

Annual Report - 2008 – 09

SHRISTI, Bhubaneswar

Contents

Sl No	Content	Page No
1	Executive Director's Message	3
2	Active Programs with operational area	4
3	Donor wise Support for different Projects	5
4	Action Programme Activities	5
4.1	Women Empowerment through Social Security Programme	5
4.2	Financial Performance of the Cooperatives based at Keonjhar	6
4.3	Baitarani River Basin Programme	8
4.4	Case Story: Learning by Doing- The Art of Making Business	9
4.5	Micro-Finance Training, Research and Resource Centre	10
4.6	Documentation on Grassroots Innovation	11
5	Action Research	11
5.1	Pani Panchayat	11
5.2	Environmental Impact Assessment	11

Executive Director's Message

Dear Shristi Well wishers,

It is my great pleasure and privilege to share with you the challenges in reaching to the underprivileged living in the hinterlands of our state.

The experiment to rope in mid-career development professionals, scientists, academicians for poverty alleviation by nurturing or promoting their ideas or perceptions or convictions through various actions/ interventions has been a very tough but rewarding experience in the growth path of the organization as a whole.

The key approach to build community owned and managed organizations or institutions have reached a stage of success. The Women Self Help Cooperatives and its members are now bubbling with confidence that their own efforts could improve their quality of life with dignity. The past experience in women cooperatives (micro-finance) lead to capacity building cell of practitioners in the sector in the organization. The Baitarani River Basin Initiative has opened up wider opportunities for the organization to formulate and be the architect for large natural resource management field projects which can address the acute basin problems and in the long run that will have a positive bearing on the agro-climatic regions across the basin and state. The appreciation of simple technology that could transform the life and livelihood of rural families has been visible in our programmes. The process of inducting mid-career professionals and their integration into the mission of the organization and over all to the sector needs more standardization for wider impact in the entire state. Secondly, this strategy demands quality time of senior colleagues and more funds, which at times makes it very difficult for their continuity in the organization.

The pattern of past project funding and their duration at times makes it very difficult to retain young, educated staff members. The organization will seek for long-term funding from its existing donors and or prospective donors to avert this situation.

We acknowledge all your visible and invisible support in shaping SHRISTI.

Sincerely yours,
Ranjan Mahapatra
Let us create

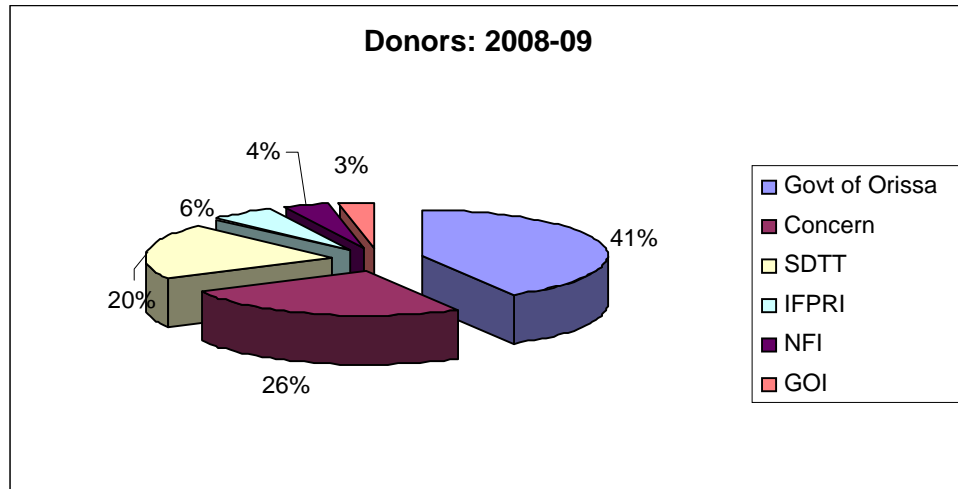
Shristi has made all attempts to bring an improvement in the life of the rural people in its operational areas. In each passing year, Shristi reviews the programme attempted and accomplished, identify the success and failures of the programme, learnt from its failures, utilizes the learning at every level of organizational development and come up with a strong strategic planning for the year to come. Despite the pressures from the external and internal factors, Shristi able to address the need of 6000 targeted families in 134 villages of Keonjhar and Dhenkanal districts of Orissa.

Active Programs with operational area:

Project Title	Donor	Operational area
Institutional Option for Improving Water Management in India - Potential Role of River Basin Management in the Baitarani Basin, Orissa	International Food Policy Research Institute, Washington	Keonjhar, Bhadrak, Mayurbhanj, Sundargarh, Jajpur,
Strategizing Natural resource management in the Baitarani River Basin districts	Sir Dorabjee Tata Trust (SDTT), Mumbai	Keonjhar, Bhadrak, Mayurbhanj, Sundargarh, Jajpur,
Environmental Assessment and Development of Environmental Management Framework (EA & EMF) of community tanks in Orissa	Govt. of Orissa	25 minor irrigation tanks across Orissa
Participatory Details Implementation Planning NGO support for Pilot PP Strengthening & Micro Planning	Govt. of Orissa	Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj
Follow up activities of Sodhyatra under scouting & documenting of Indigenous Knowledge System & Grassroot Creativity in Koraput Orissa	National Innovation Foundation, Department of Science & Technology, GOI.	Koraput, Orissa
Usher in simple living with dignity among citizen of Orissa through assimilation common people's knowledge & its application	National Innovation Foundation, Department of Science & Technology, GOI.	Orissa
Promoting Easy Access to Savings and Credit through women self help micro finance cooperative.	Concern Word wide India, Bhubaneswar	Keonjhar
Micro Finance Training, Research and Resource Centre	SDTT, Mumbai	Eastern Indian States
Sustainable Health Initiatives through Microfinance Co Operative in 15 village of Sadar Block of Dhenkanal district	National Foundation For India	Dhenkanal
End water Poverty Campaign and World Water Day Celebration	Water aid, Bhubaneswar	Dhenkanal

During the year 2008-'09, Shristi continuously improved upon and indulged in direct action-field project implementation, capacity building, action research, advocacy, documentation and dissemination simple knowledge & technology.

Donor wise Support for different Projects:



Action Programme Activities

Women Empowerment through Social Security Programme:

Micro-finance programme is considered as a channel to reach to the unreachable, accessing the capital for the people deprived of arranging it from the formal financial institutions, fulfilling the ways and means of the family to earn from various sources and the last but not the least, the total gamut of the programmes helps in fighting out directly with the poverty. More to it, the amalgamation of self-help structure concept with micro-finance helps in empowering the disadvantaged rural women to get a space to put their feet in the ground, creating a community based organization at the village level, providing a social security to the women members and ensuring a sustained livelihood for the women members and their family.

At the beginning of initiating the development activities and looking at the acute poverty pockets of Keonjhar and Dhenkanal, Shristi thought of initiating micro-finance programmes in Keonjhar and Dhenkanal respectively.

In continuation of the programme for the women self-help cooperatives promoted in Keonjhar, in the year 2008-'09, Shristi had conducted a series of capacity building programmes for the members, directors and the accountants of the cooperatives. For this noble purposes, Concern World Wide-India, had extended their support. In all 10

panchayats of Sadar block, capacity building programmes were considered as an effective medium to make the members understand and reach to the last members of the community.

Financial Performance of the Cooperatives based at Keonjhar

Sl#	Name of the Cooperative	Estd.	Surplus as on March'08	Income of the Month April'08			Expenses of the Month April'08				Surplus of Apr'09	Surplus as on Apr'09
				Membership Fees	Interest	Total	Salary	Incentives	Others	Total		
1.	Jagruti Women Self-Help Coop. Ltd., Bauripada	February 2002	23922.50	30.00	1672	1702	300	501	476	1277	425.00	24347.50
2.	Sahayogi Women Self-Help Coop. Ltd., Dimbo	April 2002	184394.00	75.00	13623	13698	300	2602	827	3729	9969.00	194363.00
3.	Subhashree Women Self-Help Coop. Ltd., Gobardhan	April 2002	142511	135.00	7692	7827	300	1448	187	1935	5892.00	148403.00
4.	Bhagyashree Women Self Help Coop. Ltd., Handibhanga	December 2002	28882.50		3494	3494	300	550	171	1021	2473.00	31355.50
5.	Dharitri Women Self Help Coop., Kathabari	February 2003	5492.00	75.00	964	964		221	30	251	713.00	6205
6.	Upakari Women Self Help Coop. Ltd., Kaunrikala	December 2002	23030.50	30.00	3321	3321	300	928	165	1393	1928.00	24958.50
7.	Janmabhumi Women Self Help Coop. Ltd., Maidankel	February 2002	49004.00	150.00	5298	5298	300	1262	204	1766	3532.00	52536.00
8.	Kalyani Women Self Help Coop. Ltd., Nellung	February 2003	73013.00		8945	8945	300	1670	3762	5732	3213.00	76226.00
9.	Pragati Women Self Help Coop. Ltd., Raghunathpur	April 2002	24713.00	135.00	5526	5661	300	1028	427	1755	3906.00	28619.00
10.	Mangalmayee Women Self Help Coop. Ltd., Sankir	March 2002	25467.50		2523	2523	300	759	341	1400	1123.00	26590.50
Total			580430.00	630.00	52803.00	5343.00	2700.00	10969.00	6590.00	2025.00	33174.00	613604.00

Note: Surplus includes interest payable on saving

Others: (House rent+ Stationary+ Travel+ Withdrawal interest on saving)

Interest: Interest on loan and bank interest

Looking at the acceptance of the programme, capacity building programmes were designed for the members at different levels of the group and done on a continuous basis at the field level. The programme has got more momentum with the activities like planned visit of the project personnel to the members' house, interacting with the members and knowing the problems of individual household helps in assessing the different needs of the people and accordingly the activities of the women led institutions at the panchayat level are given a proper shape to suit the needs of each and every sections of the society. In order to bring more ownership and involvement of the women members in these institutions, various financial products are designed and encouraged to own these products.

In Dhenkanal, Shristi has promoted twenty numbers of self-reliant women self-help cooperatives in Sadar, Odapada and Hindol blocks. Apart from getting involved in the financial transactions, the members of these cooperatives involved in other social activities like organizing health camp at the village level, promoting awareness on water and sanitation issues, scouting and documenting local health practices.

At present, Shristi has the direct presence in 134 villages in 3 blocks of Dhenkanal district and one block of Keonjhar district.



Cluster Coordinator engaged in dialogue with the women members on functional aspects of the group



Future security lies in Savings: Constituency wise savings collection in nearby primary school



Transparency is the factor of survival: Accountants engaged in learning accounting tricks and record maintenance to achieve transparency



Performance and Equity are the major wheels in the progress of community institution: Oath taking ceremony among the Directors of the Cooperative

Baitarani River Basin Programme:

The action research study on Baitarani River Basin initiative found out that in order to check the flood, pollution control measures in River Baitarani, and creating livelihood opportunity for the people living in the basin areas, more concentration should be given upon designing and implementing integrated natural resource management programme in the upper, middle and lower basin areas. Based on the findings, several rounds of consultation meeting held with the partner Civil Society Organizations engaged in promoting developmental activities in the basin areas. The outcome of the consultation programme divides the future intervention in basin areas in three thematic lines, i.e., Knowledge support initiative, Executing core action programmes in the basin areas and Research and Advocacy initiative. As per the available expertise level of the partner organizations, they are chosen to work in above mentioned thematic lines. Moreover, the concrete developmental action plan for the river basin programme will be derived from the micro-planning process that to be carried out in the basin areas. The micro-planning process will bring out the detailed need of the people in the river basin areas that to be carried out in the years to come in the areas like Rights and Governance, Natural Resource Management, Livelihood and Hydrology.

- Case Story:

Learning by Doing- The Art of Making Business

Nellung panchayat is a tribal dominated panchayat of Keonjhar Sadar block. Though it is a nearby panchayat of Keonjhar Sadar block, but most of the people work as an agricultural labourer and migrate to the nearby towns in search of job. With the help of Shristi, Women Self-Help Cooperative is established in the year 2002. The women members of Nellung panchayat increasingly involved in the activities of the cooperative.

The special feature of the cooperative is most of the members involved in productive activities. In this cooperative, Kausalya Patra and Jayanti Mohanta are the active members. They involve in many social activities of the cooperative and extend help to other members in their distress. They always look for the sources where the means of subsistence could be achieved. They discussed the matter with the project personnel of Shristi and wanted to get more information regarding the business opportunity. In the mean time, Raksha bandhan was round the corner and it was suggested to do the Rakshi business. Initially they were unwilling to involve in the business, but as the project personnel did the business plan of Rakshi business, they agreed to take up the activity. They opted for loan from the cooperative. They explained to the board of directors that they want loan for a short term period. Within the due time, they will return the entire loan amount with the interest. Board of Directors convinced upon their proposal and sanctioned the loan.

Both of them in consultation with the project personnel of Shristi procured Rakshi with an amount of Rs.2000/- from Cuttack. They opened the shop near the road side and started to sell with small margin. As the Raksha Bandhan day was approaching nearer, they could able to sell all the rakshis and get a profit of Rs.4, 500/-. With the profit amount, they paid the loan amount with the interest, the money of the tent house and get a profit of Rs.800/- each.

The seasonal business tactic gave them a fair idea about pricing and selling the product.

Micro-Finance Training, Research and Resource Centre:

Training has an important place in inclusive growth of human being and of the organization as well. The prime truth in developmental paradigm is that the successful execution of the activities revolves around transfer and utilization of knowledge to the people. Hence, it is hard to negate that a well structured and motivated training can help in transformation of dream into reality.

Realizing the practical importance of training at the execution level, the training, research and resource centre of Shristi has come up with a new module in 2007.

“To disseminate knowledge base and enhancing the capability of the grassroots level workers towards better implementation of poverty eradication programmes” was the objective. Training of Trainers Programme on Micro-Finance started keeping in mind to

create barefoot trainers on micro-finance. Accordingly, the participants were oriented on trainer’s skill and the subject knowledge on micro-finance. Initially the training programme was kept for 9 days. Looking at the comfortability of both participants and organization, later the programme got reduced to 7 days. However, the design of program and content were well accepted among the participants. Moreover, the training programme got vehement responses from all over the country and the participants from all parts of the country participated in the training programme. Initially participants from 18 organizations across the country participated. The in-house resource person had conducted the training programmes and it supported by the external resource persons. Based on the success of the programme, Shristi wanted to conduct the same training programme in the next calendar year.



Joint Director of Misson Shakti, Govt. of Orissa is inaugurating the function



Learning by doing: Participants engaged in group work



Participants of the training Programme



Certificate distributed to acknowledge participation and completion of course

Documentation on Grassroots Innovation:

Ideas born with the need and it die its own death if it is not documented properly and disseminated across the people without any boundary limitation. In India, many innovative ideas born at the grassroots suiting to the local needs of the people and in this connection, Shristi with the support of National Innovation Foundation, Ahmedabad has made a little strive to document the grassroots innovation and disseminate such knowledge and practices across the State and country.



It is true that, at the grassroot level many traditional practices are followed over the ages. However, these practices are not documented properly and the knowledge fades away from the minds of the people with the passing away of innovator of these ideas. Through proper documentation, these practices can be preserved and disseminated across the country.

In order to identify and giving recognition to such practices, last year SODH Yatra was conducted in Koraput district of Orissa. During the Yatra, many such practices were identified and award was conferred to the personnel. Besides that from the operational areas of Shristi, many local herbal practices were identified and sent to National Innovation Foundation. These practices are recognized and documented in the national level magazine named as “Honey Bee”.



Action Research

- **Pani Panchayat:** Shristi took up reformation of Pani Panchayat activities in Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj district respectively. In Keonjhar, the areas were covered near the Remal Dam and in Mauyrbhanj, the areas were covered near Sunei dam. The reformation of Pani Panchayat was done with the support of Asian Development Bank and Water Resources Department, Government of Orissa.

-**Environmental Impact Assessment:** In association with Indian Resources Information and Management Technologies Limited, Hyderabad and Water Resources Department, Government of Orissa, Shristi was engaged in assessing the impact of environment on minor irrigation sources. The study was conducted across Orissa.

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