

Staff News

Rakhee Bhattacharya has left ISST.

Workshops/Seminars organized by ISST

A two day Consultation on Qualitative Research was organised by ISST from 21-22 March 2005. The workshop was sponsored by the Anusandhaan Trust, and organised in co-operation with Cehat and Health Watch.

A lecture on 'Tackling Disaster' was given by Prof Rukmini Bhaya Nair as part

of the ISST-IHC Gender Policy Forum series, on 25 February 2005.

A one day workshop on Beyond Practical Gender Needs-Women in North-Eastern and Hill States was organised by ISST as part of the ongoing project. The seminar was attended by NGO partners, activists, academics and funders.

Workshops/Seminars Attended by ISST Researchers

Ratna. M. Sudarshan

- Meeting of the Working Group on Informal Economy Research and Statistics (WIRES), January 3 2005.
- National Planning Workshop on National Resource Centre for Women, organized by NIPCCD, Jan 20-21, 2005.
- Seminar on Globalisation and the Women's Movement in India, CWDS, 20-22 January 2005.
- Presentation on 'Beijing +10: an overview' at workshop on Beijing +10 organised by Women's Studies and Development Centre, University of Delhi and the Institute of Social Sciences, February 4, 2005.
- 'Women talk! Dealing with the Global Market' seminar organized by Self Employed Women's Association, at the National Academy of Agricultural Sciences, Delhi, February 4-5 2005.
- Panelist at discussion on the informal economy organized by the Council on Foreign Relations, India International Centre, February 18, 2005
- Participated at the Forty Ninth Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, 28 February-11 March, 2005, New York.
- Consultation on research possibilities using DISE data, UNICEF, 28 March.

Reena Bhattacharya

- GEN X view of Gender Equality organised by All India Women's Conference, 12 January 2005.

Shambhu Ghatak

- Third National Colloquium on Economic and Social Implications of the New Patent Regime, India International Centre, 1st February, 2005.
- National Perspective on Macro Economic Priorities and People's Perspective on Union Budget 2005-2006, National Centre for Advocacy Studies, Vishva Yuwak Parishad, New Delhi, 3rd February, 2005.

Medha Bisht

- The Silent Revolution: Women Sarpanch Take Charge in a Male Bastion, organised by The Hunger Project, 17 March, 2005.
- Workshop on Women and Media organised by All India Women's Conference, 21 February 2005.

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

Coordinated by Medha Bisht



ISST Newsletter

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April-June 2005

ISST is grateful for the responses you have given for the newsletter. As mentioned earlier the newsletter would inform the readers about progress of existing projects, new activities undertaken by ISST and staff news. We would again request all the readers for comments and suggestions for the better improvement of the newsletter.

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.

Ongoing Projects at ISST

Gender Network Project

MIMAP- Gender Network (Phase III)

A Regional Gender Network in South and South East Asia, with Special Reference to Gender Dimensions of Macro Economic Reforms

ISST is proposing to hold a one-day policy workshop on 'ICT and Gender' under the Gender Network umbrella, sponsored by IDRC, Canada on 9th of September, 2005 at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. National Policies in Information Communication Technologies rarely have much to say on gender issues, although the issue of the 'Digital Divide' between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots' in ICT access, skill acquisition and market opportunities, is something that has come to acquire a relatively secure place in policy discussions. Yet the recent explosion of the new technology in countries like India provides an unprecedented opportunity for addressing the persisting 'Gender Divide' in these countries that should not be missed out. Given the perceived cutting edge nature of the new technology, women's

induction in great numbers and across income classes as users of the new technology, can help not merely by generating employment but also by raising women's self-esteem and status in the eyes of the community they live in, thereby catering to both 'practical' and 'strategic' gender needs.

The advent of the World Summit on Information Technologies has prompted the gender lobby at the international level to flag the issue in several recent international meets. However, much of the policy prescriptions are based on prior suppositions and not necessarily on research. There is a persistent need for systematic research on the gendered impact of the new technology at the ground level under varying conditions. Among the

several research modules under Gender Network program, there is a module on 'Gender and ICT' under which three countries in Asia, i.e., India, Sri Lanka and Vietnam, have been carrying out gender impact analysis of some seemingly gender-neutral projects and programs in the area of ICT as well as surveys of ICT workers in these countries. The Indian component of the study is being carried out by a team of researchers at ISST. This seminar is being organized as part of the activities of this project. Similar national level seminars will be organized by partner organizations in Sri Lanka and Vietnam as well.

The seminar aims at providing a forum of interaction between researchers, NGO representatives and policy planners who are involved in, --- or are genuinely interested in, --- the interface of ICT and gender issues. Apart from researchers, the seminar will be attended by senior bureaucrats involved in policy making in government at the state and central levels as well as representatives of the corporate sector. It is hoped that the interaction will start a process of feeding ground level information and insights into sensible policy initiatives in order to have the potential benefits of the new technology to address the twin problems of income and gender inequalities in our societies.

Development Gateway

ISST continues its role as guide to the gender page of Development Gateway. It has prepared and submitted events, news items, articles, documents, calendar events to the page in a routine manner through out the last three months. ISST is also responsible for preparing a monthly highlight for gender page on different

relevant issues. The highlight currently on display is available at: <http://www.developmentgateway.org/gender> ISST contributed two highlights to the gender page in the past two months. These were *Reaffirming Beijing* and *Is there Space for Gender in the Politics of Development*.

Social Protection for Home Based Workers in South Asia

Under the Social Protection for Home Based Workers in South Asia project, a visit was made to Sri Lanka from 15 – 21 June, to train the field workers in the partnering organisation – *Siyath* – to carry out research in the field. The training included orienting the staff to the goals of the project, conducting focused group discussion, in-depth interviews and the

questionnaire survey. The findings from the focused group discussions and the in-depth interviews will be presented in the second workshop in Ahmedabad in July 2005.

In Sri Lanka the research was carried out with coir workers who form the poorest of the poor of home-based workers.

COMPLETED PROJECTS

Ensuring Public Accountability Through Community Action

The 18 month long project work was discussed in a two day workshop at the India International Centre on 16th-17th May, 2005. The workshop was attended by activists, government officials, researchers, international agencies and the slum residents.

The study was an attempt to understand the nature of the interface between the

authorities and slum residents, with a view to evolving better models of interaction that could address infrastructure and other problems.

The report findings have been submitted to IDRC, Canada and are available at the ISST library for consultation or reference.

Women in Leadership Positions

In the last three months a trip to Solan, Himachal Pradesh was undertaken where women leaders in both formal and informal structures were met. Research work was conducted to facilitate a better understanding of both the qualitative and the quantitative data.

A workshop was held on 10th June, 2005, to discuss the findings of the draft report.

Academicians, researchers, activists attended the workshop.

A scoping paper has been submitted to the UNDP, Delhi Office, as part of a UNDP-DWCD gender research programme. The report is available at the ISST library for reference and consultation.

Beyond Practical Gender Needs-Women in North-Eastern Hill States

*UNDP-Planning Commission National Research Programme
on Growth and Human Development.*

The report has been submitted to the UNDP, Delhi Office and is available at the ISST library for reference and consultation.

Evaluation of Step Project: Karnataka Cooperative Milk Federation

ISST has completed two evaluation studies in Dairy Sector. The first was the Dairy Project under the STEP programme of Govt. of India, Dept. of Women & Child Development implemented by Karnataka Milk Federation. The project is in operation in Karnataka spread over all over

the districts. The primary objective was to investigate to what extent women from the poverty households have been benefited and if dairying activities have been a source of economic empowerment for the women.

The second project was Dairy project under STEP programme of Govt. of India implemented by Nittur Education society, with similar objectives as above.

Information was collected through questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions. The various Women

Development Co-operative Societies (WDCS) that were evaluated had been selected from districts Bangalore Rural, Kolar, Tumkur, Mandya, Shimoga, Hassan, Udipi, Belgaum, Chamrajanagar, Raichur and Bidar. The study came out with some suggestions which could make programmes more effective and useful.

OUTREACH PROGRAMME OF ISST

ISST works with two slum communities- Sonia camp and Nehru camp at East Delhi and has been involved in these areas since 2000. The field office of ISST at Vinod Nagar not just includes basic education and traditional income raising activities for women but also intends to provide the slum dwellers a platform where they can express themselves. In the past three months some of the activities which were undertaken are:

Vocational Training

The children in the community centre are given vocational training at regular intervals. In the month of May, two boys took admission in a diploma course in stenography training at R.K Puram, New Delhi.

School Admissions

As per the government orders of giving 20% reservation to the children in the public schools, ISST field workers were successful in encouraging around nine children to get admissions. In Nehru camp ISST has been looking for sponsorship for three children, as their parents refused to pay for their school fees.

Some of the activities undertaken in this whole process were: interacting with the principals of different public schools, encouraging the parents to send their children to the schools, preparing

affidavits, applying for forms from various schools and interacting with various school officials.

Workshop on Public Distribution Card (Ration Card)

On 26th April 2005 the government announced that in East and North East Delhi the bearers of the ration card can check their records. ISST organised a workshop to intimate the slum residents about the ways they should check their ration cards. There were around fifteen women, who participated in the workshop. Parivartan, the Peoples' Group working on Right to Information was the cooperating organisation.

Nakshatra-The Play

ISST team –*Nakshatra* organised a play at its regional office (community center) in Delhi. The play was titled as *Aao Hath Milayen*, and was focused on issues relating to the girl child. The play was enacted by the slum children at the India Habitat Centre on the 16 May, 2005.

Basti Vikas Kendra

The *Basti Vikas Kendra* at *Nehru Camp* specially caters to children and women. Literacy classes for women and tailoring training is given to young girls. Two self-help groups have been formed. Women and girls are also informed about fair

public distribution system, health, sanitation and admissions in the schools.

Capacity Building Workshops

The community centre based at West Vinod Nagar organised a capacity building

workshop. Around eleven women and one youth participated in the workshop. Information relating to public distribution cards, and legalities regarding the Right to Information were given.

Staff News

Suchi Pande left ISST at the end of June.

Papiya Ghosh worked as research consultant from 1st -31st May 2005.

Mallica has joined ISST as research consultant and is preparing resource material and documenting experiences of the interventions undertaken by the ISST Community Center.

Manmohini Dutta has joined ISST as a part time research assistant and will be taking care of the Gender and Development page of Development Gateway.

Workshops/Seminars organized by ISST

16-17 May: Ensuring Public Accountability through Community Action: end of project workshop

Environment and Natural Resources. Academicians, researchers, government officials, representatives of international agencies, activists and trustees of ISST attended the seminar.

6 June: On the occasion of celebrating its Silver Jubilee Year, ISST organised a seminar at its office at Bangalore, on *Women's Livelihood in Coastal Communities: Management of the*

10 June: Discussion on draft paper on 'Women in Leadership Positions'.

Workshops/Seminars Attended

Ratna.M.Sudarshan

- Research Advisory Group meeting, SUTRA, Jagjit Nagar, Himachal Pradesh, April 9 2005
- Evaluating Development Outcomes: The Potential for Expanding Partnerships' organized by the Office of the Resident Coordinator, United Nations, New Delhi April 15 2005.
- Consultation on Waste Management, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, April 21 2005.

- Working Group Session on *Micro Planning and Child Rights* at Women's Political Empowerment Day Celebrations, Institute of Social Sciences, New Delhi, 24 April 2005.
- Fifth South Asia Regional Ministerial Conference "Celebrating B+10", UNIFEM South Asia and Government of Pakistan, Islamabad, May 3-5 2005.
- Building Financial Sustainability, training for development research organizations in Asia, IDRC and Venture for Fund Raising, Colombo May 10-13 2005.
- Consultation on post-disaster management and prevention strategies, MS Swaminathan Foundation and IDRC, Chennai May 13-14 2005.

Medha Bisht

- Presentation on the Human Development Report, Government of Nagaland, UN Conference Hall, 30 June, 2005.

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

Coordinated by Medha Bisht



ISST Newsletter

Vol.2

No.3

July – September 2005

This ISST newsletter seeks to provide information about research and action programmes being conducted by the institute. At present the newsletter is only 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.

Ongoing Projects at ISST

Gender Network Project

MIMAP – Gender Network (Phase III)

A Regional Gender Network in South and South East Asia, with Special Reference to Gender Dimensions of Macro Economic Reforms

ISST had organized a national seminar on Information and Communication Technologies in the context of Gender and Developmental Divides on September 9 2005, at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. This was sponsored by the International Development Research Center, Canada. The seminar sought to provide an interface between NGOs and other development practitioners, researchers, gender specialists, technical experts, scientists, senior bureaucrats and government officials, who are interested and involved in the interface of ICT and Gender, in order to collectively address the basic question of how ICT policies and programmes can be utilized to deal with overarching ‘social’ problems, like gender discrimination in society, as there are evidences of ICTs changing the contours of gender divide in Indian society, creating

new opportunities in some ways, while exacerbating existing divisions in others. Prof. V. S. Ramamurthy, Secretary in Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India, spoke of some of the special schemes for women that the DST is promoting. There were nine presentations of developmental projects by research institutions and NGOs from different parts of India and a few Asian countries like Sri Lanka, Vietnam and Malaysia. The evidence presented clearly underlined the fact that there were gender differences in the impact of ICT4D projects on the ground, though they varied across class, age, ethnicity and local contexts. The assembled research and NGO community were unanimous in stressing the unequal impact of the developmental projects on gender, including ICT4D projects and the need for

official policies and programmes to acknowledge and address such inequalities. Dr. V. B. Kamble, Director of Vigyan Prasar gave information about the wide technology based infrastructure that the Government has in operation and suggested ways in which the problem can be addressed through existing programmes of the Government. Mr. S. R. Das, Adviser in the Ministry of Information Technology, on the other hand felt that technologies are “gender neutral”, and social issues like ‘gender’ should be left to other departments of the Government which are geared to address them. Ms. Aruna Sundararajan, erstwhile Secretary of IT in Kerala, pointed out that while much effort has been spent to induct

industry representatives in Government Committees and Commissions on ICT4D programmes, there is hardly any representation of gender interests in such bodies. She further said that in the hundred odd recommendations in the ICT Policy package of the Government of India, there is virtually no mention of gender-based inequalities. It was noted that the new technology does have the potential to address social issues as ‘gender’ and it was felt that apart from financial commitments, open-mindedness and ways of fruitful utilization of this technology within the existing official infrastructure and programmes was needed to overcome these social problems.

Development Gateway

ISST is the guide to one of the pages, Gender and Development, (<http://www.developmentgateway/gender>) of the Development Gateway portal which has the objective to foster an environment where exchange of information and knowledge can take place. The Development Gateway which has been initiated by World Bank and currently operated under the Mandate of Development Gateway Foundation, an independent not-for-profit organization, is a portal for knowledge and sharing and resources on sustainable development and

poverty reduction. ISST has the responsibility of preparing regular highlights, updating the gender page with news, events and new online materials, approving or rejecting contents submitted by the members and promoting the gender page through institute’s networks and events. ISST contributed a highlight on ICT and Gender, titled, *Developing Women – The Importance of Information and Communication Technology* and a write-up on the 1000 women nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2005, which are currently on display in the webpage.

Strengthening Information and Resource Centre activities at ISST’s field office

From the experience of the action research undertaken for the project on ‘Ensuring Public Accountability through Community Action’ it was felt that there is a need to develop the community centre’s role as an information and resource centre in a more focused manner. In continuation of the

research therefore ISST will organize training in Health, Public Distribution System and Right to Information and issues related to Education and Schooling. The first training on Health and Nutrition is discussed below. More systematic documentation of the various initiatives of

the Community Centre is also proposed. The first of these follows the progress and experiences of nine children who were helped to get admission in private schools (following the Supreme Court's

judgement, followed by the Delhi Government's notification, of reservation of 20% seats and freeships to children of economically disadvantaged classes by private, un-aided schools in Delhi).

Social Protection for Home Based Workers in South Asia

A Social Protection Review Meeting was organized at Ahmedabad on 20-22nd July. Partners from all five participating countries – Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka were present, and this mid term review allowed a sharing of experience and findings to date. ISST

presented the methodology and data entry plan to be followed by all teams in the survey to follow the qualitative studies. The final workshop of the project is scheduled for 22-24 February 2006, at New Delhi.

New Project

Impact of the *Sahbhagi Yojana 2* Support Project (SY2SP), Ahmedabad

ISST has been invited by the Mahila Housing Trust, a partner of the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation in the *Sahbhagi Yojana 2* Support Project (SY2SP), to assist in the research design and analysis of an impact study of the SY2SP. This programme has been designed using the experiences and lessons learnt through the implementation of *Parivartan* (an earlier programme for slum

upgradation in Ahmedabad). Other than the up gradation of the slums it also includes the capacity of dwellers about the programs and their dealings with government, and capacity building of key partners. This study will document the impact of SY2SP among the beneficiaries in two different phases along with the baseline survey.

OUTREACH PROGRAMME OF ISST

The Community Centre has extended its activities to the women of Ramanand camp and children of Indira camp. Around

10-12 girls from these camps are now involved on a regular basis in various activities at the centre.

Meeting on Ration-Facilities

A meeting was organized in the Ration Office of Kalyanvas on the issue of inconvenience of availability of regular ration on July 4, 2005. Around 150 ration shopkeepers participated in this meeting.

Four staff members of ISST and three members of Parivartan attended this meeting. Problems faced by ration card holders and shopkeepers were discussed in this meeting and solutions were suggested.

A protest demonstration in Lady Irwin College was organized by Parivartan on July 14, 2005 on this issue of ration. On

this occasion, the ISST team, *Nakshatra* staged a play (on the ration problem), which was widely appreciated.

Workshop on Health and Nutrition

As mentioned earlier, a Workshop on Health and Nutrition was organized by ISST at the Community Centre in East Delhi from August 24 to 26, 2005. Fourteen adolescent girls participated in the workshop. There were sessions on

gender, health, nutrition, first aid, yoga, anatomy of the human body and sanitation co-ordinated by ISST staff members. A session on gender sensitization was co-ordinated by 'Action India'. Response from the participants was enthusiastic.

Staff News

Medha Bisht left ISST on 31st July, 2005. She has joined as a lecturer of political science in Kumaon University in Uttaranchal.

Workshops/Seminars Conducted by ISST

August 5, 2005: Quality of Education: What is the Missing Factor, organized by the Gender Policy Discussion Forum, jointly organised by Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST) and India Habitat Centre (IHC), was held on 5th August, 2005.

22 August, 2005: Discussion on 'Poor Children in Rich Schools', paper prepared by Mallica, at ISST.

24-26 August, 2005: Health and Nutrition Workshop (I).

9 September, 2005: National Seminar on ICT in the context of Gender and Developmental Divides was convened under the 'Gender and ICT' module in Phase III of the MIMAP- Gender Network Project (GNP).

Workshops /Seminars Attended by ISST

Amita Joshi

- 8-9 July 2005: Seminar on harnessing strengths of voluntary sector for enhancing delivery capabilities, held at HLC-IHC.
- 6 August 2005: Seminar on creating and selling a viable programme, held at HLC-IHC.

Ratna M. Sudarshan

- Review Meeting on Social Protection for Home Based Workers, HomeNet South Asia, Ahmedabad, 20-23 July.
- Panel Discussion on ‘Towards building a gender neutral society: issues and concerns’, V V Giri National Labour Institute, Noida, 9 August.
- Gender Roundtable with World Bank President, Mr Paul D Wolfowitz, New Delhi, August 20, 2005.
- Developing Women's ICT-Based Enterprise: International Knowledge-Sharing Workshop, organized by University of Manchester (Dr Richard Heeks) and University of Kerala (Dr K.S. Chandrasekar Nair), Tiruvananthapuram, August 29-31
- Talk on ‘Reviewing Beijing +10: an overview of issues in the context of gender’, at training programme on ‘Incorporating gender concerns in public policy’, Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi, Sept 5.
- Meeting on the NREGP, Krishi Bhavan, Sept 15.
- Seminar on Identity Formation, Nationhood and Women, Centre for Women’s Development Studies, September 16.
- Seminar on Chronic Poverty: emerging policy options and issues, Indian Institute of Public Administration, Sept 29-30.
- Seminar on globalization and education, NIEPA Sept 30-31.

Vishal Goyal

- 29 July 2005: Discussion on SPSS Application, held at Hotel Conclave.

Manjushree Mishra

- 24 August 2005: Lovraj
- Kumar Memorial Lecture, ‘The Next Phase of Rural Development’, organized by S.P.W.D. New Delhi.

Rina Bhattacharya

- 30 September 2005: Property Ownership and Inheritance Rights on Women for Social Protection, the South Asian Experience, held at IHC.

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

Coordinated by Manomohini Dutta



ISST Newsletter

This ISST newsletter seeks to provide information about research and action programmes being conducted by the institute. At present the newsletter is only 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.

Ongoing Projects at ISST

Gender Network Project

MIMAP – Gender Network (Phase III)

A Regional Gender Network in South and South East Asia, with Special Reference to Gender Dimensions of Macro Economic Reforms

The third phase of MIMAP – Gender Network Project, which has been investigating the impact of economic reforms from a gender perspective, has completed its two years in December 2005. However, the project is going to be extended by one more year due to late starting of a few research modules. The Network partners are now working to finalize their respective research reports on various modules, (i) Poverty and Gender in Bangladesh and Pakistan, (ii) ICT and Gender in India, Vietnam and Sri Lanka, (iii) Gender, Economic Growth and Inequality in India and other developing countries, and (iv) Gender modeling in

Pakistan, Sri Lanka and China.

Apart from the Network's regular research modules, Gender Network is working for the publication of two books. One of those is a book on "Status of Women in Kerala". The proposed book will explore the status of women in Kerala from three important perspectives: statistical overview, historical overview and gender and mental health in Kerala.

A second book on Gender and ICTs has been proposed to be published jointly with Vigyan Prasar, an autonomous organization for science popularization

under the ministry of Science and Technology. The proposed book will explore the avenues to implement gender

sensitive science and IT education with existing infrastructure and programmes of Vigyan Prasar.

Development Gateway

ISST is the guide to one of the pages, Gender and Development, (<http://www.developmentgateway/gender>) of the Development Gateway portal which has the objective to foster an environment where exchange of information and knowledge can take place. The Development Gateway which has been initiated by World Bank and currently operated under the Mandate of Development Gateway Foundation, an independent not-for-profit organization, is a portal for knowledge and sharing and resources on sustainable development and

poverty reduction is very informative and interesting. ISST has the responsibility of preparing regular highlights, updating the gender page with news, events and new online materials, approving or rejecting contents submitted by the members and promoting the gender page through institute's networks and events. ISST contributed a highlight on ICT and Gender, titled, *Developing Women – The Importance of Information and Communication Technology* in 2005, which are currently on display in the webpage.

Strengthening Information and Resource Centre activities at ISST's field office

From the experience of the project on 'Ensuring Public Accountability through Community Action' ISST feels a need to provide a space for dialogue and sharing information with activists, slum residents and others concerned in different ways with issues related to service delivery, urban development *et cetera*, on a regular basis. This project is being undertaken in association with IDRC. ISST at present has undertaken these kinds of activities more systematically. The broad areas of these activities focus on Health, Public Distribution System and Right to Information and issues related to Education and Schooling. In the area of Health, ISST organized a two-

day workshop on 'Gender and Health' on 25th and 26th November 2005. There were sessions on 'home remedies' for common ailments, nutritious food, pregnancy and reproductive health, gender dimensions of HIV/AIDS and other STIs, and yoga. In regard to Right to Information, a skit was staged by the children theatre group *Nakshatra*, titled *Kuch toh pucho ji*, at the Festival of Creative Expression and Youth Empowerment on 18th December 2005. This was organized jointly by Tehelka Foundation and Bal Bhawan Sanstha. The performance of the children was appreciated by all present at the occasion.

Social Protection for Home Based Workers in South Asia

This project is being carried out in South Asia and South-East Asia. In this regard a Sub-Regional meeting of Home Net South-East Asia was organized in Bangkok on 25th and 26th October 2005. Partners from Thailand,

Phillippines, Indonesia, Laos and Home Net South Asia were present to discuss the findings of the action-research study. Future plans of the next course of action were also presented by the participants

ISST Documentations

ISST Centres in Delhi and Bangalore have brought out newspaper clippings on certain issues of relevance. The documentation has been completed for the year 2005 (January 2005 to December 2005).

The resources available are on the issues of:

- National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (ISST New Delhi)
- Violence Against Women (ISST New Delhi)
- HIV/AIDS (ISST Bangalore)
- Child Labour (ISST Bangalore)
- Violence Against Women and Children (ISST Bangalore)
- Panchayat Raj (ISST Bangalore)

OUTREACH PROGRAMME OF ISST

ISST works with two slums communities Sonia camp and Nehru camp in East Delhi since 2000 and had recently extended its activities to the women of Ramanand camp and children of Indira camp. Around 10-12 girls from these camps are now involved in various activities undertaken by ISST. ISST has now extended a helping hand to

Cillakhadar. This slum has almost four thousand to five thousand households, and the people are into growing and selling vegetables as their source of livelihood. Almost 85 *per cent* of them do not have ration-cards and identity cards. ISST is helping them acquire these essential things.

Staff News

Jyotsna Sivaramayya joined ISST as a regular staff member on 18th November 2005.

R. P. Pandey left ISST on 24th November 2005.

25th Year Celebrations at ISST

ISST celebrated its 25th Anniversary on 8th October 2005. It was held at the Godrej Auditorium of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). With Prof. A. Vaidyanathan expressing the welcoming words, the book

'ISST 25' was released by Prof. Vina Majumdar, who also delivered the keynote address. This was followed by a panel discussion on the 'Relevance of Research to Activism and Policy: A Dialogue on Women's

Work' chaired by Smt. Devaki Jain with Prof. Smt. C.P. Sujaya as speakers. Nirmala Banerjee, Smt. Renana Jhabvala and

Workshops/Seminars Conducted by ISST

21st November 2005: Gender Sensitization Workshop held at ISST field office with the teachers of the ISST Community Centre.

25th to 26th November 2005: Gender and Health Workshop held at the ISST field office. This workshop was preceded by the Health and Sanitation Workshop in August 2005.

Workshops/Seminars Attended by ISST

Manomohini Dutta

17th to 20th December 2005: Second International Conference on Religions and Cultures in the Indic Civilization at India Habitat Centre.

Jyotsna Sivaramayya

29th November 2005: Conference on Women, work and Health at Asoka Hotel, New Delhi. Presentation on 'Status of Women in Meghalaya and Manipur' by Ms. Sivaramayya.

12th to 23rd December 2005: Training Course on Social Science Research Methodology held

at Council for Social Development and organized by the same.

25th to 26th October 2005: Sub Regional Meeting of Homenet South- East Asia in Bangkok.

Jyotsna Sivaramayya and Vishal Goyal

9th December 2005: Ms. Sivaramayya and Mr. Goyal went to Ahmedabad for providing research consultancy for the SY2SP Project regarding data evaluation.

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

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