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Vision of CASA



CASA's vision is inspired by the Christian Faith and values. CASA visualises a society in which peace, justice and equality prevail and wherein all citizens irrespective of caste, creed, language and religion—live in peace and communal harmony. CASA also envisages a society where the poor, women,

the marginalised and under-privileged lead a quality life with dignity and have equal opportunity for their involvement in the development process which is value based and sustainable, and also have an appropriate environment to develop their fullest potential.

Mission of CASA



CASA actively supports and works for a just and sustainable society by creating opportunities for the participation of socially and economically marginalised sections in the development process through networking, alliance building and strengthening of their organisation. CASA

also supports local self-governance, protection of human rights, peace and reconciliation and sustainable livelihood measures and responds to the environmental issues, natural and manmade disasters and strives to bring the victims to the mainstream while upholding the human dignity. CASA promotes gender mainstreaming at all appropriate levels, mobilises resources in favour of the poor and optimises all potentials and capacities existing within the organisation and other partners.



EDITORIAL



*“One is not born a woman, rather becomes one!”
- Simone de Beauvoir*

On the 8th March 2011, the world celebrated the completion of 100 years of the Women's Day! Even though officially 8th March has been observed as the International Women's Day (IWD) since 1975, as declared by the UN, IWD dates back to early 1900. On the 19th March 1911, the first IWD was observed in Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland. However, a week later on 25th March in a tragic accident more than 140 working women died due to bad working conditions in the USA. That gave the much required momentum to the IWD. The same year 2011 also saw the emergence of 'bread and roses' campaign, in favour of the women's rights. Since then, a lot has changed both socially and politically in favour of women. However, the process of change has been very slow, yet steady.

We live in a patriarchal world, dominated and governed by the men. The patriarchal dynamics are at play even before the woman is born on this earth! If she is 'allowed' to be born, she may not survive upto 5 years of age. If she was lucky, then the socialisation process will turn the female of the species of human being into a woman! Simone Beauvoir, the famous French feminist, therefore once said “One is not born a woman, rather becomes one!”. She will faithfully follow the gender roles dictated to her by the patriarchal society.

The political set up, religious institutions and economics sphere only reinforces the patriarchal notions. Some of the striking facts about women can well describe the unequal status of women vis-à-vis men.

- Women in Switzerland got the right to vote only in 1971. This is one of the most developed European countries.
- Quite predictably in Kuwait women have got the right to vote for the first time as recently as 2005.
- Men constitute 90% of world's parliament seats and women only in 10%.
- While women put in 70% of the work hours, they earn only 10% of the world's income and they own only 1% of the world's property. The rest is owned by men.
- 70% of people living 'below poverty line' are women.
- We seldom see a women priest in any religions at the highest order.

When we specifically look into India, some of these figures get worsened. In India, the women's challenges get compounded by the religious and traditional patriarchal practices. There are increased problems of women suffering from domestic violence, dowry, female infanticide and foeticide, etc. In this context the IWD centenary was celebrated this year, all over the world. However, things are changing rapidly towards gender equality, particularly in India. As of today in India women constitute approximately 10% of the parliament, whereas in many countries there are not even 1 woman in their parliament, particularly in the middle east. Thankfully India has already passed a bill for 33% reservation for women in the parliament, at the Rajya Sabha and hopefully sooner than later, the bill will be passed at the Lok Sabha and becomes a reality. Quite surprisingly Rwanda, one of the “under developed” African countries having an abysmally low Human Development Index @ 152, is leading the chart by bringing in 56% women in the parliament. (Sweden in 2nd position @ 45%). We think Rwanda has shown the way to the rest of the world!

Women in India continue to be discriminated on the basis of their gender. In order to achieve gender equality, we need to address the issue of Gender equity, which calls for gender equality with the fairness of justice. The affirmative actions such as the women's reservation bill is just one of such actions. At this point in time, India is best poised to pass this bill, with the President of India, Leader of Ruling party, leader of opposition and the Speaker of the house and chief ministers of 3 metro cities - Delhi, Chennai and Kolkata being Women!

CASA too is continuously playing its small but effective role in the empowerment of women. CASA is at a much advanced stage of its gender mainstreaming process. A detailed progress report can be found in this newsletter with a special focus on the women's concerns. Besides, this newsletter contains the usual success stories, case studies and reporting on the innovative experiments done at the grassroots level on community empowerment in a Rights Based Approach, as well as highlights of CASA's global ecumenical partnership. We wish you all a happy and meaningful reading.

- Editorial Team:

Aloke Michyari

PRO

Dinesh Suna

Policy Officer

NATIONAL PROGRAMMES



NEW NATIONAL BOARD OF CASA FORMED FOR THE QUADRENNIUM 2011-2014

CASA is pleased to announce the reconstitution and formation of the National Board and various other committees at the national level, as well as Zonal Committee of East, South and West Zones for the quadrennium 2011-2014. The Society of CASA, as per the Constitution, forms the National Board once in 4 years, and the National Board elects the Officers of CASA and also approves the reconstitution of the Zonal Committees with the participation of the member Churches.

After formation of the new National Board of CASA, the following officers of the National Board were elected in its first meeting on 24 February 2011 for the quadrennium 2011-2014:

Chairperson: The Most Rev. Dr. Purely Lyngdoh, Moderator of Church of North India, and elected as Chairperson of CASA.

Vice-Chairperson: The Most Rev. Dr. B. Suneel Bhanu, President of Andhra Evangelical Lutheran Church, and elected as Vice Chairperson of CASA

Treasurer: Rev. Dr. S.C. David, Moderator of Hindustani Covenant Church, and elected as Treasurer of CASA.

Altogether there are 32 members in the CASA National Board representing the member Churches of CASA, co-opted members in the category of experts from different fields, and the General Secretary of NCCI and the Director of CASA being ex-officio members.

The following members were elected to serve on the Executive Committee of CASA for the quadrennium 2011-2014:

- The Most Rev. Dr. Purely Lyngdoh, Chairperson (Church of North India)
- The Most Rev. B. Suneel Bhanu, Vice Chairperson (Andhra Evangelical Lutheran Church)
- Rev. Dr. S.C. David, Treasurer (Hindustani Covenant Church)
- Rev. Dr. A. K. Lama (Council of Baptist Churches in North-East India)

- His Grace Dr. Yakob Mar Irenaios (Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church)
- The Rt. Rev. G. Devakadasham (Church of South India)
- Rev. Dr. Anil Martin (Evangelical Lutheran Church in Madhya Pradesh)
- Mrs. S. Manohar Rao (Co-opted Member)
- Mrs. Pushpa Elizabeth Waghmare (Co-opted Member)
- Dr. J. A. Oliver (Co-opted Member)
- Dr. Sanjeev Simlai (Co-opted Member)
- Rev. Dr. Roger Gaikwad (General Secretary, NCCI - ex officio)
- Mr. Sushant Agrawal (Director, CAaSA - ex officio)

The Zonal Committees of CASA for the East Zone, South Zone and West Zone were also reconstituted by the Society of CASA in its first meeting of the quadrennium. In the subsequent first meeting of the Zonal Committees in all three Zones during the month of March 2011, the following were elected as Chairpersons of the respective Zonal Committees:

East Zonal Committee:

The Rt. Rev. Joseph Mar Barnabas
(Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar, elected as Chairperson)

South Zonal Committee:

The Rt. Rev. R.D. Vijaykumar
(Arcot Lutheran Church, elected as Chairperson)

West Zonal Committee:

Bishop Dr. Elia Pradeep Samuel
(Methodist Church in India, elected as Chairperson)

CASA looks forward to working closely with its member Churches and the co-opted members in different Committees to strengthen the governance and management of the organisation for the next four years.

Development Initiative in Western Orissa - A Collective Effort

Right Based Activities of CASA In Western Orissa

CASA is working for more than seven years for the socio-economic development of the community in nine districts of Western Orissa. Towards social development, CASA has implemented the following rights based programmes from January to March 2011:

- District level Consultation on Climate Change
- Consultation and Rally on Forest Rights Act (FRA)
- Consultation on Human Trafficking and Migration

the participants about the climate change and how do the partner organisations need to work on this issue for the betterment of the community. Further, by focusing on sustainable livelihood approach, the participants gained knowledge regarding actions to be taken to ensure that the laws in favour of the communities, specially the farmers and tribals who play a major role in preserving natural biodiversity. For the upliftment of this section of the society the PIOs have decided to connect the People's Forum with the youth cadres for highlighting these issues collectively through a common platform.

District Level Consultation on Climate Change:



Consultation on Climate Change at Jharsuguda District, Orissa organised by Western Orissa Progressive Alliance (WOPA)

CASA is working in nine districts of Western Orissa with 18 NGOs as Partner Implementing Organisations (PIOs). A district level consultation on Climate Change was organised by the Western Orissa Progressive Alliance (WOPA) with initiative taken by CASA and SEWA on 12th & 13th January 2011 at Jharsuguda District, Orissa. Today the whole world is facing problems due to the climate change whereas Western Orissa which is wholly depending on agriculture is now moving towards industrialisation. Due to establishment of manufacturing units, we can find a steady growth in the means of transport and excessive use of modern machines. While these aspects, on one hand, portray development, they have led to adverse and unfavourable conditions following climate change, on the other. Over a period of 14 years (from 1989 to 2003) the rain fall rate has decreased from 1474 mms to 1344 mms annually. The Global Mean Temperature is also found to be increasing by 0.7 degree Celsius per year.

Representatives from the 18 partner organisations, along with CASA staffs, WOPA forum staffs and representatives from other like minded NGOs participated in this programme. The objective of the programme was to give clear understanding to

Consultation and Rally on FRA:



Consultation on Forest Right Act (FRA) organised by Western Orissa Progressive Alliance (WOPA)



A rally on Forest Right Act (FRA) organised by Western Orissa Progressive Alliance (WOPA)

A two-day programme on Forest Right Act was organised by the Western Orissa Progressive Alliance (WOPA) with the initiative taken by CASA and SIDI on 17th & 18th February 2011. On the first day a consultation was held at District Auditorium Hall, Sambalpur in which 200 participants from nine districts of Western Orissa took part. On the second day a mass rally was organised in which more than 3000 people participated pressing

their demand for right to forest land which is their main source of livelihood. The objective of the programme was proper implementation of the Act for the people (mainly the forest dwellers) and to enhance knowledge of the participants about the on Forest Land Right Act, the related rules and the present situation with a view to draw a common action plan. The programme had a great impact on the State governing body as well as on the participants who came mainly from the grassroots level. At the end of the programme a written memorandum was submitted to the Revenue Divisional Commissioner (RDC) of Sambalpur.

Consultation on Human Trafficking and Migration

The “Consultation on Human Trafficking and Migration” was a two-day programme organised by the Western Orissa Progressive Alliance (WOPA) with initiative taken by CASA and SEWA. Orissa is an agriculture based State, but now there is a rapid industrial growth following which villagers are migrating out of their villages to the other states for livelihood. In Western Orissa there is distress migration because it is the second poorest State of India and more than 50% people in Western Orissa are Below the Poverty Line. Many Social Security Schemes have been formulated by the Government for upliftment of the living conditions of the poor people. In MGNREGA government has given 100 days of work out of 365 days at a minimum wage. However, most of the poor villagers are unable to have an access to these schemes. Further, in Western Orissa 52% of the land is in the hands of only 9% of the

landlords and rest is distributed within small landlords and other people. As such, the poor people are forced to go out from their villages - both directly and through brokers- to earn their livelihood. Even in the places they migrate to, they are being exploited and ill treated by their employers and brokers. In Western Orissa, girl child trafficking is also found to be a burning issue. Many girls are illegally being sent to various place outside Orissa for commercial purposes, and are abused mentally and physically too. They are not even allowed to return home or have any contact with their relatives and friends.

Through this Consultation Programme, WOPA has taken a strong stand to work closely with and counsel the migrating/migrated villagers in order to make them aware of their rights. CASA would register the names of the migrated villagers and endeavour to solve their problems and bring them out of their misery through other NGOs working in those areas. It was also decided to assess the needs of and engage the village youths gainfully by providing suitable sources of income to them - thereby preserving the traditional means of livelihood and preventing the youths from migrating out of their villages in search of jobs.

Incidentally, major developmental works by Government are implemented during the period when maximum number of people migrate outside the State. Hence, WOPA can facilitate the government to implement all the developmental works i.e. MGNREGA, distribution of job cards, BPL survey etc., when the migrated people return to their respective villages.



Consultation on Human Trafficking and Migration organised by Western Orissa Progressive Alliance (WOPA)

MAHARASHTRA STATE PLATFORM MEETING



Regional workshop on land rights at Hiware bazar- State Platform Members (LJHA Maharashtra).

MAHARASHTRA STATE PLATFORM MEETING

Lokshahi Janhakka Andolan-Maharashtra (LJHA) is the State Level Platform of the People's Organisations and networks facilitated by CASA West Zone to upscale the activism at the meso level and claim entitlements and rights of the poor, marginalised and excluded. A state level meeting of the members of Lokshahi Janhakka Andolan was held on 24th & 25th February 2011 at CASA's Human Resource Development Centre, Paithan, Dist. Aurangabad, Maharashtra. The meeting was attended by 229 people, representing the member organisations/networks of the State Platform from 100 talukas of 22 districts in Maharashtra.

The above programme was inaugurated by Mr. Sanjay Wachowre, Member of the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly, as the Chief Guest. He was apprised of the work of the LJHA in the past years and the struggles of the people to claim their rights and entitlements. Mr. Wachowre assured the gathering that he would take up the issues - particularly those related to the Land Rights and Public Distribution System- with the Government of Maharashtra,. An information kit prepared by LJHA & CASA, containing information on various Government Resolutions (GR) on Land Rights and SC directives on Right to Food, different schemes of the Central & State Governments and contact addresses and telephone numbers of the State Cabinet Ministers, was released by the Chief Guest for reference and use of the Activists.

The key points of discussion during the post inaugural session were:-

- The campaigns and advocacy on PDS, Land Rights taken up since launch of the platform and key challenges in terms of monitoring immediate and intermediate outcome and impacts.
- The structure, functions, values and principles of the Forum and coordination responsibilities.
- Broad basing and enlarging the critical mass of the State Platform by strengthening the member People's Organisations and Networks.

- The challenges of facilitating mass movements in non-violent manner and within the constitutional & legal frame work.
- Facilitating the data analysis of the land rights survey and district level consultations and submission of demands to district authorities.
- Creation of support systems at various levels like Advisory Committee with eminent persons.
- Participation of the State Platform in the convention scheduled to be held in Bhopal for the formation of "National People's Forum".

In order to build common perspectives on the key issues being pursued by the State Platform, sessions on inputs by eminent resource persons were included during the meeting for two days.

- Mr. Shantaram Bapu Pandhare, a leading Land Rights Activist, spoke on the key challenges of claiming land rights and policy environment in Maharashtra.
- Mr. Manav Kamble, a lawyer Activist from Pune, led the session on issues in facilitating People's movements and various effective strategies to strengthen the movements. He also gave his inputs on advocacy tools which can be used by the networks and movements to pressurise the administration to listen to and take actions on the demands of the people.

The two-day meeting was facilitated by the leaders of the State Platform viz., Mr. Ashok Bhosale, Mr. P. N. Chavan, Mrs. Kalavati Patil and Mrs. Joycia Thorat, Project Officer and Mr. Sunil Gaikwad, Asst. Project Officer(both from CASA). A team of staff led by Mr. Ashok Shirsat, PAT Coordinator, made all logistical arrangements for the programme.

MAHILA MELAWA AT AHMEDNAGAR

Ahmednagar Gramin Vikas Karyakarta Parishad (GVKP) is one of the PAT Units with active women participation in CASA's West Zone. The women of the GVKP have been very active in the past, but due to certain reasons most of the women had stopped coming to the programmes. In order to revive, encourage and motivate them to continue getting more women in the process, a Mahila Melawa was organised on 09th March, 2011 at Rahuri Cluster Head Quarters, in which nearly 196 women participated. This event coincided with the inauguration of the GVKP office at Rahuri to mark the importance of women's participation in the process. Eminent activist, Advocate Nirmal Choudhary, spoke on women's rights, their role in self governance and the change that they can bring about in their respective villages, talukas and districts. Sports and games were organised for young and old women who participated enthusiastically. Gifts were given to the winners as well to all participants. A young woman participant spoke on the roles and responsibilities of women today and their major contribution to strengthening the community and family. Few men observers attending the above meeting also learnt about the leading role being played by women to uphold the family, and committed themselves to work towards providing dignified life and equal rights for women.

LINKAGES AND PARTICIPATION WITH OTHER FORUMS

A. Convention for Women at Sangli, Maharashtra.

To recognise and empower women from all walks of life and to assert their right to life of dignity and self respect, a Mahila Melawa was organised at Sangli, Maharashtra. The three -day convention (from 11th to 13th March 2011) - organised and hosted by the Nehru Yuvak Kendra and Bhimangan Mahila Mandal - was co-supported by CASA and the Mahila Aghadi. About 150 women participated in the programme. The Mahila Aghadi which is a network facilitated by CASA actively participated in the Melawa by sending 19 women from different districts of Maharashtra.

The Activists, Mrs. Nanda Patil and Mr. Lalit Babar working with People's movements, addressed the gathering and gave their valuable inputs on women empowerment. The participants were also informed about the laws protecting the rights of women, various welfare schemes focusing on women, special component plan for SCs & STs and the importance of women's participation in the local self governing bodies. Mr. Pramod Hinge and Ms. Pande of Nehru Yuvak Kendra shared the information on their work focusing on issues of widows and destitute women.

Coming together and sharing common concerns and learning from each other is the first step for women in their empowerment process. Accordingly, the three- days meeting provided the space and opportunity for 150 women from across Maharashtra to strengthen their efforts of empowerment and move forward.

B. Regional workshop on Land Rights by FCFC West



A regional workshop on Land Rights for creating common understanding on the issues involved and to facilitate collective actions to claim rights of the people under Forest Rights Act and other relevant policies of the Govt. of Maharashtra, was held at Ahmednagar from 14th to 17th February 2011. This workshop was attended by 60 people including key staff members nominated by CASA, CNI-SBSS and Peaceful Society, Goa under the FCFC West Zone network.

The distinguished resource persons viz. Ms. Indvai Tulpule, Ms. Surekha Dalvi and Dr. Mukund Ghare, gave guidance to the participants on various aspects of the land rights and related struggles in Maharashtra and the need for collective action.

The inaugural programme was chaired by Dr. Suresh Pathare, Director, Centre for Studies in Rural Development -Institute of Social Work Research, Ahmednagar and the closing session was chaired by Bishop Pradip L. Kamble, CNI, Nasik Diocese and member of CASA West Zonal Committee. The workshop was jointly facilitated by Mr. K. V. Thomas from CASA, Mr. Marwin Macwan from CNI-SBSS and Mr. Kumar Kalanand Mani from Peaceful Society.

C. Dharna against diversion of water meant for irrigation to



other purposes.

The High Power Committee (HPC) headed by the water resources Minister of Maharashtra has taken a decision to divert huge quantum of water (1500 mom) from 38 irrigation project dams to non-irrigation and industrial use. Despite the failure to pass the bill in the winter session due to civil society opposition to it, the government re-issued the ordinance to this effect in January 2011. The decision is affecting nearly 6.4 lakh acres of irrigation area in the State. The government is not inclined and interested in opening the issue of ordinance for public discussion and scrutiny.

The Lokabhimukh Pani Dhoran Sangharsh Manch (LPDSM), an umbrella organisation of NGOs fighting for equitable distribution of water organised a Dharna on 16 March 2011 at Azad Maidan Mumbai to thwart the renewed attempt of the government to pass the bill during the current budget session of the assembly without any public discussion on the issue. Nearly 350 activists from across the State participated in the dharna and succeeded in getting an assurance from the concerned Minister that the bill will not be tabled in the current session and a committee will be constituted with members of the civil society to get their perspectives and inputs.

The Maharashtra State Platform- Lokshahi Janhakka Andolan supported and participated in the above Dharna by sending 12 representatives for the same .

RAJASTHAN VIKAS MANCH CONVENTION- 2011



State level convention at Pokran, Jaisalmer organised by Rajasthan Vikas Manch (RVM)

Rajasthan Vikas Manch (RVM) organised a two-days State level convention on 23 & 24 March 2011 in the campus of Urmul Samiti, Pokran, Jaisalmer. This was the third State level convention of RVM to bring RVM and members associated with the forum on one platform to discuss and share about structure and working of RVM so that it could be strengthened further at the state level. Around 200 people from different forums and partner organisations of RVM participated in this convention and shared their experiences, efforts and challenges being faced. The convention was organised at holy place of Ramdev ji (Dalit leader), so that people can take inspiration from the good deeds done by him for providing equality in society. The issue of equal representation to women members in the forum was also the key focus of discussion. The keynote address was delivered by Tola Ram from Unniti Sansthan. In his address, he highlighted the importance of this convention and the need to make RVM stronger by strengthening its grassrootedness as well as to create the State level pressure by strengthening the Youth and Women Leadership.

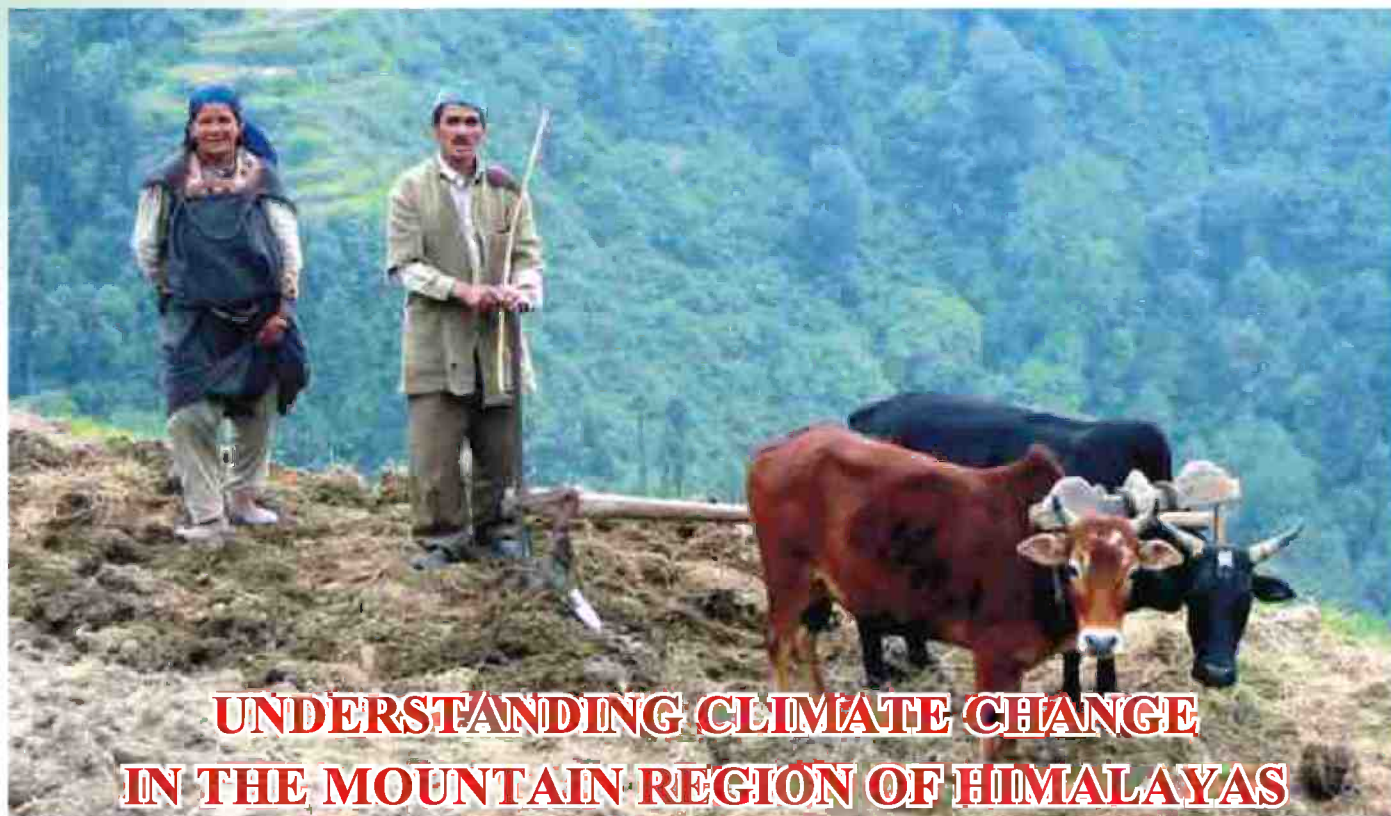
In the first two sessions of the convention, key interventions by RVM in different regions of Rajasthan were shared by the representatives from Eastern, Western and Southern Rajasthan through various campaigns like Dalit Pani Panchayat in Western Rajasthan, Charagah Bachao Abhiyan in Eastern Rajasthan, Van Adhikar and Swashasan Abhiyan in Southern Rajasthan. The representatives reported on the works undertaken by them under these campaigns and success achieved till now. In the second half of the first day, the discussions were held on the draft of Right to Food Bill. Following these discussions, a set of

recommendations has been given by the Manch members and it was mutually decided to submit these recommendations to the Prime Minister to make changes in the Draft Bill. In the last session of the day, Manch members shared their experiences and problems being faced while working with the existing structure of RVM. There were discussions on strengthening the base of the RVM and for taking more effective actions at the grassroots level. Efforts should be made to identify some common agenda to work upon. Women's participation needs to be improved. Local issues need to be raised at broader level to take up joint actions. Apart from regional issues based upon the needs of the region, there should be one or two common issues for all the Manch (Forums) concerned.

Continuing the discussions on the second

day of the convention it was felt that Manch are visible at regional level, but regional efforts should be made more effective. Suggestions came from participants for better planning, fixed agenda of work and regular follow up actions. There is a need to identify strong, common and strategic issue to work upon so that the identity of RVM can be seen differently at wider level. To re-structure the RVM, participants were divided into three groups viz.: Eastern, Western and Southern in order to create a regional level advisory committee and choose representatives among themselves to represent at the Regional and State levels. Following this, three representative (2 women +1 man) have been identified from each group to represent at the State level. RVM have also identified five representatives (2 women + 3 men) to represent RVM at the National level. The Groups have also identified some common issues to work upon like Right to Food, Livelihood, Agricultural and Gender issues. A second line of leadership has come forward to represent RVM at the State level and promote the first line of leadership to have representation at the National Level.

With these structural reformations it was mutually decided to initiate broad level campaigns and also build capacity of local level Manch by enhancing their knowledge. Focus will be given to promote coordination among regional and state structures. It was a fruitful convention in terms of structural reformations, representation, clarification of issues and building consensus among Manch members. The convention was vibrant in nature and full of energy and enthusiasm from the beginning to the end with folk songs, inspirational quotes and heart throbbing folk music.



UNDERSTANDING CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE MOUNTAIN REGION OF HIMALAYAS

Context

Climate change has become a major issue in the Himalayan region. The mountain regions are particularly vulnerable, both because warming trends are higher and the impacts are magnified by the extreme changes in altitude over small distances. The region is characterised by poor accessibility, low population density and lack of infrastructure. Life in the Hindu Kush-Himalayan region also relies strongly on the monsoon systems, and these may be altered by climate change. Locally, people's ability to adapt will be challenged; further away, changes in the Himalayas could affect the life and livelihoods of the 1.3 billion people living in the river basins downstream.

The Diversity of altitude and climate has given HP a rich variety of Flora. Covering nearly 2/3rd of the total area of the state, forests form an important source of income providing raw materials for industries, fodder and nutritious grasses for livestock and resources to meet the needs of agriculturists and other people.

Agriculture is the chief occupation of people in Himachal Pradesh. The agricultural sector of the Himachal Pradesh has more than 45 percent contribution in its economy in terms of the state's domestic product. The chief food crops cultivated in Himachal Pradesh agriculture include wheat, maize, rice, barley, seed-potato, ginger, vegetables, vegetable seeds, mushrooms, chicory seeds, hops, olives, and fig. Himachal Pradesh is also known as the 'Apple State of India' for its large-scale production of fruits -especially apples. The farmers focus

more on generating the cash crops for more revenue earning as it suits the agro-climactic conditions in Himachal Pradesh. The main cereals cultivated in Himachal Pradesh agriculture are wheat, maize, rice, and barley.

A brief study has been conducted in the Patalan and Laghati villages of Kullu District of Himachal Pradesh to understand the implications of climate change on the reference community and their livelihoods.

Impact of climate change on community

People do not make their livelihoods by growing apple in Kullu anymore. The glacier ice and snowfall which contributes a lot in apple farming is now reducing year by year. Thus, livelihood opportunities for large number of families have been disappeared especially in lower areas of Kullu.

Fast melting and receding of glaciers are immediate effects of climate change in Kullu. There have been changes in rainfall pattern and intensity besides increase in average temperature, changes in forest composition, cropping pattern and shifting of seasons.

The rainfall distribution has undergone drastic change along with increase in frequency of extreme weather events like cloudburst and floods. While monsoon has shifted to late August, the winter rains have got delayed to March- April. Winter days have reduced drastically.

Women reported that round the year they used to wear PATTU but for last 10-15 years, they need it for not more than six months. This is more significant and more visible change of climate change.

Snowfall used to be throughout the year covering the ground by about one foot in height but now it covers only 1-2 inches, that too for less than 6 months in a year.

Rabi season is advanced and shortened due to delayed and lesser rainfall. The yield of wheat crop has also gone down owing to extremely high maximum and extremely low minimum temperatures during the last decade.

The demand on irrigation resources is increasing otherwise yield is affected negatively. The area under rice crop is diverted to cropping of maize due to non availability of water. Incidence of diseases and pests in the crops has increased due to rise in temperature.

The soil moisture is decreasing and thus demand of irrigation facility has increased. Water sources are drying up. Varieties of Kikar, Tali (Shisham), Deodar, Ban trees are on decline. Number of water fowls, ducks, birds, house sparrows, vultures, crows is also on decline. Population of honeybees, butterflies is decreasing. Incidences of forest fires are rising. Incidences of droughts and floods are also on the rise. Pine forests are invading heights. Land area for apples is being diverted to vegetables owing to global warming

Apple cultivation has been adversely affected in lower areas of Kullu and Mandi districts, and as a result of this, the farmers in the state have taken up cultivation of vegetables like tomato and peas. In Rajgarh area of Sirmaur district, apple area has been diverted to peach. According to horticulturists, global warming has caused loss of vigor, fruit bearing ability, reduction in size of fruit, less juice content, low colour, reduced shelf life and increasing attacks of pests resulting in the low production and poor quality crop.

Moreover, drastic climate changes have hampered Apple production in lower hills especially Garsa lower, Bajora, Kullu lower and Pani etc. Farmers whose apple farming crops have been degraded due to climate change are left with no options except migration to cities in search of livelihood. Many of them, however, as local adaptive measures, are now growing pomegranate and peach besides vegetables like tomatoes and peas which need lesser cold climate. It took a lot of time (more than 5 years) to switch over from occupation of Apple farming to other farming.

With increase in temperature, soil fertility has also decreased which all together hamper the human beings to live comfortably as they are being forced to struggle and continue with unintended impact of climate change. Following climate change, they have to change their livelihood options and face various health hazards including scarcity of drinking water for

which they have to now depend on water sources some 2-3 Kms away. Consequently, the women members of the families have to cover longer distance on foot for fetching water, but the government is not doing anything in this direction.

Eventually, traditional crops like Kodra, Kattu, Kawari, Saliyara, Bhont etc are also being replaced now with cash and hybrid crops.

Farmers are using chemical fertilizers to enhance productivity of crops. However, over the period of time they realise that, this has led to increase in health hazards like stones, indigestion and other stomach ailments.

Local adaptation/ mitigation measures adopted by the community

As local adaptive methods people are shifting towards cash and horticulture crops. They are cultivating the drought resistance varieties of crops. To secure their investment they are now going for mixed cropping. The government of HP is also giving due importance to the issue of climate change; and promoting different measures. The people also work for the forest conservation to minimize the effect of climate change. People are adapting traditional mechanism of water and soil conservation. Further, they are using hybrid seeds and traditional methods of pest control. They are taking benefits of Public Distribution Systems, MNREGA and other government schemes like pension, mid day meal, ICDS etc. In dry area, government has provided schemes like drip irrigation to farmers. However, many farmers with lower land holdings could not benefit from this scheme as it is very costly for them. This approach of government is again treating many farmers not at par and hence hampering the human rights of small farmers to live with equality and thus disappointing them.

Government of Himachal Pradesh is encouraging the farmers to go for organic farming in order to reduce the above health hazards which are occurring due to indiscriminate use of chemical fertilizers in cultivation.

How CASA intends to take the issue forward

- Developing a strong advocacy and action network of people and organisations in the Himalayan region including Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.
- Creating a database of facts/findings/documents on Climate Change issues in Himalayan region and ensuring that these are accessible to the community and other stakeholders.
- Advocating for a better and more responsive environment governance system in the Himalayan region through larger and consistent outreach actions with network partners.
- Keeping a close watch on the Climate Change adaptation/mitigation processes in Himalayan region and ensuring that, the impact of such activities are sustainable and disseminated largely.
- Capacity building of partners, leaders of peoples organisations and elected representatives on adaptation/mitigation measures, that focuses on strengthening the environmental governance frame in the Himalayan region.

A REPORT ON WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATION



Ms. Asha Rani, a health activist from Rahatgarh Block being felicitated by Dr. Sanjeev Mukharia, District Hospital, Distt. - Sagar (MP)

we celebrate and feel their importance in our work and life. The events were organised at Mahu, Khaniadhana, Morar & Dabra, Niwas, Rahatgarh and Bhimpur blocks of MP in which hundreds of rural women and members of Mahila Mandal were present. Activists from the People's Organisation, women leaders, advocates and women Sarpanch have attended these events.

The participants and honorary members shared their views on strength of women, women's rights, identification of self, women's health, gender equality, laws against domestic violence and their self struggle.

Women's day (March 8th) is the day to renew the commitment by any organisation or individual towards gender equality and women empowerment. CASA has always endeavoured to mainstream and upscale the effort related to gender. This day marks a celebration of the economic, social, cultural and political achievements by women over the years. CASA celebrates this universal day for all women to endow them with a sense of honour, dignity and self respect for being the person that they are.

Women are the magnificent creation of God, and women's essence lies in her innate ability to care, love and sacrifice for others. She plays an all-enveloping role of a mother, daughter, wife and sister as a friend, nurturer, guide and partner from time to time. In developing countries like India, it is primarily men who are afforded opportunities and all kinds of facilities whereas the denial of women's basic right is a major problem. Women are charged with the sole care for the family and household and made dependent on a men's income. As a result, women and girls are routinely kept away from receiving education and skills training, and remain illiterate and untrained. The centenary of International Women's Day is an opportunity to step up the call for a more equal world and stir up a new generation of men and women to work together to make gender equality a reality. Today, in spite of continuing exploitation and injustice against women both in the domestic and work sector, several milestones have been achieved in terms of education, freedom of choice, liberty and equality etc.

On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day, Madhya Pradesh team of CASA organised several events at different places to let all the women know that

At Bhimpur block of Baitul District, this day was celebrated as the fest of women empowerment in which sports for the participants were also organised. On the same day they also drafted a memorandum of their demands and submitted to the Janpada. The key demands drafted in memorandum are appointment of a lady doctor in their area, provision for home loan with low interest, appointment of good teachers, provision of higher and technical education for girls and establishment of a Polytechnic College in the block etc.

At the end of the event the local leaders, honorary members and the women who fought out from their situation were felicitated. The event came to end with the songs and pledge to have unity among the women and to identify their strength.



Dr. Auchariya, Block Medical Officer sharing various health related schemes at village Dangli, Block Khaniadhana, Distt. Gwalior (MP)

PEOPLE'S MANIFESTO - an expression of people's issues and demands An experience in Tamilnadu & Kerala

"Democracy does not mean elections alone but a way of life. Democracy attains its true meaning only when everyone is able to live and feel equal at all levels."

- Dr. B.R. Ambedkar



Dr. Sheila Jones, OSD - CASA, South Zone addressing the gathering

True Democracy aims at establishing Political Governance through effective People's participation.

It is natural that people expects Good Governance through election process. The people's domain is to elect the experienced people centered leaders as their representatives. Political parties used to capture power through their appeal and assurances in the form of Manifestos. But the zeal and core issues of the people do not find a place in the Manifestos of mainstream political parties.

To counter this trend, CASA in association with 15 People's organisations and NGOs including Tamilnadu State Forum for livelihood, a confederation of POs organised through CASA initiatives has evolved a common platform called 'Forum for People's Manifesto - Tamilnadu'. This forum has engaged in evolving People's Manifesto for the elections to the Legislative Assembly scheduled on April 2011.

Sector and thematic wise people's livelihood issues and demands were collected through five regional conferences and published during a people's convention as 'Tamilnadu People's Manifesto 2011' in the form of a book and poster. The book on 'People's Manifesto' was released by Dr. Mohini Giri, Former Chairperson, National Commission for Women and posters on 'People's Manifesto' was released by Dr. S.S. Raja Gopal, Senior Educationist. To generate public awareness and to attract the attention of government and the ruling party a website was launched by Dr. Vasanthi Devi, Former Vice-Chancellor, M.S. University and Dr. Sheila Jones, OSD, CASA, South Zone. It can be accessed through www.thepoplemanifesto.org and info@thepoplemanifesto.org.



Dr. Mohini Giri, Former Chairperson, National Commission for Women, releasing the TN People Manifesto 2011 and received by Mr. LA Samy, Convener, Forum for Livelihood Rights

Leaders of mainstream political parties and activists have participated and expressed solidarity for people's initiatives. The convention had vast media coverage. Major political parties such as DMK, ADMK, PMK and VCK have incorporated major demands. 'People's manifesto' was also released on all the Constituencies to sensitise the electorate and polity on the core issues and demands.

It is also planned to monitor the implementation of the Manifesto of the ruling party, promote campaigns on the gap areas identified and to seek feed-back from the citizens and forums during the tenure of the next government in the local state and national levels. Forum for People's Manifesto - Tamilnadu will be an informal engagement for creating a vibrant and participatory Democracy.



His Grace Yuhananon Mar Christosomos, Metropolitan of Syrian Orthodox Church releasing the People's Manifesto 2011 in the presence of His Grace Dr. Gee Varghese Mar Coorilose.

Similar exercise was also facilitated in Kerala and the People's Manifesto prepared by the representatives of Civil Society Organisations, Community Based Organisations, Churches, Church related organisations and NGO has been released by His Grace Yuhananon Mar Christosomos, Metropolitan of Syrian Orthodox Church, Zonal Committee Member of CASA South Zone on March 31st, 2011 at Believers Church, Youth Centre, Tiruvalla in the presence of His Grace Dr. Gee Varghese Mar Coorilose, Bishop Kuriakose Mar Ivanios. The People's Manifesto has been shared with the major political parties viz. LDF, UDF, BJP, SUCI and SDPI. Many of the demands of the people are incorporated in the manifesto of the political parties.

REMINISCENCES



INFORMATION BULLETIN

COMMITTEE ON RELIEF AND AID SUPPLIES
NATIONAL CHRISTIAN COUNCIL OF INDIA

4, Mathura Road
Jangpura - A
NEW DELHI-14

JANUARY 1964

"When the aggressive Chinese invaded Tibet, the Tibetans had to flee for their lives. Leaving all their belongings and properties, they ran to India with what little they could carry. When they came to India, as Refugees, the Government of India gave them shelter and went about rehabilitating them in various colonies. One is situated at Bylakuppe, Mysore State where the National Christian Council also helped them by giving food supplies. That was not all. When we visited the camp once and saw the Tibetan mothers, with their babes on their backs, carrying two loads of water with the bamboo across the shoulder, walking miles in the hot sun, we felt that these children need to be taken care of. Thus, the idea of opening a day care home - cum - nursery took shape. The National Christian Council of India came forward to implement the idea by donating three creche buildings and to meet the expenditure required for equipment and staff in run the creches with full approval of the Government of India.



"Creche No. 2 for Camps No. 1 and 2 at Kallihalli, Mysore."

Identical creches now stand in camps 3, 4, 5 and 6 at Helellikunari and Gulledahalli, Tibetan Camp, Bylakuppe, Mysore-South India."

The construction of the buildings is all over now, the provision of equipment has been finalised. The staff has been selected and they all await a formal opening. The opening ceremony of the creches buildings is expected to come off some time during February 1964."

— Mrs. D. B. SINGH
Chairman
Creche Committee.



Example:

"A Tibetan Mother with baby on her back."

Such babies will be taken care of at the creches while their mothers are busy in the fields.

OBITUARIES



Mr. Raj Kumar Thambhu (Co-ordinator, Sirkazhi Sector of CASA) lost his mother on 6th January 2011 following prolonged illness. Funeral took place on 6th January, 2011.



Mr. Darshan Kumar (Driver - CASA, New Delhi) lost his mother on 22nd January, 2011



Mr. Ram Singh (Driver - CASA, New Delhi) lost his mother on 25th January 2011.



Mrs. Elizabeth Sherry (Secretary - Emergency Department, CASA, New Delhi) lost her mother on 31st January 2011.



Mr. Namandan Loyall (CASA, New Delhi) lost his mother on 24th March 2011.

CENTENARY CELEBRATION OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY AT CASA, NEW DELHI

In 1975 the UN declared 8th march as the International Women's Day (IWD). Since then every year, 8th March has been celebrated as the IWD. However, way back in 1911 itself, IWD was celebrated in Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland, though it was on the 19th march. However, this year, amidst a lot of fanfares and enthusiasm, the centenary celebration of the IWD was held all over the world, including India.

However, in India, the spirit was rather dampened due to the fact that the government of India missed an opportunity pass the historic women's reservation bill in the parliament. What could have been a more fitting tribute to the women to pass this bill in the centenary year of the IWD !

Nevertheless, in all the offices of CASA the IWD centenary celebrations were carried out. In its headquarters in Delhi, CASA organised a small get together of the staff. The Director, Dr. Sushant Agrawal addressed the gathering and offered flowers and chocolates to the women staff of CASA. Later some staff members also spoke about the status of women in our country and the importance of women's empowerment and CASA's commitment to this cause.

It was a good gesture by the Director of CASA to celebrate the centenary of IWD at the CASA headquarters and felicitate the women staff of CASA.



Director, Dr. Sushant Agrawal, felicitating the lady staff members in CASA Headquarters - New Delhi.



Director, Dr. Sushant Agrawal, sharing his message on the occasion with all staff members in CASA Headquarters - New Delhi.



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Church's Auxiliary for Social Action

Rachna Building, 2 Rajendra Place, Pusa Road, New Delhi - 110008
Ph: +91-11-25730611, 25730612, 25731218, 25731219, 25761579, 25767231
Fax: +91-11-25752502
E-mail: casa@del6.vsnl.net.in Website: www.casa-india.org

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