

Human Eyes

The Biannual Newsletter of Human Development Society

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Director Speaks...

As has been the case in the past, the six months period starting from April 2011 witnessed a great deal of dynamism in HDS in regard to its activities in the domain of research and interventions at the grassroots. Whether it is certification of organic produce in Faridabad or successful completion of one cycle of monitoring of Mahila Panchayats in the National Capital Territory of Delhi or evaluation of a major European Union-funded all-India project or commencement of Project Aarohan for slow learners in Odisha, the period under reference remained a fulfilling one for the organization. The fact that HDS has been taking up projects of different magnitude demonstrates its level of competence on one hand and the extent of trust of its collaborators on the other hand.

It is a matter of immense pleasure for us to share our activities with our friends and collaborators who have always been a great source of inspiration and knowledge. We have tried to cover in the newsletter all major developments in the organization during the reference period and it is our sincere hope that the issue will be able to connect well with all our partners and friends.

Your feedback is truly valuable for every member of HDS team, as it helps us learn new things and remain focused in our approach and actions. We look forward to your valuable comments.

Sincerely,

Anil K. Das

In this issue...

Events and Visits

- Visit of Lacon India to Faridabad
- GIPA Meeting for HIV+ People
- Visit of Concern India Foundation

Project Updates

- Targeted Intervention for IDUs
- Aarohan- A Project for Slow Learners
- Promotion of Organic Farming
- Monitoring of Mahila Panchayats
- Research on Earthworms
- MP guidelines
- Research Project

Final Highlights

- Monitoring of Mahila Panchayats in NCT of Delhi

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Events and Visits

Visit of Lacon India to Faridabad: HDS entered into an agreement with Lacon Quality Certification Pvt. Ltd. for certification of organic farming in Faridabad district in Haryana. A two member team of Lacon India visited the five project villages and offices of HDS and Kissan Jaiwik Federation (KJF) in order to inspect the internal control system (ICS) and practices of organic farming as followed by the farmers who have been included for certification. During the two day visit (13-14 April 2011), the team inspected, *inter alia*, nine randomly selected organic fields and spoken to members of KJF and ICS team. The visit and the process of compliance with the requirements of India's National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) Standards formed the basis on which the certificate was issued for organic produce in August 2011. The recommendations of Lacon India helped HDS and KJF strengthen their field operations keeping in view the requirements of organic certification.

GIPA Meeting for HIV+ People:

Greater Involvement of People living with AIDS (GIPA) is a component of targeted intervention project for injecting drug users which HDS has been implementing in Vikaspuri area of West Delhi since July 2010. A meeting for GIPA was organised in Uttam Nagar project office on 27th June 2011. Besides three HIV positive beneficiaries, representatives of NGOs of the area participated in the meeting. Dr. Sujata Satapathy, a senior psychologist attached to National Institute of Disaster Management, New Delhi participated in the event as resource person. Following a general discussion on issues affecting HIV infected people, Dr. Sujata counselled each of the HIV+ people individually covering the following aspects.

- keeping up positive self-esteem and will power
- continuation with doctor
- withdrawing self from syringe sharing
- preventing others to share the syringe in group
- use to condom
- taking meals regularly and drinking lot of safe water

- finding own strengths
- maintaining regularity in occupation



Visit of Concern India Foundation:

Concern India Foundation officials visited the Faridabad project villages on 28th August 2011. The team visited Badarpur Said where the project office is located and village Sahabad. Besides interacting with organic farmers and obtaining feedback on different project activities, they enquired about marketing arrangements for organic produce which HDS has put in place.

Project Updates

Targeted Intervention for Injecting Drug Users: The targeted intervention project for injecting drug users (IDUs) completed one year of implementation in June 2011 and entered into the second year in July 2011. During April-September 2011, HDS organized several events and achieved different physical targets as noted below.

- ✓ Total number of routine medical check up: 158
- ✓ Total number of referral cases: 222
- ✓ Total HIV test conducted: 63
- ✓ ART registration done: 1
- ✓ Attendance in Drop-in-Centre: 947
- ✓ Number of HRG counseled: 288
- ✓ Number of High Risk Group (HRG) tested for syphilis: 98
- ✓ A community event and a health camp were organized in Dal Mill Road area in April 2011 in which more than 200 HRGs participated.
- ✓ A stakeholders' meeting was organized in June 2011 at Uttam Nagar project office. Representatives of two NGOs namely Jaiti and Asra, members of residents' welfare association, Uttam Nagar, a doctor from Hatsal village and PLHA (People Living with HIV/AIDS) participated in the meeting.
- ✓ Counselling of HIV infected people was organized under project component called GIPA.

Aarohan- A Project for Slow Learners: Project 'Aarohan' is an intervention for slow learner children at primary level. 'Aarohan' (ascent in English)- a word used in many Indo Aryan languages- means an upward journey or an act of moving up. Since slow learners remain in between average and mentally handicap/ children with learning disability, the project aims to bring them at par their grade level. HDS started the project in Balasore district in the State of Odisha in May 2011. The classes of the first batch children started in August 2011 with nine children belonging to classes I, II and III. The project is a collaborative initiative of HDS and Mattai Foundation, USA. The children were selected following analysis of their intelligence quotient with the help of Raven's Progressive Coloured Matrices- an internationally known tool for testing IQ.

Promotion of Organic Farming: The collaborative project of HDS and Concern India Foundation on organic farming in Faridabad entered a crucial phase during the period under reference in regard to certification and marketing. Important achievements of the project are as under:

- ✓ Lacon Quality Certification (Pvt.) Ltd. issued the certificate in support of organic produce under the NPOP standards and Swiss Organic Farming Ordinance for plant products originating in India. The products produced by the beneficiaries are under first year conversion. The certificate, which is valid for one year, has great value for marketing.
- ✓ KJF successfully conducted its annual election of office bearers, marking further movement towards sustainability.
- ✓ HDS took concrete steps for marketing of organic produce, especially organic wheat. The resource generation arm of the organization liaised with the farmers directly and started marketing wheat and wheat flour. The procurement price was more than the market price of wheat.

Monitoring of Mahila Panchayats: It is a matter of great professional satisfaction that HDS successfully completed the first cycle of the monitoring of Mahila Panchayats (MP) in National Capital Territory of Delhi on 31st August 2011. MP programme is an important initiative of the Delhi Commission for Women. Marking the completion of first cycle, HDS conducted, in addition to the usual monitoring, a survey covering 108 women and 22 partner NGOs in order to understand the relevance of monitoring in particular and the MP programme in general. As a result of strengthening of the programme, dependence of women in distress on MPs has started increasing. Acknowledging the contributions of HDS, DCW renewed the contract for monitoring for a period of one year starting from September 2011.



Research on Earthworms

Our research project on earthworms supported by the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India and implemented in collaboration with Central Potato Research Institute, Modipuram Campus and Department of Botany, R.B.S. College, Agra entered a crucial phase during the reference period. In view of the year 2011 being the last year of the three year project, a review meeting was organized in Modipuram Campus in May 2011 to fine tune the strategy and action for documenting the findings of research till date. The meeting also decided to study taxonomy of local earthworms in order to make an inventory, as advised by DST during its February 2011 review meeting. Accordingly, studies of taxonomy were conducted by the centres at Modipuram, Agra and Faridabad with the help of Soolni Institute, Solan, Himachal Pradesh. The project is scheduled to end in November 2011.

Mahila Panchayat Guidelines

Delhi Commission for Women commissioned the services of Human Development Society for developing operational guidelines for Mahila Panchayats (MPs) in National Capital Territory of Delhi. HDS was suitably placed for the assignment in view of its exposure to the functioning of MPs. The guidelines would help members of MPs and staff of partner NGOs, which are implementing the programme, in effectively managing the affairs of the Panchayats. The assignment would be completed in the month of October 2011.

Research Project: HDS entered into an agreement with Socio-Legal Information Centre (SLIC), a Delhi-based organization with all-India operations, in September 2011 to evaluate its European Union-funded project titled "Equal Access to Justice for Poor People and Deprived Communities in India". SLIC has been implementing the project in 15 locations across the country since 2008. As the project would be completing its duration in December 2011, it became due for evaluation as is the case with EU-funded projects. HDS would be following a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods viz. focus group discussion, key informant interviews, case studies for data collection. The project would be completed in November-December 2011.

Final Highlights

Monitoring of Mahila Panchayats in NCT of Delhi: HDS successfully concluded the first cycle of monitoring of Mahila Panchayat programme in NCT of Delhi in August 2011. During the period starting from November 2010, HDS monitored 43 MPs which are managed by 22 partner NGOs. According to the arrangement, a report in three parts viz. main narrative

report, CMIS (computerized management information system) report and field visit report was submitted to the Commission every month. As a result of regular monitoring, MPs became functionally robust with systematic documentation, regular reporting, better field operation and most significantly increasing reliance of women in distress on the MPs. As the monitoring project has since been renewed by the Commission, HDS hopes to further strengthen the MPs as platforms for redressal of grievances of oppressed women in the coming months.

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