

# ANNUAL REPORT



1999 - 2000



**Institute of Social Studies Trust**



*The Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST), a non-profit, non-governmental organization, was set up in 1964 as a Society and was registered as a Trust in 1980. ISST is dedicated to conducting research and action programmes to promote social justice and equity for the underprivileged with a focus on women. In recognition of its work, ISST has been conferred NGO Consultative Status by the United Nations.*

*Over the years, ISST has conducted several pioneering research studies with a view to facilitate the designing of alternative development strategies that are inclusive of the socially and economically disadvantaged segments of the population. ISST's research has covered areas related to social sector issues such as health and education, rural development, forestry and environmental concerns, issues related to poverty and the informal sector, local governance, and legal reforms. It is currently involved in a regional programme in South and South East Asia seeking to unravel the impact of macro policy reforms on women in general and poor women in particular. ISST has been involved in the training of elected women representatives in local government structures for many years and also runs a Family Counselling Centre which has been operational for the last decade and a half.*

*With its main office situated in New Delhi, ISST operates through a field office in Delhi and a branch office in Bangalore. This report covers activities carried out between 1 April 1999 and 31 March 2000.*



### ***FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK...***

*There is a point of view that is gaining ground among a section of the intelligentsia that the country has achieved much in the last fifty years in terms of improved levels of living. Perhaps so, in absolute terms. But both in terms of our relative position in the world, and in terms of the distance we have still to travel in order to ensure a life of basic dignity for all Indians, we must admit that we have had a pathetic record. There is just so much all around that needs to change, so much that needs to be done!*

*Organizations and individuals that are committed to working for social change have no dearth of issues to work on in this blessed country of ours. In any one area there could be a hundred and one ways in which one could try to make a difference. ISST has always aspired to be a part of the collective endeavor that can usher in a better, more equitable society. This may involve digging for more relevant information and insights than are available, and develop research issues that emanate from the ground. It may involve initiating field-based activities designed to change the ground realities in desired directions. It may also mean getting involved in policy advocacy, i.e., entering the arena of politics in favour of the disempowered.*

*The manner in which we design our research programmes or select our field activities reflect these concerns. The focus of our activities has always been socially and economically deprived segments of the population. For us, gender is important not just as a social construct, but as something that defines and perpetuates unequal power relations. Our engagement with the state in whatever capacity is legitimised only in the context of the role that the state can play as a change agent.*



*Non-governmental organizations have of late been getting a kind of recognition from all quarters that was absent earlier. There is explicit recognition of the rôle NGO's can play in bringing about social change. This has been accompanied with the infusion of large amounts of resources as well, which in one sense is welcome, for it has opened up new opportunities for working. However, it has not been without its problems. The lure of money, media exposure and the 'power' that these bring in their wake, has together substantially changed the context of development work. NGO's have become the new hunting ground for the upwardly mobile jet set crowd looking for career options and similarly inclined people from the older generations. An interminable array of seminars and conferences deliberating on the plight of the poor, the deprived and the 'vulnerable' in five star comfort around the globe has added that touch of glamour that is so irresistible. Genuine commitment to the cause, the ability to put personal gain behind the general good — qualities that are basic essentials for this kind of work — is given the go.*

*There is a great need for those who genuinely feel that things are not what they should be, to weed out the raucous noise of publicity and reclaim the lost ground. For otherwise, we will all be party to committing the first of Gandhiji's Seven Social Sins, by indulging in — what he so succinctly described as — 'politics without principles'.*

Swapna Mukhopadhyay

25 July, 2000

## COMPLETED PROJECTS

### **DELHI**

#### **GENDER DIMENSIONS OF HIV/AIDS**

The study on gender dimensions of HIV/AIDS was conducted from June to December 1999. Focusing on the household and the community, the study included interviews and Focus Group Discussions with men, women, adolescent boys and girls in some slum areas of Delhi. Similar studies in other parts of the country were carried out by the North East Network (NEN) in Guwahati, Stree Adhar Kendra (SAK) in Pune and Initiatives Women in Development (IWID) in Chennai and surrounding areas.



*A Focus Group Discussion Session with Married Women in a Delhi Slum.*

Both biological and social reasons make women more vulnerable to HIV infection and these factors need to be taken into account when planning strategies against HIV/AIDS. In India currently about 21 percent of AIDS cases are females, and the rate of spread of the infection among them is higher as compared to that among men. Most of these women are single-partner married women who have been infected by their husbands.

The research found that adolescent boys are quite active sexually while girls are much more reticent about sexual matters. There is no communication between generations in these matters. School attendance and NGO presence in the community were found to increase the awareness among adolescent girls. Within marriage women have little say on sexual matters and often have no control over the factors placing them at risk of contacting HIV infection. When suffering from AIDS, men are generally taken care of by their wives or by other female relatives but women are often deserted by their husbands. This being the case, the natal family usually provides the support. An important finding of the study was that simple awareness of HIV/AIDS does not necessarily lead to changed behavior.

*The project was sponsored by UNIFEM*

## **REPRODUCTIVE AND CHILD HEALTH IN WEST BENGAL : AN EVALUATION**

An evaluation exercise of the Reproductive and Child Health Project in three districts of the state of West Bengal was carried out in June-July 1999. The Director of ISST led a team of four experts put together by DFID India to carry out the exercise and also prepared the Social Development component of the exercise.

*The project was sponsored by DFID*

### **BANGALORE**

## **STRENGTHENING THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE: UMA Project**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the UMA project came to an end in June this year. The major thrust of project has been to empower elected women representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions through extensive interactions and training using existing and new resource material produced by the UMA team.



*A Scene from The Uma Utsav*

During the tenure of the project various activities were organised by ISST so that women come forward and feel free to participate in these events. This year in May 1999 ISST organised one more UMA Utsav to felicitate the elected women representatives who have made remarkable contributions as Panchayat members and to encapsulate their experiences in the last five years. During this event, women members from different Gram

Panchayats from select districts of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh were honoured with UMA Mementos.

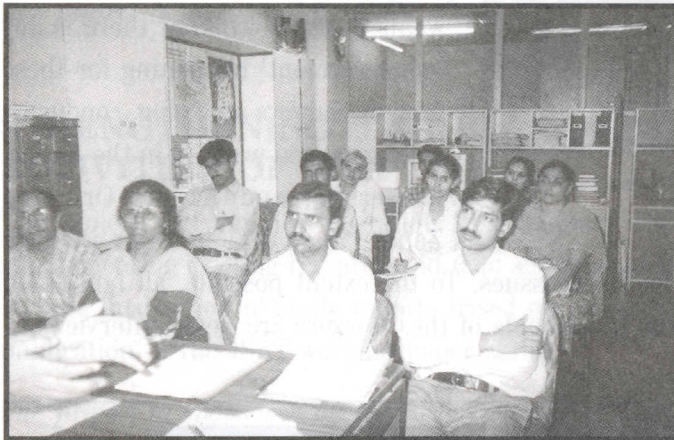
*The project was sponsored by the Ford Foundation*

## ON-GOING PROJECTS

### DELHI

#### A REGIONAL GENDER PLANNING NETWORK IN SOUTH AND SOUTH EAST ASIA (Phase I)

The Gender Planning Network (GPN) has been functioning since October 1998. The first phase of the project has been initiated in five South Asian countries, i.e., Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Pakistan.



*Gender Sensitization Training in progress at ISST's head office in New Delhi*

The main aim of this project has been to attempt an assessment of the gendered impact of economic policy reforms initially by mapping out gender bias in terms of the conventional and some not-so-conventional indicators. For the analysis of conventional indicators, different data sources have been tapped to collate information on the economic, social, demographic and political dimensions. For the analysis in terms of the 'non-conventional' indicators, an attempt

is being made to chart out the impact of changes in external economic environment induced by economic policy reforms on gender-related stress, anxiety and violence

#### Current partners in South Asia under the GPN

Bangladesh	:	Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS)
India	:	Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST)
Nepal	:	Agricultural Projects Services Centre (APROSC)
Pakistan	:	Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE)
Sri Lanka	:	Centre for Women's Research (CENWOR)

During November 1999, a three-day International Workshop was organised by ISST in which the reports on conventional indicators prepared by the partnering countries were discussed.



*Annual GPN Meeting in progress, November 1999*

Currently the countries are involved in household surveys and qualitative research to elicit information on the 'non-conventional' indicators. Economic reforms have under some situations, propelled women to work outside the household. This research wants to study whether there is any 'empowerment' happening for these women. Surveys are being conducted among women workers in the Export Processing and Export Oriented Zones in NOIDA in Uttar Pradesh

and Sonapat in Haryana to find out about these issues. To the extent possible, all household members above twelve years of age in the households of the workers are being interviewed.

### A Profile of Current Activities under the Gender Network

#### COUNTRY COMPONENT

- Preparation of country reports on gender indicators under economic reforms.
- Review of violence against women.
- Surveys in the households of women workers in EPZs and EOUs.
- Case Studies.

#### REGIONAL COMPONENT

- A review of the psycho-social and cultural aspects of gender based stress and violence.
- The links between high measured GDI and the 'status of women' : A case study of Kerala.
- Impact of trade liberalization on female employment in South Asia.
- A review of existing gender models.
- Estimating a CGE model using gender-disaggregated data.



A number of studies are also in progress within the regional component of the GPN. A survey of gender models with a focus on intra-household models of co-operative conflict is currently on. Existing attempts at tying these up with macro level structures are being analysed. A modelling exercise involving gender disaggregated components of the final demand vector within a standard multi-sectoral econometric model is also being attempted with Indian data. Another study on the impact of trade liberalisation on women's employment is in progress.

The second international workshop involving all project partners and other experts under the current phase of the GPN project is scheduled to be held at Kathmandu in November 2000.

*The project is sponsored by IDRC, Canada.*

### **STRENGTHENING THE RESEARCH AND DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES OF ISST**

The project was put into operation from January 1997. Its aim is to provide critical inputs supplementing existing research and field activities of ISST. Current activities under the project include finalisation of study reports based on research carried out under different projects for publication in the ISST working paper series.

*The project is sponsored by the Reserve Bank of India.*

#### **Some new activities at ISST**

- The research team at ISST Delhi has been involved in the process of preparing the chapter on 'Health' for the Human Development Report of the state of Himachal Pradesh.
- Delhi ISST will also be preparing a handbook for India on the cultural dimensions of HIV/AIDS prevention and care for UNESCO.
- Bangalore ISST will soon commence field work on child trafficking in Karnataka.

## **FAMILY COUNSELLING CENTRE**

The Family Counselling Centre at ISST Delhi has been handling cases of dowry harassment, marital maladjustments, cases of spouse desertion, and such other problems as alcoholism,



*Counsellor Raj Virdi with a client in ISST's Family Counselling Centre*

mental health problems or problems of communication within the family. Two trained counsellors are available five days a week to provide this service to clients free of cost. This year the Centre has dealt with fifty-two new cases and followed up forty old ones. The FCC has also been training up future counsellors for community work by providing affiliation to young undergraduate and postgraduate students of various colleges in the city in its

counselling activities. The Centre has also been organizing legal literacy camps for the benefit of different groups of women such as college students and neo-literates..

*FCC is partly financed by an annual grant from the Delhi Social Welfare Advisory Board. Nearly half of the expenses on the Centre is met from ISST's own resources.*

## **BANGALORE**

### **WOMEN IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE : NETWORKING AND DISSEMINATION AT UMA RESOURCE CENTRE**



*Role Play in an UMA Project session*

For the last several years the Bangalore unit of ISST has been working for the empowerment of women in the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI). For a number of years now, ISST Bangalore has been running the UMA National Resource Centre for Women in Local Governance. The UMA

Resource Centre is extensively used by women's organisations, various non-governmental organisations (NGOs), individual scholars and activists engaged in enhancing the capabilities of women in local governance through research, training and activism.

This project was specifically designed to enlarge our efforts towards documentation and dissemination of information for strengthening women's participation in local governance.

To reach this objective the institute undertook the following activities in the current year :

- Continue the publication of UMA Prachar in English, Hindi and Kannada.
- Continue with our documentation and networking activities.
- Field-based activities with and training of elected women representatives of the Gram Panchayats in Karnataka.
- Initiating comparative research on women's political participation in the southern states of India..

During the year, new resource books were prepared by the UMA team and tested out in training efforts around the state of Karnataka in partnership with agencies like Jonodaya, Shakti, Mahila Samakhya and Myrada.

*The project is sponsored by Action Aid India.*

## WORKSHOPS & SEMINARS ORGANISED BY ISST

### GENDER PLANNING NETWORK

The second meeting of the researchers of a Gender Planning Network (GPN), a forum for co-ordinated gender research in South and South East Asia, was held in New Delhi from 17<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> of November 1999. The purpose of the meeting was to evaluate the progress made in each country, to develop a common framework for country reports and to develop a questionnaire addressing non-conventional indicators in gender disparity.

The major outcome of the workshop was that all the participating countries would study Export Processing Zones (EPZs) because female employment has generally increased due to the expansion in export opportunities consequent to trade liberalisation. Nepal has no EPZs, hence it will study carpet industry which is similar to some of the female industries in the EPZs of the other countries. It was also decided that an additional study on the status of women in Kerala would be undertaken by ISST as part of the regional initiative.



*Some of the participants in the annual GPN Meeting*

### Prevention of Child Trafficking

During September 1999, ISST organised a workshop on 'Prevention of Child Trafficking' in Belgaum district, Karnataka. Various strategies like Awareness generation, Education, Health, Economic skill building, Policing, Legal Amendments, were discussed to understand the crux of the matter and find solutions to Child Prostitution.

### Workshop with women members of Gram Panchayat

In November 1999, as a part of the project activities, the UMA resource team conducted a two day workshop at Melkote, Mandya District. The purpose of this was to disseminate information regarding the Gram Sabha and Gram Panchayat Budget.

Workshop participants were a heterogeneous group. There were both EWRs and future contestants along with a few members from NGOs. Even though the term of EWRs was over, they were still interested and enthusiastic in knowing about Gram Sabha and Gram Panchayat budget as they had very little access to information during their tenure. Most of the future contestants

were potential leaders and they were a part of SHGs/Mahila Mandals and their curiosity to know about Gram Sabha and Gram Panchayat budget made them attend the workshop,

The Workshop had sessions on meaning, structure and scope of Gram Sabha; role of participants in Gram Sabha and functions of Gram Sabha; Gram Panchayat Budget, sources of income, expenditure, grants and auditing.

## FIELD BASED ACTIVITIES

- Several field visits were made by the research team under the IDRC project to the villages surrounding Export Processing Zone in NOIDA to pilot the questionnaire designed for the household survey. These visits were mainly to gather information on women workers working in the units within and outside NEPZ and some of the issues related to their status role in the family as compare to the male members.
- Field based activities of the UMA team are designed to ensure continuous interaction with Gram Panchayat in various districts in Karnataka for proper assessment of training needs and priorities at the grassroots level. As part of the project activities under Action-Aid project, UMA research team held a discussion with Chandapura Gram Panchayat members to assess their performance. An another meeting was conducted to have a Horizontal Interaction between Gram Panchayat of Chandapura and visiting team from Khori Centre, Haryana. Such interactions were helpful for developing relevant material by the UMA team as inputs into the collection of the UMA resource centre.
- FCC organised a two-day Workshop on 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> October 1999 in collaboration with NSS Department of Mata Sundari College. On the first day, the 6<sup>th</sup> October 1999, Personality Development and Counselling skills were discussed and on the second day of the Workshop, the 7<sup>th</sup> October 1999 the theme of the session was 'Law and its Utility in daily life'.
- The FCC at ISST organised a Legal Literacy Camp on 16<sup>th</sup> November 1999 in collaboration with the Bhim Rao Ambedkar College for the Students of Social Work Department. The purpose of the camp was to generate legal awareness among the students regarding legal provision for women against sexual harassment at work place and child abuse.



*A Legal Literacy camp in progress in a city college*

## INTERNATIONAL TRAINING

### LEADERSHIP TRAINING

A Leadership Training Programme for young reproductive health activists was organised by Choice USA from 15<sup>th</sup> of July to 15<sup>th</sup> of September. Jyotsna Sivaramayya participated from



*Jyotsna Shivaramayya with other participants in the Leadership Training Programme*

Delhi ISST together with 7 participants: one from India, three from Mexico, and one each from the Philippines, Sudan and Nigeria. This was the first international training programme for young people committed to reproductive health issues. Training included developing advocacy and lobbying skills, training for effective use of media in lobbying and meeting many people working in this area of expertise.

### POVERTY MEASUREMENT AND ANALYSIS

Sheela Saravanan from the Delhi unit attended a training program on Poverty Measurement and Analysis at Quebec, Canada from August 30<sup>th</sup> to September 17<sup>th</sup> 1999. Training was funded by International Development Research Center (IDRC) within the Micro Impact of Macro Adjustment Policies (MIMAP) Program and was organised jointly by IDRC and



*Sheela Saravanan celebrating the joys of food in the Poverty Measurement Training Programme*

Laval University (CREFA). The 30 participants were mainly from South Asia and Africa. The training included sessions on what to measure, how to measure and what to do with the measurement of poverty. In addition, practical training on handling large data sets on the computer was given to the participants.

## **GENDER MODELLING AND GENDER BUDGETING**

Two Consultants working under the Gender Planning Network project were sent abroad during the year in relation to the work being carried out in the project. Anushree Sinha, currently working on a CGE/SAM model with gender-disaggregated data was sent to the Philippines to attend a three week course in gender modelling, and Manju Senapaty, another consultant working on the effect of trade liberalization on female employment was sent to London to attend an international conference on Gender Budgeting. We are very thankful to IDRC that in both these cases, ISST's own resources were supplemented by that organization.

### **ISST WEBSITE**

ISST has become a member of INDEV. INDEV is a network of development information created by British Council in India for the benefit of development managers, academics, researchers, think-tank and anyone interested in India's development. This network is browseable at

<http://www.indev.nic.in>

or

[www.indev.org](http://www.indev.org).

ISST homepage can be browsed at

<http://www.indev.org/isst>.



## ***MONEY MATTERS...***

*The scale of operation of ISST is small in comparison with most of the multi-centre mega NGO's that have cropped up in the last decade or so. We have a modest Endowment Fund. By far the major proportion of our activities are supported by project grants.*

*Over the past half a decade or so, our small but dedicated team of researchers and field workers have striven hard to make the organization viable and self-sustaining in financial terms. We take pride in reporting that during this period, ISST's resources under virtually all heads have multiplied several times over. Surpluses in the General Fund have increased more than four times over. So have the infrastructure support investment in fixed assets such as office equipment. Gross project receipts handled annually have more than doubled. Other funds such as Publication Fund, Building Fund and Endowment Fund have all recorded substantial increase through slow and steady additions. During the same period, average staff remunerations have more than doubled.*

*What makes us proud about this small but significant achievement is that all this was done on the basis of our hard and honest labour — without having to look for windfalls or untied grants from any source.*





## A SAMPLE OF ISST PARTICIPATION IN:

### Workshops, Seminars, Discussions, Meetings etc.

During the year ISST participated in a number of Workshops and Seminars. Some of these are:

- Visited Prayas Observation Home for Boys at Delhi Gate on 8<sup>th</sup> June, 1999.
- Methodology Workshop to discuss the pilot project on Gender and HIV community based research organised by UNIFEM on June 16-17, 1999.
- Workers and Labour Rights organised by Centre for Education and Communication at YMCA Conference Centre, Delhi on 28<sup>th</sup> July 1999.
- Training programme on PR and Women's Help organised by Community Health Cell, Bangalore on 30<sup>th</sup> October, 1999.
- Conference for alternative NGO Report on CEDAW organised by NAWO at Jamia Hamdard Delhi on 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> November 1999.
- Power, Patronage and Accountability in Karnataka Gram Panchayats and Democratic Decentralisation and Participation of Women: A case study in Karnataka, organised by ISEC, Bangalore on 10<sup>th</sup> December, 1999.
- Ninth National Conference on Women's Studies from 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> January, 2000 at Hyderabad.
- Workshop on Gender Dimensions of HIV/AIDS organised by UNIFEM on 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> January 2000.
- National Conference on Women & Violence organised by National Commission on Women on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2000.
- Seminar on status of women, challenges to the social service sector organised by YWCA on 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> March 2000.
- Seminar on Women in Panchayati Raj organised by Department of Political Science, University of Hyderabad and UNICEF Hyderabad, on 29-31<sup>st</sup> March, 2000.



## LIST OF PUBLICATIONS 1999-2000

### MONOGRAPH

Women's Work in South Asia: A Situational Analysis and Policy Concerns, by Swapna Mukhopadhyay.

Published by ILO, New Delhi. 1999.

### REPORTS OF RESEARCH PROJECTS

- Gender Discrimination Under Structural Reform: India Country Report.
- Violence Against Women: Some Issues.
- Gender Dimensions of HIV/AIDS: A Study Based on Community Research.

### ISST NEWSLETTERS

Uma Prachar: Published quarterly in three languages, i.e., English, Kannada and Hindi.

Samachar Patrika: Published quarterly in Hindi.

### UMA RESOURCE MATERIAL :

What Works: A Resource Book on Training Techniques.

As We Did It. A Training Manual for Women in Local Governance.

Newspaper Clippings

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