



Sampark
Annual Report 2001-2002

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1. Introduction

Sampark is a voluntary organisation started in the year 1990 and registered in July 1991 under the Karnataka Societies Registration Act, 1960. It is also registered under Foreign Contribution Regulation Act, 1974. Sampark's mission is to expand the capacity of vulnerable and poor people, especially women to improve their income earning capacity.

Sampark also works as a resource organisation and supports voluntary, private and government organisations in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of their credit, enterprise and gender related activities.

Sampark works with a holistic approach to development, and incorporates gender and environmental sustainability in all their programmes. This experience of Sampark is utilised at village level through direct action programme in the fields.

At the close of financial year 2001-2002, Sampark has completed eleven years of operations. Members have interacted and supported us in our work and major decisions throughout the year, and we feel the benefits of such participation. Sampark, would like to acknowledge the participation of members, and extend our gratitude to them.

As a result of all of us sharing concerns, several aspects of our work have become better articulated, and have resulted in concrete actions, achievements, and clear strategic directions for our future work.

The report contains the activities of Sampark (annual report) along with issues that we need to consider at this juncture, about the future vision and strategy for Koppal, and for Sampark in general.

2. Report of Koppal

2.1. History of Koppal Project

Sampark's –Sampurna project started in November 1997, at Koppal. Initially we conducted several participatory exercises (PRAs) like social mapping, wealth ranking, resource mapping etc., with villagers in selected project villages. In the beginning we started our project on our own and started working in six villages. In early 1998 and 1999 Karnataka State Women Development Corporation

(KSWDC) extended support to form and monitor 45 self-help groups. In the beginning of 2001, Sampark worked with 20 villages supporting 60 women's groups, covering about 900 families. During 2000-01, Sampark has organised various capacity building and skill

Time Line: Sampurna Project

- 1995-77: Action research
- July 1997: Village identification
- 1998-99: KSWDC supports 45 SHG's
- 2000-01: Total of 60 SHG's with capacity building and skill training
- 2001-02: Total of 125 SHG's covering 42 villages

training programmes for group members. These groups have been linked to financial institutions (like banks and TBF). Within a period of four years Sampark team has built-up a good rapport with the village community and progressed in fieldwork.

2.2. Current Status of Activities

Koppal project has grown and now our work is spread over 40 villages. During this reporting period, we reached 20 more new villages with an addition of 65 groups. At present we work in 42 villages with 125 groups, supporting 1823 families in Koppal taluk. Most activities carried out in the Sampurna project are run under the following projects, supported by the Government, details of which are given in Figure no. 1.

Figure 1: Details about SHGs

Sl.No	Programmes / Projects	No.of Villages	No.of groups	No.of families
1	MASY – KSWDC	14	45	663
2	CAPART	6	12	174
3	SWASHAKTI – KSWDC	19	52	825
4	Sampark	2	16	161
	Total	41	125	1823

The savings of women increase by Rs. 70,000/- per month. The details of the group's funds are given in Figure no. 2.

Figure 2: Details about SHGs Fund

Sl.No.	Name of Project	No.of groups	Total Group savings & other income (Rs.)	Total loan (Rs.)	Total fund managed by women (Rs.)
1	MASY	45	983525	741557	1725082
2	CAPART	12	40120	23850	63970
3	SWASHAKTI	52	105163	73535	178698
4	SAMPARK	16	107061		107061
	Total	125	1235869	838942	2074811

125 groups have saved a total amount of Rs 12,35869, and are rotating a total loan of Rs 8,38,942. Thus the total fund operated by women is Rs. 2074811. Women's own money has been leveraged to get them external loan from banks and The Bridge Foundation (TBF) and we have applied to Friends of Women's World Banking to get them some more loans for the women. We should be able to see through our dream of having a women's own federation that runs micro-credit operations, in about three years.

Micro-credit linkages: 105 groups have opened bank accounts, out of which 60 groups have opened SB accounts this year. Sampark continues to make an effort to convince all groups to have bank accounts, understand the finance operation, and link for credit purposes.

During this period, 8 groups were linked to banks for credit, and a loan of Rs 250,500 was released to the 8 groups. With this financial support, 63 women started small business activities, most of them investing in diary, sheep, goat and agricultural purposes.

During this year Sampark has facilitated the women's group to mobilise Rs. 427,000/- from TBF (The Bridge Foundation) to start micro enterprise activities. 83 women have taken the loan and invested in various activities like Dairy, Agriculture, tailoring, poultry, pan shop, STD shop etc. As on 31-3-2002, Rs.221, 750/- is the loan outstanding and Rs205250 has been repaid to The Bridge Foundation.

Skill Training Programmes: Based on needs of women and local market demand Sampark organises skill training programmes, the details of which are below:

Kasuti: During this year Sampark has organised three months of Kasuti skill training to 25 women from four villages with the support of NABARD, Bangalore. About 7 members dropped out during the training, and the remaining 18 members completed the three months training, and made local market linkages. On an average these women get Rs.25-30 per day. In order to improve the quality of their work, Sampark organised a designer to upgrade their skills and help in market development.

Agarbathi: Sampark organised skill training for 40 women on Agarbathi making, and tied up with the Vibhava factory, but the women received less than their agricultural wage, so many women have stopped making agarbathis.

Tailoring: A six month tailoring course was started in November 2001, covering 20 women members at Bikanahalli. Follow up of last two batches who trained on tailoring

Achievements in Koppal

- Expansion in groups, membership
- Increased savings of women
- Increased external flow of funds to women
- Good repayment to external agencies
- People's acknowledgement of the need for sustainable agricultural practices
- Increased initiative and participation of people in both credit and other activities

Case Study of Shobha

Belonging to a schedule caste, Shobha was lucky enough to at least experience a few years of school. At the age of 15, a man called Maruthi asked for her hand and Shobha's parents agreed, knowing that he was married before. Maruthi was a qualified electrician who was hoping to get a permanent job as a linesman and when he claimed his previous wife to be mentally ill, everyone took him for an honest man. But fate had acted otherwise for Shobha; Maruthi turned out to be a drunkard who made her work as a "coolie" in the fields and also do all the work at home.

He showed no responsibility towards her or their three children. Shobha had suffered too much and she decided to stand on her own feet. She was selected for a tailoring training for six months with Sampark, after which she bought a tailoring machine (with a loan from the SHG.) She took up minor tailoring work for the people in her village and got involved in training others in tailoring. Shobha also started a small bangle-selling business. To add value to her tailoring business, she learnt Kasuti embroidery from Sampark. From all these activities she is able to earn around Rs 1000/-per month. She is now in a position to educate her children and maintain her home.

skills, showed that most of them purchased swing machines and are able to earn Rs. 300 – 400/- per month on an average. Along with this work , the women are also involved in vegetable selling and agricultural work.

These skill-training programmes supplement the agricultural income of the women, and raise their livelihood standards.

School linkage programme: Sampark has organised a school exchange programme with Valley school, Bangalore. A group of 25 children were taken to a village school at Chukankal and were exposed to a different type of education and a cultural programme.

2.3. Project Support for Koppal

SWASHAKTI Project

The Women’s Development Corporation has launched a new scheme, with support from the World Bank, for women’s SHGs. Sampark has been signed on as a partner for 50 groups, mainly focussing on women’s empowerment. These have to be new groups and new villages, and not the same we formed under MASY project. It includes training, camps and exposure visits for the groups.



Women Conducting Group Meeting

CAPART Project

Sampark has received a small grant programme from CAPART – Dharwad to form and support 10 groups for the period of one year, starting in July 2001 and ending in June 2002. We have organised training and exposure visits for group members as well as organisers.

NABARD – Skill Training Project

We received money from NABARD for training of women in Kasuthi training. At first NABARD refused this money, as the project in Koppal is funded by MASY programme. Then we convinced them that MASY had not paid for the training, so the programme was sanctioned and conducted with NABARD money for three months. Sampark has continued the programme with own funds.

MASY project

In early 1998, the MASY project was started to form and monitor 45 self-help groups from 14 villages. The project came to an end in March 2002. This year, too, the Women's Development Corporation did not release any money. The WDC decided that money would be released only after accounts are audited, the auditors visited Sampark, they could not find any mistakes, nor could they extract any advantage from us. They did not submit the report to WDC, and there has not been any payment released. We continued some trainings with our own resources. However, we could not invest as much money in the training of women as we could have done had the Corporation released the money for this. This project came to an end in March 2002.

2.4. Reflections and Future Outlook

In addition to credit, the families that we work with need vocational training and guidance to start businesses in non-farm sector. They also need some guidance and support from Sampark to manage their natural resources (land, water, trees)

Vision for Koppal

- Micro-credit institution of women, with their leadership
- Farmers forum for sustainable agricultural practices
- Devadasi women's forum for socio-legal support
- More women's businesses and earning
- Craft units run by women, with minimal support for design and up-gradation and marketing through Sampark

well, and to follow sustainable agricultural practices. Work on these has been slow due to lack of resources that Sampark has, yet we have been progressing a little on this front too. People in Bikanalli village, where we have had intensive discussions with farmers, are now willing to form a people's forum through which they will implement sustainable development projects for the village. Sampark is the catalytic agent for this initiative, and once this forum is established, we will be able to make an impact on both poverty and sustainability of agriculture. The vision for Koppal is outlined in the accompanying box.

3. Research

3.1. Research on Gender and Rural Livelihood Systems

For the past nine years Sampark has been engaged in gender sensitive research on Sustainable Rural Livelihood Systems (RLS) and Natural Resource Management in

semi-arid regions in India, in association with the Indo Swiss Research Collaboration, funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation.

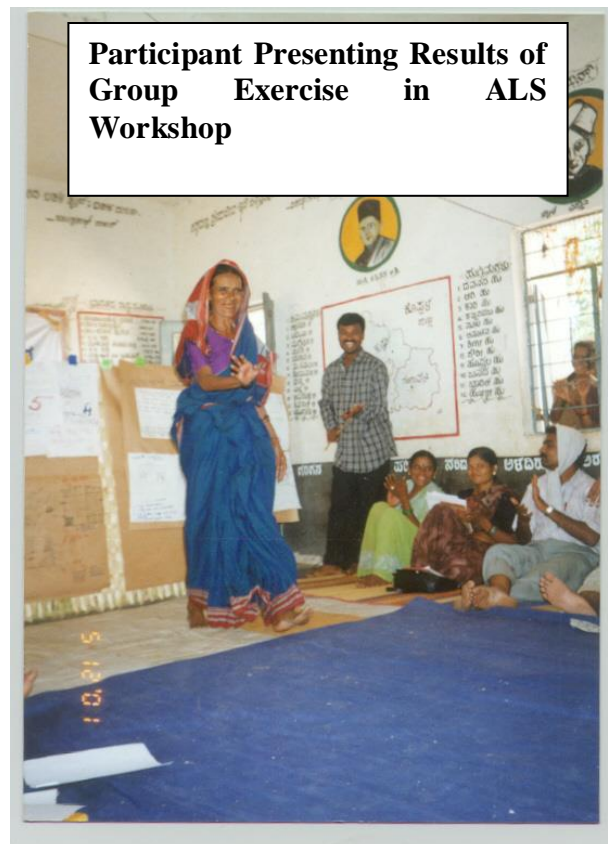
As a part of its 2001 – 2002 contribution, Sampark is involved in revising two chapters of the research on Gender and Livelihood systems, (Introduction on gender sensitive research methodology and Gender based analysis of Leadership). This will be included in the publication of the RLS research results as a book.

3.2. Research on Social Learning for Sustainability (SOLES)

Sampark has been involved in research on sustainable rural livelihood systems for over 8 years. With this experience Sampark got an opportunity to be part of a research project on Social Learning for Sustainability of Natural Resources (SOLES). It is a three year partnership project between Centre for Development and Environment (CDE), Berne and partner institutions in India (Sampark), Bolivia and Mali and continues till July 2003.

The main objective of the research is to evaluate the potentials and constraints of social learning and negotiation process for sustainable resource management and identify how learning and negotiation processes can be enhanced by Auto-didactic Learning System (ALS) at the level of individuals, communities and development institutions. Activities under taken as part of this project during this year are as follows:

Workshop on (ALS) use of Natural Resources: As per the plan made in the last year, the research team conducted the workshop in Bikanalli, Koppal between April 27th and May 15th 2001.



Out of the 20 villages of Sampark's field area, Bikanalli was selected based on the people's interest to participate for a period of 19 days without a break. etc.

Research Projects:

- RLS
- SOLES
- Devadasi Community

The main objective of the workshop was to enhance the understanding of both development workers and the community in regards to sustainable natural resource management and of its relationship with development as a whole.

Twenty-seven participants attended the workshop from villages and NGO's. As an outcome of the workshop, the farmers learned about local available Natural Resources, methods to protect and sustain the same and gained technical inputs related to land and water management. Development workers learned the concept of ALS, and different participatory techniques.

Five action plans were made and two follow up meetings conducted, after which the participants established a farmer's forum, to put the plans into action.

Case Studies: Six women from four villages have been selected to understand livelihood systems in relation to social learning and the impact of natural resources and credit. A case study method has been selected and once in 15 days field staff meet these women and have 1-2 hours discussion on basic information about family and its members, income and expenditure patterns and cropping patterns etc. systematically. The benefits of this research are explained in the box alongside.

The study enabled Sampark to

- Make people reflect on NRM aspects
- Take up NRM activities, in field project
- Understand rural livelihood systems
- Staff got exposure to Universities like Bern and built capacities in concept of ALS.

The participants expressed their appreciation for the ALS module, saying that it helped develop deeper understanding of the importance of natural resources among development workers as well as the rural community.

3.3. Research on Devadasi Community and Sexual Health aspects in Koppal

Since one year Sampark has been involved in conducting a qualitative exploratory study on the Devadasi community and sexual health aspects in villages of Koppal district, for the National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Science (NIMHANS). This study is progressing well. So far, forty in-depth case studies have been collected, translated into English, and data analysis is in process, which will be finalised by July 2002.

4. Training & Planning Projects

Several good consultancy projects were completed this year. We provided support to CARE India, FWWB and GMCL on the following projects

4.1. Training in Business Start-ups, FWWB

FWWB has helped to promote 200 women's SHGs in Indore, who have savings and credit, but were not able to identify businesses that they could start. FWWB sent 20 representatives from these SHGs for training in business start-ups.



Participants in IGP Programme

Along with business concepts the programme developed the skills of women on traits of a trainer, so that they could go back to their work field and train other SHG members.

Exposure visits to women entrepreneurs helped participants to build confidence and understand business concepts much better. The women were dynamic leaders as well as keen entrepreneurs, and the programme concluded successfully.

4.2. Design and Plan the Structure and Management of DMF for CARE, India

CARE - India was one of the development organisations that responded very fast to the earthquake in Gujarat, January 2001. The first response was with relief operations, and these were followed by rehabilitation measures of a more medium and long term nature.

One innovative part of the project that remained to be conceptualized was that of establishing a Disaster Mitigation Fund, which was given to Sampark.

Sampark conducted background research on disaster mitigation and preparedness strategies and disaster mitigation funds implemented by various countries, governments and NGOs. We also did studies in the field and conducted participatory design workshops with the donor and implementing NGOs. Based on these processes, Sampark formulated the design and structure for setting up Disaster Mitigation Fund in Bhuj, Gujarat.

4.3. Study to Design a Sustainable Tribal Empowerment Programme (STEP)

Sampark has conducted a diagnostic study for sustainable tribal empowerment programme in Andhra Pradesh, for CARE - AP, 2002. The STEP project was designed in 1997 and formally approved in 1999. The work of the project started only in early 2002; hence there is a need to review the context of its implementation, to validate the assumptions and the strategies to be adopted by the project.

Thus the diagnostic study was commissioned with the objective of understanding the current situation with respect to livelihoods of tribal in four districts where the STEP project will operate and to refine the log frame of the project based on gaps identified. Primary data was collected from interviews with government officials, NGOs staff involved in tribal development, PRA exercises with community and community based organisations, and secondary data from the documents collected from CARE, AP and also different government departments. Participatory workshops were done with all stakeholders to complete the study and advise on project design, partnerships and processes.

The research team got an exposure to tribal livelihood systems and the impact of different Andhra Pradesh government schemes.

This study gave an opportunity to Sampark's research team to understand and learn about aspects related to tribal livelihood systems and the impact of different Andhra Pradesh government schemes.

4.4. Transformation Process of CREDIT Project of NBJK, Jharkhand

The scope of work covered advising on appropriate institutional form for the micro credit operations for 12000 women, appropriate MIS systems as well as usage of CARE's corpus fund after the project period in Jharkhand. The project involved CARE and the local NGO will ensure that the savings of women benefit them, and that the credit project continues after CARE support to the NGO ends.

Training and Planning Projects

- FWWB
- DMF-CARE
- STEP-CARE AP
- CREDIT-NBJK

4.5. Assessment of women's federations in Tamil Nadu

Sampark has conducted the study of assessment of women's federation for setting up a medicinal plant enterprise for Gram Mooliga Co.limited (GMCL). GMCL has been formed with the object of promoting medicinal plant cultivation and collection through grass root level organisations, in the process building up their entrepreneurial skills. Sampark's role is to assess and identify women's federations for this partnership collaboration. This has been carried out in Tamil Nadu with four organisations and its federations. The findings of the study are as follows:

- All the four organisations and associate federations, Savaiyoor Federation of CCD, Madurai, Kurunji Federation of NMCT, Coimbatore, Mahshakti cluster Federation of Outreach, Hosur, Mahanadhi cluster Federation, of LEAD, Kodumudi) have expressed their interest to participate in this venture.
- Based on certain pre determined-criteria the 4 organisations have been ranked.
- The study offered two options i.e. GMCL can work with all the federations or only with CCD and NMCT who are already familiar with the objectives and activities of GMCL.

As Sampark's field co-ordinator was involved along with the research team in conducting the study, he got an opportunity to get exposed to different federations and its functions. This experience will be useful in federating SHGs of Sampurna field project at Koppal.

5. Documentation & Publications

5.1. A book "Turning Points - Plan Partners and Sustainable Livelihoods"

Sampark completed two publications for Plan International, which were released at a workshop on Microfinance in Bangalore. The first was a book on Sustainable Livelihoods Case Studies of PLAN projects in India, another was an overview paper on microfinance in India. The book contains case studies, which provides information on best practices of livelihood interventions that has been implemented by the partners of Plan International.

5.2. From Research to Application: Framework for Rural Livelihood Systems

Sampark brought out the documentation of the Sustainable Livelihoods Workshop conducted in Punganur, with support from Swiss Development Co-operation and Inter-Co-operation, India. This helps add inputs to the research about the impacts on implementing research results at the field level.

6. Volunteers & Students

Several volunteers and students worked towards achieving the objectives of Sampark, some of which are given below:

- Ms. Nina worked as a volunteer and provided major inputs on projects like designing and planning the structure and management of Disaster Mitigation Fund for CARE, India, Bhuj and designing a sustainable tribal empowerment programme for CARE AP. She also worked in compiling and sending information about Sampark and its activities to Give Foundation, which is involved in raising donations for NGOs through internet.
- Ms. Chinnamma, board member of Sampark helped in completing a chapter in designing sustainable tribal empowerment programme for CARE –AP.
- Ms. Neela Roy edited the report of the ALS workshop. She also gave suggestions related to image building and fund raising strategies for Sampark.
- Ms. Mamatha, Designer collected good photo documentation on the Koppal Sampurna project. She also developed linkages for organising training for rural women on agrabathi making.
- Ms. S. Umamaheshwari and Ms. Michelle Bivera, students of Xavier Institute of Management conducted a study on the needs of construction workers' children with object of understanding lifestyles of construction workers, and needs of their children. The results showed that most of these construction workers migrated from Dharwad, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh and their children need child care and education centres. Three of Sampark staff were also involved in the study, and are now developing strategies and resources to start child care centres for construction workers' children.
- Ms. Sugandha .S.Upasani, post school student from Valley School, Bangalore, has done a study and documented information on house hold energy use patterns and agricultural practices in Gunnalli village of Koppal district as a part of her post school programme. This documentation will add inputs to research on sustainable use of natural resources.
- Ms.Saumya Premchander, a student from Valley School, worked as a volunteer and helped in English editing of some of Sampark's internal reports.

7. Administration & Other Issues

7.1. Staff Growth

Sampark's has 14 full time staff, 5 part time staff and 7 animators. Out of 14, ten are women. With the intention of enlarging the experience, skill and knowledge of the staff, Sampark has deputed its staff (field and Bangalore based) to attend workshops and training programmes, which were conducted in different places. The details of some of these are given in annexure 1. Sampark also organised several internal training programmes on concept of SHG and enterprise development, and finance management for the field staff, at Koppal, which helped them to build their capacities in those areas.

Mr. Chidambaranathan presented a paper on 'Examining assumptions: Emotional Issues and Anxieties in Partnership Negotiation and Evaluation' in an international seminar organised by Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC). This paper was jointly developed by Smita and Chidam, which will be published in a book by SDC.

7.2. Management Committee Meetings

Two Management Committee meetings were held on August 30th 2001 and January 6th 2002 at Sampark. The aspects discussed in these meeting were:

- Review of actions taken placed on last AGM
- Sampark's project progress and vision of Koppal field project
- It was decided that Sampark should find the President and Secretary from among the members instead of involving core committee staff.
- Decisions were taken regarding the formation of resolution and other matters of long term relevance. Core Committee and Internal Staff Meetings

Internal core committee meetings are conducted once a month to decide on important matters of Sampark.

7.3. Financial Stability

Sampark's record of financial stability continues. We have not only been able to earn our salaries, but contributed to the Koppal project for continued work despite the fact that the government money was not received as envisaged. However, we do not have three-year financial stability. Long term funding for Sampark is not yet tied up. We continue to depend on our consultancy income to support our development work.

We recognised this, and some members have visited the field and seen the limitation of such a strategy. Lack of resources prevents us from investing as much as we need to, in people's skill and capacity development in Koppal villages. In order to increase our ability to raise resources for our development work, we have taken certain steps:

- **Opening of an account in London:** We have completed the process of opening a bank account in London, where we will access funds, from Sampark's contacts and a the Indian community resident abroad. Sushant Gupta is the prime mover and will lead this initiative, along with Elizabeth.
- **On line donations to Sampark:** We were invited to, and now have been listed with Give-online, as an organisation that people can donate to, on line.
- **80 G Exemption for Sampark:** The exemption from Income Tax under 80G has been received, for a period of three years. This has been possible due to the recommendation of one of our members, and we are grateful to him for seeing this application through.

Partners during the year	
CARE, AP	KSWDC
CARE, Bihar	XIME
GMCL	Valley School
CAPART	SDRI
NABARD	NADEL
FWWB	TBF
NIMHANS	

We are better prepared to raise donations for our fieldwork, yet the results of this work have not begun to come in as yet. We need to work more towards donations from the community for our groundwork, to be able to continue the work in Koppal to our satisfaction.

7.4. Change of President and Secretary

The AGM of 2002 will be the eleventh year of Sampark. The members need to re-elect the President, Vice-President, Secretary and the Management Committee. In preparation for this, some discussions were put through during 2001-2002. The final consensus among members has been not to change the Secretary, as this will bring in too much pressure on the current staff. Only after financial stability over a three year period is achieved, should the Secretary be changed. This issue and re-election of the above posts, will come up for discussion and finalisation in the AGM for June 2002.

7.5. Visitors to Sampark

Several people visited Sampark both at Bangalore and Koppal to understanding the activities of Sampark and review different projects. The details are attached as annexure 2.

8. Development Dilemmas

8.1. Collaboration with the Government

- **KMF, Kolar and Bellary:** These projects were completed last year, but the last instalment for both assignments have not been paid to Sampark. Even our letter to

MD of KMF has not brought any positive response. Our teams were stationed in these districts for over a year, and have done good work in formation and strengthening of women's SHGs. We must continue to try to get the payments, which are due to us.

- **ITDP (JSYS):** JSYS requested our support to prepare two Integrated Tank Development Projects in two villages in Koppal. We invested a lot of staff time in this, and submitted good reports to the department. Subsequently, we were invited to apply as the Host NGO for the district of Koppal, where 21 tanks have to be rehabilitated under this project. We gave in our application, and decided to employ 7 people on the team for the implementation of this project. We have also attended the training programmes done by JSYS for project partners. However, we have doubts about making the partnership. The first reservation relates to the difference between the stated objective and the real actions at ground level. The lip service is to participation and community empowerment, but in reality targets and deadlines are being met with little consideration to preparing people first. This will have serious quality implications at a later stage. As we can already see the difference between word and action, and as we are the only NGO talking about it, the question is whether to enter the partnership, it is likely to be stressful rather than satisfying in terms of what is achieved at the village level.
- The second reservation Sampark has is about the financial payment procedures. There are no advances to be paid to NGOs, who are to be the promoting and facilitating agencies. The relationship is like that of contractors, we have to furnish bank guarantees if we take advances. After discussion with members and staff, we have decided not to take up the project if JSYS does not release advance for implementation of the project without bank guarantees. Sampark cannot afford such a partnership.

8.2. Collaboration with Community

The expectation of the community from Sampark, as from any other NGO, is that we will contribute to all the expenses of every activity that we take up. For instance, in the Kasuti training programme, they expect Sampark to pay for transport costs from village to Koppal, material costs, and if possible even for stipends to compensate for wages lost. We recognise that this is needed, especially when we work with the poor people, as they are the least able to pay for increase in human capital. They cannot pay to increase their ability to work, that is why they are poor to begin with. Yet, this presents a major dilemma. We cannot inculcate an approach of entrepreneurship and self-reliance if we create dependencies through the processes we follow. Secondly, we do not have the finances to scale up and continue training programmes where costs are to be paid by Sampark.

Currently, we follow a middle path, we pay on training programmes where the funding agencies bear the full costs. However, this creates a problem for subsequent training, for periods after the funding agency stops, and for subsequent batches of people. Even if we

pay stipends, travel expenses for one batch, we are not able to pay for the next one. This issue has potential to create misunderstandings between people and Sampark, and between Sampark staff who view this differently.

Thus the major internal issues that still need to be sorted out about enterprise development remain:

- Who should incur the investment in upgrading people's skills, people or the NGO, and what happens if NGO funds are not sufficient?
- Who should be the major entrepreneur, people or Sampark? People want only training and employment, and are happy for Sampark to run the unit and pay them wages. There are two issues for Sampark:
 - i.) We do not have the staff capacity to put for managing an income generating unit, deal with the training, quality control and marketing tasks;
 - ii.) As drop out rate between those who take training and those who finally continue work is over 50%, half the investment in training is wasted, whether the money comes from other agencies, Sampark or people. This makes recovery of investment in training very unlikely.
 - iii.) Sampark staff are not able to sell goods at prices at which full cost coverage is possible. Such a scale and pricing is not possible at least for the current range of skills, e.g. Kasuthi, agarbatti, tailoring.

The best strategy from the NGO and people's point of view continues to be to facilitate enterprises where people are able to make products for local markets, take the initiative and be entrepreneurs themselves. The role that Sampark needs to take is only facilitation and maybe some initial investment in skill training and giving shape to the enterprise, and preparing the women's group to handle each business and marketing link on their own.

8.3. General Reflections

The relationships with the government have been stressful and have depleted our finances. Our earlier experience tells us to be extremely cautious in committing to such relationships. This year we have had two good projects: with CAPART and NABARD, all the rest have brought the same lessons as the earlier years. We still have a lot of follow up to do before we can get the money due to us released by the respective government organisations that we partnered in earlier years.

9. Future Direction

Sampark is an NGO committed to poverty alleviation in the villages where it works in Koppal. This commitment has been renewed again and again, and Sampark has pledged its resources towards this task. We have now decided to stay with the 40 villages that we work in now, and not expand our work any further till the work here has achieved significant impact.

Given our earlier experiences, we have also decided to be cautious with making partnerships with government organisations. We will make future partnerships only if the benefits to people are likely to take place, and if there is no financial drain on Sampark. We work as a promoting and facilitating organisations, have chosen not to build in pecuniary interests in our development work, and will continue to do so in the selection of new partnerships for funding and development projects.

Sampark has gained a good reputation for provisions of advisory services both nationally and internationally. Our training inputs are also well reputed and appreciated. This provides us with a flow of assignments in other parts of India. Such assignments have four major advantages:

- They help us to bring our field team, to learn from new projects in other parts of India, and to transfer their learnings, from Koppal, to development projects designed by other organisations.
- They help us to design development projects with a community perspective, we have been able to bring this perspective in all the assignments done for other organisations.
- They help us to earn the money to do our development work in Koppal.
- They give us an overview of development work in the country, and at an international level.

There are both positive and negative aspects of such an approach. The positive aspects is that Sampark does not move from project to project, but makes investments in its development project in Koppal. However, the paucity of resources to invest in Kappa restricts the speed and effectiveness of our work with people. The tensions inherent in this affect the organisation, both financial and managerial. The way we have been able to solve it is to move towards more and more financial and managerial responsibility and control to the staff. The development conflicts stated above are reflected in staff orientations too and these sometimes lead to tensions in financial decision-making. I see this as an essential part of the process if we have to learn individually and collectively from the experience of being catalysts in development.

In general, there is a high degree of transparency of finances and management processes. The Core Committee of Sampark has full control of finances of the organisation. In this sense, and in terms of its commitment to participatory development processes, Sampark continues to be a unique non-government organisation.

Smita Premchander,
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