



Comprehensive Integrated Development in Rural India

Narrative Report for the period 1st April 2007- 31st March 2008

CORD's Resource & Training centre, Sidhbari, Kangra, H.P

CORD, "a bond of love and understanding between the Have and Have-not's to empower the Have-not's to take charge of their lives to become the makers of their own destiny" is what Pujya Swami Tejomayanandaji Chairman of CORD says. It is the core of CORD's work. Sidhbari's programme in the period from April 2007 to March 2008 has been another milestone. Highlights of the various programme components have been included in the annual report to give one an insight into CORD's activities at its lead and training and resource centre.

Mahila Mandals (Women's Groups):

Mahila Mandals, or women's group, provide a forum for women of a particular village to voice their personal challenges, be it at an individual, domestic or social level. The women, with village facilitators trained by CORD, work together to resolve their issues. By this process women are encouraged to continuously grow and take their personal transformation to heights of active community participation. Currently we have 555 Mahila mandals with approximately 21,943 women as members.



Mahila Mandal follow-up session.

Some of the achievements resulting from Mahila Mandal activity over the past year include:

- International women's day (8th March 2008) was celebrated in the super focused Panchayat, and women from other Panchayat also participated at the local nodal Panchayats. A total of 1,363 members from 78 MM participated. For the first time ever, the program was completely self funded by the women of the MMs themselves.
- International Women's day was celebrated at the CORD centre too with 128 participants to discuss their experiences and current challenges.
- International and National days were observed by MM (e.g. Swami Vivekananda Jayanti, Republic day, World Water Day, World Tuberculosis day, World Consumer rights day, World HIV/AIDS day etc.)
- There were 12 MM follow up sessions in the past year. On an average each Mahila Mandal is represented by 2-3 members. (MM follow up sessions are held on the first day of each month to review all MM activities).
- Resource persons were trained in the Super-Khas Panchayats - in the last quarter we trained 147 Balvihars, 166 Yuvati Samuh and 209 Single Women resource persons.
- Training on capacity building of women leaders of grade C & D (areas covered included, writing minutes; developing action plans; record keeping; training new leaders etc.)
- Closure of an illegal liquor shop
- Reporting of an alcoholic man to officials for beating his wife.
- Women tortured by their in-laws and sent to their parent's homes were brought back home.
- Forcing an alcoholic man to stop drinking (through a written statement).

- Forcing a woman to repay her loan received from the local bank.
- Providing an avenue of hope for women in desperate situations (e.g. widowed) through empowerment with the skills to earn a livelihood and so be independent.
- Rs. One lakh was sanctioned by the Government for construction of local Mahila Bhawan (Lahuna).
- Funds were raised for the marriage of a poor girl, medical treatment of an old lady (Rs. 5,000), and building a bowri in a village (Rs.50,000)
- Kangra Eye Hospital organized an eye camp in Sartori Gram Panchayat to improve eye health for local villagers.
- Bakulja Panchayat in collaboration with the Agriculture Department conducted an agricultural camp.
- Bhuned Panchayat in collaboration with the Youth Mandal organized a program to discuss issues including dowry and female feticide etc.
- Awareness programs were organized by the police department of Indora block in collaboration with local Mahila Mandals to discuss issues of bootlegging, domestic violence, drugs and sexual assault and relevant preventative methods.
- Village clean up programs were organized (Dheneta).
- Exclusive meetings were held with SUTRA at Passu and Gurdadi for the upcoming 'Ekal Nari Shakti Sangathan' (organization working on the issues related to single women) March Past Program for demands of single women, to be held on 1st-3rd April from Akri to Shimla. 408 women participated, of which 312 were from Mahila Mandals.
- Mr. Vishal Gupta and Mr. Vinod Pathania of MM program attended a two day workshop on Empowerment of Women organized by SALTS (Social Action Litigation and Training Society) and ISI (Indian Social Institute) held in New Delhi on 25th-26th February.
- Mr. Vinod Gupta attended a DLCC meeting on the 28th of February in Dharamsala. The meeting promoted NABARD's program launches.
- Mr. Sunil Mishra, Mr. Vinod Pathania, Mrs. Seema Thakur and Mrs. Indu Dhiman attended the 7 days National workshop held in October on Gender & Development at the Indian Social Institute, New Delhi.
- Mrs. Rajni Kayastha & Mr. Ajit Kumar attended a sensitization programme on Female Feoticide and Infanticide for the trainers of PRI's in September at NIPCCD, New Delhi.

Yuva Mandal (Youth groups):

Youth, being the future of tomorrow, need to have their energies and dynamism channelised in the most appropriate direction. Regular youth group meetings encourage building youth confidence, leadership skills, representation in local governance, natural resource management and even organizing social activities. Currently there are 220 Yuva mandals, involving 5,500 members. This year 186 resource persons were trained. Regular monthly follow ups at the centre continue with a variety of workshops, discussion groups, plays, and external speakers etc.



Performance at National Youth day

Common activities that members of the Yuva mandal carry out include organizing awareness programs for various topics, mentoring other youth and younger members of the village, construction activities (e.g. building roads, toilets etc.), national

resource management activities (e.g. planting trees etc.), maintain community cleanliness, career building skills, and organizing sports tournaments. This list is continually increasing.

Some of the important achievements of youth mandal for the year:

- Encouraging increased participation in Up-gram sabhas through a special motivational program held in three different blocks (Panchrukhi, Bhawarana and Nagrota).
- 350 youth held a rally in district Kangra to reduce pollution on World Environment Day (June 5, 20 07).
- 66 youngsters trained in basic computer course through Chinmaya Yuva se Yuva program.
- On 22nd April 2007, 86 youth participated in a workshop “Just Think” focused on discussing leadership and growth training
- On 11th May 2007, 105 youth participated in a workshop to increase awareness of Right to Information (RTI) and National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS).



World Environment Day Rally



Youth working to clean local villages

- On 17th May 2007, a workshop “Achieve the Goal” was organized for 170 youth participants. Several differently-abled youth and the Canadian High Commissioner to India were in attendance.
- Celebrated Swami Vivekananda Jayanti as National Youth Day (January 12th). Plays, songs and speeches were performed to commemorate the contribution of

Swami Vivekananda. The event received significant media coverage.

- An exposure trip was organized for the Yuva Mandal team to Ray Organisation (a youth organization created by the youth). The purpose of the trip was to see how a Yuva Mandal can create its own organization.

Yuvati Samooh (Adolescent Girls Groups):

Yuvati Samooh is an integral part of our youth program. Adolescent girls face many challenges as they mature into young women. To address these issues in an appropriate forum gives the girls both confidence and a valuable support system. Topics commonly addressed in such meetings include personal health & hygiene, sanitation, gender discrimination, dowry, leadership, women’s contribution to society etc. Workshops are commonly held at CORD centre, combining awareness programs with social activities. Each workshop averages an attendance of approximately 70-100 girls each. With increasing interest in such meetings we currently have 79 Yuvati groups with 1,157 members. Eventually the Yuvati Samuh groups merge with the mainstream Yuva Mandal groups.



Yuvatis performing at the Youth Day

Achievements for the year include:

- Celebration of International Women's Day with skits and cultural programs.
- Village facilitator training was conducted, with an attendance of over 28 girls.
- Capacity building session was conducted on National Youth day in which 123 young girls participated.
- A cultural program was conducted at the CORD center on National Youth Day, winners of which competed at a District level and won second prize.
- A workshop "Aaj ki Yuvati, Kal ki Nari" (Today's girls, tomorrow's women) was held in December 2007, with the purpose of empowering the future generation of women with the right vision of women's role in society. The program was attended by 65 young girls.

Balvihar (6-14 years children's groups):

Moulding children from a young age to be moral and productive members of society can be



Balvihar session in progress

achieved by imbibing in them good values and correct thinking. Besides empowering our Balvihars with moral and spiritual values, they are also sensitized to social issues from this early age through the Bala Sena wing. Bala Sena raises awareness on issues of plantation, sanitation, literacy etc. Furthermore, health awareness programs are conducted throughout the year for both children and mothers (all topics ranging from HIV/AIDs to Alcohol Abuse are covered).

One specific program undertaken this year, based on Natural Resource Management, was recycling days. On

this day glass and plastic were specifically separated from other rubbish in almost 20 villages. Other activities included awareness programs through plays performed for other villagers, construction of soakage and garbage pits, and training of resource persons.

Due to the introduction of Anganwadis by the government, the playschool component of Balvihar has been withdrawn this year to prevent unnecessary overlap. Currently we have a total of 137 Balvihar groups, in both Khas and Super Khas panchayats, with 3,233 total members. These Balvihars are run by Mahila Mandal members voluntarily without any cost to the programme.

Adult literacy:

Literacy is one of the most fundamental tools of today's society. The unique 'Roti and Sothi' method is used to teach the village folk who were not fortunate enough develop their literacy skills earlier. Village facilitators also adopt other unique methods to educate including teaching with leaves as well relating to interesting, relevant and understandable topics.



Disabled person attending adult literacy session

Some significant achievements this year include:

- Six differently-abled children from Sokni da Kot panchyat are educating people in their own village.
- A 71 year old woman from the Barballa village has completed the first book of the program!

| ACTIVITY | TOTAL |
|---|-------|
| Number of groups | 314 |
| Number of students (up to March 2008) | 2,710 |
| Number of trainers (all volunteers with one worker) | 106 |
| Number of people who learnt how to provide a signature | 318 |
| Number of people who completed first part of program (learning the alphabet) | 79 |
| Number of people who completed second part of program (combining words to form a sentence) | 13 |
| Number of people who completed third part of program (writing paragraphs) | 5 |
| Number of people receiving normal education through Roti and Sothi method of education | 1,128 |
| Number of people who joined the program | 118 |

Panchayati Raj Institutions (Local Self Governance):

The PRI program provides a universal platform for decentralized planning from the bottom up. We are working in over 225 Gram panchayats, with intense focus in 28 of them to ensure that Panchayati Raj Institutions function as instruments of local government. This forum is for the villagers, so it is essential for them to see this as an important aspect of development and use it to bring about change in their community. Therefore, community based organizations make efforts to sensitize local community members, particularly the youth, to increase their involvement.



Gram Sabha meeting at Garla Panchayat

CORD is working in 225 Gram Panchayats. This year CORD facilitated 133 Up-Gram Sabha meetings to strengthen Gram Sabha meetings. As a result, in this year CORD facilitated 191 Gram Sabhas, and 50% run

successfully and completed their quorum. Major issues raised were inclusion of the poor people in the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) and Below Poverty Line (BPL); discussion on the Right to Information Act; devolution of powers & functions; micro-planning; and resource mobilization. Women participation has been consistently around 44.5%. 40 people were trained as VVRPs in Panchayati Raj.

Regular activities and follow ups conducted by PRI, include regular meetings with Panchayats on Panchayat Diwas (2nd day of each month), training of volunteers and resource people; networking and liaison.

Following initiatives of CORD during the year to strengthen PRIs:

- Training of Village Volunteer Resource Persons (VVRPs).
- Organizing Panchayat Diwas in the field and in the center on the 2nd of every month. Here panchayat representatives from different panchayats share their experiences and difficulties along with discussion of economic and social development schemes.
- Formation, nurturing, and awareness in the following CBOs: Mahila Mandals, SHGs, Yuvati Samuh, Yuva Mandals, and Balvihar.
- Eight training programs have been organized for elected representatives held at the CORD center, and in the field.
- Meeting with satellite agents (far off block workers) on the 26th of each month to discuss activities done in the field.

- Mr. Narender Paul partook in a two day workshop on PRI- Indo-German bilateral capacity building of Panchayati Raj institutions in H.P. (Project Design workshop) held at New Shimla in November. He also attended the 2nd sustainability Summit Asia 2007 organized in New Delhi in December.
- In October, Mr. Vishal Gupta participated in a workshop on Village Resource Centres supported by ISRO (Bangalore) and Implementation of NRHM in H.P. and the role of NGO's in National Rural Health Mission. Later in the same month, Mr. Vishal Gupta participated in the Indo-Norwegian Symposium on "Experience of local self- Government" at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.
- Mr. Neeraj Gupta represented CORD in four days training in Dehradun organized by the Rural Litigation and Entitlement Kendra (RLEK) where various topics were covered such as the PRI system and its uses, communication, disaster management, networking and resource management.

Alcohol Abuse Awareness (AAA) Program:

Excessive use of alcohol can have negative consequences on individual's health, personal relationships and the community. Awareness and education is an essential starting point to understanding alcohol addiction. In the previous year 900 people attended awareness programs about the negative effects of alcohol and how to prevent alcohol addiction. Also, four Youth awareness programs were facilitated in which over 500 people were in attendance. Further, a survey of alcohol consumption was conducted in four villages, in an attempt to understand better their needs and intervene accordingly.



Consultancy services to alcoholics by Dr. Roy Eskapa at the field level

Treatment of people dependant on alcohol is two-fold.

The first step is awareness and counseling and the second step is the use of the Sinclair Method and medication. This year, we were fortunate to have Dr. Roy David Eskapa from London, to facilitate the progress of the Sinclair method in CORD. He predominantly used the medication Natrim (Naltrexone) as a withdrawal aid. In the past year we have provided counseling to 55 alcoholics and their families, of which 23 are currently on treatment, 22 have reduced their drinking, and 10 have stopped drinking altogether.

One unique event included a trip to a country liquor manufacturer for education and research purposes. The purpose of this trip to Parour village, where rice beer is manufactured was to gain insight into the process of production and attitude of producers. The particular type of rice beer produced at the Parour location is also used as a medicine to treat kidney stones and other kidney related ailments. It is cheap and has a wide appeal amongst the poor. However, like all alcohol, when abused it can lead to serious illness and addiction.

Community Based Primary Healthcare:

Healthcare is addressed by looking at both treatment and prevention. CORD provides primary healthcare, through the outpatient's department as well as through awareness campaigns in the field. Ongoing training is given to the health guides, birth attendants and Balwadi workers. Through this past year specific topics of health campaigns included:

- Diarrhea - understanding the preventable causes of diarrhoea and the usage of Oral Re-hydration Solution (ORS) for prevention of severe dehydration.

- Diabetes Mellitus - 50 patients were given advice and medication by an endocrinologist from Delhi.
- Blood donation camp was set up in which 158 CORD volunteers donated blood.
- Plastic Surgery camp at local Medical College in Dharamsala.
- Pulse polio immunization programs (both at centre as well as in the field).
- Health and relevant support services provided to bed-ridden patients.
- Other health awareness programs covering HIV/AIDs, anaemia, pre and post natal care.
- Health checkups for children of 10 Balwadis.



Blood donation by our team members at the centre

In addition to health campaigns, the outpatient department is kept consistently busy with over 12,000 consultations through the year (including patients seen in our sub-centers). Patients whose care is beyond our scope are referred on to hospitals and other relevant facilities for further investigation. The typical presentations seen in OPD include respiratory disease, skin conditions, anemia, and worm infestations.

Community Based Integrated Sanitation Program:

To promote better health & encouraging good sanitation habits essential. Through our sanitation and hygiene program we have reached out to almost 15,438 people. Low cost toilets structures have been developed and promoted through practical demonstrations thereby discouraging open defaecation. Almost 689 basic toilets have been constructed through the year. In addition, we have facilitated the setup of 382 garbage pits, 394 soaking pits, 391 kitchen gardens, and held cleanliness drives in 633 villages. The Lions Club in Chicago in collaboration with Lions Club Dharamshala has supported toilet construction in 2 blocks of the project area. CORD's workers have raised approximately 50% of the cost of toilet by motivating individuals and rest is by Lions Club.



Sanitation Awareness program at Dhaloon village

Other activities include:

- Awareness campaigns for local villages, schools, and factories.
- Proper segregation of solid waste (plastic, iron, glass etc.)
- Construction of garbage and soakage pits.
- Exposure trip to Kullu (an open defecation free village)
- Regular training of village facilitators is conducted.
- 57 segregation campaigns.
- Cleaned 134 natural water sources.
- Chlorinated 80 bowries.
- Conducted 40 sanitation programs in schools and ran 68 awareness campaigns.
- 6 inaugurations programs in different Panchayats with an average attendance of 80-100 people.

Resource Centre for Self Help Groups (SHGs):



SHG training session

Self Help Groups are a means for underprivileged people to learn micro-finance. Once they are established in those skills, they are able to borrow significant loans from the bank in order to earn a living and explore entrepreneurship options. Currently there are 1,473 SHGs, with over 20,000 members, with almost Rs. 18 crores in circulation (i.e. approximately US\$ 4.5 million).

The success of our SHGs enticed people from all over

Himachal to understand micro-economics through SHGs. 25 people attending one such training included state government officials as well as 13 state level NGO representatives. Furthermore, regular trainings are conducted at the CORD centre for our own village facilitators. CORD continues to provide training to govt. departments in needs of training at the resource centre.

Social Justice and Informal Legal Cell:

Women's equality allows development of a society in all aspects including political, economic and social. Through monthly Mahila Mandal meetings, workers are able to reach the most victimized women and resolve their problems by networking with relevant agencies.

Legal cases can be divided in two specific sections, individual cases and cases of public interest. The latter is generally a matter of providing awareness and legal literacy to members of the community. However, this year we specifically fought a case related to environment pollution by the municipal corporation, Dharamsala. This case was ruled in favor of the public interest; a judgment was passed directly to the municipal corporation of Dharamsala to take the relevant measures to prevent garbage seepage into water resources as well operate the solid waste plants immediately.

The majority of cases filed with CORD are those of individuals. The most common cases were in relation to matrimonial issues (i.e. domestic violence, divorce, demanding or giving dowry, ongoing maintenance). Thus far we have had 385 cases filed through CORD, of which 239 have been completely closed and 146 are continuing.

Attaining justice for the women is not our final destination; we ensure the woman is appropriately rehabilitated into her community with dignity and respect after the case is closed. We ensure that the community takes up the responsibility to accept that woman back into society and enable her independence.

Keeping abreast of the changes and amendments to the law through attendance of trainings and workshops is an integral component. In the last year, we have had workers attend the following:

- Women's Law training and workshop in Dharamsala.
- The regional workshop of Protection from Domestic Violence Act 2005 training in Chandigarh.
- Para-legal training for social activists.



Legal Literacy camp conducted in commemoration of International Women's Day

- A workshop on “Human Rights Vis-à-vis marginalized communities in India with special focus on Uttarakhand”

We also conducted a legal literacy camp on 14th March 2008 in commemoration of International Women’s Day. The purpose of the workshop was to increase women’s awareness and knowledge of the legal system. It was facilitated by the Legal Service Authority, Dharamsala (Dist. Kangra). The members of Legal service authority, Honorable Judges, Advocates, CORD members and notable personalities from All India Radio were present. The Secretary of Legal Service Authority, Sri. Rattan Chand Thakur (Chief Judicial Magistrate) chaired the workshop.

Breakdown of individual cases for 2007-08

| Category of case | Total Cases | Category of case | Total Cases |
|-----------------------|-------------|----------------------|-------------|
| Murder | 5 | Crime General | 49 |
| Rape | 10 | Harassment Other | 29 |
| Sexual Assault | 6 | Property | 29 |
| Matrimonial cases | 234 | Child Related Issues | 6 |
| Family Related Issues | 11 | Job Related Issues | 6 |
| Total Cases | | 385 | |

Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) for Differently-Abled:

The Community Based Rehabilitation program continues to not just provide rehabilitation for the disabled but also provide the differently-abled with their constitutional rights. This is achieved by working in synergy with Chinmaya Umang. Chinmaya Umang is a forum for the differently-abled, their parents, friends and relatives to share their stories, voice their concerns and fight for their rights. To strengthen the Chinmaya Umang forum and their young leaders’ capacities we increased their participation in the community groups, held regular meetings and training at the centre and build their confidence by involving them in decision-making and events organizing. Also their accessibility and participation in the community has been emphasized.

The aim of CBR to promote collective awareness and inclusion of differently-abled persons back into society is achieved through awareness camps, integration and networking with rehabilitation centers, welfare organizations, schools etc. Currently the program works with 416 differently-able people in over 80 villages (in the field and in the centre), on various aspects of life depending on their needs and abilities. During the year, we have increased focus on Khas and Super-Khas Panchayats (Panchayats with special focus).

Some major activities during the year include:

- CORD worked with the National Disability Network to compel the Government of India to sanction the UN convention for the rights of the differently able and helped achieve its ratification by the Govt. of India with other NGO partners of NCPEDP (National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People). It is now mandatory for all types of government to implement the laws with accommodations for the differently-abled.
- CORD in collaboration with NCPEPD and supported by AIFU, organized a State level seminar on Inclusive Education; there were 66 participants (including disabled people).

- CBR team & Chinmaya Umang members participated in a seven day recreational camp organized by Indian Muscular Dystrophy association at Soghi. The emphasis was on schemes of cooperation for the differently-abled

- Mr. Mahendra, one of our differently-abled, participated in International Abilympics in Japan in knitting skill competition.



- Meetings were held with our district partners to strengthen the advocacy movement in Himachal. It resulted in the preparation of a district wide action plan to promote equal opportunity, and protection of rights of the differently-abled.
- Mrs. Monika Kalia attended one day workshop at Shimla and Mr. Vijay Guleria attended a one day national seminar on the 'Disability Rights Movement in India in Chandigarh. Both the programmes were organized by the Society for Disability & Rehabilitation Studies, New Delhi.
- Mr. Narender Paul and I represented CORD in the two days National Consultation on the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities and one day National Partner's Meet organized by National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People from 27th - 29th July 2007.
- Attended a national conference on 14th March - "Skills development of person's with disability in inclusive rural development" in Panchkula. The focus discussion of the seminar was opportunities available to the differently-abled in rural India, poverty alleviation schemes, and ensuring the schemes were inclusive of the differently-abled.
- Regular attendance to statewide and national meetings on topics related to differently able people. Some included National Abilympics Association, training of trainees on topics of Disability Rights and Acts and the UN Convention, and meeting the director of social justice and empowerment (Shimla, HP) to standardize the Common Attitude Test (CAT) for diploma/certificate course for the differently-abled.
- Attended Karuna Vihar and National Institute for Visually Handicapped (NIVH) in Deharoon, Snehalya in Gwalior.

- Participation in the regional consultation on PWD Act Amendment in Delhi.
- Participation in annual plastic surgery camp at the Dr. Rajendra Prasad Medical College in Dharmasala, where 20 patients underwent surgery.
- Escort individuals to the Polio surgery screening camp to help candidates for contracture release surgery to be chosen.
- Five day sign language training organized for CBR team and the hearing impaired.



Sign language training in progress

- Six differently able girls recently completed a 6 month training program on sewing and embroidery at I.T.I in Dari. They can now sustain their own livelihood this way.
- 15 awareness camps during the year, on average each camp has 30-35 participants.

- Inclusion of 11 differently able youth at the Yuva Mandal awareness rally on world Environment Day.
- On World Disability Day (December 3rd) a rally was organized by Chinmaya Umang in Dharamshala on December 1st, and a play “Wider access and quality education” was staged by its members
- Regular participation in the statewide Special Olympics. Two mentally challenged youths participated in national level basketball competition and six differently-abled attended the Winter Sports at the National level training camp at Narkanda for 1 week.
- State Level Ability Festival was organized at Dharmasala. Sports and cultural activities were conducted, and six differently able individuals from CORD participated.
- In October, a Festival of Differently-Abled (FODA) organized by Bishop Cotton School was held in Shimla (H.P). Sanjeev Gupta, ten disabled individuals and one resource person attended the cultural and sports event.
- Regular networking with government officers at district and block levels, welfare organizations, and schools etc.
- Three patients were taken to Walawalkar Hospital Chiploon, Maharashtra, for free hip replacement surgery.
- Regular meetings of Chinmaya Umang members are held on alternate months open to all members. On average 60-70 participants attend. Individuals can resolve any challenges they may be facing at these meetings. In the other months meetings are exclusively for Chinmaya Umang leaders to discuss the future directions.
- Public litigation appeal to Food and Supply Officer Kangra filed by seventeen members of Chinmaya Umang in March. Human Rights Law Network Advocate, Miss. Ruchi assisted them with the appeal which was to provide low cost cereals and oil in their respective villages through public food distribution system.
- Two of CBR’s mentally challenged children, Kushal and Krishna, accompanied by Sanjeev Gupta, attended a basketball training camp held in Bareilly (U.P) in September. Sanjeev also attended the valedictory function of special athletes going to Shanghai (China) in Shimla
- Sanjeev Kumar attended a 2 day meeting of NGOs in November. The discussion involved the conducting of common admission test for all the Diploma/Certificate level courses and charging fee at Directorate of Social Justice & Empowerment, Shimla.
- Mr. Narender Paul attended a 2 day workshop on disability surveying in Kullu by HPVHA, Shimla as well as a budget for children by the H.P Govt., analyzed by HAQ, Delhi in November.
- Narender Paul and I represented CORD in the 5th National Disability Network’s State Partners meet in New Delhi.

Community Based Livelihood (CBL) programme:

Community based livelihood explores avenues of income generation, through enhancing or upgrading people’s skills and capacities. Agricultural farming is the main source of income for villagers of the Kangra District. CBL also provides other different avenues for income enhancement. Livelihood is divided into two broad categories, farm& allied sector and non-farm & service sector.

Non Farm and Service Sector (NFSS):

Non-farm training delves into areas such as weaving, sewing, embroidery, knitting, soap making, Kangra painting, candle making, and food production. Training topics include quality & design improvement, demand based production, market orientation, exploring local resources etc.

Once skills are established, entrepreneurship skills are taught to the women. Rural women have some level of difficulty approaching the competitive marketplace so CBL's first priority is local markets. Other skills include managerial and marketing skills and concepts of product quality, price, place, and packaging.



Training on value addition in herbal products preparation

Currently we have 366 training sub groups, of which 41 were created this past year. There are currently 2,355 total beneficiaries in focused areas in our 12 main activities (which has indirectly benefited 4139). At year ending, the total number of fully trained resource

persons for CBL-NFS is 76 people. Currently beneficiaries earning more than Rs.500 per month are 3325 and those earning more than Rs.1000 per month are 853.

Exposure trips are also a relevant component to familiarize attendees to larger markets of finished goods, as well as to demonstrate how to acquire raw material in the wholesale market. This year a total of 53 such trips were organized. For example, one of the trips was organized to New Delhi for 3 villagers with Mr. Rajesh Kumar (of CORD), to purchase raw materials for candle making.

Some specific achievements of the CBL (NFSS) for the year 2007-08 include:

- We have trained a total of 628 people, through 75 trainings conducted at the CORD centre and 56 trainings conducted in the field
- A carpenters training program was organized by Bosch in Chandigarh. 13 carpenters were trained on how to use power tools as well as in areas of quality improvement, design development and market orientations
- During the Silver Jubilee celebrations of Hanuman Abhishekam, an informal training was given to many women on different products, colour combinations and designs. Various methods of packaging and price determination were also discussed. They then had the option to sell their products through their SHG shop, Guru Dhara Self Help Group, or independently.
- Kangra painting works done by talented hearing and speech impaired youth, was displayed at an exhibition held in Delhi (16th-19th November) with the support of His Excellency Mr. David Malone, the Canadian High Commissioner to India. More than 120 guests from different embassies participated in the exhibition. SHG members of Kangra painting were able to sell their paintings and greeting cards for total Rs. 85180.



Speech and hearing impaired youth with the Canadian High Commissioner

- Kangra painting and bamboo products were promoted at Kangra museum, Dharmasala on International Women's Day (8th March)
- Women entrepreneurs participated in the Mumbai SARAS Fair from 22nd December to 3rd January organized by NABARD

- CORD is acting as a Micro Enterprise Promotion Agency (MEPA) for Himachal Pradesh, currently covering 20 Gram Panchayats of Kangra and Nagrota blocks. MEPA is a livelihood program introduced by NABARD as a pilot project in 9 states of India.
- We have established new networks with the Forest Department, Dharmasala for training and marketing of Bamboo products as well as with the Palampur University and Institute of Himalayan Bio-Resource Technology (I.H.B.T) for food products development.

Farm and Allied Sector (F&AS):

Farm sector focuses on exploring and establishing multiple livelihoods based on agriculture and related fields. Activities include, production of off-seasonal vegetables and cash crops, poly houses construction, construction of vermi compost pits, pattal production (plates made out of leaves), livestock and animal husbandry, dairy farming, fishery, mushroom cultivation (*Dhingri* mushrooms), goat and sheep keeping, poultry, beekeeping, sericulture, turmeric cultivation, mushroom compost and farming, fruit production, horticulture, floriculture, sheep and goat rearing, sericulture, and bee-keeping. Presently we have 7983 beneficiaries associated with our program in which 855



Dhingri-a type of mushroom

are earning more than Rs. 3000; 583 earning more than Rs.2000; 997 earning more than Rs.1000; 1578 earning more than Rs.500. One of our youth, Mr. Shammy, set an example by earning Rs. 5000 per month through vegetable cultivation.

Other major activities over the year include:

- Currently using 23 poly-houses in district Kangra by farmers with successful results
- Promoting use of low cost poly-houses through practical demonstrations
- Replication of the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) during Kharif season has been carried out by 115 farmers in 10 Panchayats.
- A one-day workshop was organized on SRI. Participated by CORD, 42 farmers of the Kangra district, 4 scientists from the Rice and Wheat Research Centre and a consultant from People's Science Institute (Dehradun).
- A workshop on chemical free agriculture was conducted. Also, a field trip to Haripur Jevic Gram at Dehradun was organized to learn practices of organic farming.
- Improved dairy farming, particularly with respect to raising awareness of food and fodder security, reproductive health and artificial insemination, nutrition, and disease control amongst cows.
- Selected farmers attended training on mushroom cultivation, conducted at Institute of Himalayan Bio-Resource Technology and Agriculture University, Palampur. The workshop was conducted by the Indo-Dutch mushroom training centre
- Four camps on Dairy and Organic Farming were organized, with the agriculture department of Kangra

Participatory Natural Resource Management (PNRM):

CORD's integrated PNRM not only focuses on management and conservation of natural resources, but also on the building of community understanding to govern their own natural resources strategically.

Some of the achievements of 2007-08 are detailed below:

- Planted 6695 Mulberry species, 35568 of Napier grass, 3000 fruit and fodder trees
- 2267 trees were planted in many areas by the youth and mahila mandals
- Multiple projects in various sectors. For example, in Fatehpur, trenches were built to limit erosion and capture rainwater, thereby rejuvenating water resources.
- 20 exposure trips for 302 participants (including trips to Rajasthan and Uttaranchal)
- Six training programs and one awareness program was held.

Evaluation, training & capacity building of other satellite centres of CORD:

- Mohan Raj & Prabhakaran, two Chinmaya Yuva Veer from Tamilnadu (to be posted in CORD Siruvani & CORD Thamraipakkam respectively) and Shri Brahmananda Das, Subhash Gamango, Somanatha Sabar from Gajapati Orissa (where CORD envisages to setup a new centre), Sumit Sharma & Geeta Prasad Dhakal (two Chinmaya Yuva Veer from Sikkim), are attending six-week training programme from 20th March 2008 on comprehensive integrated rural development.
- I visited various CORD sites regularly throughout the year sometime alone and sometime with a team constituted of Mr. Narender Jamwal, Vijay Singh & Smt. Kaushalaya Devi from the resource centre as per need. The largest numbers of visits have been to CORD Deuladiha.
- I visited CORD-Vijay near Vijayawara Andhra Pradesh & Chinmaya Mission's orphanage near Thiruvanthpuram in Kerala for the first time while I was in the south visiting the CORD centers at Thamaraiykkam & Siruvani.

General highlights of networking, trainings and volunteers:

- CORD's 23 years work in comprehensive integrated rural development was acknowledged by the Government of India by bestowing the honour of 'Padma Shree' award for our work in social sector to me on our Republic Day, the 26th January 2008. This moment became more memorable for CORD as on the day of declaration of this award many who have contributed to the



Republic Day Celebrations at CORD Centre

work were present with the team. We were celebrating the Republic Day with Shri Joti Chakraborty and Dr. Sneh Chakraborty of Chinmaya Mission Halton Region, Dr. Odile Voinchet and the Multi-Purpose Health Workers who gather every year on this date to come back to

their Alma Mater with their families. CORD started its work in health by training four batches of these 120 MPW (F) from 1985-1992.

- The first ever document of CORD at Sidhbari after 23 years entitled 'Grace at work' written by Ms. Deepika Sondhi was released on 2nd March 2008 in Delhi by H.H Swami Tejomayananda, head of Chinmaya Mission Worldwide.



"Grace at work" being released by Pujya Swamiji



Author's briefing about 'Grace at work'

- I was honoured with Golden Jubilee Achievers award by my Alma Mater Maulana Azad Medical College, New Delhi at its Golden Jubilee celebration. Sh. M. Hamid Ansari, Vice-President of India was the chief guest on this occasion. The medical fraternity acknowledged our work and appreciated their colleague who brought a deeper meaning to holistic health by working in integrated rural development.
- Canadian High Commissioner His Excellency David Malone and Canadian Consulate General Ms. Helen Amundsun visited CORD to see its integrated development work on 17th May 2007.
- CIDA evaluated our programme in May 2007 when Ms. Louise Mailloux visited CORD at Sidhbari. The evaluation concluded that "CORD Sidhbari's programme is relevant, cost-effective, designed appropriately, uses its resources appropriately, having partnership, local ownership, taking informed and timely action thereby meeting seven of CIDA's eight key success factors. However it raises its concern on one factor, sustainability, in terms of moving ahead in absence of diversified funding". She also made insightful recommendations to strengthen our 2nd tier of workers and our Result Based Management further.
- Mr. Narender Paul & I presented a paper in a two day Development Professional Meet 2007 at G.B Pant Institute for Social Sciences at Allahabad. The theme was 'Managing Performance for Rural Development'. G.B Pant Institute honoured two developmental scientists in rural development. I was one of them.
- I was invited by National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), Thiruvanthpuram, Kerala in March 2008 to address "State level seminar on women empowerment" as a chief guest speaker.
- Mr. Narender Paul attended training on basic and advanced data analysis using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) organized by Sambodhi Research & Communications, New Delhi for four days in May.



Vice President of India honouring Dr. Kshama Metre

- Mr. Narender Jamwal & I attended meeting on Natural Resources based Small Micro-Livelihood (SML) programme -Phase II with People Science Institute (PSI) Dehradun. We have started implementing this programme in four villages with kind support from PSI and Sir Rattan Tata Trust, Mumbai.
- Mr. Narender Paul, Senior Programme Manager at CORD attended five days of training on proposal writing, project planning and resource mobilization at Sai Ropa, Kullu, organized by Grass-root Institute, Grass-root Trust India, New Delhi in May.

Volunteers and trainees:

- Our work has attracted volunteers not just from India but also from countries all around the world. Poonam and Pooja Merai, Bhavana ShivaKumar, Charlie Richter from USA and Suresh, Kanchan, Prem, Mohit Wadwani & Rishi Vadera, Seema, Bindiya, Bina Naran and Sikta Ghelani from UK, Ms. Yoshita Tewari (UK), Rajneel Kunaal Prasad and Pravesh Narayan (Australia), Priya Gopalan (Hong Kong), Nitish Shah (U.K), Dr. Mitul Kapadia (USA), Lavanya Venkateswara, Paayal Kot and Abinav Koul (Canada), Dr. Odile Voinchet (France) Vandana Rai, (Singapore), Krupa Shah, (Australia), Neel Mansukhani, (USA), Sunil Kapur, (USA) and many others volunteered their services to our programme during this period.
- Three Chinmaya Yuva Veer, Rishi Seth, Vaishali Gandhi & Bhakta Prasad Dhakal are posted with CORD Sidhbari as volunteers by Swami Mitrananda to work in various programme of CORD.
- During this period, Ms. Maria Brun, Sheila Nezhad, Sarah Vig, Anil J. Mehta, Kajal Mehta, Kathryan Hansal, Pareena Lawrence, Kanika Metre and Professor Mary A. Buckley from USA came to study our development work.
- Five students of Master in Social Work (MSW) from Delhi School of Social Work and two students of MBA (Rural Development) programme from G.B. Pant Social Science Institute, Allahabad (U.P) studied our development work during their one month summer placement programme.
- A team of eight students with their Professor Ms. Suzane Feeny, Professor in International Development and her colleague Ms. Linda Golaszewski from University of Portland came to see & study our work in integrated development for a week in August-September 2007.
- Two MBA students Nikhat Pawane & Tarun Pal from S.P Jain Institute of Management and Research, Mumbai are doing their one month academic internship with CORD from 26th March - 26th April 2008.



(Kshama Metre)

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