Towards Consolidation

Activity report - 1986

Society for participatory research in Asia (PRIA)
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INTRODUCTION:

The year 1986 was a year of reconfirming the relevance and direction of PRIA. At the beginning of the year on February 5, a day-long reflection exercise of our past four years was carried out collectively with more than 40 active partner groups and PRIA members. Apart from the review of our programmes our method of working were also critically assessed.

Several important insights were gained from this reflection:

a) PRIA has a role, a role in supporting field based groups and organizations - in reflection, capacity-building, study, documentation, information dissemination.

b) The methodology of functioning that PRIA has adopted is useful in helping activists and grass-roots organisations to recognize and value their experience and develop keenness to acquire new information and skills.

c) The responsiveness of PRIA through field support, dissemination of information, opportunities for linking up and open consultation has been appreciated and valued by its partner groups.

d) There is a need to strengthen, deepen and specialize various programmes on Land, Primary Health Care, Occupational Health, Women's Income-Generation, etc.

e) Continuing to respond to the specific needs of individual groups as well as a set of organisations may demand greater capacity and capability in PRIA.

f) The national and regional networking role of PRIA was appreciated and the need for making it more intensive recognized.
development or destitution: understanding land-related issues
PROGRAMMES:

I. Land Ownership and Alienation:

Our involvement in the problems of Land Ownership and Alienation have acquired a three fold thrust.

i) training and sensitizing groups and activists on these issues through workshops and training programmes,

ii) Investigating the complexities of the issue through participatory research,

iii) and documenting the experiences for broader dissemination.

* Training of Vikas Utsari (Ranchi) field workers in data collection on land related issue was carried out during the year. Two workshops, for the purpose of designing the study and analysing the findings were held during February 17-20, 1986 and October 6-10, 1986 respectively.

* A national Workshop on "Organizing Strategies for Land related issues" was organised during March 10-14, 1986. 31 participants from Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and West Bengal took part in this workshop.

* A popular booklet, based on the deliberations of the workshop and issues raised has been prepared and published.

* Another booklet on "Land Records" has been prepared as follow-up of this workshop, it will be published soon.

* A Training Workshop of field based activists was organised on "Assessment of Dams" during May 4-10, 1986. Twenty activists from seven States participated in this workshop. 8 resource persons dealing with different aspects of impact of Dam were invited to the workshop.
A handbook for activists on "Assessment of Dams" is under preparation for publication and wider distribution.

A two day workshop of 30 organisations from Thane and Marathwada region of Maharashtra, engaged in the issue of encroachment and regularisation was organised at Bombay on May 31 and June 1, 1986. The workshop led to the formation of a coordination committee to launch a struggle on the issues.

A Study of Land Records in Dahamu Taluka of Dist. Thane, Maharashtra was initiated this year.

"Biography of Dams" (a popular booklet) - a case study of persons displaced by dams is under preparation. A noted Marathi writer, Dinanath Manohar is working on it.

Case study of Vegai Dam, Ardipetti, Madun, was prepared.

A case study of land degradation due to industrial pollution was undertaken for an area about 70km from Bombay in Palghar Dist. of Maharashtra. This study is complete and we intend to do similar studies around a Zinc factory at Udaipur, Rajasthan, a Cement Factory at Sambhalpur, Orissa, and a Leather tannery near Madurai.

A slide show on impact of Dams is being prepared by Mohynath of Palamu, Bihar with our assistance.

In order to do ground work for holding a regional workshop of South and South East Asian Countries on the subject of 'Impact of Dams' visits were made to several countries to discuss the issues with the groups involved in those countries.

A process of collaboration with a number of national and regional NGO's concerned with the issue of Dams was initiated this year in order to attempt to create a National Network on this subject and work towards policy interventions.
is there any escape from hazards of work .... a quest
II. Worker Education and Occupational Health and Safety:

This programme was initiated with a view to support educational activities of workers in general and to focus on the problems of occupational health and safety in particular. The activities of this year can be broadly divided into three types: educational programmes in the form of workshops; training programmes and industry based workshops; participatory research and investigation of workplace related health and safety problems along with worker activities; and preparation of educational material in the form of studies, informative booklets and Bulletins and Audio-Visuals.

A. Educational Programmes

* Workshop on Occupational Health and Safety, Madurai, January 25-26, 1986: A two day workshop was organised with the joint effort of RCPED Madurai and FPFA on the theme of Occupational Health and Safety. 47 participants from cement, match, engineering, handloom, salt works, beedi work, and chemical industries attended the workshop.

* Workshop on Occupational Health and Safety in Chemical Industries, Baroda, March 16, 1986: As per the recommendation of the local activists, the first one day workshop was held in Baroda. Thirty participants from Baroda based chemical industries participated in the workshop. To orient the discussion to local work related hazards and safety problems an intensive visit was also undertaken prior to the workshop.

* Training Camp for Construction Workers, Kanpur, July 15-19, '86: A five day camp was organized for the Kanpur based construction workers on the issues related to the unorganised sector, viz. inadequacy of existing legislations, how to organize them and occupational hazards in construction work. Thirty workers attended the camp.

* Workshop on Worker's Awareness and Occupational Health and Safety, Nagpur, August 27, 1986: Seventy factory workers and union activists working in and around Nagpur participated in the workshop. The discussion centered around several issue
like closure of factories, retrenchment, lay-off, lock-out, modernization of factories, job classification and occupational health and safety.

* State level consultation among NGOs and Trade Unions on Occupational Health and Safety - Arignakunte, Bangalore, September 5-7, 1986: A three day consultation among NGOs and trade Unions was organised by Trans National Centre, Dharward. It was sponsored by ILO. PRIA was one of the co-organisers in the Occupational Health and Safety section of the consultation. It was attended by twenty participants.

* International Seminar on Workers Education in Asia, Colombo, October 24-26, 1986: The Seminar was sponsored by ICAE, ASPRAE, NATE, and SLF. The two main objectives of the seminar were to share and analyse grass-roots worker education experiences in selected Asian Countries, and to build and strengthen the links between worker educators. PRIA was actively involved in the coordination of the seminar. 19 worker educators from eleven Asian countries along with ICAE Executive Committee members and Secretariat staff participated in the seminar.

* Workshop on Occupational Health and Safety, Jallandhar, December 7-8, 1986: A two day workshop was held at Jallandhar on the issue of Occupational Hazards. Fifty worker activists from agricultural, tannery and construction works in Punjab participated in the workshop.

* Factory Visit and Meeting on Occupational Health and Safety, Baroda, 25-27, 1986: As a follow-up of the March Workshop a two day factory visit and one day workshop was organised in Baroda. Eighteen participants from seven units participated in the workshop.

B. Participatory Research and Investigation

During the year the following research activities were undertaken:
Health Hazards in small and medium sector chemical industries:
This research activity was undertaken in Nanakpura, a Chemical Industrial Estate located near Baroda. The aim of this investigation is to gather information on workers experiences on workplace hazards and the concept of a Chemical Estate. Three visits have been made to this area in connection with the study.

Understanding the Industrial Pollution and Occupational Health and Safety: As a part of the process of linking up actions on pollution with understanding and action on Occupational Health and Safety, a visit was made to Dhurbar (Harihar Polysilicon plant and nearby communities located on the bank of Tungabhadra river). Another visit was undertaken to some cement factories in Tumkur region.

Occupational Hazards and Workers Struggle: A study visit was undertaken to Madhya Pradesh (Durg and Raipur) to understand the health hazards in Iron Mines and Textile Industry.

Understanding Work Hazards in Lai, Leather Industry and Agricultural Works: A visit was made to Banda (U.P.) to start a survey of health hazards in Lai Industry. Another visit was undertaken to Jullander and Ludhiana region of Punjab to initiate a research study on work hazards in leather industry and Pesticide use in agricultural activities.

C. Educational Materials:

"Beyond Bricks and Stones: The voice of construction workers, (English and Hindi), a popular booklet reflects the condition of construction workers and industry. It also argues for an alternative comprehensive legislation for construction industry and workers.

Mismenaging Occupational Health (English): a popular booklet exposes the management practices in putting the Occupational Health issues under the carpet.
"Shopal Syndromes: The story of a chemicalised City" (English)
This booklet is the outcome of our involvement in the workers' concern on health hazards caused by high density Chemical Industries in Baroda (text under publication).

Quarterly Bulletins: Four issues of bulletin in English and Hindi each on Occupational Hazards have been released.

Audio-Visuals

Silicosis: A killer disease: This twenty minute film projects the hazards of Silica dust in a Slate Pencil industry based at Mandsaur (M.P.).

Plights of Construction Workers: A short 40 minute video film projects the condition of construction workers. It also captures the view of trade union leaders on the inadequacy and irrelevance of the present legislation for protecting the rights of construction workers.

Introducing Occupational Hazards: It tries to focus on the wider area of work hazards, an introductory, overview film (under preparation).

New Thrust: To systematically review the past activities and to spell out the future strategy of this programme, various groups and individuals associated in this programme with PRIA were invited for a day long meeting on November 23, 1986 at New Delhi. The deliberations of the meeting led to the development of the idea of PRIA supporting the creation and development of workers service centres on Health and Safety in several sites in the country (initial interest has been shown at Bombay, Baroda, Nagpur, Kanpur and Madurai). This new thrust will require systematic elaboration and operationalizations in the future.
'learning for change'
III. Building Internal Training Capability:

Strengthening the training capability of field based organizations has been an ongoing programme. Several activities were undertaken in this respect during the year.

A. Training of Trainers (TOT):

The Training of Trainers programme completed its second round this year and Third round was initiated. TOT is a three phase programme aimed at building internal training capabilities in activists and organisations, it has so far trained fifty five trainers from about thirty organisations all over the country. Due to several requests to continue the programme a third round was initiated in November 1986. Twenty Eight participants from 16 organisations are participating in this round of training.

A manual of Training of Trainers has been prepared and is under publication (in Hindi and English).

B. Study of Participatory Training Methodology of Adult Educators:

To deepen our understanding of Participatory Training efforts in the field of adult education we undertook a study to analyse the processes that take place in training adult education functionaries. This detailed document covers five case studies from Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh. It was submitted to the Directorate of Adult Education in October 1986.

Efforts are afoot to further examine key issues in training methodology as highlighted in this study. Publication of the document is also underway.

C. Other Examples:

Workshop on Training Methodology for the Trainers

A workshop on training methodology for the trainers of National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NICPCD)
was held in the Deenbhandu Centre, Tamil Nadu, during Feb. 1986. Twenty trainers attended the workshop facilitated by PRIA.

* On going input was given to other MIPCCD programmes on training methodology.

* During March 1986 a workshop enhancing training skills of Seva Mandir field workers of Kherwa and Girwa blocks of Udaipur District was held at Kaya Training Centre. Twenty six participants attended this three day event.
women and work .........
a new thrust .......
IV. **Women's Income Generation Efforts:**

Our involvement has been to critically look at the income-generating programmes for poor women of the Governmental and the non-governmental sectors in the country and to provide practical suggestions and support to field based organisations to improve and strengthen their economic programmes for poor women.

* A Workshop on **Women and Waste Land Development** was organized during January 15-17, 1986, New Delhi. 31 participants representing various field based as well as resource and support organisations attended the workshop to discuss their collective experiences around the procedure of land acquisition for women, waste land development by women, water management and other related issues. The final report is being published.

* A two day **Regional Workshop** for Gujarat was organized during July 9-10, 1986, in collaboration with SEWA, Ahmedabad. Participants from 21 organisations discussed problems related to organizing and managing women income generating activities at the State level. A report in Gujarati has been prepared.

* A two day **Workshop on Forms of Organisations** was organised in New Delhi during April 26-27, 1986. This workshop was attended by those who had experience in organising women around income generating activities or had technical expertise around the forms of organisations or both. The advantages and disadvantages of different forms like Society, Trust, Company, Cooperatives, Union were discussed at length. Appropriateness in relation to its suitability for poor rural women was looked at. About 20 participants attended this workshop.

* A **regional workshop** was organized in Tamil Nadu along with Community Services Guild from April 6-8, 1986. Twentyfive participants discussed the problems they faced in organising income generating programmes. Whilst discussing the major focus was on the process of empowering women through the process of income generation. A follow-up committee was formed at the state level to work amongst groups at the
State level and work on issues and problems at the State level. A report in Tamil has been prepared.

A Training Workshop on Socio-Managerial Technical Skill Development for women's income-generating activities was held in Udaipur from July 23-31, 1986. Twenty Seven participants from 18 organisations across the country involved in women's income generating activities participated in the workshop. The training programme is named as Mini social MBA. The workshop focused on identifying, planning and managing appropriate economic activities by poor women themselves. A report has been prepared and sent to all participants.

A two day workshop on Women's Access to Credit was organised from November 25-26, 1986, at New Delhi. Sixteen participants representing the Banking sector and the voluntary organisations attended this workshop. Participants discussed at length the existing procedures and forms entailed in the application and sanction of small loans to poor women. They also looked at the existing system of information dissemination. A report has been prepared.

A workshop organised to evaluate Oxfam America's programme on Women's Economic Security in India and Bangladesh was facilitated by PRIA. Held outside Dhaka in the first week of December, it brought together 30 project partners working on empowering women and enhancing their economic security.

Publications:

Invisible Hands: Towards Empowerment has been translated and printed in Tamil and Gujarati.

Ecological Disaster or Life Giving Resource, this is the report based on the workshop 'Women and Wasteland Development'.
Strengthening local groups
V. **Strengthening Local Groups: Initiative for Collaboration**

among NGOs: Because of the nature of local action and the type of support that PRIA provides, a variety of activities are undertaken beyond the scope of programme areas to strengthen local groups in their ongoing work. The depth of our involvement with selected partner groups and organisations varies considerably and takes a variety of forms. The most common of these activities is Participatory Evaluation; helping groups in planning and thinking through their activities, including assisting in the preparation of proposals and progress reports, has become another support activity. Informal dialogues and workshops on common issues, understanding and strengthening management practices and systems of NGOs and initiating processes of wider collaboration among NGOs are some other activities in this regard.

*Participants Evaluation*

Participatory Evaluation is an exercise where the field based organisation or programme is assisted systematically, reflecting on and critically evaluating its activities and projects in a comprehensive manner. During the year, several such exercises were undertaken. The ongoing participatory evaluation exercise with YWCA project in Trichurapally was completed and final report submitted; the evaluation of non-formal education project at Ambikapur and Raigarh initiated last year was completed and reports submitted. Participatory evaluation exercise in respect to Abhaydhana and Slum Development Programme, Bangalore were also completed and report submitted during the year. The Women's programme of BCT was evaluated and final report was submitted. An evaluation workshop for CDC, Hyderabad was held; indepth planning of Participatory evaluation exercise for CROSS, RDAS and SEDP was held and intensive field work has been undertaken in respect of the first two. The process of developing Participatory Evaluation plan for Salem Adult Education Centre has been initiated.
Besides, the follow-up evaluation of DEEDs programme of Caritas Bangladesh was once again undertaken during the year.

ASPBNE supported Learning Fund Programme in Indonesia (as a part of Two Country Programme) assisted in its participatory evaluation exercise.

Besides, the process reflection document for 3 programmes was also undertaken during the year. These are RUCHI, CHOPAL, Grameen-Uttan Sansthan, Kapkot and Shri Bhubaneswari Mahila Ashram, Anjanisain Tehri, programmes in U.P. Hills. 

* Supporting Planning Process

One of the ongoing activities has been to assist various field based programmes and organisations in planning their activities and building a perspective of their programmes. During the year, such a support was extended intensively to SPARC, Astha, Gram Vikas, Shramik Bharati, Abhiyan, Ankur and Vikas Niketan. This effort also includes help in the preparation of project proposals and monitoring progress of their programmes.

* Management of NGOs

NGOs are beginning to experience a variety of managerial problems. Some of these arise out of Statutory Requirements (PCRA, Income-Tax); some others relate to organizational and human issues. Based on the experiences of a workshop held in December 1985, PRIA organised its second workshop on Management of NGOs in Delhi during May 23-25, 1986. 27 participants from all over the country joined in this workshop.

Besides, PRIA has assisted on site several partner organisations in developing management practices and systems. Assistance has been given in evolving and streamlining financial and logistic management systems and procedures to several organisations like Ankur, Gram Vikas, SPARC, Astha etc.
A manual on Management of NGOs is under preparation.

Collaboration among NGOs

The year witnessed a major nation-wide effort to inform and mobilise grass-roots NGOs on the issue of their likely regulation and control through an Act of Parliament. A proposal to create a Code of Conduct and National and State Councils of Voluntary Agencies through an Act of Parliament was introduced in the country. Along with several other voluntary agencies, PRIA joined in an effort to respond to these moves by facilitating state level workshops and meetings and by convening a National Convention on the theme of Collaboration among NGOs in September 1986. A report of the National Convention was also prepared and distributed.
a lens-view
VI. **Through the Lens**

PRIA is now slowly developing its audio-visual unit to produce video for exchange of experiences and ideas and educational materials for various programmes. During the year, several video films were produced:

* As mentioned earlier, 3 video films were produced for occupational health and safety programme;

* Each phase of Training of Trainers was videoed during the programme. Based on this, a three-hour video film on Training of Trainers has also been produced.

* A video on Land Alienation due to Vagai Dam near Madurai has been produced.

* To highlight the Women's involvement in the Social Forestry programmes at Gram Vikas, a video entitled "Story of tribal women in Orissa" has been produced for Gram Vikas.

* To support and highlight Fisherfolk struggle in Madras, a film entitled "In the midst of turbulent sea" has been produced for local activist groups.

* 'The story of ASSEFA' a video film edited for Assefa based on the shooting done by them.

* "Asth: A New Faith", a video film has been produced for Astha, Udaipur to highlight its inaugural programme and plans of work.
Promoting popular education
VII. Promoting Participatory Research and Popular Education

In a variety of ways, through exchange visits, discussions, meetings, dialogues and seminars, as well as on-site consultations, PRIA has been promoting a deeper understanding and practice of participatory research and popular education. Many initiatives in this regard were begun during the year.

* Myles Horton, Founder Director of Highlander Research and Education Centre, USA travelled through India and some other Asian countries, sharing his experiences in popular education and participatory research, from the workers movement and human rights movement and other poor people's movement in USA. Myles also gave a seminar on Adult Education, PR and People's Movement in Delhi on February 21, 1986.

* For the field officers of UNICEF, PRIA organised a workshop on Community Participation and Participatory Research in March 1986. Specially focussing on the involvement of women, the workshop, held at Udaipur, helped UNICEF to look at their programmes in the light of people's participation and PR. As support to this programme, 3 didactic bulletins were prepared on How to conduct participatory planning, Participatory Evaluation and Participatory Training with poor rural women.

* As part of the ongoing study of non-formal education and primary health care, the final report was prepared and published and distributed during the year--"Learning for Health Care".

* Budd Hall, Secretary-General of ICAE, gave a seminar on "Global Aspects of Adult Education" organised jointly by Indian Adult Education Association and us in April 1986.

* In collaboration with Association for the Rural Poor, Madras a seminar on popular education was held on April 11, 1986, attended by 27 participants.

* PRIA assisted in initiating a discussion on participatory research in Thailand on April 15, 1986.
A similar seminar was organised in Indonesia, attended by 28 field based groups from several Indonesian NGOs. PRIA assisted in designing and conducting of the training of field workers in participatory research.

Along with other NGOs, PRIA has assisted CAPART in developing participatory evaluation mechanisms for the projects it supports in the country.

During the World Congress of Sociology, in Delhi August 1986, PRIA organised two sessions on Participatory Research; Issues and Practices. A series of papers were presented.

Peter Park and Orlando Fals Borda initiated a dialogue on PR in Delhi on August 23, 1986.
networking
VIII. Regional And International Network

Several activities have been initiated to support and strengthen the regional and international network.

a) The quarterly Newsletter continues to be distributed to more than 1000 individuals and organisations throughout Asia and other parts of the world.

b) To strengthen links across regional networks of PR, the International Networking Memo was produced 3 times during the year and distributed to more than 400 persons and organisations all over the world.

c) Several activities have been initiated or conducted in collaboration with ICAE and its regional member ASPBAE. A popular booklet on 'Non-formal education and PHC' was prepared.

d) A dialogue between donors and the recipients of international aid for adult education organized by ICAE, was attended.

e) Planning for Asian regional workshop on Participatory Training methodology to be held next year was initiated.

f) Specific plans for strengthening the Non-formal education and Women's network have been made.

j) Coordination of international Workers Education Network will be supported through the secretariat of PRIA.

h) PRIA has contributed towards the development of constitution and programme of ICAE during the year.

i) The year provided an interesting and unique opportunity for a dialogue with Executive Committee members of ICAE in Delhi during October 1996. The discussion with the Ministry of Education as well as local NGOs was also organized on this occasion. These events helped us to build and strengthen linkages with similar organisations in other parts of the world, for example CECAL in Latin America, and PPG in Canada.
growth
and
Critical reflection
Are We Relevant?

The year began with an assessment of our work done during the past four years. This collective evaluation of PPIA was conducted with the help of 50 representatives of partner groups and organizations in the country. Based on that assessment and the ongoing consultations with partner groups, the year represents a major effort to consolidate the programmes and activities of PPIA as well as evolve its vision and future perspective.

As an integrative part of this effort, a staff development workshop was held in May 1986 to clarify our individual and collective plans and visions.

We are now at a juncture where the initiatives taken by us require further attention during the coming years. Moving beyond the concern of being relevant, we now need to begin a process of multiplication, evolution and consolidation.