



ISST Newsletter

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ISST newsletter seeks to provide information on research and action programmes being conducted by the institute. The newsletter is available on ISST's website.

The Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST), a non-profit non-governmental organization, was set up as a society in 1964 and registered as a Trust in 1980. ISST's overall aim is research for social

change with focus on work and well-being from a gender perspective. In recognition of its work, ISST has been conferred NGO Consultative Status by the United Nations.

Projects at ISST

Ongoing Projects

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

ISST has completed this rapid assessment study for ILO, New Delhi. Two sectors, namely the hand-printed textile and hand-made paper have been studied under this project. The study is based on detailed interviews with the entrepreneurs of block printing and hand-made paper industry at Sanganer and workers both at unit level and home-based. Apart from this, representatives from block printers' Association and Federation of Rajasthan Handicraft Exporters were also interviewed. Secondary data published by the concerned ministries have been used in the study. A consultation with the stake holders represented by the government, workers, employers, entrepreneurs, trade union leaders, and scholars was organized in Jaipur as a part of the ILO initiative to deal with the economic slowdown. A draft report of the study has been submitted to ILO, New Delhi.

Baseline and End line Study for Street Vendors in Ahmedabad City

ISST has undertaken a baseline study on Street Vendors in Ahmedabad under project, "New Strategy of SEWA: To Save the Livelihoods of women street vendors in the Era of World Class Cities". SEWA has organized 57110 vendors in Ahmedabad city with an objective to save the vendors' livelihood and to bring them in the main stream. To assess the impact of SEWA's work on the socio-economic and working conditions of street vendors in

Ahmedabad city in the areas of capacity building and promotion and protection of livelihoods with street vendors, Mahila SEWA Trust has commissioned the ISST to conduct an impact study through baseline and end line research survey.

Impact of Micro Finance to Women on Reduction of Domestic Violence: Case Study in Haryana

Several studies have confirmed that domestic violence is widespread in India. The provision of micro finance to women is a way of 'empowering' women. ISST has undertaken this study with the objectives to investigate whether there is any evidence to support the view that micro finance to women reduces the incidence of domestic violence, and if so under what circumstances. In the light of the high importance placed upon micro credit and SHGs in the current policy and planning framework, it is believed that more information in the context of north Indian states would be useful. The study has conducted on a small sample of individual members from 12000 SHGs in the state. A detailed questionnaire was developed by the Ministry of Women Child Development, Govt. of India to canvass to women SHG members. Canvassing a questionnaire may not be enough to capture the sensitive issues, hence focused group discussions and in-depth interviews were carried out with the women in each of the study locations. The three districts selected to conduct the survey were Rewari, Ambala and Jajjar. A total of 202 women (SHG) members across three districts in Haryana were interviewed. Data Analysis is under progress. This study is sponsored by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Govt. of India.

Institutional Strengthening and Support: IT Up-gradation, Training, Research and Dissemination

ISST has received an Institutional support grant from IDRC for a set of activities including IT Infrastructure up-gradation, IT training with the intention of building up research and dissemination capacities at the Institute. ISST is also undertaken a study to assess the kinds of IT related interventions that are present in Bangalore which reach out to low income groups and especially children, and what if any are the gaps that exist. The objective of this study would be fulfilled through secondary information available - published and unpublished data and literature on the subject. This will be supplemented by a field survey of selected training programmes in the city and interviews of key informants. A small sample of trainees will be interviewed to understand the effectiveness of programmes and pathways to work.

The Policy Research Environment and Policy Research Organizations in South Asia

ISST has undertaken a research project entitled, 'The Policy Research Environment and Policy Research Organizations in South Asia'. This project includes various activities designed to develop better understanding of the nature of policy research organizations in South Asia and the varying environments in which they function. A set of background papers have been commissioned and three Roundtables held with heads of organizations from five countries in South Asia. The project is supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada.

Urban Poor Livelihoods in the National Capital Region: Emerging Trends

The study examines livelihood issues with special attention to obtaining a gendered understanding and a focus on informal work for the poor and migrated population. The study specifically looks at a sector within informal care economy i.e. domestic work, and a sector that is continuously growing to offer employment opportunities i.e. IT-enabled services and low-end IT work. More than one thousand households have been surveyed under each category adopting a representative sampling method. Apart from this, case studies have been done to supplement the findings from the survey. It is expected that, findings from the present study will lead to action and strategizing some long term policy interventions that would directly benefit the groups of workers studied. This project is being sponsored by Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, Mumbai.

Examining the NREGA – Women's Participation and Impacts in Himachal Pradesh and Kerala

ISST is contributing through this study to the research programme Social Protection in Asia' (SPA) Phase II co-ordinated by IDS, Sussex and supported by the Ford Foundation and IDRC. SPA is a research, advocacy and network building programme. The ISST study will explore the likely reasons behind varying levels of women's participation, wider impacts of the programme, and the various ways in which local contexts influence outcomes. The study has already completed the field works in Palakkad district, Kerala, and Sirmaur district, Himachal Pradesh. A review of secondary literature is also carried out at ISST.

Revisiting Education for All

Revisiting Education for All (REFA), a field-based study of the schooling situation in rural India, entered its third year and initial findings from the study have been shared through seminar presentations. ISST Bangalore has completed qualitative studies in the south of India looking at innovative initiatives in education. The project is a collaborative venture between Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST), New Delhi and researchers based at

Collaborative Research and Dissemination (CORD). The project is supported by IDRC, Canada.

National Consultation on ‘Current Employment Strategies and Women’s Work’

ISST will partner the ILO and provide technical inputs towards organizing the National Consultation. A background paper on Women’s Contribution to the GDP will be prepared/ commissioned by ISST. This project is *sponsored by ILO, New Delhi*

Empowering Adolescent Girls as future leaders and Trainers

ISST has undertaken an evaluation on Empowering Adolescent Girls as future leaders and trainers for “Indian Academy for Self Employed Women”. The study intends to assess the impacts of the trainings being imparted to the adolescent girls of Ahmadabad city. The study consists of two phases – baseline and end line. The base-line survey carried out in Ahmedabad. The end line study will be carried out soon after one and half year from the baseline study.

Baseline Study to assess the impact of SEWA’s work in Delhi

ISST completed a baseline study sponsored by SEWA Bharat, Delhi to assess the impact of SEWA’s work in Delhi in the areas of capacity building and promotion and protection of livelihoods with street vendors, construction workers and home-based embroidery workers. ISST has conducted surveys and interviews which were supplemented with the discussions with SEWA Bharat activists on issues like advocacy, representation efforts and achievements. An end-line survey will be conducted after a year to study the impact of SEWA Bharat intervention.

Evaluation of Doosra Dashak

ISST has completed a baseline survey of the Doosra Dashak programme in three blocks in Rajasthan, sponsored by Sir Dorabjee Tata Trust, Mumbai. A report on the findings has been submitted. The report includes information on education, health, youth, community participation, people’s rights and public institutions and livelihood issues. An end line survey will be conducted after two years to see the impact of Doosra Dashak programme in these blocks.

OUTREACH PROGRAMME OF ISST

Ever since its inception in 2000, the activities and areas of work of ISST Community Outreach Programme in East Delhi has been expanding. It continues to empower the youth through information, education and dialogue and reaches out to them in a variety of innovative and interactive ways like discussion groups, workshops, theatre groups, film club, non-formal education, computer training etc.

Discussion Groups

In the last three months, discussion groups were organized on 'Friendship' and 'Honesty'. Adolescent boys and girls from the neighbouring communities, coordinators, peer educators and volunteers of the community centre participated in a series of lively discussions. The young members initiate the discussion by sharing their thought. The discussion session of friendship concluded on a note that a true friend will always show you the right path. In the group discussion on 'Honesty', they shared what honesty means to them. The discussion session concluded that despite all difficulties a person should be honest in all occasions. One should remember that an honest person might face lot of problems.

Summer Camp

Like previous years, this year also a month long Summer Camp was held at Saathi Youth Resource Centre. During the Summer Camp, a theatre workshop, a henna workshop and a dance workshop were organised. The youth and children enjoyed the workshops.

New Initiatives of ISST:

ISST Community College

ISST Community College is a new collaborative initiative with Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) that will offer two programmes: Six month Certificate Course in Computer Education and Six month Certificate Course in Functional English Language. The certificates will be awarded by IGNOU on successful completion of the course. IGNOU's initiative of Community College is an alternative system of education which aims to empower individuals through appropriate skills development leading to gainful employment in collaboration with the local industry and the community. It's expected that community colleges will help in developing skills towards employability particularly for the marginalized and underprivileged sections of society. The courses will start from July 2009.

Jan Shikshan Sansthan Resource Centre:

This year in August, Saathi Youth Resource Centre will start offering mobile repair training programme in collaboration with Jan Shikshan Sansthan to the youth of the community.

Workshops/Seminars Conducted by ISST

- **Gender Policy Forum (in association with India Habitat Centre) Casuarina Hall, IHC, 15 May, 2009**

State, Market, Family: The Care Regime in India: The fifteenth session in the series of talks under gender Policy Forum, jointly organized by ISST as India Habitat Centre (IHC) was held on 15 May 2009 at Casuarina Hall , India Habitat Centre. The key speaker for this forum was Prof. Rajni Palriwala, Department of Sociology, Delhi School of Economics. The Discussants were Dr. Elizabeth Hill, Sydney University and Ms. Sudeshna Sengupta, Mobile Creches, Delhi.

- **Stake Holders Meeting on the Effects of the Global Financial Slowdown on Sanganer Handicrafts Cluster, (in association with ILO, New Delhi) Om Niwas, Jaipur, 17 June, 2009.**

Workshops /Seminars Attended by ISST

Ratna M. Sudarshan

- Inception workshop on baseline exercise for Mahila Samakhya, April 27, DFID
- International Seminar on Comparative Contexts of Discrimination: Social Exclusion and Equal Opportunity Policies in Asia, Indian Institute of Dalit Studies, 8 May 2009.
- Launch workshop of National Youth Readership Survey, NCAER and NBT, May 18.
- Interaction with NFI interns, May 19.
- Community Learning: a workshop, Almora 22-24 May, organized by Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Paryavaran Shiksha Sansthan (Uttarakhand Environmental Education Centre, UEEC), dolcelab (Lab for Design of Learning Collaboration, and Experience) and by the US-India Educational Foundation (the Fulbright Commission).
- Talk on 'Promoting Gender Equality in India' at DU-ORF Summer Workshop, Observer Research Foundation, June 29.
- Social Protection in Asia: Experiences, Lessons and Barriers to Extension, 1-2 June, and SPA Annual Research Workshop 3-4 June, Hanoi, Vietnam. Organised by IDS, IHD and ISDS.
- Delhi City Consultation for Inputs on Delhi City to UN HABITAT The State of the World's Cities Report 2010-11, June 27, organized by Society for Development Studies.

Rajib Nandi

- Fourth Expert Group Meeting on Dealing with the Effects of Economic slowdown, organized by ILO, at Ministry of Labour and Employment, Shram Shakti Bhavan, Rafi Marg, New Delhi. 24 June 2009

Recent Publications

Research papers:

Ratna Sudarshan

- Child Labour in Industrial Outworker Households in India (with Mario Biggeri and Santosh Mehrotra) published in EPW, March 21, 2009 Vol. XLIV, No. 12

Newspaper Clippings 2008:

- Newspaper Clippings on: Right to Education, NREGA, Violence against Women in India.

Staff News

- Ms. Ammel Sharon joined ISST Bangalore in May 2009 as Research Associate
- Ms. Sudhamani Nalini joined ISST Bangalore in June 2009 as Project Leader

Compiled and edited by Rajib Nandi

Send your comments and suggestions to rajibnandi@isst-india.org

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