

Annual Report

2016-17



ŠRUTI

Society for Rural Urban & Tribal Initiative

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ABOUT SRUTI

SOCIETY FOR RURAL, URBAN AND TRIBAL INITIATIVE

SRUTI – Society for Rural, Urban and Tribal Initiative was founded in 1983, on the belief that individuals are powerful instruments of social change and transformation. Originally conceived by social sector leaders Tara Ali Baig, Bunker Roy, Ela Bhatt, Lotika Sarkar, Poonam Muttreja, Samir Chaudhuri and Dr. Ramalingaswami, the **SRUTI Fellowship Programme** supports individual and community action towards securing justice, rights, dignity and opportunity for some of India's most marginalised groups.

SRUTI aims to harness the power of individuals in order to attain its vision of a society that is based on the core values of justice, equity, compassion, respect and dignity for all. The importance of **collective social action and local leadership at the grass root** is the crux of the SRUTI Fellowship. SRUTI and its Fellows believe that social change and sustainable economic development can be achieved by empowering oppressed and vulnerable communities to access justice, equality and opportunity and be true stakeholders in a vibrant democracy.

SRUTI's core mission, therefore, is to identify and invest in individuals armed with zeal and a vision to work towards the ideals of a more equitable society within a democratic framework; individuals with idealism, staying power and the ability to mobilize communities at the grassroots to seek solutions to address their most pressing issues through the idea of the 'sangathan', a peoples' group that facilitates community social action.

Some key issues dealt with by the SRUTI Fellows and the sangathans are: Access to, and Ownership of Natural Resources - *Jal, Jangal, Zameen*; Land and Forest Conservation; Small Holder and Sustainable Agriculture; Right to Food; In situ Livelihood; Panchayati Raj Institution and Governance; Rights to the City; Education; Right to Information; Caste and Gender, among others.

SRUTI extends a mix of financial support and intermediary inputs to an individual Fellow/a group of Fellows through the Fellowship Programme that has evolved substantially over the decades. The Fellowship Programme is financed by resources mobilized, to the extent possible, from within the country, through support partnerships and a range of fundraising efforts. The Fellowship Programme, its related Advocacy and Outreach efforts, and the Resource Mobilization program, form the key pillars of SRUTI.

For more information, please visit www.sruti.org.in

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTORS

Since its inception in the year 1983, Society for Rural, Urban and Tribal Initiative (SRUTI) has been extending its support under the central theme 'SRUTI Fellowship Programme'. The idea of - supporting individuals and group of individuals so that they can continue with their chosen path of working on core issues in the remotest of locations, is enthralling. With the time passing by, SRUTI evolved with its ideas and facilitated grassroots social action by complementing the efforts and building leadership among the marginalised communities through financial and non-financial support. While facilitating such building processes, the most important aspect of the Fellowship Programme is maintaining the organic, roots-up approach. This core philosophy of SRUTI is being followed under the processes - from the core fellowships support that are being facilitated by Indian sources so that the independence and sovereignty of peoples' organizations are maintained, to planning and facilitation of the fellowship building processes based on the diligent follow-up of requirements from the ground and sharing with the Fellows. The idea of roots-up approach though a popular hypothesis is a very rigorous process to properly understand and follow-up with in continuity. Understanding and learning facilitation and coordination of roots-up processes, building perspectives and leaderships from within the communities has been one of the most rewarding experiences of working with SRUTI.

The year 2016-17 was significant for us in many ways. Our hallmark program, 'School for Social Change' was re-initiated after the year 2009-10. With the idea of evolving organic leadership as the next wrung of community awareness and mobilisation processes, SSC has been able to build scientific temper for participants. The shivirs have been able to increase their ability to see local and regional geo-political contexts with a critical perspective and understand cross-cultural issues. The school is a successful experiment providing articulated hypothesis and directions to the aspirations of young *karyakartas*, thereby adding to the efforts in grassroot processes.

The geographical reach of Fellowship programme was further extended with fellowship entries of two fellows from Jharkhand and Jammu & Kashmir. There have been facilitations of multiple initiatives through fellowship building processes based on the demands from ground to address the challenges and concerns on rights over resources and related governance. From meeting the immediate challenges to building campaign for effective implementation of governance and welfare schemes, the initiatives involved trainings, documentation and advocacy at regional, state and national level.

Among the challenges, demonetisation was a major shock at the end of the year. While SRUTI's core area is fellowship support, it was an exigent task to facilitate the fellowship support to fellows based in remote locations. Demonetisation proved to be a major setback influencing economy and peoples' lives. The young SRUTI fellowship team stood hand-in-hand and could facilitate fellowships and organise a successful National Convention on Panchayati Raj Institution during this time.

The SRUTI team has been further strengthened with more people this year onwards - to coordinate and facilitate the work with the Fellowship Programme. We are a bunch of young and enthusiastic people willing to look at the world beyond their own pre-conceived notions. Being able to travel and meet people from all walks of life across the country give us our necessary share of learnings, constant travel schedules and a lot of love and inspiration from acquaintances and strangers alike.

Our spectrums of work have also expanded further this year on. The insecurities emerging due to inadequate resources in the past 5 years have been reduced and we have gathered the requisite resources for our planned activities. There has also been increase in individuals supporting our work, along with new partners joining in to support the work. We have also made many new friends through regular interactions at various forums. The caravan has moved a little beyond, with its small, regular steps.

We deeply thank all individuals and institutions who have been associated with us.

Satyam, Shweta and the SRUTI Team
New Delhi, 25th June 2017

ACTIVITY REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2016-17

FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME

SRUTI FELLOWS AT A GLANCE

Since its inception, SRUTI has supported the work of more than **128 fellows** at the grass roots in 18 states across India. SRUTI currently supports **32 Fellows, 117 karyakartas (volunteers/activists) and their groups in 14 states:** Uttarakhand, Delhi, Rajasthan, Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh. The current outreach of SRUTI Fellows is over 7361 villages and 250 urban clusters covering around 6.8 lakh families and 34 lakh people.

ANDHRA PRADESH

1. B. Sunanda - Mitra Association for Social Service, Chittoor dt.
2. K. Victoria – Navjeevan, Nellore dt.

BIHAR

3. Kailash Bharati – Mazdoor Kisan Samiti, Gaya dt.
4. Sanjeev Kumar – Bahishkrit Hitkari Sangathan, Khagaria dt.

CHHATTISGARH

5. Alok Shukla – Jan Abhi Vyakti, Korba and Sarguja dt.
6. Jang Sai – Gaon Ganrajya Sangathan, Sarguja and Ambikapur dt..
7. Rajim Ketwas - Dalit Adivasi Manch, Baloda Bazar and Mahasamund dt.

DELHI

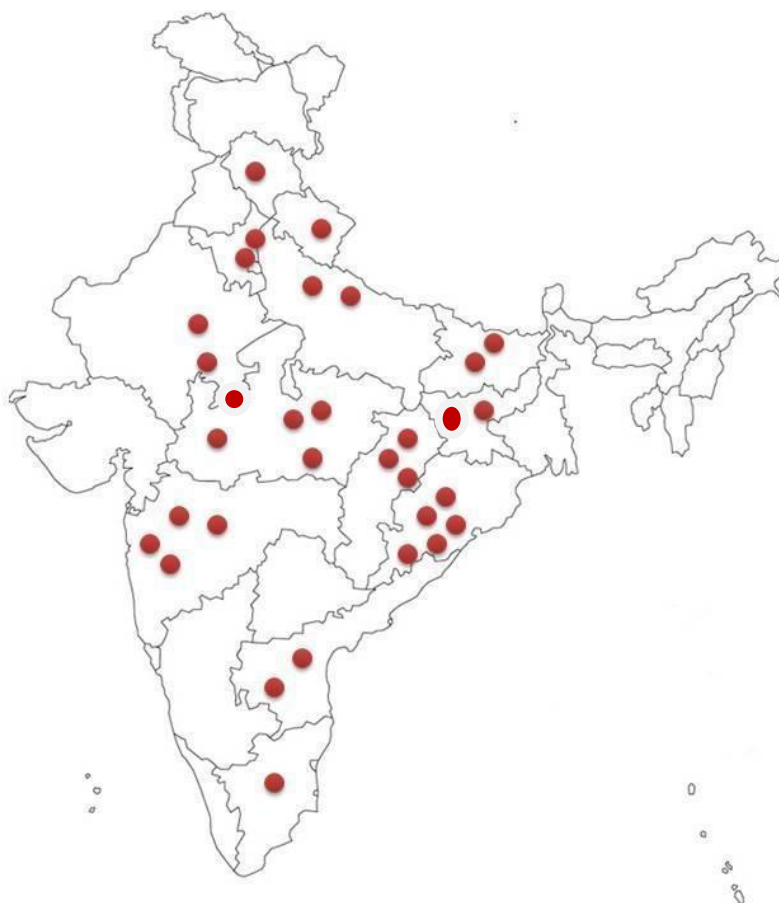
8. Anjali Bhardwaj – Satark Nagrik Sangathan, South Delhi dt.
9. Sadre Alam – People's Foundation, North-west, South-west & South Delhi districts

HIMACHAL PRADESH

10. Puran Chand – Sirmaur Bachao Sangharsh Samiti, Sirmaur dt.

JHARKHAND

11. Arvind Anjum – Visthapit Mukti Vahini, Singhbhum dt.
12. Jerome Kujur – Jan Sangharsh Samiti, Latehar dt.



JAMMU & KASHMIR

13. Dr. Sheikh Ghulam Rasool – J&K RTI Movement, School for Rural Development and Environment

MADHYA PRADESH

14. Amit and Jayashree – Adharshila Learning Centre, Badwani dt.
15. Veerendra Kumar – Bundelkhand Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan, Damoh dt.
16. Yousuf Beg - Patthar Khadan Mazdoor Sangh, Panna dt.
17. Aradhana Bhargav – Kisan Sangharsh Samiti, Chhindwara dt.

MAHARASHTRA

18. Dashrath Jadhav – Shramjeevi Sangathan, Latur dt.
19. Pandurang Biradar – Shoshit Kamgar Sangathan, Latur dt.
20. Ulka Mahajan – Sarvahara Jan Andolan, Raigad dt.
21. Vilas Bhongade – Kashtkari Jan Andolan, Nagpur, Bhandara, Wardha and Gondia dt.

ODISHA

22. A K Pany – Adivasi Kranti Sangathan, Dhenkanal dt.
23. Amulya Nayak - Adivasi Chetna Sangathan, Dhenkanal and Angul dt.
24. Pradeep Dash – Lok Chetna Sangathan, Rayagada dt.
25. Prafulla Mishra– Adim Adivasi Mukti Manch, Nayagarh dt.
26. Trilochan Punji – Zindabad Sangathan, Bolangir dt.

RAJASTHAN

27. Devendra and Sudhi – Him Kisan, Manthan Shikshan Kendra, Jhalawar dt.
28. Khemraj – Khetihar Khan Mazdoor Sangathan, Chittorgarh dt.

TAMIL NADU

29. MS Selvaraj - Vyavasayigal Tozhilalargal Munnetra Sangham (VTMS), Nilgiris dt.

UTTARAKHAND

30. Basanti and Rekha - Maati Sangathan, Pithoragarh dt.

UTTAR PRADESH

31. Dharmendra Yadav – Lokadhikar, Bareilly dt.
32. Rajnish Gambhir – Tharu Adivasi Mahila Mazdoor Kisan Sangh, Lakhimpur Khiri dt

NEW FELLOWSHIPS 2016-17

- I. Dr. Sheikh Gulam Rasool**- Dr. Sheikh, 39 years old, is an MBBS & MD Physician from Abu Ali Ibn-E-Sena University, Tajikistan. He is a Srinagar (J&K) based political activist. During his first posting as a Medical Officer in rural stretches of Badgaon District of Kashmir valley under Border Area Development Program (BADP), he witnessed many families living as bonded labourers as well as large scale corruption in welfare schemes. He started working on issues of PDS and facilitating other basic entitlements for the villagers. In order to resolve a land dispute involving corruption, he started filling RTIs on various people's issues, resulting in formation of J&K RTI Movement. The reluctance of government officials toward RTI-2005 brought him to NCPRI and later he became the State Coordinator of NCPRI, J&K. He went on to raise the

issue of timber smuggling and was successful in halting the extraction by developing alternative livelihood for the villagers who were hired by smugglers. This also effectively broke the nexus between the timber mafia, Forest Department and army officials.

His next posting happened in Tosa Maidan area of southern Kashmir region which had been given to Army and Air Force on lease as firing range for the past 62 years, where killings of people and animals in firing drill practices were a regular feature. Dr. Sheikh started a democratic struggle to liberate Tosa Maidan from the dangerous firing range that claimed the lives of many innocent villagers. He mobilized villagers and PRIs members and formed a platform in the name of *Tosa Maidan Bachao Front*. After a long and peaceful struggle, the people of Tosa Maidan were successful in getting land lease renewal discontinued from the J&K State Government. After this victory, Dr. Sheikh has been engaged in developing alternative livelihood for men and women through rural tourism and revival of arts & craft in the area. He is also focusing his work on clearing encroachments on water resources and maintaining them while establishing community ownership on natural resources, especially forests. With his continuing work on RTI, now he is one of the National Co- Coordinators of NCPRI.

2. **Jerom Gerald Kujur-** Jerome has worked as a freelance journalist for many years, and has long-term association and with many people including adivasi networks, media, Church-affiliated agencies and activists in Jharkhand. He is also widely respected for his simple living, strong educational credentials and the ability to take forward people together. He has been the Chief Advisor of **Sanyukt Chhatra Sangh** (a state-level student body), edited **Hindi magazines like Janhak, Hari Ghati, Janpath, Jharkhand Ahwan; and contributed articles to leading hindi dailies**. He has also authored a book on indigenous displacement issues on Netarhat Field Firing Range Project – **‘Jaan Denge, Jameen Nahi’**.

He is also the Convenor of Jharkhand Indigenous Peoples Forum and a core member of the Jharkhand Human Rights Movement. He is currently the Secretary of Jansangharsh Samiti, a people’s oversight organisation formed to look after the affairs of the region. Jerome (aged 38), grew up in Latehar district of Jharkhand, infamous for the actions of ultra-left groups in the region. He was inclined to study well and excel from a very early age, which led his family and peers to encourage his convent education, and subsequently his academic interests while studying at Ranchi. By the year 1992, the then student movements in Palamu gained prominence with the active involvement of Jerome (who was then President of Student Union, Ranchi University) and others, and they successfully procured documents using pressure tactics from the SDO exposing the plans of the army to acquire completely displace 245 villages in the Netarhat region for the purpose of development of a firing range. The struggle has since then united people, many of whom are tribal communities, who have stood together peacefully in the face of violence, constant provocation and administrative negligence.

The Netarhat Andolan has set an example in the country for successful, organised and peaceful resistance of peoples’ rights over resources. The striking and most unique feature of Jansangharsh Samiti is there is no leadership of one person, or a set of people. Duties assigned with officer bearers revolve, and a post is held for only particular periods of time depending on their own skills, ability to devote time and interest. A few programmes, annually or bi-annually, are organised on a mass scale – to remember the active days of the movements and continue mobilisations along the lines of preserving natural resources.

Jerome lives in Ranchi with his family and takes up writing and advocacy work from here. In the past few years, his income sources from writing has diminished and it is getting difficult for him to undertake field travel, build associations without any support. His contribution is recognised well by members of the activist fraternity in the state.

SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

A rejuvenated step in building the young leadership from the communities

One of the key-objectives of SRUTI Fellowships is to help grassroots sangathans sustain their processes and activities in their respective areas. This would not be possible without a strong line of karyakartas with leadership skills. To accomplish its key objective, School for Social Change (SSC) was re-initiated this year. Evolving indigenous leaderships as the next wrung of leadership to sustain and strengthen the community awareness and mobilization processes is the crucial concept behind the whole idea of SSC. With its well-articulated and thought-of pedagogy; designed by involving Fellows, educationists and experts; SSC has been a very successful model in bringing-out the youth leaderships from the communities and sustaining the organizational process through these youth community leaderships.

School for Social Change (SSC) started in January 2017 with the first shivir organised at Jhiri village, Rajasthan. 48 participants from sangathans working in 8 hindi-speaking states came together to ask, debate and learn from each other. Reinventing leadership building among sangathans, SRUTI initiated this path-breaking model of learning for development of young volunteers in fellow areas. Senior SRUTI fellows engaged in non-formal education methods have developed the curriculum which would trace the origins of the universe, beginning of civilizations, cultural, social, economic and political systems in India and the world – which would, at the same time, develop from local knowledge.





The school is envisioned to run through 4 language-based regions – Hindi, Marathi, Tamil and Odiya. It relies extensively on group discussions and presentations, games, learning of local practices through role-plays and theatre, analysing beliefs and practices and through the use of audio-visual material for illustrations. Over the course of the year, it seeks to train about 350 volunteers across the centres. SRUTI had engaged with these processes till the year 2002, a crucial time space which has built capacities of karyakartas in sangathans to let them explore avenues as composing songs, writing, painting, group theatre and others. Discussions made people ponder with questions as to how was this universe formed? People formed groups to discuss if discrimination a natural outcome of evolution, or how our earliest ancestors come into existence, and what were their ways of life. Development of a culture of scientific reasoning, critical questioning, seeking accountability from oneself and from others, getting together for problem-solving and being able to develop one's skill-sets for the goals of social justice are the pillars of the School for Social Change. The year 2016-17 saw many meetings organised for the preparation of curriculum, collection of resource material as teaching aids and resource material.

We look forward to the participation from young volunteers to take up the baton of social change – and inculcate the values of freedom and equality in their practices.

WORK UNDERTAKEN BY FELLOWS: THEMATIC AREAS

'Right to life with dignity' for vulnerable groups is a central thrust of the Fellowship Programme. In keeping with this, the focus of Fellows in 2016-17 was to ensure ownership of natural resources; explore sustainable livelihood opportunities; enhance agricultural productivity; and rejuvenate traditional socio-cultural forms and expressions. During this period, the Fellows effectively engaged with land, forest and governance issues. They also campaigned at state and national level for effective implementation of pro-people policies and laws such as Forest Rights Act, governance and decentralisation of democracy as provided under the 73rd and 74th Amendments of the Constitution. The Fellows also campaigned rigorously at state and national levels demanding repeal of undemocratic and anti-people amendments to important legislations such as the Land Acquisition Act 2013 and the Forest Rights Act 2006 through state and national-level alliances, networks and parliamentary consultations. Follow-ups with concerned administrative bodies at the local and state-level, to ensure implementation and proper functioning of welfare and social security schemes were carried out.

The key thrust of the work undertaken by the Fellows during this period was to prevent alienation of resources and form pressure groups to guarantee basic entitlements for exploited communities.

More specifically, the work undertaken by the Fellows during the period under report may be grouped into the following thematic areas:

☐ ***Jal, jangal, zameen (Rights over water, forest and land)***

☐ ***Panchayati Raj Institutions and Governance***

☐ ***Agriculture and Livelihood***

☐ ***Social Inequality***

☐ ***Education***

☐ ***Welfare Schemes and Programs***

Jal, jangal, zameen

For majority of India's population, survival directly depends on access to land, water and forest resources. Where communities have had long-term rights over these resources, they have often regulated their use to prevent over-exploitation and abuse, ensuring their own subsistence while conserving nature. However, this relationship between local people and their natural environment has been ruptured by policies that have accelerated exploitation and deprived village communities of their right to subsistence, destroying the natural base on which all life depends.

Most of the SRUTI Fellows are engaged in building leaderships and movements among the communities to be able to proclaim their ownership rights over their resources, thereby assert for their socio-economic and political recognition and rights. The Fellows have been engaged in campaigns to defend jal-jangal-zameen (water-forests-land) while asserting for their access to and ownership rights over resources that they have conserved and lived with for generations threatening their bio-against projects that entail large-scale acquisition of natural resources without seeking prior consent of affected families. An assessment of the environmental and social impacts of such acquisitions which cause massive displacement without suitable livelihood alternatives is also not carried out. Large scale conversion of agri-lands for non-agricultural purposes has led to a deepening food crisis as well as environmental degradation.

SRUTI Fellows mobilize communities to stake claims over resources that are rightfully theirs, using legislations like the Forest Rights Act and schemes such as the Common Land Development Program. Many Fellows in resource-rich regions are working with people to establish fair and sustainable ways of managing natural resources, as local control over these resources is a key element in achieving socially just and ecologically stable development.

Forest Rights and Conservation

With the passing of the Forest Rights Act, 2006 there was renewed vigour amongst communities in forest regions that they would finally be able to get their rights duly recognised by the state. The empowering provisions in the legislation around collection of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) and Non-Timber Forest Produce (NTFP) allow adivasis and traditional forest dwellers to claim their lands – through filing of claims, individually and collectively. It also aims at strengthening conservation efforts of the communities, and describes the complementing role of state agencies in achieving these objectives. Much of its implementation on the ground, however, has been left to the diktats of the district administration. The reluctance and prevalent prejudices among local administration further add to the woes of people. In recent times, there have also been attempts made by governments at the centre and states to allow diversion of forest land, for mining and other allied purposes. While much of it has been challenged in the courts, these clearly are signs that the tendency of the ministries – of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and Tribal Affairs (nodal agencies for the implementation of the Act in different states) is primarily on leasing it out for mining and energy generation, and not on efforts of conservation or fulfilling the promises made to people dependant on the vast forest regions in the country.

The ‘historical injustice’ on communities living and dependent on forests was duly recognized in the passing of the FRA, 2006. It has been ten years since the legislation was passed, and more than eight since it came into force in 2008. In this context, the two hindi publications from noted legal expert and activist Shri Anil Garg, AITAHISIK ANYAY BANAAM ASAL DAAWEDAARI (Historical injustices versus Real Claimants) and KYUN NAHIN MILE SAMUDAYIK HAQ (Why the community rights couldn’t be obtained?) assumes wider significance. It can be safely assumed that not more than 5 percent of the actual scope saw the light of the day in the new legislation. Other than a few stray examples, the law has also not been implemented in its letter and spirit. Awareness generation or active filing of claims has also been done in only a few parts of the country where people have organized themselves and played watchdogs to secure better implementation of the Act. Most of the Fellows are also engaged with the campaigns under the alliance ‘Campaign for Survival and Dignity (CSD)’ focussing on getting community rights recognised, removing bottlenecks in its implementation through advocacy with Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) and state monitoring agencies.

Forest Rights and Conservation - Outcomes

- ❖ Workshops have been organised to train community members on the use of GPS in Bihar and Chhattisgarh.
- ❖ A total of 2000 maps have been prepared in Bihar to add documentary evidence for filing of individual and community claims.
- ❖ Out of the 2,688 community claims filed by sangathans in Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha, 224 claims have been approved by the authorities and the distribution of pattas is ongoing.
- ❖ Memorandums have been submitted to several Ministries and officials and RTIs filed to gain information on FRA in Chhattisgarh. In Andhra Pradesh, claims have been filed over a total area of 76 acres of land.
- ❖ Meetings have been organised with community members and Collectors, MLAs, Sarpanch etc to transmit and collect information on FRA in Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and Maharashtra
- ❖ Sangathans working in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Odisha have filed 11,392 individual claims out of which 778 pattas are in the process of distribution.
- ❖ In Himachal Pradesh, Himalaya Niti Abhiyan revised the figure of felling of trees from 8,013 as stated by the authorities to 15,000 by conducting a survey around the Renuka Dam.

To address many of these challenges, workshops were organised with community members, panchayat representatives and others in Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Odisha on the use of GPS devices for resource mapping. Public meetings and network meetings were organised in Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Bihar and Chhattisgarh with a participation of 1000-8000 people to demand for collective resolution of pending claims, withdrawal of ordinances aimed at the diluting the Act. Training programs for formation of Forest Rights Committees, formation of cooperatives for NTFP collection, implementation challenges, empowerment of Gram Sabhas, land mapping through GPS and leveraging RTI for better realization of forest rights were organised by groups in Bihar, AP, Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.

Some glimpses from the States

Chhattisgarh: Dalit Adivasi Manch organized a Forest Rights March (Van Adhikar Yatra) spanning over a period of 6 days, from April 14 to April 19, 2017 which was attended by around 5000 people from 60 villages of Kasdol Block in Baloda Bazar district. The march served as a medium of transmitting and collecting information on FRA from the people. Through the sangathan's continuous intervention in FRA through meetings with MLAs and district Collector, the Collector has assured that all the pending work would be completed in a month's time. This would further hasten the process of granting rights over forest land.

Odisha: Adim Adivasi Mukti Manch organised a janajagaran sabha on 21st March, 2017 on the occasion of the World Forest Day at Purunapani village in the Baisipalli Wildlife Sanctuary area. It was attended by members of the Forest Rights Committee, Eco-Development Committee and village-level Forest Conservation and Management Committee. Several key issues such as the dependency of forest dwellers on the forest for livelihood, causes of forest denudation and livelihood threats were discussed. FRA was hailed as a progressive legislation which aimed to correct the 'historical injustice' meted out to the forest dwellers. It was further suggested that FRA was an important tool to regain rights over natural resources which was hitherto in the hands of the forest department.



Bihar: Mazdoor Kisan Samiti, working in Gaya District, has helped preparing the appeal submitted to the high court in regards to Forest Rights Act. In September, the sangathan was involved in campaigning, taking a global positioning on forest rights claims. Around 2000 maps were prepared in this process. Around 104 people attended the public hearing from 23 Dec to 26 Dec and 12 to 13 workers were involved in making maps, training in GPS system and data entry. From around 2.2 million claims filed in Bihar, around 1 lakh comes from Gaya district. There were mass programmes and discussions around it organized by the sangathan.



State-level convention on Gram Sabha resolutions on Mining and Displacement

UP: Tharu Adivasi Mahila Mazdoor Kisan Manch organised membership drives, campaigning of settlement of claims, sammelans to build public awareness on the issue. A meeting was called in Paliya Kalan on to discuss the delay in the execution of community claims filed under FRA. A delegation of karyakartas was formed to discuss the matter with the Deputy District Officer and take out information on the same. The sangathan continued to work with Gram Sabha members, engaging with local administrative officials and organising programs to commemorate significant days of struggle.

Land Rights and Development

The question of securing land rights has been detrimental in the working area of SRUTI Fellows. Alongside the question of forest land, sangathans in Odisha, Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Bihar and Maharashtra have been engaging in collecting information on land reform status, proposed displacement and holding public meetings with a large participation of community members to build pressure on the authorities to hasten the process of land distribution.

SRUTI has also been working with national-level forums, including farmer unions, trade unions, progressive individuals and other like-minded group. The alliances have grown to address the changes in law determining land use in various states. Fellow groups across 12 states were part of the *Bhumi Adhikar Andolan (BAA)*, a national-level alliance of peasant unions, people's movements and farmers' organisations, that brought together lakhs of people to successfully stall the anti-people Land Ordinance. While facing defeat in the Parliament, the anti-poor and anti-people amendment in the Land Act 2013 was passed on to states to make laws to ease the process of land acquisition at state levels. In light of the victory of people's movements in scrapping the Land Ordinance, sangathans have now decided to focus on their respective states where draconian state-level laws are being introduced to ease land acquisition while ignoring grave issues of agrarian crisis, food security and communalism facing the country. In Jharkhand, the state government has bypassed several procedures in law-making to amend the **Chota Nagpur Tenancy (CNT) Act and Santhal Pargana Tenancy (SPT) Act**. Active campaigns on tribal land alienation are being organised across the state and national platforms to raise awareness on the issue.

Land Rights and Development - Outcomes

- ❖ In Andhra Pradesh, land pattas were distributed over an area of 476.69 acres of land and distribution of 723 acres of land has been assured in Nellore district.
- ❖ In Odisha, 381 claims over land have been filed out of which 26 land pattas have been distributed.
- ❖ In Maharashtra, 10 land pattas have been distributed in Raigad district.
- ❖ The Maharashtra Government has allocated 74 crores more for the development of the rehabilitated village of Ghosikurd.
- ❖ In Odisha, 62 families have got homestead land patta of 2.48 acres of land under Vasundhara scheme.
- ❖ Members of musahar community at Allouli block of Khagaria district in Bihar organised a meeting on pending patta distributions.

Some glimpses from the States

Maharashtra: Sarvahara Jan Andolan (SJA), working in Raigarh district is in the process of securing recognition rights over forest land i.e. Dali land for Katkari tribes for last 25 years even before the FRA came into force. Through a notification dated 4th January 2017, State government of Maharashtra recognised the rights of tenants over Dali land through rules prescribed as Bombay Tenancy and Agricultural Land Rules, 1956. More than 40,000 families are to benefit with the passing of the order, which would regularise their agricultural and homestead lands. In last 10 years SJA has been able to facilitate the recognition of rights under forest rights for more than 2000 families. The sangathan has also been spearheading the campaign on the DMIC issue, where owing to public pressure the amount



People's march for restoring community claim in Ghatbarra, Sarguja district, Chhattisgarh

Jharkhand: To commemorate the 25 years of peaceful struggle against forced displacement and asserting the rights of adivasis and local people on their natural resources, a mass meeting was organised on 22nd and 23rd March 2017 at Dudua mod, Netarhat by Jan Sangharsh Samiti, Latehar. Around 20 thousand people were present for the meeting. Among the participants were different sangathans such as Koelkaro Jan Sanghrash Samiti, AICUF, Chhatra Sangh Ranchi, Kendriya Jan Sangharsh Samiti, different political leaders- Babulal Marandi, former CM, community leaders, PRI leaders and people from nearby and far away villages.



Voter awareness campaign before panchayat elections. Odisha

Panchayati Raj Institutions

Sangathans in Uttarakhand, Jharkhand, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, AP, MP, Maharashtra and Odisha have shaped an organised campaign for the effective implementation of Panchayati Raj in their respective states. Through meetings and



Block level convention in Surguja district on the passing of Gram Sabha resolutions on PESA rules, mining and land rights

Panchayati Raj Outcomes

In Odisha, several interactions were held between the candidates and voters for the panchayat elections to voice their concerns and understand the candidates before voting began. Awareness campaigns addressing the rights of the voters and transparent and liquor free election process were launched in Odisha before the beginning of the elections. Around 406 Panchayat level meetings were held in Odisha to discuss issues relevant to governance and Panchayati Raj.

workshops, the community is being made aware of the powers of the Gram Sabha and its role in the development of villages. These activities assume importance in the context of the government's attempts at reducing the powers of the gram sabha and dismissing its decisions on important

matters. Our Fellows view the Panchayati Raj as an essential tool in ensuring decentralisation of power and thus any efforts to dilute its provisions is met with resistance.



Kendu leaves laid out for drying after collection in Dhenkanal district, Odisha

Some glimpses from the States

Jharkhand: On the occasion of the enactment of PESA 1996 a Gram Sabha was held on 24th December in Hurlung village of Ichagarh block in the district of Saraikela Kadsanwan. The challenges to PRI in schedule areas were discussed and suggestions were sought for the same. A model gram sabha as described by the people would be one which would have its own office and sources of funds. To strengthen gram sabhas they suggested that it should be given rights over minor forest produce, minerals and other resources. The Jan Mukti Sangharsh Vahini has organised shivirs called “Gram Sabha se Gram Swaraj” in various villaes of Jharkhand which saw the coming together of gram sabha members to discuss issues concerning Panchayati Raj. The first shivir was organized in Gorangkochoa of Ichagarh on 19th March.

Chhattisgarh: Dalit Adivasi Manch organized trainings with women PRI members at Pithora. Women have been at the forefront in the communities' demands of forest land and there is constant effort by the sangathan to develop their capacities for making effective demands, leading deliberations, meeting administrative officials and participate in mass awareness programmes.

Agriculture and Livelihood

Peoples' movement groups have time and again advocated for 'Sangharsh and Nirmaan', which remains one of the most deep-rooted philosophy for SRUTI. Sangathan supported cooperatives are functioning in Uttarakhand, Jharkhand, Rajasthan and Odisha, processing forest-based produce as mahua jams, pickles, manufacture of cotton clothes through use of handlooms, involving innovative ways of fishing and through the



Life irrigation begins at Hudlung village, Jharkhand

Agriculture and Livelihood - Outcomes

- ❖ MAATI's weaving cooperative in Uttarakhand produced garments and other products worth Rs. 2.74 lakhs
- ❖ Adharsh Hatkargha (the handloom cooperative in Rajasthan) run by Hum Kisan Sangathan has witnessed an annual turnover of about Rs. 27 lakhs. The profits are shared by handloom workers through the cooperative.
- ❖ Through the advocacy efforts of the Lok Adhikar Sangathan, hazardous chinese manjha has been banned across the state of Uttar Pradesh.
- ❖ Thousand small and marginal farmers were assisted in demanding compensation for crop loss and 1742 farmers were helped in registering themselves as farmers to avail agricultural assistance and subsidies in Odisha
- ❖ In Andhra Pradesh, 12 farmer clubs covering an average population of 180 workers, 320 women SHGs and seed banks in 6 villages covering 132 farmers are functioning.

development of homestays. These supplement farm incomes for more than 1200 families in 4 states.

While farm incomes have fallen in many areas, organic methods continue to be encouraged by the sangathans in Andhra Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Odisha, Bihar and Jharkhand to decrease the input cost and preserve indigenous practices of farming. In Maharashtra, Kashtkari Jan Andlan has dedicatedly worked to save the livelihood of fishermen who were dependent on the Totladhoh dam.

In Tamil Nadu, 94 farmers' organisations have come together to form a coalition 'Tamil Nadu Farmers Organisation' which methodised a convention with the demand to write off all the loans from National and Cooperative banks and to repeal the land Acquisition Act. The coalition has also organised public meetings and mass programmes across the state.

Some glimpses from the States

Jharkhand: Jan Mukti Sangharsh Vahini has organised an introduction of lift irrigation and deep boring in the area behind the Chandil reservoir with public support. The government has not paid any heed to their demands despite the fact that offshore cultivation can be carried out effectively in the said area and can sustain cultivation of 50 acres of land. This can also be an opportunity in developing agriculture of the people and along with this rehabilitate the displaced people. Work in village Hurlung has begun by the sangathan with approval from the gram sabha.

Kashmir: School for Rural Development and Environment (SRDE) has come up with the idea of Community Driven Adventure and Rural Tourism model for Tosa Maidan. It has prepared a comprehensive socio-economic research document and a proposal to implement the CDAR tourism model. Over a period of several months the advocacy measures by SRDE further resulted in an independent tourism development authority for Tosa Maidan. By promoting this model, the community will have control over its natural resources, benefits of this tourism model will reach every strata of the community so that socio economic benefits are shared by them and not the corporate and outsiders. As an initial step 10 youths have been identified to be trained in the overall procedure to be followed in the CDAR tourism model.



Adivasi Festival organised in Latehar, Jharkhand to commemorate 30 years of Netarhat Struggle

Uttarakhand : Maati Krishak Samuh and Vanya Samuh sold radish seeds, cabbage, lahi, broccoli, rajma, onion etc. and total of Rs. 1000 for Maati Krishak Samuh and Rs. 1400 for Vanya Samuh was kept. Along with

cultivation of different vegetables were done such as matar, methi, onion, beans, radish etc and 15 quintal potato was planted. Different deeds, spices and Jadibuti were collected, packed and sold. 3 quintal rajma was bought for cleaning and 2 quintal 48 kg were sold after cleaning.

Maati workshop on wool collection: In a 4-month period 11 kgs of wool from sheep was collected and to make this business garment making was initiated and maphlar, shweter and bags were made. For this purpose 230 meter of plain cloth was bought of Rs. 27638. During this time total of 497 garment stock value of Rs. 3,50,030/- was there from which 389 units were sold with total price 2,74,280/-

Addressing issues of social inequality

In Maharashtra, several meetings and workshops with an average participation of 900 women have been organised to build awareness around women's issues. **Shramjeevi Sangathan** in Latur has organised a number of public meetings and interactions with officials to raise awareness on the

Prevention of Atrocities Act. As a result, individuals and organisations have come together to collectively work under the banner of **Social Justice Movement** a state-wide network of progressive individuals and groups.

In Madhya Pradesh, **Patthar Khan Mazdoor Sangh** has organised three meetings to generate awareness on issues of forest rights, employment, livelihood and health. **Khetihaar Khan Mazdoor Sangh** in Rajasthan has organised trainings for labourers working in brick kiln. 77 brick kiln are operational in their working area. Meetings were organized in 24 villages, mostly with migrant workers regarding their timely payments, workplace facilities and supporting education for drop-out children of workers in these kilns.

Sangathans in Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand have received and dealt with 82 cases of domestic violence. Follow-up support to survivors of violence, initiating police action and giving support (legal and otherwise) has been the focus of the sangathans.

On January 12, 2017, a Mahila Mela was organised by **Kashtakari Jan Andolan** in village Punarsit, Nagpur district which was attended by around 300 women. Women were mobilised around the issue of liquor ban and it was decided to raise awareness on proper provisioning of rations. In Nagpur, the women living in bastis, mostly working as domestic workers have also organised themselves through the registration of a union. The process is ongoing in Umred and Bhivapur district to ensure no discrimination from social welfare schemes, provisioning of identity cards from the union and demands for better work facilities.

Mazdoor Kisan Samiti in Bihar organised a convention on women's rights and access over natural resources at Bodh Gaya on 11th December, 2016. It was attended by 60 women and 10 men from among sangathan members. It focussed on leadership development for women, adopted resolutions for including women in the granting of land titles, and getting actual ownership over land for landless and dalit women. Youth trainings was organised on 27-30 December, with a participation of about 150 young volunteers from Chhatra Yuva Sangharsh Vahini. These shivirs aimed at holistic development of volunteers, inculcating a strong value system which recognises and fights discriminatory practices based on gender, caste and religion. It also allowed participants to develop a strong support system for learning, increasing livelihood opportunities and addressing regional backwardness of the state through participation in community led initiatives.

Education

In India, poor access to education has helped further entrench and consolidate prior social advantage instead of bridging the gap between the rich and the poor. Public education, has in effect, widened the social distance between the well-off and the poor, dalit and adivasi. Additionally, conventional education systems in India promote narrow career paths driven by competition, exclusion and largely urban aspiration, often resulting in disillusionment and frustration for those that don't make 'the cut'. For most students from a disadvantaged background, the experience of formal education is oppressive, alienating and eventually turns ineffective for improving their life chances. Improving access to, and the quality of, education for a majority of deprived Indians requires sustained interventions in public schooling processes and engagement with government policy and relevant delivery mechanisms. Some SRUTI Fellows have started independent schools – Adharshila Learning Centre in MP and Manthan School in Rajasthan, that provide an alternative philosophy and practice of holistic, socially-conscious education, models that can help enrich and influence the way government schools are run.

Some glimpses from the states

Odisha: Lok Chetana Sangathan organised 3 training programs for PTA,MDM and SMC leaders and 2 Training Programs for MTA leaders. Sangathan also reviewed the school committee for monitoring the proper functioning of schools.

Delhi : Delhi Young Artist Forum (DYAF) organised its annual convention 'Hume Mauka Toh Do' on January 8, 2017 at Gandhi Ashram Harijan Sevak Sangh, Delhi. It saw the participation of 400 youths from resettlement colonies in Delhi. The children addressed the convention on the increasing communal tension in resettlement colonies, current

Right to Education - Outcomes

- ❖ In Uttarakhand, new Library was inaugurated in Jangli School at Sarmoli under the READ Library Initiative and girl's hostel was built in Shankdhur.
- ❖ In Jharkhand ,Jan Mukti Sangarsh Vahini established 18 Library cum study centres called **Deshaz Adhyayan Kendra** in a resettled colony called Birsa Basti in Jamshedpur city. Each library is provided with 100 books initially.
- ❖ Fellows from Rajasthan and Madhyapradesh are running two alternative school .Total number of 290 students were enrolled into the school out of which half are girls with 2 new trainee teachers.
- ❖ In Andhra Pradesh,MASS has facilitated the enrolment of 158 drop out children in RBC and 345 children in regular school.
- ❖ In Kashmir , SRDE has established two education centers one in Rawatpora Beewah and other in Chardoora,budgam to help school going children with their studies till functioning of school resumed.
- ❖ On 22nd October, 2016 a program was organised by Delhi Young Artist Forum (DYAF) at Bawana on '**Education for girls and role played by the guardians.**' It was attended by 60 young girls. A range of issues concerning women were discussed and their feedbacks regarding the centre were taken.
- ❖ An interaction session was organised between the Chhattisgarh Imli-mahua school students and Jangli school students in Uttarakhand through an exposure visit.

socio-political scenario, girls' education and issues of gender as experienced by them through cultural performances.



Madhya Pradesh: Adharshila Sikshan Kendra, an alternative educational institution for tribal children in Badwani district organized workshops on making masks, soft boards, mufflers, woollen caps, ear bands, hand bands with focus to develop psycho motor skill of children. To improve the social skill of children the school has organized interview programmes. Middle school children went to two local markets – Sendwa and Palsood for four days and interviewed shopkeepers, farmers and wage labourers to understand the impact of demonetisation on the markets, agriculture and common man. After that there was a discussion on its reasons and effects. Children also wrote essays on the same topic.

Rajasthan: Manthan School - This year there were around 160 students out of which half were girls. 14 students were enrolled in class 10 which had 5 boys and 9 girls. The year started with 7 teachers and a number of volunteers came for different time durations. However, by the end of the year only 4 teachers were left. A digital course in English language was given to the school by a retired Professor from Indore. This year there were only 24-25 students in the Hostel unlike the previous year which had 44 children. This year, 3 ex-students of Manthan will also complete their engineering.

One student scored very well in entrance tests for admission to IITs for admission to M.Tech and PhD degrees.

Adharshila School has been running in the working region of Khetihar Khan Mazdoor Sangathan for orphaned or poor Bhil girls in Bhilwara district. The sangathan runs a residential school with public support, insisting on young girls to join the school and continue their education. After years of efforts, few students have completed class 10th and 12th this year. The sangathan is trying to get them admissions in colleges at Delhi and Jaipur. Many of these children (3-14 years) are first-generation learners and need support to take their dreams ahead.

Welfare schemes and programs - Governance

The year saw a sharp decline in allotted funds to MGNREGA in the country. There also remained confusion over the methods adopted for the transfer of wages, as several gaps in the existing system of direct bank transfers were exposed.

Following the decision of demonetisation, many small industries were severely affected which created additional need for securing jobs under the employment guarantee scheme. Overall there were delays in payments, non-provisioning of work demanded under the Act and corruption in the planning of work. Sangathans continue to engage as watchdogs to properly implement schemes of social welfare.

Right to Work

Andhra Pradesh: Navajeevan has Formed wage seekers group Shrama Shakthi Sanghas to organize meeting with MGNREGA workers and with potential workers with objective of creating awareness about the facilities available under MGREGA .This helped job card holders to demand work under MGNREGA and timely payment from the concerned authority. As a result number of work days under MGREGA has increased to 60 and able to secure 160rs per day.

Odisha: Lok Chetana Sangathan has organized villagers of lade and submitted Memorandum on the month of September to the Panchayat authorities and Water Shed department of Gunupur

Right to Work - Outcomes

- ❖ Ensuring of total wage payment for about Rs. 6.75 crores for 28,768 mandays of work with 727 new job holders in Odisha and Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ Meetings and awareness discussion have been organized in 80 villages about migration issues and facilities of MGNREGS in Bolangir district in Odisha
- ❖ Through the efforts of the sangathan in Chattisgarh, 12 villages have received payments on time.
- ❖ Out of 106 development plans proposed under MGREGA by Adivasi Kranti Sangathan in Odisha, 92 plans have been accepted by panchayats especially in the areas of plantation, road connectivity, soil conservation and micro watershed construction and land development.
- ❖ Work under MGNREGA was demanded in 49 villages, out of which it was made available in 45 villages, covering a total of 1366 labourers in 3 blocks in Maharashtra.

Block and pursued the gram panchayat for getting job under this scheme. Block authorities have sanctioned Rs.5 lakhs to village Lade for work under MGNREGA. Following to this, villages like Alingar, Plolur, Borei, Toikur, Ollinger and Jung jung, Putta also put forward demands for work. Villagers of Bundingi, Kulusing, Kadasi, Kudua Chitanyaguda, chinariguda, Budaguda, Patili, Undrungguda and Podasingi, Engaraba also submitted demand applications with the panchayat authorities for getting job. As per the pressure of the Sangathan authorities sanctioned more than 30 lakhs to the above villages.

Right to Food

Delhi

Advocacy: On September 2015, a public hearing on the challenges faced by people in accessing their food entitlements under TPDS in Delhi was organised by the Delhi Rozi Roti Adhikar Abhiyaan, in which SNS also participated. As part of the follow up to the public hearing, SNS along with members of Delhi Rozi Roti Adhikar Abhiyaan met with more than 20 MLAs across Delhi to urge them to take action to improve the condition of food security in Delhi. During the budget session of the Delhi Legislative Assembly, budget related demands of the abhiyaan were discussed with these MLAs.

In order to press for greater transparency, SNS along with the Delhi Rozi Roti Adhikar Abhiyan and students of Jagran Institute of Management & Mass Communication (JIMMC) undertook an audit of more than 250 ration shops across all the districts of Delhi to verify their compliance with various transparency provisions of the NFSA and the RTI Act. Some of the key findings of the audit were

Right to Food – Outcomes

- ❖ Through the effort of Dalit Adivasi Manch in Chhattisgarh, the mid-day meal scheme is under the supervision of villagers through the formation of dedicated committees.
- ❖ In 40 villages, committees were formed with 127 males and 120 females to oversee PDS distribution in Rajasthan.
- ❖ Around 65 BPL cards were made in Akya and other Gram Panchayats by Khetihaar Khan Mazdoor Sangathan in Rajasthan.
- ❖ In Odisha around 236 bogus beneficiaries who had obtained ration cards and ration under NFSA in Kankadahad block have surrendered ration card with fine as determined by the government.
- ❖ In Tamil Nadu meeting with of all unit office bearers organized in order to address the issue of central government exerting pressure to impeditment the Tamil Nadu's Public distribution system by implementing Nation Food Security Act 2016.
- ❖ In Madhya Pradesh, Bundelkhand Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan filed 2183 claims for food coupons. People have got benefits for the same.
- ❖ In Andhra Pradesh, MASS ensured transparency in the implementation of PDS by demanding proactive disclosure of list of beneficiaries and available ration items.
- ❖ In Delhi, Satark Nagrik Sangathan has organised several awareness and grievance redress camps in the 12 slums, to create awareness among people about their rights and entitlements under the PDS and assist beneficiaries in filing complaints wherever they were unable to access their rightful entitlement

more than 60% of the shops were found to be shut/closed when we visited the shops during working hours, More than 70% shops did not display the requisite information in terms of the entitlement of cardholders and More than 70% shops did not display the requisite information in terms of the price of wheat, rice and sugar for different categories of ration cards. Aadhaar has been made mandatory by the Delhi government for getting entitlements under the NFSA which has resulted in a very large number of poor across Delhi being denied their subsidized food grains and other benefits as well as a lot of other problems.

Odisha

As a result of prolonged pressure and advocacy by Adivasi Kranti Sangathan, opposition party raised the issue of irregularity in the distribution of ration card to bogus beneficiaries and exclusion of NFSA beneficiaries having 3 rooms of pukka houses who were previously allocated with IAY. This issue was also raised in the state assembly. Public pressure compelled the government to take two important policy decisions, i.e., **to issue an order spelling out provision for fine and imprisonment and not to exclude IAY beneficiaries by getting NFSA entitlements**.

Health

Dalit Adivasi Manch in Chhattisgarh organised a convention in Palai, Kasdol block to assess the status of malnutrition among children. It was emphasised that the anganwadi workers manipulated the data in their registers to hide the extent of malnourishment in the children. Six cases of severe malnourishment were identified and treatment was sought.

Patthar Khadan Mazdoor Sangh in Madhya Pradesh organised blood donation camps, health check-ups for miners and others, who have been facing acute cases of Silicosis. In the past few years, the sangathan has raised the ill-condition of workers, many of whom have died or are undergoing treatment for the same. The district administration has finally recognised the existence of silicosis and is now offering free treatment.

Right to Information

Jammu & Kashmir :Transparency International India in collaboration with J&K RTI movement and school for Rural Development & Environment held one day seminar on combating corruption through tools of good governance at IMPA, Srinagar .TII will work with SRDE closely on early enactment of whistle blower protection legislation in J&K. Workshop on provocative disclosure is organized in Kupwara and Kulgam district .The district administrations requested the SRDE to make Kupwara district a model in proactive disclosure.

NETWORKING AND ADVOCACY

Through documentation, studies, and coordination; SRUTI works to build solidarity amongst pro-people groups to advocate for universal implementation of pro-poor legislations on land, forests, displacement and public policy in the view of constitutionally recognised people's rights and universal human rights.

Events organised by SRUTI

- National Consultation of Panchayati Raj Social Movements and Democracy | 20th – 21st November, 2016 (detailed in earlier section) | New Delhi
- Workshop on Water Rights, Pollution and Environment | Jharsuguda, Odisha (15th – 16th October, 2016) | Singrauli, Madhya Pradesh (26th – 27th March, 2017)
- Book Release and Discussion: Aitahasik Anyaay Banaam Asli Daavedari and Kyon Nahi Mile Samudayik Adhikar | 30th March 2016 (detailed in earlier section) India Islamic Cultural Centre, New Delhi

Campaigns

- Campaigns with state and national networks like Campaign for Survival and Dignity, Bhumi Adhikar Andolan (A national level alliance of farmer unions, forest workers, and other pro-people groups with social movements), platform launched in February 2015 advocating for Land Rights, Agrarian Reforms and Land Use Policy.
- Campaign demanding accountability of private and public health services during dengue outbreak in Delhi.

Advocacy

- Advocacy with Parliamentarians and Ministries of Tribal Affairs (MoTA), Rural Development & Environment and Forests; National Commission for Scheduled Tribes, National Commission for Scheduled Castes, etc
- Networking with people's organizations and movements such as AIUFWP (All India Union of Forest Working People), NAPM (National Alliance of People's Movements), INSAF (Indian Social Action Forum), Chhattisgarh Bachao Andolan (CBA), Samajwadi Jan Parishad, Campaign for Survival and Dignity, Delhi Solidarity Group, etc. in various states of India

Strategic Status Report on National Inland Waterways in India published by Manthan Adhyayan Kendra and SRUTI is the first study report after the enactment of The National Waterways Act March 2017 and which has declared 111 rivers or river stretches, creek, estuaries as National inland waterways, with the specific objective to identify the range of social and environmental issues and provided by inland waterways and the extent to which these can be quantified and to provide guidance to users on valuing these issues.

The study starts by questioning popular notion that inland water ways are fuel-efficient compared to the other modes of transport, rail and road and seamless interconnectivity connecting hinterlands along navigable river coasts and coastal routes" and that "...riverine routes are likely to play a crucial role in connecting the north-eastern states to the mainland."

However, this study says these advantages are neither unqualified, nor automatic. They will manifest only when certain conditions are met, and only under certain circumstances. Waterways by definition are encroaching upon rivers, estuaries, creeks and deltas which support rich flora and fauna not just aquatic but also terrestrial and sustain livelihood of large population. The study report examined the likely impacts in the construction, maintenance and operation stages.

Capital dredging is unexceptional activity in development of waterways which includes removal of silt, rock, sand and clay from river to construct the navigational channel of desired depth and width. Dredging physically cuts and damages the river bed, and can lead to change in habitats for various aquatic flora and fauna and turns river turbid due to , fish tend to run away from the site and this ultimately reduces fish catch in the area.

The other impacts are loss of water from river and loss of ground water due to cutting in to the river bed, ingress of excess saline water into the creek or rivers, removal of trees and mangroves, restriction for fisher community in accessing river due to construction of jetties and river ports, and destruction of riverbed cultivation, alteration of river flows due to construction of barrages.

The study also gives descriptive analysis of socio cultural impacts which included implication on livelihoods of people dependent on the rivers and creeks .Fisher community are the worst affected . For example the development of the waterway in the Mahanadi delta in Odisha will cut-off the access of hundreds of fishing boats to the best parts of the marine fishing areas. People dependent on riverbed cultivation can also face loss of livelihoods. Displacement is another serious issue as land is needed for number of facilities like ports, jetties, and other infrastructure.

The full range of environmental and social issue is rarely considered in decisions over the use or development of inland waterways and their surrounding areas; this can result in incorrect decisions being made.

(The report can be accessed through this link)

<http://www.sruti.org.in/?q=news-media/national-inland-waterways-india-strategic-status-report>

Book Release and Discussion:

SRUTI and NFI organised a day long program for the release of Shri Anil Garg's publication, "**क्यों नहीं मिले सामुदायिक अधिकार**" (*Why the community rights couldn't be obtained?*) and "**ऐतिहासिक अन्याय बनाम असली दावेदारी**" (*Historical Injustices versus Real Claimants*) on March 30, 2017 at the India Islamic Cultural Centre. It started with a discussion on relevant community and individual forest and land issues which saw the participation of around 40 people from different states. This was followed by the book release in the evening with a panel of noted speakers like Digvijay Singh, Siddharth Varadrajan, Sharad Chandra Behar and Hannan Mollah.

The discussion was called to address the challenges faced by the activists and sangathans working on the ground in the sphere of the Forest Rights Act and to evolve processes addressing the inadequacies in the Act which were halting its implementation process. A decade has passed since the introduction of the Forest Rights Act which claims to transfer the traditional rights over forests to its rightful owners, which had for years been unethically concentrated in the hands of the Forest Department. Despite the replacement of the Indian Forest Act, 1927 with the new law, the Forest Department in some states still acquires considerable authority in the forests, dismissing the rights of the forest dwellers and continuing to act as a contractor. When seen in this context, Anil Garg's book assumes significance for its ability to identify the gaps in the law, simultaneously providing a new lens to view the same.

Paving new Pathways : A National Consultation on Panchayat Raj

The 73rd and 74th amendments to the Indian Constitution recognised the need to transfer power from



centralised institutions, and aspired for **‘maximum democracy and maximum transfer of power’**, to give executive control in the hands of local self-governing institutions – alongside marking roles, responsibilities and powers in decision making. The amendments have been passed for 25 years now, and there is a need to assess and attempt its comprehensive evaluation, to know how far these aspirations have taken shape.

Alongside the historical and significant amendments in how the Constitution accepted the legitimacy of peoples’ rights over their lives, radical changes were also being made in the country with the aspirations of ‘economic growth’. Liberalising the economy was given shape through legislations under the New Economic Policies (NEPs). These changes in policies opened up markets, trade negotiations, and gave way to substantive private ownership over public goods. It sought to replace protectionism or control of trade in the country by governments or other regulatory agencies, whereby facilitating the growth of money flowing in from outside the country. In the post-cold war period these were also hailed for its attack on the infamous ‘license-raj’. This trend has continued, and the ‘liberalisms’ have continued to neglect, relegate and block legislative and executive action aimed at recognising the dignities and values of individuals, communities and societies at large.

A two-day National Consultation on **“Panchayati Raj, Social Movements and Democracy”** was organized on 20-21 November, 2016 at Delhi. Around 120 people including activists, individuals, sangathans, panchayat members, researchers, students and policy experts participated in this consultation.

The discussion were by sharing of experiences from people involved in developmental work at the remotest locations from states like Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, J&K, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, Odisha , Uttarakhand, Bihar and Tamil Nadu.

Well-known speakers as ex-Panchayati Raj Minister Shri Manishankar Aiyar, former Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh Shri Digvijay Singh, senior journalist Siddharth Varadrajan with senior representatives of social movements, national research institutes discussed how the system of PRI has not been relevant enough for the government to translate it from paper to reality and hence never



relevant for the masses too. There has been a clear dismissal of transfer of power and hence the functionalities attached to it. *Decentralization necessarily has not ensured democratization or transfer of power.* In most areas, it's still the collector who is in charge of important decisions and allocations. There is a clear *lack in the implementation* and in most places there has been no such efforts from the government in terms of creating awareness, advocacy, training programs, perspective or capacity building, allocation of resources etc. contrary in most places, there has been an increase in corruption specially during allocation of funds, division of work, exploitation and profiting of middle men, contractors and other involved parties. While in some places, this has served as an effective platform enabling the participation of women, in most places

Workshop on Panchayati Raj Institutions – New Delhi, May, 2016



engagement is more visible only during the times of elections. In some places involvement has also reduced due to various factors like false promises and expectations, lack of transparency and clarity, absence of advocacy or any measures to include more people etc._

The consultation connected different dots essaying it again that this system cannot function in isolation or cannot be the only resolving power. A multidimensional endeavour which synchronously channels all other involved parameters and carries forward the vision is necessary.

The issue of Governance is not mutually exclusive from rights that can be of land, forests, water, natural resource etc or discourses of caste, gender, social fabric etc. While the nature of power and its players have an important role, it's crucial to shift the lens towards the linkages on which power acts. An important constituent of this process are the ones who are at the receiving end. The power-of people's movement, vision of decentralisation and democratisation, responsible solidarity, assertion of rights, voices and experiences, mistakes and lessons learnt have to be all clubbed together and the

process has to go on. In these difficult times when structures of inequality are growing while being compounded with different forces, the coalition and alignment of all these is even more necessary and mandatory for implementation of inclusive growth and empowerment.

DISASTER MANAGEMENT & RELIEF

The region of Marathwada has become a witness to successive droughts, taking with it the lives of hundreds of farmers who commit suicide with nothing in site. While the politicians are caught up in the blame-game, the sufferings of the people have not subsided. With wells drying up fast, people have to dig deeper to find water which in itself is a risk to their health. With crops completely destroyed and the functioning of MGNREGA delayed, life in Latur has come to a standstill. This has rendered the people completely helpless and shattered, leaving single women and children in the most vulnerable state. Shramjeevi Sangathan working in Latur district tried to ensure water tankers in the face of drought, as there was no-other alternative even for drinking water. It managed supply of water in 87 villages of three blocks in the district. Owing to the continuing drought in the area, water shortage is a grave problem. Water was provided once a week or in 15 days but the poor families of the region did not have access to water storage, for which the sangathan provided 430 storage tanks with the support of SRUTI in Udgir and Jalkot blocks of Latur district.

SRUTI WELFARE AND SOLIDARITY FUND (SWSF)

The SWSF was constituted with the idea of providing financial assistance to individuals and communities for medical emergencies, higher education, house construction, welfare and relief during natural and other calamities. The assistance is extended to SRUTI Fellows; staff members; associates in SRUTI's solidarity network, and communities supported through SRUTI's Fellowship programme. A total of 30 individuals and grassroots groups benefitted from the Fund during the year.

Structure of the SRUTI Team (2016-17)

<i>Slab of monthly salary (Rs) plus benefits paid to staff</i>	<i>No. of male staff</i>	<i>No. of female staff</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>10,001-25,000</i>	3	1	4
<i>25,001-50,000</i>	5	2	7
<i>50,001-100,000</i>	1	1	2
<i>Total</i>	9	4	13

PEOPLE

SRUTI General Body

1. Amita Joseph
2. Anju Talukdar
3. Apoorvanand
4. Enakshi Ganguly Thukral
5. G.B. Panda
6. Jamal Kidvai
7. Kabir Dixit
8. Kanika Satyanand
9. L.R. Sarin
10. Poonam Muttreja (Founder Member)
11. Prabhu Mohapatra
12. Rajeswari Raina
13. Ravi Rebbapragada
14. Sanjit (Bunker) Roy (Founder Member)

15. Shibani Chaudhury
16. Shubha Laxmi Pande Iyer
17. Uma Chakravarti
18. Vijay Sardana

SRUTI Executive Board

1. Amita Joseph, Treasurer
2. Apoorvanand, Member
3. Enakshi Ganguly Thukral, President
4. Kanika Satyanand, Member
5. Prabhu Mohapatra, Vice President
6. Rajeshwari Raina, Member
7. Ravi Rebbapragada, Member
8. Shubhalaxmi Pande Iyer, Member

SRUTI Team

1. Asha Raveendran, Programme Trainee
2. Baldew Thakur, Finance Officer
3. Elin Archana Lakda, Assistant Programme Executive
4. Emlon Tirkey, Assistant Programme Executive
5. Jojoy Mathew, Assistant Officer – Finance and Admin
6. L.R. Sarin, Financial Advisor (*part time)
7. Mahipal Singh, Admin-Fellowship Assistant

*in alphabetic order

8. Manisha Dalabehara, Programme Trainee
9. Rakesh Sharma, Assistant Manager – Resource Mobilisation
10. Sanjay Verma, Assistant Manager – Resource Mobilisation
11. Satyam Shrivastava, Director
12. Saurabh Sinha, Programme Executive
13. Shweta Tripathi, Director
14. Sukruta Alluri, Senior Programme Executive

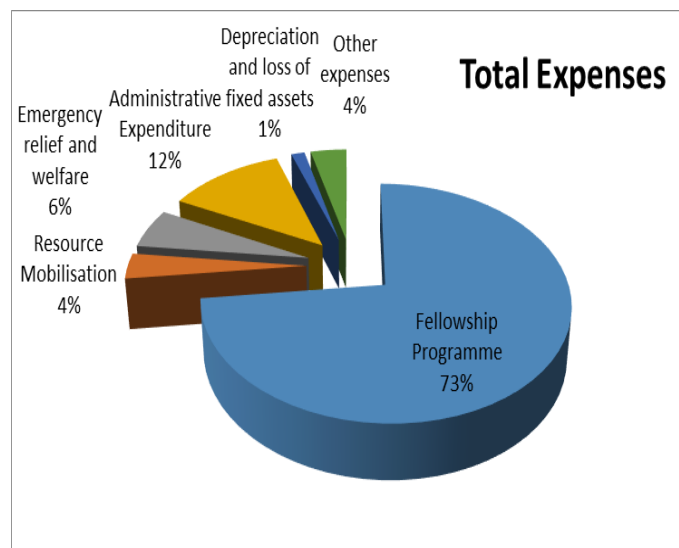
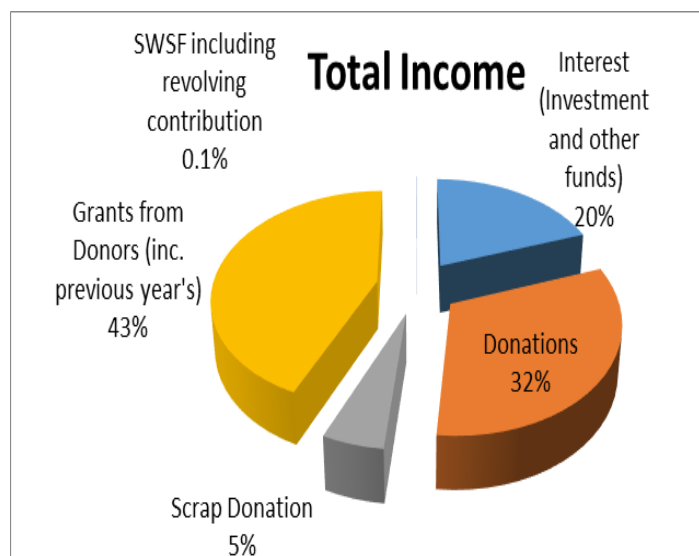
FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

SRUTI Income for the financial year 2016-2017

S.No.	Details	Amount (Rs.)
1	Interest (Investment and other funds)	44,04,886
2	Donations	71,52,711
3	Scrap Donation	11,31,212
4	Grants from Donors (inc. previous year's)	97,04,530
5	SWSF including revolving contribution	6,000
	Total Income	2,23,99,339

SRUTI Expenditure for the financial year 2016-17

S.No.	Details	Amount (Rs.)
1	Fellowship Programme	1,76,54,152
2	Resource Mobilisation	8,65,437
3	Emergency relief and welfare	13,68,292
4	Administrative Expenditure	29,63,220
5	Depreciation and loss of fixed assets	3,43,579
6	Other expenses	9,25,681
	Total expenditure	2,41,20,361



CONTRIBUTORS

We thank our institutional, individual and scrap donors for their continued support and trust in SRUT

SIR RATAN TATA TRUST

Paul Hamlyn
Foundation

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