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The year 2002-2003 has been a period of renewal and restructuring in PRIA. The new strategic plan ‘Governance Where People Matter’ has evolved after extensive consultations and deliberations internally with the Governing Board, key stakeholders in the country, partners and donors during this period. These consultations have resulted in a major shift in PRIA’s programmatic framework. Greater emphasis on field-based actions that focus on enhancing the interface between civil society and governance institutions has led to a targeted intervention plan in nearly 40 districts of 14 states of the country. Simultaneously, the task of synthesizing lessons at the macro level and disseminating them widely for shared learning and policy support has acquired new significance.

In light of the new strategy, internal organizational restructuring has been undertaken during the year. A matrix structure which combines field-based responsibility with thematic coordination has begun to operate. Training of staff to facilitate the effective functioning of such a complex structure has acquired a new priority.

A particular implication of these shifts is more focused attention on outputs and outcomes as opposed to inputs alone. In order to facilitate ease of communication, planning, monitoring and reporting, a new web-enabled IT system has been developed and is being piloted in PRIA. This system will ensure on-line and efficient use of our database and resources, of staff capacities in particular, and in achieving programmatic objectives at micro, meso and macro levels.

A major initiative during the year was a Gender Audit of PRIA and its RSO partners. Using the findings of this study, detailed plans for gender mainstreaming in PRIA and its RSO partners have been evolved. It is hoped that mainstreaming gender in the institutional and programmatic aspects of PRIA and its key partners will become an integral part of their operations.
An extensive external review of PRIA’s programme on ‘Strengthening panchayati raj institutions’ was enabled by Sida and led by Prof. James Manor, IDS, Sussex. The findings of the review were very positive in terms of intervention strategies and their emerging impacts on the ground. On the basis of this review, Sida and SDC have agreed to continue their support to PRIA over the next three to five years. Likewise, our cooperation with CORDAID and IIZ/DVV has been restructured over the next three years.

After four years of intensive effort, PRIA completed the survey on the status of the non-profit sector in India. The findings of this pioneering study, entitled “Invisible yet widespread: The Non-Profit Sector in India” were released through a series of workshops and media reports.

Two new initiatives were undertaken during the year. Strengthening citizen leadership at the micro level has witnessed innovative use of participatory learning methodology to enhance greater voice of community-based organizations and citizen leaders. Particular focus has been on the leadership of women, dalits and tribals. The second initiative has centred around peace and social cohesion. In the face of growing conflicts at the community level around caste, gender and religious identities, creative educational processes have been facilitated in several locations to enable community level peace-building and social cohesion as building blocks to just socio-economic development.

As a result of many of the above-mentioned change processes, sustaining and nurturing coherent organizational focus and collective culture has been a major challenge. This has placed heavy demands on leadership functions at different levels of the organization. Support from the members of the Governing Board, key partners and donors has been valuable in this process. I want to acknowledge that with all sincerity.

Finally, PRIA lost a senior colleague due to untimely demise of Ms. Atreyee Cordeiro during the year. I want to acknowledge her contribution here with a heavy heart.

Thank you

Rajesh Tandon
President, PRIA

August 2003
New Delhi
Governance with Accountability

I have enjoyed writing for PRIA’s Annual Reports as it gave me invaluable opportunities to think about issues concerning Voluntary Development Organizations (VDOs), and to express myself without restraint – with abandon. This is the last such piece. By the time it reaches you I will have relinquished my seat on PRIA’s governing board after a long and happy tenure. Aside from having been associated with PRIA right from its inception, I was also granted – by colleagues on its governing board – the privilege to be its first chairperson, and to continue so for a full decade. My utmost gratitude to all those who sustained me during this period!

As I write on the highly charged themes of governance and accountability in VDOs, it helps me do some serious self-reflection. Let me start with accountability of a position that I have held so long.

Accountable Conduct of Governing Boards

Although, a VDO board member plays an essentially advisory role, and is just one among several, his public and statutory accountability is total and mandatory. At a minimum, accountability is delivering high performance with high integrity. An organization can scarcely be accountable if those who undertake the mantle of its governance do not act accountably – personally as well as institutionally.

A basic quality of someone who occupies a governance-level chair is the ability to apply broad-based maturity and wisdom, keeping long-term perspective, with independence, character and integrity, in best interests of the organization, to technically correct policy decisions that all worthwhile organizations must have the capability to reach. Another crucial quality of any governing board member is to wholeheartedly own up all aspects of overall functioning of the VDO, and effectively represent and defend them – with deep conviction – in its total environment. These basic requisites are impossible to meet unless the following conditions are met in letter and spirit – jointly as well as severally – at all times:

1. The member experiences high level of comfort with the VDO in the matter of its mission, strategy and programmes. When he finds
himself out of synchronization with colleagues, he must understand that he has outlived his utility for the organization.

2. Nell Minow, editor and founder of Corporate Library – a governance research firm – says, “What the worst boards all have in common is an inability to say ‘no’ to the CEO”. This criterion applies equally to VDO governing boards.

3. He must experience utmost vigour and willingness to defend, in public, both the organization and its CEO. When for any reason whatsoever, he finds himself unable to do so, he must realize that somewhere on the way he has failed to honestly fulfil his accountability.

4. He must maintain high standards of personal integrity in his dealings with, and on behalf of, the VDO – even otherwise. When he feels the need to defend his personal integrity vis-à-vis the VDO, whether or not he believes his position to be defensible, he must know that his continued leadership would do more harm than good to the VDO. While foregoing a portion of the perks he received from GE as part of his retirement package, Jack Welch said last year, “Perceptions are important”. I agree with him entirely because it is interpersonal perceptions that ultimately determine the effectiveness of our leadership and relations.

5. He must consistently experience high pride and exhilaration in his position with the VDO. Similarly, the VDO must experience true and legitimate pride in this very crucial relationship with its governing board member. When this pride and exhilaration ceases to be boldly palpable, it should be unhesitatingly conceded that the relationship has begun to rot.

Ideally, no governing board member should wait to actually fail on any of these counts. As an experienced and sensitive person, he must get an inner signal of things to come – especially since these involve him personally.

**The Ultimate Organizational Deliverable**

*Wholesome accountability is the very first requisite that organizational governance is expected to ensure. Sound accountability and governance are not possible without an organization becoming keenly aware of the problems and the causes of the environment it expects to influence, its own organizational purpose, its force fields, and core stakeholders. Accountability must be circumscribed precisely by the organization’s stated identity and its stakeholders.*

*Merely because we traverse the same road, we don’t become a caravan. To become a caravan, we must pursue shared goals or destinations. Otherwise, in a real sense, we walk alone! Understanding of who are our true stakeholders, and who aren’t, is essential as serious accountability can be due only to those whose interests are firmly interlocked with those of the organization, who swim or sink with the organization – feel exhilarated when the organization wins and hurt when it loses. In the normal course, I consider three – a VDO’s resource-providers, programme beneficiaries, and core staff – as its primary stakeholders. Collaborating VDOs also become meaningful as well-defined networks or fora, or as bilateral partners.*

One ostensible reason for a perceived lack of accountability is the organization’s failure to precisely define parameters of its accountability. Leaving this loose is a sure recipe for disaster. Unless stakes, contextualized in the VDO mission, are clearly negotiated in terms of interdependence – each party’s expectations from, and offerings to the other, accountability remains wide open, ambiguous, and a perennial source of contention. Effective accountability can’t be achieved without providing a clear focus to performance that is made measurable. Scattered performance that cannot be measured doesn’t satisfy anyone! In effect, what I am suggesting is that it is prudent to initially limit the scope of accountability to our stated mission, and a set of core stakeholders – and fulfill it to the hilt. Once this well-defined accountability has been achieved to a satisfactory level, its ambit can be cautiously and deliberately expanded.
Common Vision – Establishing a World of Order

Clear definitions of performance and accountability must flow from a VDO’s perceived purpose – its societal vision, mission and values. While each VDO, as a distinct entity, must formulate its unique mission and values, can VDOs share a common vision? I believe that, in fact, all VDOs do work for a similar – if not the same – societal future. But, is it defined, shared and accepted as such? Till last year I thought that a common vision could be – mainstreaming the beneficiaries. But, then something came up, and I started to think again. Should VDOs align their beneficiaries with a societal mainstream that is inflicted with severe conditions of apathy, corruption, communalism, and doubtful character? I am still searching for alternatives: maybe enabling beneficiaries to celebrate life, or to live a clean wholesome life. However, something quite as simple and positive that asserts hope, peace, faith and respect!

In his article of 9 February 2003 in the New York Times, Thomas Friedman backs the need for reinforcing a World of Order against a World of Disorder. Edmund Burke said: ‘there is but one law, which governs all laws, the law of humanity.’ For me, it is this law that the vision for a World of Order must necessarily converge on! Accentuating negatives, such as poverty alleviation, may be good for mobilizing resources, but not necessarily a complete goal in itself, because those who are not poor are not always good examples of citizenship to emulate. Besides, it could create a contrary vested interest among VDOs.

Performance-based goodwill building

Accountability often gets mixed up with performance-based goodwill building. It is important to inform people about the good work done by VDOs because perceptions, images, reputations do count in significant ways. But, let us recognize that this is not the same as accountability. I consider even articulations to demonstrate VDOs’ intents and commitment to rounded sustainability, or reassertions for all socially significant work, as parts of goodwill-building rather than the more serious performance-based accountability business. Yet, we need to be careful about the VDO profile we thus project! I’m tempted to quote the unquestioned gross compensation received by an Indian company-CEO during 2001 – close to Rs. 10 crores p.a., contrasted with less than 0.5 per cent of this received by an Indian VDO-CEO, continually called under scrutiny by the income tax authorities. I wonder if this has something to do with the unrealistically frugal kind of a profile that VDOs themselves consistently project. After all, a large number of VDO leaders are intellectually or academically in no way inferior to most corporate CEOs! Yet, the remuneration they accept is rarely adequate for maintaining a sustainable living style commensurate with their competencies and status. This also sets a low ceiling for others working in VDOs.

Deteriorating Levels of Social Accountability

In January 2003, PRIA shared findings of its study on the non-profits in India. Its size - some 12 lakh organizations; 20 million persons as staff or volunteers – 3.4% of adult population or full-time equivalent employment of 6 million – around 80% of all Government of India employees; mobilizing about Rs. 18,000 crores in 1999-2000 – over half of it self-generated, seemed to leave some in the audience a bit wide-eyed, and calling for increased accountability, which is not bad in itself. What was disturbing, however, was a suggestion that owing to absence of visible public agencies as in the case of government, maintained at heavy tax-payer cost, non-profits had perhaps been less accountable than the government or the business sectors. Not supported by concrete data. I found such comparison unacceptable. The Wall Street Journal has reported a recent study that found declines in firms’ willingness to transparently discuss bad news and business prospects compared with two years ago. Scams in the government and the businesses (the most commonly heard of in India being Enron, and rail accidents), makes even the idea of business or government accountability something of a fiction. Pardon my cynicism, but despite the expensive
watchdog agencies, how does it happen that 55 years after free India’s government accountability, the Prime Minister had to reassure people that every village would have clean drinking water? Earlier this year, a Division Bench of Rajasthan High Court had to rule that the state’s failure to provide safe drinking water to people mocks their fundamental right to live. It is a different matter that the ruling itself came ten years after the writ petition filed in 1992. Add to it the CSE finding that over 90% samples of bottled drinking water brands were found to contain unacceptable levels of pesticide residues. This drinking water scenario alone illustrates the roles of state executive, judiciary, business and a VDO around a very basic need. This also, simultaneously, questions the effectiveness of several VDO programmes addressing this area.

Front-page headlines in newspapers do, in some ways, spell what the media perceives as priority areas for their readership. If so, why was it that, perhaps for the first time in over 50 years, a report of the President’s address to the Nation on the eve of Republic Day didn’t find space on front pages of two newspapers that I saw this year? Was it because the emphasis of President Kalam’s address was on his Vision India 2020 – essentially developmental – rather than on war cries, threats and counter-threats?

CR Irani’s Caveat in The Statesman of 2nd February 2003 is indicative of gross deterioration in a State where Mother Shakti has historically been worshipped with perhaps the highest vigour and enthusiasm in the country. It is about how five constables beat up a sergeant of Kolkata Police when he attempted to interfere with what Irani calls ‘their fundamental right to molest any women in sight’. The sergeant subsequently died of these injuries. The Chief Minister, ostensibly for fear of the Police Karamchari Union, ruled out any criminal or disciplinary proceedings, saying that the government would take action if there were a repetition of such incidents.

As a private citizen, NR Narayana Murthy, Infosys Technologies founder and chief mentor has expressed deep distress: ‘the government does not seem to believe in private people. That is such an insult to all who have tried to be good citizens of this country.’ At the G-22 dialogue in Evian, leaders from the developing world are reported to have stressed that corruption was a serious malaise and that unless it was controlled, there could be no “progress” in the equitable distribution of wealth. On hearing this, the Indian Prime Minister is reported to have said, ‘I heard the word corruption at this debate so often that I thought I was sitting in Parliament back home.’

‘Stark reality in a country where there are about 700 legislators with criminal records’, says Rajni Kothari, ‘is that citizens feel insecure and helpless.’ In her ‘Capital Diary’, Malvika Singh paints a factual picture of the grim reality of the great Indian democracy in terms of criminality, immunity and no accountability. She says, ‘the many levels of criminality that have overwhelmed our society … makes living in India a nightmare. There is no way this country will move forward and revert to being a civilized nation till the leadership … takes it upon itself to make life dignified for the citizenry … There is nothing celebratory in the news that hits us each day. Grim real life stories, grim realities, killings, bribery and corruption, base politics, governmental ineptitude with constant policy rollbacks …’

So?

These are some instances of what happens when emphasis is on building structures for enforcing accountability, while underlying principles and values are forgotten or distorted; and concerted efforts to correct the way people think, or to encourage good conduct, are neglected. Stephen Covey advocates: let guiding principles of spiritualism pervade every aspect of management and strategy. A few municipal commissioners, presumably guided by something similar, were able to achieve results that demonstrate effective accountability. Recall what was achieved in the post-plague-scare Surat, and more recently through the use of IT in Vizag, among others. In
business too, there are similar examples – but more person-specific than system-specific. Andrew Jackson says, ‘There are no necessary evils in government. Its evils exist only in its abuses’. This can often apply equally to governance of business and development organizations. Bhaskar Ghose highlights the need to monitor the orientation of governance. He concludes that our version of democracy is not about governance, but about power and control. Some incidents cited earlier seem to support his conclusion. It appears that for the government (even others) to become transparently accountable, it will need to modify some of its basic philosophy and architecture. In the meantime, let it be known that we will all be prouder and happier if all organizations and institutions do become truly accountable, even if it means that a substantial number of VDOs might go out of business as a result.

Raising the threshold

‘Corruption has eaten into the vitals of our social and economic system. It has unfortunately become a way of life for us in India’, suggests Babu Joseph. Yet, that the governmental and commercial institutions are not playing the game by the rules is no alibi for VDOs in the matter of their own accountability. Such comparisons, even otherwise, seem meaningless. I say so because one of the strong rationales cited for activating and empowering civil society is for it to act as an intermediary between the citizenry and the state or the market when the latter fail to effectively fulfil their accountability to the citizens. So, if the government and commercial institutions fail the accountability criterion, can the civil society be said to have fulfilled its promise? In fact, deteriorating non-accountable functioning of the state or the business should raise serious questions in the minds of VDO leaders about the relevance of the very strategies that they have been pursuing earnestly with vast governmental as well as donor funds. This deterioration might show VDO goals, attitudes and strategies in a somewhat counter-productive light! For, the higher the earnestness in pursuit of wrong goals, the farther we move from the cherished ones. VDOs need to seriously ponder if this is not what is happening to the development scenario!!!

Notwithstanding comparisons between VDOs and other kinds of organizations, let me assert that the scope for VDOs raising the threshold of their own accountability on certain core issues vis-à-vis their real stakeholders is not negligible by any standard. There is an imperative need for VDOs and their leadership to develop internally controlled mechanisms to ensure high levels of accountability – especially because those in whose service the VDOs are engaged are, by definition, not empowered enough to demand accountability; and when they do get so empowered then, again by definition, they will cease to be VDOs’ primary stakeholders.

Listen with utmost sensitivity: don’t wait for noise!

In situations where some of those, to whom the accountability is legitimately due, are unable to raise their voice (as are the VDO beneficiary communities), the first element of accountability is to drop arrogance and listen to them with sensitivity and respect. Otherwise, at the very best, accountability will become lop-sided – in favour of the donors who have the power to assert – also in favour of the VDO staff.

Prem Chadha
Chairperson, Governing Board*, August 2003

*Prem Chadha’s tenure as Chairperson of Governing Board of PRIA ended on September 3, 2003.
Inaugural address by Dr. Rajesh Tandon, President, PRIA, at the ‘National conference on the role of voluntary sector in national development’ held on 20th April, 2002, at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, presided over by Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

Respected Prime Minister, Hon’ble Deputy Chairman – Planning Commission and other senior political leaders, government officials, members of the international community and colleagues from the voluntary sector. I am indeed privileged to be able to stand here this morning to share my experiences and views on this important subject of voluntary sector and national development in our country.

Voluntary action has a long and rich tradition in our country. It entails individual and collective initiatives for common public good. In our land, the roots of voluntary action have been primarily spiritual. Several major religions of the world were born and nurtured on our soil, some took root and they have all implored their believers to contribute to the well being of other human beings. Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Christianity and Islam and their various sects have all been an important source of spiritual inspiration for voluntary action in our country. The social reform movement of the 17th and 18th centuries was characterized by missionary zeal to address significant social problems facing society at that time: superstitions, ignorance, poor status of women, etc. During the freedom movement, largely inspired by Mahatma Gandhi, voluntary action became constructive work in the communities where problems of untouchability, illiteracy and economic livelihood were addressed.

In post-independent India, the Indian nation-state was created and our constitution was adopted. The government became the central player in promoting socio-economic development of our society. Over the first four decades of our independence, the State became the sole player, as it elbowed out other actors in society. However, in the last decade, particularly since the early 1990s, it became an accepted national consensus that the State alone cannot deliver on all aspects of improvements in the lives of our people. In his address to the Convention of Voluntary Sector from Uttar Pradesh held on October 22, 2001 in Lucknow, the Hon’ble Prime Minister himself acknowledged that there are significant limits to what the Government can do on its own. It is this recognition that led to economic liberalization based on the understanding that the free market economy can be the best engine for economic development. The role of the government will then be of policy formulation and regulation in this regard. However, the third leg of this trinity that has been called ‘civil society’ in the international discourse on development has remained unattended in our Indian context. While the relationship between the government and the private business has been significantly redefined and reworked over the last 10 years, the same has not happened with respect to the voluntary sector, the ‘people’s sector’ or ‘civil society’. I hope today’s important deliberations will ensure that concrete actions follow from the Government in this area under the strong leadership of our Hon’ble Prime Minister.
CONTEMPORARY SCENARIO

Most of the above historical trends continue to be present in the diverse and vast mosaic of the voluntary sector in the country today. It is difficult to capture this diversity in a few words.

Scale

In the absence of any centralised data bank or nationally coordinated system of information on the voluntary sector today, it is impossible to provide accurate and precise estimates of the scale and size of the voluntary sector. However, there are an estimated two million voluntary organizations registered under the Society and Trust Acts in the country. This, of course, includes a wide diversity of local youth clubs, Mahila Mandals, private schools, hospitals and, in recent years, even some government organizations (like CAPART itself). How many of these are still alive and functional is hard to estimate. From the list of organizations provided by Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB), KVIC, CAPART and Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, it appears that they have been funding an estimated 10,000 different voluntary organizations in the country. Through a recent government survey (Economic Census, 1994), it is estimated that a full 60% of these organizations are concentrated in four states of West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh.

Estimating scale of resources being used by the voluntary sector is even more difficult. Nearly 18,000 organizations are registered under FCRA and have received nearly Rs.4000 crores in the year 1999-2000 (source: Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India). This, of course, includes a large number of religious institutions (Hindu, Christian, Muslim, et al.) as well as formal schools/colleges and hospitals. Likewise, an estimate of total government funding to the voluntary sector is hard to compile. Different Ministries and Departments of the national and state governments have prepared a vast number of schemes (Report of the Steering Committee on Voluntary Sector for the 10th Five Year Plan prepared by The Planning Commission, Government of India in January, 2002). I would hazard a guess that nearly the same amount as the foreign contribution comes from government departments and agencies (including large development projects funded by bilateral and multilateral agencies) – Rs.4000 crores annually. In addition, India has had a long tradition of volunteering and giving. Contributions from ordinary people and community continue to be received by the voluntary sector. Recent surveys (Non-Profit Sector Survey by PRIA, 2001-2002) on giving and philanthropy suggest that an equal amount (equal to the sum total of government and foreign contribution) is being mobilised from local contributions. Thus, the total annual outlay of this vast and diverse voluntary sector in India could add up to Rs.16,000 crores per year.

However, there is a very important caveat to keep in mind. This annual outlay may include religious organizations, formal educational institutions, research and training centres, hospitals and health care institutions as well as Indian counterparts of international non-government organizations (like Action Aid, Maharishi Ved Trust, Foster Parents, Plan International, etc.) Therefore, it is important to separate that part of the voluntary sector, which we understand as voluntary organizations involved in the task of national development directly. These intermediary voluntary organizations involved in different aspects of socio-economic development programmes constitute a very small, though important, sub-set of the above vast universe. The website of the Planning Commission lists 13,000 such voluntary organizations out of which 1500 have been validated by Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) – India, recently. Hazarding a rough estimate, I would guess that nearly 50,000 intermediary voluntary organizations of the kind that interest us today are active in the country these days. A vast majority of these are small – nearly 80% have one or two full-time staff and annual budgets of less than Rs.5.00 lakhs. The total annual receipts of such organizations would be about Rs.3000 crores.
ROLES AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Perhaps more than the scale and size of the intermediary voluntary organizations involved in the socio-economic development in the country is the issue of the kinds of contributions to national development that they have been making over these decades. I think three most important contributions of voluntary organizations involved in national development need to be highlighted:

INNOVATIONS

Voluntary organizations have been experimenting with new ways of promoting more sustainable, people-centred development. Through flexible and risk-taking experimentation, they have been able to develop methods, models and equipments that have been widely adopted by the state and national governments as well as internationally. Many national development programmes of Government of India, based on such innovations promoted by voluntary organizations, include hand-pumps for drinking water, literacy, primary healthcare, biogas, community-forestry, and in recent years, self-help groups. This is only an illustrative list. In making these contributions, voluntary organizations require flexible resources and a process-oriented approach which is not weighed-down by bureaucratic rules and procedures. Scaling-up such innovations by voluntary organizations also requires an understanding of the “software” nature of this work, without insisting on short-term target-orientation.

EMPOWERMENT

Another most important contribution that intermediary voluntary organizations in India have been promoting is the empowerment of the socio-economically marginalized and exploited sections of our society. Through awareness raising, conscientisation, and organization building, voluntary organizations are able to promote social mobilization. Voluntary organizations have empowered women, dalits, tribals, slum-dwellers, rural poor and many others to understand their rights and obligations. Most significant contributions of empowerment can be seen on such issues as minimum wages, bonded labour, child labour, access to government schemes, land patta, ration cards, housing rights, access to customary rights on forest and water by tribals, etc. It is now widely acknowledged that social mobilization and empowerment are essential ingredients for ensuring just and equitable development in society. However, it is important to recognize that such efforts of empowerment by voluntary organizations create conflicts and tensions. In a hierarchical and patriarchal society, any attempt on empowerment of women, dalits, tribals etc. is likely to challenge the vested interest of the local elites, many of whom receive patronage and protection from the government machinery and officials. Thus, such voluntary organizations tend to be perceived as “noisemakers” or nuisance-creators. The government needs to find peaceful ways of dealing with such conflicts as they arise inevitably in any process of social transformation.

RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY

On a number of issues of concern to human welfare, many intermediary voluntary organizations in India have undertaken significant public education and policy advocacy through their sustained research. This has brought many issues on the agenda of public discourse and national policy in India. For example, the issues of women, tribals and dalits have become part of national policy largely due to the sustained research and advocacy by voluntary organizations. Likewise, issues of environment, education, human rights (including right to information), have gained visibility and policy response largely due to the work of voluntary organizations. In recent years, such issues as female infanticide and, strengthening of Panchayati Raj Institutions have also been promoted through sustained research and advocacy by voluntary organizations.

However, it is important to recognize that often research by voluntary organizations brings to light major gaps in the policy and implementation of government programmes. Their advocacy may promote perspectives and policies not necessarily favoured by the mainstream government thinking. What is important here is listening to.
and acceptance of, **different voices** from the voluntary organizations and a willingness to share new knowledge generated by them. Viewed in this sense, it is important to acknowledge that intermediary voluntary organizations contribute immensely to the promotion of a just, equitable, and sustainable human development in our country.

These three contributions of innovation, empowerment and advocacy are the ‘unique selling point’ (USP) and comparative advantage of the voluntary organizations. If we acknowledge this comparative advantage, then it is not difficult to recognize that voluntary organizations can play significant and complimentary roles to that of the government in the task of national development. However, the relationship between voluntary organizations and the government must be so nurtured that it does not undermine these three USPs of voluntary organizations. If voluntary organizations become an extension of the government department, if they are unable to identify, document and give visibility to new emerging issues in society, and if they are not able to mobilize human creativity to evolve solutions to the pressing and difficult problems of development of our times, then they will add no value to this enormous task of national development.

**IMPLICATIONS**

What then are the implications of the above? These implications are relevant both to the government and the voluntary organizations. In some of these areas, the government has a major responsibility, and in some others the voluntary organizations:

**ENABLING ENVIRONMENT**

The policy and legislative environment at the national and provincial level needs to be overhauled significantly in order to promote the above-mentioned contributions of voluntary organizations. The Task Force set up by the Planning Commission in November 2000 has produced an excellent report, which highlights precise legislative and policy changes that need to be made. **These are essentially in three areas:**

The **first** area is related to **legal identity**. While the original Society Registration Act of 1860 and Indian Trust Act of 1882 provide a very flexible framework for registration, many state governments have created their own laws, significantly curtailing the “freedom of association” as enshrined in our constitution. The classic case is from Uttar Pradesh where a voluntary organization has to **renew** its registration every five years.

The difficult part here is to establish a unique and separate identity for intermediary voluntary organizations involved in socio-economic development in the country. In the absence of such a distinctive separate legal identity, the Finance Ministry continues to “lump” all types of organizations merely on the basis of their ‘original registration’ as a Society or a Trust. Thus, the Income Tax Department makes no distinction between Apollo Hospital and a small health education programme of a voluntary organization in rural Ghazipur; just as it makes no distinction between Doon School and a non-formal education programme among tribals in southern Rajasthan.

It is this ambiguity which has resulted in undermining the capacity of voluntary organizations particularly in relation to their ability to mobilize resources for self-reliance. The recent Budget speech of the Hon’ble Finance Minister goes to the extent of removing the basic provisions related to the possibility of accumulating income over a long period of time (Sections 11-13 of Income Tax Act, 1961). The deliberations in the Shome Committee on this issue focus on “charitable organizations” which lumps all types together. If such proposed policies of the Finance Ministry are not revised immediately and replaced with more coherent supportive policies, I am afraid that intermediary voluntary organizations will be driven to total dependence on the government or foreign funds.

The **second** area of great concern identified in the report of the Planning Commission Task Force has to do with the **Foreign Contribution Regulation Act** (FCRA), 1976. On the one hand, liberalization of FERA is seen as
promotion of freedom for private business. On the other hand, continuation and further tightening of FCRA
seems to be the preferred order of the day by the Ministry of Home Affairs. It has been repeatedly pointed out
in the Reports of the Committees set up by the Ministry itself as well as in the recent Budget speech of the
Hon’ble Finance Minister himself that voluntary organizations are not receiving foreign funds as gifts which they
can use, abuse or misuse in any way they like. All these funds come through clearly designed development
projects specifically earmarked for that project, the results of which are periodically documented and evaluated.
The problem is that the entire Rs.4000 odd crores received under FCRA during 1999-2000 is not the amount that
goes to voluntary organizations. In the absence of a separate identity, intermediary voluntary organizations are
lumped together with colleges, universities, research institutions, hospitals and religious institutions of all faiths.
These irritants undermine the potential of voluntary organizations, on the one hand, and increasingly ‘seduce’
them into corruption, on the other.

The third aspect of enabling environment is the need for protection from harassment of activists of voluntary
organizations. While conflict in social transformation is inevitable, it is expected that government law-and-order
machinery in the country, especially police and district administration would protect voluntary activists from
harassment and intimidation unleashed by those whose vested interests are challenged by the work of such
organizations. Instead, the tendency of the government to label such voluntary activists as ‘naxalites’, ‘anti-
nationals’ or ‘provocateurs’ is unbecoming of a democratic government in a society, which has a long tradition of
voluntary action.

PARTNERSHIP IN DEVELOPMENT

The second broad implication of the above is to identify and agree on areas, which could entail joint action by
voluntary organizations and the government. In light of the pressing problems facing our society, I may suggest
that issues of poverty, education and population could be such key areas. However, joint action does not imply
government formulating programmes on its own and asking voluntary organizations to implement the same.
Joint action will mean taking advantage of the wealth of experience and knowledge of voluntary organizations
in framing policies and programmes as well and involving them in monitoring and evaluation.

Another aspect of such partnerships is to agree on areas of independent action. In all the aspects of socio-
economic development, government and voluntary organizations do not have to work together all the time.
There are things that voluntary organizations must do on their own (including monitoring of government policies
and programmes). There are many things that the government must do by itself. However, mutual respect for
areas of independent action between the government and voluntary organizations will go a long way in building
such partnerships.

In the end, I hope that this important National Conference today will yield the possibility of concrete follow up
action on a few areas which can help improve further the depth and scale of contributions of voluntary
organizations in national development. This is particularly timely as ordinary people are becoming increasingly
alienated and frustrated. I do hope that today’s deliberations will not meet the same fate as the last meeting of
the voluntary organizations with the then Prime Minister in March 1994. This can only happen, if the Government
under your leadership, Hon’ble Prime Minister, and the voluntary organizations commit themselves to advance
on these issues together. Thank You

Rajesh Tandon
I. COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATION

Strengthening Citizen Leadership and Citizen Collectives

PRIA launched a visionary initiative “Strengthening citizen leadership and citizen collectives” which intends to mobilize and facilitate informal community-based networks and citizen associations, that are working towards development issues at local levels, for collective action. The initiative aims to build a network of democratically governed, sensitised institutions and groups promoting voluntary action at grassroots level, managed with collective leadership.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locations</th>
<th>Identified target groups</th>
<th>Issue being pursued</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jamtara district, Jharkhand</td>
<td>11 parents associations of child labour schools</td>
<td>Effective functioning of the child labour schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajnandgaon district, Chhattisgarh</td>
<td>5 self help groups of women bidi workers</td>
<td>Living conditions of women bidi rollers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratnagiri district, Maharashtra</td>
<td>32 women self help groups</td>
<td>Post industrialization issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uttarkashi district, Uttarakhand</td>
<td>104 women leaders, 4 civil society groups</td>
<td>Poverty reduction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

JHARKHAND

PRIA’s intervention on strengthening citizen leaders in Jamtara district in Jharkhand, emerged from its past experiences of the social development monitoring programme undertaken in the 11 child labour schools of the district. The parent monitoring committees in these schools were identified for promoting the citizen leadership efforts and worked closely with them during the year. Activities undertaken included district level interfacing amongst parents, teachers and local government officials, identification of issues at each school and articulation of demand for access to a variety of welfare, livelihood and school related schemes. A focused effort was made to enhance experience sharing amongst parents’ groups and interaction with teachers who have played an important role in supporting the efforts of the parents’ leaders. Citizen action undertaken on a range of issues is showing results in the form of increased articulation of demands and many self-initiated activities in various schools.

CHHATTISGARH

The strengthening citizen leadership intervention was initiated in Rajnandgaon district of the state from July 2002 focusing on workers in the informal sector specifically on women bidi workers. Prior to this PRIA had taken up issues of workers’ occupational health and safety in the district for several years, which provided it with a strategic historical base for this intervention. In partnership with ‘Rajnandgaon Kapda Mazdoor Sangh’, ‘Kshetriya Bidi Mazdoor Sangh’, (local trade unions) and ‘Ravi Das Samaj Kalyan Seva Samiti (local community-based organization) key inputs were provided to five self-help groups of women bidi workers (formed under Swarna Jayanti Saher Rojgar Yojna), with an aim to develop them as citizen leaders. Various orientation programmes and interface meetings were organized to highlight the importance of their collectives and the role they can play in improving their conditions. A Bidi Shramik Chintan Sammellan was organized (January 03) at Rajnandgaon with an aim to raise the awareness level of bidi rollers on various issues related to their work and on the available government schemes. It provided a common platform to
220 women bidi rollers to discuss and share their issues with a range of stakeholders including government officials, local community based organizations, trade unions, media and others. A two-day exposure visit (February 03) of ten bidi rollers to SEWA-Ahmedabad, where they met their counterparts who had collectively and successfully struggled to earn their rightful wages, had a deep impact on these women. They witnessed the results of organizing and empowering women in the unorganized sector and decided to collectively fight against their exploitative system. PRIA has simultaneously initiated a study on the supply and manufacturing chain of the bidi industry in Rajnandgaon district to gain an in-depth understanding of the roles of various stakeholders in bidi production, ascertain the present status of related issues and to find out the availability and utilization of government schemes.

**MAHARASHTRA**

In Maharasta the strengthening citizen leadership programme was initiated in partnership with Parivartan (local voluntary development organization) in Lote Industrial Area in Ratnagiri district focusing on issues arising due to indiscriminate industrialization. Efforts were made to organize the local community into collectives such as the Dakshata Samitis (Vigilance Committees), Yuvak Mandal (Youth Groups) and Women’s Self Help Groups. 31 women self-help groups (SHGs) from eight villages (Asgani, Saatvingao, Kothavli, Ghanekhunt, Songaon, Lavel, Dhabhil, Mete) in the area were provided structured capacity building support through four workshops on leadership development. The workshops provided inputs to the participants on the role of the leaders, group processes, challenges faced by SHGs, participation of women, importance of Gram Sabha and others. The efforts have resulted in increased interaction and cross learning amongst members of different groups and has provided space to the women leaders to gain confidence and raise their awareness levels.

**UTTARANCHAL**

PRIA, in collaboration with Himalayan Action Research Centre (HARC), Dehradun, coordinated the strengthening citizen leadership programme focusing on poverty reduction. The intervention aimed at strengthening women’s community based associations, self-help groups and women leaders to access and use natural resources productively and in enabling women to participate actively and effectively in the village-based planning and implementation of programmes through panchayats. 104 women leaders, representing four civil society groups namely Village Water and Sanitation Committee, Swarn Jayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojna, Swajal SHGs and Rawain Mahila Federation were identified. Various formal and informal learning events were organized to provide inputs on issues related to interface with local bodies, role of CBOs in village development, leadership development, natural resources, budgeting, insurance, banking and finance. This has resulted in improved capacities of women to organize their own affairs and participate in local panchayat elections held in March 2003.
Management in Development Programme

The Management in Development (MIND) programme (initiated in 1995) currently in its third phase (April 2000-March 2004), provided support to selected citizen leaders and civil society groups promoting voluntary initiatives at grassroots level in five states. The fellowship programme aims to assist and encourage individuals, ordinary citizens and civil society groups to pursue socio-economic development efforts at the local level, focusing on empowerment of women, dalits, tribals and other excluded sections of society. During the year, selected fellows received financial assistance and capacity building inputs to support and sustain their developmental efforts. The programme will continue to promote citizen leaders and strengthen networks of such actors to work together on common agendas in states where PRIA’s future convergence strategy is being implemented.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementing Agency, State</th>
<th>Fellows supported Group</th>
<th>Individuals</th>
<th>Key Issues taken by MIND Fellows</th>
<th>Support provided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sahbhagi Shikshan, Kendra, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>• Women’s empowerment and self-sustainability • Dalit participation and social and economic empowerment • Livelihood development, formation of self help groups • Panchayati Raj and decentralized governance • Local problems like drinking water, health, sanitation, primary education and others • Youth development</td>
<td>• Financial • Capacity Building • Training on various facets of participatory methodologies • Field based support • Information/MIS related support • Exposure visits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samarthan, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unnati, Jodhpur, Rajasthan</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CENCORED, Patna, Bihar</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jharkhand Resource Centre, Dumka, Jharkhand</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prayas Sanstan (run by Bagaram Dayal), is one of the civil society groups supported by the MIND fellowship programme. Now under its second year of MIND fellowship the group is working in 26 panchayats of Sindari block of Barmer district, Rajasthan, on the issues of dalit empowerment, leadership and livelihood promotion. It facilitates a Dalit Resource Centre, a block level forum to assert dalit rights through leadership development. This year, efforts were made to incorporate voices of dalit women in the movement. It fought against many cases of caste-based discrimination at public places and raised a voice against cases of dalit atrocities, during the year. One such case taken up was in the Dandali panchayat where a Bhil woman was raped. Prayas Sanstan supported the woman in legal action. The culprit is currently in jail and the woman has received compensation of Rs. 10,000/-. The organization took up a range of issues like equitable water distribution, encroachment of land, employment, monitoring of food security scheme and others. On the eve of 15th August, In Khantariya panchayat, for the first time ever, dalit women were able to hoist the flag in the panchayat due to the efforts of this organization. It also organized two block level capacity building workshops on “Orientation of dalit ideology” and “Women mobilization and leadership development” during the year.
Women’s Empowerment through Literacy and Livelihood Development (WELLD)

The WELLD project, (initiated by PRIA and World Education (WE) in April 1999) aiming to integrate literacy with livelihood enhancement and savings and credit initiatives, within an empowerment framework, was concluded during October 2002. PRIA provided inputs for institutional development and strengthening capacities of NGOs and WE focused on the literacy and education under the project, which was implemented in Madhya Pradesh (along with CEROWC and Pradeepan) and in Andhra Pradesh (along with PEACE and RADS).

PRIA provided technical support in the areas of capacity building support, research and documentation, and policy advocacy during the year. Activities in the concluding phase focused on dissemination of learning’s and advocacy with donors, government agencies and institutes like APMAS (A.P) and Swashakti project (M.P). State level meetings were organized to share experiences and lessons from WELLD with all partners and concerned stakeholders. Also organized was a joint national level dissemination workshop in Delhi which was attended by representatives from Oxfam, CARE India, Centre for Social Research, Ministry of Human Resource Development, ASPBAE, IGNOU, Institute for International Education and organizations which participated in the project.

Publications produced as part of the project included Meri Pragati (Hindi) and Naa Pragati Soochika Pustakan (Telegu), a community based monitoring system developed for women learners in M.P and A.P respectively. A booklet synthesizing experiences generated during the WELLD project was also brought out.

**. CAPACITY BUILDING NEEDS OF VDOS**

The formal findings of a macro level need assessment study on the capacity building requirements of small and medium sized grassroots level voluntary organizations in six states across the country, conducted earlier, were released and disseminated during this year. The study aimed to understand and analyse issues and concerns related to the existing capacity building needs of community-based organizations in present contexts. The concluding results of the study covering more than 200 organizations in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Uttaranchal and West Bengal were shared through a number of workshops.

The capacity building need assessment studies and the subsequent sharing workshops paved the way for developing local specific strategies and modules for strengthening capacities of voluntary organizations in the states. They provided key inputs in sensitizing stakeholders including donor agencies, on the pressing requirements of these development organizations in each state. The process simultaneously assisted in building a rapport with local individuals, groups, networks and other civil society organizations.
III. NON-PROFIT SECTOR STUDY

A range of training events and need-based capacity building workshops, as below, were organized during the year based on the outputs emerging from the study. More than four hundred participants attended these structured events held at various locations, across the country.

In this concluding phase of the intensive study on mapping of the non-profit sector in India PRIA released emerging findings of the study from three states. The empirical survey documents the size and scope of the non-profit sector in the country and provides data analysis in relation to multiple factors and facets of the sector.

During the year, the outcomes of the study were shared and disseminated through state level workshops in West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Meghalaya.

Five state specific working papers published during the year included:

- Exploring the Non Profit Sector in India: Some Glimpses from Tamil Nadu,
- Dimensions of Giving and Volunteering in Tamil Nadu,
- Exploring the Non Profit Sector in India: Some Glimpses from West Bengal,
- Dimensions of Giving and Volunteering in West Bengal
- Exploring the Non Profit Sector in India: Some Glimpses from Meghalaya.

PRIA also released a popular document in the form of an illustrative statistical report titled ‘Invisible yet widespread: The Non Profit Sector in India’. summarizing all-India estimates of key parameters, at a national level dissemination workshop at Delhi. The report, published in hindi and english, graphically presents data on the non-profit sector including its size, activity, employment, revenue, givers profile and others. Representatives of civil society institutions, Central Statistical Organization media, government, donors and bilateral agencies attended the event, which was chaired by Dr. Manmohan Singh (former Finance Minister and the leader of the opposition in Rajya Sabha).

The exclusive report generated a debate on the emerging need for a contemporary approach and framework for the sector. The chairperson recommended that government policy should facilitate the effective functioning of this vast sector through appropriate tax regimes that provide incentives for more charitable giving and its more effective use in the country. The report evoked a substantial response from the media and more importantly from the Indian Planning Commission, which is working with PRIA to follow-up on the key recommendations of the report.
IV. PEACE AND SOCIAL COHESION PROGRAMME

In response to the destabilizing and violent religion based events of the recent past, PRIA in association with strategically identified partners, launched a pilot initiative on Peace and Social Cohesion. The programme aims at building a cadre of citizens, especially women and youth, to support appropriate peace-building mechanisms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intervention Site</th>
<th>Facilitators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chitrakoot district, Uttar Pradesh</td>
<td>Akhil Bhartiya Samaj Sewa Sansthan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mehboobnagar district Hyderabad, A.P</td>
<td>PRIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deogarh and Giridh districts, Jharkhand</td>
<td>Lok Jagriti Kendra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kollam district, Kerala</td>
<td>SAHAYI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mau, Ghajipur, Deoria, Jaunpur, Kanpur and Baharaich districts, Uttar Pradesh</td>
<td>Sahabhagi Shikshan Kendra, Janpad Vikas Samaj Kalya Samiti, Gramin Vikas Sansthan Amar Shahid Chetna Sanstha, Bhartiya Manav Samaj Kalyan Sansthan, Shramik Bharati</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It intends to develop local mechanisms for addressing conflicts through establishing a dialogue amongst the diverse religious sections of the society and generate an environment of mutual understanding, tolerance and trust. PRIA and the local partners applied an innovative approach, imbued with a sensitive and personal flavour, for promoting community initiative for conflict resolution.

Major activities undertaken during the year included rapport and trust building, informal meetings with various community groups, revival of dormant citizen groups (like Kabir Gaddi), mobilizing youth groups to initiate community action on development issues, awareness building and public education, exposure visits and capacity building of identified citizen leaders.

The intervention has received an unprecedented response and appreciation from the community. It has been successful in mobilizing more than 200 citizen leaders to address the issue of social harmony at the local level at various intervention sites. A network of grassroots organizations has been prepared to work on the issue of peace building and communal harmony. PRIA and partners developed several learning materials for peace activists and facilitators.
PRIA and partners have been working on ‘Reforming Institutions of Urban Governance’ since the past two years in an effort to capitalize on the opportunities provided by 74th Constitutional Amendment in 1992. This pilot initiative in Haryana, Madhya Pradesh (M.P), Uttar Pradesh (U.P), Rajasthan and Kerala targeted the Nagar Panchayats, which are the transitional areas turning from rural to urban and Nagar Parishads, which are the small to medium-sized towns. However, the central idea has been to promote greater citizen participation and to ensure a more transparent, accountable and responsive municipality. The year under review could be rightly described as being guided by the principle of “continuity with change”. Though the sites chosen during the pilot phase continued to remain our focus areas of intervention, a number of new sites were taken up to build upon the previous experience gained. The table below indicates the scope of the programme during the year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTERVENTION SITES, STATES</th>
<th>PARTNERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ratia and Fatehabad, Haryana</td>
<td>PRIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sehore, Iccchawar and Ashta, Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>Samarthan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chomu (Jaipur) and Bilara (Jodhpur), Rajasthan</td>
<td>Unnati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gazipur, Saidpur and Turki-Itanijja, Uttar Pradesh</td>
<td>Sahbhagi Shikshan Kendra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chethaitta, Kalpetta and Thodupuzha, Kerala</td>
<td>Sahayi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahendragarh, Haryana</td>
<td>PRIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidhauli and Kharabab, Uttar Pradesh</td>
<td>Sahbhagi Shikshan Kendra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajnandgaon and Dongargarh, Chhattisgarh</td>
<td>PRIA, Chhattisgarh Mukti Morcha, Ravi Das</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anakhagalli and Qutubullapur, Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>Samaj Kalyan Seva Samiti, Kshetriya Bidi Mazdoor Sangh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aurangabad and Chiplun, Maharashtra</td>
<td>PRIA, SVDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumka, Jharkhand</td>
<td>PRIA, Parivartan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pithoragarh and Champawat, Uttaranchal</td>
<td>Jharkhand Resource Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Himalayan Study Circle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reforming Institutions of Urban Governance, 2002-2003

The year was marked by not only the addition of new sites but also introduction of new methodologies and context-specific strategies. Some of the key activities are enumerated below.

**Multi-stakeholder interfacing**

A series of Multi Stakeholder Dialogues (MSDs) were initiated at district level in several states, which brought elected representatives, municipal officials, block and district level government functionaries within the administration and parastatal bodies together with other stakeholders like citizen forums, CSOs, NGOs, media and academia, looking for solutions to common problems. Targeted interfacing initiatives were also pursued between two or more stakeholders on specific issues like an interface in Rajnandgaon (Chhattisgarh) facilitated between the government and trade unions, focused on livelihood and living conditions. Similarly in Aurangabad (Maharashtra), interfacing between municipal workers and citizens was actively pursued with support from local NGOs, trade unions and corporations. The district level interface meetings were followed by state-level MSDs on issues of urban governance in U.P, M.P, A.P, Haryana, Rajasthan, Kerala, and H.P. These were successful in bringing state level political leadership and bureaucracy on a common platform with civil society organizations for the first time on issues of urban governance.
**Issue based initiatives**

A range of intensive interventions aimed at improving the overall quality of life of the poorest sections were undertaken with a focus on sectoral and local issues. The issues taken up during the year were a combination of short and long term areas of interest to the community. While the former puts in sharp focus those issues of service delivery, which require solutions in the foreseeable future, the latter are vexed issues that have a bearing on community assets or are areas that deal with rigid social norms, values or social stratification. These included water, sanitation, waste disposal, health, livelihood, encroachment of public assets, occupational health and safety of municipal and industrial workers and gender related issues.

**Knowledge base**

PRIA and partners undertook a range of studies to augment their knowledge base and gain better understanding of issues related to urban governance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Title, Location(s), Partner</th>
<th>Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Role of elected representatives in municipal functioning” U. P, Sahbhagi Shikshan Kendra</td>
<td>To find the actual level of participation of elected representatives as visualized in the laws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Analyse vulnerability and seek ways of reducing it in the framework of governance in mid sized towns” Rajasthan, by Unnati</td>
<td>To identify the most vulnerable groups in town areas and to understand their problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Capacity building needs assessment Study” Chipulun, Maharashtra</td>
<td>To assess the training needs of the elected representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Status of Municipal Finance”, Mahendragarh (Haryana), Dongargarh (Chhattisgarh) and Khairbad (U.P)</td>
<td>To take a macro view of the issues and problems of municipal finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Strengthening the voice of the poor and the marginalized in town planning process”, Madhubani (Bihar), Hamirpur (H.P), Sidhauli (UP)</td>
<td>To analyse the problems relating to planning in small and medium sized urban centres and explore various mechanisms of participation of poor people in the existing planning process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Capacities of elected representatives and municipal officials**

PRIA has worked continuously towards bridging gaps in the ability of elected representatives to understand their own roles in relation to the authority devolved on them and to translate local needs and priorities effectively. The capacities of elected representatives and appointed officials were addressed through a series of orientation workshops and structured training programmes across various intervention sites focusing on the constitutional-legal framework. Special emphasis was on enhancing the capacities of representatives of weaker sections, notably women. Sehore and Icchawar in MP, Ghazipur, Saidpur, Itaunjha, Sidhauli and Khairabad in UP, Kalpatta, Thodupuzha and Cherthall in Kerala, Rajnandaon, and Dongargarh in Chhattisgarh were some of the intensive municipal sites for capacity building interventions. In some intensive sites, capacity building initiatives covered a wide array of subjects and methodologies including ways to improve the functioning of the municipality, prevailing conditions at ward level, Tenth five year plan, leadership skills, and others.
Awareness generation

One of the primary reasons for the ineffective functioning of the urban local bodies (ULBs) has been the lack of awareness amongst citizens about the existing constitutional and legal frameworks under which the ULBs work. The effective functioning of elected representatives is hindered by a serious lack of understanding of their roles, responsibilities and powers.

Pre-Election Voters Awareness Campaign (PEVAC) in Uttaranchal

After carving out the new state of Uttaranchal in November 2000, elections to urban local bodies were held on February 1, 2003 for the first time. Taking this as an opportunity, PEVAC was organized in Pithoragarh, Champawat and Haldwani.

The Pithoragarh intervention was unique in many ways. This initiative brought together a host of civil society organizations under the aegis of Matdata Jagrukta Abhiyan Manch. A combination of mass and non-mass media options were utilized to reach all sections of society. The campaign was successful in not only ensuring citizen participation in the election but in also raising the level of debate among contestants focusing on issues, problems and developmental priorities with special reference to weaker and deprived sections having little or no access to municipal services. The campaign helped citizens and their groups to understand their future role in ensuring an accountable and responsive governance of the town.

PRIA and partners organized a range of awareness generating events for elected representatives, municipal officials, citizens and their forums and local CSOs, on constitutional provisions and state municipal laws in respective states. These events have helped elected representatives to gain clarity on their roles and have benefited citizen groups in understanding the importance of their engagement and participation.

Methods like report card surveys, focused group discussions, talk shows, health camps, health rallies, promotion of local art forms (like ‘Kala Jatha’ in Kerala) and discussions on existing government schemes and programmes were other highlights of the initiative. Educational and infrastructure based support to Narottam Das Library cum Information Resource Centre in Siddhauli was a step towards institutional support for awareness building in local communities. Examples of other initiatives range from women-focused meetings in Fatehabad (Haryana) to house-to-house contact programmes in Thodupuzha (Kerala).

Dissemination

In continuation of the earlier efforts, cost-effective means of dissemination like pamphlets, handbills, folders, booklets, and wall writing (covering topics from ward committees, legal provisions and rules to issues such as water) were pursued during the year under review as well. The conditions of municipal workers (solid waste) in Aurangabad, was published to sensitize citizens about their plight.
PRIA produced and published five occasional papers on urban governance titled:
- The Gender Paradigm in Local Governance: An Indian Experience
- Relationship between Elected Representatives and Municipal Staff
- Urbanization Trends
- Municipal Finance: A Comparative Study
- Competitive Politics and Urban Governance

**Intervention in New Delhi**

PRIA has been engaged in a pilot initiative called “Technical support to strengthening urban governance and citizenship” in New Delhi. While the initiatives in small and medium sized towns focus on reforming governance institutions, the overarching objective of the initiative is to enhance the capacities of various civil society formations so that they could include issues of urban governance and citizenship in their ongoing work.

The intervention seeks to optimize the organizational capabilities of these CSOs and facilitate their engagement in participatory reflection, analysis and action on community issues. The programme also aims to provide inputs to these organizations to understand linkages across sectors and address their respective concerns in an integrated mode.

As in the previous year, PRIA worked closely with Action India (AI) to help form Community Watch Group (CWG), an informal civil society formation, in Sanjay Camp settlement in the Dakshinpuri area of New Delhi. Some key highlights of the initiative are listed below.

- The joint efforts of PRIA and AI have led the 15 member-strong CWG to spearhead several issue-based initiatives like livelihood, water, sanitation and micro credit.
- The CWG embarked on a course of reflections within the community, generating awareness on aspects of relocation and resettlement, community-based monitoring of sanitation services and interfacing with the elected representatives and officials.
- An exposure trip (for community members of Sanjay Camp settlement) to Mumbai was organized to understand the various steps and processes facilitated by organizations like SPARC, NSDF, Mahila Milan and Nivara-Haq. Visits were also organized to Bhalaswa and Vikas Puri slum settlements in New Delhi, to compare the situation within and outside the city. These visits helped the community to explore various options and work out a strategy when they are confronted with relocation.
- Another exposure visit was organized for the young civil society leaders in Delhi, with an aim to expose the participants to the urban governance initiatives being undertaken by SPARC, NSDF and Mahila Milan in Mumbai from the vantage point of the poor and marginalized communities. 13 middle and senior level programme staff from nine organizations including SHARAN, Care India’s PLUS Project, Action India, Pratidhi, Prayatn, Prayas, Bal Vikas Dhara, Ashray Adhikar Manch participated in the same.
The experiences gained by PRIA in strengthening Panchayati Raj Institutions as institutions of local self-governance over the past eight years paved the way for an up-scaled, intensive set of interventions during the year. The programme continued to be governed by the perspective which views PRIs as institutions of democratic governance, promotes bottom up participatory planning through panchayats and focuses on active participation of marginalized groups like women, dalits and tribals.

The multi-levelled intervention, during the year, expanded dimensions by initiating work in PESA (Panchayat Extended Schedule Areas) in Orissa, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh (M.P), Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh (H.P) and schedule VI areas of Assam, reaching out to the marginalized tribal groups. The intervention operated in an intensive mode through 46 Panchayat Resource Centres (PRC) at the local level and in an extensive mode through State Resource Centres (SRC) at the regional level across the country. At the national level, a number of research and advocacy efforts were undertaken.

During the year a need based state specific strategy was applied. In Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh (U.P), Madhya Pradesh, Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, Chattisgarh, Bihar and Maharashtra (where panchayat elections were held more than a year ago), intensive interventions focused on micro planning, building women and dalit leadership, strengthening networks while Gram Sabha mobilization was conducted in an extensive mode. In Orissa, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh (A.P) and Tamil Nadu (T.N) (where elections were held over the last one year) interventions focused on capacity building, micro planning and PRIA. In Jharkhand, where elections were yet to be held, and in Uttranchal where elections were finally held during March’03, initiatives focused on building platforms of civil society organizations for PEVAC and research studies. Detailed below are some of the key activities during the year.

1. ON-GOING GRASSROOTS LEVEL INITIATIVES

Resource centres - promoting linkages

The 46 Panchayat Resource Centres (PRCs) operating in as many blocks of 44 districts in 18 states have become role models for other civil society organizations. During the year an effort was made to promote partnerships with locally based community organizations. In an innovative experiment, a community-based organization in Ratia in Fatehabad district of Haryana, is now managing the PRC promoted by PRIA. The resource centres also played a catalysing role in bringing people and government together in ‘doers’ role. In Rajasthan, for example, all seven PRCs were requested by the block development officers to assist the state government’s campaign “Prashashan Gaon Ke Sang”. NGOs are also experimenting to link their programmes with the PRCs like the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation is piloting to link its village library programme with existing PRCs of PRIA.

In an attempt to synergize the efforts at district levels, District Resource Centres (DRCs) are being established in every intervened district. A series of multi-stakeholder dialogues were organized to provide a platform to various stakeholder groups to analyse and debate on issues collectively and to understand each other’s perspectives. Also initiated during the year were focused efforts to facilitate the linkages of the three tiers of PRIs around specific developmental issues at each location of intervention.
Building Capacities

A range of training events were organized at the local level for elected representatives, members of village level committees, community based organizations, youth networks, women’s groups and others to promote effective and democratic functioning of local bodies. Below is an indicative list of a few such events undertaken during the year by PRIA partners.

- **SAMARTHAN**  
  Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh
  - Orientation on Gram panchayats for Gram Sabha committee members, Koshadhyakshas and village level committee members
  - Leadership development for members of village development committees and members of PRIs

- **UNNATI**  
  Ahmedabad, Gujarat
  - Capacity Building workshop for newly elected representatives of PRIs
  - Training of Trainers for representatives of local NGOs and CBOs
  - Orientation on role of Panchayats for members of partner organizations
  - Role of Social Justice Committees for committee members and chairpersons of Gram panchayats
  - Women Leadership programme for 500 women leaders

- **SAHAYI**  
  Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala
  - Programmes on participatory methodologies for 153 elected representatives
  - Orientation on PRIs for women representatives
  - Consultations on civil society for women’s groups and local CBOs

- **SSK**  
  Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
  - Campaign mode training on PRI for elected representatives and Gram Sabha members
  - Workshops on PRI Act for a total of over 500 women representatives
  - Sensitisation programme for members of youth groups

- **CYSD**  
  Bhubaneswar, Orissa
  - Orientation programmes for volunteers
  - Orientation programmes for over 300 CBO leaders
  - Training of Trainers for staff of local partner organizations
  - Workshop on Palli Sabha and Gram Sabha for local body representatives and CBO leaders

- **CENCORED**  
  Patna, Bihar,
  - Self-Help Group Management for group leaders

Gram Sabha mobilization

The ongoing initiative was undertaken all over the country with an aim to ensure frequent and focused conduct of Gram Sabha meetings and to encourage the local community to participate in them and contribute in the decision making process and village level plans.

THE WOMEN’S NARI NETWORK, promoted by PRIA in Ratia block, Haryana, volunteered to actively participate in the Gram Sabha mobilization campaign (village Ratakheda), with an aim to increase the presence of women in the Gram Sabha meetings and to encourage them to raise their issues during the same. The volunteers launched a door-to-door effort, meeting women and explaining to them the importance of such meetings. They distributed handbills and information pamphlets and pasted posters in the village to educate the Gram Sabha members about the same. 200 women (mostly from the dalit community) attended the Gram Sabha meeting on 9th December, a record participation of women in such meetings held in the state.
Information campaigns and Networking

A range of innovative and creative efforts were undertaken to generate awareness and provide information on various issues related to the panchayats and its constitutional provisions in colloquial and simplified versions. These efforts promoted grassroots level networks, including Pre Election Voters Awareness Campaigns, focused on creating an enabling and informed environment and providing common platforms to a range of stakeholders to share and exchange experiences and information. Some new initiatives during the year are described below.

Vikas Utsav(s)

A series of development fairs were organized (November-December) in the people friendly mela mode in Himachal Pradesh. The event aimed at providing space and platform for local people from various stakeholder groups to informally interact and exchange a range of information amongst each other, with a focus on issues related to Panchayati Raj Institutions.

The themes touched upon during the event included Gram Sabha mobilisation, information on development programmes of the state government, encouraging participation of women, schedule caste/tribes and other governance related issues. The audience targeted at included women, schedule castes and tribes, youths, self help groups, members of Gram Sabhas and other PRIs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Block, District</th>
<th>Panchayats</th>
<th>Local Partner</th>
<th>Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bharmour, Chamba</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>New Hope</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village Nari, Una</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>EEG</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kangra, Kangra</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>UTHAN</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagrota Suriyan, Kangra</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>KMS</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagrota Bagwan, Kangra</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>PARAS</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rait, Kangra</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>SSP</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baijnath, Kangra</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>ASHA</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sulah, Kangra</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>New Hope</td>
<td>375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sujanpur Tihra, Hamirpur</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>New Hope</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nadaun, Hamirpur</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>PARAS</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amned village-GP Taal, Hamirpur</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Yuwa Mandal</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pre Election Voters Awareness Campaign

PRIA and Himalayan Action Research Centre, Dehradun, launched the Pre Election Voters Awareness Campaign (PEVAC), prior to the local body elections during March 2003, in 12 districts in the state of Uttaranchal. The campaign aimed to create an enabling atmosphere for free and fair panchayats elections at the village level, generate awareness in the community on voting rights, guide candidates on election issues and encourage participation of women and weaker sections in the electoral process. Covering a total of 1608 panchayats the campaign was conducted in association with the Ministry of rural development and local voluntary organizations. A range of information dissemination tools used during the campaign included foot march, informative posters, pamphlets, audio cassettes, slogans, wall signs, videos on cable networks, street plays, children’s rally, radio broadcasts and others. Regular village level meetings and ‘meet the candidate’ programmes were organized. The campaign received co-operation from the State Election Commission and was successful in generating a great deal of enthusiasm amongst the community.

Radio Programme

In another effort towards increasing awareness about PRIs and strengthening them as bodies of local self-governance, a pilot radio programme on PRI was initiated in nine states including A.P, Bihar, Haryana, H.P, M.P, Jharkhand, Orissa, Kerala and U.P. The design and content of each has been customized as per the identified needs and character of the reachable audience. A listener’s survey provided inputs into the content and the broadcast plan, before the production. The radio series designed creatively presents the issues related to Panchayati Raj Institutions through a combination of music, folk drama, talks, interviews, and stories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Radio Stations</th>
<th>Partner</th>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Episodes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIR Hyderabad, A.P</td>
<td>PRIA</td>
<td>Grama Swarajyayam Kosam</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIR Darbhanga, Bihar</td>
<td>CENCORED</td>
<td>Panchak Vani</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIR Ahmedabad, Vadodara and Rajkot, Gujarat</td>
<td>Unnati</td>
<td>Gamda Ho Dhabkar (Heartbeat of the village)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIR Rohtak, Haryana</td>
<td>Nava Yuvak</td>
<td>Roshni</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kala Sangam</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIR Shimla, H.P</td>
<td>PRIA</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIR Tiruvananthapuram, Kerala</td>
<td>Sahayi</td>
<td>Swayambharnam (Self Governance)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIR Gwalior, M.P</td>
<td>Samarthan</td>
<td>Apna Gaon Mein Apna Raj</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIR Cuttack and 5 regional centres, Orissa</td>
<td>CYSD</td>
<td>Ama Haate Ama Sasan Dori (Power to people)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIR Varanasi, U. P</td>
<td>SSK</td>
<td>Aap Ke Naam,</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Panchayati Raj Ka Paigam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Periodicals

Publications like, ‘SwayamBharam’ (a Malayalam bulletin by Sahayi, Kerala), ‘Panchayat Jagat’ (newsletter by Unnati, Gujarat), ‘Gaon Kalam’ (Newsletter by CYSD, Orissa) and Participation and Governance (journal by PRIA) publish informative articles and experiences on PRIs and were disseminated to local stakeholder groups regularly.
II. NATIONAL LEVEL INITIATIVES

Programme Evaluation
The year was marked by an independent national level review and evaluation of the Panchayati Raj programme (April-June 2002, commissioned by Sida). The impact of initiatives of PEVAC, PRJA (Panchayati Raj Jagrukta Abhiyan), Gram Sabha mobilization, Micro planning and others were analysed. The report suggested that Panchayat Resource Centres, which have successfully provided the vital institutional support for programme implementation, should be carried out for longer durations to match the PEVAC to PEVAC period.

A series of multi-stakeholder consultations, attended by representatives of Panchayats and Municipalities, district and block administration, NGOs, state government, academia and media were also organized to provide inputs to the future programme strategy. The synthesis of the above became inputs to the action plan for the next phase of the programme. The emphasis in the next phase would be on expanding linkages between rural and urban governance, five-year planning period, deepening research and advocacy work, within an overall district focus.

Dalit Leadership Study, Interface with Academia
A nationwide study on ‘Dalit leadership in PRIs’ was conducted with an aim to comprehend the status of dalit leadership in the context of reservations mandated for marginalized groups as per the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act. Undertaken in 12 states, the study was implemented through involvement of 17 universities under a jointly prepared research framework. Members of the academic institutions were provided exposure visits to Jodhpur (Rajasthan) and Nanded (Maharashtra), two of our intensive work areas on the Dalit issue. The findings from the study highlight that despite reservation, dalits are still dominated by upper castes and are not allowed to play an active role in PRIs. These were shared in each state to promote governmental and civil society action in strengthening Dalit leadership in panchayats.

Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas Act, Study
The 73rd Amendment to the Constitution of India and its subsequent extension to the Schedule V Areas through the provisions of Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas Act, 1996 (PESA) has attempted to decentralize the control and management of development planning, natural resources, adjudication of disputes, and others. In
H.P, M.P, Gujarat and Rajasthan a study was conducted with an objective to analyse the application of PESA and assess the impact of other legislations in the states to document the experiences of PESA in the selected Schedule V Areas and propose strategies to strengthen action within the legal framework on PESA.

**Women in local governance, Celebrating success**

On the occasion of the International Women’s Day, a national level event “Panchayat to Parliament: Women show the way” was organized in collaboration with The Hunger project, at New Delhi (6 - 8 March), with an aim to highlight the new role that women are playing as leaders and catalysts and provide them with a forum to share their experiences at the national level. 112 elected representatives and grassroots women leaders (with whom PRIA and its partner organizations have been working) from all parts of the country came together to celebrate the success of women in Panchayats and Municipalities. The three-day programme, apart from providing the women representatives a platform to share their experiences, also gave them an opportunity to initiate a dialogue and interact with women parliamentarians, women leaders of the civil society and other stakeholder groups like media, academia, corporate, donors and voluntary organizations. Similar celebrations were also facilitated at district and state levels in A. P, Bihar, Chhatisgarh, Jharkhand, Haryana, H.P, Kerala, M.P, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, T.N, Uttaranchal and U.P.

**Cases on Panchayats**

Six booklets, describing case studies from the field, were produced and disseminated:

- Women Leaders in Panchayats,
- Dalits in Panchayats,
- Finances of Panchayats,
- Civil Society and Panchayati Raj,
- Micro Planning and Panchayats,
- Gram Sabha and Panchayats.

**Logo Link**

PRIA is the South Asia regional partner for LOGO-Link (Learning on Local Governance) programme being anchored globally by Institute of Development Studies, Sussex with the support of the Ford Foundation Local Governance Learning Group (LOGO). Major activities undertaken during the year are mentioned below.

- Research on ‘Legal Framework for Citizen Participation’ in South Asia was conducted in North, South and Central regions of India, Nepal and Bangladesh.
- A roundtable (July 2002, New Delhi) on ‘Legal Framework of Participation in Local Self-Governance’ was organized to share the study findings.
- Attended a write-shop at IDS to prepare global synthesis of report and a LOGO Link regional partners meet during August 2002.
- Organized an academic seminar for participants from Uganda, Bangladesh and Nepal and exposure visits to Uttar Pradesh and Haryana.
The year was marked with significant developments within PRIA’s programme on environmental and occupational health, wherein past efforts were consolidated and the programme was repositioned, for more meaningful grassroots level impact. An attempt was made to synergise these efforts within the upcoming framework of citizen participation in governance. PRIA has been actively working on strengthening workers’ movement for safe and healthy work environment for the last two decades. Intensive work has been carried out in relation to the Employees State Insurance Act, diagnostic and medical camps and local level research. The post liberal economy trends have changed the composition of the Indian workforce wherein the permanent organized workforce has been scaled down, and the numbers have risen in the informal sector placing them in a more vulnerable position. Since most industrial belts are in areas where panchayats and local bodies have a key role in establishment and maintenance of industries, the programme strategy for strengthening the voice of the marginal workforce was repositioned to link up with local bodies for an environmentally sustainable industrial development (ESID). In conformity with the convergence strategy, focused efforts were undertaken to involve Gram Sabhas and elected representatives in the struggle for ESID. The approach has been successfully experimented with in Lote-Pershuram Industrial Belt in Chiplun and in Parvada Industrial Belt in Vishakhapatnam. A similar intervention was initiated with municipal workers on improving their working conditions. Programmes were facilitated where municipal workers and the local community jointly worked towards better management of the deprived municipal wards of the large cities like Aurangabad, Amritsar, Mumbai, and Ahmedabad.

Key activities during the year were:

1. INITIATIVES WITH INDUSTRIAL WORKERS

**Ahmedabad**
- In collaboration with, Kamdar Swasthya Surakha Mandal, PRIA continued its initiative of providing ongoing support to strengthening workers’ movement on occupational health and urban governance.
- During the year 866 workers were checked for Noise Induced Hearing Loss (NIHL) and byssinosis.
- During the visit of a special medical board (June, 2002) 27 workers were certified as suffering from occupational diseases and compensation was given to 87 workers during the year.

**Andhra Pradesh**
- An analysis of the socio-economic realities and availability of human and natural resources was carried out in the Parvada Industrial Belt, Vishakhapatnam. A Peoples’ Development Plan was initiated in the industrial belt based on the needs expressed by the local community.
- In Qutubulahpur Municipality, an occupational health survey of the women bidi workers undertaken showed that no health and welfare schemes were being made available to these women, though many of them were issued identification cards under the Bidi Welfare Act.

**Aurangabad**
- A study on working conditions of solid and liquid waste (drainage) workers in the city of Aurangabad was conducted along with a health check up for diagnosis of occupational diseases. A popular booklet *Palika Karamchari Mahasang* was prepared based on the study.
- A workshop was organized (March 14, 2003) with workers and their leaders on the changing trends of the workforce and its impact on the Employees State Insurance Scheme (ESIS). A booklet on ESIS highlighted efforts of the workers on activating the ESIS system.

**Mumbai**
- On-going support to textile and municipal workers continued under workers’ resource centre (PRIA, Occupational Health and Safety Centre (OHSC) and Mumbai based unions) in Mumbai.
- During the year, more than 479 workers were checked out of which 33 workers were diagnosed as suffering...
from byssinosis and 43 from NIHL. Due to continuous follow up efforts with the local office of ESIC, 108 workers (suffering from byssinosis (39) and NIHL (69)) were granted compensation.

- Two workers from small-scale glass factory were also diagnosed as suffering from silicosis.
- PRIA and OHSC were also involved in providing input to workers in the small-scale industrial sector, airport and contract workers union.
- Training inputs were provided to 86 medical doctors.
- An analysis of the annual reports of the ESIC was carried out and published in various journals.
- Orientation meetings and discussions on work conditions and health were organized with the Mumbai municipal union. The union printed leaflets based on the inputs received for wider distribution.

**Punjab**

- Participatory diagnostic camps were organized in the textile mills of Amritsar and Malot for identifying the victims of byssinosis and NIHL and more than 100 workers were diagnosed affected by the diseases.
- Intensive follow-up with Employee State Insurance Corporation special medical boards, constituted for the compensation of diagnosed victims, resulted in compensations for 35 workers.

**West Bengal**

- Meetings with stakeholders including Nagarik Mancha, representatives from ESI, trade unionists and workers were organized in Belur, Howrah district.
- A dialogue was established with engineering workers (March 2003) at a meeting organized at ESI hospital, Belur to gauge their health problems and the prevailing social security schemes. Participants included workers from Garden Reach Ship Builders, National Iron and Steel Company and representatives of ESI hospital.
- A similar meeting (March 2003) was organized in the labour colony of the jute workers, which was attended by fifty workers, union leaders, labour welfare officers from Ambika Jute Mill and Bali Jute Mill. The discussions focused on the problems faced by the workers on the shop floor.

### II. EXTENSION AND ADVOCACY

#### Demystifying Occupational and Environmental Health

PRIA participated in the programme on “Science and Citizenship in a Global Context: Challenges from New Technologies”, organized by IDS, Sussex, U.K. A presentation was made on 'Demystifying Occupational and Environmental Health: Experiences from India’. Experiences were shared from our work related to the issue of occupational and environmental health among doctors, disability assessment, accidents due to exposure to chemicals and their antidotes and risk of occupational diseases to health care workers and paramedical staff.

#### Access Initiative

Being the Indian counterpart of the “Access Initiative” for assessment of access to information on environmental issues, PRIA presented its country report in Regional Prep Com IV organized in Bali, Indonesia in June 2002. Other partners of the project came from USA, Mexico, Uganda, Hungary, Thailand, Indonesia, South Africa and Chile.

#### Consultations with Indian Trade Unions

PRIA organized consultations with Indian Trade Unions in Hyderabad, Mumbai, and New Delhi (August 2003) to generate discussion on the low priority given to workers’ issues in the World Summit for Sustainable Development (WSSD). The issues discussed during the consultation focused on role of workers in sustainable development. Concern was raised on the deplorable working conditions in the unorganised sector and dumping of hazardous technology in developing countries. On 4 September 2002, in Hyderabad, PRIA organised a joint press conference with Trade Unions and NGOs during the Summit to highlight the above issues.
Practice Research Engagement (PRE) has been the basis of PRIA’s work for a long time. It is an attempt to bring the practitioners and researchers together on a common agenda of social change. Practitioners intervening for social change benefit from research as well as contribute to it from their experience. PRIA aims at positively changing the lives of people through research on social issues and is dedicated to creating an interface between research and practice.

Carrying forward the initiatives of the past year on the theme of Citizenship and Governance and PRE, this year saw an enhanced focus on activities to explore the theme. Mentioned below are the structured events and research studies conducted during the year.

I. PRACTICE RESEARCH ENGAGEMENT

The theme of Practice research Engagement (PRE) has been very central to PRIA’s work and it was concretised in greater detail during its 20-year celebrations. The issues were presented in a paper entitled “Practice Research Engagement and Social Transformation: Key challenges in the Indian Context” in a panel on “Practice Research Engagement and Civil Society in Social Transformation” at the 5th International Society for Third Sector Research (ISTR) conference held at Cape Town, South Africa during July 7-10, 2002.

II. CONFERENCE ON CITIZENSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

PRIA held a conference on “Citizenship and Governance: Issue of Identities, voice and inclusion” during 12-14 February 2003 at New Delhi, in collaboration with IDS, UK. 130 Participants from different parts of India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Uganda, and UK representing academia (including university teaching faculties and students from sociology, political science and anthropology), practice based voluntary institutions, practitioners, government, and industry attended the same. Some highlights:

- The participants came together to deliberate on issues pertaining to social and political exclusion of the marginalized, challenges inherent in the emergence of leadership of weaker sections in processes of governance, barriers to actualisation of citizenship by the marginalized sections, and various ways through which citizen engagement takes place to influence governance.
- Underlying all these deliberations was the critical issue of how to ensure the inclusion, identities and voice of those who have been left at the margins of socio-economic processes of development and political processes of governance. The discussions took place in plenary sessions and paper presentation sessions.
- The discussions at the conference reflected upon a range of questions including: Can the ordinary, marginalized people be citizen-like agents capable of effecting changes? How the marginal sections (poor, women, lower castes, tribals) can actualise their citizenship, act like citizens, address the issues of governance and what are the structural barriers to this? What enabling environment is required to make the citizen act and engage? How is citizenship to be conceptualised? How is development to be executed so that it includes and not alienates people? What processes and mechanisms need to come into place to make the vision of a just and inclusive society real?
- At the heart of the entire debate lies the relationship between the state and the citizens. There is a lot of disappointment, bitterness and frustration in the way citizens relate to an overbearing state - the state, which neglects its citizenry, the state that shuns its responsibility. But as the narratives of citizen action and engagement revealed, there is also a constant search to reform the state, to deepen democracy and to forge a meaningful relationship with the state. The discussions also revealed that the legitimate place and role of civil society actors in a democratic polity is not to pose an alternative to the state but to conscientise people for action and engagement to reform the state.
As a logical conclusion, the last session of the conference focused on the research – practice engagement, that is the synchronization between knowledge production and putting that knowledge into practice, and how that can promote citizen action in governance.

The conference ended with the message that to create conditions for the effective citizenship, to ensure the inclusion, voice and identities of the excluded in the processes of governance, democratisation is the key, which can unlock the possibilities and promises. Democratisation has to take place with reference to the state, with reference to the societies in which we live, with reference to our value systems, with reference to the knowledge we produce and with reference to the means we use for citizen action.

III. DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH CENTRE

As part of the global project of the Institute of Development Studies, Sussex, PRIA has been identified to operate as the Development Research Centre (DRC) in India. DRC research mainly focuses on the themes of citizenship, participation and accountability. Under the DRC project PRIA undertook four major studies:

Linkages, conflicts and dynamics between traditional, developmental and statutory decentralized institutions

The study explores the question: ‘How does the existence of multiple institutional spaces affect participation in local forest management’ in selected hilly villages of the Kumaon region in Uttaranchal.

- It focuses on the state created developmental institution specifically for the management of local forests, and explores its interaction with the traditional institution. It explores both the traditional ways of forest management and the constitutionally mandated statutory institutions of local governance, to depict the nature of participation as it actually takes place and reveals the dynamics of participation at the local level.
- It looks at the positive side of the institutions which create space for participation in many ways - formation of village based institutions responsible for planning and implementation of programmes of forest management, joint sharing of finance by the government department and village institutions, creation of a minimum and necessary condition for the inclusion of marginalized sections in decision making at the local level.
- It focuses on the lack of co-ordination among various institutions; cutting out a larger role by the forest department for itself through the control mechanisms planning and inflow of finances; involvement of a large number of people as labourers in the forest conservation; incongruence between fixed project duration and time required to build sustainable village institutions; inadequate representation of weaker sections in decision making; and lack of clarity regarding the accountability of these institutions to the people.

Meanings and expressions of rights and citizenship among the nomadic communities in Rajasthan

The study explores the issue of citizenship identities from the vantage point of marginalized nomads in Rajasthan and their articulation for claims to rights and recognition.

- Generally legal, constitutional, and political considerations define citizenship as something to be bestowed by the State as a set of rights and responsibilities. But a citizen also needs specific social positioning for becoming a fruitful socio-economic agent to actualise her citizenship.
Nomads variously find inclusion as one of the underprivileged groups such as SCs, STs, and OBCs, and are therefore also entitled to benefit from cited affirmative action and safeguards. But they have only de jure citizenship status, compounded by their spatial heterogeneity. This inhibits their access to the citizenship rights, and special constitutional privileges available to the socially underprivileged.

The changing economic scenario is forcing many nomadic communities to opt for settling down for their livelihood. Their traditional means of livelihood, formerly supported by their nomadic nature, have become outdated. Nomads have found it increasingly difficult to meet their basic requirements of shelter, security and livelihood and, most of all, of acceptance in the societies they have chosen to settle down with.

**Meanings and identities of citizenship among Santhal tribals in Jharkhand**
The study explores the understanding and experiences of citizenship amongst Santhals in different contexts - political, developmental and cultural.

- The focus is on the way this relationship between citizenship identities and the context defines the social and political participation of Santhals in matters related to governance.
- The study also examines the role of the state and civil society institutions in mediating the meaning of citizenship, thereby enabling or disenabling Santhals in exercising their citizenship rights in relation to governance.

**Multi-party accountability for Environmentally Sustainable Industrial Development: The challenges of active citizenship**
The Simhadri Thermal Power Project (STPP), under the aegis of the National Thermal Power Corporation, Vishakapatnam, was commissioned in 2002 and acquired around 3000 acres of land for the purpose. This resulted in loss of approach roads and other common property resources causing much inconvenience and affecting the employment opportunities of the inhabitants of 2,841 households spread over 13 villages and hamlets. The present study was taken up to multi-party accountability of the stakeholders in order to maintain environmentally sustainable industrial and community development. Key highlights:

- Denial of any type of employment to locals by the private contractors and low rate of employment offered by the management of STPP had created innumerable problems to the local people.
- The functioning of the plant caused innumerable environmental problems, which in turn caused livelihood problems for fishermen and farmers. A number of health problems were also reported.
- The NGO’s and CBO’s made attempts to organize the project affected people in the initial stages which bore fruit in the form of higher compensation. However, in the later stage, the villagers’ protests and representations were confined only to the level of Gram Panchayat authorities.
- On the other hand, STPP contends that it had paid as high compensation as Rs.2.25 lakhs per acre and had also initiated a few community development programmes in the affected villages. The people perceived this as falling short of the promises made by the project authorities at the time of acquisition of their land.
Findings of these studies were shared in the Citizenship and Governance Conference. In addition to that a paper entitled “Expressions of Rights and Citizenship: The Case of Nomads in Rajasthan, India” was presented in the panel discussion on “Meanings and Expressions of Citizenship: The Search for New Forms” at the 5th International Society for Third Sector Research (ISTR) conference held at Cape Town, South Africa during July 7-10, 2002.

IV. COLLABORATION WITH SCHOOLS OF SOCIAL WORK

This period saw the completion of studies which were conducted by Regional Nodal Centres like The College of Social Work, Nirmala Niketan, Mumbai; Department of Social Work, Andhra University, Viskahapattanam; and Department of Social Work, Viswa Bharati, Shantiniketan, West Bengal. Some highlights of the period:

- Dr. Rajesh Tandon, delivered a special lecture on Citizenship and Good Governance, on 28 August’ 02, at the Department of Social work, Stella Marris College, Chennai.
- College of Social Work, Nirmala Niketan, Mumbai, undertook a study on dalit leadership and governance in gram panchayats in Maharashtra.
- The department of Social Work, Andhra University, Viskahapattanam, undertook a study on water users associations in Visakhapatnam district.
- Department of Social Work, Viswa Bharati, Shantiniketan undertook a study exploring the evolution of Tagore’s ideas of social work as it manifested in the transformation of Sriniketan as an experiment in social work.

GLOBAL GOVERNANCE 2002

‘Civil Society and Democratisation of Global Governance, Redefining Global Governance’

This meeting on Global Governance was organized by FIM – Montréal International Forum, during 13 – 16, October 2002. Redefining Global Democracy, was the theme of the world conference held in Montréal. Delegates from all continents and from various sectors of activities met to share views on how our Global Village will be governed. Can we ensure for all accessibility of the benefits of globalisation? The keynote address to the conference was by Mr. Nitin Desai - UN under Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs, who spoke of the crucial role of the UN has played in the 1960’s and 1970’s of magnifying the image of smaller states. The old system of international relations has given way to new global relations, UN summits have played the role of bringing in the issues of Civil Society and other issues of concern like sustainability, women, environment and children. Mr. Desai also spoke of the interface between Global Civil Society and the global structure of discussion making. The Chair of the FIM Board Dr. Rajesh Tandon welcomed all the delegates and speakers to sharing and discussion which would enhance the learning of all and provide insights which would be more meaningful to both personal and professional lives. The Conference focused on nine tracks around each of which a series of workshops were organized. Themes included: Governance in Trans-national Civil Society – Lessons from the Co-operative movement; Ecological Economics and Distributive Justice; Reviving Democracy; Regions – Building Blocks for Cooperation, Intellectual Property - Can it benefit the Third World; and Teaching Participatory Organizational Learning.
In December 1998, the Governing Board mandated the formation of the Committee Against Sexual Harassment (CASH). The Committee did not limit its involvement on gender to the issue of sexual harassment alone, but took a deliberate decision to facilitate gender mainstreaming in all aspects of the institution. In 2001, CASH evolved into the Committee For Gender Awareness and Mainstreaming in PRIA (CGAMP), which continues to operate up to the present. During this two-year period, the role and scope of CGAMP remained largely limited to gender related institutional issues and internal functioning. It facilitated programmes for staff members on issues of gender sensitivity and awareness, though did not reach out directly to programmes at the field level. The main activities for the period 2002-2003 are as below.

**GENDER AUDIT**

Informally reviewing the situation of the last two years, the Committee took a decision to have a gender audit conducted both within PRIA as well as its RSO partners. The audit was conducted by an external facilitator with an aim to assess the role, scope and future of the committee and the process of gender mainstreaming within PRIA and its RSO partners. Ms. Maria Victoria Raquiza, from the Philippines Rural Reconstruction Movement worked as a consultant on this study.

The objectives of the study included:

- Document current practices and efforts in mainstreaming gender in PRIA and regional support organizations (RSOs)
- Generate recommendations that further promote the gender mainstreaming process within PRIA and help initiate and further facilitate these processes in the RSOs
- Identify factors for formulating recommendations on ways and strategies that serve to further promote the gender mainstreaming agenda in the wider civil society

The Audit report highlights the gender assessment of PRIA during the years 1998-2002, though at different points it has also referred to an earlier period when gender initiatives were undertaken. The highlights of the study as presented are divided into findings and recommendations of the consultant at two levels - Institutional and Programmatic.

**Institutional Level**

PRIA has made significant strides in the area of gender mainstreaming particularly within the institution, especially with the creation of the Board-mandated Committee Against Sexual Harassment (CASH), now known as CGAMP. The major findings are as below:

There is a current **Gender Disparity** in staff composition.

- The ratio of men and women needs to be reviewed in the context of the representation of women in the decision making process of the organization. The statistics reveal a very interesting picture. There are a total of 29 women and 25 men at the programmatic level and at the support staff level 38 men and 9 women. While it is generally seen that in most organizations women are more dominant at a support level, in PRIA this is quite the reverse.
- While numbers are one way of determining the gender balance it is more important to understand the roles and responsibilities that are being assigned to women. While understanding the gender equation in the workplace it is important to have a perspective on the cultural issues as well. Jobs like those of peons,
drivers, errand boys, security guards, office cleaners are not normally taken up by women, as these jobs imply local travelling, exposure to unsafe situations as well as late and uncertain working. Under these circumstances, it is not the number of women employed that is the issue; but what is crucial is the roles, responsibilities and levels of decision making that are given to women within the organization.

The **institutional policies of PRIA** are Gender sensitive:

- The credit for the change in policies goes largely to CGAMP as it is their persistent efforts in taking recommendations from the staff and following up the same with Management. Needless to say that the Management and Governing Board have also been supportive of the process that finally culminated in these positive changes.
- CGAMP/CASH workshops have been successful and these have led to the creation of a gender sensitive climate within the institution, where women can work in an atmosphere of comfort and security.
- There is a healthy working environment where women feel they can generally compare and compete with their male colleagues in terms of work opportunities based on merit and competence.
- There has been a thorough and systematic review of personnel, systems and other processes with a view to making them gender-sensitive.

Some recommendations for future institutional change suggested are:

- Flexi-time/Part-time arrangements for mothers to be and those with young children
- Formalize some facilities which are already in practice like compensatory leave, flexible working hours for all staff
- Capacity building of all levels of staff on Gender
- Review of existing Gender Training Modules and customizing PRIA’s own Module
- Inclusion of Other Gender Development Concepts in Trainings
- Child care facilities to be developed in the offices

There were also specific recommendations for the improvement of CGAMP

- The reconstitution of CGAMP
- A full time Gender Person to be identified at the head office
- Gender focal points to be identified at the programme level
- Use expertise/learning of PRIA female Board members
- Retention of women in the organization, especially married and pregnant women
- Reassurance of job security to young and married women

**Programmatic Level**

Since the early 1980s, PRIA has sought to link its concerns for participatory research and training with an agenda building process for women. Under the participatory approach, women were organized and encouraged to articulate their agenda within some projects during this period. Attention was given to the distinct ways of women’s learning—what’s different and unique as well as problematic. Towards the latter part of the 1980s, concerns around women’s economic empowerment came to the fore. In the early 1990s, more attention was given to developing a leadership programme for women, which also produced training materials. It was also during this period that PRIA decided to deliberately focus on enhancing the political participation of women and other marginalized groups in the Panchayati Raj institutions, and in other development projects.
Some of the findings at the programmatic level indicate that the organization has focused upon the following issues in the context of working with women:

- Building women’s capacities
- Developing leadership skills amongst women activists
- Encouraging women’s participation in political activities
- Building solidarity amongst elected women
- Addressing literacy problems of women, especially in the area of functional reading.
- Resolving other social problems (mobility, support of male members in family, etc.)

The following recommendations were made for future programmatic aspects:

- Creating templates for Gender Analysis to be done at district Level
- Developing Tools for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation with gender-based indicators
- Cull out gender-based outputs in all thematic areas
- Gender balance in composition of field workers
- Ensuring women’s participation in programmes at the community level
- Extended role of CGAMP - Programmatic Inputs - tools, capacity building, information dissemination at field level and among RSOs

“PRIA has walked a significant distance in its gender mainstreaming efforts but still has some way to go. With its Committee on Gender Awareness and Mainstreaming in PRIA (CGAMP), is well prepared to undertake the necessary steps needed to move its gender agenda forward. By re-orienting and reconstituting CGAMP so that it is better attuned to the current institutional and programmatic priorities, and by identifying a full-time staff to serve as the gender secretariat, PRIA may be better placed to tackle the challenges thrown its way in its pursuit of gender mainstreaming.” (Gender Audit Report, December 2002).

WORKSHOP ON HIV/AIDS

A workshop on the issue of HIV/AIDS was organized for the entire staff of PRIA in November 2002. A total of 80 persons drawn from all levels of the organization took part in this two-day event. This programme was conducted by resource persons from the NAZ Foundation, a voluntary organization working directly on the issue of HIV/AIDS, along with Shikha Ghildyal and Feisal Alkazi, freelance consultants working on the issue.

The initiative for this programme came from CGAMP as part of its strategy in sensitizing PRIA staff on issues of gender. Although PRIA does not work directly on the issue of HIV/AIDS as part of its activities, it was considered important to organize a programme for the staff on this issue. The basic thinking behind this move was that in the current context, all our lives are or will be touched by the impact of HIV/AIDS. We will also have to deal with situations and people with HIV/AIDS and therefore it is crucial to have a basic sensitivity to and knowledge of the illness. From the gender perspective an important focus of the workshop was also to understand the impact and effect of the disease on women and how they cope with the myriad dimensions of the illness.
INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTRE

The division provides key support to all the thematic interventions in the areas of information management and maintenance, library, databases, website, publications, and electronic data processing. It facilitates communication linkages amongst a network of organizations at national and international levels.

Library
The state of art Library at PRIA holds a collection of books, periodicals, news magazines, reports, mimeos, videos and CD ROMs on a range of socio economic issues, access to which is facilitated by user friendly online electronic catalogue system. PRIA staff, members from partner organizations, representatives of civil society organizations, researchers, students, and many others use it extensively. During the past year, the library:
- Acquired 600 books and 26 video-cassettes,
- Categorized and stocked old PRIA photographs,
- Facilitated conversion of 275 from old library videos into CD ROMs for easier access,
- Added almost 1000 documents and reports into its electronic system,
- Provided support to field and regional offices for library related activities.

Publications
The publications unit facilitated production of a range of learning materials, brochures, books and manuals on various themes. Given below is a partial list of major national level publications. In addition to this, a range of learning materials, information booklets, reports, brochures, occasional papers and studies have been also been produced.

Manuals and Books
- Community Monitoring in water and sanitation projects: A facilitators manual (English)
- Capacity Building of Southern NGOs (English)
- Case Studies on Panchayati Raj Institutions (English)
- Hashiye par Ghumantoo (Hindi)
- Haryana Mein Nagar Nikay (Hindi)
- Invisible yet widespread: The Non Profit Sector in India (English and Hindi)
- Participatory Programme Management (English)
- Working papers on Non Profit Sector (English)
- Working papers on Urban Governance (English)

Periodicals
- Collective Initiatives (English)
- Innovations in Civil Society (English and Hindi)
- Participation and Governance (English and Hindi)
- PRIA News (English and Hindi)
- Annual Report 2001 –2002 (English and Hindi)
- PRIA Planner 2003
**Electronic Data Processing**

The electronic data processing unit continued to provide support on latest Information Technology techniques and procedures for effective functioning. Key activities during the year included:

- Installation of windows-based e-mail application at all offices of PRIA.
- Undertook ongoing management of Local Area Network and Internet Access.
- Provided consultancy to partner organizations and associates on upgrading their hardware, software and networks functions.
- Established standardized IT systems at all regional and field offices and their regular maintenance.
- Conducted hands on training programmes for staff on standard software’s and made an ongoing effort to update them on latest versions.
- Provided support for effective audio-visual presentations.
- Re-organized our web site (www.pria.org) according to the organization’s workflow structure.
- Installed Tally software for Stock and Inventory Management.
- Facilitated an IT audit exercise based on which development of new applications for Project Planning, Monitoring and reporting and Document Management have been initiated.

**Management Support Centre**

**Project Monitoring Unit**

The unit continued its ongoing function of monitoring the progress of the projects including coordination with the thematic teams at state and national levels and with donor organizations and agencies, to ensure effective implementation of projects. During the year:

- Efforts were made to ensure that projects were planned and implemented within the new strategic framework of PRIA.
- A common planning format was developed to consolidate key activities, outputs and output indicators for each state. Quarterly review of plans, budgets, reports and tracking of major achievements and deviations were streamlined.
- The PMU provided inputs to conceptualise a high end, integrated web-based Planning and Monitoring System (PMS). The development of the system was initiated and will be mainstreamed during the forthcoming year. The PMS includes an integrated system for planning, budgeting, monitoring, and reporting based on standard templates and database.

**Human Resource Management**

Taking into consideration the role and responsibility of this department, its name has been changed from ‘Personnel and Administration’ to ‘Human Resource Management’.

- This year the focus remained on professional development and enhanced performance of staff members. Towards this end, opportunities were made available to professional staff to attend various training programmes, workshops, seminars, conferences, and a range of other programmes conducted by reputed organizations in the country and abroad to enable them to enhance their skills and get a wider exposure.
- **Mid-term and annual performance reviews** were conducted and timely feedback was given to the staff about their strengths and areas in which improvements were needed. Specific feedback was given to the supervisory and managerial staff on development of their leadership skills.

- To provide support to the geographical and thematic teams in implementation of the new convergence strategy of PRIA, there was a drive to recruit professionals at all levels. Campus interviews were also conducted in a few institutes of repute to select Programme Interns for various field locations. Keeping the gender policy of the organization in mind, female candidates were given preference.

- A comprehensive induction and orientation programme was arranged for new entrants to give them an overview of PRIA’s vision, mission and programmes. Systems and procedures related to personnel, accounts, project monitoring, estate facilities and travel were explained. They were also given a briefing on CGAMP (Committee on Gender Awareness and Mainstreaming in PRIA) and informed of norms of behaviour, which all are expected to observe within the office and in dealing with outside parties.

- As an annual event, a two-day staff development programme was organized at the Golden Huts, Gurgaon. The programme aimed at understanding the new Convergence Strategy of PRIA and its implications for the programme/thematic teams. A one-day workshop on ‘Team Building’ was also arranged taking the help of an external resource person. Various team-based activities and sport/cultural events were also organized which provided an opportunity to build inter-team relationship and team spirit. All staff members participated actively in the programme and came forward with very useful suggestions. A positive atmosphere was created at the end of the programme.

- Based on **exit interviews** with the outgoing staff members, a turn-over analysis was made and it is gratifying to note that the turn-over is at 6.2%. The main reasons for employees leaving PRIA included were improved job prospects, health, and transfers.

- During the year personnel policies and compensation practices followed by various NGOs were studied. Based on this and taking into consideration PRIA’s Strategic Plan for the next five years, **service rules and compensation structure were revised** and will come into effect from April 2003.

**Estate and Facilities**

- As part of its ongoing activities the Estate and Facilities unit of PRIA continued to host a series of workshops, seminars and other events for PRIA programmes, as well as for external groups.

- Logistics for a number of national and international level workshops and seminars were successfully arranged at venues like India Habitat Centre, Indian Social Institute and Vishwa Yuva Kendra.

- Almost 500 guests from different parts of the country and abroad utilised the hostel facilities of PRIA during this year.

- Maintenance and regular upkeep of the building and infrastructure was also undertaken at regular periods. Strict norms for fire fighting equipment and maintenance of the lift were also ensured.
The unit continued to play a supportive role in related activities of International and domestic travel as well as local transport and travel. Steps have been taken to improve the system to make the procedure more convenient to the staff.

A major activity undertaken was that of **Rain Water Harvesting**. With technical advice and support from our neighbour ‘Centre For Science and Environment’, we were able to appoint resource persons to undertake the job on behalf of our institution. The results are quite encouraging as the rainwater, which used to be drained out has been diverted to the underground level through a number of ducts and catchment pits installed at strategic points. As a result the ground water level has risen.

A two-acre plot purchased by PRIA several years ago at Faridabad, to construct a Training Centre, was sold since the construction could not take place and the maintenance costs were very high.

The storeroom on the roof, which was damaged during the cyclone was also reconstructed with no additional expense to the organization. A reinforced structure was built with money that we received as compensation from the Insurance Company.

A daylong **picnic** was organized on the outskirts of New Delhi in a farmhouse for the entire staff of PRIA and their families. A great deal of planning and involvement of each staff member made it a great success and everyone enjoyed meeting colleagues and family members in an informal atmosphere. The event was action-packed with games and activities and prizes for all from eight months to 75 years along with a variety of delicious snacks. Children eagerly took part in the painting and dance competitions organized for them.

**Finance and Accounts**

During the financial year 2002-2003, the finance and accounts department maintained the accounts on Tally package version 6.3, which was installed in the previous year; however necessary changes were made in the programme to meet the requirements of PRIA. A new package TDS PLUS was installed during the year. The TDS PLUS package is linked with the Tally Package and is useful for calculation of TDS, generating computerized TDS certificates and annual returns for income tax.

In the financial year 2002-2003 the main focus was on capacity building of staff of finance and accounts department. Two staff members attended the workshop organized by Sida for its partners in GOA, and one staff member attended the workshop conducted by FMS in New Delhi. A staff member who looks after the PF Trust accounts attended a workshop conducted by Regional Provident Fund Commissioner, New Delhi. Staff members from the finance & accounts department visited the offices of RSO’s and other partners this year for reconciliation of accounts.
TREASURER’S REPORT

The audited accounts of PRIA together with the audit report have been circulated by the President to all the members. May I submit these to you for your approval as I find them acceptable and satisfactory. I take this opportunity to point out the following:

- We have undertaken an exercise in introducing costing with an expert outside group. We are discussing the new system along with I.T system.

- We have also recast the budget with Reforming Governance Institutions (RGI), and Civil Society Building (CSB) with new nomenclature and split up details, we are planning to apply the same code to the accounting statement and may be able to give the figures correlated with programmes from the next accounting year.

- The internal auditor has done 100% checking of all the vouchers and the adjustment entries are passed wherever required.

- As informed during the last year, PRIA has filed an application for exemption and relaxation with the Regional Provident Fund Commissioner, which is still under consideration. PRIA is remitting the pension fund to the Provident Fund Commissioner and the other funds are deposited in approved securities.

- PRIA financial accounting practice continues to be of a high standard and professionally managed.

- All statutory requirements are complied with.

- All corpus and other investments are made in approved securities.

- The systems of financial management and internal audit are constantly monitored and evaluated through internal control systems.

K. Shivakumar
Treasurer

May 2003

Results for the year ended 31st March 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INR (Million)</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>INR (Million)</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year ended</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.03.02</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55.19</td>
<td>Grant</td>
<td>65.80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>5.15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.62</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4.87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>64.64</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>75.82</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Expenditure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INR (Million)</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year ended</td>
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<td>31.03.03</td>
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<td>54.48</td>
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<td>3.67</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>63.26</strong></td>
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<td>1.38</td>
<td>Excess of Income</td>
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<td></td>
<td>above expenditure</td>
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<p>| | |</p>
<table>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>13.59</strong></td>
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FINANCIAL SUMMARY, 2002-2003

### BALANCE SHEET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSETS</th>
<th>AMOUNT IN INR As on 31.3.2003</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CURRENT ASSETS</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash &amp; Bank Balance</td>
<td>48.32</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sundry Receivable</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</strong></td>
<td><strong>49.32</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>OTHER CURRENT ASSETS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
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<td>Fixed Assets (Furniture, Equipments etc.)</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL OTHER CURRENT ASSETS</strong></td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL ASSETS</strong></td>
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<td><strong>LIABILITIES</strong></td>
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<td>Capital Fund Balance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reserve &amp; Surplus</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>80.89</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Current Liabilities &amp; Provisions</strong></td>
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<td>Grant received in advance</td>
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<td>Expenses Payable</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL LIABILITIES</strong></td>
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### INCOME & EXPENDITURE AND FUND BALANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INCOME</th>
<th>AMOUNT IN INR As on 31.3.2003</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research &amp; Training Grants</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donations &amp; Contributions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>5.15</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL INCOME</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPENDITURE</th>
<th>AMOUNT IN INR As on 31.3.2003</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL PROGRAM EXPENDITURE</td>
<td><strong>54.20</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Administrative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Depreciation on Fixed Assets (Furniture, Equipments etc.)</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL OTHER EXPENDITURE</strong></td>
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</tr>
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<td><strong>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</strong></td>
<td><strong>62.23</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excess of Income Over Expenditure</td>
<td>13.59</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>75.82</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital Fund Balance as on April 01, 2002</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add: Excess of Income Over Expenditure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital Fund Balance</td>
<td>80.22</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Capital Fund Balance as on March 31st, 2003</strong></td>
<td><strong>80.22</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: All figures are in INR Million (‘000,000).
Extracted from Audited Statement of Accounts 2002-2003

Statutory Auditors:
Charnalia, Bhatia & Gandhi
Chartered Accountants
New Delhi
INCOME CHART 2002-2003

- Grant: Rs. 31.03 Million, 65.80 Rs., 86.78%
- Interest: 5.15 Rs., 6.79%
- Other Income: 4.87 Rs., 6.42%

EXPENDITURE CHART 2002-2003

- Programme: Rs. 31.03 Million, 54.20 Rs., 87.10%
- Administration: 5.47 Rs., 8.79%
- Depreciation: 2.56 Rs., 4.11%

PROGRAMMATIC CENTRE WISE EXPENDITURE 2002-2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme Wise</th>
<th>Amount (Rs)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President’s Office</td>
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<td>4.85</td>
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<tr>
<td>Civil Society Building</td>
<td>11.49</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environmentally Sustainable Industrial Development</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>3.17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local Self Governance (Rural &amp; Urban)</td>
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<td>55.39</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information Resource Centre</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>3.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management Support Centre</td>
<td>9.12</td>
<td>14.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>62.23</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GOVERNING BOARD

Shri Prem Chadha, Chairperson, has worked in senior managerial positions in private and public corporations in India for more than 40 years.

Shri K. Shivakumar, Treasurer, is a Chartered Accountant and is the Director of V.K. Foundation, Gandhigram, Tamil Nadu.

Dr. Rajesh Tandon, President and co-founder of PRIA.

Ms. Sheela Patel, Founder-Director of a voluntary organization, Society for Promotion of Area Resource Centre (SPARC), Mumbai.

Ms. Lalita Ramdas has been active in literacy, non-formal education and women’s empowerment issues in India and internationally.

Dr. H.N. Saiyed is presently Director of National Institute of Occupational Health (NIOH), Ahmedabad.

Shri. Joe Madiath is the Founder-Director of a voluntary organization, GRAM VIKAS, Ganjam, Orissa.

Dr. N.C. Saxena is former secretary, Planning Commission, Government of India.

Ms. Rita Sarin is the Country Director of the Hunger Project, New Delhi.

KEY RESOURCE PROVIDERS

- Action Aid, U.K
- The Commonwealth Foundation, London, UK
- Department for International Development (DFID), U.K
- The Ford Foundation, New Delhi, India
- IIZ/DVV, Germany
- Institute of Development Studies (IDS), UK
- International Water and Sanitation Centre, The Netherlands
- Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, New Delhi, India
- Sir Ratan Tata Trust, Mumbai, India
- Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), New Delhi, India
- Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), New Delhi, India
- Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, New Delhi, India
- CORDAID, The Netherlands
PRIA OFFICES

NEW DELHI
PRIA
42, Tughlakabad Institutional Area,
New Delhi - 110062
Tel.: 011-29956908, 26060931-32-33,
Fax: 011-29955183, E-mail: info@pria.org

ANDHRA PRADESH
PRIA (Regional Office)
H No. 3-6-532/1, Flat No. S-2
(3rd Floor), Rangaswamy Mansion,
Street No. 7, Himmayatnagar
Hyderabad - 500029, A.P
Phone: 040 - 27651744
Telefax: 040 - 27623532
Email: ap@pria.org

CHHATTISGARH
PRIA
Block-60, Plot-1A
Motilal Nehru Nagar (East)
Durg. Bilai - 490 020, Chhattisgarh
Phone: 0786 - 2038954
Email: bilai@pria.org

HARYANA
PRIA
House No. 2339, Second Floor,
Sector 35-C, Chandigarh -160 022
Haryana, Ph: 0172 - 264329
E-mail: panchkula@pria.org

HIMACHAL PRADESH
PRIA
B-11, Sector 2, Phase - 1, New
Shimla
Shimla - 171009, H.P
Ph: 0177 - 2671309
Email: shimla@pria.org

JHARKHAND
PRIA
Jharkhand Resource Centre
House of Brahmedo Narayan Prasad
Gilanpara, PO. and Dist - Dumba
Jharkhand, Tel: 06434 - 226355
Email: dumba@pria.org

RAJASTHAN
PRIA
S-28, Geeth Garh Vihar
(Near Nandpuri Market)
Bais Godam
Jaipur - 302006, Rajasthan
Phone: 0141 - 2216013
Email: jaipur@pria.org

REGIONAL SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS

SAHBBHAGI SHIKSHAN KENDRA
Sahbbagi Road
(Behind Police Fire Station),
Sitapur Road
Lucknow - 227208, Uttar Pradesh
Phone: (0522) 258004 & 5 /6. 259199 &
(0522) 2590187. Fax: (0522) 259003
Email: info@sahbbagi.org

CENCORED
A-16, Buddha Colony
Patna- 800001, Bihar
Phone: (0612) 2532858, Fax: (0612) 2532857
Email: sansarg@rediffmail.com;
sansarg1@sancharnet.in

SAHAYI
T.C. 22/143, Peroorbad PO.
Trivandrum - 695 005, Kerala
Phone: (0471) 2434664, 2431347
Fax: (0471) 2539757
Email: sahayi@techpark.net

SAMARTHAN
E-7/81, Arera Colony
(Bankers Colony), Bhopal - 462 016
Madhya Pradesh
Phone: (0755) 2467625/ 2420918
Fax: (0755) 2468663
Email: samarth_bpl@sancharnet.in

SAHAYI
T.C. 22/143, Peroorbad PO.
Trivandrum - 695 005, Kerala
Phone: (0471) 2434664, 2431347
Fax: (0471) 2539757
Email: sahayi@techpark.net

SAMARTHAN
MIG-132, Kavita Nagar
PO. Shankar Nagar
Raipur - 492 007, Chhattisgarh
Phone: (0771) 5057826
Phone/Fax: (0771) 5010443 / 5022410
Email: samarthan@mantrafreenet.com

UNNATI
G-1, 200 Azad Society
Ahmedabad - 380 015, Gujrat
Phone: (079) 6746145. 6735906, 6730365
Fax: (079) 6743579
Email: unnatiad1@sancharnet.in

UNNATI
G-55, Shastri Nagar
Jodhpur - 302 003, Rajasthan
Phone: (0291) 2642185, 2643248
Email: unnati@datainfosys.net

CENTRE FOR YOUTH & SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
E-1, Institutional Area
(near Survey Bhavan)
Regional Research Laboratory (RRL)
Post Bhubaneswar - 751015, Orissa
Phone: (0674) 2300983, 2301725, 2301339
Fax: (0674) 2301926
Email: cysdbbsr@sancharnet.in

OTHER KEY PARTNERS

HIMALAYAN ACTION RESEARCH CENTRE
744 Indira Nagar Phase - II
PO.New Forest
Dehradun - 248006, Uttaranchal
Ph : 0135-760121, Fax : 0135-697075
Email: harcddn@sancharnet.in

LOK JAGRITI KENDRA
52 Bigha
At/PO Madhupur- 815 353
Dist - Deoghar, Jharkhand
Ph : 06438-242562 / 242664
Fax: 06438-24380
PRIA STAFF
AS ON 31.03.03

NEW DELHI
Rajesh Tandon
Malini Nambiar
K. L. Bhatt
Bindu Baby
Satinder Sahni
Harsh Jaitli
Martha Farrell
Manoj Rai
K K Bandyopadhyay
Mandakini Pant
Anju Deviedi
Ranjita Mohanty
Pankaj Anand
Sonal Surange
Nandini Sen
Tapati Datta
Shalini Grover
Shalini Bijlani
Priti Sharma
Ranjana Pandey
Preethi Viswanath
Joseph PP
Chandra Shekhar Joshi
Jose George
Mini PK
Poonam Singh
S.S. Srivastava
Media
Sandip Das

Project Monitoring Unit (PMU)
Mathai Joseph
Namrata Jaitli
M.P. Awasthi

Information Resource Centre
Publication
Poonam Mehdiratta
Subhash C Verma
EDP
Ranjit Sinha
Prabhat Arora
Library
Mahipal Singh
Pradeep Sharma
Multimedia
Anwar Khan
Management Support Centre
F&A
Girish Bhasin
Furgan Khan
Sushil Kumar
Ramesh Chand
Surjit Singh
HRD
K.S. Chouhan
Satheesam. T
E&P
S.N. Tandon
Jose Xavier
Satish Samudre
Shashi Tandon
Satish C Bhatt
Rakesh Sharma
Lal Chand
Anand Bhatt
Ram Sumiran
General Administration
Vijay Rawat

ANDHRA PRADESH
Shagun Mehrotra
Josyula Labshmi
Paravane Kanapara
Anil Vadderaju
G. Umashankar
Pushpa Valli
Uma Saraswathi
L. Rajasuya
Vijay Giri Goswami
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HARYANA
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Binu Arickal
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Anil Jha
Kamleshwar Singh
UTTARANCHAL
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Onkar Singh
ASSAM
T. Ariful Hussain
MAHARASHTRA
Vijay Kanhere
Chiplun
B. Tara
Nanded
Veena Dhabadey
Aurangabad
Sachetan R. Gharat
CHHATTISGARH
Sohini Paul
Shrinivas Rao
Dhan Singh
Ummed Singh Bhati
PUNJAB
Subbhir Singh
Surviving clipped powers and parallel bodies

Nine years after being granted official status through an act of parliament to institute a democratic system at the grassroots, the Panchayati Raj system finds itself bogged down with clipped powers, mushrooming of parallel bodies and growing political and bureaucratic interference.

Deccan Herald, Bangalore. 1 August 2002

Involve Gram Panchayats to achieve literacy for all:

NGO

Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA) and its partners undertook a study on the devolution of Primary Formal Education to Panchayats in over 14 Indian states like Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Orlissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Sikkim, Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal and West Bengal. The study found that voluntary organizations (VOs) are involved in creating awareness about democo.

The Indian Express, Noida. 19 Jan. 2002

Lack of devolution of financial resources

The lack of devolution of financial resources within the departments of Himachal Pradesh is one of the biggest issues affecting the autonomy of the Panchayat Raj Institutions. A report released by PRIA today said due to the overlapping of functions among the three tiers of the Panchayat Raj as well as between the departments of the state, the independence of the Panchayat Raj has been affected.

The Times of India, Delhi. 13 Jan 2002

The Pioneer, Delhi. 6 January 2003

It's no one's baby, let it cry

According to a recent study conducted by PRIA, the functions of democracy are being undermined in many Indian states like Jammaboomi programme in Andhra Pradesh, Gram Swaraj in Madhya Pradesh, Gram Vibas Samitis in Haryana, Vigilance Committees in Himachal Pradesh and Joint Forest Management Committees in Gujarat are not under the control of Panchayats. Many cases reports of local bodies even in areas, which are Constitutionally demarcated to Panchayats.

The Pioneer, Delhi. 6 January 2003

The Difficult art of governance

State governments have firm control over the functioning of Panchayats besides promoting parallel structures outside them. Despite an increase in the central grants to development schemes, most Panchayats have poor fiscal base. Another area of concern is low participation in Gram Sabha meetings.

The Pioneer, Delhi. 6 January 2003

To be continued. 15 Feb 2003

Hidden persuaders

NGO sector in India is reaching a nation wide study of 12 million NGOs in India. M one-man shows.

The Financial Express, Delhi. 19 January 2003

A different Survey

For the first time, a survey has been done on the non-profit sector of India, a sector that works mostly in the areas of religious or community or social service, education and health recently by Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA) and it has an interesting insight into the sector and never before collated before. For instance, PRIA estimated that there are nearly 20 million persons on paid or volunteer

The Hindu Business Line, Delhi.

80% January 2003

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