



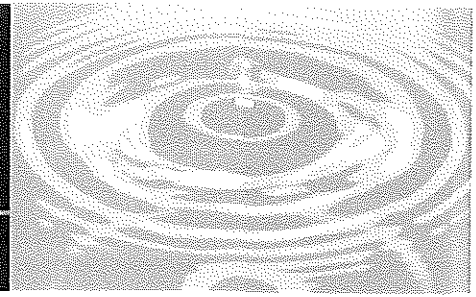
PROJECT SUMMARIES



Institute of Social Studies Trust

**PROJECT SUMMARIES
(2004 - 2010)**

INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL STUDIES TRUST



Introduction

The Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST), a non-profit organization, was registered as a Trust in 1980. In recognition of its contributions, ISST has been conferred NGO Consultative Status (Special) by the United Nations.

ISST's overall aim is research for social change with focus on work and well-being from a gender perspective. It attempts to bridge the gaps between research, action and policy debate, positioning itself at the interface between research, action and policy.

Headquartered at New Delhi, ISST has a branch office in Bangalore and a community outreach programme in East Delhi.

Research

At the heart of ISST's research is the link between women's livelihood, work and well being. Over the years ISST has carried out research in several related areas viz., poverty, education, health, social protection, governance, and environmental concerns. Research methods are mixed, including quantitative and qualitative methods; the approach is multidisciplinary; the scope of research ranges from analysis of macro level policies and data to micro level action research; the field of operation includes rural and urban India and beyond. Our research projects are often carried out in partnership with grassroots groups.

Evaluation

ISST carries out evaluations at the request of donors or implementing NGOs; using participatory and mixed method approaches, and seeking through evaluation to support gender transformative development initiatives.

Seminars and Workshops

Are organized frequently, usually to share and disseminate project findings, and invite critique and feedback.

Discussion Group

Discussion group meetings are held occasionally on Saturdays to discuss work in progress, or newly published research, outside of project work; participants include ISST researchers and invited colleagues.

Gender Policy Forum

The India Habitat Centre - ISST Gender Policy Forum organizes talks or panel discussions three to four times in the year. These discussions share findings from recent research, are open to all, and seek to stimulate public debate on issues around gender and public policy.

Documentation and Library Resources

The Documentation Centre at ISST's head office in Delhi includes unpublished documents as well as books and journals on gender studies and development, and is open to all interested persons.

At Bangalore, through the 'UMA' project a National Resource Centre on women in local governance was set up. These resources are used extensively by organizations involved in the training of elected women representatives in Karnataka and beyond.

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Outreach Programme

Saathi Community Centre in East Delhi has the vision to empower women and children from disadvantaged households through educational inputs and facilitating access to information, public services and other entitlements. Activities are regularly conducted for very young children and youth, as well as community mobilizing with a focus on women domestic workers.

Gender Resource Centre

Since October 2009, a GRC is being run in Kalyanpuri with support from Delhi Government as a part of the Mission Convergence programme of the Delhi Government. This serves as an interface and contact point between different agencies of the government and the community, and facilitates access to various services.

Newsletters

A quarterly newsletter is brought out in both Hindi and English on on-going activities. *UMA PRACHAR* brings out selected experiences of elected women representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions all over India and this too is produced in both Hindi and English. Both sets of newsletters are available on the website.

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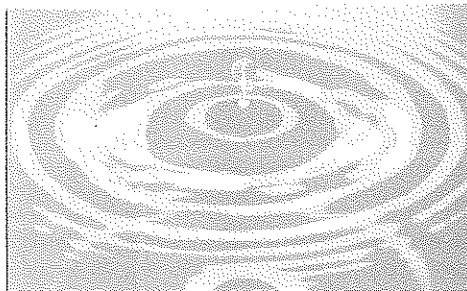


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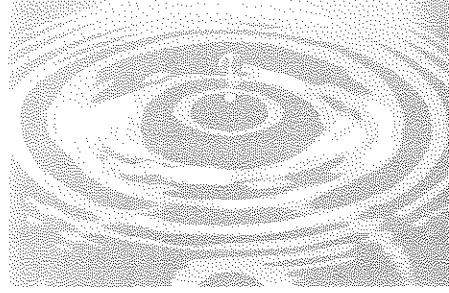


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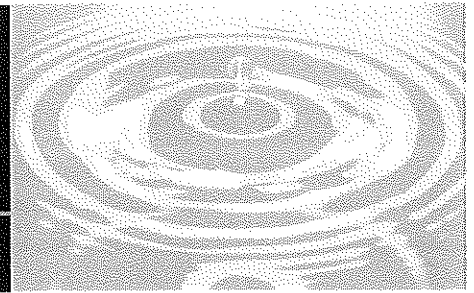
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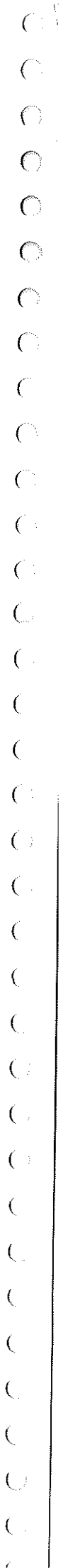
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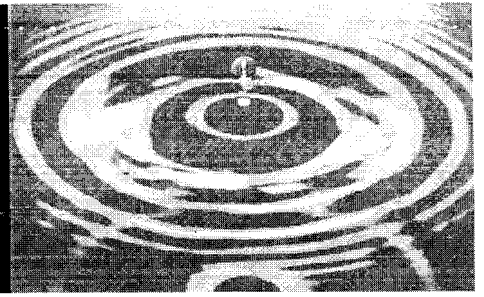


Women, Work and the Informal Economy

Institute of Social Studies Trust



Decent Employment for Women



Decent Employment for Women- Learnings and Recommendations from the Pilot Project (March 2004)

Supported by International Labour Organisation (ILO)

This report documents the interventions undertaken under the ILO funded project on 'Decent Employment for Women' to help poor women living in selected slum clusters in the cities of Bangalore and Delhi to acquire the skills and capacity to attain decent employment. Decent employment for women is employment that helps women empower themselves and take greater control of their lives. Since merely skills training is no guarantee in securing employment there has been particular attention to selecting marketable skills and in ensuring that women are able to apply these skills in practice. It has also been a concern of the project to try and address issues such as child care, limited mobility, illiteracy and lack of awareness related to new technologies that prevent women from accessing opportunities and improving their situation. The pilot project was started in 2001 and had been under way for 2 years at the time of this review. It has been implemented in partnership with NGOs in Delhi and Bangalore.

This review is based on direct observation, participatory discussions and in depth interviews with partner NGO staff, including field staff with direct involvement in the project, as well as with women participants. Existing documentation has been used to supplement first hand observation and the experience as gathered from partner staff. A draft report has been shared with partner NGOs to ensure accuracy. The learnings and

recommendations are also largely culled from their experience and knowledge. The overall attempt has been to let the project and those involved speak for themselves.

The report looks at positive and negative learnings, and concludes with some recommendations. The positive aspects of the project included its emphasis on flexibility and relevance in design and strategy; the aim has been to fill a gap that remains under sourced, despite various governmental and non-governmental efforts, that is, training for uneducated older women. One of the areas that has also been focused on while designing and implementing this project is that of looking at non traditional areas of work as well as developing suitable and usable training models and syllabi that can be replicated. Electrical wiring, electronics components, assembling transformers and masonry are some of these. For some partner NGOs there is already a base of experience, which they have been able to build on, while for others it has been a learning experience.

A holistic approach has been followed and the addition of life skills to the technical training programme has been a positive feature; another important learning is that the preparation process is as important as the actual training and the follow up. The close links between partner NGOs and the communities they work with is a major strength of the programme. In some cases the pilot project has created new bonds. While it is not possible to quantify all the benefits within the scope of this study but women have reported earnings of Rs.1000 - 2,000 monthly; for many it is a net increase since they have not worked before either due to domestic pressures or because of limited opportunities.

Decent Employment for Women



The training itself has given some women the confidence to feel that they will be able to apply it in due course despite the difficulties they are currently facing as in the case of those who have learnt taxi driving but face a lack of market opportunities. Counseling and placement has been a major area of thrust. It is here that the maximum amount of effort has gone in and is still likely to go in since this is the most important issue. Some of the unanticipated problems come from the women's requirements and constraints themselves. Most would prefer work close to their homes but this is not always possible.

The project has also had some negative experiences. While non-traditional trades have been initiated into the training programme in both the cities, a majority of the women in Delhi have opted for employment in traditional trades such as cutting/tailoring and embroidery. Despite acquiring higher skills, women continue to work as assistants or thread cutters, even though they are skilled in garment construction and embroidery. This is partly due to reluctance on the part of the employer and in some cases women expressed an instinctive reluctance towards stepping out to find work. Sensitisation and Training of husbands/fathers/brothers is crucial for the long-term success of the training programme.

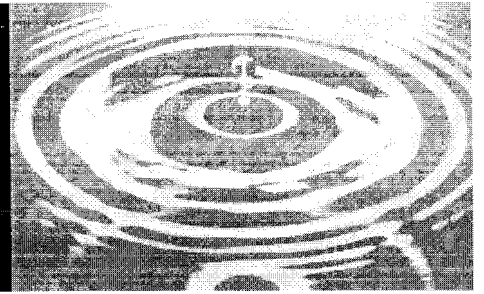
Recommendations emerging from the review include the need to link training and availability of employment. While many of the skills and trades selected have proved viable, a few non-traditional ones have proved difficult; skills such as taxi driving, horticulture driving, machine knitting and transformer assembly, repairing household gadgets may require additional inputs. Some of these have been anticipated, such as the need to break through

gender barriers which requires attitudinal change, while others have been part of changing market conditions. In some cases markets are fairly stable and there is a level of continuous demand such as in the case of domestic housekeeping. In other cases while demand exist it is more difficult to place poor women because they are not the first choice such as women working in export or garment houses. It is in this area that the maximum effort is required to build linkages to ensure that placements take place and this may not be a one time activity since employers/buyers, as well as products and demand can change. Handholding on a continuous basis has emerged as a crucial factor. Another area that requires re-focusing is the training duration, it appears to be insufficient to help develop the skill to its fullest potential, and lacks certification which can aid the employment seeking process. Co-ordination and networking has taken place between partner NGOs facilitated by ILO, as well as on an informal basis. There is an expressed need as well as an inherent requirement to create a more formal process and forum for interaction between those involved in this project or even in similar areas of work.

There is every reason to believe that the present pilot can be scaled up and improved by incorporating the learnings during implementation; and the general experience of partner NGOs has been that the project has provided a real source of empowerment to poor women in the slums.

Report on Workshop - 'Promoting Work and Network: Women in the Urban Informal Economy', ILO and ISST, Bangalore, July 2004.

Decent Employment for Women



This study of the project was followed by a workshop on 'Promoting work and networks: women in the urban informal economy', on 9th July 2004, at the Federation of Karnataka Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Bangalore. The daylong workshop intended to arrive at a future plan of action for further developing the 'Decent Employment' programme for the city of Bangalore.

The five sessions of the workshop focused on the current emerging issues in relation to the informal sector women workers in Bangalore. The first session began with reflections on the review of the decent employment programme in the two cities. A background paper presentation emphasised a better understanding of who the women in the urban informal economy are and how the locational and physical characteristics of their surroundings contribute to their economic position and sustenance. The next session focused on skill and training. The Directorate of Employment and Training, Ministry of Labour, GOI, dwelled on the various institutions and systems in place that support vocational training and work towards generating a flow of trained craftsmen into the job market. They also emphasised their role as implementing partners of the 'Decent Employment' programme. The need for realising and maximising the full potential of a market oriented approach was the focus of the third session, where both presentations gave priority to markets as a necessary tool to build more able entrepreneurs. The fourth session focused on urban participatory governance and its impact on livelihood for the urban poor. Here the example of the reworked *Swarna Jayanti Shehari Rozgar Yojana* (SJSRY) was narrated to demonstrate that integrating the poor into participatory governance efforts enables them

to achieve a more holistic progression towards their overall economic sustenance.

The last session was devoted to recommendations from the participants on taking this programme forward in the city of Bangalore. The workshop concluded on the note that a single track focus on marketing, skill training, placement or networking alone is not sufficient to help informal sector women workers enjoy a decent work environment and a decent standard of living. The work and lives of women in the low skilled unorganised sector are not easily separable – in fact they are closely knit and shaped by the environment they live in. Efforts must be put into place to ensure a multi-dimensional approach to skill development and training, which also incorporates an understanding of the living environment of these women.

Publication: Ratna M. Sudarshan "Vocational Training for Women in Informal Employment", Journal of Educational Planning and Administration Vol XIX No 4 Oct. 2005, pp 543-550; reprinted in J.B.G. Tilak (ed) 2007 'Women's Education and Development', New Delhi: Gyan Publishing House



"Please contact Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST) for any particular report at isstdel@isst-india.org."

Social Protection for Home-based Workers



Social Protection for Home-based Women Workers in South Asia: Learning from Action and Research (2006)

ISST with Home Net South Asia, Supported by Ford Foundation

Home-based work is an increasingly important source of employment worldwide. It is estimated that there are over 100 million home-based workers in the world and over 50 million home-based workers in South Asia. HomeNet South Asia (HNSA), a network for home-based workers in South Asian countries, was established in October 2000 with the objective of strengthening the network of homebased workers and their organisations and to advocate for economic rights and social protection for these workers. This action-research on social protection issues attempted to understand the risks and vulnerabilities faced by home-based workers in several different situations, and the coping mechanisms that they use.

The specific objectives of the project were:

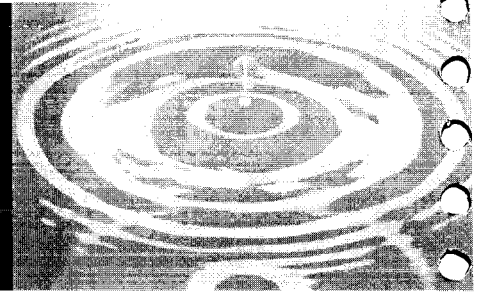
- Explore risks faced across the life-cycle by home-based workers. This was to be done against the context of changing patterns of livelihood
- Identify both governmental and non-governmental interventions that have been successfully implemented in order to address these risks.
- Exchange practical experiences and research findings, and build capacity for research and advocacy, among Home Net South Asia member countries and organisations.
- Use social security as a tool to organize homebased workers.

- Prepare concrete social protection policies and programme prescriptions based on review of government and non government initiatives

The study was carried out in five countries in South-Asia – Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka using action research methodology. The project decided to undertake a sector - based study of home based workers. Prior to the commencement of the project, HomeNet had carried out a mapping exercise of home-based workers carrying out different kinds of activities in each of the countries. The selection of sectors for this study was based on the mapping. Given the numerous sectors of industry where home based work is done, it was decided to select two common sectors of industry across countries in South-Asia. In addition, a sector where the poorest of the poor home based workers were found would be included. The selection of the third sector was left to the individual country. The common sectors that were chosen were ready-made garments and weaving. Action-research on these sectors was carried out in Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan. For the poorest workers, sectors selected were pottery makers and pearl extractors in Bangladesh, *agarbatti* (incense stick) rollers in India, pottery makers in Pakistan, hand made paper workers in Nepal. In Sri Lanka, the common sectors could not be canvassed and a different selection was made, comprising mat making workers, coir workers, reed and cane item makers, jewellery makers and batik handicraft makers.

The methodology has focused on collecting primary data. The lack of secondary data on the situation of home-based workers in the region was a factor in emphasizing the need to

Social Protection for Home-based Workers



collect information from the field. The research was conducted in three phases. In the first phase, qualitative methods were used for conducting research. Focused group discussions (FGDs) and interviews were used to gather information on the situation of home-based workers. In the second phase, a quantitative survey was carried out. The interview schedule for the survey was based on the issues that were discussed by home based workers during the first phase of research. The third phase consisted of a review of 'best practices' of governmental and non-governmental programmes and policies for home based workers.

The key conclusions from the study are briefly summarized below.

It is imperative to look at the overall development context within which workers operate to envisage a long term social protection plan. This development context includes various issues such as the global market context, the sectoral context of the worker, their geographical or socio-economic context and the local historical and community context they inherit. Thus, we need to look at social protection hand in hand with overall development strategy as the risks and vulnerabilities faced by workers in the study are shaped by their institutional construct such their sectors, communities and societies.

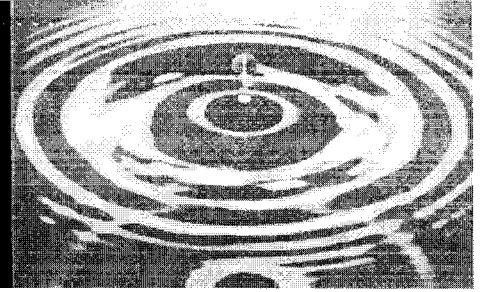
The survey responses from each location reflect the varied risks which arise not only from the labour process and employment patterns of home based work, but also those embedded in the overall weak socio economic position of HBWs in society and the sector. The needs emerging from the survey reflect the fractured economic status of home based

workers. Income-related and cash liquidity oriented needs are followed by enterprise oriented priorities. Risks faced by workers due to their poor housing conditions were prominent throughout the sample. Health care provisions are miniscule throughout the sample and health related expenditures emerged as the key heavy expenditure for the worker's households. Poor health is a perennial problem and is associated to the work process and living conditions and thus highlights occupational safety issues.

The survey also highlights grave child labour concerns. Most of the female respondents have been working prior to the age of 15 without being educated. Such a pattern of perpetuating poverty through poor investments in children's human capital and child labour continues.

Home based workers are found to be most vulnerable to disasters and yet the government response to these needs is found to be most lacking. Each of the risks and needs identified by the study cannot be seen in isolation from the location and context of the workers in the changing national and international scenario. Seemingly simple protection solutions relating to providing more employment and income opportunities, adequate housing and health facilities are related to more complex contemplations regarding the future course and development of the sector, country and community or cluster. More than ever before, several sources of insecurity and vulnerability as suggested by the study lie well beyond the boundaries of the local space, and arise from processes which are national or global in nature. Not taking this explicitly on board in the design of policy would relegate social protection interventions to the level of 'search and rescue' operations. Global macro

Social Protection for Home-based Workers



economic and technological changes need to be analyzed within the social protection discourse as they have the potential to shape the status of workers and the sectors they work in for better or worse.

There are several aspects to how the global market affects the home based workers surveyed by this study. Various examples from the study highlight that the influence the global market has on workers is mediated through various national economic policies. First, where workers are located in this global picture is significant. Second, how workers experience the global economic context is dependent on national economic policies. Third, the opening up of economies along with technological changes has placed these workers in even more difficult times as their ability to compete with much cheaper imports is weak and access to new technologies and modes of production is minimal. Finally, broad trends of feminization of the informal labour force are confirmed through this study. Global value chain analysis would not be adequately able to capture the risks and vulnerabilities faced in the context of the HBWs in South Asia as the workers who are in most vulnerable positions are linked very loosely, if at all, to enterprises that are part of global or national value chains.

The lack of a trickle down process from sectoral booms to these workers also appears due to their geographical and socio economic context. Workers engaged in well to do sectors who live near or in centres of such growth were experiencing much more valued changes than those living in rural outskirts or far flung regions. However, geographic and transport infrastructure issues also relate to the overall socio economic context of workers. Most workers who are engaged in home based

work in the survey were part of extremely poor and backward sections within their nation. Thus, any solution to curb the insecurities of these workers shall have to address larger development related queries about their weak socio-economic status and weak access to infrastructure which causes poor linkages with areas of high demand and earnings potential.

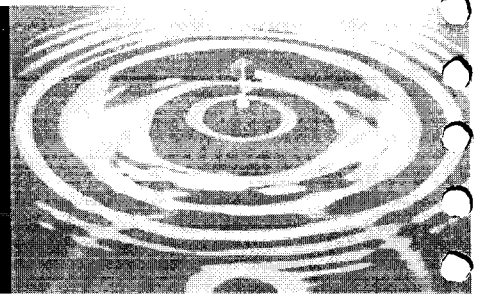
Social Protection has also been described as based on 'collective care arrangements'. What forms the 'collective'? The study suggests that the collective may need to be defined differently depending on the context. The community history and background of workers determine to a large extent their presence in a particular field of employment and also determine the nature of an individual's work within the sector. As the need for more work and regular payment from middlemen appear most significant from the survey, the issue of community identity and its preservation or decay is an integral development question that needs to be taken on board in design of any alternative employment scheme or social protection plan.

The study stresses the role national macro economic , infrastructure and fiscal policies can make in ensuring the promotion of home based work and the sectors surveyed At the international level, foreign governments, international labour unions, development and trade organizations need to be cognizant of the impact their decisions make to the livelihoods of the millions engaged in home based work.

In brief, the study recommends that:

- Decisions on social protection interventions and appropriate development trajectory need to be taken

Social Protection for Home-based Workers



together within a shared conceptual framework

- All home based workers share certain sources of vulnerability but the heterogeneity within the sector is a strong argument in favour of locale-specific approaches
- Economic insecurities are linked to low earnings, seasonality, stagnant markets, competition from new products/markets; and also to lack of credit and training support. As a result there is need for immediate relief as well as longer term interventions
- Health, housing and children's education emerge as top priorities. While it is clear

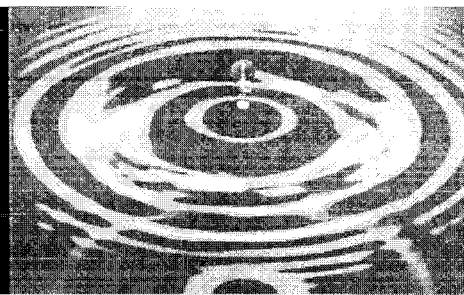
that there are strong linkages between such social insecurities and the nature of work, tackling them calls for looking beyond the immediate work context.

- Given the wide range of needs, successful social protection initiatives will call for joint action by many agencies. Partnerships are thus central.

Publication: Ratna M. Sudarshan (2010) - "Reading the Signposts: Social Protection for Home-based Workers in South Asia" in Social Protection as Development Policy: Asian Perspectives, edited by Sarah Cook and Naila Kabeer, Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, London, New York, New Delhi, pp 165-189.

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HNI Case Studies



Case Studies of Home-based Workers in Bihar, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh (2006)

Policy Workshops on Home-based Workers in Lucknow, Patiala and Patna (2008)

Supported by UNIFEM

In India, there is severe lack on authentic data for home based workers. Official data sources such as census of India do not recognise these workers as an independent category but have included them in the broad category of those working in household industries. As such, home based workers are not visible in national statistics. This study was carried out by Home Net India and ISST. Sector selection was based on information given by local organizations. The study included rural and urban areas in 3 states (Punjab, UP and Bihar). Each of the state studies looked at:

- Nature and conditions of work in these trades.
- Social and economic insecurities faced by the workers
- Key areas where further action is required.

Both qualitative as well as quantitative techniques were used in the study. Case studies, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted in each of these locations. Along with these, four surveys were conducted in the study sites with the help of local partners, one each in Bihar and Punjab and two surveys were conducted in Uttar Pradesh (one each in Rampur and Bareilly). The following trades were covered: Phulkari work in Patiala (5 locations); Applique work in Rampur (4 locations); Zari-Zardosi in Bareilly (13 locations); Box making in Lucknow (2 locations); Chappal making in Patna city

(1 location); Toffee wrapping in Patna city (1 location); Flute making in Patna city (1 location); Mala making in Patna city (1 location); Agarbatti rolling in Gaya (2 locations); Bidi rolling in Samastipur and Begusari (2 locations)

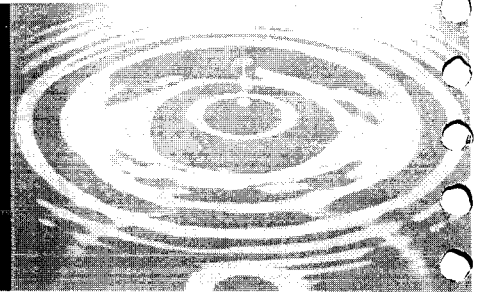
Key Findings Include

Sector and Value Chains: The studies reveal that several home-based trades are being challenged in the fast changing economic and production context and workers are marginalised as a result. Decreasing vulnerability for home based workers requires clearer articulation of the sector they are involved in and the impact of changing economic policies and urbanization on the sectoral demand and supply chains.

Access to Market and Associated Infrastructure: Women form the vast bulk of home-based workers. In many instances, women's contribution as unpaid family labour has not been ever accounted for. Greater thought needs to be focused on providing linkages for such women to be more visible within the sectoral space they occupy. This can be done through greater organization and networking through civil society initiatives. Women's role within the sector is further curtailed due to social restriction on their mobility. Women are often barred from participating in the marketing process and greater impetus in encouraging female home based producers to showcase products and sale could serve the purpose of boosting income security and confidence.

Minimum Wage: In the majority of cases, home based piece-rate workers do not receive the minimum wage as fixed by the state

HNI Case Studies



government. Wages paid are also irregular and meager. Adoption of minimum wage for piece-rated home based workers emerges as a key priority to ensure their survival and sustenance.

Child Labour: The substantial part of this labour comprises young girls and women. Policies pertaining to the use of child labour and the associated institutional mechanisms need to be enforced.

Advocacy and Representation: The study also highlights the dismal living conditions of homebased workers in the trades mapped. The large majority is living below the poverty line, and is unable to access any social protection measure legislated by the state such as documented in the *beedi* sector. In most places homebased workers are at the bottom of the socio-economic hierarchy and the fragile and insecure nature of their work does not help them come out of this precarious existence. Homebased workers are in need of credit facilities, but do not have access to these. They are unable to approach banks, as they are unable to provide the required documents to avail the facilities and no one to act as guarantor. To tackle such problems, greater recognition is required for home based workers and organizations representing the same through government officials. This recognition can be fruitfully used to ease barriers workers face in accessing schemes and services provided by the government.

Housing and Habitat Improvement: For homebased workers, the home is also the workplace, but they lack proper housing. In all regions, basic facilities such as sanitation are lacking. Many live in houses that are one room tenements lacking proper ventilation. As the

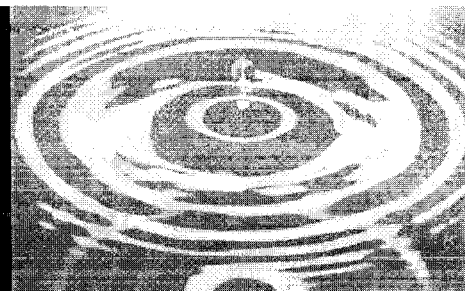
home is also the workplace, homebased workers end up paying for many of the costs—such as electricity, pay for defects in raw materials which in the factory setup would have been the entrepreneur's responsibility, for instance the bad quality of leaves in *beedi* rolling sector. The lack of space and proper housing affects their productivity and increases risks regarding goods being damaged.

Occupational Health and Safety Focus: Workers surveyed suffer from a variety of ailments which are directly related to their work. But it is difficult to separate the occupational health problems from their life situation. Lack of sanitation and safe drinking water and low nutritional status spiral a cycle of low productivity. Workers in the case studies use private facilities which bleed their savings and report minimal access to quality public health care services. Further awareness about safer working process and conditions could go a long way in augmenting the productivity and well being of female home based workers.

Policy workshops on Home-based Workers based on these studies were organized in Lucknow, Patiala and Patna by ISST in coordination with HomeNet India and Lucknow Mahila Sewa Trust, Lucknow; The Nabha Foundation, Patiala; Bihar Rajya Gharkhata Mazdoor Union, Patna.

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Women's Work in Urban Delhi



Through the Magnifying Glass:
Women's Work and Labour Force
Participation in Urban Delhi

Ratna M. Sudarshan & Shrayana Bhattacharya

Supported by International Labour
Organisation (ILO)

Executive Summary

This paper seeks to explore the nature of women's workforce participation in urban Delhi through a household survey carried out in Delhi during a three month period between September 2006 and November 2006. It also attempts to identify key factors influencing women's decision to work, the type of work they do, the constraints they face, and the perceived benefits and costs of engaging in paid work outside the home. In doing so, issues surrounding the methodology and underestimation of women's work are also tackled.

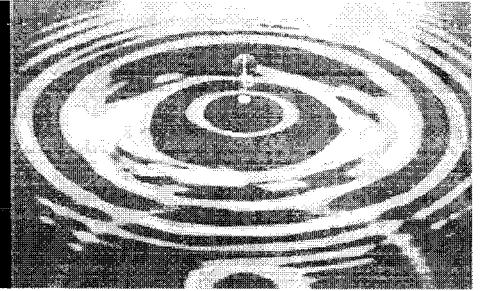
The survey estimates a greater female workforce participation rate than recorded in the NSS. This suggests that undercounting and perception bias can be overcome through intensive probing as was done here. A key finding is that most working women do not have access to paid leave or provident fund. This reflects the informality that surrounds women's work. The key factors which appear to push up women's workforce participation rates include higher education, reduction in time spent on housework (domestic technology, water and electricity, child care arrangements), and safety in public spaces (transport, lighting). Results stress the role of variables beyond the labour market and work space in influencing women's access to work opportunities. The time spent on care work is

high, and working women are not able to reduce their house responsibilities very much. The results confirm that the decision to work outside the home is usually a function of the preferences of the marital home. The study suggests the need to understand the familial and household context within which labour market decisions are made. The role of family and kinship structures to determine women's work-life choices emerge as an important area for further study.

Published as ILO Asia-Pacific Working Paper Series, May 2008; and in Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. XLIV no 48 November 28 - December 4, 2009, pp 59-66.

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Employment, Informality and Poverty



Employment, Informality and Poverty: Comparative Research in India and China, Study Visit to India (2007)

Supported by International Development Research Centre (IDRC)

A study visit was organized for a group of Chinese economists and policy makers to Delhi and Ahmedabad over the period February 3-12, 2007.

The visit started with a welcome dinner and a visit to Social Centre for Rural Initiative and Advancement (SCRIA), Khorī Gaon, District Rewari, Haryana where the approach to rural development followed by this NGO was discussed. A day long seminar was organized at the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER). The morning presentations were on India and the afternoon China, followed by a wrap up session. Discussions during and through the day drew attention to the following issues:

- India and China are both fast growing, yet with persistent poverty, and there was an agreement that we need to focus on employment to understand this
- Other similarities include the shift from planning to the market, large size of the populations, regional disparities, a shift to services, and migration.
- In China, the consumption: GDP ratio is relatively low; there is a focus on manufacturing which has been the driver of growth (with implications for the possible overuse of natural resources and levels of pollution); there is a gradual shift from capital goods to consumption, and from manufacturing to services. (The distributional implications of these shifts need to be explored).

- Definitions of 'home based', 'informal' etc were queried and discussed. It was suggested that while using internationally accepted definitions is necessary for any comparison across countries, priority needs to be given to using definitions that will allow the identification of national trends over time

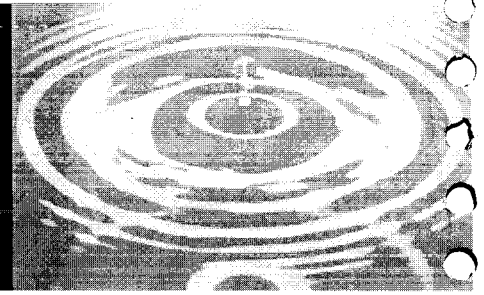
A book release and panel discussion was arranged in the evening around the new Oxford University Press publication, Trade Liberalization and India's Informal Economy, edited by Barbara Harris White and Anushree Sinha, and based on an NCAER-QEH project.

Meetings were organized at the National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganized Sector (NCEUS); with Prof Abhijit Sen, Member, Planning Commission; a day long workshop on the concepts and methods of statistical measurement of the informal economy that are currently in use in each country, the sources of data, and the recommendations of international forums such as the Delhi Group. This was followed by a 2-day visit to the Self Employed Women's Association, SEWA, Ahmedabad. On return to Delhi, a half day discussion was organized on women's work.

Several areas were identified as holding potential for further collaborative work, including :

- Concepts and methods of measurement of informal employment
- Socio-economic characteristics of informal employment, using internationally accepted definitions
- Comparative study of the top 5 large industries with focus on emerging work and production arrangements

Employment, Informality and Poverty



- How are the traditional bases of segmentation (gender, informality) being affected by globalization in each country
- Study programmes with a view to reviewing the role of state, market and NGO.
- Study the various forms that informal employment could take, including self employment, workshop employment, through a study of an industry such as garments
- Comparative studies of social protection - In China, the challenge in social security is how to break down the wall (between those included and those like migrants who are excluded); while India struggles to provide basic social security to all
- Relation between globalization, inequality and informality
- Influence of household characteristics of those in informal employment on the next generation – issues of inter generational transmission of poverty
- Forms of organizing that are permissible in China and could be used by various groups – garbage collectors, casual labour

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Women in the Informal Economy



Workshop on Organising Women in the Informal Economy: Lessons from Practice

Millward, Ratna M. Sudarshan) is currently under preparation.

20-21st October 2008, New Delhi

Supported by Pathways to Women's Empowerment Research Consortium, Institute of Development Studies (IDS) Sussex

This workshop brought together academics, activists and practitioners to discuss the experience of organisations of women informal workers, with the aim of documenting these experiences and understanding the strategies that have 'worked' in particular circumstances. Participants included representatives of organisations of domestic workers in Karnataka, India and Brazil working for workers' rights and better conditions; women in fisheries in Tamil Nadu working to preserve and enhance their role in the domestic fish trade; sex workers in Maharashtra working for recognition and human rights; rag pickers in Pune finding ways to achieve recognition and to adapt their work to the new economy; tribal women in Jharkhand working on land rights; construction workers in Chennai achieving workers' rights; Burmese migrant women in Thailand using limited available spaces to find voice; women farm workers in South Africa organising in partnership with an NGO; and the experience of Trade Unions reaching out to informal sector workers in Ghana. These stories confirm that models for organising women in the informal sector are in many ways distinct from conventional models of workers' organisations.

A Report on the Workshop is Available at <http://www.pathwaysofempowerment.org/OrganisingWomenintheInformalSector.pdf> and an edited volume (editors Naila Kabeer, Kirsty

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Low End IT and ITES Workers in National Capital Territory of Delhi: Profile and Key Issues

Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST),
November 2009

Supported by Sir Dorabji Tata Trust (SDTT)

Motivation

With greater integration of domestic input and output markets with global markets, ICT based sectors and use of ICTs and IT enabled services are being promoted in various ways. IT-enabled services in particular are expected to offer new employment opportunities for both men and women, in contrast to slow employment growth in the traditional manufacturing sector. In anticipation, a large number of IT training institutes have come up in recent years at several locations catering to students across the economic segments of the society, including recognized and formal institutions as well as informal, unregistered institutions run by a variety of persons - private entrepreneurs, NGOs, etc. However, there are uncertainties not only about the likely size of the new employment at the lower segment of the sector, but also the nature of this employment. Given the potential role envisaged for ICTs in both employment generation and reduction in labour market segmentation, it is worthwhile to understand the nature of new economic opportunities especially, for the poorer section of the society; and examine empirical evidence regarding the nature of employment in selected locations.

According to one study, over 70 per cent of the workers in ITeS are dominated by unorganized enterprises.

Method

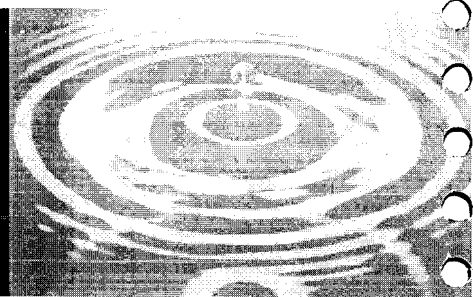
This study focused on 'low end' IT workers recruited after basic IT education. Policy implications and scope for interventions both at grassroots and at policy level are indicated.

The sample was selected after carrying out a listing of households covering all the districts of Delhi. The share of each district in the sample was decided on the basis of pre-existing data sets available through Census 2001 district level data on occupational spread of IT workers in Delhi. The electoral roll of Delhi has been used in listing the residential areas in each district. As our primary objective is to capture the low-end IT workers, the lower ranked residential colonies were purposively selected on the basis of Census 2001 ranking of wards. The final selection of residential blocks has been done after discussion with sampling experts and resource persons. A total of 1111 IT/ITES workers in Delhi were surveyed, out of which 79.93 % are males and 20.07 % are females.

Profile and Key Concerns

In terms of social background and gender, the low-end IT/ITES sector has been found dominated by men and forward castes. The entire sector of work is dominated by men and women in their twenties with little prior work experience. For most of the IT workers, father is educated at least at the school level. Most workers in this level are first timers in the IT/ITES sector from their respective families. Around 36 percent workers are first generation migrants in the city. Among the migrants, almost half are from Uttar Pradesh and a quarter from Bihar. Most of the workers had received IT training between six months and 24 months from small IT institutes before obtaining work. The survey confirmed that

Urban Poor Livelihoods in the National Capital Region of Delhi



there are opportunities for people in accessing the available jobs even without any prior formal training. A sizable proportion of workers enter in the low-end IT/ITES sector without any prior formal IT training. Most employers do not provide any formal IT training for the beginners or for skill upgradation at this level.

Personal contact is the major route to accessing low-end IT/ITES jobs. Posts are mostly filled through referrals, where the IT institutes play a major role. Campus recruitment is very minimal in accessing low-end jobs, unlike high-end IT jobs, as shown by other studies. A visible gender bias is noted with respect to access to IT/ITES jobs and salary. Wide disparities exist in wage levels. Most low-end workers fall in the monthly wage group of Rs. 5000 to Rs. 8000. Private sector enterprises are the major job providers. Large chunks of workers are found in retail and other non-IT sectors; 22 percent are employed in the IT sector. Eleven percent is in Call Centre jobs. Most workers at the low-end are employed as computer operator or data entry operator. A sizable proportion of workers are found working as sales person.

Most workers are employed without any written contracts. However, workers perceive their job as permanent, where they feel no threat of eviction. Daily work hours range from 6 hours to 13 hours. Women work on average less hours than men.

Emerging Implications for Policy and Action

Recommended interventions can be divided into three broad categories:

Training: More training options for students from economically weaker sections. Capacity

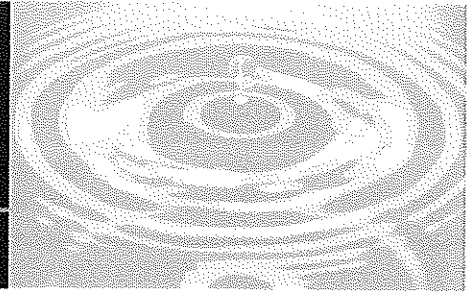
building and work orientation for the students and the organizations involved in free/low-cost IT training is needed, including networking among such organizations. It would help to have a standardized and open source software based IT training programme/curriculum. Some incentives may be needed to encourage girls to take training in IT.

Accessing Work: Development of formal placement cells that can be accessed by students of these organizations; systematic networking with industries/private sector enterprises - the potential recruiters.

Contracts: Regulation/voluntary compliance to do away with the informalities in this segment of work.

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PROJECT SUMMARIES

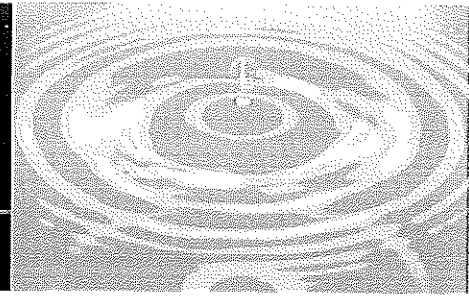


Domestic Workers

Institute of Social Studies Trust



Live In Domestic Workers In NCT of Delhi



Key Findings from Case Studies of Live In Domestic Workers In NCT of Delhi

The ISST research team collected life histories from 66 live-in domestic workers. The interviews and interactions were conducted between June 2008 and March 2009. Live in workers were extremely difficult for the team to trace. The team procured a list of 54 agencies in the National Capital Territory, but only 7 of these were available on the contact details provided by an online directory. Snow ball sampling was used through 3 different routes:

1. 2 of the 7 agencies in (South Delhi and New Delhi) allowed the team to interview the agents and workers placed by them. These interviews and initial interaction allowed the research team to find and maintain contacts and communication with 36 live in domestic workers placed by these agencies. These workers were met on several occasions.
2. Live-in Workers contacted through the previous method, allowed the team to also meet and contact other live in domestic workers who were acquaintances or friends. This group of 15 workers had not been placed by the two agencies mentioned above.
3. ISST research team used personal contacts to pursue interviews with 11 live in workers.
4. 4 live in workers were interviewed and contacted due to their social relationships with live-out domestic workers surveyed by the ISST team.

The sample comprises of 23 women from Jharkhand, 33 women from Bengal, 4 men from Jharkhand, 3 men from Uttar Pradesh and 3 women born in Delhi (from Andhra

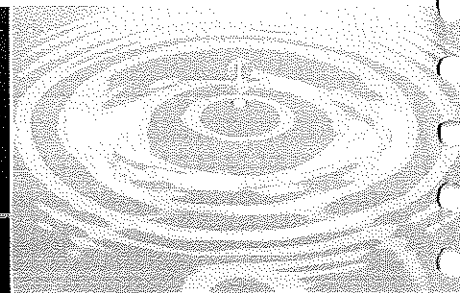
Pradesh, Jharkhand and Bengal). Migrant women interviewed have lived and worked in Delhi for an average of 8 years. 4 women interviewed were above the age 70 years and 2 reported being engaged as live-in domestic workers for nearly 35 years.

Commission rates were different for different workers, despite the employer being told that the commission rate was a one-time payment which would be Rs 5000 OR Rs 8000, for the two agencies investigated. Workers interviewed stated that arbitrary commissions would be deducted from their monthly salaries, which could be half or more of the salary paid by the employers to the agencies. In all cases where agencies supplied workers, wage payments were routed via the agent. A few employers stated that they provided extra cash in hand to workers to remedy such a situation.

The average wage reported by workers is estimated to be approximately Rs 4500 per month. Detailed interaction with workers revealed varying income scales based on the number of years of work experience, the socio-economic profile of employers demanding workers, types of tasks performed, the nature of placement and education.

Work experience appears to have an immense impact on the wages earned by live-in workers interviewed. On an average, the data provided suggests that women engaged in their first job as live-in domestic workers earned close to 30% of the wages earned by women who had more years in work experience. For example, amongst women placed by an agency in B.D Park, 3 women who had been placed for the first time earned Rs 2500 per month, whereas 6 women who had been placed with more than

Live In Domestic Workers In NCT of Delhi



one employer earned an average of Rs 5700.

The ability to negotiate increased salaries from the second placement was a common reason given by workers from one of the agencies for leaving their previous employers willingly. **Workers, placed by agencies, stated that they were not allowed to discuss wage increase with their employers. Workers feared losing their jobs if they requested for an annual increase in payment.** Agents stated that they feared women being co-opted by employers and becoming autonomous workers, whereby the agency commission would be stopped.

The ability of workers placed by agencies to negotiate improved wages and working conditions appear dependent on the nature of social controls which can be imposed on the agents. There were two different patterns observed through the occupational histories and interviews with agents. One agency, managed by a single agent who relied on personal contacts and social networks of the live-in domestic workers placed by him in specific villages and districts in Bengal, appeared more prone and responsive to bargaining with potential and current employers on behalf of placed workers for decent living conditions and wages. His reasons for taking up such demands from workers were couched in fear that a bad reputation for his agency would restrict the future supply of labour and hurt his personal relations with families of women he had placed. In situations where women were unhappy with wages or working conditions, they could apply pressure on the agent through shaming and asking their households to also make demands from the agency. On the other hand, the agency placing women from

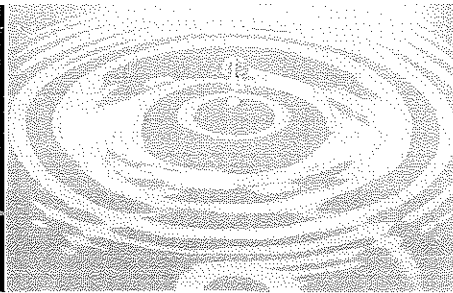
Jharkhand, operated through more depersonalised networks of large number of agents, who would facilitate the supply of labour for the agency. Once, in Delhi, the migrants or their families would rarely be in contact with the agent who brought them to Delhi. In cases where living or working conditions appeared extremely unsatisfactory to workers, they had no recourse than discuss with their employers themselves or run away. In a few cases, employers gave these workers extra cash in hand. The amounts ranged from Rs 800 to Rs 1000.

Women engaged in elderly care or patient care reported highest salaries amongst the live in workers interviewed, whereas those assisting in child-care, without helping in other household tasks reported minimum salaries. The two agencies studied by the ISST team made a clear distinction between skilled and unskilled domestic workers, with those engaging in elderly or patient care being deemed 'skilled' and others 'unskilled' or 'semi-skilled'. Employer's complaints often related to problems with this skill notification devised by agents.

Workers placed through agencies reported higher monthly earnings than those placed through familial or social networks. **However, interviews further revealed that only 5.5% (2) of the live in workers placed by the two agencies received the income promised to them by the agent.** The remaining received varying amounts of their income each month. Narratives highlight how agencies would deduct arbitrary amounts from the worker's salaries.

24 of the 36 (66%) workers placed by agencies reported that their salaries

Live In Domestic Workers In NCT of Delhi



were completely withheld for at least one month. Discussions with workers placed by the agency sourcing labour from West Bengal and Jharkhand revealed that the reasons for wages being withheld were usually related to remittances made directly by the agent to the workers families upon their request, debt or payment for facilitating migration. Workers also complained that the agents would dupe them by saying the money was being saved or remitted for them. However, at the time of payment or when girls would visit their villages, they would either not be handed over their savings or hear that their families did not receive the remittances.

The provision of interest-free credit from agents towards workers and their families resulted in wages being persistently being deducted. Women complained that they were unsure of how much was actually due to them.

Only 8 of the women interviewed reported attending school. 6 of these women are from Jharkhand.

The role of education and basic numeracy and record keeping skills are important. In one agency, a woman who could perform such tasks said she was never duped as she would maintain records and calculate. However, other girls could not do so. Thus, when they argued with agents regarding wage disputes, the agencies would provide arbitrary explanations which cannot be disputed unless women look at their accounts.

Majority women did not have separate living quarters. It is interesting to note that those with living quarters also reported the highest incomes amongst workers interviewed.

Wage and working norm negotiations were affected by the inability of female workers to access safe and affordable shelters, in cases where working conditions were becoming abysmal and immensely difficult to manage. Women reported running away to the agent, but many felt unsafe in the shelter provided by agencies as well. Male live-in domestic workers did not face such problems as they could easily access the housing market, while single women could not do so.

Child domestic labour emerges as a significant issue. Nearly 33% of the sample started work as domestic workers below the age of 15 years. Agents said many employers would hire younger girls to play with their children. These girls families would be paid Rs 800 per month. Further interviews with workers suggested that many workers felt working at a younger age allowed one to apprentice and become more comfortable with domestic work and the employers families.

A majority of workers felt harassed due to long hours of work. On an average, female domestic workers reported working for nearly 12 hours daily.

There is need for counselling and support for live in domestic workers. Many felt isolated and lonely, due to restrictions on mobility and their inability to maintain social relationships beyond communication at their workplace and agency. In this regard, women from Jharkhand reported a stronger network due to church based meetings, which they were allowed to visit.

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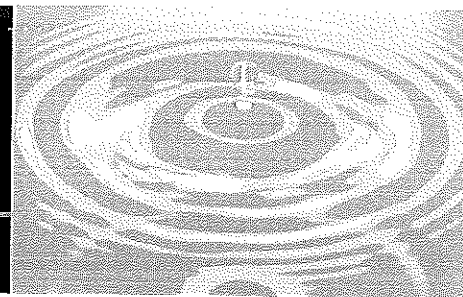
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Urban Poor Livelihoods in the NCT Region



Live Out Domestic Workers in the National Capital Territory of Delhi: Profile and Livelihood Concerns

Key Findings from Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST) Study, November 2009

Supported by Sir Dorabji Tata Trust (SDTT)

The ISST sample survey on live-out domestic workers, conducted between September and December 2008, highlights certain key concerns which need to be addressed by activists and livelihood interventions. The study of 1438 domestic workers was carried out in 117 slum and JJ clusters in the National Capital Territory of Delhi, through use of the electoral rolls and a stratified three stage quota sampling design. Each of the nine districts of Delhi formed a stratum and the survey covered 36 of the 70 Assembly Constituencies in the state. A brief summary of the key findings follow.

Education and Skills Training

Out of the sample of domestic workers surveyed, majority 72% are illiterate. Only 11% can sign their names and 8% have completed primary schooling. This was emerging as a serious constraint in finding better paid jobs in upper middle-class localities. Workers articulated the need to understand basic Hindi and English, in conjunction with the ability to manage a few basic calculations. Many felt such skills would help them get better work in New Delhi and South Delhi districts.

Only 1.4% of the sample reported receiving any form of skills training prior to joining work. During qualitative rounds of investigation, workers in New Delhi district emphasised upon the changing nature of

demand amongst employers in their localities. Interviews with workers highlighted the need for training for workers to manage modern appliances, cooking methods and house-keeping.

58% of the workers surveyed said they would prefer to find other types of work. Many younger workers in East and West Delhi were also trying to join training sessions for alternative livelihoods such as garment embroidery, computer training and beauticians courses.

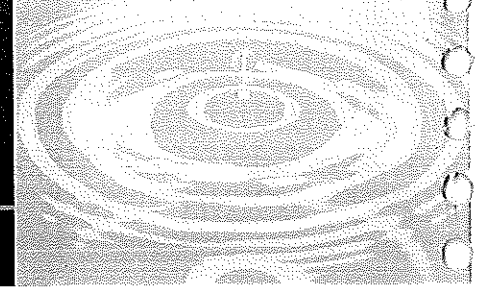
Caste and Social Discrimination

88% of the sample is Hindu, with 11% Muslim persons being captured by the data. From the sample of 1438 persons, a majority are from the Scheduled Caste groups. These represent historically backward and discriminated communities. Narratives from workers also refer to issues surrounding caste and pollution as barriers to entry into certain types of domestic work such cooking. A few life histories also discuss how access to paid domestic work has allowed women to escape rigid caste roles. Nearly 7% of the domestic workers surveyed are from general caste groups. It is interesting to note that many of the problems perceived by the low status given to domestic workers has been voiced by many such women during qualitative investigation in New Delhi, West and South Delhi. These groups complained about not being allowed to drink water or use toilets at their employers' home. Key caste groups reported by the survey data include Balmiki's and Namoshudras (from Bengal).

Migration, Social Networks and Remittances

Domestic work is emerging as a key cause for migration into cities. The ISST survey data

Urban Poor Livelihoods in the NCT Region



finds nearly 80 % (1153 persons) of the sample are migrants. From this migrant group, nearly 41% state they came to Delhi in search of paid domestic work. From the migrant group, close to 15% of households report owning land in their village or pre-migratory home. A dominant share of migration for live-out domestic work is familial or facilitated through social networks. While a majority of women were accompanied by their family members during migration, 5% reported moving to Delhi without any companions. Only 5% migrants paid a neighbour or agent to help them migrate to Delhi. From the sample of workers, 39% reported UP as their previous state of residence, while 15% reported West Bengal. This was followed by approximately 10% who reported Bihar. Other states mentioned include Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, Tripura, Uttarakhand and Jharkhand.

The data also highlights the significance of social networks in finding work for migrants. 72 % of the migrant workers surveyed said they had first heard about domestic work through a person from their village. 79% state that they have friends and networks from their villages in Delhi. Data and discussions with workers revealed that many migrant households reside in close proximity to their village kin group. 65% of the migrant domestic workers said they received help in finding work in the city from these networks.

11% of migrants report making remittances. On an average, the respondents remit income 3 times in a year. Workers report remitting an average of Rs 3437 per year. Workers report going to their village between one or two times in a year. This is a source of work insecurity as 23.15% of the migrant sample

reports losing jobs when they return from their holidays.

Livelihoods

A key finding of the study is the increasing economic significance of paid domestic work as a form of stable income in the household. On an average, each household has 2 persons who are working. Majority 50% of the households surveyed relied on a mix of domestic work and other casual labour for primary income. Approximately 33.5% of households rely exclusively on domestic work to manage expenditures. Majority (45%) of the respondents' state their husbands are engaged as casual labourers. 10% are unemployed, 26% have salaried jobs and 17% are self employed. A majority of the narratives offered by women on the causes pushing them to take up paid domestic work stressed on the variable nature of incomes brought home by their husbands. Thus, income from domestic work was seen as a stable source of money to tackle monthly expenditures.

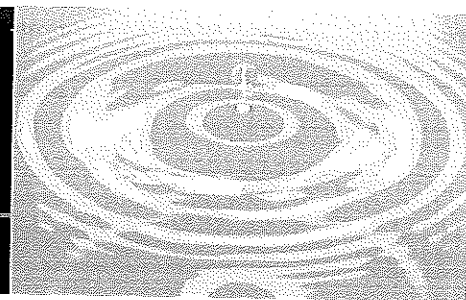
Housing

64% of the sample report owning their own home. Qualitative investigation suggests that the profile of homes is *kutcha-pukka*, with the data also suggesting that workers pay monthly rent of Rs 725.

Identification and Access to Government Service

Lack of identification emerged as a key concern which restricted access of workers to larger state services and benefits. Only 27% workers report owning any proof of identification as a resident of Delhi. 3.4% reported having completed the domestic workers police registration process. 5% own identification papers issued by the local colony

Urban Poor Livelihoods in the NCT Region



association where they work. Qualitative research highlighted the numerous difficulties workers face in accessing government schemes and programmes. Majority of the areas visited during qualitative research reported weak access to public amenities such as water, sanitation and electricity. Many women had to make work related decisions based on such considerations. For example – women in 2 slums visited would avoid working in the evening shift as private tankers would supply water to the area at this time.

Savings and Credit

90% report no savings mechanisms as they had no savings from their income. For the remaining, 4% report personal bank accounts while 3% have joint family accounts. Workers report relying on other domestic workers and migrant networks for credit. Only 24% receive cash assistance from their employers. Workers receive cash assistance of a Rs 42 per month. It is important to note that 76% of workers do not receive such support.

Wages and Remuneration

Women report earning Rs 620 in each household. Total Income is reported to be an average of Rs 1875 per month. *This varies based on the number of tasks, types of tasks, number of households and the locality where work is performed,* as indicated in the table below:

Close to 21% households where workers are engaged do not offer any gifts or cash during festival time. 76% provide festival allowance

once in a year. The average amount given during festivals is reported to be Rs 93.

Wage setting is based on informal norms and standards set by domestic workers in a particular locality.

However, workers without access to such networks through family or friends are unable to negotiate with employers based on such information. Narratives from women and field observations suggest that such wage setting is also based on social networks, with different groups working in the same colony reporting different norms. These differences also appear to be a source of conflict between workers.

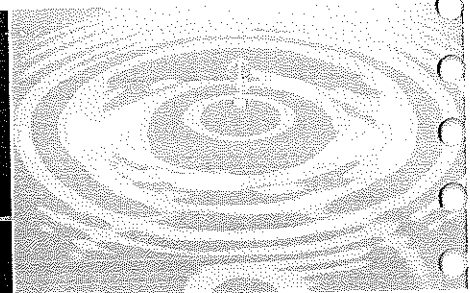
86% of the sample of workers walk to work. The average time taken by the journey is 32 minutes. Women taking public or private transport spend close to Rs 384 on monthly travel expenditure. Those in South and New Delhi report highest monthly expenses of Rs. 450 and Rs. 461 per month. Such payments were never factored into wage discussions with employers, amongst the domestic workers interviewed.

Informality and Working Conditions

Working norms are purely based on oral contracts and bargaining between workers and employers. Unlike the case of wages, many domestic workers interviewed felt they were not sure on the minimum norms for holidays and sickness leave. Several workers also felt that they would risk losing their job if they

Tasks	Mopping Floors	Washing Utensils	Hand Washing and Drying Clothes	Food Preparation
Per Household Rate	413	380	485	983

Urban Poor Livelihoods in the NCT Region



made too many demands. Field observations suggested that while wage oriented discussions were common amongst networks of workers, norm setting for working conditions requires more awareness generation and organising. 98% workers do not have any contract papers. 28% report receiving one holiday each week. 65% work overtime. From this group, only 20% receive payment for extra hours. 38.5% experience wage deductions if they take sick leave. Thus only 61.5% receive paid sick leave. On an average, workers receive 2.5 paid holidays a month.

Apart from fever, majority women report bladder related problems. During interviews, workers reported not using toilet facilities at their employers home. 74% are happy with their work. 76% state they do not want their daughters to take up domestic work. 7 persons report violence with employer. 6% have heard of other domestic workers facing violence.

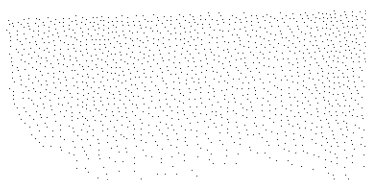
Child Care

4% report paying others for assistance in housework and childcare. These women report an average monthly payment of Rs 303. of married women with children below the age of 15, 47% leave their children by themselves when they go to work. Other strategies include keeping children with neighbours or at school. Concerns regarding the safety and well-being of children mediate the working patterns of domestic workers i.e the distances they cover to go to work and the number of households they work in and the number of hours or shifts they work.

Organising

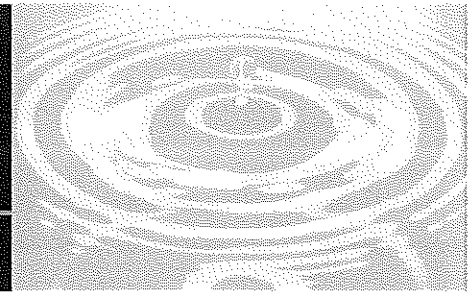
Despite having networks, 60% state that they had to solve disputes situations themselves. This was an arena where women felt they

needed skills training to manage disputes and negotiations with employers. Only 3 women sampled were members of a workers association. These were women working and residing in an army cantonment area.



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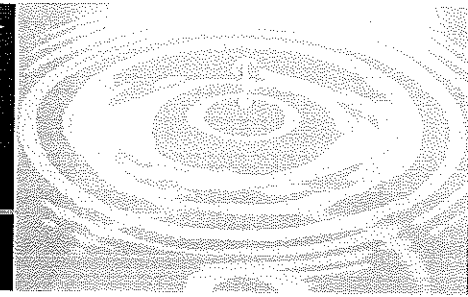
PROJECT SUMMARIES



Education for Change

Institute of Social Studies Trust

Poor Children in Rich Schools



'Poor' Children in 'Rich' Schools: A Report on Impact of 20% Free-ships to Economically Marginalised Children in Recognised Private, Unaided Schools in East Delhi (2005)

By Mallica

Supported by Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST)

This is a study of the impact of the Supreme Court's judgement, followed by the Delhi Government's notification, of reservation of 20-25% seats and free-ships to children of the economically disadvantaged classes by recognized, private, unaided schools in Delhi. The study also documents ISST's experiences-the difficulties and challenges faced in assisting people from poor and deprived BPL families to get their children admitted in these schools.

An attempt has been made to look at the perspectives of the children (who've been admitted under this scheme); the experiences and perspectives of their parents; teachers (both of private and government schools) and principals of these respective schools.

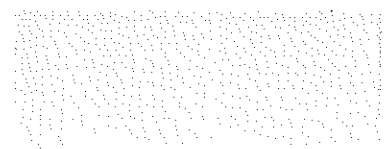
The study reveals a tremendous sense of resentment against the order of the Delhi government and reluctance on the part of the private schools. The resistance to the order seems to originate from the economic aspects (as the private schools will have to bear the costs of schooling for these children) as also, more importantly from a hidden bias against children of the poor. School principals and a few teachers interviewed in the study seemed to possess stereotypical mindsets and prejudices against the learning ability of the first-generation learners. There seemed to be no

recognition of the need to help the children to cope with a new school environment, with children themselves being labeled as "weak" and blamed for their "inherited" lack of ability to do well in school.

The study raises significant questions about the 'hidden costs' that parents are being forced to incur (for school uniforms; books; private tuition; transportation etc). The need to deliberate upon the entry criteria, apart from income, has also been stated.

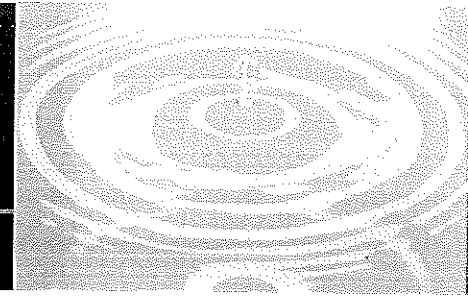
The study stresses upon the need to address these and related issues to increase the sustainability and viability of the scheme and to achieve the larger goal of equity and equality in education.

Available as ISST Working Paper



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The Playground Study



The Playground: A Place Full of Interactions and Diverse Expectations (2007)

By Sophie Woehling and Shubh Sharma

Supported by Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST)

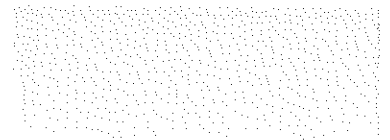
The design for a playground study came following a previous study on the Freeship Quota Policy in private/ public schools for children from socio economically weaker sections. The purpose of the previous study was to explore the expectations and experiences of the parents of children who have been enrolled with private/public schools under the 20 percent reservations scheme in public schools of the Government of Delhi, and the children themselves. The lack of information and the relative silence of the parents and children on the subject pushed forth the idea of a more in depth study, of their integration, within the school itself. Also, an online review on playground studies, thus far, suggests a very limited investigation on the subject in India. The study formulates certain suggestions for such private schools that could strengthen the integrative process. Besides that the idea of studying the space of the playground was also inspired by several studies led in Western countries on the playground itself, conceptualized as a "micro society", as a space where socialization of children takes place.

This exploratory study, carried out in one private school in East Delhi, did help identify interesting dimensions of the interaction on the playground and other related areas which can be further studied. One such aspect that can be delved into is the classroom interaction. We feel that the children's commute from

home to school and back can also be looked into. Further study of the existing groups may throw some more light on the function of the socio economic backgrounds of children in integration. Also, the influence of family and friends back home on the school environment, as well as interactions in playgrounds outside school can be explored. A similar exploration with older grades in the same school and with other schools, particularly those catering to higher income groups, will help better understand the issue comprehensively, especially the dimension of gender segregation.

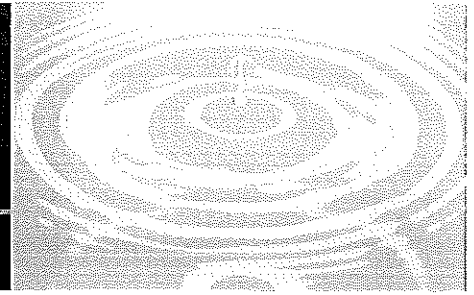
Suggestions to the school for making the experience of children at school more enriching include more efforts towards the integration of both the sexes, providing similar facilities and opportunities to them, and try and make the playground as enjoyable, friendly and clean a place as possible.

Available as ISST Working Paper



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Bolti Lakeerain (Talking Lines)

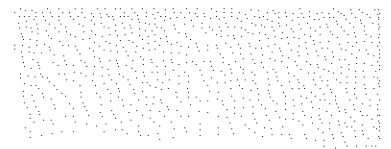


Bolti Lakeerain (Talking Lines): A Report On Comics Workshop and Exhibition, 19th - 24th May 2007, Kalyanpuri - East Delhi

By Deepika Singh

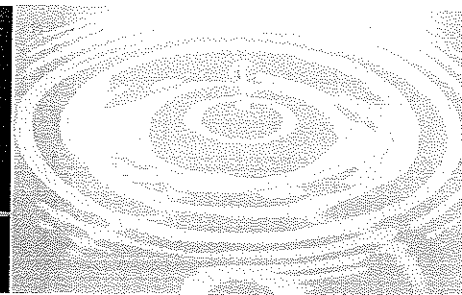
Supported by National Foundation of India (NFI)

A Comics Workshop was organized with the children of ISST's Community centres to provide the children with a new media to communicate their expression and feelings about their surroundings which affect them. Also it can additionally help in boosting their creative dimensions. A 6-day workshop was organized with World Comics India. It was an optional forum for children to participate, around 52 children came on the first day of the workshop but only 22 really got interested passionately and stayed till the end of the 6 day workshop. 44 wall poster comics on a range of issues were ready at the end of the workshop.



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Educational Initiatives: South India



Qualitative Studies of Selected Educational Initiatives in South Indian States (Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh)

Carried out for the Project Revisiting Education For All (2006-9)

Supported by International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada

By Meera Pillai and Radha Ramaswamy, Senior Research Consultants, ISST, Bangalore

With all its flaws, most notably that of leaving out children below the age of 6, and from the ages of 15 to 18 from its purview, the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Bill 2008, which was passed by Parliament on August 4, 2009, and notified as law following presidential assent on September 3, 2009 is, according to the Union HRD Minister Kapil Sibal, the "harbinger of a new era" and represents a "historic opportunity" for the children of the country.

The task of raising the standards of existing schools so that they meet qualitative norms, and establishing new schools according to these norms, is a very complex and daunting one. Hence, there is no doubt that all the stakeholders involved in re-casting education will be looking for relevant qualitative information which will be of assistance in the process. In the next two or three years, it will be of significant importance to collect stories of efforts which have been functioning above par, and critically analyse these to identify principles, practices, systems, structures or actions which can be replicated, or successfully applied in other contexts or locales, in order to raise the quality of the educational experience for children in India.

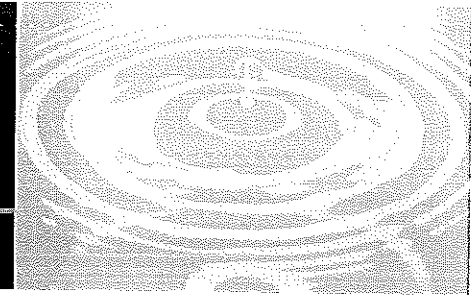
This study provides a few examples of such stories from southern India, and a small study of school choice in three urban slums, to emphasise the importance of putting in resources, creativity and commitment into providing government school education of good quality.

The case studies have covered the following initiatives:

- **Mahila Samakhya Karnataka-facilitated KGBV and NPEGEL Programmes:** Using the technical expertise and organisational experience of a quasi-government organisation to promote gender equity in education
- **School Monitoring Committees, Karnataka:** Opportunities to Nurture Local Schools through Participation and Partnership
- **Examples of Effective Government and Public-Private Initiatives in the Administration of the Mid-Day Meal Scheme in Karnataka**
- **Activity-Based Learning (ABL) and Active Learning Methodologies, Tamil Nadu:** Building transformative pedagogies for government schools through public-private knowledge networking and capacity development
- **Community Owned and Managed Education: Setting up Schools for Tribal Children in Dindigul district, Andhra Pradesh**
- **School Choice and the Urban Poor:** A micro-study in Hyderabad

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Study of IT Sector Programmes for Youth



Study of IT Sector Programmes for Youth from Low Income Families in Bangalore 2010

Sudhamani N and Ammel Sharon, Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST), Bangalore

Supported by International Development Research Centre (IDRC) through Institutional Support Grant

The IT Policy of the Government of Karnataka emphasizes the role of IT education in improving the quality of performance of the IT sector in the state. IT jobs are generally assumed to be high paid and formal in nature. But the sector also requires a large number of people in low skilled jobs. It offers opportunities for professionals trained at smaller IT institutes. The proposed study had a focus on 'low end' IT workers recruited after basic IT education.

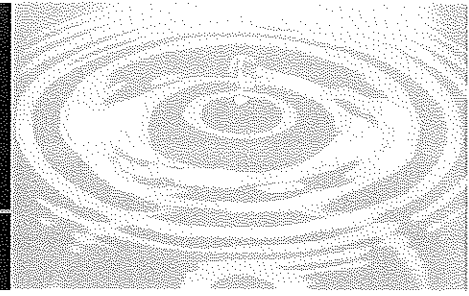
IT-enabled services like call centres, medical transcription, back office work processing, data entry etc., are held to offer considerable and growing employment opportunities for both women and men, unlike the traditional manufacturing sector. In anticipation, a large number of IT training institutes have come up in recent years at several locations catering to students across the economic segments of the society, including recognized and formal institutions as well as informal, unregistered institutions run by a variety of persons-private entrepreneurs, NGOs, etc. At the time the study was conducted, several of these were closing down due to the impact of the financial recession in Bangalore.

The study found that IT training has created some opportunity for the youth from the low income group. But the existing free training

centres run by the government and NGOs are not always able to help with placements or to provide follow-up counseling and support. Learning a new skill has empowered boys and girls to get a job that their peers and others in the community were not able to access. Though the training provided equal opportunity for both boys and girls, gender stereotyping was evident: more girls were seen to access software training compared to hardware, and were getting into jobs such as data entry operators, DTP operators etc. The notion that girls have a flair for creativity encourages them into learning graphic designing, which has opened up a new avenue in the low skilled side of the IT jobs. This is slightly better paid than jobs at DTP centres or cyber cafes.

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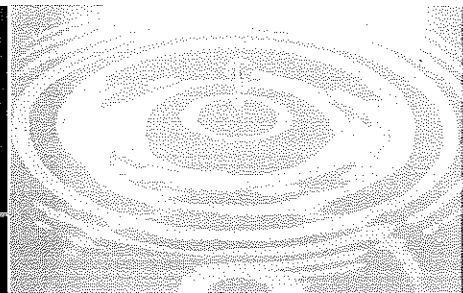
PROJECT SUMMARIES



Evaluating and Engendering Public Policy

Institute of Social Studies Trust

Chronic Poverty, Intra-household Allocation



Chronic Poverty and Gendered Patterns of Intra - household Resource Allocation: A Preliminary Enquiry

Supported by Chronic Poverty Research Centre (India)

This paper is a preliminary enquiry into the nature of gender based discrimination in poor households in urban slums in Delhi. The data presented is based on a household survey as well as case studies. The paper finds evidence of gender based disadvantage within households, with adult women and daughters, especially elder daughters, worst affected. While all children have access to schools, there is greater commitment to schooling for boys. As part of the informal labour force, both men and women are at a disadvantage when seeking work; women are further disadvantaged by gender roles and norms. This includes reproductive responsibilities and household controls on women's mobility. A number of government programmes have been introduced for which the population of the areas studied is eligible, including free health and schooling facilities, and a public distribution system (PDS) targeted at the poorest households. Effective implementation of these programmes is expected to improve the capabilities of the individuals covered. Some programmes, such as the PDS, are essentially anti-poverty programmes. While the worst forms of disadvantage would be ameliorated with effective programme implementation, the underlying structural reasons behind intra household discrimination cannot be directly addressed. Although the identification of intra household disadvantage has been done in this paper by looking at individuals within households, we argue on the basis of our findings that community action

could have an important role to play in influencing household behaviour. Thus, the strengthening of collective action for improvement of community infrastructure, access to health, education and work, in a manner so as to be especially responsive to the needs of women and girls, could be one way of reducing intra household disadvantage.

Published as Ratna M. Sudarshan and Rina Bhattacharya 2004 'Chronic Poverty and Gendered Patterns of Intra Household Resource Allocation: A Preliminary Enquiry', Working paper no 12, Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi; revised version in Chronic Poverty and Development Policy in India, 2006. Edited by Aasha Kapur Mehta and Andrew Shepherd, New Delhi: Sage Publications, pp 222-247.

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Evaluation of the STEP Programme



Evaluation of the STEP (Support for Training and Employment) Programme (2007)

Commissioned by Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India

The STEP programme was initiated in the Seventh Plan by the Department of Women and Child Development as a centrally sponsored programme, which emphasized the critical need to increase and improve employment opportunities for women. Women's involvement in economic activities was seen as a necessary pre condition to build up their self reliance. The Eighth Plan put emphasis on Right to Work – a positive thrust area to empower women by raising their status and bringing them into the mainstream of national development not as mere beneficiaries but as contributors and partakers along with men.

Based on the view that economic empowerment is a route to all round empowerment, the programme was started in 1986 in response to *Shramshakti*, the findings of the National Commission for Self Employed Women and Women in the Informal Sector. The objective of the STEP programme is to provide support for training and other inputs with a view to creating sustainable employment for women. The aim of the programme has been to empower women and to promote sustainable livelihood for them in traditional sectors that, in turn, would ensure the well being of women. It is a poverty alleviation programme that seeks to provide income generating activities to women from vulnerable groups to enable their economic empowerment.

The programme sought to direct a maximum

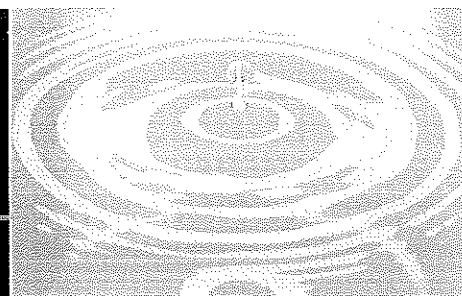
of resources towards releasing productive and creative energies of rural women so that they could become equal partners in the social and structural transformation of the society. The objective of the programme has been to support women's work by providing a range of inputs, with especial focus on training for skill upgradation, and marketing linkages.

This evaluation of the STEP programme is based on interviews with recipient institutions, project managers, beneficiaries, and experts, from seven states i.e. Assam, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh. In each state, at least one recipient from the dairy sector has been visited, along with one from another sector. Apart from the fieldwork, relevant documents and previous evaluations have been studied. Experts have been consulted both on the methodology to be followed and the substantive issues. A query posted on the UIN Solution Exchange has been used as a method to canvass inputs from individuals and organisations across the country.

Suggestions for re-designing aspects of the programme so as to improve actual outcomes were further discussed at a National Workshop chaired by the Secretary, MWCD, and later partly incorporated by the Ministry.

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Meeting of Feminist Economists

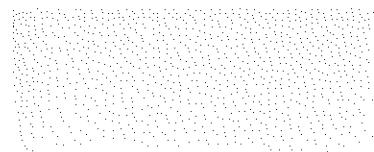


Meeting of Feminist Economists (2007)

Supported by International Development Research Centre (IDRC)

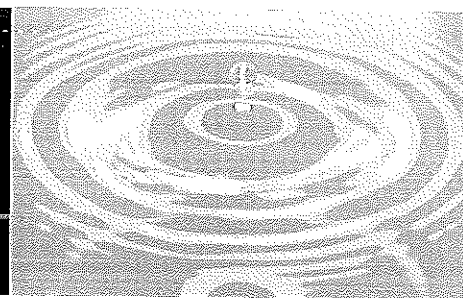
An informal meeting of the Group of Feminist Economists set up by the Planning Commission in preparation of the Eleventh Five Year Plan, was organized at the India Habitat Centre on July 27 and 28. Prior to the meeting draft versions of the first chapter of the Plan (draft) and the chapter on Women and Child Development had been shared in confidence with the group. Discussions at the meeting therefore were focused on these two draft chapters. Dr Syeda Hamid, Member, and a few officers from the Planning Commission attended parts of the discussion. At the meeting the idea of making a presentation to the Planning Commission was discussed and this presentation was made at the Planning Commission in August 2007.

Report available at http://planningcommission.nic.in/aboutus/committee/wrkgrp11/wg11_fec.doc



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Impact of Micro Finance in Reduction of Domestic Violence Against Women



Does Access to Micro Finance Bring Down the Incidence of Domestic Violence?

Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST),
December 2009

Sponsored by Ministry of Women & Child
Development

The assumed pathway of influence is as follows: women organize into self help groups (SHGs); as group members, women access credit from microfinance organizations for productive activities; through these activities, they experience an increase in income; with higher earnings of women, the other members of the household begin to place a higher value on their work and contribution; this brings down the incidence of domestic violence.

To explore whether this expectation can be empirically confirmed, ISST carried out interviews with a total of 202 women members of SHGs, distributed across the three districts of Jhajjar (72), Rewari (64) and Ambala (66) in the state of Haryana. Sixty per cent of the women interviewed were between the ages of 26 and 40. Thirty four per cent were illiterate and less than 2 per cent had been to college. 89 per cent were married and 8 per cent were widowed. A majority of the sample belonged to the Scheduled Caste. Half of the sample had incomes below Rs 37,000 per annum.

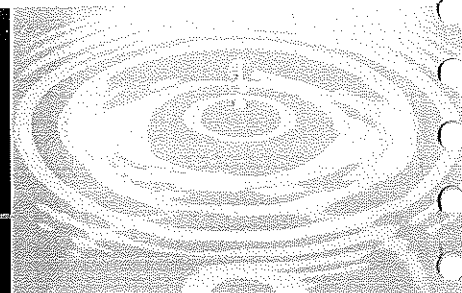
These SHGs were linked either to the Rashtriya Mahila Kosh programme or the Women's Development Corporation for the purpose of borrowing loans to undertake income-generating projects. The ISST study design had assumed that by interviewing members of SHG's we would have a sufficient

sample of women who had accessed micro credit and also experienced violence, so that the hypothesis of impact could be tested. However, while the study revealed a very high incidence of violence it was found that very few SHG members had accessed micro credit; but since Haryana government has created opportunities for income generating projects to be carried out by women's SHG's – including making of sanitary napkins, cooking food for ICDS centres, many women were engaging in income generating activity. The link between higher incomes/economic empowerment through self employment and reduction of violence could still be explored.

Incidence of Violence

Out of the full sample of 202 women, while 30 per cent felt that women have subordinate status in the family, and others felt that women's status is equal to that of men, 92 per cent of respondents reported that there is some form of violence in their household: 70 per cent stated that they face violence from their husband, and others from in-laws. Fifty nine percent reported facing physical violence (and 27 per cent 'frequently'). Eleven per cent reported sexual violence – forced sex with husband. Alcoholism and poverty were given as the main reason, and a third reason was 'generation gap with in-laws'. As per the provisions of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, the state government has appointed independent Protection Officers on a contractual basis and Protection Cells have been established in every district. Around 28 per cent of the sample was aware of the PWDV Act; 3 persons reported having had recourse to the law. 67 per cent did not feel that the law is an adequate deterrent; 58 per cent felt that what is needed is 'a change in mindsets'.

Impact of Micro Finance in Reduction of Domestic Violence Against Women



Income Earning and Incidence of Violence

Taking a smaller sub sample of 50 women who were engaged in self employment – including those who have taken micro finance loans as well as those who have taken loans from the group, we find that 52 per cent are from below poverty line households, none is illiterate. Over 25 per cent have taken a loan to start an enterprise. Sixty four per cent reported experiencing violence from husband; 22 per cent at the hands of in laws. In this group 46 per cent reported facing physical violence. One respondent said the cause of violence was husband's jealousy of her earnings; another 9 said that not giving money for alcohol provokes husband to be violent (other women gave no response to the question). Fifteen respondents were aware of the protective law, and one had used it. While 46 respondents said that their dependence on the moneylender had come down with access to micro credit, only 6 said they have seen an increase in their monthly income. Only one respondent reported a moderate decline in domestic violence.

View of Adolescent Girls

Out of a total of 49 adolescent girls who were interviewed, only 8 per cent said that there is discrimination against girls/women in the society. More than half - 59 per cent - said that they had witnessed women being mentally/ physically harassed at home. They gave the main reasons as alcoholism/drugs or poverty. Around 50 per cent of the adolescents thought that complaints of violence should be registered with the police to punish the offenders. In case they were to experience such violence themselves, 51 per cent said they would preferably approach their elders, 27 per cent said that they would call the police, and

12 per cent said that they would reach out to other relatives.

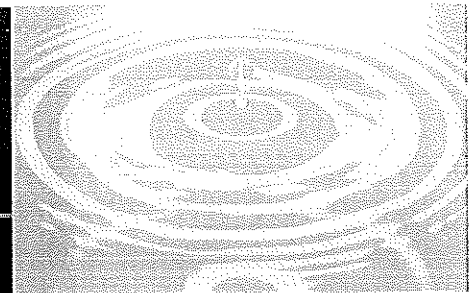
Almost all of them said they did not know anyone who had registered a complaint against domestic violence with the police, and 73 per cent were not even aware of the Domestic Violence Act.

Policy Implications

- The very high incidence of violence is alarming; more research needed to find out what kinds of interventions or organizing efforts in the context of Haryana have been successful in bringing down the incidence of violence
- On the basis of the study, no evidence to suggest that micro credit or higher incomes are able to reduce the incidence of violence
- From focus group discussions, however, women who are earning an income appeared to feel that this makes them more secure and able to cope with their situation
- While some inter-generational change is visible, again, there is not enough evidence that awareness or attitudes are dramatically different between mothers and daughters

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Women and Work (2009)



Women and Work: Contemporary Trends and Challenges

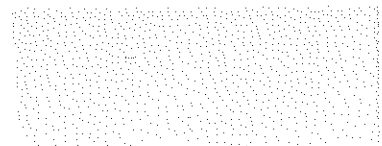
Supported by International Labour Organization (ILO)

National Consultation on 'Current Employment Strategies and Women's Work' organized by International Labour Organization (ILO), in partnership with the Ministry of Labour and Employment (MOLE) and the Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST), New Delhi, July 6-7, 2009.

The National Consultation brought together representatives of the government, workers, employers, academics and civil society. India's total workforce has grown to 455.7 million by 2004-05, and an increasing share of women in employment forms an important aspect of the current scenario of growth. Women's participation in the labour force and contribution to household income as well as the GDP is both significant and increasing. The Consultation was held in the context of an emerging National Employment Policy; the upcoming Census 2011; insights from the field that recommend reviewing some key programmes, and building the knowledge base for gender sensitive macroeconomic policy making. The inaugural session took stock of persisting gender inequalities in job creation, wage differentials, disproportionate representation in poorly paid work and vulnerabilities of the informal economy and highlighted the need to focus on education as the key determinant of opportunities and wages for women and stressed the need for gender sensitive policy architecture.

Background papers were prepared by Professor Nirmala Banerjee; Professor

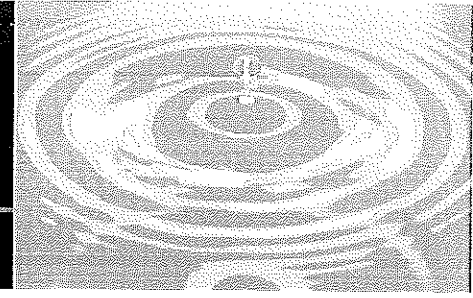
Saraswati Raju; Dr Preet Rustagi; Ms Anandi Venkateswaran; Dr G. Raveendran; Dr Aruna Kanchi. These are available as ILO working papers.



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Experiences in Implementation of the ERA, 1976



Has the Equal Remuneration Act (ERA) (1976) been able to Advance Gender Equality?

Sponsored by International Labour Organisation (ILO), New Delhi

January 2010

The ERA provides for the payment of equal remuneration to men and women workers for same or similar nature of work by stipulating that no employer shall pay to any worker, employed by him in an establishment or employment, remuneration whether payable in cash or kind, at rates less favourable than those at which remuneration is paid by him to the workers of the opposite sex for performing "same work or work of similar nature" (Section 4). It also provides for not making discrimination against female employees while recruiting for same work or work of similar nature or in any condition of service subsequent to recruitment such as transfers, training and promotions, etc (Section 5). Under this law, no discrimination is permissible in recruitment and service conditions except for where employment of women is prohibited or restricted by law (Section 15).

Equal Remuneration Act has had at best a limited impact both in terms of ensuring parity in wages in the various sub-sectors of the labor market as well as in terms of successful prosecutions. While the period 1977-83 was marked by a decline in the male-female earnings gap across most of the states in India, the male-female earnings disparity increased in the period 1983- 88 in 14 out of the 17 states (or 82 percent of the states) of India.

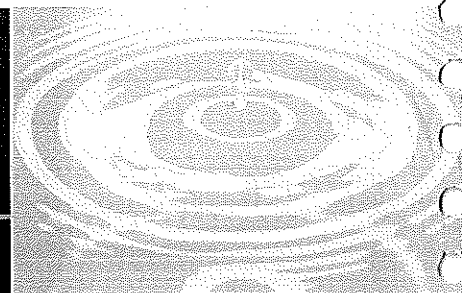
The Act has primarily been used in the organized sector. Of the total of 17 cases filed

in the Supreme and High Courts till date under the Act, only 5 cases relate to the informal sector (1 in the plantation sector and 4 in the construction sector). Some of the cases relate not to gender disparity, because the principle of "equal pay for equal work" has also been used by men to demand equal wages vis-à-vis other male employees.

What accounts for the limited effectiveness of Equal Remuneration Act (ERA)?

- The term "work of similar nature" creates scope for ambiguity in the implementation of the Act.
- Poor people are willing to work at less than minimum wages and/ or accept gender inequity in wages rather than risk losing their job by antagonizing their employers by claiming better or higher wages.
- Using ERA means bringing men into the picture either as employers or as co-workers and this is not always feasible for women in the existing patriarchal framework.
- The judicial process is very slow, and expensive and therefore, not feasible for many poor women.
- It is more feasible for an organization to speak on behalf of a group, than to expect individual workers to file cases on their own, and this has not happened on a significant scale
- The definition of the employer used in the Act is the same as in Clause 2 of the Payment of Gratuity Act. This can limit the applicability of ERA to the unorganized sector.
- State governments do not have the financial resources to implement the Act.
- Labor departments across the country are overburdened with work; labor inspectors

Experiences in Implementation of the ERA, 1976



tend to prioritize legislations as Minimum Wages Act, Factories Act, Employees' State Insurance Act as compared to the Equal Remuneration Act.

- Although ERA is intended to prevent discrimination in recruitment and thereafter, in fact, the Act seemed to have aggravated the stratification of some jobs as "female" and "male" accompanied by different pay levels. More awareness is needed on the non-discrimination part of the Act. There is a need to reform the law to "equal employment opportunities" which covers pay, treatment, sexual harassment and all other employment related issues.

Conclusions

The study suggests that the Act has had limited impact in terms of ensuring gender equitable wages and more needs to be done to improve the effectiveness of this Act; the following policy implications are derived:

1. Legal experts along with trade union leaders can work towards a clearer and a concise definition of the term "same work or work of a similar nature". The definition adopted by ILO of "equal pay for work of equal value" as per The Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100) could prove useful in this respect.
2. Changes in the law that would enhance its efficacy in the unorganized sector (for example, through a broader definition of the term "employer") would also be helpful.
3. Harsher penalties could help towards discouraging violations of the Act.
4. If the implementation of the Act could be prioritized, for example, by making it a job-responsibility of a particular Labor Inspector (as opposed to it being a

responsibility of all Inspectors in the Labor Ministry), the chances of prosecutions could be improved as well.

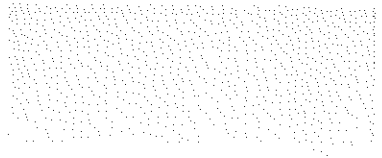
5. A wider dissemination of the Act among workers, particularly in the informal sector, is required.
6. The ERA will work better within a policy framework that promotes sharing of family responsibilities amongst men and women. In this context, the ILO's mandate on gender equality is of relevance - especially the four key equality Conventions. These are the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111), Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100), Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156) and the Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183). Unless all of these co-exist, the idea of equal remuneration alone may be difficult to attain.
7. There may also be a need for a policy measure such as Equal Employment Opportunities Commission Bill as suggested by the Sachar Committee.
8. Finally, continued efforts through advocacy and public debate to bring about a stronger social commitment for equality are needed.

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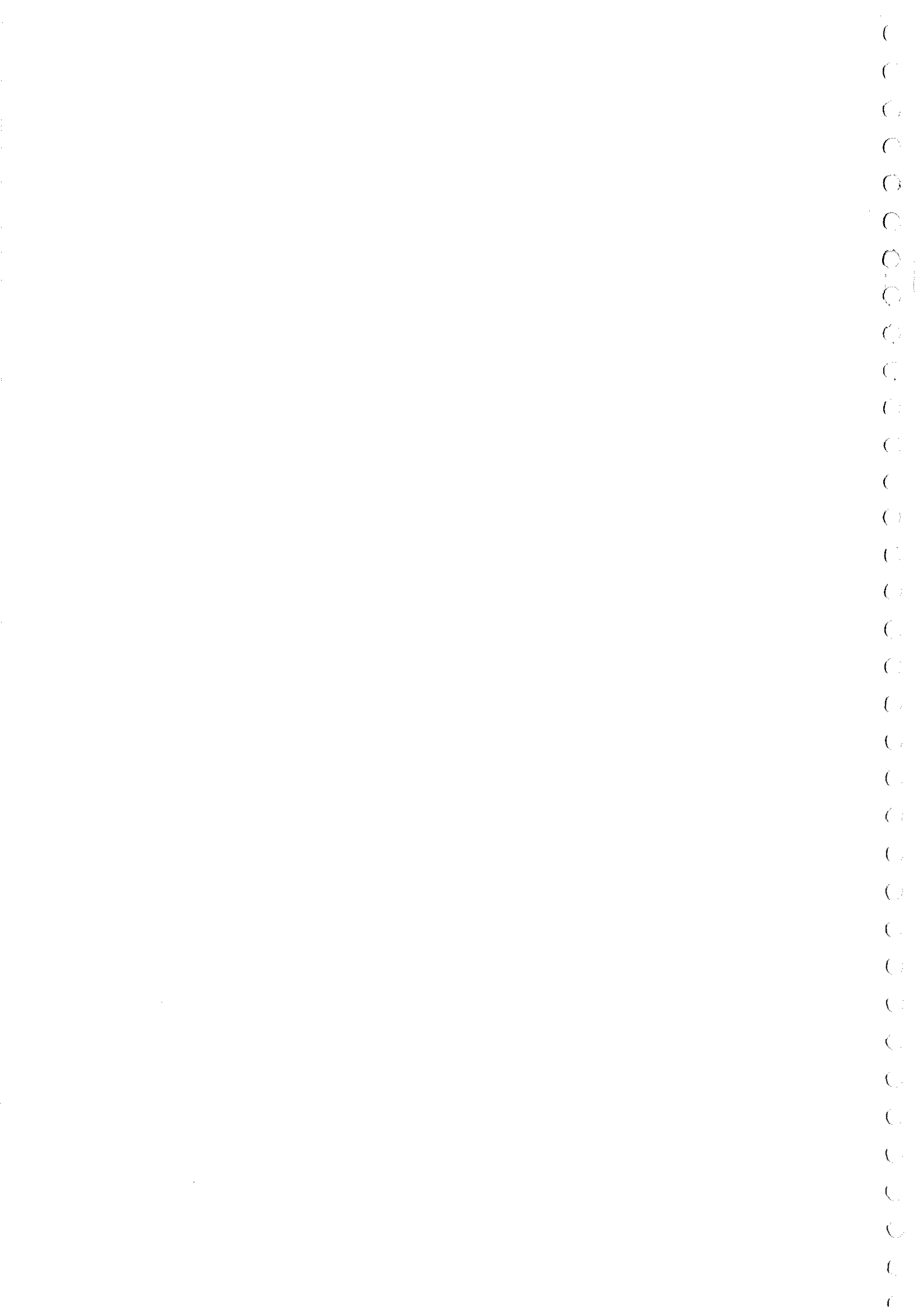
Engendering Public Policy

Workshop on 'Engendering Public Policy', New Delhi, March 25-26, 2010

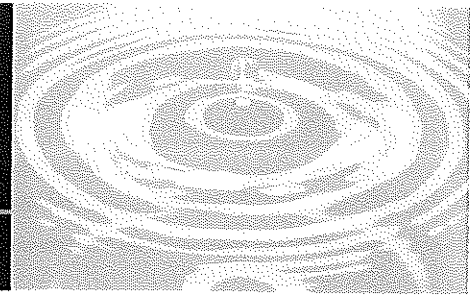
The conference on Engendering Public Policy was hosted by the Institute of Social Studies Trust in partnership with SEWA (Self-Employed Women's Association) Bharat and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) as part of a larger project whose objective was to describe the feminist economist intervention in the Eleventh Five Year Plan of India as a significant voice in public opinion on macro-economic policy. It aims to contribute to feminist understanding of concepts like mainstreaming gender; poverty eradication with special reference to women's poverty; and developing new measures to understand progress and gender equality. This conference was held as an initiative to strengthen the network of 'feminist economists' whose opinion and work engage with public policy.



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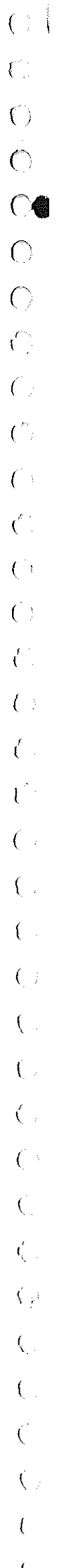


PROJECT SUMMARIES



Studies on NREGA

Institute of Social Studies Trust



Gender Mainstreaming in NREGA



Issue Brief: Gender Mainstreaming in the National Rural Employment Guarantee 2007

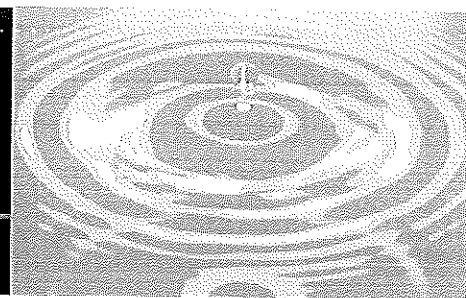
Ratna M. Sudarshan and Shrayana Bhattacharya

Commissioned by UNDP

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) was passed in 2005, following which state level National Rural Employment Guarantee Schemes (NREGS) were initiated to implement the provisions of the Act in February 2006. Within the policy and programmatic sphere, gender mainstreaming is seen as 'a process through which the legitimacy of gender equality as a fundamental value should be acknowledged and reflected in development choices and institutional practices at the country level. Hence, gender equality goals should influence mainstream economic and social policies that deliver major resources'. The mainstreaming agenda aims to influence government level programmes and thus the NREGA assumes immense significance, being a large scale initiative taken up by the Indian government. This issue brief evaluates the provisions of the NREGA and its efforts to address gender concerns through the programme design.

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Women and the NREGA: June 2006



Women and NREGA: June 2006

Supported by International Labour Organisation (ILO), New Delhi

June 2006

ISST with NGO partners [*Doosra Dashak* (Sirohi, Rajasthan), SEWA MP (Dhar, Madhya Pradesh), ISST Bangalore with local women's groups (Gulbarga, Karnataka), and THREAD (Sundargarh, Orissa)] undertook a study to see how the initial implementation of the NREGA has been perceived.

The following are the key emerging issues:

I.

The EGA is based on an understanding that there is an acute shortage of work in rural areas reflecting the dependence of people on agriculture and the seasonal nature of agricultural activities. The works started under the EGA are intended as a supplement to normal agricultural work and to stop distress migration in off peak seasons. The survey conducted by ISST confirms the finding of heavy dependence on land/ forests and lack of other sources of income. Most households get by on a combination of manual labour, agricultural and non-agricultural. From the survey, it is seen that there are differences in the percentage of the landless in the sample (5 % in Sirohi, Rajasthan, 12 % in Sundargarh, Orissa, 33 % in Dhar, Madhya Pradesh and 53 % in Gulbarga, Karnataka); and ownership of animals (8 % without animals in Sirohi, 13 % in Sundargarh, 41 % in Dhar, and over 70 % in Gulbarga).

All the areas are characterised by lack of irrigation facilities and hence water conservation and harvesting emerges as a

priority in all the four places.

II.

The size of the household and the dependency ratios vary. The number of men eligible for EGA and the women eligible (i.e. over 18 and able and willing to work) is roughly equal in all the places sampled. The number of eligible persons per household averages 3 (three).

III.

In this situation, what strategies the households use to claim the 100 days of work promised through the EGA-whether it is shared among all the eligible members or whether one person stays on this work - will not make a difference to the net addition to household income but may have important implications for intra household distribution of work and responsibilities.

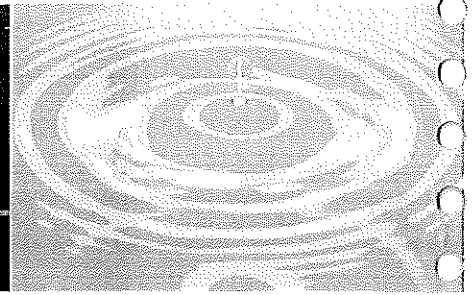
The proportion of eligible men and women are roughly the same, but in Rajasthan it is seen that 70-80 % of workers on the EGA sites are women. Crèche facilities were not observed.

In order to ensure that such participation by women does not have adverse effects on children and elderly members of the family, there is a **need to ensure adequate child care facilities** - whether on or off site, depending on the age of the child and the preferences of mothers - and flexibility of work timings at a minimum. Currently it seems that many children are out of school, which could be a result of having to migrate out of the village. If women stay behind to work on the EGA sites, and child care facilities are available for very young children this may stimulate schooling of older children.

IV.

Levels of illiteracy were found to be high in the

Women and the NREGA: June 2006



sample. In Sirohi, 47% of men and 82% of women were illiterate. Even in the 7-20 age group, 28% of males and 67% of females were found to be illiterate. In Dhar, 36% of men and 61% of women were illiterate. For the 7-20 age group, the illiteracy was 19% for males and 43% for females. 21% of men had no education in Sundargarh, and 52% of women. In Gulbarga, 45% of males and 68% of women reported no education. This high level of illiteracy will need to be factored in, while designing programmes and attempting also to impart skills. If the EGA works are to be able to also build up skills, some arrangement for imparting at least basic and functional literacy will need to be made. This is a point for convergence with literacy programmes, or alternatively a point to be considered for the future framework of the operational guidelines.

V.

The operational guidelines for the EGA offer scope for activities to be undertaken by NGOs and other organised groups. The present level of mobilisation among the villagers in the sample is indicated by membership of groups. In Sirohi, 23% of women were members of self help groups or mahila mandals and other women's groups. In Dhar, 18% were members of self help groups or other women's groups, and 77% were members of SEWA. In Gulbarga, 29% were members of self help groups. In Sundargarh 62% were members of self help groups or other women's groups. The level of such community mobilisation appears to be higher among women, however, more probing will be needed to see how far these groups offer the possibility of leading community action.

VI.

On the NREGA:

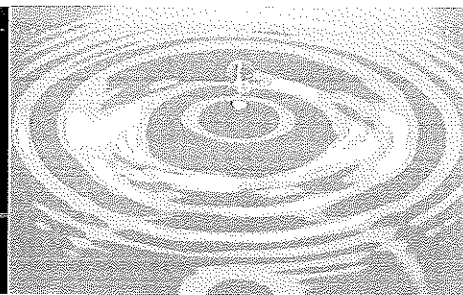
Awareness about the NREGA: In Sirohi, over 50% of the sample had come to know about the scheme through word of mouth and from other villagers. In Dhar over 30% had learnt about it in this way. In Sundargarh 80% said they had come to know from others. In contrast in Gulbarga all but one respondent said that this information had come from the sarpanch. (Women's awareness appears to be a function of intra household relations (where men get this information, do they communicate it to the women in the family?); the general level of awareness; and whether any effort has been made to disseminate specifically to women (for example through NGOs, women's groups, where these exist).

Desired form of Payment: 86% of the respondents in Sirohi, 82% in Dhar and 79% in Sundargarh said they would prefer the payment to be partly in food and partly in cash. (All these are forested and predominantly tribal areas, and the finding could reflect food insecurity present in these areas). However in Gulbarga, almost 90% said they would like the payment in cash.

Method of Payment: In Gulbarga, the administration intends to make payments through direct transfer to bank accounts in the name of the head of the household. This means that in all households with a male head, women will not have direct access to their earnings, and this is a matter of concern.

Need for Clarity on Piece/Time Rates: In Rajasthan, wages being paid are much lower than minimum wages (in fact even lower than under previous programmes such as drought relief works. In Abu Road, wages were reported to be around Rs 38-40/- for a day's work; whereas they had been reported as being Rs. 50-60/- in the last year under the

Women and the NREGA: June 2006



drought relief programmes). The reason for this seems to be that the payment reflects a 'piece rate' and not a time rate, and the assessment of work done is made at the end of the stated duration of the works. Unfortunately people working on the site are unaware of how much work needs to be done in order to receive the minimum wage, and there needs to be clarity on this at the start of the work.

It has been suggested that there are two aspects to the wage question. One, the productivity norms that have been used in establishing rates; and second whether these are being implemented properly. However what a survey or visit can establish is what is actually being received.

It has also been suggested that the number of days for which work is received is as important as the wage: over the course of a year, it will be possible to assess what *net* addition is made to household income.

Choice of Works: Road construction at present seems to dominate, and this may partly reflect allocations already made by the administration. However this is where the challenge of the programme lies, in the ability to be creative about choosing works that will contribute effectively to local development and that will be sensitive to actual perceived needs. This will call for considerable capacity building at village and Panchayat level.

Given acute shortage of water, works aimed at water harvesting and conservation were given high priority everywhere, but in Abu Road only road construction has so far started. Need to ensure that systems are in place for giving quick approval to works identified as a

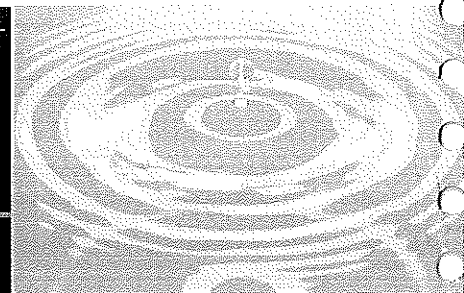
priority by the villagers, and for whatever technical assistance is required and not available locally.

Ensuring that women's needs are addressed is a special challenge. Women are represented in *panchayats* – ensured by the 33 % reservation – but in many places this does not translate into effective participation and therefore is not a way of ensuring that women's perspectives find a place in the decision making and planning by the *panchayat*. Thus, in Dhar, Madhya Pradesh, women *sarpanches* were found to be entirely ignorant of *panchayat* matters and effective power was being wielded by sons or husbands, or even contracted out in one case. However in Karnataka a number of women have been elected to Panchayats against the general quota and there is considerable optimism that with a little bit of guidance and information, these elected women could play a leadership role in defining appropriate projects for the EGA. There is need to also support other community level groups for better articulation of women's needs and priorities.

Directions for Further Action Research
From the pilot study conducted in 4 locations in different parts of the country, it seems clear that the participation of women on the EGA works, where they have begun, is high. This is so even though (as seen in Rajasthan) the wages paid have been much below the minimum wage, at least in the initial stages. In fact in some places in Rajasthan women are reported as being 80% of the participants on EGA sites.

To understand the reasons behind high participation of women, it is useful to look at

Women and the NREGA: June 2006



the current patterns of migration. In Abu Road, Sirohi, Rajasthan it was seen that in the sample surveyed, 10% of adult men and 4.5% of adult women migrated out of the village for varying durations in search of work. However among the men who did not migrate, most were able to get work only outside the village but at a distance that enabled them to stay at home: usually over 5 kms, and in hilly geographical terrain. With the opening up of EGA works in the village, most men have apparently continued their previous work and more women are to be seen on the EGA work site.

In Dhar district, Madhya Pradesh, 23% of adult men and 20% of adult women migrate for work (usually couples or families). As the works had not started at the time of survey, the impact on this type of migration is not yet known.

In Gulbarga, Karnataka, 12.7% of adult men and 5% of adult women in the sample households reported migration (for varying periods).

In Badgaon block of Sundergarh district, Orissa, in the villages surveyed, 93% of adult men and 12% of adult women in the sample households migrated in search of work (for varying periods).

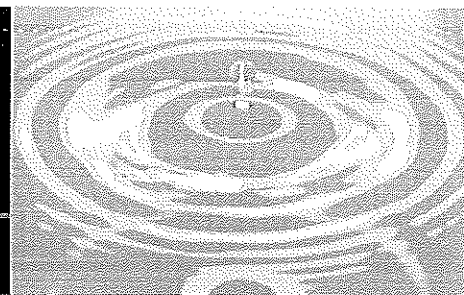
Depending on the area and location therefore the pattern - duration, distance, whether individuals or groups - of migration out of the village varies considerably; it seems that women generally stay behind, or else accompany husbands, but in these areas independent female migration was negligible.

The impact of the EGA works on patterns of

migration, and the implications for women's 'triple burden' of work, household maintenance and child care, will depend a lot on the conditions at work and the pattern of development that is stimulated through the assets and skills generated through the EGA works.

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Women and the NREGA: August 2007



Women and NREGA: August 2007

Supported by International Labour Organisation (ILO), New Delhi

August 2007

ISST Delhi and Bangalore, in partnership with Doosra Dashak (Rajasthan) and THREAD (Orissa), carried out a survey based study to examine the impact of the NREGA on women, migration and local economic development.

Review of worksites around selected villages once a month in 2007 shows that the sites started functioning after the monsoons were over, in October, in Abu Road, Rajasthan. Drinking water is available on sites. In Sundargarh villagers reported that job cards had been issued and funds (possibly) allocated however no sites were observed to be open in the two villages being tracked until May. Most works are for road construction; or (non permanent) water conservation canals and ponds in Abu Road.

During the project period, discussions have been held with villagers and Panchayat members, and dissemination of information/discussion on various aspects of the NREGA by project partners is on-going.

Observations from the Findings of the Household Survey:

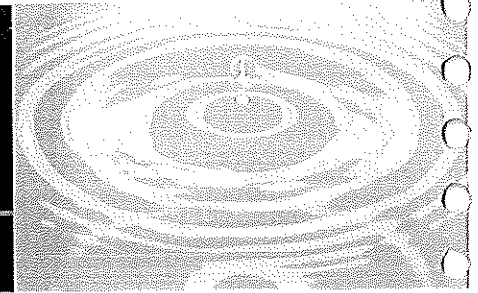
In all, 1412 households from 33 villages in 11 Panchayats were surveyed in two clusters in Hemgir and Badgaon blocks of Sundargarh district, Orissa; and 1251 households from 11 villages in 8 Panchayats in two clusters (hill and plain areas) in Abu Road block, Sirohi district, Rajasthan. The same questionnaire was used.

A majority of the households in Sundargarh had a household size of upto 5 members (55 %); in Abu Road a majority had a size of between 6-10 members (53%). Since the job cards have been issued per household, this implies varying levels of contribution to household income. Roughly one-third of all household members in Sundargarh, and almost one half in Abu Road, were under the age of 18.

Local Economy, Migration and the NREGA Works

In both areas surveyed, the villages are largely dependent on rain fed agriculture and small animal husbandry. In Orissa, collection of forest produce is another major source of income. Apart from this, casual wage labour, wherever available – in or away from the village – is the only supplement to income. In Sundargarh around 11% of the sample had no land holdings and 21% did not cultivate any land. In Abu Road around 10% in the plains area and 2% in the hilly areas had no land. Of the most important activities undertaken by men and women, in Sundargarh 33% of women and 23% of men reported collection of forest produce; 10% of women and 23% of men casual wage labour; and 25% of women domestic duties. The Abu Road data shows very little difference between men and women, with 57% of women and 55% of men reporting casual wage labour; and 16% of both men and women family worker. 41% in Abu Road, and 25% in Sundargarh, of those who responded, stated that 'well without electricity' is the main source of irrigation. Although livestock is central to the economy of both places, around 20% of households in Sundargarh reported no livestock, and 10% in Rajasthan. In Sundargarh 21% of households reported that they receive remittances from

Women and the NREGA: August 2007



migrants, and 23% in Abu Road (of which 2% were 'regular').

Other characteristics of households that are pertinent to understanding the impact of the NREGA include the finding that around 46% of respondents reported being members of SHGs in Sundargarh, and over 24% in Abu Road. Other collectives – including unions (nil in Abu Road, 1% in Sundargarh) and mahila mandals – had low membership. Around 26% of the sample had bank accounts in Sundargarh and 15% in Abu Road (suggesting that payment into bank accounts cannot be a preferred option in these places). While in Sundargarh the percentage of females who are not literate is 32% and that of males 17%, in Abu Road the corresponding percentages are 82 (F) and 56 (M).

In Abu Road, 35% of men and 68% of women in the hill area found work within 5 km of residence; in the plains this is true of 70% of men and 93% of women. Of the others most were able to find work outside the village but within the block. Migrants from the Orissa villages were also mainly intra district migrants. Most migrants are away for work, men as well as women. In the Orissa villages, 77% of women and 86% of men (migrants) were away for work; in Rajasthan, 94% of women and 87% of men. Marriage accounts for only 8% of female migrants in Orissa, and 1% of men; and in Rajasthan, 2% of women and 9% of men (showing an interesting locality specific tradition of movement).

The NREGA works offer an opportunity for supplementary work within or near the village. 91% of households in the hills of Abu Road, and 83% in the plains, (or around 88% overall) reported participation in the NREGA. While both men and women participate, the works

have encouraged women to go out for work as the distance to travel is within 5 kms. Of all those reporting participation, 44% are men and 56% women.

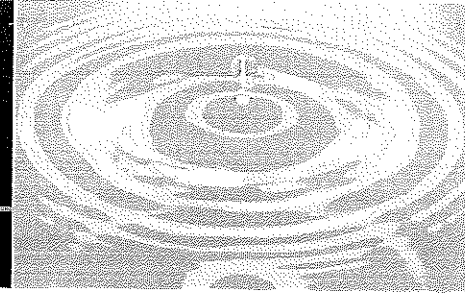
In Sundargarh, 38% of households reported participation in the NREGA. Of all those reporting participation, 31% are women and 69% are men. While actual participation is relatively low, the number of households that are aware of the NREGA is higher (62% of all households), and much higher than those aware of other government programmes. (Oddly enough the awareness levels in Rajasthan have been reported as lower than participation levels (at 53%), a result that is attributed to the way in which 'awareness' has been interpreted, in this case, as awareness of details of the scheme. Here as in Sundargarh, awareness about NREGA is much higher than about other government schemes).

The participation of women in NREGA raises the question of how their household responsibilities are managed. In both places, it was reported that the older daughter and husband assist women in coping with household responsibilities; other children and other members assist in a much smaller degree.

In Sundargarh almost 40% of respondents said the NREGA income went for food and basic needs, followed by 20% for health and 20% for paying back loans (multiple responses). In Abu Road 56% of the respondents said the NREGA income went for food and basic needs, 19% health, and 11% mentioned miscellaneous uses (mainly clothing).

A number of suggestions were made on how the scheme could be improved. While the need for more work, more days of work and

Women and the NREGA: August 2007



higher wages reflects the underlying situation of inadequate employment and work opportunities, some specific suggestions include from Abu Road, the request that 50% of the payment should be in food grains; training of the mate; better measurement of work; and from Sundargarh, greater participation of people in planning. Overall, it seems the immediate impact of the NREGA has been to improve basic food security, and the longer term or development potential of the programme has not yet taken hold.

the ripple effects of the works undertaken. In the short run however the main impact of the works is to increase basic food security and meet health expenses to some extent. The immediate impact in Rajasthan is reportedly to draw women into the work force, but not to impact on the choice of work by men. In Orissa, more men have been drawn into NREGA work.

Nature of Migration

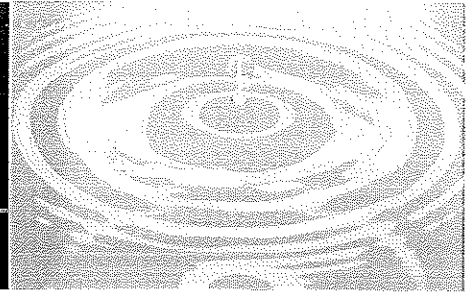
The number of migrants who could be met was small in both places, however some findings include

- Main reason for migration was lack of work in the village, followed by higher wages
- While more persons reported migration in a group in Sundargarh, most persons from Rajasthan reported going alone.
- Nature of work done included mainly construction and earth work, followed by agricultural labour, brick making, and road work (Sundargarh); wage work, construction, marble cutting, agricultural labour (Abu Road).
- For a large number the destination is usually not the same; and place of work is not known in advance.
- Where there is a contractor, generally not a local person

The survey confirms that NREGA holds out potential for reducing distress migration if it succeeds in stimulating local economic development, itself very much a function of

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Examining NREGA



Examining NREGA - Women's Participation and Impacts in Himachal Pradesh, Kerala and Rajasthan (2010)

Sudarshan, R.M. (2011) 'India's Rural Employment Guarantee Act: Women's participation and impacts in Himachal Pradesh, Kerala & Rajasthan'

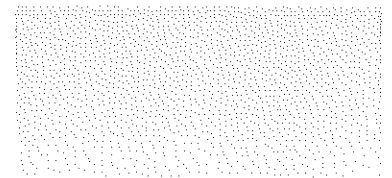
Supported by Institute of Development Studies (IDS), Sussex (Ford Foundation and International Development Research Centre (IDRC).

This study examined the gender dimensions of India's national rural employment guarantee programme instituted through the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act - (MGNREGA) to assess whether the programme is enhancing women's well being and autonomy. Fieldwork was carried out in selected pockets of three states (Himachal Pradesh, Kerala and Rajasthan) in very different contexts of local economy and labour markets; gendered roles and responsibilities; institutional arrangements for programme implementation; and role of civil society groups. The study finds that all of these factors influence whether and to what extent women participate, and that in all cases actual outcomes are mediated by pre-existing norms around care responsibilities and other unpaid work.

Published As

Sudarshan, R.M., Bhattacharya, R. and Fernandez, G. (2010) 'Women's Participation in the NREGA: Some Observations from Fieldwork in Himachal Pradesh, Kerala and Rajasthan', *IDS Bulletin*, 41 (4): 77-83.

SPA Working Paper Series, IDS:
(www.socialprotectionasia.org) Sudarshan, R.M. (2009) 'Examining India's National Rural Employment Guarantee Act: its impact and women's participation'



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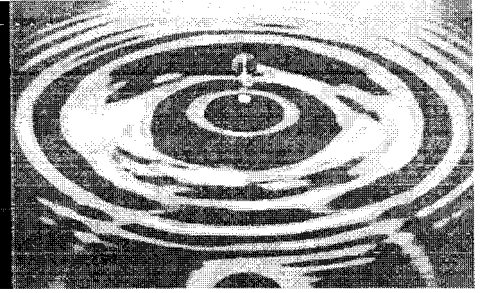
PROJECT SUMMARIES



Macro Economic Policy and Its Gendered Impact

Institute of Social Studies Trust

Women's Livelihood in Coastal Communities



Report on 'Women's Livelihood in Coastal Communities: Management of the Environment and Natural Resources'

Seminar Organised by the Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST), Bangalore, June 6, 2005 with Support from Ford Foundation

I.

The seminar was flagged off by presentations made by Chandrika Sharma, International Collective in Support of Fishworkers on 'Women of coastal fishing communities in the Asian region: An agenda for research' and Nalini Nayak, Sakhi, Tiruvananthapuram, on 'Sharpening the interlinkages: towards feminist perspectives of livelihoods in coastal communities'. A brief presentation on coastal Karnataka was given by Prof Ramachandra Bhat, Professor and Head, Department of Fisheries Economics, College of Fisheries, Mangalore.

With these presentations and background papers, the discussions covered a wide area and a number of themes.

1. Globalisation, Economic Growth and Coastal Communities

The systems of production and marketing of fish have evolved over the years into complex networks and commodity chains, generating livelihoods all along the way. Globalisation and the emphasis on economic growth has impacted on this in many different ways. For example, a well established domestic chain with ribbonfish, which started at Gujarat and the product was sent to different parts of the country, including Kerala and the North-East has been disrupted – affecting both livelihoods and domestic consumption – with the export of this fish variety. (Ribbonfish, unlike some

of the other export species, has a good domestic market, so that its export has greater livelihood repercussions). New chains have emerged, such as with the export of ribbon fish from Gujarat to Japan and China. The changing economic situation has had several different aspects to it. These include,

- Changes in technology used, which today is more aggressive, mechanized, and whose use has altered the patterns of landing with a concentration of the activity in harbours instead of the earlier dispersed activity across villages.
- Change in consumption patterns of the fishing community – previously, the best fish was kept for the home, now it is sold. This is also because the investment required to fish competitively has gone up, as has indebtedness, hence the compulsion to increase returns from the fishery. The nutritional intake in households and specially for women was always low on non-working days; however there may now be an impact on all days. The overall impact on the standard of living is not clear.
- Women earlier had easy access with boats landing in the village; with increasing trend towards controlled landing at specified places, only some groups of women are able to continue the active engagement in fish processing and marketing.

The implications of these changes are difficult to communicate effectively in the absence of data on earlier situation and the impact of policy changes. But clearly there have been changes in all aspects: production, marketing, commodity chains, employment/work, consumption patterns. Some groups would have gained and others lost, but by and large

Women's Livelihood in Coastal Communities



women have been adversely affected.

2. Gender and Social Implications of Changing Fish Economy

The changing patterns of production and marketing have been associated with a wide range of social changes too. It is reported that the sex ratio in fishing communities in Kerala is low. There is an increasing incidence of dowry, fundamentalism and a more aggressive stance towards women within the home. This community faces many kinds of risks, including the nature of the work itself, political boundaries at sea, natural disasters of which the tsunami is an especially horrifying example, and these result in a relatively high death rate for men. What coping mechanisms exist, what is the access to social security provision, needs to be explicated. There is reported to be a high incidence of indebtedness. Inter generational change is taking place, with changing aspirations. The problem of non enrolment or early drop out is especially acute among young boys who start young at sea. All of these issues call for deeper study to understand the kind of social transformation or change that is accompanying economic change, and its impact on intra household relations.

3. Organising and Voice

Fish workers movements are fairly well established and are perceived as strong movements. At the same time their role in voicing the problems faced by the community has been partial. For example, some demands made by women (such as that some varieties of fish should not be exported and should be reserved for domestic consumption) have not been taken up by the groups, perhaps because men and women are differently located along the commodity chain and perceive the benefits differently. At a micro level, the weak situation of women thus translates into a

weaker voice. At a macro level, the groups have not been able to influence the trading agreements regionally or internationally to take adequate note of the emerging problems.

4. Governance and Institutions

Coastal communities are the site of many different kinds of institutions of governance, formal and informal. These include fish workers movements, caste panchayats, and others. The formal Panchayat Raj institutions also exist although there is no evidence that they have a concern with issues of livelihood or natural resource management. Other institutions promoted and supported by the government include fisher women's co-operatives, self help groups, Fishermen's Guidance Bureaus. There is need to study all of these to understand to what extent the structures are responsive to, and able to address and articulate the needs of the local community.

5. The Role of The Government - Policies and Programmes

There are two different aspects to this - one is the programmes and schemes introduced by the government and the need to evaluate their design and impact. The second is the fact that major decisions relating to the use of coasts are not within the ambit of local government control, making it very difficult for local voices to have any say. Ways of sensitizing the fisheries department could be explored. There is need to facilitate dialogue with government, to examine the assumptions on which the official approach is based, and be able to identify clearly where the differences lie.

6. Beyond Fishing

While fishing has been a major driver in the economy of coastal areas, coastal communities include people dependent on a range of other

Women's Livelihood in Coastal Communities



sources of income, including agriculture, wage labour, salt extraction, coir making etc. There has been even less attention paid to these groups. A range of other skills exist, and need to be introduced and strengthened; and there is need for diversification and multiple sources of livelihood. There are also significant differences from one place to another in the people who live there, their customs and traditional occupations. Riverine routes are a part of what is happening in the coasts; an ecosystem approach is essential in any study.

Overall, there was an agreement that an eco system framework is needed to explore these issues further. Apart from the physical aspects of an eco system, the social aspects – the nature of the groups, communities and livelihoods, and the interdependence between them – needs to be documented. It was also

felt that a 'gender lens' will enable us in examining both the ground reality and the macro picture. Finally, while data is needed at the micro level, it may be that for effective advocacy we should think at national/regional level.

II.

This seminar was held in ISST's Silver Jubilee year, and thus also provided an opportunity for stock taking and planning for the future. Bhuvana Krishnan presented a brief overview of ISST's research over the period 1980-2005. The underlying principle of ISST's work, which has tried to 'triangulate action, research and policy', has been the recognition that a strong backing of research drawn from the varied and lived experience of men and women is essential to advance activist causes and sensitive policy making.

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Sanganer, Rajasthan



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

Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST) July 2009

Supported by the International Labour Organisation (ILO), New Delhi

Through a rapid assessment exercise carried out in May and June 2009, ISST tried to respond to the question of the impact of financial recession on the handicrafts industry in Sanganer, as part of a larger ILO project to assess the impact of financial recession.

Respondents said that export demand has fallen by 30-40 per cent over the last year; impact on hand block printing on textiles has been somewhat cushioned by the domestic market; handmade paper, lacking domestic markets, has suffered more. Among workers, the worst affected group is semi skilled workers, mainly women.

The study drew attention to strategies for a short-term response to the effects of the current economic slow-down as well as mid/long-term development responses related to production methods: specifically, there is on-going crisis, pre-dating the financial recession, due to adverse environmental impact, which is worse with chemical dyes and screen printing.

Policy suggestions emerging from the study, and consultations that followed it, include

Short Term/Immediate:

- Support entrepreneurs, enhance liquidity through access to credit
- Recognize the increased presence of

migrant workers, ensure their registration, and deal with the problems of housing, health, education and social protection

- Create a brand for traditional craft (Geographical Indication) and ensure recognition of the same at national and international level
- Create a tripartite forum/platform for all cluster stakeholders to come together for collective actions

Medium/Long Term

- Cluster needs to develop a common vision for the future, place voluntary restrictions on use of chemical dyes and processes that have adverse environmental impacts, and develop methods that provide livelihood and income with minimal adverse impact.
- Skills upgradation.
- Government assistance in the form of facilitating the formation of cooperatives of micro - level producers in sector; provide access to credit at low interest rates; assist with marketing facility/infrastructure.

Further Research

Need for more careful study of the nuances and disaggregated data on the sector as the impact on different groups may be different. Such detailed micro research can capture the specificities which in turn can be weaved into planning and policy implementation

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PROJECT SUMMARIES



Towards Equality and Empowerment

Institute of Social Studies Trust

Progress of South Asian Women 2005



Progress of South Asian Women 2005

Supported by United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

This report formed the base document for the Fifth South Asia Regional Ministerial Conference Celebrating Beijing Plus Ten, held at Islamabad, Pakistan. The publication is a comprehensive analytical report, which maps the situation and status of women in South Asia, within the framework of the twelve critical areas of concern identified in the Beijing Platform for Action. It presents an overview of the processes that have been at work in South Asia, both to promote the advancement of women and to identify gaps between the years 2000-2005. In addition, the publication provides one of the mechanisms to track progress on gender equality in the region, filling the need for a single combined document, showcasing some Government and civil actions on the twelve critical areas of concern.

Considerable progress has been made in the movement for gender equality since 1975, when issues concerning women's status and awareness were articulated at the First World Conference on Women in Mexico City. With the Fourth World Conference in 1995, countries accepted the need for a gender perspective in all areas of development planning and implementation. The Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) which came out of the Conference, provided clear and comprehensive guidelines towards advancing the rights of women. The BPFA identified twelve critical areas of concern for women's advancement, each with its set of strategic objectives and activities to be undertaken by different stakeholders. The implementation of

the BPFA lies in the main, however, with the State and the document serves as the basis upon which the implementation shall be assessed.

The BPFA was a remarkable consensus, and a vision and strategy for change. Five years after, and again ten years after, national governments have given full and unequivocal re-affirmation of the principles and strategies outlined in the document. As a region, gender equality in South Asia poses many challenges, as it requires addressing, often challenging, deep rooted traditions and social norms. It is notable that all the governments in the region have taken a positive and constructive approach, and have moved the agenda forward despite occasional roadblocks and opposition. All the SAARC countries are committed to implementing the BPFA, and all have ratified CEDAW. In South Asia, a unique accountability mechanism has been evolved to monitor progress in the twelve critical areas of action. UNIFEM has instituted a process of biennial meetings to track progress and enable debate on new and emerging challenges. The meetings also offer a forum to examine various opportunities for joint action. So far, the meetings have been held at New Delhi, India (1996), Kathmandu, Nepal (1998), Bandos Island, Maldives (2000), and Paro, Bhutan (2003).

Publication: Progress of South Asian Women 2005 - A Series for the Fifth South Asian Regional Ministerial Conference Celebrating Beijing Plus Ten, prepared for UNIFEM by ISST and also at http://www.unifem.org.in/Pro_of_so_women_2005.pdf

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Hill Women



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

Study for the UNDP - Planning
Commission National Research
Programme on Growth and Human
Development

Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST), New
Delhi

June 2005

This study, 'Beyond Practical Gender Needs-
Women in North-Eastern and Hill States', was
commissioned under the UNDP - Planning
Commission National Research Programme on
Growth and Human Development. The
purpose of the study is to understand the best
ways in which women's strategic needs can be
advanced in selected hill states, where the
achievements in standard indicators is often
better than in the rest of the country. It is
based on an analysis of the strategic gender
needs of women in selected areas of Himachal
Pradesh, Uttaranchal, Meghalaya and Manipur.
These four hill states share somewhat similar
physical and topographical features. The
economy of all four hill states was traditionally
based on land and forest, with negligible
industry or commerce and heavy dependence
on natural resources. The states share borders
with neighbouring countries.

To identify both the strategic (relating to
gender division of labour, power, legal rights,
domestic violence and control over bodies)
and the practical (immediate perceived
necessity, identified within a specific context,
like inadequate living conditions, like health
care and employment) gender needs in these

states, the study has used a methodology which
was primarily qualitative in nature. In order to
capture the field situation, we invited a
perspective on each state from leading NGOs
based there. The study has been conducted in
partnership with the NorthEast Network
(NEN) in Meghalaya, the Rural Women
Upliftment Society (RWUS) in Manipur,
SUTRA in Himachal Pradesh, and the
Uttarakhand Sewa Nidhi Paryavaran Shiksha
Sansthan in Uttaranchal. Secondary data has
also been reviewed and incorporated into these
reports. The investigation has been selective
in nature, examining key areas of intervention
and capability, and with a focus on trying to
understand what is needed to ensure that
women's practical and strategic needs are both
advanced. Our purpose has been to provide
some suggestions to those who are engaged in
planning for economic and human
development, to better engender the approach
and the impact of policies and programmes.

Available as an ISST Working Paper, with
contributions from Ms Anuradha Pande from
Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Paryavaran Shiksha
Sansthan, Almora, Uttaranchal; Ms Monisha
Behel and Ms Annie Sohtun from North East
Network, Delhi and Shillong, Meghalaya; Ms
Mary Beth from Rural
Women's Upliftment
Society (RWUS),
Churachandpur,
Manipur; Dr Aparna
Negi, Kasho and Mr
Subash Mendapurkar,
Sutra, Himachal
Pradesh.

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Progress of Women in South Asia 2007



Progress of Women in South Asia 2007

Supported by United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

This report was prepared as a background document for the sixth South Asia Regional Ministerial Conference Celebrating Beijing Plus Ten held in New Delhi. It notes that South Asian countries are embarked on a process of economic reform and growth that has attracted the attention of the world. It is widely accepted that failure to have gender equality will result in a failure to achieve the desired efficiency and well-being outcomes. Overall, governments in South Asia have been forward looking and have demonstrated commitment to advancing gender equality. At the same time, difficult development choices have to be made to protect vulnerable groups and all too often, corporate and business interests outweigh the concerns of gender activists.

The actions of government set the framework for ways to meet the various challenges that countries face. It is one of the outstanding features of this region that civil society has often been in the forefront of change: whether it is in conflict resolution and building peace or seeking to build solidarity between home-based women workers across the region. Today, as was true some decades ago, the relation between the women's movement and governments of the region continues to be complementary in many ways. In other areas the independent view and critique of the movement is a catalyst for policy change. Thus, the advocacy for women's land rights, for women's political representation, for women's rights as workers, have been able to cross borders and draw in women across the

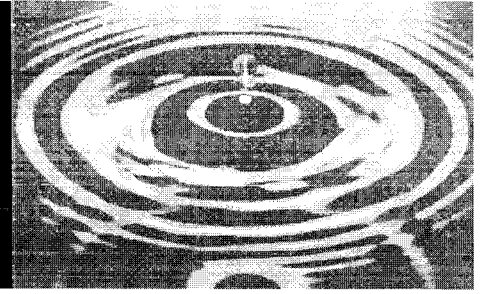
region in support of change. Women in the region are assured (largely) of legal and constitutional rights: but their ability to exercise these rights requires different forms of affirmative action, solidarity and support. While there are many successes to record, sustained and continued effort is needed to ensure that we see the emergence of substantive equality.

Among the many recommendations of this report, the need to re-examine development discourse emerges as prominent. Women's roles and contribution to economic output are not fully recognised, as in agriculture, leading to their limited presence in stakeholder discourses. The risk of serious threats to environment and natural resources has found expression in the studies of climate change; the impact of disasters as well as recovery from disaster has a gendered dimension which needs stronger recognition in policy. The UN Report, *An In-Depth Study on All Forms of Violence Against Women*, has argued strongly for the exercise of leadership to end VAW, and close the gap between international standards and national laws, policies and practices.

Publication: Progress of Women in South Asia (2007), ISST supported by UNIFEM, also at <http://www.unifem.org.in/PDF/Progress%20of%20Women%20in%20South%20Asia%202007.pdf>

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Uttarakhand Mahila Parishad



Uttarakhand Mahila Parishad

March 2010

Supported by Rajeshwar Susheela Dayal Charitable Trust

Introduction

UMP is a network of women's groups in 450 villages (Whole Village Groups-WVGs henceforth) spread over seven districts of Uttarakhand. The UMP is a part of a larger network under the umbrella of Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Paryavaran Shikshan Sansthan/ (Uttarakhand Environment Education Centre) (USNPSS), based in Almora. USNPSS started working in the hill villages of Uttarakhand in the mid 1980s as a nodal organization enabling regional CBOs and in some cases individuals initially to start, continue or expand working in their specific regions, the overarching theme being that of environment education. The founding philosophy drew on an understanding of the link between environmental degradation and livelihood sustainability.

UMP includes village level groups as well as intermediary regional federations, constituted of women's groups that fall under a particular region and work with a particular Community Based Organisation (CBO). Currently there are 20 CBOs linked to the USNPSS working in different districts in the state, through which funds are channelled for the *balwadi* programme and for the WVG activities.

The idea of a network best describes the organisational set-up which involves:

- USNPSS at the helm as a facilitator laying out the guiding principles
- The CBOs who work with the community on an everyday basis based on the guiding principles but also modifying them,

according to regional specificities and undertaking a process of negotiation in their interaction with the community

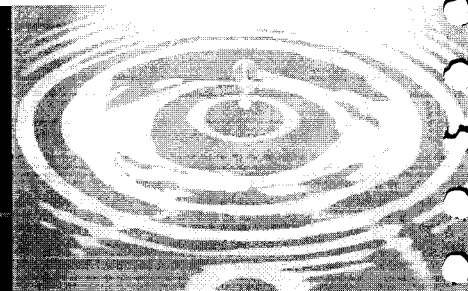
- The community formed by the people in the villages, and whole village women's groups (WVG) where the women who are active participants in the process of bringing about changes according to their felt needs, are supported through the network.

Women in most instances have a sense of being part of a state-wide or at least regional network and not just members of an isolated village level group. Groups at the village level each have their own unique trajectories of development determined by the specific social, economic and political context of the village.

Formative Periods-Challenges and Social Changes

The majority of the older groups trace their origins to the opening of the *balwadi* in the village. Women started meeting and discussing issues related to education for their children and then subsequently they became involved in the everyday functioning, monitoring and maintenance of these centres. This process laid the foundation for organising and getting together, engaging in dialogue and taking decisions.

The WVGs are communities constantly in the 'becoming'. Change has not been linear but went back and forth as women engaged in a process of learning through experiences of their own as well as of other women as a part of the network. Conflict and breaks in the life histories of WVGs happen for reasons that include lack of a suitable person willing to take leadership responsibilities; creation of factions in the village during elections for the *panchayat*



and subsequently in the groups; and dispute over mismanagement of the savings fund.

Organizing and Managing the Village Eco-System

Cleaning the village pathways, common spaces, *naulas* and other sources of water periodically are among the key activities which groups are encouraged to do from their inception. Management and protection of forests and plantation activity, conserving and rejuvenating traditional water sources like *naulas* are the most prominent activities included in the ambit of '*rachnatmak karya*' for the *sangathans*. Women decide on rules for usage of common resources, like opening the forest for collecting wood at certain times during the year, prohibition on cutting young trees and branches and cattle grazing to ensure equal distribution to all households of fodder and wood and simultaneously preventing excessive usage.

Demanding Accountability from State Institutions and Influencing the Development Agenda

WVGs demand accountability in various ways ranging from direct engagement with government apparatus and functionaries to demand effective services particularly in the area of education and functioning of schools, talking to government functionaries, pressurizing them as a collective and in certain cases more active forms of protests such as *dharnas* and *andolans*.

The engagement of the groups is also going beyond asking state institutions for effective services as recipients. Women are making attempts to influence the development agenda according to their needs and priorities and succeeding to some extent.

Political Participation and Reshaping Governance

In recent years there has been a movement towards active participation in the electoral political process. Several women from the WVGs have contested for, and won, the positions of *gram pradhan*, ward members, and block development committee member, particularly in the *Panchayat* elections in 2008.

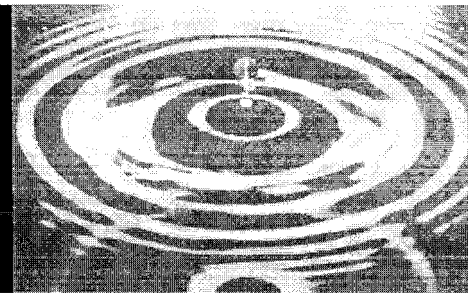
Women have over the years acquired the confidence and also the aspiration to affect change through politics and to influence the development agenda. The WVGs act as a pressure group demanding accountability from their elected representatives. The activities of the *Panchayat* are in many instances discussed at the group's village meetings, particularly where WVG members are elected representatives.

Assessment

The collective journey of the WVGs also indicates some of the tangible changes that have occurred for instance improvement in the general cleanliness and hygiene increase in women's participation in formal institutions of governance; better functioning of schools in certain villages and change in social norms around women's participation in social gatherings.

Meaning of 'Participation'

UMP has followed a flexible and adaptive need based approach circumscribed by a broad vision of ecological sustainability, environment education and collective learning. The nature of funding also allowed for a non-prescriptive model of functioning. Without such a flexible and adaptive need based approach, it would not have been possible to work with small CBOs and individuals.



One of the most significant achievements has been that of strengthening women through building collectives which are inclusive. This process is intrinsically political, involving negotiation as women identify their needs which may be divergent at times, and devise strategies through a collective process.

Conflict occurs often within groups as well as within the larger village community and discussion and dialogue may or not may not result in a consensus but the community undertakes a process of negotiation.

Role of 'External Intervention'

The 'external' intervention has been limited to enabling women to exercise their agency through the act of creating deliberative spaces, with the constant attempt to make and keep these spaces inclusive and to counter certain established economic and social hierarchies, particularly of caste and gender. Interactions and regional and state level meetings of the women clearly illustrate the impact of sharing experiences particularly by other women who are perceived to come from a familiar milieu and are 'like one's self' in expanding aspirational horizons in terms of what seems achievable, and confidence building. This aspect of empowerment is often underemphasised.

Gender and Empowerment

Experiences of the women's groups suggest that 'empowerment' is a collective process. Narratives of women across villages indicate that they value their ability to speak publicly has come about due to their experiences of speaking at village level meetings. The act of using public spaces in the village such as the *panchayat bhavan* by women for their meetings is a stepping stone towards claiming their

identity as a group and as women.

Empowerment is also conceptualised as an evolving process, as opposed to being defined as a measure of performance on certain indicators such as literacy level, participation in political governance institutions or ownership and control over economic assets.

The movement from addressing practical to strategic gender needs over the years has occurred but the agenda of achieving gender equity is enmeshed with women's attempts to achieve better quality of life.

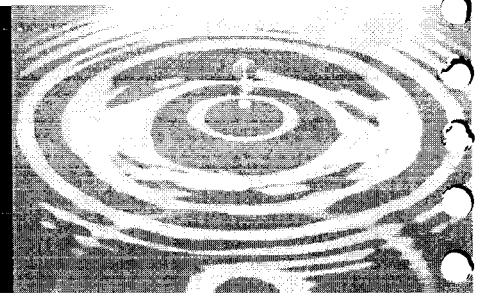
Women's role in defining the parameters of change and its pace is significant but it has come about over a period of time. Women's political participation for instance in this case is clearly in continuum with their social experiences of collectivising which has helped them to acquire self-confidence, skills, capacity as well as aspiration.

Some Reflections

Interplay of the three levels is a counterbalancing act which ensures that no one set of objectives is dominant or imposed. Visions are not always in sync but are negotiated. There is an apparent conflict of principles in several instances. For example, USNPSS does not directly encourage or support watershed management programmes as these do not necessarily respond to village level needs; yet a partner CBO may take up watershed projects with funding from other sources.

Funding in the development sector in the current scenario is largely attached to prescriptive objectives or measurable time bound outcomes and activities. Women are also confronted with challenges emerging from

Uttarakhand Mahila Parishad



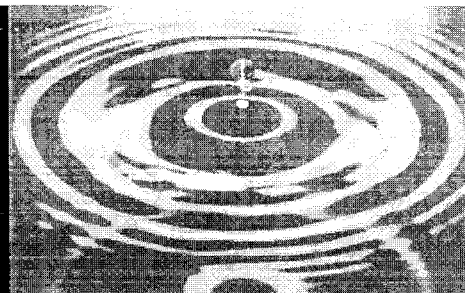
a changing political, economic and social milieu. For instance, the proliferation of NGOs in the region leads to development interventions by different actors which are guided by differing and sometimes contradictory visions. This translates into inconsistencies at the village level and also within the CBOs that are acquiring funds from different agencies.

Women articulate the need for information for instance on legal matters or institutional procedures which they are currently unable to access and also their inability to deal with some of the broader changes. Closure of *balwadis* as indicated in interviews with CBO workers means fewer numbers of workers and also a decrease in the frequency of visits to villages particularly those which are at greater distances from the CBO and not easily accessible. Despite such constraints however, the UMP and the WVGs have acquired the status of credible institutions and the process of formation of new groups in villages continues.

Perhaps the biggest challenge is to involve the whole village community including men specially as women are increasingly challenging practices such as domestic violence and actively threatening gendered power relations. As the agenda of gender relations is fore grounded, conflict at least initially will surface strongly and may have repercussions of creating divisions at the village level.

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Ensuring Inclusiveness



Ensuring Inclusiveness from the Gender Perspective in the UNDP Country Programme for India (2008-2012)

Ensuring inclusiveness from a gender perspective in practical terms can be interpreted as: (i) ensuring that the views and voices of both women and men are able to **influence the design** of programmes and policies; (ii) ensuring that women and men are both able to **access the benefits** of programmes and policies.

Source of Gender Inequalities

Culturally observed differences in roles and responsibilities of men and women lead to different decisions by households and families on investments and allocations for boys and girls. For example, the understanding that men are the primary breadwinners and women the primary home makers makes education-for-employment a more desirable route for boys than girls, and households are therefore willing to make greater sacrifices for sustained schooling and further education of boys. Women's work participation can be very high but is usually understood as a household decision – that is, women will work if the household needs them to work, but the primacy of the household is not altered by the fact of women's work participation. This influences the choice of work – thus, over 50% of women in non agricultural work are in home based work, which means they remain at home even though they may be working a full eight to nine hours a day. It also means that women's paid work does not lead to commensurate reduction in their care responsibilities, leading to very long hours of work.

The Constitution, however, gives women equal rights with men, and the legal

framework supports women's independent rights. The Constitution and the State thus seek to give women the rights and the freedom to participate fully and equally in economic, social and political spheres, along with men.

To understand why gender disparities exist and persist, it is the struggle between the modernity that is guaranteed by the State and the expectations that are imposed by tradition and culture that needs to be understood.

Since tradition and culture varies across the country, the precise nature of gender inequality is also not the same in different parts of the country.

The UNDAF States: Summary of Observations on Gender Inequality

The section briefly summarises some key indicators relevant to understanding the nature of the challenges facing UNDAF states in ensuring inclusiveness from a gender perspective. While poverty and low human development affect both men and women, special interventions are needed to ensure that women are able to participate and benefit in the same manner as men, in light of the constraints and restraints that are present in society and as a result of women's weaker access to work and assets.

The findings suggest that the main sources of livelihood for women continue to be land (agriculture), forests and household industry. In all states, the link between ecological health and women's well being is strong for this reason.

The sex ratio has been seen as a key indicator reflecting the social status of women and in the districts and blocks in which the sex ratio is

Ensuring Inclusiveness



low and falling, this can be seen as a danger signal warranting further probing and stronger effort to change the environment in a manner that enhances the value and prestige attached to being a woman.

The social profile including health and education indicators, shows persistent gender gaps and rural-urban gaps.

Migration data shows that women migrate far more than men, and even though much of this may be consequent upon marriage, the fact is that after marriage most women will need to work and so they would have the status of migrant workers in new place of residence. Since women migrants are vulnerable to trafficking this is an area needing to be made more visible so that protective regulations and institutions can be put in place.

While available data is a useful way of getting an overview of the situation, the limitations of data also need to be kept in mind.

For example, it is well known that data on women's work tends to undercount many kinds of productive activity that women do, so that many women workers do not get recorded as such.

The presence of health and education infrastructure does not give us ready information on quality of service and on problems of access that may be faced by women.

National Initiatives: Implementing the NREGA

The NREGA is a national effort that is particularly significant for women given that the majority of women continue to be

dependent on agriculture, and the inability of agriculture to generate adequate annual income could be offset by earnings from public works started under the NREGA.

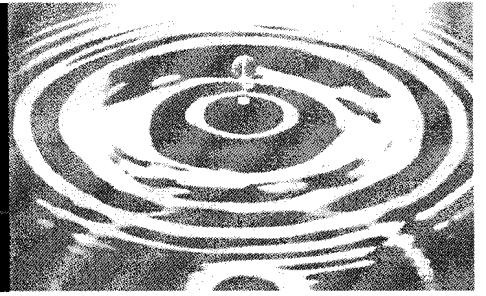
The study shows that there are considerable differences in the participation of women in the NREGA, despite the one-third reservation that is stipulated for women. Data from the official website (accessed November 2007) shows that while in Rajasthan the female share of total person days is as high as 68 %, in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar it is only 17 and 18 %. The reasons for these differences need to be explored.

National Initiatives: JNNURM

India's urban population is growing, cities are seen as 'engines of growth', and hence investment in urban areas is being given priority. Six of the seven UNDAF states contain cities that have been identified as eligible for the JNNURM, as shown below. Ensuring inclusiveness from gender perspective in the implementation of this programme requires special attention to factors such as:

- ensuring safety at all hours through presence of street lighting and security personnel
- ensuring distribution of facilities (toilets, water, sewage) for all parts of the city including slum populations
- encouraging active participation of elected women councilors and mayors in city planning and development, and ensuring processes that allow women whether individually or in groups to interface with elected bodies so as to help in engendering the planning process

PROJECT SUMMARIES



Governance

Institute of Social Studies Trust

Women in Leadership Positions



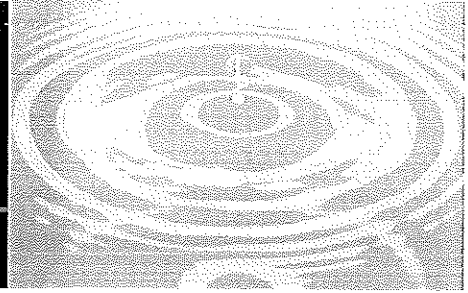
Women in Leadership Positions: A Scoping Paper

Submitted to the UNDP (July 2005)

This paper is based on interviews with women in leadership positions in some villages and cities in the four hill states of Himachal, Uttaranchal, Manipur and Meghalaya and on a review of available literature on leadership. We try to identify the characteristics of women's leadership as they emerge from the interviews, and the importance of groups and collectives in the development of leadership and articulation of issues. The primary hypothesis that emerges from this preliminary exploration is that the emergence of women's leadership seems to be closely linked to the existence of informal women's groups and collectives. A second hypothesis is that the existence of women with leadership qualities is insufficient to engender the agenda, it is necessary that the structure should allow space and should be responsive and flexible. There does appear to be a difference in the style of women's and men's leadership and in the issues they bring to the table. The issues themselves vary from place to place. This is a preliminary study, with the main purpose of identifying promising areas for further research.

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Ensuring Public Accountability



Ensuring Public Accountability Through Community Action (2003-5)

Supported by International Development Research Centre (IDRC)

This action research project 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 faced on a daily basis by poor households living in slums. It was carried out in East Delhi. ISST has worked closely with other agencies over the last year and a half in this action research project, including two partner NGOs, Raasta and the Sabla Sangh, Action India. The project was possible with the co-operation of the Delhi Government and in particular the MCD, and Delhi Jal Board.

At a workshop held on the completion of the project, several recommendations were made. These included, first, that ISST could work towards developing a resource centre as part of its Community Outreach Programme activities. Dissemination was considered essential; it was also pointed out that information on its own can not provide answers unless it is linked to the activities that an organisation is engaged in. Alongside Information collection and dissemination it was also considered important that capacity building become an essential activity. It was suggested that ISST acknowledge that unless the residents of the area become involved through direct participation and eventually take ownership of the community centre, project based intervention will be difficult to sustain and yield results. It was also understood that project based interventions are a way of initiating a process. However, this

process is not time-bound. Besides human resources, availability of financial resources must be considered seriously and need to be adequately met to sustain efforts on the ground. The realisation that the work must carry on after a project has come to an end was unanimously felt.

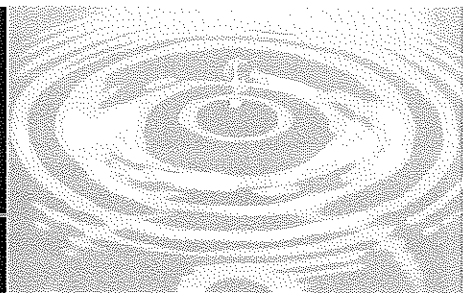
It was also understood that no doubt issues like addressing gaps in basic service delivery to the urban poor are important issues that need to be addressed. However, the process can not be completed within a short period. For the expressed objectives of the ISST-IDRC project it was amply clear that the process is a long-term one that requires sustained efforts at various levels. Overall, it was also discussed, in light of the macro level developmental changes that are underway and many more being formulated in cities, it becomes increasingly important to understand how the urban poor can influence change in their favour. It is certain that the poor must become informed and enable themselves to become active actors in the process of governance. However, this requires time, resources, an enabling environment and a focus. How can active participation of the government, other sections of society and non-government organisations be invoked to facilitate the process of involving the poor into formal systems of governance is a large question that needs to be explored at length.

Publication: Ensuring Public Accountability through Community Action: A case study in East Delhi, Edited by Ratna M.

*Sudarshan and Suchi Pande
New Delhi:
ISST (2007)*

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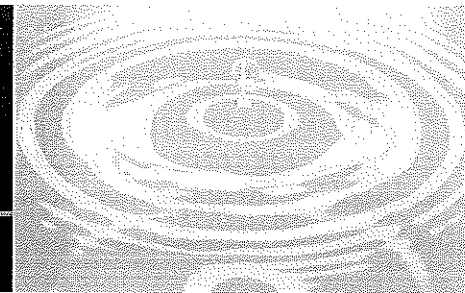
PROJECT SUMMARIES



Policy Research

Institute of Social Studies Trust

Policy Research Environment in South Asia



Scoping Study on the Policy Research Environment in South Asia (2008-2010)

Supported by International Development Research Centre (IDRC)

The project had the objective of understanding better the challenges facing policy research organizations (PROs) in South Asia and the environments in which they operate. While considerable social science research is available on policy outcomes and impact, there is little scholarship on the ways in which research influences policy and the role of policy research organisations (PROs) in this process. Clearly, there is no one mechanism linking research to policy; rather there are various pathways, determined by the varying contexts of policy making in different countries, and the features of the particular political prism through which research is viewed. The study covered Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, and included four Background Papers and three Roundtables through which issues were debated. Roundtable participants affirmed the usefulness of this dialogue and supported the idea of continued networking among policy research organisation leaders.

Background Papers

Kuldeep Mathur: Policy Research Organisations in South Asia

Subbiah Arunachalam: Social Science Research in South Asia - An analysis of the published journal literature

Ratna M. Sudarshan: Policy Research and Practice in India

Anuradha Bhasin and Mubashira Zaidi: Policy

Research Organisations: Projecting Successful Performance in the South Asian Context: an Analysis of Annual Reports and Websites

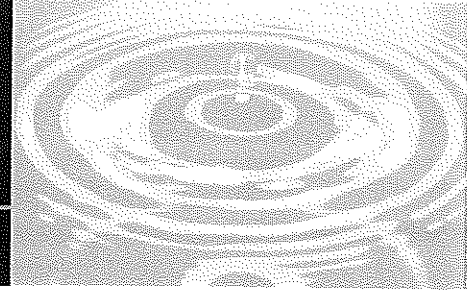
Roundtables: Policy Research Environment

Three country level Roundtables/dialogues were organised with social science and policy research organization leaders over the period December 2008-March 2009.

Publication: 'Making Research Matter in South Asia' by Katherine Hay and Ratna M. Sudarshan Economic and Political Weekly, 16 Jan 2010, pp 34-36.

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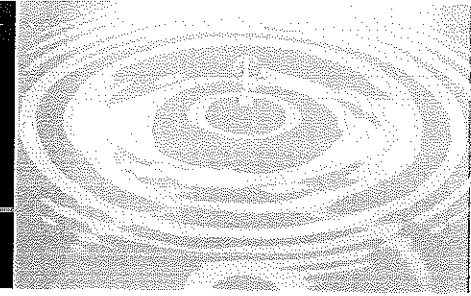
PROJECT SUMMARIES



Research and Evaluation Methodology

Institute of Social Studies Trust

Consultation on Qualitative Research



Consultation on Qualitative Research,
21-22 March, 2005

Supported by Abortion Assessment Project,
Anusandhan Trust

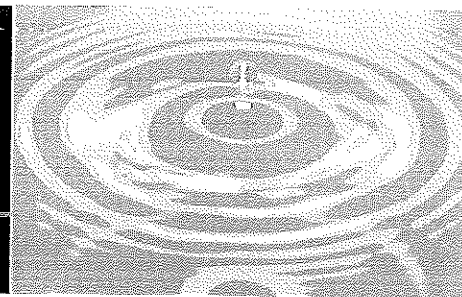
Organised by Institute of Social Studies Trust
(ISST) with CEHAT and Healthwatch

As an activity under the Abortion Assessment Project, the workshop sought to allow for reflection and sharing of experiences in using qualitative research methodology, in this programme of research, as well as in other studies. One of the major issues that needs to be discussed further is that of ethical issues that arise in using qualitative (and other) research methodologies. Presentations were made by Prof Bert Pelto, Prof. Leela Visaria, Ms. Vimala Ramachandran, Dr Sunita Sheel Bandewar, Professor Rajni Palriwala and Ms Jyotsna Sivaramayya.

The proceedings have been published as a report 'Perspectives on Qualitative Research' New Delhi: ISST (2006).

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Gender and Evaluation Workshop



Gender and Participatory Development: Evaluation Concerns (2009-10)

Supported by International Development
Research Centre (IDRC)

A workshop on *Gender and Participatory Evaluation* was organized by ISST on August 26-7, 2010 in New Delhi, with support from IDRC Canada. Too often, evaluation is seen as a stand-alone activity, carried out in a routine fashion, and not taken seriously by the research community or even, unfortunately, by policy makers. In fact, evaluation is an integral part of the research-to-policy cycle, can offer insights into how programme implementation is proceeding and what mid-course corrections are called for, and also indicating areas where more research is needed. This workshop focused on the ways in which a gender sensitive/feminist lens could be used to strengthen the role of evaluation in the social change process.

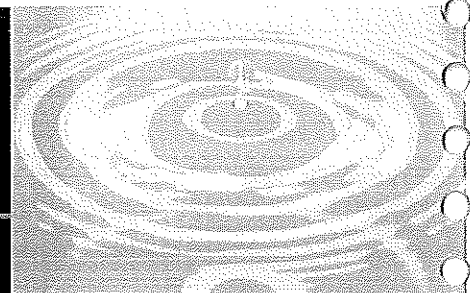
The workshop highlighted the perspectives of a set of gender equality advocates and social science researchers who have also been engaged with evaluation studies over the years. Among the issues that were highlighted were the importance of local understanding and assessing progress in the light of ground realities. The papers argued for the use of qualitative and participatory methods in evaluation while also suggesting that quantitative methods and data analysis are useful in contextualization and that evaluations offer the opportunity to strengthen quantitative skills of the implementing agencies. Examples were given of the ways in which evaluation has been able to shift policy perspectives and lead to re-design of programmes. Some of the papers emphasized

the need for attention to the intervening layer of implementing agencies, often overlooked when the focus is purely on ultimate impact or 'beneficiaries'. An underlying sub-text in the papers is that knowledge of context and sector is as important as or perhaps even more important for 'good'/useful evaluation than technical expertise in evaluation tools.

Six background papers were prepared for the workshop, including one by Vimala Ramachandran, who reflects on many years of evaluation of education programmes in India and of the ways in which these evaluative studies have shifted the thinking regarding gender and equity within education. Renu Khanna writes about her experiences in evaluating health projects and programmes, the ethical framework within which these evaluations have been conducted and the ways in which evaluation can contribute to change. Ranjani Murthy discusses her experiences with applying a gender lens in evaluations of, and seeking to engender, micro-credit programmes. Kameshwari Jandhyala discusses the various implications of different evaluation frameworks proposed by different donors for the process-oriented Mahila Samakhya programme. Ratna Sudarshan and Divya Sharma examine the ways in which participatory evaluation of NGO-managed development projects can be a way both of encouraging greater gender sensitivity as well as generating important insights for research on contextually appropriate trajectories of such change. Radhika Govinda carried out a background review of how gender analysis and research on the one hand and gendered evaluation on the other have developed in India over the last 2-3 decades.

In concluding, workshop participants agreed

Gender and Evaluation Workshop

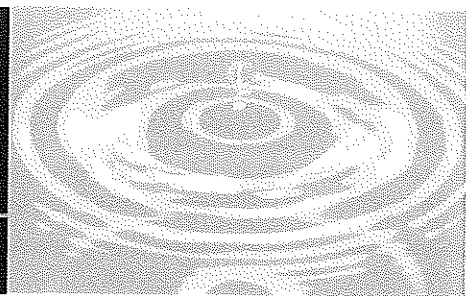


on the need for greater conversations
collaborations and convergences between the
worlds of activism, academe and evaluation.

*To be published as a special issue of the Indian
Journal of Gender Studies (forthcoming 2012).*

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PROJECT SUMMARIES

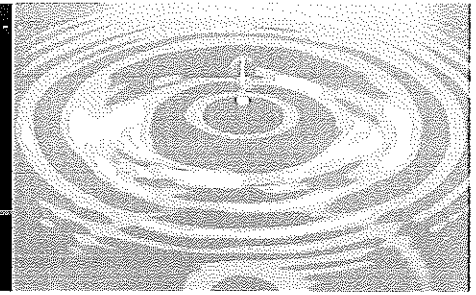


Gender Network (2003-2006)

Institute of Social Studies Trust



MIMAP - Gender Network



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

The Gender Network Project initiated in 1998 is a thematic regional research program under the Micro Impact of Macro Adjustment Policies (MIMAP) Program Initiative of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada with a mandate to investigate the gendered impact of macro economic policy changes. Under its overall umbrella, several studies were carried at the micro, meso and macro levels to understand various dimensions of the changing situation of women, and men, as external environment of households undergo rapid economic change. The empirical basis of the Project has been provided by a number of household surveys conducted mainly in South Asian countries and also in a couple of countries in South East Asia. This has been supplemented by a few studies involving macro econometric and CGE modeling of gender and by selected sectoral studies.

The Network has broadened the scope of gender research by introducing the mental health dimension of gender bias in its fold. Mental health indicators have been used to bring in the phenomenon of violence against women as a crucial parameter for gaining insight into the true measure of gender development. The psychological dimension of gender has proved to be a powerful tool for analyzing the elusive phenomenon of 'gender empowerment', especially in situations where these indicators tend to fly in the face of other conventional indicators such as female literacy. The research on the contradictory signals of gender development has led to a number of

studies on the highly acclaimed case of the Kerala woman where high female literacy goes hand in hand with disquieting evidence of violence against women.

In order to enhance the reach of gender research within the mainstream social science research community, the Gender Network has involved a whole range of researchers from disciplines such as economics, psychology, history, geography, demography, sociology and anthropology.

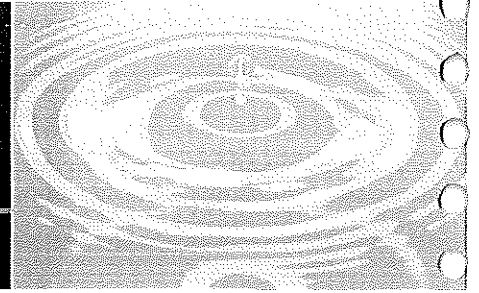
The Project has carried out a number of specific studies on various sub-themes like the gendered impact of the Information and Communications Technologies in Asian countries, the qualitative dimensions of gendered poverty and economic growth, income inequality and gender disparities. The research under the project has been completed in three phases between 1998 and 2006. The Network's research agenda had been conceptualized and coordinated by Prof. Swapna Mukhopadhyay, erstwhile Director of the Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST), India.

Project Title: Micro Impact of Macro Adjustment Policies (MIMAP) - Gender Network

Supported by International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada

1998 to 2006

MIMAP - Gender Network



MIMAP-Gender Network (Phase III) 2003-2006

The Gender Network had set itself a research agenda to provide a common framework which could facilitate systematic gender based assessments of changes in economic environments in general and of policy changes in particular. The third phase of the Gender Network project continued its investigation on the gender differentiated impact of economic reforms in South and South-East Asia. Some of the research agendas in the third phase were built on the research that had formed a part of the second phase of the project, and some explored new areas of interest. One of the new areas of research was the gender differentiated impact of new Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in three south-east and south Asian countries. A research module had been designed to investigate the linkages between economic growth, income inequality and gender disparities in a multi-country set up. Third phase also continued a multi-disciplinary research in order to understand the 'enigma of the Kerala Women' by integrating issues of mental health and gender ideology within such analysis. A new element in the third phase agenda of the Network has involved developing a Gender Sensitization Training Programme specially designed for the young economists. Under this, a two-day training programme had been organized in June 2004 in Dakar, Senegal, which was attended by about seventy economists from developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The third phase of Gender Network also sponsored three studies based on gender modeling with an objective to promote research interest on gender issues among young economists along with another

IDRC-sponsored network called the Poverty and Economic Policy Network (PEP). The following is a short description of the work done under the Gender Network project (phase III):

(i) Gender and Poverty

During the second phase of the Network, five countries were involved in exploring the quantitative dimensions of the interface between gender and poverty. Of these, two countries, Pakistan and Bangladesh' had been selected in Phase III to conduct follow up studies with an emphasis on qualitative dimensions of the interface.

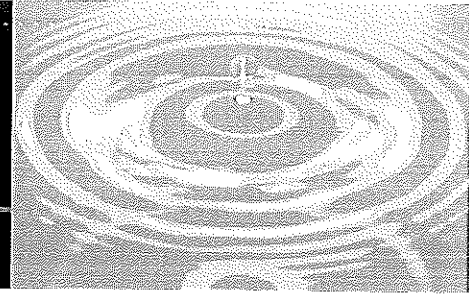
Two studies carried out in by partner organizations in Pakistan and Bangladesh with the help of multi-disciplinary research teams have investigated the qualitative dimensions of gender differences in the experience of and reactions to poverty conditions. These results need to be tied up with quantitative analysis on the same theme carried out in the earlier phase of Gender Network. The results from these studies highlight the multifarious coping measures women take for all members of the household to handle poverty conditions.

Reports:

Rehana Siddiqui, Shahnaz Hamid & Rizwana Siddiqui, Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE, Pakistan): **Gender and Poverty: A Qualitative Assessment in Selected Rural Areas of Pakistan**

Nurun Nahar Begum & Ranjan Kumar Guha, Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD, Bangladesh): **Coping with Poverty by Gender and Age**

MIMAP - Gender Network



(ii) Gender and ICTs

The nature and extent of gender differentiation in the wake of the new technological changes in the area of ICT that are sweeping through the South and South-East Asian region have been studied in the third phase of the Gender Network. Three countries studied in this module were India, Sri Lanka and Vietnam. A National Seminar in the context of Gender and Developmental Divides was organized in New Delhi. The seminar sought to provide an interface between NGOs and other development practitioners, researchers, gender specialists, technical experts, scientists and bureaucrats.

The studies on this theme came up with the general finding that there are indeed significant gender differences of various kinds emerging within this new but fast growing sector. By not taking cognizance of these ground level differences within policy initiatives because of supposed gender neutrality, may have unforeseen distributional consequences. According to the Sri Lankan study, already adverse distribution of benefits from the sector, may actually get worse unless timely proactive action is taken.

Reports:

Swapna Mukhopadhyay & Rajib Nandi, (ISST, India): **Gendered impact of the Akshaya Project**

Institute of Social Studies Trust with Malavika Kapur (India): **Gendered Impact of Computer Literacy on Disadvantaged Children & Adolescent**

Swarna Jayaweera, Thana Sanmugam & Leelangi Wanasundara, Centre for Women's Research (CENWOR, Sri Lanka):

Information and Communications Technology and Gender in Sri Lanka.

Le Thuc Duc et. al, Institute of Economics, (Hanoi, Vietnam): **Gendered Impact of the Development of Information and Communications Technologies in Vietnam**

Working Papers:

Swarna Jayaweera, Leelangi Wanasundara (CENWOR, Sri Lanka): **Gender and Information and Communication Technology in Sri Lanka: An Overview**

Le Thuc Duc, Tran Quoc Trung and Nguyen Thi Thanh ha (Institute of Economics, Vietnam): **The Gendered Impact of Information and Communication Technologies in Vietnam**

Monograph:

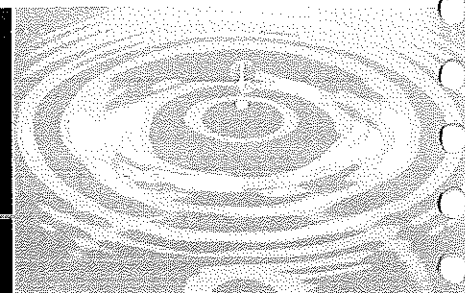
Swapna Mukhopadhyay (ISST) and Vinay B. Kamble (Advisor, Department of Science and Technology ; Government. of India): **Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Gender** (Published by Vigyan Prasar, A Unit of the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India)

(iii) Gender Modeling

Gender Network tied up with the PEP Network (Poverty and Economic Policy Network of IDRC) to establish a gender challenge fund within PEP. Three research studies were sponsored by Gender Network.

The study on China examined the underlying causes of the change in female labor force participation rates (FLFPR) and analyzed the

MIMAP - Gender Network



gender differences in the determination of the probabilities of reemployment in post-restructuring urban China using three nation-wide household surveys. Its expected that the analysis helps to design gender-sensitive public policies to alleviate the pain of economic adjustment borne by women and to seek gender equitable solutions for urban unemployment.

The Sri Lankan study provides the first consistent gender wage gap between 1996 and 2004 for Sri Lanka. This will facilitate analysing the effects of recent shifts in supply of and demand for female labour, particularly within the export manufacturing sector.

The study on Pakistan develops a gender aware computable general equilibrium model for Pakistan with productive and reproductive sectors of economy and intra household allocation of resources to assess the gender impact of two types of shocks: trade liberalisation and fiscal adjustment. Results indicate that economic reforms increase real wage income of women more than men but relative time poverty among women increases in both exercises. While capability poverty increase in poor households and reduces in rich. This implies that economic reforms are pro rich. Trade liberalization reduces monetary poverty among rich and increase in poor households.

Reports:

Dilani Gunewardena, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka: **The Gender Wage Gap in Sri Lanka**

Rizwana Siddiqui, PIDE, Pakistan: **Modeling Gender Dimension of the Impact of Economic Reforms in Pakistan**

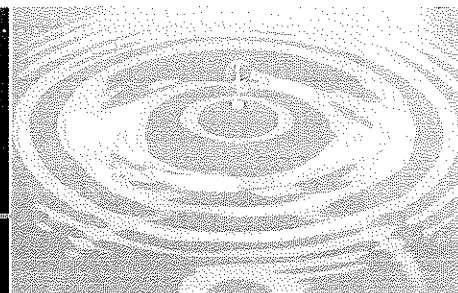
Fenglian Du, Inner Mongolia university, China: **Women's Employment & Industrial Restructuring in China: Investigation Using Urban Household Surveys**

(iv) Econometric Analysis of Economic Growth, Income Inequality and Gender Disparities

Studies under this research module looked into the patterns of association between economic growth, poverty, income inequality and gender disparities.

One study that looks into the differential performance of countries and regions around the world finds very different patterns of gender differences in educational attainments and macroeconomic parameters such as growth rates or income disparities. More than anything else, this reflects the differential impact of parental and official commitment to girls' education. However considering that the correlation between gender differences in educational attainments and indices of women's empowerment such as absence of violence against women is often not that high – many Latin American countries have in fact reverse discrimination in terms of educational attainments but evidence of high incidence of violence against women.

The study on female labour participation with recent data from the NSSO demonstrate a descriptive statistical analysis of women's work force participation vis-à-vis men's. The study poses some standard questions about the characteristics of women's labour force participation patterns in comparison with men's and uses the NSS data to carry out some econometric estimations.



Working Papers:

Nanak Kakwani (International Poverty Centre, Brazil); Swapna Mukhopadhyay (ISST) and Fabio V. Soares (IPC, Brazil): **Gender and the Millennium Development Goals: the Role of Economic Growth and Distribution**

Swapna Mukhopadhyay (ISST) and Suresh D. Tendulkar (CDE-DSE, India): **Gender Disparities in The Labour Market: An Analysis of NSS data**

(v) Status of Women in Kerala

An edited book has been published from the Social Science Press consists of multi-disciplinary research carried on various aspects of gender relations in Kerala by a range of scholars. The papers collectively seek to provide an answer to the 'enigma' of the Kerala woman. Although not strictly within the context of economic policy reforms, the in-depth analysis of the Kerala case exposes the essential contradictions inherent in uncritical indicator based analysis.

Working Papers:

Swapna Mukhopadhyay (ISST): **The Enigma of the Kerala Woman: Does High Literacy Necessarily Translate into High Status?**

Edited Volume:

Swapna Mukhopadhyay (ed.) 2007: **The Enigma of the Kerala Woman: A Failed Promise of Literacy**, Published by the Social Science Press, New Delhi and distributed internationally by the Berghahn Books, New York.

(vi) Gender Sensitization Training:

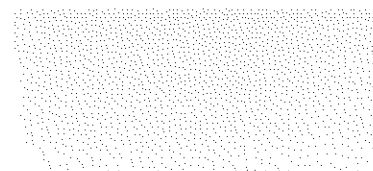
One of the major objectives of the Gender Network has been to sensitize young male and female researchers on gender issues in order to ensure that in this research work. As part of the strategy for achieving this objective, the Gender Network had facilitated the organization of a Gender Training Workshop for young researchers from the developing countries in Dakar, Senegal.

Report:

Swapna Mukhopadhyay (ISST), and Marzia Fontana, (IDS Sussex, England) with Sally Baden: **Report on the Gender Sensitization Training Workshop, Dakar, Senegal**

(vii) International Seminar

The International Seminar on Gender under Economic Reforms, the last seminar of the Gender Network Project was organized at Jaipur between February 1 and 4, 2006. The seminar brought together several gender researchers both from partnering organizations and others as well as scholars outside the network.



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