

# livelihoods

*today and tomorrow*

October 2008

## Women & Livelihoods



Why Are We So Desperate? - 10

Silk Value-Chain - 18

Leap Tools - 24



**The month that went by is full of international days! World Peace Day, World Tourism Day, International Day of Non-violence, International Day for Decent Work, World Food Day, International Day for Poverty Eradication ....**

Before India could recover from the disastrous floods in Bihar, the world has caught in the tsunami of global financial crisis. Fortunately, it appears, India is in the margins of this tsunami! Even then, the fall in the shares is more than Rs.40 lakh crores. We knew all along opportunities presented by Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization were dynamic. Till we catch them, we will not be sure. Now, we are witnessing huge losses and huge job losses! All these losses, incidentally, are in the growth sectors.

Women constitute half of the mankind. Their stamina is superior to the other half. Their mental and emotional maturity is higher. They have demonstrated that they do not lack in physical endurance and strength. They live longer. There are no sectors in which they have entered and not proved themselves. Their performance far outstrips the performance of the other half. Even if they have entered the skies and walked in the space, their feet are on ground firmly and display unusual humility. Their patience and tolerance is higher than that of the mother earth. Their ability to love, unusual sensitivity and hidden courage differentiate them from the other half. With superior physical, conceptual, and emotional competencies, women are surging ahead tapping the opportunities that come their way and chasing opportunities that elude them. In this context, 'livelihoods' has looked at the livelihoods of the women to realize that there are no livelihoods of the women in particular. Women have done well in all sectors. They are knocking the doors of all the livelihoods activities that are not open to them. The sounds of the knocks have become louder and knocks themselves have become fiercer.

When 90%+ women are in unorganized domain, Self-Employed Women's Association has made a huge difference to some of them (more than a million!) economically in Gujarat and the model is replicated in the country and outside. Their SEWA Bank is managed by women themselves. SEWA demonstrates that issues of the poor are addressed only when they come together and fight with solidarity. The smaller women's collective, a collective of about 1.5 lakh women, is seeking more political say, beyond the reservations, for the women in Tamil Nadu. A tribal illiterate but bold and wise Mukta's 15-year long fight against the corporate is an inspiration to many of us.

Association of Lady Entrepreneurs (ALEAP)'s efforts in building women entrepreneurs offer insights in building the entrepreneurs from the poor in general and poor women in particular.

Bhanuja, the founder of REDS, has been putting her efforts in changing the lives of the marginal women and marginal farmers in a pocket of drought prone Rayalaseema of Andhra Pradesh.

Simone de Beauvoir's, The Second Sex is inescapable for any serious gender worker who believes in the brotherhood of men and women as a necessity so that they achieve and retain the freedom.

Fukuoka and his One Straw Revolution need no introduction in the circles of natural farming. His natural farming practice led the movements for integrated pesticides management to non-pesticide management to complete organic farming. It is the modern human mind that is struggling to come to terms with the superiority for natural farming. However, the day may not be very far when we accept and embrace the natural farming completely.

As we complete a year of 'livelihoods', as we informed you last month, we have begun a special and comprehensive review of 'livelihoods' including content, columns, presentation, reaching out etc. Your inputs, insights, critical feedback and your association in this review now and in the path of 'livelihoods' thereafter are important for us. Please remember - you have allowed us to grow with you. Let us get going, evolving and growing.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Muralidhar', is positioned above the typed name.

G. Muralidhar  
the 'livelihoods' team

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Significant Days in September & October	7
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<b>Cover Story</b>	12
“Woman-Specific livelihoods” is a misnomer. Women are capable and have made their way into all livelihoods. They are working and producing results on par with or better than men.	
Trekking Across Gaddi Villages	20
Mukta Jhodia, The Crusader	21
LEAP Tools	24
Convergence Can Make A Difference!	25
Volunteers And Paid Workers	27

**For Private Circulation only**

Response	4	
News	5	
Legend	Fukuoka’s Natural Farming	8
Intervention	ALEAP For Women Entrepreneurs	9
Perspectives	Why Are We So Desperate?	10
Interview	Women should NOT Give Up, but Fight!	17
Value Chain	Silk	18
Organization	Self Employed Women’s Association	22
Policy	National Policy For The Empowerment Of Women	26
The Contrasts	Rising Security!	28
	Fading Ghanis!	28
Worker	REDS Bhanuja	29
Books	The Second Sex	30
Resources	Solution Exchange	31
Story	Right Livelihood	32
Trends	Cost Of Illness In India	33
Case studies	Tapping Opportunities! In The Fangs Of Drought!	34
‘Yoga’kshemam		35

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# Response

The livelihoods monthly magazine is an extremely useful publication. The articles in the magazine provide new insights and tools for addressing poverty and deprivation in our society. I have a special word of appreciation for the September issue focussing on urban poor.

Prof. K L Srivastava



The article on festival livelihoods in the September issue of livelihoods magazine is interesting. I would like to add that Durga Puja in West Bengal, mainly in Kolkata is celebrated in a huge way and is a source of livelihood for many people including the Dhakis who play drums, the artisans and other labourers. This work occupies them for almost the whole year.

Anuradha Sen

## Contributions Solicited

If you would like to contribute an article or have something interesting to share, email or mail it to us. If it contains pictures or files please remember to attach them to the email. Please include your name, email, contact information such as phone number, location (nation) and area of expertise. If your article is accepted an editor will prepare the article for publication and may edit it for accuracy, grammar, style, and length.

Email address is [akshara@aksharakriti.org](mailto:akshara@aksharakriti.org) ; please include "livelihoods Contribution" in the subject line .  
Mailing address is: HIG-II Block 25 Flat 6, APHB Colony, Baghlingampally, HYDERABAD, India 500 044.

*A Woman is The Full Circle.*

*Within Her Is The Power To Create, Nurture And Transform. - Diane Mariechild, Writer*



**ADB Loan For Khadi** - The Asian Development Bank is extending a loan of \$150 million to India to help revive the Khadi, handspun and hand-woven cloth. This loan will also be



supplemented with a \$2 million grant by the Japan Special Fund through the Manila-based multilateral institution to monitor the progress of the loan-funded reform package. The ADB loan shall be released in 4 phases over a three year period.

**CADWM To Continue** - The Command Area Development and Water Management Program will continue for the duration of the 11th Plan till 2011-12. The outlay for the program is Rs.1600 crore. Under the program, central assistance is provided for development of infrastructure to facilitate use of the sprinkler and drip irrigation systems as an alternative to construction of field channels. The component of renovation and desilting of minor irrigation tanks from the CADWM program will be withdrawn to avoid overlap with similar works.

**Housing For Construction Workers** - To improve the living conditions of workers at construction sites, the Ministry of Environment and Forests issued instructions



under Environmental Impact Assessment, 2006 Notification to include housing and other facilities at the construction sites for the workers. Under the Notification, Environmental clearance for development projects will not be granted if the construction agency fails to provide for housing of construction labour within the site with all necessary infrastructure and facilities including fuel for cooking, mobile toilets, sewage disposal facilities, safe drinking water, medical

health care and crèche. The housing may be temporary in nature to be removed after completion of the project.

**Smoking Banned In India** - Starting October 2nd this year, India has banned smoking in offices and private establishments including shopping malls, cinema halls, public/private workplaces, hotels, banquet halls, discotheques, canteens, coffee houses, pubs, bars, airport lounges and railway stations. According to World Health Organization estimates, nearly 800,000 deaths per year in India are attributed to tobacco consumption. India accounts for 12 per cent of the world's smokers. According to Indian Society of Medical and Paediatric Oncology, lung cancer is assuming epidemic proportions in India and chewing tobacco or gutkha is causing increased incidences of oral cancer.



**Lok Talim** - The Union Ministry of Human Resource Development has redesigned National Literacy Mission under the new name 'Lok Talim' which means people education. Lok Talim will be voluntary-based and will not follow one-size-fits-all approach. Many options will be given to program managers to implement Lok Talim. There are provisions for resident instructor for remote and backward areas, residential camps for 4 month duration for adolescents and week long residential camps for 10 months for SHGs and Panchayats to manage the program. Efforts will be made under Lok Talim to ensure simultaneous availability of programs for non-literate, semi-literate, neo-literate and school dropouts. The aim of Lok Talim is to take the literacy program back to the people from the bureaucracy in more ways to achieve the 11th Plan target of 85 per cent literacy by 2012.

**Coordinating AIDS Technical Support Database (CoATS)** - UNAIDS along with its partners has developed a

new tool providing latest information on technical support for global AIDS programs called CoATS. CoATS aims to facilitate access by country partners to timely and quality assured technical support, encourage coordination of technical support between providers and users with increased accountability for results and facilitate collaboration and exchange of information on technical support activities at global, regional and country level.

**Older Persons In Emergencies** - WHO's recent publication - Older Persons In Emergencies: An Active Ageing Perspective, focuses on the elderly in conflict related and naturally caused disasters. It calls upon policy makers for greater recognition of their roles during such crisis by bringing together real-life stories of positive contributions from different parts of the world.

**India 70th in World Prosperity Index 2008** - India ranks 70th among 104 nations on the World Prosperity Index. Poor quality of secondary education, cost of starting a business and lack of government effectiveness have placed India in the 70th position.

**Deaths At Child Birth** - According to a new UN study an estimated 80000 pregnant women and new mothers die each year in India from preventable causes including haemorrhage, eclampsia, sepsis and anaemia. An average of 301 deaths occur for every 100,000 live births annually.

**Nobel Peace Prize** - Martti Oiva Kalevi Ahtisaari, former President of Finland and UN envoy, is chosen for Nobel Peace Prize this year for his efforts on several continents to resolve international conflicts. Ahtisaari served as UN Commissioner of Namibia in 1977 and worked towards securing the independence of Namibia from the Republic of South Africa. As a member of Northern Ireland international arms inspectors, Ahtisaari was appointed in 2000 to verify IRA weapons decommissioning. In 2005 he

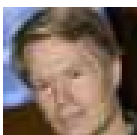


successfully mediated to end conflict between Indonesia and the free Aceh Movement rebels. In the same year, Ahtisaari helped broker the deal that ended Nato's Kosovo air campaign. He has also been involved in mediation in Iraq, Central Asia and Somalia.

**Nobel Prize In Economics - 2008** Nobel Prize in Economics was awarded to Paul Krugman for his research on international trade and economic geography. Paul showed the effects of economies of scale on trade patterns and on the location of economic activity. In 1979, he proposed a new trade model that explained why countries that are similar, benefit from producing and trading similar goods and the occurrence of intra-industry trade based on an assumption of economies of scale whereby mass production diminishes the cost per unit produced. In 1991, he showed how theories of economic geography attempt to specify the forces whereby labor and capital become located in certain places and not others. Here he showed that labor is free to move to the country or region which can offer the highest welfare, in terms of real wages and diversity of goods. Firms' location decisions imply a trade-off between utilizing economies of scale and saving on transport costs.



**Nobel Prize For Literature** - The 2008 Nobel Prize for Literature is awarded to Jean-Marie Gustave Le Clézio, a French writer and a traveler. His novels explore the transformation from childhood to adulthood (Cœur brûlé et autres romances), voyages that result in the confrontation of cultures (Désert), and the points where past, present and future collide (Ourania). His first novel, Le procès-verbal, received Renaudot prize. Le



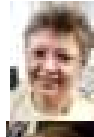
Clézio early novels present a bleak picture of modern western urban existence as one of alienation, aggression and enslavement to materiality. In 70s he developed thoughts on the limits of western rationalism and its dangerous devaluation of emotions and spirituality and also of the natural world. Recently, in his effort to explore the interaction between past, present and future, Le Clézio made his own family history a subject for his novels.

**Nobel Prize For Physiology/Medicine** - The Nobel Prize for Physiology/Medicine is shared by three persons this year. One half of the Prize is awarded to Harald zur Hausen for



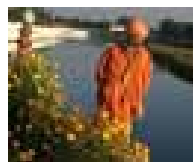
his discovery of human papilloma viruses causing cervical cancer and the other half is jointly awarded

to Françoise Barré-Sinoussi and Luc Montagnier for their discovery of human immunodeficiency virus, HIV.



**UN Recognition For Sulabh International** - The United Nations has chosen Sulabh International as one of the 50 most successful business models targeting the poor. The UN reviewed Sulabh's role in transforming the lives of scavengers in India. The UNDP in its latest report - Creating value for all: Strategies for doing business with the poor - recognized Sulabh as a role model and appreciated its strategy of building and operating public toilets and installing private toilets being used by more than one crore people in India.

**Environment Hero 2008** - The TIME Magazine chose Balbir Singh Seechewal as one of the Heroes of the Environment 2008. In 2000, Balbir Singh took up the task of cleaning up Kali Bein river in Punjab. Kali Bein is a 99 mile long river considered sacred, but for longtime received pollutants and trash from towns and villages. Balbir Singh, Sikh holy man



along with his followers taught locals why they should clean Kali Bein. Volunteers were enlisted to do physical work and raise funds. River-bed was cleaned and river banks and roads alongside the river were built. Balbir launched public awareness campaign to encourage villagers to dispose of their sewage elsewhere. Villagers revived traditional methods of waste disposal and treatment. Natural springs revived and the river began to fill up. Today Kali Bein has become a famous picnic spot and people bathe during festivals. Today Balbir is leading efforts to get residents and the government to clean up rivers and creeks in the state in a more systematic way.

**World Water Week 2008** - The World Water Week 2008 was held in September in Stockholm Sweden. The event was convened by World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI). Sanitation was top on the agenda including toilets, integrated water resource management (wastewater treatment, recycle and reuse).

**24\*7 Helpline For Women** - Uttar Pradesh State Women's Commission will start a 24-hour toll free helpline number - 1800-180-5220 - to offer consultation services round-the-clock for women in distress. According to a study conducted by the National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB), UP accounts for nearly 10 per cent of the crime against women in the country.

**Computer Course Through Distance Education** - Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University is offering Bachelor of Computer Applications - Industry Specific course through distance education.

**Ford Foundation Fellowships 2009** - The Ford Foundation invites applications for its International Fellowships Program 2009 to build a new generation of social justice leaders worldwide. The program supports underprivileged individuals to improve their lives and assist in common pursuit of equitable and just societies. ■

## Significant Days in September & October

### International Day of Democracy - September 15th

To promote democratization, development and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms the United Nations observes International Day of Democracy. According to the General Assembly of the UN, "while democracies share common features, there is no single model of democracy and that democracy does not belong to any one country or region".

### International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer - September 16th

2008 marks the 21st anniversary of the signing of the Montreal Protocol which is an international treaty signed by 193 countries to protect the stratospheric ozone layer from being destroyed. Under this treaty parties are required to phase out the production and consumption of ozone depleting chemicals. Ozone layer refers to the ozone within the stratosphere, where over 90 per cent of the earth's ozone resides. Ozone is an irritating, corrosive and colorless gas. Ozone layer absorbs 97 to 99 per cent of the sun's high frequency ultraviolet light which is potentially damaging to life on earth.

### International Day of Peace - September 21st

The International Day of Peace is observed as a day of global ceasefire and non-violence through education and public awareness and to cooperate in the establishment of a global ceasefire. Conflicts and wars devastate societies and social systems. They lead to violation of human rights, discrimination, marginalization and sexual abuse. They cause wide displacement, produce large number of refugees. Children are robbed of their childhood and even their basic means to live.

### World Tourism Day - September 27th

The purpose of World Tourism Day is to display awareness that tourism is vital to the international community and to show how it affects the social, cultural, political and economic values worldwide. This year Peru hosted the day under the theme of "Tourism Responding to the Challenge of Climate Change". According to the 2008 UN Study on Climate Change and Tourism Estimates, tourism generates about 5 per cent of global carbon emissions.

### International Day of Older Persons - October 1st

The theme of 2008 International Day of Older Persons is "Rights of Older Persons". This year also marks the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The UN recognizes that persons as they age should enjoy a life of fulfillment, health, security and active participation in the economic, social, cultural and political life of their societies. It is everyone's responsibility to enhance the recognition of the dignity of older persons and to eliminate all forms of neglect, abuse and violence. Promoting the independence, participation and dignity of older persons is central to the Madrid International Plan of Action on Aging.

### International Day of Non-Violence - October 2nd

"...What difference does it make to the dead, the orphans, and the homeless, whether the mad destruction is wrought

under the name of totalitarianism or the holy name of liberty and democracy?" said Mahatma Gandhi. The International Day of Non-Violence is marked on the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, the pioneer of the philosophy and strategy of non-violence. The day is observed to disseminate the message of non-violence including through awareness and education. The direction is to secure a culture of peace, tolerance, understanding and non-violence.

### World Habitat Day - First Monday of October

The World Habitat Day is observed on first Monday of October and this year it happened to be the 6th of October. The idea is to reflect on the state of our towns and cities and the basic right to adequate shelter for all. It is also intended to remind the world of its collective responsibility for the future of the human habitat. The UN chose Harmonious Cities as the theme for 2008 to raise awareness about the problems of rapid urbanization, its impact on the environment, the growth of slums, and the urbanization of poverty as more and more people move into towns and cities for a better life. Harmonious cities are inclusive cities where everyone and every culture is at home.

### World Day for Decent Work - October 7th

The World Day for Decent Work is a joint campaign supported by UNI Global Union and led by the International Trade Union Confederation, the Global Progressive Forum, Social Alert and Solidar. The aim is to build awareness of decent work among citizens, decision makers and key institutions; to show that decent work is the one sustainable way out of poverty and is fundamental to build democracy and social cohesion; to place decent work at the core of development, economic, trade, financial and social policies at all levels.

### World Food Day - October 16th

This year's World Food Day theme is "World Food Security: the Challenges of Climate Change and Bioenergy". Climate changes make the poorest regions the first victims. Hundreds of millions of people are already vulnerable and food insecure. Climate changes will affect availability of land, water and biodiversity which can cause shortfalls in agriculture production. Agriculture has to be able to double global food production by 2050 when the current population will reach 9 billion. In the context of global food crisis including the increasing cost of food, the UN High-Level Task Force put together a Comprehensive Framework of Action to chart the way forward for governments, the donor community, civil society and the private sector.

### International Day for the Eradication of Poverty - October 17th

The theme of this year's observance of International Day for the Eradication of Poverty is "Human Rights and Dignity of People Living in Poverty". Poverty is seen as the human condition of deprivation of resources, capabilities, choices, security and power necessary for enjoyment of an adequate standard of living and other civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. This year the day was commemorated in the midst of deep global financial crisis and global food crisis which impact the poor adversely in more than one way. ■

# Fukuoka's Natural Farming

"The ultimate goal of farming is not the growing of crops, but the cultivation and perfection of human beings." This is the profound belief of Masanobu Fukuoka, the Japanese microbiologist who showed the world the natural way of farming with no plowing, no chemical fertilizers and pesticides and no weeding.

Masanobu Fukuoka was born to Kameichi Fukuoka and Sachie Isshiki on 2nd February 1913 in Iyo, a small town on the west coast of the Japanese island of Shikoku. Fukuoka was the second child of six. His father cultivated Mikans (a type of mandarin orange) and had extensive rice lands that made him the largest land owner in the area.

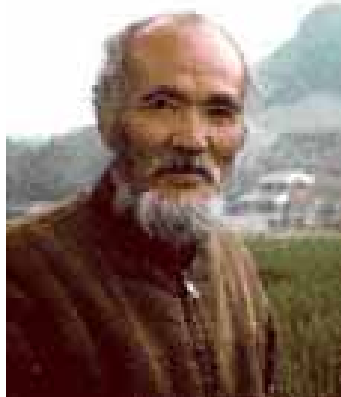
Fukuoka completed his elementary education in Iyo's local elementary school. Later, he travelled everyday to Matsuyama to complete his middle and high school education. After school he studied microbiology at Gifu Agricultural college. After graduating at Gifu, Fukuoka began his career as a soil scientist specializing in plant pathology.

At age 25, Fukuoka began to doubt the wisdom of modern agricultural science. While recovering from a severe attack of pneumonia, he experienced a moment of personal enlightenment. He had a vision in which he realized that all the "accomplishments" of human civilization are meaningless before the totality of nature. He saw that humans had become separated from nature and that our attempts to control or even understand all the complexities of life were not only futile, they were self-destructive.

Fukuoka quit his job as a research scientist and returned to his family's farm to grow organic Mikans. From that point on he devoted his life to developing a unique small scale organic farming system that does not require weeding, pesticide, fertilizer applications or tilling. Proceeding by trial and error, he farmed the land passively. Instead of asking, "how about doing this?" he asked, "how about not doing this?" As more natural ecology was re-established, the less he did, the better the land responded.

Fukuoka's Four Principles of Natural Farming, compose a list of things not to do. He observed that the earth cultivates itself. There is no need for man to do what roots, worms, and micro-organisms do better. Furthermore, plowing the soil alters the natural environment and promotes the growth of weeds. Therefore, his first principle is: **No plowing or turning of the soil.**

Secondly, in an unaltered natural environment the orderly growth and decay of plant and animal life fertilizes the soil without any help from man. Adding chemical fertilizers helps the growing crop but does not help the soil, which continues to deteriorate. Even compost and chicken dung cannot improve on nature; moreover chicken dung can cause the disease rice blast. Therefore Fukuoka's second principle is: **No chemical fertilizers or prepared compost.** Instead he promotes cover crops like clover and alfalfa which are



natural fertilizers.

Fukuoka observed that when he ceased plowing, his weed population declined sharply. Tillage is not the answer to weeds according to him. Nor are chemical herbicides, which disrupt nature's balance and leave poisons in the earth and water. The simpler way is to understand that weeds need not be wholly eliminated. Instead they can be successfully suppressed by spreading straw over freshly sown ground and by planting ground cover. Eliminating intervals between one crop and another through carefully timed seeding is essential. Thus **No weeding by tillage or herbicides** is

Fukuoka's third principle.

Although chemical solutions can be effective against pests and plant diseases in the short run, in the long run they are hazardous. Wholly aside from the pollution they leave behind, they permit weak, chemical-dependent plants to survive. Left to itself, nature prefers hardier stock. Fukuoka's fourth principle therefore is: **No dependence on chemical pesticides.**

In his 60's, Fukuoka sat down to document what he had seen and done. In 1975 his first book "One Straw Revolution" was released and has had a profound impact on agriculture and human consciousness all over the world. "One Straw Revolution" was followed by "The Natural Way of Farming" and then by "The Road Back To Nature."

Since 1979, Fukuoka has been touring, giving lectures and sowing the seeds of natural farming all over the world. Believing that most deserts were man-made, Fukuoka dreamed of "re-greening" them through massive seeding. He was confident that in time natural farming could make them rich sources of food. To try out his idea he flew to Somalia in East Africa in 1985, taking with him several kilos of grain and vegetable seeds and fruit tree seedlings. He hoped to run tests on reseeding arid lands by airplane. Unfortunately his plan was thwarted. Fukuoka then visited a remote Ethiopian refugee camp where some Japanese volunteers were already providing assistance. Here he taught the refugees to sow the vegetable seeds he provided. Soon small garden patches sprouted around the village and near the riverbanks.

In 1988 Fukuoka was given Deshikottama Award by the ViswaBharathi University, and the Ramon Magsaysay Award. In 1997 he received the Earth Council Award.

Masanobu Fukuoka passed away on 16<sup>th</sup> August, 2008. But his principles of natural farming continue to inspire many across the world. "Nature knows the best" is his simple message. Let us preserve the nature. ■



# ALEAP For Women Entrepreneurs

More than 90 per cent of the women workforce in India are in the informal sector. Of these some of them are engaged in their own business/enterprise. Lack of credit is one of the hurdles faced by Indian women to start up a business. Most of the women cannot offer any collateral and the loan from moneylenders is very expensive. In Andhra Pradesh, Association of Lady Entrepreneurs provides a forum to overcome this hurdle.

Association of Lady Entrepreneurs of Andhra Pradesh (ALEAP) was established to bring women entrepreneurs to help each other and work in collaboration for welfare maximization. Established in 1993, ALEAP is today a recognized institution in the nation devoted to the cause of the development of entrepreneurship among women. The guiding faith of ALEAP is that entrepreneurs need not necessarily be born, but can be developed through well conceived and well directed activities. The membership of ALEAP is currently about 2500.

The objectives of ALEAP include - assisting women in identifying projects; providing capacity building trainings to the members; providing marketing support like organizing exhibitions, sending delegations within and outside the country to get market information; creating infrastructural facilities to the members and acting as a liaison between government and the entrepreneurs.

ALEAP Credit Guarantee Association came into being to implement mutual credit guarantee scheme. Under this scheme small scale units can avail collateral free bank finance. To reduce risks, market potential of various business ideas are scrutinized thoroughly. Free basic counseling is provided.



The Centre for Entrepreneurship Development (CED), an autonomous body set up by ALEAP aims at facilitating training and research on problems on development that must be solved for realizing planned objectives. CED

conducts seminars on topics oriented towards industrial establishments. In this effort CED interfaces with state level entrepreneurship development organizations, NGOs, educational and financial institutions etc. It also provides follow up services after the training programs.

ALEAP's Facilitator and Business Development Cell (FAB Cell) assists women in setting up their projects by providing required inputs and information on government schemes, policy guidelines, industry specific incentives etc. ALEAP offers incubator facilities in the areas of IT, leaf lamination, jute products where the entrepreneur can manufacture a product without investing on infrastructure. On the marketing side, ALEAP has established tie-ups with retail outlets and supply-chain stores and other MNCs. ALEAP also provides

marketing insights to its members from time to time. It conducts skills up gradation training programs in various areas like food processing, garments, jute products in collaboration with various banks and institutions. ALEAP conducts one month Entrepreneurship Development Programs for beginners. Further, the organization has provides commercial space on rent to its members at nominal rate to market their produce. In the outskirts of Hyderabad, ALEAP played a vital role in creating the business park for women.

To promote networking and cooperation, ALEAP has facilitated various sector-specific clusters including that of garment workers in Vijayawada, food processors in Cuddapah, and silk units in Madanapalli. ALEAP conducted a training and networking program called EU-India Network



for Women Entrepreneurs in cooperation with InWEnt. The program helps build and improve knowledge and skills of the Indian women to gain foothold in the food and garment export sectors. Support is also given to women entrepreneurs to broker international contracts.

ALEAP has set up the First Women Entrepreneur's Industrial Estate in India, in Hyderabad. The estate has all the required infrastructure facilities to transform women into entrepreneurs. The success of this estate helped ALEAP develop another multi product industrial cluster in Vijayawada.

ALEAP also runs a conference centre, a communication and information centre, a crèche and a home for working women.

ALEAP's members are mostly first generation entrepreneurs. The President and members of ALEAP are represented in various committees at state, national and international levels.

By providing comprehensive range of services for women, ALEAP has become a change agent. It proves the point that women when given opportunities to broaden their present horizons can excel in any type of business venture. Several studies have conclusively proved that gainfully employed women are crucial for most dynamic economies. ■

# Why Are We So Desperate?

**We never seem to get out of disasters! World at large and USA and Europe have been struck with a huge financial tsunami.**

During the month, our interactions have been mainly with the communities, their organizations and the organizations that support them in Jharkhand and the Trans Himalayan Region, apart from the interactions related to endogenous tourism in general and in Pochampally in particular. We continued our engagement with young professionals in appreciating poverty reduction, development and livelihoods management effort.

As I traversed from South to North, from Ganges in the East to the Indus in the West, from the land of the highest population density to the land of the lowest population density, from forever marshy lands to the cold deserts, from the philosophy of leisure maximization to the philosophy of let us first survive, from religious tourism areas to nature and experiential tourism areas, from plains to peaks, from completely concretized jungles to pristine natural habitats, from hottest areas to sub-zero areas and so on, it has been a study of contrasts on the surface, yet similar deep within.

Sunderbans, hilly and mountain areas and



the glaciers, the rivers, the hills, the lakes, the valleys, the islands and the seas are wonders of the nature, for us to be with.

This year's Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel is given to Paul Krugman, for his analysis of trade patterns and location of economic activity. His analysis concludes that economies of scale combined with reduced transport costs help to explain why an increasingly larger share of the world population lives in cities and why similar economic activities are concentrated in the same locations. Lower transport costs can trigger a self-reinforcing process whereby a growing metropolitan population gives rise to increased large-scale production, higher real wages and a more diversified supply of goods. This, in turn stimulates further migration to cities. The key question then is – **can we reverse this? How can we?**

My recent visits to Sunderbans, Jharkhand, Spiti Valley and Ladakh have given a glimpse of possible food security dependent integrated organic farming. We seem to have



forgotten the integrated farming system practices on the way. Can we get back?

## Perspectives

G. Muralidhar

When the tribals in Jharkhand maximize leisure, when the spitians and ladakhis are happy with whatever little they have– why are we after growth, profits and stress? Are we wrong?

Chewang Norphel at the ripe age of 73 is in a creative tension of building artificial 'glaciers' so that some lands in the cold desert get some water during the early summer before the natural glaciers start melting a bit and give water to these lands. Nomads in the cold desert take their livestock into the hills even at 5000 metres above mean sea level. Ladakhis and Spitians pool up cow dung cakes, fuel wood, fodder for the cattle, provisions etc., for a long winter exceeding six months with temperatures falling down to -30 to -35 degree Celsius with no electricity most of the time. Still when a visitor meets them, they welcome with a greeting 'Julley' and offer some hot tea to drink. Even when land is there for use, the tribals in Jharkhand and Dandakaranya are content with using a portion of it. The people in Sunderbans are fighting the river, sea and the crabs, day in and day out. The fishermen in the coasts of India are in the sea for days together waiting for the catch. The migrants into the cities are sleeping on the foot paths and slightly less crowded roads and flyovers displaying enormous grit to survive. When everyone around is so bold, generous and happy with 'life', why are we so desperate to accumulate, cheat, exploit, hide, flaunt and runaway from our share of contributing to the life around us?



Ladakhis dream of food-security driven self-sufficient and self-reliant economy. Strangely, the economy of Ladakh is driven by the army, because of border with China and Pakistan and the tourism. For example in Leh district, army personnel outnumber the 1.2 lakh locals. In season, 70000-

80000 tourists visit Leh. While the poor are negligible in number here, and the area has the best equity that can be seen in the country, the harsh ecology of cold deserts tests and tires them out with lowest rainfall of 50-60 mm and a long and lowest temperatures. Look at them. It beats our imagination why there are poor in other parts of the country. Surely, the blessed non-poor should have no complaints whatsoever!

When the needs of the human beings are essentially air, water, food, clothing and shelter and most of these exist in plenty for any one for their use and not for storing and wasting, when we did not own any resources that give us these, when the value of each one's time is more or less the same, the inequities are strange and appear to be results of some ingenious engineering! It is beyond a common man's comprehension why a young and physically hardworking person gets Rs.50 per day of his labour and why another gets more than Rs.100,000 per day. There appears no fair and just logic behind this. This is a cause of deep frustration to many of us. Can we do something about this? Or should we accept and resign ourselves to this strange equation that governs us?

With the global financial crisis, it became clear to us that we can not bank on these dynamic opportunities that come from the liberalization, privatization and globalization processes. These LPG processes are as risky as LPG in our houses. Its availability is not reliable. Safety is not guaranteed. Surely, prices are not going to remain low.

While the very purpose of the Non-Government Organisations and Civil Society Organisations is to show models for replication by the CBOs and the Governments, and the collaboration between the NGOs and Governments contributes to the public good, to develop models and build communities, NGOs seek autonomy and independence and the arms of the Governments resist in accepting that they are indeed independent organizations. An angry and upset District Magistrate can stop the funds to the NGO from foreign sources and Government sources, as in the case of SECMOL in Ladakh. The lesson here for the civil society is to build local sources of funds and revenues from activities and business. It needs to combine for-profit and not-for-profit



business. It needs to source volunteers and learn managing volunteers. It needs to have wider base of work beyond a district or a state. It needs to be networked for solidarity and learning.

King Nono of Spiti explains the need for integrated and holistic approach succinctly – when the farmers produce barley, they get food for the winter and fodder for the cattle. That encourages them to have livestock. These give manure, milk, wool, meat and all other things. The organic farming is then feasible. Micro-hydel can provide electricity to the area. This can also reduce drudgery. Additional land can be brought under cultivation with more snow and water harvesting. This land can be for growing vegetables, fruits and horticulture crops. The surplus can fetch high price because of the off-season in the market. The bio-diversity conserved can give us a variety of non-timber forest produce, medicinal and aromatic plants for local use and a little additional cash. The youth can be provided with skills to provide services that are required in the local area. The producers can be collectivized for sourcing goods from outside, for exchange of goods between them, and surplus disposal with local value-addition. The youth clubs can take up zero-waste management and revival and conservation of social and cultural practices, art forms, etc. The traditional systems blended with modern technology improve the quality of life including appropriate housing and guarantee sustainable well-being and development .....

**This is just for Spiti valley in Himachal Pradesh. Each and every compact area in the country requires this kind of integrated and holistic thinking on the livelihoods.**

**We have very few people who can appreciate and support this integrated and holistic way of living and livelihoods. We need to build and run campaigns for that all over. We need volunteers and articulators.**

**All this would mean the need for multiple alternative ways. Hope we succeed in identifying and adapting some. Of course, the critical element in our success is in most of us becoming less desperate to live 'better' than most others at any cost to themselves, others and the world.**



# Women & Livelihoods

There are no “women specific” livelihoods. Women are everywhere. Women have consistently and for long proved that they can engage themselves in all livelihoods on par with/better than men. They have more physical stamina and mental endurance than men. In fact women are exclusively sought after in some fields like teaching, care taking, counseling etc. At the grassroots level women have increasingly come together and proved to be harbingers of positive change and development. The fact that various organizations, institutions, governments have been increasingly coming forward to work with women and their groups but not with men proves the point. However lot of work done by women, particularly by the poor women goes unacknowledged. Household chores do not come into any reckoning. ‘livelihoods’ team makes an humble attempt to appreciate and portray a sample of women’s work across.



If we look at the history of human development from the perspective of livelihoods it has happened in four stages -

- ♦ Hunter-gatherer
- ♦ Subsistence agriculture
- ♦ Small surplus production
- ♦ Production for market

In the hunter-gatherer stage work division between men and women was very basic and women played a pivotal role in various aspects of life.

Gradually human beings started agriculture and animal husbandry. And the work division started becoming more defined and explicit. Men were taking up more tasks outside of home under the sun like grazing cattle, plowing the fields, providing security to the group etc while women took to more creative work including food production, raising herbs, handicrafts, apart from raising children. Gradually conflicts between clans to gain access to resources including women raised their ugly heads. While the men in the losing side were eliminated women were taken as slaves. This paved way for polygamy practices and the importance of giving birth to children and raising children has declined and



perceived as routine. This simultaneously led to the perceived higher importance to the activities taken up by men.

Polygamy provided more women labour engaged in food production. Increased food production resulted in small surpluses and introduction to barter. Satellite occupations around agriculture economy like weaving, carpentry, pottery etc came into being. Interdependent household economy emerged. As people gained more control over nature, men started focusing more on inter-household transactions and women were relegated to intra-household activities.

Control over nature increased agriculture productivity. The labour force got freed from agriculture work and were able to get involved in army, entertainment, fine arts and other non-production activities. To facilitate this transition, the new activities were placed on a premium. Trade and market has come into existence for exchange of goods and services. Men having got their feet wet in the inter-household transactions could quickly adapt to market needs and women remained in the background and further pushed inside. The increased market transactions called for



“Woman-Specific livelihoods” is a misnomer. Women have made their way into all livelihoods and are working and producing results on par with or better than men.

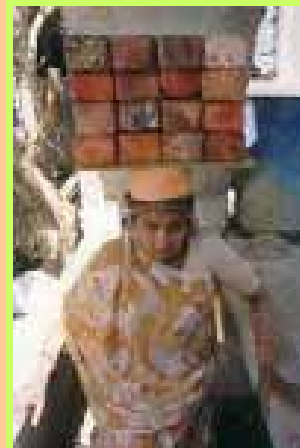
monetary system which in turn graduated into a capitalist system that ensured consolidation of men and women stereotypes in all spheres. The literature was also created to ensure this consolidation.

Over the last 100 years, however slowly and steadily some cracks have appeared for women to enter into spaces hitherto reserved for men. Naturally, women started performing better whenever they entered those spaces. Some men started acknowledging this reality and women have recognized that they have better capabilities and started demanding their rightful spaces.

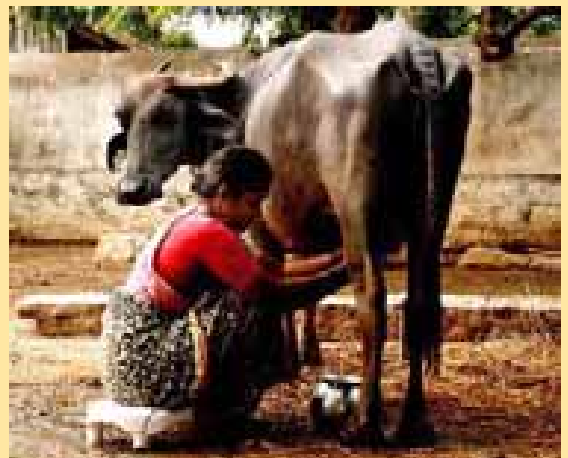
Changes are visible, systems are changing to accommodate the women force, the tone of literature is changing, education is supporting, statutes are supporting this. Now there is hardly any space in which women have not entered. However, women have to go a long way in having equal rights and opportunities in all spheres. **The society has to ensure that this happens double quick because we have denied them all these for a very very long time!** ■







# Not Counted!





## Women should NOT Give Up, but Fight!

Confronted with many problems in life, Rojarani not only survived the storm but also showed livelihood avenues to many other women like her. Migrated with bare minimum from her native place along with family in search of a living, Rojarani is today managing a working women's hostel in Hyderabad and able to earn good income. This interview by A. Ramana with Roja is an attempt to understand the arduous journey of a woman from downhill to newer positive heights.

**Question:** Please tell me your name.

**Answer:** Vadlamudi Rojarani

**Q:** What is your native place?

**A:** My native place is Vijayawada which is in Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh.

**Q:** What is your family background?

**A:** My father Dhanunjaya Rao is a small private employee. My mother is a housewife. I am the eldest daughter in my family. I have one brother and one sister and both are younger to me.

**Q:** Please tell us about your education.

**A:** I studied up to Intermediate. When I was in the first year of my graduation, my father asked me to stop my education due to our family's bad financial situation. So I stopped my education at that point of time.

**Q:** When did you get married?

**A:** I got married on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1995 with Srinivasa Rao, who also belongs to Vijayawada.

**Q:** How was your in-law's financial position?

**A:** My husband's comes from a middle class family. His family used to do a small business. They were struggling and making only little profits from that business.

**Q:** How were you able to support your family then?

**A:** I thought of helping my family as far as I can. I started tutoring school children at home in the evenings.

**Q:** Why did you come to Hyderabad?

**A:** We suffered huge losses in business in the year 2003. We were not able to make up the losses in any way. We did not find any other work to do in Vijayawada. In that circumstances, my husband and myself along with two children came to Hyderabad in 2005 to make a living.

**Q:** How did you manage in the initial days when you moved to Hyderabad?

**A:** We embarked upon a new life in Hyderabad. We took a small room for a rent of Rs 600/- a month in ESI area. My husband joined a small job in a private milk dairy.

**Q:** How did you find the city life?

**A:** Its very tough to live in a city. We, four people had to live on very meager earnings. But I still managed to save some money as far as I can.

**Q:** What made you start working women's hostel?



**A:** I thought of starting a small business. But I took a step backward because there was no one to support us in this city. I also realized that we do not have any buffer to bear losses in case we incur. Then one fine day, I thought about starting a hostel to accommodate working women. I will have to invest money in this venture depending on the number of

women staying in the hostel. The inmates will pay money in advance. I may not need to invest much money from my own pocket. Even if there are no inmates I would not suffer much losses. After going through this thought process I finally decided to start a hostel with 10 women in Ameerpet area.

**Q:** How did you manage with only 10 inmates?

**A:** I took a flat for rent in Ameerpet for these 10 women. While looking after these 10 inmates, I also started tutoring school children at homes.

**Q:** What other works do you do?

**A:** Apart from managing the hostel and tutoring kids, I also do tailoring work.

**Q:** How is your business now? Does your family support you in your efforts?

**A:** It is quite good. we look after the inmates of our hostel as our own children. We give good food and security to the inmates. Now there are 60 women in my hostel. I go to four homes to tutor children. My tailoring work is also going very well and giving me reasonable income. I get lots of support and encouragement from my husband.

**Q:** How much money are you able to get every month?

**A:** From hostel and tailoring work I am getting not less than Rs 20000/- a month and from home tuitions another Rs10000/-. In total I am able to earn Rs 30000/- a month which is beyond my expectations.

**Q:** What do you feel about your life now?

**A:** Though I have little education I am able to earn good income. I appointed two poor women in my hostel to help me in cooking and managing the hostel. Not only did I survive but I could also show livelihood to two needy women. That gives me a lot of satisfaction.

Rojarani concludes her conversation by saying that it is natural for any family to confront problems. But one should not get frustrated with problems. We, especially women, should not give up but fight with problems. If we do anything with a strong commitment, we can definitely achieve what we want to achieve. ■

# SILK Value-Chain

Silk is the filament from the cocoons that the silkworms spin around themselves when they start their chrysalis, or pupa phase. Most widely used for this purpose are the larvae from the silk moth *Bombyx mori*. Silk produced from their cocoons is smooth, strong, naturally white and absorbs dye well.

There are four commercially known varieties of silk, namely, Mulberry, Tasar, Eri and Muga and all the four are found in India. While mulberry is cultivated, the other three are obtained by rearing worms on trees in forests. Hence, Tasar, Eri and Muga are collectively referred to as 'vanya' silks.

Larva of *Bombyx mori* gives bivoltine silk. The silk produced from the multivoltine races of silkworms is poor in quality & is known to have greater defects, such as lousiness, and defects in neatness and cleanliness and is of very poor quality in light of the international D grade. The silk produced by the bivoltine races of silkworms is superior and has high tensile strength and stands to the international A grade.

Three species of *Antheraea* are used for the extraction of tasar silk in India. They are *Antheraea mylitta*, *A. pernyi* & *A. roylei*. This silkworm is reared on trees of *Terminalia tomentosa*, *Terminalia arjuna*, found in the jungles of central & north-eastern parts of India. *Antheraea assama* gives the golden-yellow silk known as Muga. The silk produced by *Philosamia ricini*, whose main food plant is castor, is called eri silk. Of these, eri silk cannot be easily reeled, as they are made up of uneven fibres. Usually, after the emergence of the moths, the cocoons are used for producing spun-yarn.

The stages in value-chain are cultivation of silkworm food plants, silkworm rearing, silk reeling, and other post-cocoon processes such as twisting, dyeing, weaving, printing, value-added products and finishing. All these phases are labour intensive. While men are involved in growing mulberry, weaving and marketing across all phases, women are more involved in rearing the worms, collection of cocoons, etc. Old



persons and children are found in the reeling stage. Child labour is employed specially during the laying of warp.

The silk value-chain provides employment to about 60 lakh

persons, most of them being small and marginal farmers, or tiny & household industry mainly in the hand reeling and hand weaving sections. Silk contributes an

estimated Rs.6000 crores to the GDP. In India, sericulture cultivation is found in contiguous districts in the three southern States of Karnataka, AP and TN, and in the North Eastern region. Sericulture exists in about 54,000 villages, involving 8 lakh families. The cocoons and silk processing industry has traditionally existed in clusters in Karnataka, AP, TN, West Bengal and Bihar. Weaving of silk is more widespread, with different clusters/traditionally producing distinctive designs and weavers, mainly in saris. Tasar is found in jungles of Central and north-east India, in the tribal areas of Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, AP, Orissa; and in J&K and West Bengal. Muga culture is found only in the Brahmaputra Valley of India. Eri culture is found in Assam & in the eastern parts of India.

India's raw silk production is 16500 MT (2004-05), of which 88.61% is mulberry and 11.39% is Vanya silks. The area under mulberry cultivation is 1.72 lakh hectares. The World Raw Silk production in 2004 is about 1.25 lakh MT. Of this, China produces 81.6%. With 13.13% of the world production

Inputs	Pre-production	Production	Value-addition	Marketing	Further Processing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Mulberry saplings</li> <li>♦ Fertilizers</li> <li>♦ Pesticides</li> <li>♦ Labour</li> <li>♦ Silk worm eggs</li> <li>♦ Bamboo baskets, mountings</li> <li>♦ Other agricultural implements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Cultivating mulberry</li> <li>♦ Establishing linkages to get silk worm eggs at the right time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Harvesting mulberry leaf; chopping</li> <li>♦ Feeding the worms</li> <li>♦ Care of worms</li> <li>♦ Transferring worms to chandrikas</li> <li>♦ Cleaning of old leaves, other debris</li> <li>♦ Collecting cocoons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Grading of cocoons</li> <li>♦ Proper storage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Sale to middlemen</li> <li>♦ Auction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Inspection &amp; grading</li> <li>♦ Stifling (to kill the pupae)</li> <li>♦ Cooking (for degumming)</li> <li>♦ Reeling, doubling</li> <li>♦ Setting (to retain the twist of yarn)</li> <li>♦ Baling</li> <li>♦ Inspection</li> <li>♦ Dyeing</li> <li>♦ Weaving</li> <li>♦ Marketing (either as fabric or after stitching / making it into products)</li> </ul>

India is the second largest and the only other major producer of silk.

The main considerations for policy making in India with respect to sericulture and silk are (a) the position of India as one of the two major silk producers in the world, and (b) the employment potential in the industry.

The recent trend in sericulture is a fall in area under sericulture, which is more than set off by steady improvement in productivity per ha. Acreage has fallen due to: (a) drought in AP and Karnataka and (b) fluctuations in the price of raw silk. The factors contributing to increase in productivity include- improved silkworm races and hybrids, better technologies in rearing and reeling, evolution of higher leaf yielding mulberry varieties.

The domestic production of raw silk is not adequate to meet the domestic and export demand. It is estimated that against the demand of around 26,000 ton per annum, the domestic production is around 16,500 tonnes. High-grade quality mulberry raw silk is not being produced in the country to the extent required by the industry. To meet the demand, India imported raw silk valued at Rs.607 crore in 2004-2005.

While India imports raw silk and silk fabric, it exports natural silk, fabrics, made-ups, ready-made garments, silk carpets and silk waste. Central Silk Board (CSB) has evolved & popularized Bivoltine silkworm races, which can yield raw silk of international standards. With these races, provided there are changes in marketing and processing of cocoons, India can hope to reduce its imports and expand its exports.

Steps taken by the government to encourage exports are:

- ♦ Assistance to the Indian Silk Export Promotion Council, Mumbai for undertaking various export promotion activities such as participation in international fairs, organizing generic promotion stalls in domestic fairs like TexStyles India, publicity in foreign trade magazines, publication of magazine "Silk India" and colour forecast card for domestic silk manufacturers, dissemination of overseas trade information among exporters, etc.
- ♦ Facility of duty free import of raw material under the Advance Licensing Scheme
- ♦ Import of capital goods at concessional rate of duty for export products.
- ♦ Loan at 5% point less than applicable rate, under the Technological Up-gradation Fund Scheme for the Textiles sector.
- ♦ Reduction in import duty on silk machinery.
- ♦ Encouragement for production of bivoltine silk
- ♦ Promotion of non-mulberry silks in the existing areas of North East and Jharkhand, expanding it to other areas like Uttaranchal, HP, Bihar etc.
- ♦ Improvement in technologies at all stages of the process of silk development.
- ♦ Diversification of products with inputs for improvement of looms and designs.
- ♦ Initiation of futures trading in cocoon and raw silk at the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange

(NCDEX) in Mumbai.

- ♦ JBIC assisted projects are underway in Chhattisgarh and Manipur to promote tasar and mulberry in these areas. Special SGSY projects to promote vanya silks are being implemented in Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram, Bihar and Jharkhand.
- ♦ Development of new technology for production of bivoltine silkworms throughout the year, specially in Karnataka.

The government institutions working for the silk industry are Central Silk Board, Indian Silk Export Promotion Council, and Central Sericultural Research and Training Institute, Mysore.

Another value-chain very closely related to the silk value-chain is mat weaving using either bamboo or palm leaf. Baskets for gathering mulberry leaves, trays for feeding leaving to larvae, mountages (called chandrike in local language) for production of cocoons, trays for cocoon storage, stifling baskets for steaming of cocoons and some woven mats are the main uses of bamboo in sericulture.

Issues in the value-chain:

- ♦ State legislations in the southern states producing mulberry require all reelers and rearers (a) to register themselves, (b) physically bring all their produce to the designated market yard and to none other and (c) to compulsorily participate in the open auction conducted by the State.
- ♦ Production of small lots of cocoons of varying quality by large number of producers, is discouraging corporate sector from setting up large cocoon processing units.
- ♦ Weaving sector is discouraged from promoting better technology oriented reeling units as the system of open auction in the silk exchanges does not allow them guaranteed access to the output from these reeling units, nor any advantage in terms of price.
- ♦ Since 2001, globalization has exposed the industry to several risk factors and has necessitated changed responses. Among these, the most urgent is the need to regulate production, supply, distribution, trade and commerce in quality silkworm seeds.
- ♦ Increasing imports of raw silk and silk fabric at low prices from China since 2001 adversely impacted the domestic markets thereby distracting farmers and other stakeholders from sericulture activities as it has reduced the remunerative gains for sericulturists, reelers and weavers.
- ♦ Seed supply, which falls 73% in the private sector under license by the State Governments and 20% directly in the State sector is un-reliable for both quality as well as disease freeness. Controls by the State Governments on licensed seed producers are poor.
- ♦ The areas in AP, Karnataka and TN where a lot of mulberry is cultivated are drought prone areas. This leads to variation in the yields and increases risk for the small farmers. ■

Value chain analysis is an examination of different stages in a good or service till it reaches the customer. In this analysis, backward and forward linkages are studied to identify gaps and possible interventions.



# Trekking Across Gaddi Villages

I wondered what the streams of white dots are at a distance on the hills surrounding me! And then I realized that these dots are moving! What could they possibly be? Travelling from a city in Andhra Pradesh, the green pastures, hills, mountains with streaks of snow, streams, lakes, blue skies, forests with pine trees of the Kangra valley of Himachal fascinated me beyond words. I thought nature is at its best here! And the moving white dots continued to puzzle me! I continued to trek towards the white dots. In sometime, I see a villager, with a small white lamb in one hand and with a stick on the other herding his flock. The white dots are his goats and sheep! This is my first encounter with Gaddi!

Gaddis are one of the well known tribes' residing in the states of HP and J&K. They are traditionally semi-nomadic shepherds and they travel with their flocks of sheep and goats to higher pastures in the summer and lower valleys in the winter. Majority of them today are land owners and practice agriculture as their primary means of livelihood. Some of them are in the service sector especially tourism and some have taken up government jobs.

Instead of trekking to the ranges and passes I now decided to trek through the villages of Kangra. To chart the route I sought the help of a trekking agent who coincidentally happened to be a Gaddi himself and also a community worker in some ways. According to him all the villages above 1500 meters are neglected and receive little attention. Many of them have no roads and this greatly hampers their access to schools, colleges and hospitals.

After a brief bus ride from McLeod Ganj to Naddi I started my trek to a village called Gatri (means deep hole). It truly matches its name, a steep downhill for about two kilometers. Gatri is a small village of about 22 Gaddi households comprising about 80 people. There are about 20 youth in the village and 2 of them are graduates. Women are illiterate for the most part.

The houses in Gatri have thin slate roofs and walls are built of local stone and plastered. The village has an anganwadi center. The nearest school is 2 km uphill in Naddi where the Panchayat is also located. The nearest college is in Dharmasala which is approximately 15 km from Gatri. To see a doctor including child birth people from Gatri have to trek their way up to Naddi and take bus to Dharmasala. The closest bank is in Dal lake which is 3 km away. The PDS is also located here.

All the people in the village have ration cards and all the old receive pension. Disability pension is there but some are left out. The stream close by is used for drinking water and non-potable purposes. According to the villagers the government drinking water facility works erratically.

The major livelihoods in this village are agriculture, livestock and wage labour. The per capita land is about 2 acres. All farming is rainfed. The kharif crops include corn and in rabi they grow jowar. The villagers said that the food they grow is enough for just 7 to 8 months. They buy rice and wheat from Naddi. The village does not grow vegetables and these are purchased from outside as well. Lack of irrigation was cited as the main reason for not growing vegetables. Further being located in the deep valley the village is deprived of sufficient sunlight for most part of the year. The village remains cold



and a fire has to be lit most of the time. The villagers collect some greens like sag and mushroom from the nearby forests during season for consumption. The forest also provides firewood for the village.

Ten families have cows. Only 2 of them have jersey cows that give 3 to 4 liters milk per day and the rest are desi cows that give not more than 1 liter per day. All the milk is used within the village. Those who do not produce milk buy at Rs.12 to Rs.14 per liter. Milk based products like curd and butter are made for local consumption. Villagers have to go to higher ranges of the hills and cut grass for the cattle to save during winter months. This activity occupies a large chunk of their time especially of the women for about 2 months. Seven families have goats and each family has about 10 goats. Sheep are fewer in number. The wool from the sheep is processed in the village and sweaters are made for local needs. Open grazing is practiced for goats and sheep. About 8 families have poultry and the meat is sold within the village for Rs.70 to Rs.80 a kilo. The poultry feed is locally made.

Except for wage labour the village does not trade-out any services. Cash comes into the village through labour works in Naddi and other places. While some go as far as Manali for work, migration outside the state is not reported. Most of the work is in the construction sector. NREGA is functional but the work is not within the village; people have to go uphill to Naddi. The labour rates are Rs.100 and equal for men and women. There is one petty shop in the village.

All the people in the village are related and loans among them taken and repaid with no interest.

According to the villagers there are no women groups in this village, no NGO is working here or has visited this village. Lack of access to road is a huge gap. The villagers felt that having a road, ration shop, school and health center in the village would help them in a big way. The youth want to study, take trainings and work in the mainstreams sectors.

I thanked Vimala Devi, Rathu Devi, Radha and Pappu for spending time and sharing information about their village and continued on my trek into the valleys and onto the mountains to the next village. Gatri, is beautiful but it is quite tough living here, I thought, going uphill with my heavy backpack!

- Nirmala T ■



# Mukta Jhodia, The Crusader

“I will not leave my motherland and will not let the company take over,” said Mukta, responding against the powerful company, Utkal Alumina International and its conglomerate of partner companies.

Illiterate and coming from a family of farmers, Mukta Jhodia, a 45 year old tribal woman leader from the Sriguda Goudaguda village in Orissa’s Rayagada district, is the first ever recipient of the Chingari Award for Women Fighting Corporate Crime 2007.



For 14 years she has lead a battle against the Hindalco-led Utkal Alumina’s bauxite mining project, when her tribal community was threatened with eviction to make way for mining by the company and its partner companies. The mother of a married son and a daughter, Mukta has been a key source of inspiration and awareness among Kashipur’s tribal communities. She is a fiery speaker that has helped bring the marginalized communities together to fight the mining companies from evicting them and pillaging the lands. She has travelled tirelessly to the tribal villages around the area often on a bicycle with her husband or son informing the community of the company’s plans to exploit their land.

Mukta Jhodia along with a group of committed colleagues has had to face brutal repression from the government of Orissa, police and the mining companies. She has proved to be a tenacious crusader against the violation of human rights and the plunder of natural resources by bureaucracy and greedy business interests. Hers has been, ultimately, a battle to protect her motherland or, as it would translate in the local dialect, her ‘bheeta mati’. She has been a leader in

stopping this cause by actively stopping the company from evicting them. In one case they did a chakka jam in Rukma village by stopping company cars and buses from entering the



factory site. There were more than 2,500 people from three villages who have been displaced. From morning until night they sat in front, blocking the road and shouting slogans and carrying banners. But all this comes at a cost. Since this is big money at stake from a big corporate they are constantly being threatened by the police and intimidated with false cases. The company has also done its part to intimidate with goondas being sent to their meetings. But Mukta expounds that “... nothing can stop us. We keep creating blockades by

digging up roads and taking out rallies and sitting in dharnas.”

One of the most brutal repressions came in December 2000 they were taking part in a peaceful protest against the government’s plan to allow the mining to begin. In the end, the police killed three tribal men. Mukta and her co-workers stayed behind to face the police and reclaim the bodies. Mukta said that “They were armed and they threatened to rape the women and to attack those who are vulnerable, like women, old people and children. But no amount of threats can prevent us from being united. A few days later, thousands of people gathered to plan the next phase of action. I spoke to the gathering so that I could give them courage.”

After 14 years of effort by a large international corporation and the government to trample on the poor, it has not happened! In fact, some of the partner companies of Utkal Alumina have opted out and are no longer involved.

This is just one of the struggles that she has undertaken in her life. Mukta has been a central figure in resisting the damming of Khandani Kharak River for supplying water to the alumina plant. Besides the mining struggles, she has also worked with other villagers to reclaim illegally acquired land from big landlords and distributed it among adivasi farmers.

The Chingari Award was created by two women who have seen the horrors of corporate crime firsthand. The award recognizes the real struggle of women against corporate ravages and crimes. Rasheeda Bee and Champa Devi, victims of the Bhopal Gas Disaster, had led the long and arduous



struggle for rightful compensation, basic health facilities and the cleanup of the toxic disaster aftermath. For their efforts they received the Goldman Environmental Prize (considered an alternate Nobel) in 2004. These women then used the prize money to set up the Chingari Trust to seek out others like them around the country and recognize their efforts.

As in the true spirit of a fighter for justice, when Mukta received the Chingari Award her thoughts and speech were for furthering the struggle. “Our movement is going through a critical phase. People are afraid to come out and fight. What we need is strength of numbers. I want to ask more people to join. The award will be good for our struggle. When I go back I will show everyone the trophy and the pictures, and take them around the village. Also, people have taken my interview and I hope it will spread news about our struggle and make our movement stronger.” ■

# Self Employed Women's Association

Women constitute more than half of the total workforce in India. Of this more than 96 per cent are in the informal, unorganized sector. Their work largely remains undervalued and invisible. Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) with more than 11 lakh women-members, emerged as India's largest membership-based organization for women working in the informal sector. SEWA Bharat, a national federation with 10 organizations as members, works to bring to the limelight the issues of women working in the informal sector and to strengthen the capacity of the organizations that serve them.

SEWA stands as testimony to how mobilizing women at grassroots level from unorganized sector leads to economic development. SEWA is both a movement and an organization. Registered in 1972 as a trade union, SEWA movement is enhanced by it being a confluence of three movements - the labour movement, the co-operative movement and the women's movement. With Gandhian philosophy as the inspiration, SEWA organizes poor self-employed women who steer themselves towards social change through the path of non-violence and truth.

SEWA organizes women to enter the mainstream of the economy through struggle and development. The struggle is against the constraints and limitations imposed on them by the society and the economy while the development activities strengthen their bargaining power and offer them new alternatives. About 96 per cent of the women workforce in India are in the informal sector. They earn their living through their own labour or small businesses. They do not get regular salary or other benefits like workers in the organized sector. The work of many women workers remain uncounted, undercounted and invisible.

One of SEWA's goals is to organize women to ensure that every family obtains **full employment**. Full employment encompasses work security, income security, food security and social security. Women should be **self-reliant**



individually and collectively and both economically and in terms of their decision making ability. To achieve these goals SEWA evolved as an organization/union where membership is open to self-employed women workers all over India. The membership fee is Rs.5 per year. The union is governed by a two-tier elected representation. The members of each trade elect their representatives in the ratio of 1:100. These representatives form the Trade Council (Prathinidhi Mandal). There are also



Trade Committees (Dhanda Samiti) in each trade. The Trade Committees have members ranging from 15 to 50 and meet every month to discuss the problems of their trade and possible solutions. Trade Council members are members of their respective Trade Committees as well.

SEWA began organizing women in the villages in 1979. One important item on the agenda was better wages. Soon it was realized that the women should have better bargaining power and the strategy to increase local employment opportunities

was adopted. Under this efforts were made to develop women's assets, women leadership and capacity building, provide food and social security, increasing women employment through eco-regeneration and integrating with government rural development programs.

SEWA Movement has given birth to several institutions. About 84 cooperatives with 11000 + members have come up including dairy cooperative, artisan cooperatives, service and labour cooperatives, land-based cooperatives and trading and vending cooperatives. Women provide share capital to these cooperatives and get employment from them. One woman can be a member of more than one cooperative. Each cooperative is run by elected executive committee of workers.

The largest cooperative is SEWA Bank with more than 1 lakh members. The bank is owned by self-employed women as share holders and is run by professionally qualified managers accountable to the Board of women workers. The bank has various schemes like Crisis Mitigation Scheme, Housing Finance Scheme, Women Farmers Credit Scheme, Savings for Special Events, Sunrise Scheme for Developing Women's Business, Pension Scheme in partnership with the Unit Trust of India (UTI) etc to meet various financial needs of the women.



There are 6 social security organizations providing health

care and child care services. The members are the actual caregivers and the self-employed women get their services. Also formed are women savings and credit groups and assets are built up in women's name. These groups have formed their own district-level associations.

Federations of grass roots groups have been formed at the state, national and international level to gain access to markets, trainings, technical inputs, policy making etc. The primary objective of these federations is to link the self employed women through their primary organizations to the larger economic structures and mainstream them into the economy. The Federations are purpose-specific like crafts, watershed, savings and credit, vending, women and child development, communication, marketing, housing, trainings, child care etc. At the national level National Alliance of Street Vendors (NASV) of India was formed to highlight vendor issues and SEWA Bharat, a federation of 10 organizations was formed to work on the issues relating to informal women workers. Also formed are Homenet India and Homenet South Asia.

At the international level Homenet was formed to work on the issues associated with home-based workers. Homenet played a vital role in the passing of International Labour Organization Convention 177 which gives complete rights to 250 million + home-based workers. This network is also assisting rural home-based workers especially artisans in forming networks and establishing market linkages. Like NASV at the national level, Streetnet was formed at international level with representation from various continents, to work on the issues of vendors. SEWA could also inspire women in other countries like South Africa, Yemen and Turkey to form women unions/groups to address the issues of women workers in the informal sector.

To facilitate mass mobilization around women issues, SEWA recognized the importance campaigns. The issues are identified by women and local leaders and meetings are held at village or mohalla level. Under the aegis of SEWA several campaigns including Home-based Workers' Campaign, Vendors Campaign, Forest Workers' Campaign, Construction Workers' Campaign, The Water Campaign, Food Security Campaign, Campaign for our Right to Child Care, Campaign for Recognition of Midwives, Clean Ahmedabad Campaign, Minimum Wages Campaign and Campaign for Recognition of Unorganized Sector Workers were held. These campaigns not only rallied people in large numbers around these causes but also developed many strong leaders. In Ahmedabad city, bidi-workers, readymade garment workers, vendors, construction workers and those engaged in small industries as contract workers organized struggles to improve their working conditions and earnings.

Poor women need services likes savings and credit, health care, child care, insurance, legal aid and many others. SEWA facilitated women to take up a number of initiatives which not only provided services for the poor women but also generated employment for some. SEWA Bank, the first of its kind meets various financial needs of the self-employed women. SEWA health care is run by women and includes

both preventive and curative components. It also collaborates with government health services like TB control, immunization, micronutrient supplement etc. SEWA promoted several Midwives' & Health Cooperatives. Also promoted are childcare services through cooperatives and local organizations. SEWA's Work Security Insurance is an integrated insurance scheme that provides for life, natural and accidental death, widowhood, health, maternity, flood, fire and communal riots etc. Members of SEWA get legal services including legal education and support. There is a legal advisory center which accepts cases. SEWA Academy is its members' university focuses on workers' education and capacity building. SEWA's housing and infrastructure



services provide for improved living conditions for its members. For many of the poor their house is also their workplace. Earthquake reconstruction, pucca housing, building infrastructure like paved

roads, individual toilets, water and drainage connections have been taken up. Many of these initiatives are done on cost sharing basis between the municipality, private sector and the community themselves.

With its significant contribution towards improving the quality of life of self-employed women workers both within and outside India, SEWA became an affiliate of the International Trade Union Congress and International Federation of Building and Woodworkers. SEWA's efforts led to the recognition of construction workers as those eligible for welfare and social security. Unnat Bazar, SEWA's international marketing organization entered into a partnership with Exim Bank of India for expanding artisans production and marketing. SEWA receive Business Today's "Most Powerful Women in Business" award.

Ela Bhatt, the founder of SEWA is a leader of the international labour, cooperative, women and microfinance movements. She won several awards including Padma Bhushan, Ramon Magasaysay and Right Livelihood Award. Today she is the Chair of SEWA Cooperative Bank, Homenet, International Alliance of Street Vendors and Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing research and policy analysis network. Her book - *We are poor but so many...* - presents the world and work of self-employed women.

SEWA gives us the most fascinating and powerful example of how poor (women) can come together and transform their lives for better, can take responsibility, can empower themselves and can produce results that are long-lasting. ■



# LEAP Tools

Good livelihoods interventions evolve from the understanding of the 'livelihoods situation'. Participatory current reality assessment of the households, the community, village and surrounding areas combined with the relevant information from outside the community and presented to the community provides this understanding of the livelihoods situation. The community analyses this understanding, identifies interventions and evolves an action plan. These processes lead to 'livelihoods enhancement action plan' (LEAP).

LEAP processes broadly encompass tools like Social Map, Resource Map, Institutional Analysis, Livelihoods Listing and Analysis, Traded-In and Traded-Out, Income and Expenditure Analysis and Value-Chain Analysis. When these tools are put to use and information is obtained and analyzed one can arrive at possible gaps and opportunities in the livelihoods situation of the village. Some of them may need to be probed further. The processes then go on to identify a set of interventions, institutional arrangements needed, and resources required.

Social Map as discussed in earlier issues of 'livelihoods' gives information on geography, demography, infrastructure, institutions and socio-economic networks/systems in the village. Resource Map featured in the September issue of 'livelihoods' and helps understand the quality, quantity, location, and usage of natural resources in the village such as land, water, forests etc. Through Resource Map, one can gain insights into the ownership and rights of the people on lands in the village.

An important tool in understanding livelihoods is the Income and Expenditure Analysis of the select households in the village. This tool provides insights into the different sources of incomes of an individual household, the location of the source and also the seasonality of incomes. On the expenditure side it shows how the money is moving out of the household in different ways. At the first instance the development worker will not get accurate information because of the natural tendency to inflate expenditure. For instance source may include a loan component not captured in the first iteration. Similarly self-provisioning of food items may be shown as expenditure and payment received in kind may not be accounted for. Savings into bank, insurance may not be accounted for. All these discrepancies can be resolved by trying to balance income and expenditure and by engaging the community into further discussions.

Income and Expenditure Analysis also gives a quick overview of the various livelihoods practiced by the household. This exercise will not only feed the development worker with information but also give an opportunity to the household to embark upon some financial planning.

The sample format for capturing income and expenditure of

an individual household is as below.

S.No	Source of Income	Amt (Rs)	S.No	Expenditure Item	Amt (Rs)
	Total				

Another significant tool that is of consequence in understanding livelihoods is the Traded-In and Traded-Out. This tool is used at the village level and gives information on what goods and services are purchased by the village and what good and services are sold by the village. The format for this tool is as below:

Traded-In				Traded-Out			
Particulars	Units	Amt (Rs)	Total	Particulars	Units	Amt (Rs)	Total
Total							

For instance in Mudireddypally village, the villagers purchased clothes, rice, groceries, agricultural inputs, meat, petrol, utilities, education and medical services etc. Some of the goods and services they sold include agricultural produce like maize, red gram, cotton etc, milk, transport services, wage labour in companies, stone cutting, carpentry, sand labour, agricultural labour etc. Items that took away significant amount of money from the village include liquor followed by agricultural inputs, rice and other grocery items.

A study of the Income and Expenditure patterns of the individual households and of the Traded-In and Traded-Out of the village will give insights into the possible gaps and opportunities. For instance one can look into collectivization of purchases to reduce the expenditure of the village and collectivization of sales to increase their incomes. Scope for value-addition activities where appropriate can be explored. A study of the patterns of expenditure on education, health etc can help make interventions like skill building etc. By studying the services sought by the village from outside one can explore the scope of making the services available from within the village or network with service collectives in the neighboring villages/clusters.

Livelihoods listing and analysis gives an near to exhaustive list of the livelihoods practiced in the village, information on the number of families dependent on each of these livelihoods, the number of person days in each livelihood, the seasonality of livelihoods and the incomes from them. ■

Format for Capturing Livelihoods Information												
Name of the Livelihoods	Dependent Families		Engaged Persons M/F	Season	Days	Income		Support Mechanisms				Remarks
	primary	secondary				Per day	Total	Kinds of Support/Inputs	Availability Y/N	Quality	Ease of availability	



# Convergence Can Make A Difference!

The most recently held Bhoodan Pochampally Mela on World Tourism Day, the 27th of September has nicely portrayed how convergence can make a positive difference. Convergence between the community, the CBOs, the Village Committees, the NGOs, the village administration, various departments at districts and state levels, donor agencies, volunteers has made the mela one of the most successful and talked about events in Bhoodan Pochampally.

Bhoodan Pochampally is located 46 kilometers east of Hyderabad in Nalgonda district of Andhra Pradesh. Its



predominantly a weaving cluster with more than 50 per cent of the families engaged in the unique Ikkat weave (tie & dye). This weave has also received GI recognition. Both silk and cotton fabrics are woven in this village. Bhoodan Pochampally has

gained the first part of its name after the famous Bhoodan movement started by Acharya Vinobha Bhave. It is in this village Bhoodan movement was initiated by Vinobha.

The unique Ikkat craft, the historical significance, the experience of village life though very close to the bustling city of Hyderabad, has made Bhoodan Pochampally one of the 36 sites selected for Endogenous Tourism Project by UNDP and the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. The aim is to promote tourism and tourism based livelihoods and thereby the local economy, publicize the Ikkat weave and improve the overall quality of life. Though the Ikkat products of Pochampally has a decent market, the weavers continue to remain poor and continue to reel in the vicious cycle of tied-up purchases and sales. Their interaction with the market is extremely limited and most of the market information is disseminated by the middleman. Other livelihoods apart from weaving in Bhoodan Pochampally include toddy tapping, fishing, basket making and agriculture labour.

Between September 27th and 29th this year, Bhoodan Pochampally Mela was held in the village to attract tourists,



highlight Ikkat craft, to boost weaver morale and promote tourism-based livelihoods in particular and livelihoods in general. This event also marked the launching of Pochampally site as a craft-based rural tourist destination. The event acted as a forum where different stakeholders came together and exhibited the spirit of cooperation and resolved to take the energy and enthusiasm forward.

The Gram Panchayat of Bhoodan Pochampally and the Village Level Tourism Development Committee played an active role. Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation (APTDC) took the lead role to make things happen. It met with all the Line Departments to discuss the possible support efforts to the Mela. Prior to the Mela, APTDC met with villagers, Gram Panchayat, VLTDC, NGOs working in the village, National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), National Institute of Tourism and Hospitality Management (NITHM) and discussed with them various nuances.

The events in the 3 day Mela included classical dance performances, local sports, local food festival, classical instrumental symphony, folk arts and fashion show by NIFT. The Mela culminated with a colorful dance by the local women observing Bathukamma festival.



Over 10000 visitors visited Bhoodan Pochampally in those three days including 200 people from other countries. The village sold about Rs.25 lakh worth of goods and services.

VLTDC played a key role in the success of the Mela. After receiving orientation from the NGO on handling tourists, organizing the Mela and managing the tour packages, VLTDC shared the duties among their members by forming into working groups. The groups anchored events like the local sports, cultural events, organizing food stalls, sanitation, and hospitality services.

The support extended by APTDC was another key factor in the success of the Mela. The Corporation took the overall responsibility of advertising the Mela in print and electronic media, organization boating facility in the village tank and running free pick up and drop off buses from Hyderabad to Pochampally.

With the support of the Director Culture, three days worth of cultural shows were organized. District Administration support was leveraged in conducting local sports and establishing SHG stalls. The Gram Panchayat took responsibility of sanitation, lightings in the main street and vehicle parking facilities. 14 students from NITHM volunteered their services at the information center.

Convergence truly made a remarkable difference! ■

# National Policy For The Empowerment Of Women

Indian Constitution advocates the principle of gender equality through its Preamble, Fundamental Rights and Duties and Directive Principles. Several laws have been made in the country to promote advancement of women in different spheres, remove gender discrimination. Women development got focus in various programs of the governments. But women are still seen as “second sex” on various aspects. Their voices are not heard enough. Their invaluable work goes unrecognized. Declining female ratio in the population continues to be a grave concern. In this context, National Policy for the Empowerment of Women, 2001 was drafted with a more enabling orientation.

The 2001 policy for Women Empowerment was drafted with the objectives - to create an enabling environment for women through positive social and economic policies; to enable women to enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms on par with men in all spheres of life; to provide equal access and facilitate equal participation in decision-making; to promote equal access to women in health care, quality education at all levels, career and vocational guidance, employment, remuneration, occupational health and safety, social security; to strengthen legal systems to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women; to change societal attitudes and community practices by active participation of both men and women; to mainstream gender perspectives in development process; to eliminate violence against women and girl child and to build and strengthen partnerships with civil society especially women's organizations.

The policy prescribes a more responsive and gender-sensitive legal-judicial system. New laws will be enacted and existing laws will be reviewed to eliminate discrimination against women in issues related to marriage, divorce, maintenance and guardianship. Also laws relating to ownership of property and inheritance will be reviewed to make them gender just.

To ensure active women participation in decision making at all levels various measures will be taken. Where necessary affirmative actions will be considered.

Macro economic policies and poverty eradication programs will become more women oriented and women participation will be ensured both in design and implementation. Women will be recognized as producers and workers in the formal and informal sector and appropriate policies will be made to improving their working lives. Existing micro-credit infrastructure will be enhanced so that the credit reaches all poor women with ease. Women engaged in agriculture will receive trainings in soil conservation, social forestry, dairy development and other allied sectors like horticulture, poultry, fisheries etc. Various support services will be provided to women working in the industrial sectors including labour legislation, social security, child care facilities, home for aged and disabled etc. To ensure safety during night shift services like security and transportation will be provided.

Gender-sensitive education system will be evolved. Efforts will be made to increase enrollment and retention rates of the girl children and facilitate vocational/technical skill building for women. The policy recognizes that women should have access to comprehensive, quality and affordable health care system including their nutritional matters and prescribes several measures to accomplish this. Women perspectives will be included in housing policies, in designing sanitation facilities, providing safe drinking water etc. Women will be involved on all policies relating to conservation and restoration of environment. Women will be encouraged to get into science and technology spheres more vigorously.

Women in difficult situations like poverty, destitute women, women in conflict situations, those affected by natural calamities, disabled/elderly/widowed women will be given special focus and programs will be made to give them special assistance. All forms of violence against women shall be effectively dealt. Preventive and punitive measures will be adopted where girl child rights are violated. Media will be sensitized and encouraged to wean away from showing stereotypical image of women.

To implement the policy prescriptions, the central and state governments were expected to draw time bound action plans with measurable goals. Gender Development Indices will be developed by specialized agencies. Existing institutions will be strengthened and new institutional mechanisms will be evolved to promote advancement of women. Government personnel will be gender sensitized. PRIs will be actively involved in implementing the policy at the grassroots level. NGOs, CBOs and other organizations will be actively engaged in the formulation, implementation, monitoring and review of policies and programs affecting women.

The policy incorporates all the major concerns that the women's movement has been voicing. How the various state governments take it forward will be the deciding factor. There are cases where women struggled against the state for its callous and unresponsive attitude. Therefore instead of creating more state apparatus to implement the policy, efforts can be made to work with non-state organizations that have made credible inroads into the world of women and of course with the women themselves. ■



# Volunteers And Paid Workers

Research on the differences in organizational commitment between paid workers and volunteers was reported in a recently published article. As there is not much literature available on managing volunteers in a mixed environment where both paid workers and volunteers exist, 'livelihoods' summarizes the above article.

Organizational commitment correlates positively with enhanced work efforts, better performance, and reduced absenteeism and turnover. Organizational commitment incorporates three distinct dimensions: affective, normative, and continuance commitment.

Affective commitment reflects a person's emotional attachment with the organization. Affectively committed employees will be more likely to show organizational citizenship behaviours, be absent less, and have fewer turnover intentions. It seems reasonable to assume that volunteers who enter and stay in an organization will have firm affective commitment to their organization, as their desire for contributing stems from a careful process of "sorting out priorities, and matching of personal capabilities and interests". People who also need other rewards of work (like financial compensation) will presumably not base their activities and commitment solely on these value-based considerations and affections. Therefore, volunteers are likely to have both higher affective commitment and person organization fit. Moreover, affective commitment could be more strongly related to perceived person-organization fit with volunteers than with paid staff.

The normative commitment indicates a sense of obligation and loyalty towards the organization - for example, a "psychological contract", which flows from a belief in mutual obligations. This reciprocal nature of a working relationship may be more central to paid workers, as their relationship with the organization is more contractual than for volunteers.

Continuance commitment is "an awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organization". Quitting an organization can lead to the loss of important (im)material benefits and incentives like income, prestige, or side-bets. For volunteers, these "golden handcuffs" will presumably be less prominent, as there is no "stick of paid work" involved. The perceived lack of alternatives is presumably also smaller for volunteers than for paid members of the organization.

The results of the research involving 597 paid workers and 57 non-paid volunteers (all belonging to one organization) showed that:

- ♦ The volunteers have higher affective commitment. The volunteers showed higher levels of person-organization fit. The affective commitment of volunteers is more strongly related to person-organization fit than paid workers' affective commitment.
- ♦ Contrary to expectations volunteers have a much higher

level of normative commitment to the organization than paid workers.

- ♦ The hypothesis that volunteers would have lower continuance commitment than paid workers, was not confirmed in the study. No significant difference was found between volunteers and paid workers in their attitudes towards the perceived lack of alternatives and the loss of investments when leaving the organization.

However, as the paid workers and volunteers differed in age and gender, effect of these variables on the above behaviour patterns was also tested. It turned out that gender was not important, but age had a positive effect for affective, normative, and continuance commitment, and person-organization fit. Even after taking age into account, volunteers showed stronger affective, and normative commitment, but lower continuance commitment than paid workers. For person-organization fit, the differences between paid and unpaid workers turned out to be non-significant after controlling for the age and gender.

Normative commitment may also enhance through the concern of older members of society for establishing and guiding the next generation. As continuance commitment comes with age, organizations attracting older volunteers, however, may experience their volunteers having a continuance commitment as strong as their paid workforce.

From a managerial point of view, the results of this study offer several preliminary insights in the functioning of volunteers in organizations.

First, person-organization fit seems to be even more influential for volunteers than for paid workers. If organizations are able to communicate how their goals, values, and culture are congruent to the individual's beliefs, volunteers can indeed be very helpful and committed organizational members. Given the influence of age in this respect, this is especially true when volunteer-based organizations could emphasize their contribution to society's benefit, as this is most important for volunteers in later life. This will be rewarding for both parties involved. Explicit communication of values thus compensates for the absence of an organization's pay and reward system for volunteers, as it reveals what kinds of behaviour are valued.

Second, given that the volunteers' sense of commitment appears to be similar to or even stronger than the commitment of paid workers, it is crucial to fully acknowledge their membership of the organization. Management has to make sure that volunteers are not belittled and do not "perceive themselves as the 'poor bloody infantry' with the officers and other full-time staff creaming off the attractive, rewarding or exciting activities". What is more, the apparent attachment of volunteers towards the organization makes the organization responsible for the much-needed support of the voluntary members of the organization. ■

## Rising Security!

Shining Livelihoods



## Fading Ghansis!

Declining Livelihoods



## REDS Bhanuja

Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh is known for its rich heritage. Vijayanagar Dynasty considered the golden period in Southern India prevailed in this region. The historical remains can still be seen in Lepakshi, Penukonda and other places. Anantapur, today is known as one of the backward districts of Andhra Pradesh. It is the second district in the country that receives very low annual rainfall. It receives less than 500mm per year. Only 15% of the cultivable land is under cultivation due to lack of water. Out of the 4 million people that live in the district, more than half are in deep debt spiral. In this drought prone district, Bhanuja Rao is doing commendable work towards improving livelihoods of the marginalized sections of people.

Bhanuja Rao was born on April 10<sup>th</sup>, 1969 as elder daughter of Sri Cheruvu. Siddhaiah and Kullayamma in Badavandlapalli village of Nallamada mandal of Anantapur district. Her father is a small farmer. Though they are having two acres of land, part of it is not cultivable. Their family suffered lot of financial problems in early days. Bhanuja hails from the so-called lower caste and had to face lot of discrimination from the upper caste people in addition to her poor economic condition. All the other lower caste families in their village suffered the same kind of discrimination. Bhanuja Rao's father mobilized all the people of their community to fight against discrimination. He used to conduct lot of meetings to educate the people. Young Bhanuja used to participate in those meetings very enthusiastically. These childhood experiences and exposure laid strong seeds and became the foundation for her development work in future. She became determined to do something for the upliftment of women and lower caste people.

Bhanuja completed her primary education in her village itself. Due to their bad financial situation her father joined her in a social welfare hostel to pursue further studies. At that time she mobilized all the other inmates of her hostel to fight against poor facilities in the hostel. While pursuing her 10<sup>th</sup> standard, her father encouraged her to participate in a training program on Agricultural Cooperatives conducted by Young India Project.

Bhanuja's father is a traditional song and story teller. He used to tell the drought stories in the form of songs in the surrounding villages. Bhanuja actively supported her father by preparing his schedules, designing concepts etc.

Bhanuja got married at an early age of 17 years. She worked in Young India Project for about 10 years. As her interest is to work for the downtrodden people, she decided to leave that project to do something on her own. Eventually, she



started "Rural Environment Development Society" (REDS) in Kadiri with an objective of improving livelihoods of marginalized people and to work towards women empowerment. She organized many movements for abolition of child labour system, human rights protection, dalit empowerment etc. In the initial years REDS actively got involved in advocacy programs but later from the year 2002 it started implementing livelihoods programs.

Under the dynamic leadership of Bhanuja REDS has been implementing diverse activities successfully such as Sustainable Agriculture, Natural Resource Management, Comprehensive Land Development Program, Orphan Children Home, Anti Human Trafficking movements etc. Started in 15 villages of Kadiri mandal, REDS, has now expanded its activities to 95 villages in 4 mandals (173 villages indirectly) benefiting 4500 (50,000 indirectly) people.

When National Rural Employment Guarantee Program (NREGS) pilot program was implemented in Amadaguru, Kadiri, Nallamada mandals REDS conducted a survey on the poor women who can work but unable to go because of having small children at home. REDS has taken steps to join the children at the local child care center (Anganwadi) so that their mothers can go to work and earn some income to their families. REDS also appointed one care taker to the children.

REDS has conducted training programs on Non Pesticide Management to the women in that area. Now the NPM activities have expanded to 45 villages. About 2000 women are practicing NPM techniques in 9000 acres of



land. The women groups organized by REDS are supplying organic fertilizers to all these NPM farmers.

Disturbed by the difficulties faced by the women both in domestic and work place, Bhanuja set up a family counseling center through which she is trying to resolve the women problems.

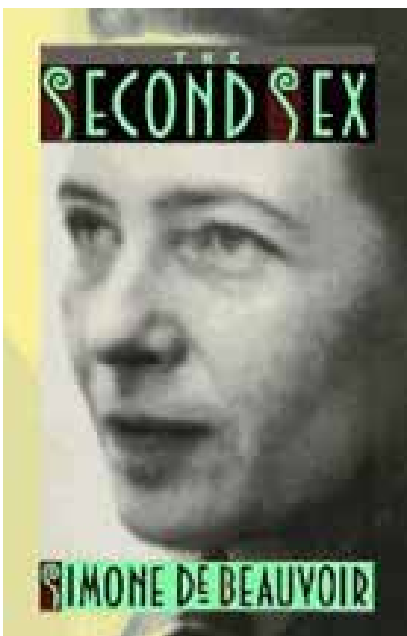
Bhanuja continues to bring about a change in the lives of marginalized people through her Rural Environment Development Society. Going forward she desires to help more and more number of people in their struggle for development. ■

# Books

## Book Summary

Name: **The Second Sex**  
Author: **Simone de Beauvoir**  
Publisher: **Vintage Books**

Born in Paris on January 9 1908, Beauvoir was brought up to follow the usual path for a French Catholic girl of good family: religious devotion, marriage and children. Her parents sent her to a very elitist Catholic girls' school. That this girl went on to become a world-famous writer and intellectual, and a great feminist thinker of her century, is a phenomenal



achievement.

In the years before the women's movement, *The Second Sex* was a source of inspiration and insight for countless women. Everyone who cares about freedom and justice for women should read *The Second Sex*. Long before Amartya Sen, Beauvoir argued that abstract freedom (the right to vote, for example) will make no difference to women who are deprived of health, education and money to avail themselves of such rights.

Beauvoir's analysis of sexism is perhaps her most powerful theoretical contribution to feminism. In a sexist

society, she argues, man is the universal and woman is the particular; he is the One, she is characterized as the Other. Women therefore regularly find themselves placed in a position where they are faced with the "choice" between being imprisoned in their femininity and being obliged to masquerade as an abstract genderless subject.

To explain what she means, Beauvoir gives an example. In the middle of an abstract conversation, a man once said to her that "you say that because you are a woman". If she were to answer "I say it because it is true", she writes, she would be eliminating her own subjectivity. But if she were to say "I say it because I am a woman", she would be imprisoned in her gender. In the first case, she has to give up her own lived experience; in the second, she must renounce her claim to say something of general validity.

The anecdote warns us against believing that feminism must choose between equality and difference. As long as that "choice" takes place in a society that casts man as the One and woman as the Other, it is not a choice, but an insoluble dilemma.

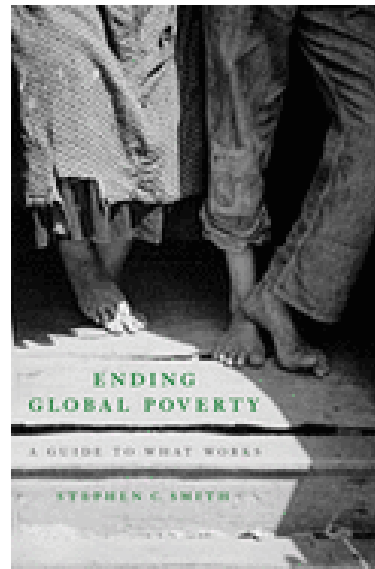
Beauvoir argues ferociously against attempts to lay down requirements for how women ought to be or behave. To her, any imposition of "femininity" on women is an invitation to soul-destroying alienation.

*The Second Sex* provides a strong alternative to identity politics. For Beauvoir, identity is an effect of choices and actions in specific situations: "One is not born, but rather becomes a woman." Living under vastly different conditions, women are unlikely to develop the same political interests. Women often have stronger allegiances to their race, religion, social class or nationality than to their own sex, Beauvoir writes.

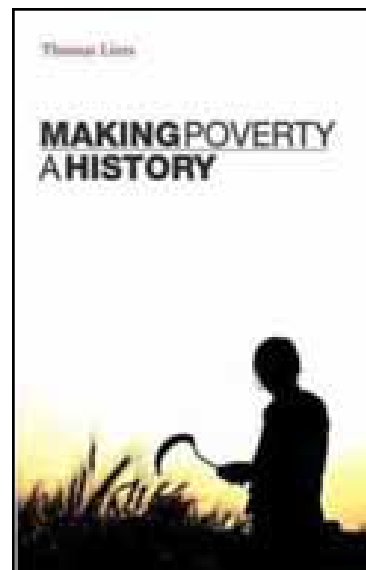
Written in 1949 in French and translated to English in 1953, *The Second Sex* is a wonderfully energetic book. For Beauvoir, the future is wide open, and freedom within reach: "The free woman is just being born," she optimistically concludes. *The Second Sex* urges us to have faith in our power to transform the future. ■

## New Books

Name: **Ending Global Poverty: A Guide to What Works**  
Author: **Stephen C. Smith**  
Publisher: **Palgrave MacMillan**



Name: **Making Poverty A History**  
Author: **Thomas Lines**  
Publisher: **Zed Books**



## Solution Exchange

Knowledge spreads vertically and horizontally when shared, codified and replicated. However, in many instances knowledge gained through experience, age-old knowledge faces the danger of being forgotten when not pooled and documented. Traditional knowledge and wisdom orally transferred for generations can be a good example. Unless documented and preserved and shared, we end up reinventing the wheel each time. The danger is more so in development world where much less time and efforts go into documenting.

To harness the knowledge that would otherwise be lost, the United National Country Team in India, collectively agreed to support a knowledge sharing platform for increasing the effectiveness of national development efforts. This initiative was branded Solution Exchange and launched at the beginning of 2005. The UN serves as a catalyst and plays a facilitation role.

Solution Exchange provides an impartial platform for exchange of knowledge and ideas among development practitioners in key thematic areas under the framework of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as they relate to national goals and targets.

Solutions exchange not a database, it is not an IT network. and it is not web-based. Rather, Solution Exchange connects development professionals in similar fields from diverse organisations ranging from Government, bilateral and multilateral development partners, and non-governmental organisations to academics, corporates, and the media. It is building Communities of Practice through electronic mail groups and face-to-face interactions.

Instead of advocating any particular viewpoint, Solution Exchange is working towards India's development goals by fostering trust between development practitioners who share a passion for their work. Solution Exchange seeks to empower practitioners by offering them "knowledge on demand" based on solutions from their peers.

Today there are eight Communities of Practice, who are practitioners in maternal and child health, primary education, work and employment, gender equality and women's empowerment, decentralization, HIV/AIDS, water and sanitation and food and nutrition security. Participation is free and open to all interested professionals. Each Community is guided by a group of eminent persons working in that sphere and is facilitated by the UN organisation (s) with a mandate in that area.

There are now over 2000 Solution Exchange subscriptions from across the country with Community membership ranging from over 750 for HIV to around 200 for Gender. Each Community of Practice is moderated by a subject

expert assisted by a researcher to circulate questions posed by Community members. This team adds value to the replies received from Community members by summarising the responses, by providing comparative experiences from within and outside India, and by suggesting additional resources such as subject area experts and recent research or publications.

- ♦ For the Maternal and Child Health Community, the questions have ranged from ways to promote breastfeeding to how to sustain low-cost rural health services.
- ♦ A member of the Water and Sanitation Community obtained a range of alternatives for providing safe drinking water; another got tips for helping communities share village pond water resources.
- ♦ The Decentralisation Community is grappling with issues such as the role of Panchayati Raj Institutions and parallel local bodies.

Workshops are also being organised to bring Community practitioners together to identify burning issues — gaps in programmatic areas that could mean the difference between success and failure — and to build trust and recognition among members.

For now Solutions Exchange is providing real-time solutions and range of options for development workers on the challenges they face everyday. Development practitioners are benefitting from being networked. It is hoped that solution exchange will reach the levels where it can help shape national policies and programs by giving relevant and valuable inputs. For instance at the request of the National AIDS Control Organisation, the AIDS Community held a very active nation-wide electronic consultation on Solution Exchange to help formulate the third phase of the National AIDS Control Policy.

Solutions Exchange idea is not without its teething problems. There is a difficult learning experience and there are some challenges. To reach out vertically can be a challenge because of barriers like vernacular languages and lack of access to infrastructure facilities like internet. Also can be challenging is to ensure linkages with large government programs like the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, National Rural Health Mission etc. The effort is to make each village a knowledge hub. The aim is to provide front line workers with insights and innovative approaches for effective delivery of services as well as for efficient management and implementation of development programs.

For more information on Solution Exchange on can visit <http://www.solutionaexchange-un.net.in> ■

## Right Livelihood

*Your work is to discover your world and then with all your heart give yourself to it - Buddha*



In a small Himalayan village hundreds of miles from his native Tibet, an artist is thoughtfully carving a wood block which will be used for making beautiful ink block prints. There is a peaceful smile on his face as he stops to show me his progress.

Nearby, a group of women are weaving rugs that will be sold to an American trading company to provide income for their families. The women are talking softly and laughing at the antics of the children playing in the courtyard outside. They are sharing this space with several other workers who are producing the staples needed for everyday life. They have suffered a great deal, yet they are happy and their business is thriving.

When I talk to them about their situation, there is no trace of bitterness or resentment, only compassion. They are smiling, and their gentle manner and contentment are so genuine they leave me with an uncanny sense of inner peace. I've never been around people who enjoyed their work so much.

You've got to love your job. Imagine waking up every morning thinking: "WOW! I get to go to work today! Am I lucky! What I do makes a difference! And to think, I get paid for this!" That's the way it's supposed to be, and that's the

way it can be. As a wise sage once said, Choose a job you love and you'll never have to work a day in your life .

What we do for a living and how we treat each other as we make our living are as important to our success, happiness, and spiritual development as are prayer and meditation. Viewed from this perspective, work is a spiritual practice.

Right Livelihood involves finding a way to make a living that benefits both ourselves and others. It is a commitment to working with integrity and awareness. Above all, it is avoiding causing harm to others or the environment.

To paraphrase the Bible: What is the point of gaining the world if you lose your soul?

Are you searching for the right job which will make you happy? If you look within, you'll realize that finding the perfect career is an "inside job." Make a list of the things that are important to you, your values, dreams, aspirations. Is what you're doing making a difference? Are you making sure that you're doing no harm?

Extra Credit: When you're 80 years old, sitting in your rocking chair on the porch, will you feel good about what you did with your life? ■



## Cost Of Illness In India

Health risk is one such risk that has crippling effect on the poor. A study (published in Indian Journal of Medical Research, April 2008) reported the health costs of the households based on field work in Pune (in Maharashtra), Patna, Vaishali, Khagaria, Muzaffarpur, Nawada, Begusarai (in Bihar), Theni and Chennai (in Tamilnadu). The study covered over 3500 households (representing 10,984 persons and over 4,300 illness episodes).

Information was obtained on three components of the cost of illness episodes: (i) direct formal costs (including allopathic consultations, prescribed allopathic drugs, tests and hospitalizations); (ii) informal costs (including traditional consultations and drugs, and OTC drugs); and (iii) indirect costs (including wage loss of the ill and of the care-giver, and transportation costs).

The mean cost of one illness episode, including all three components, was Rs.1159. Direct costs were for Rs.779, indirect costs Rs.343 and informal costs Rs.37.

Among the illness episodes, 64% were classified as acute, 18% as chronic, 4% as accidents. About 14% fitted into more

than one category and were classified as 'undetermined'. The three most prevalent acute illnesses related to parasitic (fever, malaria) (54% of acute), respiratory tract infections (22%), and digestive disorders (13%). Among the chronic diseases, the most frequently mentioned were cardiovascular (21% of chronic), musculo-skeletal & connective tissue disorders (20%), asthma (9%) and diabetes mellitus (4%). Over 95% accidents involved wounds and fractures.

The median ratio between cost of illness per episode and monthly income per household member was 0.73. In other words, on an average, the poor spent 73% of the monthly earnings of a member per illness episode. As their income is generally not sufficient to meet the regular food and social needs, such additional burden draws down what ever little saving they have.

The median of the ratio between cost of an illness episode involving hospitalization and monthly income of one HH member was 2.79 (meaning that 50% of the households that experienced a hospitalization paid an amount equal to 2.79 monthly income per HH member).

The table below gives the breakdown of mean costs per illness episode by type of illness.

Care	Illness		
	Acute	Chronic	Accidents
Hospitalization	663	1797	1568
Consultation	124	263	327
Drugs	302	672	632
Tests	246	393	574

## Out of Poverty

## Tapping Opportunities!

Rambattini. Narayana who belongs to Parsigutta area of Hyderabad has three sons and one daughter. Narayana's elder son Ramesh studied upto Intermediate. Later he stopped his education due to financial problems. To support his family Ramesh joined in a pharma company for a very low remuneration of Rs 900/- a month. He continued to work in that company for two years. Because of his sincerity and hard work the company increased his salary from 900 rupees to 2200 rupees. Ramesh got married during this time. After one year the company suffered huge losses and removed many of its employees to reduce the costs. Ramesh also lost his job during this layoff episode.

Ramesh searched for work for some months, but did not find any. Then he joined in a news paper agency as a paper boy who supplies news paper to offices and households in the morning hours. He also joined in a workshop in which aluminum carpentry works were being done. In the morning hours Ramesh used to supply paper and in the remaining time he was doing carpentry works

in the workshop. Despite doing work all the day he could only get very meager income. He earned Rs 350 for supplying paper and Rs 2100 for engaging in carpentry work. These earnings were barely sufficient for the family to eke out a living.

While supplying paper he observed all the issues and nuances that are associated with the paper agency and understood that the investment that goes into this type of work is not much. This encouraged him to start a paper agency and he started a paper agency of his own. He also employed six young boys as paper suppliers. Each of these boys are paid Rs.500 a month. Now he is able to earn a decent income of Rs 5000 from his paper agency. His working hours for the paper agency are limited to morning hours. In the remaining time Ramesh has joined as office boy in an organization. He makes Rs 3000 a month.

With Rs.8000 per month earnings, Ramesh is now able to send his daughters to school. ■

## Broken Lives

## In The Fangs Of Drought!

Yadayya and Arulakshmi were residents of Vadiyaram village of Chegunta mandal of Medak district in Andhra Pradesh. They have three children. They used to practice their traditional occupation of washing clothes of rich farmers in their village. They also had three acres of dry land in their village. Yadayya used to cultivate sunflower, groundnut and cotton in his land. By selling the crop they get money and for washing clothes rich farmers give them food grains that are sufficient for them for the entire year. So they were leading a happy and peaceful life.

But suddenly a severe drought struck that area and there were no rains for almost 3-4 years. All the lands in that area are dry lands which are completely dependent on rain and hence there were no crops. Yadayya could not cultivate his land. Even the rich farmers were unable to grow crops for these three years and hence they were

unable to give grains to yadayya's family. So they asked him to stop coming to work in their houses. Yadayya's life became more miserable. His family suffered a lot. Yadayya thought he could not survive in the village anymore. So he thought of migrating to Hyderabad. Thus they left their native village and the land which gave them food so far and migrated to Hyderabad.

After coming to Hyderabad, with the little money they have, they bought a cart and started ironing the clothes before the houses. Yadayya joined as a watchman in one apartment. Now their family is staying in a small room provided by the apartment owners. Arulakshmi is doing ironing work. Once the owners of three acres land are now surviving as wage labourers with the little income they are getting from ironing cloths and safeguarding apartments. ■

# ‘Yoga’kshemam

In a month, we moved from Ganesh to his mother, Durga Puja. Then we had Dusserah. Ramzan fasting has ended with Ramzan. We also went through a series of international days – from International Peace Day, International non-violence day, to International Day of Decent Work, International Food Day and International Day of Poverty Eradication. In between we have a World Tourism Day. As we are going through the pujas, fasts and festivities in quick succession, as we are remembering a series of international days, as Bihar is trying to limping back to normalcy after the floods of gigantic proportions, the world in general and US and Europe in particular are through a huge financial crisis, dubbed as ‘financial tsunami’, comparable to the great depression some 6 decades ago. Thankfully, as the experts say, India is not affected much as it could not /did not invest much in their primary market. However, the waves of Tsunami touched India with some roll back of some assignments and jobs.

Amidst all these, India and USA ink the Nuclear Deal, notwithstanding any and all objections in India and in US!

Livelihoods of Jharkhand have occupied most of the month. Some engagement with civil society in Western Himalayan Region has begun towards helping them to have plans for enhancing their capacities around their vision and plan for better livelihoods for the community in the region, particularly in the winters. Pochampally Mela, going forward at Pochampally, continued involvement in the new one-year program in rural development management, etc., have marked the month that went by.

A resource rich Jharkhand with large proportion of poor is an irony. And it should be surprising to many of us why some people live in extreme harsh conditions, like in cold desert areas of Spiti and Ladakh. When the temperatures go sub-zero for more than six months, going down as low as -30 deg Celsius coupled with wind chills, when one needs to earn whatever one has to in the six months before the winter, when the rainfall is less than 50 mm, and one's habitation is as small as 10-20 houses, with a population density of less than 2 persons per sq. km, you can not but salute the locals for their courage and their spirit of life!

It is a life-time experience and bliss to see Himalayas as the snow mounts up, on a bright moon night with a clear sky and seeing the water oozing out into small streams to make mighty perennial rivers of India and around! I feel excited, ‘lost’ and of course, blessed. This coupled with sub-zero solitude offers wonderful space and time for reflecting one's course forward.

Jharkhand and the winters of cold deserts interestingly talk about maximizing leisure time rather than material comforts and possessions. They seem to be in a yogic pursuit, in some sense. They seem to have converted that into a way of life like the monks and rishis.

Investing in civil society to acquire the capacities to achieve their visions, which in themselves are linked to the community vision for better future, better life and better

livelihoods with choices and control, as an independent component is an interesting idea and needs to be pursued. While we understand the capacities get built with transactions and business, some tailored inputs hasten the process of building capacities. Many a time, most of us get lost in what and how part of the knowledge and skills. The most critical part, however, is the why and why not part. Of course, end of this investment is how it gets translated into the capacities of the communities.

To mentor young would-be practitioners of development and livelihoods in a class room situation is different from mentoring an associate in the real world. This learning came as a reinforcement from our involvement in the one-year program in rural development management of NIRD. We could adapt well and do a decent job!

As a development worker, one is in the business of developing and going forward rather than get stuck with anything. When more and more people with promise get, acquire capabilities and remain committed to development, s/he has done her/his bit. This would mean, we need to get out of entertaining judgments and just go after our pursuit. Be ‘atal’.

This calls for one seeking yoga in thoughts, words, actions, insights, devotion and of course yoga in the spirit of being in all dimensions that are of consequence. This is the

‘atma’ yoga. It helps to have spiritual partners to enhance this practice, although may not be a must. It would be painful to miss the spiritual partner in this pursuit, particularly after realizing after n number of hits and misses that we are the partners.

Krishna advises: the yogi who diligently practices what he has mastered and is cleansed of all faults, perfects himself in all fields. For this he has to go through many stages of induction and practice and attain the highest level. It is not adequate to be recognized as a meditator (Tapasvi) who seeks to master the technique of achieving the goal. It is not enough to become a Jnani (knower) to gain theoretical knowledge of the concerned field of study or action. It is not enough to become a perfect doer (Karmi). One needs to be three in one, with clear focus on the purpose with faith and devotion from the inner self (antaratma).

**Thus, we need to transcend Karma yoga and Jnana yoga, to enter Atma yoga where we are in union with our thoughts, words, actions, insights, devotion and the spirit of being. This is yoga for us.**

Join us in the world of yoga – the merger of spirit of being with the being and life and the practice of acquiring abilities to transcend. You will not regret it. ■

