

## SEVA MANDIR NEWSLETTER JAN TO MARCH 2008

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**Cover** : *Drawing made by Laxmi (8 years) from Dewas village during the Residential Learning Camp*

# editorial

Dear Readers,

A warm welcome to all of you! I hope you are enjoying the onset of the early monsoon. This issue carries several articles on the topic of raising funds and how Seva Mandir is adapting itself to these new trends in fund raising.

Despite the significant strides made by our country in terms of economic growth, mass poverty and social discord continues, and in fact, in some pockets has even increased. In this context the work of grassroots voluntary and civil society organisations becomes very pertinent. Seva Mandir is one such organisation, which, over the last 40 years, has worked to empower the poor and especially the tribal communities of Southern Rajasthan, to engage in and determine their course of development. However, it has been a challenge for Seva Mandir, as said by Mr Aad Van der Meer in his article, to 'bind her present resource partners and to find new resource partners.' It has become particularly challenging in recent times when the trend in philanthropy is changing. Liberalisation and globalisation has pushed for privatisation in almost all fields of our economy, and the development sector has not been left behind. While the Government has increased its outlay in social sector, it is also keen on playing the role of a regulator and facilitator rather than that of an implementer. Keeping this in mind it has come out with the 'National Policy on the Voluntary Sector, 2007' announced in the Gazette of India in July 2007. With this policy the government has indicated a commitment to forge partnerships with voluntary organisations to make lasting changes in social development.

Earlier individuals routed their contributions for social development and charity through known Foundations, but now the interesting trend is the direct involvement of corporate bodies through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities and public-private-partnerships. A large number of corporate entities are trying to meet, what John Elkington calls the Triple Bottom Line - measuring not just financial performance but also their impact on the larger economy, i.e., the environment and the society where it operates - for their sustainability. Consequently there is a spurt in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funding and activities. NGOs, who are well connected with local communities, can link up with corporate entities, form partnerships, and utilise such funding sources for the benefit of social development and eradication of poverty. Another interesting trend in modern philanthropy is that increasing affluence has created a group of people who are willing to donate their time and money to help solve problems and to get at the root causes of poverty.

While the donor market has expanded and brought in new players, the competition continues to be tough for Seva Mandir because it is difficult to match donors with

the organisational values, mission and approach. Also being a large organisation, the quantum of funding required is large. But Seva Mandir has taken these challenges in stride and has undertaken several exercises, in the quarter being covered in this issue, for improving its communication and outreach strategy so as to be able to reach out to a larger number of donors. This issue of the Newsletter carries a few articles which provide glimpses of some of these efforts. Mr Van der Meer has suggested the need for enhanced balance between the organisational, programmatic, accountability and contextual levels; greater integration of programmes and people to attain the 'we' feeling as an organisation, to make itself more attractive to donors. Ellen Tacoma's article stresses on the need for communicating one standard message both internally and externally. The article shows the processes adopted to design a virtual identity for the organisation in line with its mission and values. The article by Poonam Abbi and Deepti Ameta provides glimpses of an online fund raising event that Seva Mandir participated in. The experience was immensely enriching for Seva Mandir staff as it brought to focus the need for having effective and concrete fund raising and communication strategies, and the art of reaching out to potential donors through the use of new technologies like the web, email, social networking sites, blogs, etc. Liby Johnson has very aptly said that, "'Technology,' 'competition,' 'pitch,' etc. have already become buzzwords, replacing 'bleeding hearts'." Mithun Mukharjee's article on goat rearing at Redia Khedi village is interesting to note as even small changes made, with small amounts of funding from single individuals, makes a significant difference in the lives of the poor and disadvantaged.

This issue of the newsletter is raising another important element of developmental work - the need for recognising and rewarding indigenous knowledge and individuals as a means of encouraging people to continue to engage in the kind of work they do in the remote corners of the country, in the harshest of conditions, and with nominal monetary gains.

The Umed Mal Lodha awards given by Seva Mandir on 12th February 2008, is an example of this effort and the profile of the awardees show the kind of work being done by our rural communities given the right conditions. Shri Sandeep Virmani has also given ample examples of how the indigenous tribes of the Kutch peninsula have been living in harmony with nature for generations, how their lifestyle and knowledge has led to the discovery of new cattle breeding and building technologies which follow the principles of nature, and how they have used and preserved such knowledge for the benefit of society. In his speech Shri Virmani states how a little bit of recognition and encouragement can do wonders to such groups. The *Hakim Khan Soor Alankaran*, the Maharana Mewar Charitable Foundation Award given to Sh. Jagat Singh Mehta on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2008 is a recognition of a lifetime of hard work, at the national level for promoting the values of nationality, integrity, love for country, for communal harmony, and at the community level for the welfare of the society particularly in this southern Rajasthan pocket.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue of the Newsletter. We look forward to your continued support for Seva Mandir. You can write to me at [editor@sevamandir.org](mailto:editor@sevamandir.org) and I am eager to receive your comments and feedback.

Thank you.

*Sangeeta Agarwal*

## **Towards an attractive Seva Mandir**

*Aad Van der Meer*

***Aad van der Meer heads the organisation, Meer Mens located at Bilthoven, The Netherlands. As mentioned by him in the article, Mr Van der Meer undertook an exercise in Seva Mandir to reflect upon its fund raising attractiveness. He wrote this article for our Newsletter, summarising his experience.***

It was great to be back at Seva Mandir. From the mid-eighties till the mid-nineties of the past century I frequently visited the organisation in my capacity of Programme Officer India of the Dutch development organisation ICCO. It was a fruitful period in which the foundation was laid for a long term relationship between the two organisations - a relationship grounded on optimal trust and great mutual respect. This ultimately resulted in the financing by ICCO of Seva Mandir's first Comprehensive Plan; a pioneering way of shaping a mature relationship between an enabling development organisation in the North and a highly reputed quality NGO in the South.

In 1995, I changed my working area from Asia to Africa. ICCO gave me the responsibility for managing the contacts with partners in Zimbabwe and Swaziland. Ten years later, in October 2004, I left ICCO after 24 years of programme related service.

I started my own consultancy association with the name *Meer Mens* which means "people in the centre of development." I know about the power of people to destruct but more than that I believe in the power of people to build and to create and so in my advices people are central. Systems and structures are only there to the benefit of people - People Unlimited - Meer Mens. Organisational Development and the power of Southern NGOs to be solid and equal partners with their Northern resource partners are key elements in my assignments. But always - equality on the basis of quality!

In 2006, I met on different occasions with Seva Mandir's chief executive officer Neelima Khetan and Ajay S. Mehta, Seva Mandir's chairperson. Both were old friends from my earlier active working period with Seva Mandir.

Later that year I also visited Udaipur and had more discussions with them.

A red line in the discussions was the increasing problem of Seva Mandir to bind her present resource partners and to find new resource partners. In spite of the fact

that Seva Mandir is constantly delivering high quality development work and plays an important role in the empowerment of poor tribal people (especially women) the financial continuity is under pressure. I offered to visit Seva Mandir and analyse the attractiveness of the organisation for resource partners from the perspective of organisational sustainability.

At the end of 2007 the assignment was given to Meer Mens and the work was planned for February 2008.

For a 10 day period I came to a cold Udaipur and met with many people at their workplaces and in the various units and departments; people working on communication, on finance, on planning and research, in the field, in the library, with management responsibilities and office staff; young staff and more senior staff, board members and advisors; a broad range of people with Neelima Khetan as my focal reference point. We had several longer and shorter meetings about the progress of the work. It was a very fruitful period during which I think I arrived at very useful and workable conclusions.

#### **What was my approach?**

Organisational sustainability has 4 main levels of attention and in my work I am always searching in organisations for a balance among the four.

These 4 levels are: *organisational level* (about internal strength, culture, leadership and cohesion), *programme level* (about the relevance and strength of the work in the field), *accountability level* (about the financial strength, system, checks and balances) and *contextual level* (the way in which an organisation is open for the context in which it is working and the intensity in which she is searching for allies to achieve her goals). In all the discussions, in the one-day training to 25 people of the core staff, and during all other elements of my programme I created a picture of the organisation for myself.

A picture that says there is a fair level of balance within Seva Mandir, but striving for more balance can be a very fruitful and lucrative aim.

What can be said about the various fields? While a 27 pages long report contains detailed observations and analysis, in this article I reflect upon the key elements.

Seva Mandir is a solid organisation, well rooted, with a high profile and excellent programmes. Accountability is optimal, leadership visionary and there is a strong vision and mission. However, labour-intensive working procedures could be replaced and a new organisational structure introduced.

Active work on more cohesion in the organisation is necessary. At present there are many committed professionals working in several units. All these individuals and units lack a total 'we' feeling. Cohesion is the oil in the machine. On that field Seva Mandir can definitely make progress.

In general Seva Mandir's programmes are effective, relevant and directly serving the purpose of working towards better living conditions for poor people in South Rajasthan. Improvements possible on this field are more integration of programmes, more staff capacity enhancement and more innovation in programmes (on solar energy for instance).

Accountability is critical for an organisation and it is in very good hands in Seva Mandir. There are strong financial structures and procedures, optimal checks and balances and excellent staff to do this important work. The integrity level of the organisation is high. Some progress could be made on the field of active budget control and a more active role of financial units in project planning and budgeting.

On the contextual level, it can be said that Seva Mandir enjoys good credibility and has a strong reputation with many stakeholders in her broad network. More networking within India with organisations of the same standard and nature is advisable. The external communication could also be timely and more vibrant. Last but not least on this point is the joined effort (with other NGOs) that Seva Mandir could make in starting a campaign to let more young educated people choose working in NGOs as a career option.

These were some impressions out of my report with many observations and recommendations. It hopefully helps Seva Mandir on the way from having a high quality but introvert organisational culture and presentation style into a more dynamic and attractive extrovert style - a style that will definitely lead to more attractiveness to resource partners.

## **The process to a clear positioning of Seva Mandir**

*Ellen Tacoma*

**Women on Wings is based in Holland and supports Indian organisations operating in rural areas with international business knowledge. The main goal is to help organisations move towards a stronger market orientation. Ms. Ellen Tacoma of Women on Wings had previously visited Seva Mandir, & since spring of 2007, Women on Wings has been helping the Seva Mandir team orient itself to the new fundraising challenges.**

In recent times, the market for finding donors is getting more competitive. Therefore, it has become very important to have a clear and recognisable positioning - of the work you do as an NGO, the way you do it and last but not least how you communicate with your stakeholders. We, Maria van der Heijden and Ellen Tacoma of Women on Wings, a Holland based organization, started in July 2007 working with Seva Mandir on these aspects. Together we have looked at the values, the mission and the different communication activities both internal and external. By organising workshops with villagers, young employees, the management and a group of American students we got a clear picture of the key values of Seva Mandir. The energy and strong enthusiastic involvement of all these groups was very inspiring for us. The challenge, however, was getting an agreement on a limited set of values which could be highlighted. Although the red line was very clear, choosing the right words is something else. A final meeting in September, where we summarised all the results of the different groups, helped the management agree unanimously on the following values - Empowerment, Equity and Equality, Dignity, and Inclusiveness. This was a very big step forward because values are fundamental to the way you act and present yourself.

This was the preparation for an important step in February 2008; to create a visual identity in line with the mission and values. A visual identity that underlines who Seva Mandir is and the uniqueness in the way she works. But also an identity that helps Seva Mandir to talk proudly about her achievements and ask for support clearly. 'The hidden pearl Seva Mandir needs to be shown to the world.'

Paul van't Veld and Henk Seelt, two very experienced creative guys from the Netherlands worked intensively for a week on the 'metamorphosis of Seva Mandir'. To get insight into the work of Seva Mandir, the team was introduced to a number of impressive projects in the region. After this field experience we sat together with Neelima and the Resource Mobilisation Unit team at Seva Mandir to define what was needed in the short and long term. In the days after the briefing, Henk and Paul engrossed themselves in the assessment and improvement of their communication tools. They literally started to cut and paste. They put annual reports, brochures, and PowerPoint presentations next to each other to show Seva Mandir how inconsistent their communication was in terms of content and visual appearance. The next step

was to develop a new style with which Seva Mandir could work. Above all, the team looked for a guiding theme throughout the work. An idea with which all that Seva Mandir does, could be mirrored. It resulted in - 'Seva Mandir transforming lives through democratic and participatory development.'

During the final presentation, all the pieces (letterhead, business card, brochure, annual report, website and a specific fundraising action) were put together, and Seva Mandir gratefully embraced the work. Even better: on the day of the team's departure the newly designed brochure arrived after being printed in Udaipur, ready to be used in an important congress two days later. It was a job well done and the team went back to Amsterdam satisfied.

A joint operation resulted in an experience for both parties that were exciting and rewarding. We learned a lot about the complexity of the work of Seva Mandir and the perseverance they have shown in the last 40 years. Impressive progress has been made in the livelihoods of the people but Rajasthan is very poor and there are still many parts that need their support. In the coming year we will work together on developing a systematic approach for moving towards new and existing donors with creative offers and different projects big and small that could be sponsored by them.

## **The Giving Challenge – Detailing Our Experience**

*Poonam Abbi & Deepti Ameta*

America's Giving Challenge was a large scale initiative to use technology as a way of inspiring people to support causes they care about. It was organized by the Case Foundation and Parade Magazine, in partnership with Global Giving (for international causes) and Network for Good (for US based organizations).

The challenge invited individuals to champion their favorite cause and raise donations online. An award of \$50,000 each was being awarded to four fundraisers (for domestic or global causes) who attracted the greatest number of (unique) donations for their causes in addition to the amount they could themselves raise through the online donations. The challenge lasted for 6 weeks from 13<sup>th</sup> December 2007 to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2008.

Some projects from Seva Mandir had recently been included for support at Global Giving. We thought this may be an interesting opportunity to get the word out, about the work of Seva Mandir. So Poonam from Friends of Seva Mandir - USA decided to register to seek support for Non-Formal Education Centers - village based schools, run by Seva Mandir. The entire process of the challenge was being anchored by Friends of Seva Mandir, USA. We did not fully realize the potential or the challenges involved in this exercise, not until after the event for sure!

The minimum donation was \$10.00 per donor. Poonam felt that theoretically it seemed simple and doable; however, practically it was difficult as it was not easy for her to ask for money initially. The amount per se was not large, but people needed to be reminded to make the time to donate. So we wrote to people who were on our dataset urging them to give and also to spread the word. With time and with the element of 'urgency' (we were in the top 10 and it did seem doable) and with much help from many well-wishers, we decided to write updates and send reminders a couple of times, every week.

This effort was appreciated - many donated, and persuaded others to consider support, and constantly watched the Leader Board for updates. Many said it was akin to watching the Score Board of a game of Cricket!! Many friends came together, each advocating and approaching newer networks for support.

There were some issues too - some people had one credit card in a family; some were (rightfully) skeptical about using credit cards, on an unknown site. We responded by sharing more information on Global Giving to reaffirm people that this is a credible organization. Poonam felt it was difficult to be sure, how much information, is too much; how often should we send the reminders and make the ask - to give and get support? It probably meant differently for different people and for lack of knowing the audience, we could not tailor our approach. A week before the event ended, we realized that we were mistaken in thinking that the donors had to be

limited to legal residents/citizens of the US; instead everyone in the world could donate. This opened the floodgates of possibilities, but time was of essence - with only one week left for the Challenge to end.

Thereafter, Seva Mandir, India took charge and knocked on all doors.

The scene in India was not too different from the experience of Friends of Seva Mandir, USA that has been described above. From the day when the challenge began, Deepti was sending requests from India to all our American well-wishers or those who had some connection with Americans. But the day we learnt that the challenge is open to anyone in the world we felt we were losing our grounds. We started sending appeals to all the well-wishers we knew. We also requested our current volunteers to pitch in to the battle to seek funds by approaching their friends and contacts. But Seva Mandir just did not seem to move up the ladder on the Challenge's 'Score-board.' We were at the 9<sup>th</sup> position then and there were only 7 days left for the challenge to close.

Days passed by and realizing that time was slipping, the CEO Ms. Neelima Khetan, called for an emergency meeting. Sunday, the 27<sup>th</sup> January 2008 was a holiday - we tried to contact every staff member by phone. And then the quandary began. Some of them knew something about the challenge but they knew it was for American Residents only, while others had no idea why we were participating in this challenge. However, everyone clearly understood the urgency. We had contacted around 30 people but surprisingly more than 60 people turned up for the meeting next morning. Everyone was given a clear explanation of what was going on and that we were running out of time. Neelimaji appealed that everyone had to participate now by bringing in at least 10 donors each. The next moment, it felt as if an epidemic had broken out with every single person on his/her toes.

Wherever one could see, in the premises, people were on their cell phones speaking about the challenge and requesting their acquaintances to donate. We contacted almost everyone we knew including our Computer Suppliers, Banks, Travel Companies, Local Universities, Insurance Companies, Family members, Alumni-networks and their friends, fellow NGOs and so on. For the next couple of days Seva Mandir was on fire. Like following a cricket match, everywhere one question was echoed - "What is the Score? What position are we in now?"

In just two days we reached the 6<sup>th</sup> position. But while the enthusiasm was on, we encountered several problems. Many people in India do not have credit cards and the debit cards were not working. We learnt later that Banks in India have put disablers on debit cards for international internet transactions. Almost all the staff members wanted to donate but only a handful of people had credit cards with them. One story that is particularly touching is the call received by Neelimaji from Mr Joe Madiath of Gram Vikas, Orissa, a NGO similar to Seva Mandir working on social and economic issues with the marginal groups in Orissa. Mr Madiath informed that 35 of his staff colleagues had given money for our challenge, and since people don't have credit cards, he was now entering that money using his card. Neelimaji

was really moved but had to tell him that he should not do it, since that'll be counted as one donor. He was very upset, and felt that the Challenge was biased against developing countries like ours. But what really touched Neelimaji was that these were people with NGO salaries like ours, and still willing to donate money for helping us win. On top of it, many people had no email accounts and, therefore, used email addresses of others only to be counted as repeat donors. This did not technically help in the challenge given the requirement of being 'unique' donors. So although the number of donors increased we remained low on the score-board. It was a really helpless situation.

Despite all this we moved up to the third rank on the third last day (29<sup>th</sup> January 2008) and reached the first position on the second last day (30<sup>th</sup> January 2008). But we did not remain there for long and we tumbled down to the fourth position on the morning of the last day. With this every one of us became super active again and by 6 p.m. in the evening we had resumed our first position on the scoreboard and remained there till midnight.

On the last day, unfortunately the Internet speed was rather slow and we could not sustain this position for long. Another factor which influenced the result was that while it was day time in the western hemisphere during the last few hours of the challenge, it was night-time in India and not many people were active at that time. In the last 2 hours, FoSM made every effort to locate more support- we called our Board members and many other contacts, but our donors did not increase as rapidly. We were slipping and Poonam knew from the calls received (to say that the Global Giving site was hanging up and so people could not process their donations, or suggestions to send a last appeal for support and many others) that people were watching the scoreboard in several cities, countries and continents- Delhi, Mumbai, Baroda, Jaipur, Calcutta, Bhopal, Chennai, Trivandrum, London, and of course cities in USA. So a little after the mid night of the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2008, India time, which was the last day of the challenge we began to slip down rapidly and during the last two hours we slipped to the fifth position and lost the contest. It was really heart breaking after all the efforts we had put in and everybody was very sad the following day.

However, the consolation was that we had raised a huge donation of more than \$40,000 with over 1400 donors. This fund support will help us strengthen our school program for disadvantaged children, which covers a little over 1500 children, who cannot access formal schools for economic and social reasons. More details on the program can be found on the Seva Mandir web site ([www.sevmandir.org](http://www.sevmandir.org)).

The important learning has been that we need to have a more concrete strategy for such fund-raising exercises. We also need to make efforts to understand the best ways of communication and writing effective appeals to our partners with a timely follow-up. We re-established contact with many old friends and made new friends, with whom we can engage with and explore the possibilities of support in the future. We were also introduced to the idea of 'Viral' marketing (a technique that uses word of mouth or email to reach and affect an audience such as to encourage them to

spread the same to other people) and learnt the potential of micro-philanthropy (a model of philanthropy that is based on smaller, more direct interactions between "helpers" and "doers."). Online social networking sites (like Orkut, Facebook, etc.) & Blogs were used well by the winners to recruit support (largely student based groups / established groups of Peace Corp fellows). We have to understand more deeply the audience and the investments required, for such fundraisers and examine to what extent we can/should employ the use of what is the New Media.

The biggest reward of participating in this challenge was the fact that every staff member took part in this fund-raiser. Seva Mandir's employees exhibited tremendous team spirit. Hats off to our staff!!! And we use this opportunity once again to thank everyone who supported us in this fundraiser.

## **Online fundraising - hair-raising, nail-biting**

**Posted by: "Liby Johnson" libytj@gmail.com Sat Feb 2, 2008 4: 07 am (PST)**

*The following is an email posted by Mr. Liby Johnson, a social development consultant on the Institute of Rural Management, Anand (IRMA) Alumni Listserve. Liby has worked with Seva Mandir in the past. This email was first published in DARE (the magazine for entrepreneurs in March 2008) and is being republished with their consent.*

Friends,

Just this last night, I stayed awake till midnight watching almost a minute-by-minute progress of an online fund raising initiative on an American website. My interest in this was sparked after Seva Mandir approached me with a request to contribute and to spread word about this "America's Giving Challenge" hosted on the 'Global Giving' website. It was meant initially to be a United States fund-raiser but eventually became a global one. Different organisations had put in their fund-need pitch on the site (Seva Mandir's was for non-formal education for tribal children; others were, for example, 300 fuel efficient cooking stoves in Honduras , routing out poverty for Cambodian children, education for 900 rural girls in Burkina Faso , Invest in International Development Leaders.. a very interesting mix of development action ideas.) The contest went something like this: You raise the maximum number of donations (there are conditions like unique donations etc.), you get all the money you raised, plus the top four projects will get a cash award of USD 50K each!!!

I am sure every one of the fundraisers went around the globe stoking passions to get people to contribute. In Seva Mandir's case, I found a series of requests from various people on the IRMA alumni mail group.

The real fun (just like a nail-biting 20-20 cricket match) was last night Indian time. The contest was to close at 3pm US Eastern Time (around 1 at night in India). Between 10.30 pm and 11.30 pm that I watched closely, there was at least one donation being added (to at least one of the projects of the top 5 I was watching)[<http://givingchallenge.globalgiving.com/dy/amgive/leaderboard/ag.html> is the link I was looking at] with every screen refresh I did (even three per minute). Seva Mandir was on the top of the table, challenged closely by the Cambodia project, 1475 donations to SM and 1474 to Cambodia , then all of a sudden the tally was 1490-1492 against SM, soon again 1501-1496 in favour of SM, similar contests going on between the next 3 projects as well.

Well, I went to sleep. This morning logged on to check the site out of sheer curiosity - here are the final results:

Cambodia - 1710, Honduras - 1698, International Development Leaders (Atlas Service Corps) - 1661, Burkina Faso - 1635, Seva Mandir - 1576.

Cambodia did marvelous pitch hitting in the slog overs; Seva Mandir like the good Indian Cricket Team probably sent an off-form Rahul Dravid to play his forward and backward defense in the final over!!

Honduras after leading earlier this week, had fallen to No.5 used probably its time-zone advantage to make a final surge; Atlas of course being based in the US also had the same advantage; Burkina Faso is like the South African cricket team - never the very best, but seldom far from the Top!!!

Indians went to sleep at midnight, with less than two hours to go before close, and see what happened!!!

The lighter vein apart, what prompted me to write this mail is a real thought/concern about what it holds for us in the "development" sector, with a real need to raise funds!!! "Technology", "Competition", "Pitch" etc have already become the buzzwords, replacing "bleeding hearts".

**Warm regards - Liby**

# Goat Rearing in Redia Khedi: Old Wine in a New Bottle

*Mithun Mukharjee*

*The Goat Rearing Project of Rejuvenate India Movement (RIM) in Redia Khedi awaits results for reviewing and rethinking alternate models of livelihood options in tribal areas and building genuine donor-beneficiary affiliation.*

In April 2007, Mr. Suneet Arora, a visitor from Canada

first visited and began his association with the Rejuvenate India Movement Program (RIM) of Rajasthan in Mavli Tehsil, Udaipur district. Now, one year later not only is he sponsoring a *Samaj Shilpi* (village volunteer) but he has also lent a helping hand by providing a grant to run a small goatery project on pilot basis for ensuring extra income generation options for poor residents of Redia Khedi, a tribal village in Bansliya panchayat, Mavli block. The project was initiated by RIM *Samaj Shilpis* while a couple of student volunteers from IIFM helped identify issues and prepare an action plan for implementation of the project.

Conversations with goat breeders in Mavli region who are generally poor identified certain issues related to this livelihood activity; the goat rearers in this region have small herd sizes ranging from five to eight goats for every family. The small income derived from this activity makes negligible contribution to the family's livelihood. Moreover, the local goats are sensitive to diseases and there is no proper access to veterinary services. Despite that the market is available at the doorstep giving them access to quick money, although most of the time the animals are sold at a very low price. While being aware of these and various other problems, the RIM team was determined to improve the practice of goat rearing in the area by providing each family *Sirohi* breed goats. They decided to submit a business plan to Mr. Suneet Arora. The project will enable villagers to expand their income opportunities by rearing goats, trading the off-springs, getting milk and manure at the household level and increasing the unit for periodic but sustainable benefits.

Field visits were planned in selected villages of Kumbalgarh and Mavli blocks where the team gained first hand information about existing practices; group discussions with villagers, *Samaj Shilpis*, and Seva Mandir officials were held; and other relevant documents were referred.

Following are the major components of the plan:

## **Feasibility**

- Existing practice

- Less water requirement
- Large chunk of waste land available for fodder
- Small amount of money required
- Readiness of villagers to do the project with improved breed variety

#### **Weakness**

- Return starts late
- Poor monitoring by villagers

#### **Opportunity**

- Number of mother unit increases fast after the initial first 1.5 years
- Improved breed earns more than double price

#### **Threats**

- Disease and Mortality
- Loss of interest
- Malpractice (i.e., the possibilities of fake cases of death, stealth, insurance claim, exchange etc.)

#### **Critical Issues**

- Disease control
- Mortality
- Monitoring

Upon the request of RIM Rajasthan Mr. Arora benevolently sanctioned a sum of Rs. 1 lac as pilot for the purchase of improved variety (*Sirohi* breed) goats and distribution to 8 poor families of Redia Khedi. Each family was provided a unit of 4 goats on 18th February 2008, with the condition that they will return 4 goats at the end of 2 years. This type of practice is customary in the villages when one person gives a goat to a fellow villager to take care of his goat and in return takes back half the off-springs. During the 2 years or until the time they have fulfilled their contract of returning 4 goats, the beneficiaries will have to pay a monthly rent of Rs.10/goat. This money will be used to insure the goats and for regular visits of the vet for medical care and immunization.

All the residents of Redia Khedi welcomed the plan, which meant the project is expected to have a high acceptability rate amongst them. This also meant that goat rearing could be seen as a tertiary economic activity, more likely to be adopted by the women folk, besides agriculture and labour work. While most of the breeders have received 4 goats, many of them expressed the need for bigger sizes of at least 12-15 goats. It is also worth mentioning here that all the villagers have strong bonds with each other and are not envious of the eight families, who were the first

beneficiaries, selected through village meetings and in consensus of all members present in those meetings.

The start of the goatery project at Redia Khedi is another milestone of RIM Rajasthan and the support/grant provided by Mr. Suneet Arora can be advocated as a model of genuine donor-beneficiary affiliation where enabling environment can lead to the successful implementation of small initiatives. Although the project has entered another quarter and seems to be giving the desired results, there is much room for improvement. On average a family rears a herd of 10 goats but the project is still in the evolution phase and it is hoped that with the passage of time villagers will develop their own vision for the improvement of cattle breed in the entire village.

Rejuvenate India Movement (RIM) is a network of individuals and partner NGOs working together for India's development:

- Through a common action program between voluntary organizations and individuals
- By fostering a non-violent people's movement towards collective self-reliance in the community
- By channelising creative energy of individuals into voluntary action and assisting them with making a conscious commitment to serving the rural and urban poor.

## The Dal Mill Initiative

*Sunil Nepak*

Seva Mandir has been working in Kotra since 1984.

This is the most backward block of Udaipur district. Small land holding, poor quality of various natural resources, unavailability of irrigation infrastructure, high dependence on migrant wage, etc are some of the characteristics of the livelihood of these villagers. Seva Mandir works in 102 villages of Kotra block. Medi is one of the panchayats in this block consisting of 6 villages, namely Bavviran, Koldara, Hansreta, Medi, Nakola and Ghodamari. These villages are well connected with the Kotra-Khedbrahma main road through PMGSY roads. Our association with these villages has brought many fruitful results, one of them is the watershed project implemented during 2002-2007. This micro watershed covers all the 6 villages of this panchayat. The watershed work has resulted in preventing / reducing soil erosion, increasing ground water level, increasing productivity of cultivable as well as non-cultivable land.

Although the productivity of cultivable land has increased in this cluster, the livelihood has still not improved very much. This is due to the presence of many middlemen in the value-chain of cash crops who take away a part of returns from the farmers. Therefore, there is a need for intervention at suitable points of the value chain, which can result in better return to the tribal farmers of the area. The main cash crops grown in this area are various pulses (*tur*, *moong* and *urad*), various edible and non-edible oil seeds and cotton.

With these understandings, a team from the Natural Resource Department at Seva Mandir conducted a study in May - June 2007 to map out the value chain of various pulses with special focus on *tur* (pigeon pea). The study yielded the following results:

- o Value chain of all pulses consists of village / block level aggregators, *mandi* level traders, processors, wholesaler of finished product, retailer and final consumer.
- o Processing can be done in small scale for which technology is available, proved and in use for the last several years.
- o Quality of the *tur* grown in this area is suitable for processing.

These findings helped us in understanding that by initiating the processing operations, we can remove/ replace 3 links (the village level aggregator, *mandi* traders and processors) from the chain. This will help in increasing the return of

farmers. This concept was then finalized and discussed at various forums during September and October 2007.

The plan is to mobilize villagers to form an entity, which will aggregate the pulses at the village level, process it their and market the final produce for the benefit of the farmers. This entity will be given all necessary support from project planning to implementation to hand-holding and finally be made an independent entity in a few years time. The processing operation is simple. It consists of removing the skin from the whole *dal* through successive cycles of scratching by roller and de-gluing by adding water and oil and drying. Once the skin is removed it is then split into two parts and polished. This is then sold in the market. In this process the broken *dal*, powdered *dal* and husk comes out as by product, which is, also sold in the market.

Punjab Rao Krishi Vishwa Vidyalaya, Akola has developed small-scale machinery with a processing capacity of 8-12 qtl *dal* per day. They also replicated this technology in many places of Maharashtra. The machinery cost is around Rs 2 lakh including DG set to take care of the power shedding. Another Rs 2-2.5 lakh is required to build the infrastructure for the same. Apart from this Rs 3 lakh to 19 lakh are required as working capital depending upon the capacity utilization.

This proposal was discussed at various levels within Seva Mandir - NRD Unit, *sanchalak mandal*, block meeting and zonal staff - during the month of Sept and Oct 2007. It was decided that work would start with community mobilization and trading of raw *tur*, to be eventually followed up with the processing operation. In the month of November and December 2007 the team had several rounds of meetings with the villagers. Once they understood the project and showed interest, a two-pronged strategy was adopted. First, to mobilize and ensure involvement of more and more people so that this process can be eventually transferred to them. Second, to initiate the trading operation by taking a loan from the GVK.

In the month of January 2008 we started procurement of *tur* in 2 of the villages. Due to certain confusion and internal problems we were a little late in starting the operation. However, in 15 days we have procured 20 qtl. of *tur* and sold it in the Khedbrahma Mandi. This whole operation has generated a profit of Rs 2500 for the villagers despite the fact that the villagers were paid a purchase price of Rs100-200 per qtl higher than the prevailing market price of Rs 1800-2000 per qtl at that time. Effectively, the direct price rise due to this operation was to the tune of Rs 300-400, which was earlier going to the intermediaries. This has boosted the confidence of the villagers in the project.

The team visited the machine manufacturer and a few other dal mills to understand the process better. This has given them the confidence to start the processing operation during the coming season in September 2008. In the larger perspective this has also helped the farmers of nearby villages as the village level aggregators have increased their procurement price anticipating loss of volume. We have submitted the proposal to Dept of Science and Technology, Govt. of Rajasthan and CII-RBH for funding the proposal through Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Govt of India.

Presently we have completed the trading cycle for this season. We have also ordered the machinery. We are planning to appoint one person to take care of the village level operations of the dal mill initiative. Simultaneously we are working on creating the infrastructure building, power connection, etc. to support the installation of the machinery. We are expecting to procure, install and run the machinery for a few days in May, which will give us, hands on experience on the processing operation. This will help us to take care of operation related problems and also establish contact with the market players. At the same time we are also working on the registration of a new Mutual Benefit Trust which is the organization structure planned upon to take up this activity in future.

Finally, the project hopes to increase the return by around 40-50% for around 1500 producer families of various pulses. In value terms this is equivalent to around Rs 15 lakh distributed among 1500 families every year. The simple trading operation increased the return to the farmers by around 10%, as observed in the case of Shri Belaram, a local farmer. He used to produce approximately 200 kgs of *tur* and earn around Rs 3500. This time he earned around Rs 3900 for the same quantity of *tur*. However, it will take some 3 years to establish the procurement and processing system of the pulses, establish market linkages, form and transfer the ownership to an organisation owned by these people. Also as mentioned earlier the capital required is significant and making this intervention successful will take considerable effort from Seva Mandir's side.

# Maharana Mewar Charitable Foundation Award 2008

*Dr. Manju Pandey*

Getting an award is important; but the cause for which it is being given is probably more important. *Hakim Khan Soor Alankaran*, the Maharana Mewar Charitable Foundation Award, for the year 2007-08 to Sh. Jagat Singh Mehta, not only brings pride to him but to the whole of Mewar.

Sh. Jagat Singh Mehta, ( fondly called Jagat Saheb by Seva Mandir staff ) belongs to the Mewar region ; his father, the great educationist Dr. Mohan Sinha Mehta was the Governor of Mewar state. Jagat Sb. served for a very long time in the Indian Foreign Services, and had the opportunity to work with Smt. Indira Gandhi, Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru, Shri Atal Vihari Bajpayi, and Shri Morarji Desai among other formidable Indian personalities. His efforts in harmonizing Indo-Pak relations are incomparable. In the year 1976 while working towards establishing normal relations with Pakistan, he showed exemplary sensitivity and perception. His collaborative efforts in various pacts under the foreign policy of India has paved the way in keeping intact the integrity and sovereignty and in maintaining cordial relations with other countries. He also skillfully negotiated various issues like Ganga River Water dispute, followed by establishing business relations with Nepal in year 1978. Shri Jagat Singh Mehta was awarded the Padma Bhushan in year 2002.

## ***The Hakim Khan Soor Award***

*Hakim Khan Sur was a Pathan who came to Mewar from his domicile in Hyderabad, Deccan. He became a general in Rana Pratap's army and fought to uphold the freedom and beliefs of his adopted home in the epic battle of Haldi Ghati (1576 A.D.) against the invading Mughal army of Emperor Akbar. This is the first recorded instance in the Annals of Mewar in which the responsibility of leading the Mewar Army was not entirely entrusted to a Shekhawat or Chundawat (Rajput brethren). This was the direct consequence of Hakim Khan Sur's undertaking that no one would be able to part him from his sword in battle. Despite being a follower of Islam, fighting his blood brothers, he was the first to lay down his life in the battle thereby fulfilling his commitment to uphold the freedom and honor of Mewar. Even on death no one could part him from his sword and he was buried with full honors – sword in hand.*

*His sacrifice is symbolic of supremacy of ideology over religious and communal consideration – a unique example of his belief in the principles and commitment of unquestionable loyalty and devotion to manav dharma.*

*The Hakim Khan Sur award is a National Award. This award has been instituted to honour work of permanent value for the cause of national integration.*

Jagat Sb. lives in Udaipur these days and constantly looks for and finds innovative ways of working for social wellbeing. Words are short to express fully Mehta Sb's multifaceted talents and infinite knowledge over all the spheres of life. One good example of his diversified thought process is the *Beed* near Badgaon, where Mehta Sb. has proposed to build an environment centre for school children to visit and learn

about the local environment, vegetation and birds of that region, and to stay during the time of their study.

The Maharana Mewar Foundation decided to honour him with the *Hakim Khan Soor* award for 2007-2008 for his continuous efforts to benefit society. This award is recognition for the services rendered towards promoting the values of nationality, integrity, love for country, and for communal harmony. The award carrying a cash award for Rs. 25000, a silver toran, a shawl and a certificate was given on 2nd March 2008 at 4.00 p.m. Selection of Mehta Sb. for this national level award is a great pride & honour for the institutions associated with him - Seva Mandir, Vidhya Bhawan, and The Lake Conservation Committee.

How valuable is our indigenous knowledge to us.....

**Mr. Sandeep Virmani**

*Every year, the Umed Mal Lodha trust invites for its Smiriti Vyakhanmala, a renowned personality, a scholar in the field of Environment Education and Conservation who is acquainted with the lifestyle and eco-system of rural areas. The speech below was given by the Chief Guest, Sh. Sandeep Virmani at the 2008 Smriti Vyakhanmala. Sh Virmani is an environmentalist working with the rural inhabitants of Kutch district, Gujarat. He has a strong hold and minute understanding of issues related to water, land, forest and environment.*

My greetings to all of you!

I am an architect, an engineer... in our terminology, whenever artisans lay the stones to construct a building, they lay them from both sides of the wall and after every 100-125 stones, a large 'key stone' is put across the wall connecting both surfaces. This key stone is what gives strength to the building. We can say that these workers, who have been awarded for their contributions today, are key stones; they support and hold our society...and can be seen from inside the wall, from within society. More than money, these workers and samuhas wish to be recognized for their contributions and their contributions are often a result of the trust and faith that their communities have placed in their indigeneous knowledge. More often than not these solutions have a combination of technology, management and values that modern societies can learn from. In our country, a treasure of information and knowledge lies within its communities, that modernization has not completely eroded yet and we are only now beginning to value, acknowledge and recognize.

I will share with you our experiences of working with some of these rural/community 'experts' in the fields of animal breeding, water and building construction. I wish to communicate a portion of the enjoyment that we have felt in bringing formal and informal science together to create unique solutions and resilient societies.

When we started working with the pastoralists, called Maldharis in Kutch, people discouraged us saying that they are 'backward', that they are a burden on society, that they should be given a few acres of land where they should settle down. In India, Maldharis and the grasslands play a major role in breeding cattle for the farmers. We wanted to find out how they breed cattle and buffaloes; how are the desirable characteristics in cattle and buffaloes developed by the pastoralists. They told us it takes around 20 to 25 years to add one desirable change in the blood of the animal. If we want to increase the milk production of the animal then a good quality bull possessing those specific characteristics is required for breeding. The change is only observed in the seventh generation. According to them an important characteristic is to increase milk production. Secondly, they would also like to

ensure that the animal is free from any disease. Along with these features it is also made sure that the animal gets along well with the group of other cows and buffaloes because it has to move in a group. Another feature taken care of while breeding an animal is that it should behave well with strangers as she has to be sold to farmers. If the animal is uneasy with the new owner its milk production will also be adversely affected. But, according to them, the most important feature which is developed in an animal is that the animal should be able to thrive well under all kinds of environmental conditions. They should be able to survive when they get less to eat, but then should give 20-25 litres of milk when they get sufficient green fodder. If the weather is too hot or too cold, or if the animal has to walk long distances, the milk production should not be adversely affected. Apart from these, physical appearances also hold a prominent place in our society - the horns, the forehead, neck, body structure etc. should be as per the standards of beauty set by them. These are often signs of purity of breed. In this manner these people from Kutch have developed 15 different characteristics in the Banni buffalo over the last 400-500 years contributing to the white revolution in the country.

While this is one method of breeding animals established by the Maldharis, we wondered what kinds of animals are reared by those people who used formal science and technology. So we decided to go to the Netherlands in Europe because it is the country where the best breeds of cattle are produced. There the animals are kept in closed stables. We were asked to wear fresh overcoats over our clothes and our mouths were covered with a piece of cloth. We thought they were trying to protect us but they had made all these arrangements to protect their animals from any kind of infection that we might be carrying! But never mind..... When we went inside we found very big animals that were three times bigger than ours. There were two belts, one in the front of the animal carrying its food and the other at the back which carried her excreta, and these were moving; a machine was fitted to the animal's udders to collect milk; an electric wire passed under the animal that gave shocks to the animal whenever it tried to sit down - so it remained standing; and the whole place was air conditioned. All this they said was necessary to ensure the animals give 35 litres of milk and for fattening them for maximum meat. So they were preparing the animals keeping two characteristics in mind, i.e., it should give good amount of milk and meat. They explained that these were the two economic characters that mattered to them.

These animals are bred in air controlled artificial conditions. Each farmer keeps them grazing in their home steads. But their grasslands have been reduced to growing only one type of grass that gives them maximum productivity. As a result only one variety of grass is now available in Netherlands and all their previous cattle have been replaced with this new kind of animal.

We asked them, 'what are you feeding these animals to get 35 litres of milk?' I am giving a detailed account because this is another form of knowledge building - they are breeders and so are we here in Kutch but there are a lot of differences in the way in which life and nature is approached. I want to highlight the differences between formal and informal techniques of breeding. The cows in Netherland are fed a

mixture which is manufactured from the remnants of goat meat, whatever is left that humans do not consume. In this process, an animal created by nature as herbivore has been converted into a flesh eating animal by man.

In a very short time, a large number of people in that country started rearing cattle, huge quantum of milk production was recorded, and the country became a milk and meat exporter. Everything was going alright and the country was applauded by the world for doing great work in the dairy industry. But about 10-12 years ago a disease spread - called the Mad-Cow disease like Bird Flu which recently spread in Bengal. Over the last 10-15 years, there have been so many incidences where animals - chicken, cattle or pigs - have been infected by diseases on such large scales that people want these animals to be killed so that the disease does not spread in human beings either through milk or meat. Thousands and lakhs of animals have been killed and buried and this has been aired on television to win back consumer confidence. A society in the face of such impaired circumstances is even unable to feel remorse that so many animals are being killed; the same animals whom people have bred and who are now unable to thrive with nature. These cattle, on their own, will not know what to eat and will not survive; an artificial animal has been created because people were only concerned about one thing - increasing profits.

On the other hand are our pastoralists who have been breeding animals keeping in mind 15 different characteristics so that they are able to live with nature under humane conditions. These animals may be giving only 20-22 litres of milk instead of the 35 litres by the cattle in Netherlands, but we are not only concerned with profit but instead keep in mind the relation of these animals with nature and society. What is important is that our society, our villages have developed such indigenous technology which is in conformity with nature. Having seen the short sighted approaches of the industrial, intensive farming systems, the world is slowly beginning to realize the wisdom of extensive animal breedings practiced by the pastoralists of the world.

It is necessary, to recognize these communities. However, few in our society are aware of the contributions they have made. So we invited scientists from various universities and research institutions to Banni and requested them to conduct studies and investigations to validate the claims of the pastoralists. The blood sample tests have shown that the Banni Buffalo is distinct from all the 11 buffaloes recognised in our country so far. The scientist community has taken up the task of officially recognizing this as the 12th breed in India. This outcome is not just recognizing the buffalo but is acknowledging the people and their knowledge and understanding that they have developed over the last 400-500 years of developing a humane and sustainable economy.

After seeing the Pushkar Pashu Mela (Animal Fair) they decided to organise the first Banni Pashu Mela. Last month this was done in Hodka where breeders sold animals worth Rs. 1.5 crores. This honour and recognition have made this community, earlier regarded as insignificant and worthless, proud. While they have earned money, they are also gaining respect.

When rural experts and trained professionals pool their knowledge on a subject together the solutions are creative and contextual to the situation. Similarly, when we began working on water issues, we decided to bring together rural experts who knew about the rocks and geology of their region and professionals who were formally trained as geologists. They documented 18 rock formations. The rural experts went on to describe the character of each rock from a hydrology perspective, like ability of a rock to store less or more water and the salinity in the rocks. We realized that they had a far more stratified nomenclature and understanding of aquifer rocks, compared with the geologists. It's quite natural that in such dry regions, where lives have depended on the ability to understand how to harvest water, their understanding of geo-hydrology will be well developed.

The government has been trying to bring water from the Narmada River to Kutch district since the last 50 years, but they fail to accept that the people of Kutch can have their own resources of water. Over the last decade, women collectives and rural experts worked together and helped more than a 100 villages become self sufficient for their domestic water needs, by digging wells using their knowledge of water and geology of the region. Even if these communities are faced with one or two droughts they do not have a drinking water shortage. It is ironical that although a society can solve their problem of water by spending Rs. 4-5 lakhs only, the government is planning to spend crores of rupees to bring water from a distance of a 1000 kms from the Narmada River. The arrogance of our policy makers and professionals on their knowledge, does not even consider the prospect that they can collaborate with the people to solve their problems.

The Gujarat government based on the work done in these 100 villages, has finally accepted this in policy and is allocating large sums of money for villages in Kutch and Saurashtra to have a well of their own, managed by the Panchayat. A para college has also been started so that the older people who possess this knowledge can teach the younger generation, train them to find aquifers, mark them on maps, develop proposals for the panchayats to apply for funding from the government. Formally trained engineers from Gandhinagar and Jaipur are not deciding these activities any more. Today this college has trained 120 youth, who have studied only upto class seven (7). These children have been trained by geologists as well as by the rural experts. This example shows that by giving recognition to indigeneous knowledge, government policies can be changed.

With increasing concerns for the environment, when new buildings are designed, an important consideration is minimising energy utilization. Mud, being a bad conductor, it has kept people cold in harsh summers and warm in the mountains, for centuries. Earth artisans have developed hundreds of techniques for housing in this country, however, mud houses are today considered a poor person's dwelling. In the Banni region our engineers worked with the local building artisans and made more than 2000 houses using a combination of mud and cement which is strong and prevents rainwater entering the walls.

There is an interesting story of how this all began. In 2001, there was a massive earthquake in Kutch. In the city of Bhuj itself, where I live, many concrete buildings collapsed and about 7000 people died. However, comparatively fewer people died in the rural areas and the Bhungas (round houses) of the pastoralists in Banni did not break. We got the masons of this region together and asked them why the Bhungas had not broken. They explained that their fore fathers had developed these circular mud forms, as safe houses, after the 1819 earthquake. Houses with corners that are square or rectangular in shape tend to be more vulnerable to earthquakes. However strong the walls may be, in the lateral thrusts of an earthquake, the corners begin cracking from the top of the wall and the crack extends all the way to the bottom. This results in the walls collapsing followed by the roof. But a round building instead of falling down gets further strengthened in an earthquake due to 'Arch Action'. When earthquake forces put pressure on the circular walls from left to right and then right to left, the walls become stronger, just as an Arch transfers loads efficiently into the ground when vertical load of the wall and roof is applied.

Many senior architects and engineers came to investigate and study this indigenous technology. Dr. Arya, an eminent earthquake engineer, also visited the area and was amazed to see the work of these pastoralists. We prepared a technical guideline with Dr Arya for the Government of Gujarat on this indigeneous concept. This material is becoming increasingly popular even amongst urban people today. Hundreds of artisans have been organised. They have developed several different building materials and technologies based on mud, and build campuses and offices for urban societies. The team has also worked in Abu Dhabi and Dubai.

These are all examples of what such people, who had no recognition in society, have been able to achieve, whose knowledge is now benefiting society in so many ways. I believe that the knowledge of the people from such dry areas like Rajasthan and Kutch will give new direction to our society in the coming years, especially in the context of Global warming and Climate change as mentioned by Neelimaji.

Several studies have been conducted over the past few years on the changing climate patterns. The sun's rays fall on earth and generate heat, but a cover around earth does not let the earth heat up too much. To maintain the balance in air, nature created a symbiotic relationship- humans need oxygen but give out carbon-di-oxide that plants use and inversely produce oxygen for humans and animals. The people present today at this talk are working hard to maintain this relationship between nature, environment and human life. But the urban human beings have destroyed this balance, by creating technologies and machines, which have been producing more carbon-di-oxide thus upsetting this balance. All this has increased the temperature of the world by a few degrees, thus disturbing the reproductive cycles of thousands of life forms. It has changed the weather and monsoon cycles as we know them. People, like you, living in these dry desert-like conditions know how to manage some grain and fodder production in a highly variable rainfall. You have developed a range of seed varieties that can grow in different rainfall patterns. In deserts like yours and ours in Kutch the coefficient of variation of rain fall is more than

40%. With climate and weather changing, the world will be compelled to learn coping strategies from the arid areas. It is for this reason that it is important for you to have faith in your way of life and your knowledge. Tomorrow's world has more to gain from you than they can give you. Development programs need to learn from you as much as cater to your needs. Today's citizens do not understand the delicate balance between nature and human life, like you do; your societies respect nature and life too much to ruin it for your monetary gains alone.

When Neelimaji gave me the invitation I readily accepted it because when I started my own work in 1991, the first thing I did was to bring two groups of Maldharis, in 1991-92, to one of the villages where Seva Mandir works. They went back motivated to change their situation. I am indebted to Seva Mandir, and I wanted to come back to the place where I had begun my learning ...to share my experiences.

Thank you very much.

# **Seva Mandir and the Land Reform Committee under the Ministry of Rural Development**

*Vivek Vyas*

Good governance in land administration and effective management of agrarian relations has been considered, since long, to be imperative for reaching the desired level of economic growth and sustainable development. It has been an accepted fact that socially-just access to land, land related services and security of land rights can go a long way in improving the economic condition of the primary sector. Not only this, land reforms can change the current culture of exclusion to enable the poor gain access to land, credit, technology, markets etc in the development of government policies and programmes affecting their livelihood.

With a view to looking into the unfinished tasks in land reforms, a committee, "State Agrarian Relations and the unfinished task in Land Reforms" has been set up under Minister for Rural Development consisting of officials from Department of Land Resources, NGO representatives and subject matter Specialists. Seva Mandir has also been invited to be part of the same. The recommendation of this committee would be considered by the "National Council for Land Reforms" constituted under the Prime Minister to lay down broad guidelines and policy recommendations on agrarian relations and land reforms. The council comprises of the Ministries of Rural Development, Agriculture, Environment and Forests, Panchayati Raj, Tribal Affairs, Social justice and Empowerment, Dy. Chairman of Planning Commission, Chief Ministers of various states in India like Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal, and other eminent citizens.

The committee will visit the states and hold consultations with them in order to finalize the recommendations for effective implementation of land reforms. The committee is expected to tender its recommendation to the national council within one year of formation the deadline for which has been set as mid-September 2008. Also for the same purpose seven (7) sub-groups/task forces have been formed. Seva Mandir has been appointed to convene the group that shall work towards (1) Ensuring access of the poor to common property and forest resources (2) To look into land use aspects, particularly agricultural land, and recommend measures to prevent/minimize conversion of agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes.

## **Common Property Resources (CPRs) :**

One of the critical components of land reforms identified was CPRs or "Common Property Resources" which have been defined as those resources accessible to and

collectively owned\held\managed by an identifiable community and on which no individual has exclusive property rights. "Rural common property resources are broadly defined as resources to which all members of an identifiable community have inalienable use rights. In the Indian context CPRs include community pastures, community forests, Govt wastelands, watershed drainages, village ponds and rivers etc. The first three resources are particularly important because of their large area and their contribution to people's sustenance."<sup>1</sup>

Presently the percentage of CPR/Total geographical area of the country is 15 %. If the Forest lands are included in this definition of CPRs, then there is another 23.38 % of the country's geographical area. The beginning of the studies of the CPRs in India can be traced back to early 1980's. Studies covered a fairly large number of villages scattered over the vast area of the country but majority of those were case studies. NSSO study, 1999 (report no 452) of the 54th round is one of the first attempts to provide comprehensive state- and national- level estimates of size, utilisation and contribution of CPRs. It says in the pre-British India, a very large part of CPRs was freely available under the control of the local communities. Extension of state control over these resources, resulted in decay of the community management system, and CPRs available to the villagers declined substantially over the years. Despite this, CPRs still play an important role in the life and economy of the rural population.

However, all these studies still fall short of suggesting measures required to improve the administration of CPRs as well as to facilitate their development for the future generations. There are two ways of looking at CPRs: *De Jure* or by legal definition - officially allocated figures and *De Facto* or actual ground reality - in terms of actual usage and access which differ significantly.

### **Agriculture Land Use**

The second aspect on which the sub-group has to give its recommendation is regarding land use - particularly agricultural land and recommend measures to prevent or minimize conversion of agriculture land for non-agriculture purposes. The conversion of agricultural land into non-agriculture use is highly debated and is attributed as one of the factors leading to food insecurity. On the other hand, it is also true that lot of forest land not fit for cultivation is being transferred for cultivation. There is a need to look into this critical aspect of land use and suggest measures to minimize the conversion.

The purpose for which agriculture land is being transferred vary from Infrastructure development projects like roads, housing colonies; Industrial purposes like Special

Economic Zones, allotment of land for bio-diesel plantations, etc.; and Commercial interests whereby due to increasing land prices farmers find it more lucrative to dispose of their agricultural land rather than farming on their own.

### **Proposed Methodology**

This subgroup proposes to **identify partners** who can provide quantitative and qualitative information (to extrapolate for the agro-climatic regions and state as a whole). Partners once selected would be engaged in **consultations** for identifying common issues and salient points. Ultimately best practices and recommendations would be submitted to the State Agrarian Committee which in turn would be submitted to the National Council headed by the PM. We propose to collect both primary and secondary information and the various heads on which information would be collected are about the present status with respect to availability of CPRs, i.e. Land Classified as common lands under various categories as per state subjects, Use Pattern of such lands, Longitudinal Change (over the last few decades) in the status of CPRs, etc. Subjective Data shall include programme experiences of state and civil society agencies and also about the various issues being faced by the communities in the management and governance of CPRs.

Seva Mandir has created an expert group for leveraging existing body of knowledge on CPRs through collaboration with knowledge centres. The group consists of eminent researchers like Ms Kanchan Chopra from Institute of Economic Growth, Mr M. S. Rathore from Institute of Development Studies, Ms Amita Shah from Gujarat Institute of Development Research, Shri Sivaramakrishnan from Yale University, Shri Ajay S. Mehta, President Seva Mandir, and Ms Neelima Khetan, Chief Executive, Seva Mandir. An approach paper has been prepared and circulated with the help of this subgroup. During a recent meeting it was also decided that to make the process as transparent as possible we should try and cover as many perspectives as possible and therefore a Perspective Paper has been written and circulated. Information Formats for the various states have been forwarded to the Ministry for circulation to the states. Partners have been identified for State Visits (to start from 27<sup>th</sup> July) to 9 states having a substantial component of CPRs in their total geographical area. These partners are being contacted for organising NGO level consultations to supplement government consultations. We also propose to commission Status Papers for each of these states as well as Thematic Papers for issue-based recommendations all of which will be discussed during the state visits.

*Vivek Vyas works with the natural resource management programme of Seva Mandir*

# Empowering Communities For Forest Governance

*S.N. Bhise and Vivek Vyas*

## **Background**

The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act 2006 received the assent of the President of India on 29th Dec 2006. It is a step aimed to compensate the historical injustice meted out to forest dwellers, scheduled tribes and other traditional forest dwellers whose forest rights on ancestral lands and their habitat were not adequately recognized in the consolidation of state forest during colonial period as well as in independent India. Soon after the Act was promulgated, rules were enacted which were notified in the gazette on 19th June, 2007.

**Role Of Gram Sabha** - *Gram Sabhas* have been assigned important role in the implementation of the provisions of the Act promulgated by the central government and applicable from December, 2006. The *Gram Sabha* would elect Forest Rights Committee who would invite claims on forest land as detailed in sec 3 (1) of the Act. Some of the important rights mentioned are

1. Right to hold and live in the forest land under individual or common occupation for habitation or self cultivation for livelihood.
2. Community rights.
3. Right of ownership, access to collect, use and dispose of minor forest produce.
4. Rights for conversion of *pattas* or leases or grants on forest land.
5. Conversion of all forest villages into revenue villages.
6. Right to protect, regenerate or conserve or manage any community forests resource which they have been traditionally protecting.
7. Right of access to biodiversity or community right to intellectual property.
8. Right to in-situ rehabilitation including alternative land where scheduled tribes or traditional forest dwellers have been illegally evicted without receiving legal entitlement to rehabilitation prior to 13<sup>th</sup> day of Dec 2005.

The vesting of forest rights under this Act, with respect to forest land shall be subject to the condition that the scheduled tribes or other traditional forest dwellers had occupied forest land before 13<sup>th</sup> day of December 2005.

The Forest Rights Committee of each *Gram Sabha* after recovering the above referred claims will examine the claims, look into the evidence, visit and survey the site, demarcate, and then would put its recommendation for the claims before the *Gram Sabha*. The *Gram Sabha* would then approve/disapprove the claims and would forward

them with their recommendation to the Sub-Divisional Committee who in turn would send it to the District Level Committee who would finalize the claims. The District and Sub-Divisional Committees are supposed to raise awareness through workshops and other means and sensitize officials and the public, and members of *Gram Sabha* about the provisions of the Act.

### **The Process**

After the Act and Rules came into force, the Rajasthan state government initiated activities at the *Panchayat samiti* level to initiate and plan implementation of the provisions in the field. The first step was the election of Forest Rights Committee (FRCs) through the general assembly of the *Gram Sabhas*, who would be receiving claims of forest rights from the residents of the concerned *Gram Sabha*. The forest department is supposed to play the role of a watchdog as well as facilitator, given its role in the various Sub-Committees who shall preside over the crucial decisions being made at various junctures.

### **Perceptions at the grassroots on the FRA**

Seva Mandir had the opportunity to put before people provisions of the draft act as well as the rules and get their feedback. Members of the *Van Utthan Sangh* (VUS), the federation of FPCs facilitated by Seva Mandir, managed to organize consultations with the members of the Forest Rights Committees of different *Panchayats*. Meetings were convened in Jhadol, Kherwara and Kotra Blocks where elected members of the Forest Rights Committee, other PRI officials, and FPC members were invited for discussions and feedback on the provisions of the act, its implementation and effect on the conditions of the forests. The roles were not very clear to them despite the awareness programmes conducted by the government, but the discussion revealed that they had their own concepts regarding rights on forest lands and for deciding the rights.

There was consensus amongst the villagers that forest are to be served as common property resources (CPRs) because they are the mainstay of the poor - from where majority of people earn their livelihood and use the resource for meeting their daily needs of Fuel, Fodder and Timber. They also wanted to protect forests on ecological grounds. They wanted to exercise their right in deciding the regularization of forestland for agriculture purposes and for habitation. They were in favor of regularizing forest land for poor landless, but were opposed to regularizing forest land, falling within their jurisdiction, for community members of other villages. Such inter-village and intra-community disputes are expected to make land settlement a very contentious process.

Under the circumstances, we feel that civil society organizations should take up the responsibility of making people aware of the provisions of the Act, role of different stakeholders in implementation of the Act and help *Gram Sabhas* in taking proper decisions which would protect the rights of genuine claimants with as little as possible destruction to forest land.

Given this background, we feel that the following activities could be undertaken to establish a more transparent and participatory approach towards implementation of the Forest Rights Act:

#### **Evolving Best Practices for Engaging with the Communities/Forest Rights Committee**

Capacity building of Forest Rights Committee and *Gram Sabha* on provisions of the act and their role in implementation is an essential requirement so that eligible claimants will get their due rights. Need of the hour is that people should also be made aware about the concept of land use wherein the decision about defining the classification of land should be based on, firstly, the land capability and, secondly, the subsistence needs of the population. For e.g conversion of land-use pattern of the upper reaches of a hill from forest land to agriculture land might not yield much to the tiller and might end up damaging the ecology and watershed health of the region. Thus in a nutshell the focus would be on capacity building of members of Forest Rights Committee on the right interpretation and implementation of the Act for making it community friendly.

#### **Planning for future land use**

This includes supporting *Gram Sabha* and Forest Rights Committee to settle claims as per their vision giving specific reasons for approval or rejection - this may include negotiation with claimants who claim land with low ecological capability and/or scattered patches and reallocate them on other suitable sites which may be against the provisions of Act but will be in the interest of forest wealth and ecology. This might involve decisions which rationalize or balance community land use and individual stakes. This also might require working on an action research mode to optimize the decisions made so that they incur minimal ecological damage and at the same time are able to settle community/individual rightful claims. Thus in a nutshell ideally our focus shall be on land use planning for the whole village taking the use of forest lands as CPRs for the coming generation. Therefore the approach suggested is to go for a balanced win-win model (livelihood security and conservation of ecology - not one at the cost of the other).

#### **Evolving a roadmap**

Finally, we would like to evolve a roadmap for dealing with all the land use related issues in the future and guidelines for claim settlement. This would also include

supporting the *Gram Sabha* in solving inter-village conflicts. Conflict Resolution can be based on proven methodologies and participatory exercises like PRAs and RRAs to make collective decisions about the veracity of the claims. We also propose 'continuous dialoguing' as a guiding principle instead of for confrontation which would only widen the gap between the enactors and the beneficiaries.

One of the major learnings can be through Process documentation of these activities, in few villages/regions, so that they may be replicated/emulated.

*Mr. S.N. Bhise and Mr. Vivek Vyas work with the natural resource management programme of Seva Mandir*

# **An Initiative to Integrate Improvements in Drinking Water Quality in Watershed Projects**

*Peter Gaff & Ronak Shah*

Little need be said regarding the critical role that safe water plays in the health of communities throughout the “developing” (and “developed”) world. Not surprisingly, issues of water safety are of great urgency within Udaipur District, even arguably more so given the district’s negligible annual rainfall and consequent issues of water scarcity. According to MIT’s 2004 socio-economic survey of the areas of Udaipur district, slightly more than half (54.1%) of the district’s rural residents rely on open wells or other unprotected sources for their household water supply. Perhaps as a consequence, nearly one-quarter (23.48%) of young children (five and younger) in the district and more than 15% of all children were identified by the MIT survey as having suffered from diarrhea, the most common manifestation of waterborne illness, within the previous month of being surveyed.

Increasing access of rural population to safe drinking water has, at various instances, been part of Seva Mandir’s work. Over the years, various interventions such as construction of parapet wells, repair of hand pumps, water chlorination and awareness campaigns were taken to address the enduring problem. However, the initiatives lacking integration with a broader programme and in some cases perhaps due to inappropriateness of the solutions, could not sustain longer.

Taking from the learning of earlier experiences and aiming to revive the issue of drinking water within the existing work framework, an action-research was initiated in September 2007. The research is expected to comprehend the present issue of drinking water in our villages, and evolve an integrated strategy to address the problem. As an objective of the Watershed Programmes is to improve availability and access of drinking water for humans and livestock, incorporating drinking water as a component or an extension of this programme was seemed rational.

A community of a recently completed watershed village Dhala (population 1,516) of Jhadol block was selected for the action-research. The village, having a hilly terrain, is a highly scattered settlement spread across five hamlets. The first part of the research process, conducted in 3 months, involved a 100% household behavior and perception survey, water testing of a few selected more-used water sources, a five-day observation stay in the village to observe community’s water collection, transport and storage practices, and mapping of all water resources of Dhala using GPS technology.

The results of the assessment were revealing: 70% of the community’s hand pumps were either not working or did not produce potable water (which is promoted to be a

key source of rural water supply) and 81% of total village households relied exclusively upon unprotected water sources- primarily open wells- for drinking water. Along with that, almost 50% of all water sources tested in the village, including the two most commonly used wells in the community, registered a maximum level of coliform bacteria that was more than 1,800 organisms for every 100 ml of water against the standard of 10 organisms per 100 ml water.

Based on these findings, a two-phase action strategy has been developed, where the Phase 1 is to focus on protection and restoration of existing community water sources and community education. The general tendency to ensure that the water is safe is by providing water through pipe-supply system, but this is not considered in the present situation because it is not cost-effective for such scattered population. The Phase 2 is designed to focus on water purification and increasing access to safe drinking water.

The work on phase 1, which will be done through active and constructive community participation and contribution, has been kicked off in January 2008. The activities include improving present condition of five commonly used wells, repair of three hand pumps through panchayat support if possible, and awareness programme on the importance of clean drinking water, health & hygiene as well behavioral practices.

The Community has identified five wells- one in each phala/hamlet- that are the most used to ensure coverage of a majority of households for restoration in the first phase. Each of these wells will be repaired as required; parapet walls will be constructed, wells will be internally cleaned, will be covered by either iron/bamboo grill, and shall be provided with a hand pump/ pulley to draw water. The community has shown ample interest and has also realized the need for the intervention; they have agreed to contribute physical labour and stone to repair wells and hand pumps. Further, a Drinking Water Committee has been formed, comprising of one man and woman from each phala/hamlet, to execute the project and manage it in later stages.

The Natural Resource Department at Seva Mandir is planning on bringing back drinking water as a thematic area for the next Comprehensive Plan for the organisation. This will be executed based on the strategy evolved and tested in Dhala village. However, in present context, it has also been strategically thought out to limit the implementation to watershed and water resource development villages so as to ensure an overall improvement in water availability and quality of the selected areas. In this process, many eyes will be focused on Dhala village in the months ahead as work has started taking shape on the ground.

***Ronak Shah and Peter Gaff (Volunteer) are working with the Natural Resource Management programme***

# Silhouette

## Retired But Not Tired - Abraham Mathai

*Shri Mangi Lal Rawat*

Honest, hard working, dutiful, punctual these are

a few similes which describe Shri Abraham Mathai, a driver at Seva Mandir who retired on 29th Feb, '08 after completing 18 years of a glorious service.

Abraham Mathai born on 20 Feb. 1950 in Villayanthur of Collam district of Kerala, first arrived in Seva Mandir in 1991.

Seva Mandir is one of those pioneer institutes where people from various states and diversified cultures work together. Abrahamji is an ideal example of this fact - working at a place 2500 Km. away from his native place. People working at this institute work for the values & ideals of the institute, but few people are able to establish their own values & ideals while following those of the institute. Abrahamji had established a value for punctuality of time and was an inspiration for all others. The working areas of Seva Mandir are in very remote & inaccessible places; driving to these places, maintaining the vehicle condition & ensuring the security of the workers are a challenging task. Abrahamji successfully accomplished these challenges which were exemplary.

Promptness & smartness of the soft spoken Abrahamji never revealed that he was 58 yrs. old and that it was time for him to retire. It is for this reason that it has been said 'he is retired but not tired.'

The Seva Mandir Family wishes him a happy, healthy & long life.

## volunteer speak

**My stay at Seva Mandir... I learnt to think outside of myself and saw beyond the world I knew**

*Aaron Ackerman*

I arrived at Seva Mandir four months ago as naive and wide-eyed as a 6 year-old on the first day of school. I had no friends, no Hindi, and no idea what I would be doing (my initial assignment to a 'community radio initiative' turned out to have been a case of mistaken identity). Indeed, a jetlagged and bewildered journal entry scribbled on the back of my e-ticket that first night concluded, "I hope I make it." Later confessions revealing my paranoid diet of only thick-skinned fruits and bottled water during the first three days drew a mixture of laughter and sympathetic nods from more seasoned volunteers.

I did, however, come to India with three goals. First, to see how well I stood up to NGO life in a developing country. Second, to make a positive impact, no matter how small or seemingly insignificant. Third, to learn. The first goal relates to my future career plans and reflects my status as yet another vocationally-ambiguous recently-graduated liberal arts nomad. The second goal hints at the egomaniacal side of my altruism; I honestly do care about helping others, but I also need some actual results to substantiate my efforts. The third goal was always going to be the most important, mainly because four months is simply too short a time. Too short to really know if I'm suited for life in the development sector, too short to truly understand the lives of the Rajasthani villagers, and definitely too short to effect the type of sustainable advancements about which I've read. This is why my own education has been of the utmost importance here in India.

To share everything I have learned during my time at Seva Mandir would be impossible. I could of course talk at some length about youth, education, and employment in Rajasthan. I could describe my adaptation to everyday life in Udaipur, from power cuts and bucket baths to *garam masala* and 'Indian Standard Time.' Volunteering at Seva Mandir has been extremely fulfilling in terms of the knowledge and experiences I've gained visiting villages, developing a pilot program, exchanging ideas with staff and other volunteers, and making Fatehpura my home.

But my most important discoveries are those that I cannot fully relate, at least not yet. Living so far from the world of college football, reality TV, and political correctness has allowed me to learn about myself. More subtle and conceptual than a

true *renaissance*, what I've experienced is perhaps best described as a paradigm shift in outlook, a flexibility in mindset.

I have gained in patience and perseverance, but most importantly, I've learned appreciation - appreciation for the resilience and sanguine generosity of rural villagers; appreciation for the selflessness of those who turned down lucrative careers for a 9-to-5 of giving; appreciation for the life I have been afforded. My education will continue long after I leave India, which is why I cannot share all of my discoveries right now. It is clear, however, that these new perspectives will greatly shape my future.

I leave Seva Mandir no longer confused, terrified, and alone, but wiser and more confident, complete with an address book filled with new friends. I've also made progress on my first two goals; the next step in my life still remains undecided, but the NGO waters have been tested. I have also positively contributed to Seva Mandir, so I will have something to show family, friends, and future employers. Most importantly, goal number three has been fulfilled. I have not become an expert in rural education or microfinance, nor am I now an enlightened bringer of peace and sustainability. It may be that I will never again work in grassroots development, and that my project will ultimately stutter its way to the third floor of the Seva Mandir library, consigned to dust collection duties. But no matter what, I have learned to think outside of myself and see beyond the world I knew, which is all I could have asked from my stay at Seva Mandir.

## book review

**Reviewer : Mr. Peter Gaff**

**Book: 2008. Astad Pastakia (Ed.). *Locked Horns: Conflicts and their Resolution in Community Based Natural Resource Management*. Books for Change, Bangalore, India.**

In India, where the population is still nearly 70% rural and only slightly more than half of all land is privately owned, common property resources (CPRs) and concessions on government-owned lands (such as forests) are integral to the livelihoods of hundreds of millions of people, and the poorest of the poor in particular. Thus, the development and careful management of CPRs—pasturelands, wastelands and watersheds, among others—has long been a favored policy among Indian development organizations, and with the advent of the Joint Forestry Management (JFM) program in 1992, the Indian government joined the community based natural resource management (CBNRM) wave as well.

The strategy in such programs—a “participatory” approach common to development circles—has been to devolve responsibility to the people, relying on their labor, leadership and management of shared resources to achieve the desired transformation, meanwhile empowering them to identify their own problems and solutions in the future. As Sudarshan Iyengar, Vice Chancellor at Gujarat Vidyapeeth writes in the foreword to the book, one byproduct of this salutary trend toward empowerment at the grassroots in India has been increased conflict between the newly empowered and their ostensible superiors—increased economic and political power means an increase in the power to disagree as well.

This isn't a bad thing, or at least necessarily so; conflict, one hardly needs to be reminded, is a natural feature of human interaction. It is the engine for much change in the world, and much change for the good. Conflict implies both the possibility of destruction *and* creation: out of the flotsam of disagreement can come new ways of thinking, seeing, and being—even for those who have long exploited and abused the historically disadvantaged segments of Indian society. The problem, as Astad Pastakia, editor of *Locked Horns*, realizes, is that, like everyone else in the world, rural Indians are not well equipped to manage conflict; more to the point, neither is the Indian government, and the track record of the NGO community on this score is hardly better.

*Locked Horns*, then, represents a sort of handbook for those invested in the management of conflict focused within the ever contentious arena of CBNRM. The book was first conceived of as a simple collection of case studies for an NGO audience; however, in the course of his work, Pastakia encountered what he felt to be critical gaps in the knowledge and theoretical framework governing the discourse surrounding this key aspect of rural development. Accordingly, he commissioned review papers by selected experts in the field to address those gaps and developed an alternative methodology for identifying, managing and resolving conflicts based on the

cumulative experience collected in the book's fifteen case studies. He has also included an overview of tools and frameworks for conflict analysis and offers conclusions and recommendations for practitioners and policy makers. The result is a thorough, detailed and likely vital addition to the erstwhile scant body of literature on the subject.

Case studies are at the heart of *Locked Horns*—they represent the real-life sinew giving shape to Pastakia's theoretical vision. Most of the cases in *Locked Horns* were written by field workers directly involved—through their work with implementing agencies—in the conflicts they describe, and what they lack in stylistic polish, they more than compensate for in pages of grippingly immediate narrative. Each case represents a microcosm of the difficulties inherent in promoting equitable development of CPRs in rural India.

One reads of inter-caste violence sparked by a dispute over community grazing land; battles between upstream and downstream villages along a shared watershed; community women standing up for control of a dysfunctional, male-dominated Watershed Development Committee; and a seemingly unending series of squabbles derived from poorly thought out JFM program interventions. Most cases close with a brief analysis of the conflict utilizing tools presented by Pastakia in the first section of the book; this aids in linking practice to theory.

Although two-thirds of the volume's fifteen cases originated in Gujarat, Seva Mandir (which hosted one of the case writing seminars for contributors to the book) is given room for two of its own studies of conflict management in CBNRM programs. One of its cases centered on the encroachment of community pastureland by Rajput landholders in a largely tribal village; the other, perhaps unsurprisingly, hinged on a JFM program that excluded two villages from the produce of a particular patch of forestland despite their traditional rights of access to it. JFM, one gathers, is, notwithstanding its noble purpose, the source of a disproportionate number of headaches in the CBNRM world. As Madhu Sarin and Rukmini Rao observe in their chapter on latent conflicts: "The absence of an unbiased forum for resolving...state-community conflicts, combined with the disempowerment and lack of voice of the affected communities, makes latent conflicts inherent in the implementation of JFM in most parts of the country." Pastakia recommends that the government establish conflict resolution mechanisms at both the state and district level explicitly to manage CBNRM disputes.

Only time will tell whether Pastakia, in *Locked Horns*, has enunciated a theoretical model of conflict with better predictive and explanatory powers, as has been his intention. However, he has certainly offered development practitioners, policy makers and academics a rich store of example, anecdote, analysis, tools, findings and recommendations for the future understanding, management and resolution of CBNRM-based conflicts. Conflict, and conflict over natural resources in particular, isn't going away anytime soon; in fact, a convincing argument can be made that given a still growing population, static land resources and a shrinking water supply, conflict over natural resources in India will only increase in the future. Without

the lessons of *Locked Horns* and similar attempts to further the understanding and practice of conflict resolution, the future of CBNRM in India may not look much different than the present. CBNRM's potential for economic and community empowerment and environmental revitalization is simply too great to be frittered away in endless, internecine squabbles.

***Mr. Peter Gaff is a Volunteer from US and is interning with NRM programme of Seva Mandir***

# Donations

1st January - 31st March 2008

*(All amount in Indian Rupee)*

## FOREIGN

1. Mr. Keval Bhasin,U.S.A	4,000
2. Annie Lefe, France	3,005
3. Ms. Neiope De Dobbeleer, Belgium	15,025
4. Mr. Jacques Carluy, France	6,010
5. Mrs. Gilly & Mr. Chris Wiscarson	381,631
6. Mrs. James McKenzie Thomson	18,915
7. Markus Maier, Lerchenaver, Muenchen	14,383
8. Vancouver United Church, USA	5,189
9. World President Organization	200,350
10. Goodwill Association of America	
⇒ Mr. Kent Fikrig	9,662
⇒ Ms. Cynthia Elliott	19,325
⇒ Mr. Anupam Puri	19,325

**TOTAL** **715,870**

## INDIAN

1. Dr. Sunita Kumari, Udaipur	1,001
2. Mr. A.K.Agarwal, Udaipur	5,000
3. Mr. Hardish Gill, Ludhiana	1,600
4. Shri Kishore Saint, Udaipur	1,000
5. Praveen Devpura	10,000

**TOTAL** **18,601**

## CORPUS

1. Goverdhan Singh Jhala (Life membership fee)	1,000
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## THROUGH GIVE FOUNDATION

1. Mr. Rakesh Rathi	5,000
2. Mr. Pralabh Verma	1,666
3. Mr. Bhanu Prakash Reddy	2,500
4. Ms. Krishna Kumar	41,270
5. Ms. Uma Pariti	512
6. Iris Software♣	89,716
7. Ms. Gaurika & Mr. Rakesh Kushwaha *	5,907
8. Tides Foundation*	118,140
9. Ms. Aarti & Mr.Badri Nath	3,977
10. Ms. Sarita & Mr. Vijay Chopra	3,938
11. Mr. Harsh Tiwari	1,615
12. Sang Jo Kim	1,666
13. Sanjay Shah	500
14. Kiran Deshpandey	1,666
15. Amit Acharya	1,666
16. Shamim Furtado	500
17. Satish Thombre	2,166
18. Anuj Babel	3,886
19. Judith Helzner	9,845
20. Vanguard Charitable Endowment programme	195,500
21. Scottrade	29,364
22. Earnest Gilbert Alvares	500
23. Chaitanya Pragda	500
24. Ashutosh O Pewekar	500
25. Apoorva Gosalpuria	1,000
26. Sachin Kasera	1,017

**TOTAL** 5,27,737

\* Corpus

**CHILDLINE PROJECT**

1. Mr. Sudarshan Kushvaha	1,200
2. Mr. Vinod Karanpuria	300
3. Mr. Modi Ram Keer	100

**TOTAL** 1,600

*Grand total*

*1,264,808*

## Visitors

1st January - 31st March  
2008

<b>Name/No. of members</b>	<b>Institute/Organization</b>	<b>Duration of Stay</b>	<b>Activity done at SM</b>
23 people	Pearly Academy, New Delhi	22/01/2008	Educational visit including a orientation meeting, visit to Shishvi, & movie screening
4 people	Rotary Group Study Exchange	25/01/2008	Orientation meeting
Mr. Tanmoy Chakravorty & 29 people	Enterpreneurship Institute of India, Gandhinagar	29/01/2008	Kagmandara field visit-SHG meeting and Balwadi, NRD interventions
Franziska	Give India, Mumbai	15/02/2008 to 18/02/2008	Orientation, screening of movies, Madla and jamun village visit
Kimberly Erringtonmoers	U.S.A.	18/02/2008 to 21/02/2008	Kaya and other field visits
Ms. Kate Ellis	The University of Texas, Austin	04/03/2008	Orientation, Internship Program information
12 Members	St. Christophers School, U.K.	08/02/2008 to 12/02/2008	Orientation, activities with Learning Camp children, Mandana village visit
50 members	Brookings Institute, U.S.A.	26/02/2008	Sadhna artisans home visit, photo exhibition in Delwara
20 members	World President Organisation	26/02/2008	Sadhna artisans home visit, photo exhibition in Delwara
8 members	The Study School, Udaipur	07/02/2008	Orientation, discussion
Laura Tacelli	Italy	10/03/2008	Orientation, Delwara visit
20 members	SEWA Rural, Gujarat	28/03/2008	Orientation and field visit
3 members	Byrraju Foundation, Hyderabad	10/03/2008 to 12/03/2008	Attended meeting of Van Uthhan Sang, Barawa village visit
60 students and teachers	St.Pauls School, Udaipur	31/03/2008 to 05/04/2008	Orientation, Kaya village visit, 6 N.F.Es visits and interactions with the kids

**Volunteers**  
**1st January - 31st March 2008**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>End Date</b>	<b>Institute</b>	<b>Project</b>
Manohar lal Meena	03/01/2008	02/03/2008	Shramjeevi College, Udaipur	Documentation work in CHILDLINE project
Aaron Ackerman	03/01/2008	03/04/2008	U.S.A.	Feasibility research on Youth Resource Centre - Self Help Group pilot program
Annalyn B. Alenton	07/01/2008	17/01/2008	Columbia University, USA	Developing a food security assessment tool for NRD
Kyla Levin Russell	06/01/2008	17/01/2008	Columbia University, USA	Developing a food security assessment tool for NRD
Caroline Bourgeois	10/01/2008	10/02/2008	France	Pregnancy and infant care counseling for TBAs, GNMs and pregnant women for HEALTH Dept.
Brenot Anne	10/01/2008	10/02/2008	France	Pregnancy and infant care counseling for TBAs, GNMs and pregnant women for HEALTH Dept.
Saloni Gupta	14/01/2008	21/03/2008	KIIT School of Rural Management, Bhubaneshwar	Preparation of micro plan for Joint Forest Management in Dob & Nevaj village of Jhadol block for NRD
Sangeetha Nair	14/01/2008	21/03/2008	KIIT School of Rural Management, Bhubaneshwar	Preparation of micro plan for Joint Forest Management in Dob & Nevaj village of Jhadol block for NRD
Piyush Tiwari	14/01/2008	21/03/2008	KIIT School of Rural Management, Bhubaneshwar	Preparation of production plan for the local farmers in Babri Gadunia village of Kherwada block.
Hemendra Kumar Gupta	14/01/2008	21/03/2008	KIIT School of Rural Management, Bhubaneshwar	Preparation of production plan for the local farmers in Babri Gadunia village of Kherwada block.