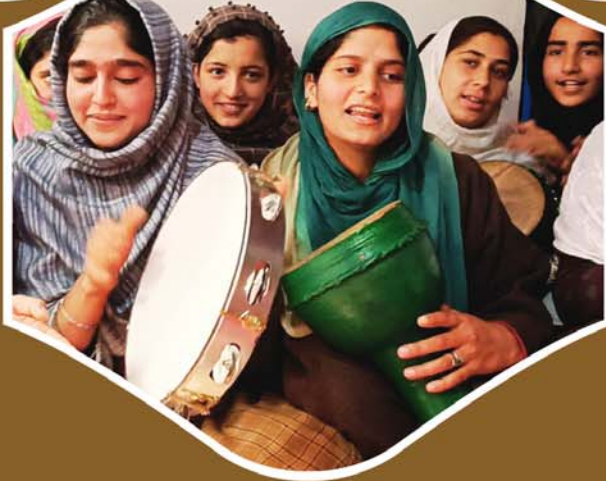


ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023



COMPOSITE HERITAGE
for PEACE, HARMONY and DEMOCRACY

isd
Institute *for*
Social Democracy

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Flat No. 110, Numberdar House
62-A, Laxmi Market, Munirka
New Delhi-110067, INDIA
Phone & Telefax : 091-11-26177904
Email : notowar.isd@gmail.com
Website : www.isd.net.in

In-co-operation with

Bread for the World - Protestant Development Service

P. O. Box 40144
D-10061 Berlin
Federal Republic of Germany
www.info.brot-fuer-die-welt.de

MISEREOR

Catholic Central Office
for Development and EB
PO Box 10 15 45,
52015 Aachen, Germany

Written and Edited

Ravneet and Babita Negi

Illustrations and Cover Design

Surender Singh and Ainie Sushmita Mookerji

MESSAGE *from* The DESK



"The surest way to corrupt a youth is to instruct him to hold in higher esteem those who think alike than those who think differently." –Friedrich Nietzsche

When conformity to a single ideology, a single culture and to a single way of life in general is forced on people, in a systematic way, the consequences are severe and long lasting. A systematic erosion of the idea of diversity, coexistence and dignity of all creates a conducive ground for building a highly violent, volatile and corrupt society where people respond to any crisis through varying degrees of violence and hatred against those who are different. Politics of hate thrives on instilling fear. Fear of change, fear of those who are different, fear of standing against hate and so on.

Renowned scholar Amartya Sen, in his book, *The Argumentative Indian*, a compilation of his essays, establishes and traces the history of diversity of ideas, intellectual pluralism. This is in complete contradiction to the assault on the diversity of ideas, cultures and everything associated with it. The biggest disservice to young generation and to the coming generations, is to fill them with fear and hatred through distortion of history. To subjugate a vast number of youth and children to humiliation and otherness based on their identity. Their identity as Dalits, as Muslims, as Christians, as Ethnic groups, to name a few.

We are witness to this massive discrimination against the deprived sections of the society and have a responsibility to address the same to the best of our capacities. Through our work on Composite Heritage, Do No Harm/Local Capacities for Peace and Social Analysis, we have been engaging with youth, children, and women and with community in general to enable them to see their interconnections as a community, to see the need to save and respect diversity and shared heritage for peaceful co-existence.

We take our inspiration from these lines of poem *Where the Mind is Without Fear* by Rabindranath Tagore and commit ourselves to continue working towards this vision.

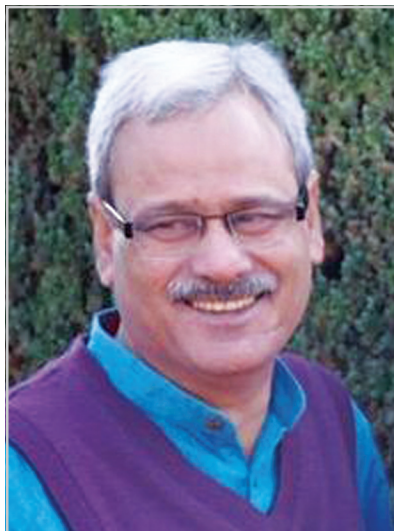
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;

Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the
dreary desert sand of dead habit.

Shruti

INSTITUTE *for*

SOCIAL DEMOCRACY



Institute for Social Democracy came into existence in the backdrop of unprecedented violent conflict that South Asia has witnessed over several decades. Now they have become a routine affair. Thousands of women, men and children fell victim to this madness. ISD was established by late Dr. Khurshid Anwar and its work on Composite Heritage was his brainchild. ISD has chosen Composite Heritage as a tool for conflict transformation and violence prevention as no other organisation has yet taken it up. Composite Heritage is chosen as a tool, because of the fact that irrespective of the caste, religion and gender every individual relates to it. It belongs to the masses, not an individual. The initial objective of ISD was to provide a common platform for groups and individuals committed to secularism and democracy, to explore and affirm Composite Heritage as a basis for peace and democracy. With this objective in mind, we initiated our intervention through perspective building and capacity building on the context of conflict and bringing Composite Heritage as a tool to restore Peace, Harmony and Democracy. Through our interventions, we learnt that there is almost total lack of peace movements in the context of sectarian violent and non-violent conflicts such as communal, caste, ethnic, linguistic and regional conflicts. In the sub-continent, there is a movement for peace when it comes to war and nuclear race issues. There is also a strong and significant feminist movement, but when it comes to conflicts mentioned above, our efforts become only reactive. We assume that there is peace because there is no visible conflict. We remain still until and unless we are confronted with violent conflicts. Once the violent conflict is invisible, we again assume that there is peace. The biggest lesson that we learnt through these years, is that, the absence of violent conflict does not mean peace. We also learnt that there are always sources of tension present in the society and they become visible as and when the forces behind the sources become proactive. On the contrary, we also realize that in a given society there are always "Local Capacities for Peace" present. Though we always require them to remain on the surface and help to keep peace and harmony intact, we hardly become proactive. During our journey, we have evolved not just as an organisation, but also the concept of Composite Heritage has evolved and new dimensions are added to it.

ABOUT US



Institute for Social Democracy is a non-governmental organization which aims to build a peaceful society through conflict transformation. It came into existence in the context of a post-liberalization society, which was still dealing with violence. Liberal economy's claim that it will lead to fading away of hierarchies was washed away by rounds of violence during the initial years of twenty-first century in India.

In the following song, John Lennon succinctly describes a society where all of us would like to live in:

Imagine there's no heaven
It's easy if you try
No hell below us
Above us only sky
Imagine all the people
Living for today.

Imagine there's no countries
It isn't hard to do
Nothing to kill or die for
And no religion, too

Imagine all the people
Living life in peace... You...

You may say I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one
I hope someday you'll join us
And the world will be as one

Imagine no possessions
I wonder if you can
No need for greed or hunger
A brotherhood of man¹
Imagine all the people
Sharing all the world... You...

You may say I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one
I hope someday you'll join us
And the world will live as one

Composite Heritage, as a concept we feel, can help us achieve a world of our dreams, a dream we all can have, a dream we all can fulfill.

1.—We understand the limitation of the term 'brotherhood.' So, we would invite to expand it a little further and include all those who wouldn't want to be restricted within boundaries of gendered identities. It won't only be brotherhood but sisterhood and everything beyond.

VISION and MISSION



ISD - ITS ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE



ISD is a trust and has its own organisational structure. Its central unit, which outlays and decides the outline of its programmes is based at Delhi, which also happens to be its main office. Programmes and interventions of ISD are spread across at many levels. With the support of its Delhi and field staff, ISD has adopted the structure of adhocracy, in which different cells are created and the anchors of each cell work accordingly.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE : ADHOCRACY



ISD - ITS AREA of WORK



ISD, directly and indirectly, is engaged in enriching and enhancing the concept of Composite Heritage, democracy and peace building in India with support of its network partners, likeminded people, comrades and partners through publication and workshop medium.

Directly

ISD works at Kullu and Mandi in Himachal Pradesh; Allahabad and Jaunpur in Uttar Pradesh; Mukteshwar and Nainital in Uttarakhand; Kaithal in Haryana; Jamshedpur in Jharkhand; Srinagar, Tral, Kathua and Samba in Jammu & Kashmir.

Indirectly

Through Publications

Through publications- ISD has reached out to Andaman, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Gujarat, Jammu -Kashmir, Jharkhand, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Manipur, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamilnadu, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal.

Indirectly

Through Workshops

ISD has shared its concept of Composite Heritage with diverse groups in Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Gujarat, Jammu -Kashmir, Jharkhand, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, North-East, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

Note:

All activities of Composite Heritage at Jammu and Kashmir are supported and funded by Misereor.



COMPOSITE HERITAGE



Composite Heritage focuses on the shared cultural heritage of a society/ region as an entry point for peace building. This approach focuses on identifying threads of common cultural practices. Some of these examples can be language, food habits, festivals, value systems to name a few¹.

Composite Heritage, as a concept, can be perceived as a peace-building tool. Communities' collective stake in cultural heritage of a certain region/society makes it Composite. It does not belong to a single community and is passed on from one generation to the next. Its collectivity is what makes it an important tool in building a peaceful society. The radicality of it lies in the fact that it aims at strengthening shared cultural spaces amongst communities, which makes it an important peace building tool. Festivals, food habits, shared history, language among many have potential to bring conflicting communities together and resolve differences. These examples, however, are restricted to a region and are under a continuous dynamic process. We aim to build a secular movement which does not wait for violence to happen so as to warrant any attention. We want to rather anchor ourselves in peaceful traditions which help mitigate a violent fracas from the very beginning.

1.—Shruti Chaturvedi in "Mainstreaming Sensitivity Through Composite Heritage Approach in Nagarik Aawaz Nepal and People's Action for Development, India".

LOCAL CAPACITIES for PEACE



Even in the face of adversities like war or communal pogroms, we often come across individuals/communities who offer generosity and firmly position themselves in humanity. Mary B Anderson in her book, 'Do No Harm', underlines how every community/society has capacities for peace which are local and firmly grounded in their respective contexts. She identifies these capacities within institutions, attitudes, moral and ethical values, collective experiences, symbols and festivals. She asserts that one cannot break the cycle of violence unless in a conflict-ridden society, *connectors* are strengthened and *dividers* are weakened.

Our work takes inspiration from this analytical framework to train team members and communities, (especially the youth), to understand problems which continue to plague a community. The aim is to strengthen their skills in conflict analysis and, encourage collaborations between different actors. The idea is to identify roles of local communities in generating preventive action and response to conflict. One of the agendas is to capacitate youth so that they can play a fundamental role in furthering our work of peace-building.

THEMES WITHIN the FRAMEWORK of COMPOSITE HERITAGE and LOCAL CAPACITIES for PEACE



Our work is not just restricted to engage with Composite Heritage only on a conceptual level. It, however, is a theoretical framework which metes out our work at the grassroot level too. The work also entails capacitating our target groups so that they can become self-reliant. The following are some of the areas that we cover under the aegis of Composite Heritage:

REVIVAL of COMPOSITE HERITAGES

Reviving lost Composite Heritages is equally important as recognizing them. ISD, with the help of communities, recognizes as well as revives forms of Composite Heritage through various activities. Traditional food items, games and folk art/songs etc. are in the process of being revived in our field areas.

AWARENESS BUILDING PROGRAMS

Awareness programs, even though non-tangible or quantifiable, make an important constituent of any community-based work. In this regard, ISD, through the help of its popular material and theatre workshops, has been trying to build a strong understanding of issues pertaining to society, social justice, rights etc. amongst its stakeholders. Composite Heritage has been underlined as an important tool in building a peaceful society. We also keep organising capacity building programmes with our staff members such as seminars/workshops on Non-violent communication, issues related to LGBTQIA+ communities etc.

EDUCATION

Education, through alternative means/ways, can be extremely helpful in building awareness in communities. It can be a useful tool to reduce negative aspects of society while enhancing skills. Education, in the context of culture and tradition, also works as a binding force between people. In Jaunpur, for example, we organise *Youth Adda* where youth groups are given different tasks such as writing poetry/short stories on socio-cultural issues etc.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING

It is important to engage with the issue of gender discrimination and gender-based violence, especially with the youth. We have been trying to engage with the help of workshops and training

sessions with the communities in general and the youth in particular. The necessity of engaging the latter lies in the fact that they play an important role in disseminating ideas. The topics which we cover through our trainings and workshops are as follows; gender discrimination, eve-teasing, domestic violence, gender-based violence, witch-hunting, rights and duties etc. We also ensured that women took part actively. In addition to this, we contributed in creating self-help groups so as to provide a space for women and youth to be self-reliant. The effort was also to illuminate negative forms of Composite Heritage.

CAPACITY BUILDING of YOUTH, LEADERS and WOMEN

Capacity building programs and workshops have been conducted in different field areas for development of youths and women. These programs are aimed to capacitate the target groups so that they can take up leadership roles in their respective areas.



EXPLORING NEW IDEAS

by ADAPTING DIFFERENT STRATEGIES

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We strive towards using various methods to illustrate the importance of Composite Heritage as a tool to build a peaceful society, which are as follows:

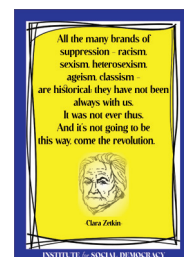
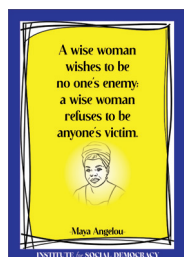
1) RESEARCH as A TOOL to UNCOVER COMPOSITE HERITAGES

ISD has been working on local Composite Heritages through research work since the past year. The aim of the research cell entails using research as a methodology to develop a nuanced understanding of shared heritages while also bridging the gap between us and ISD's trainees and comrades.

The process involves inviting proposals from our trainers which underline the Composite Heritage of their respective fields. The proposals undergo a scrutiny by the members of the research cell to gauge their potential and a topic is selected after a unanimous decision. Himachal Pradesh, Assam, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh etc. are some of the areas where ISD has undertaken research with its trainer partners.

2) UTILIZING INTERNET as A MEDIUM to CIRCULATE OUR IDEAS

The strength of social media as a tool to spread ideas cannot be denied any longer. It plays a significant role in reaching audiences which otherwise wouldn't have been possible. We, too, incorporate this method in our work to share the ideals that we stand by and believe in. We regularly make pamphlets/posters and hold online meetings on relevant issues. We have been active



on social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram to regularly catalogue our activities.

3) ORGANISING WEBINARS and STUDY CIRCLES

To reach our community and for building knowledge on various issues, we organised various webinars and study circles. We invited multiple scholars and speakers to discuss different Composite Heritage topics. ISD, in past years organised webinars on Traditional Farming-A way of Life, Economic Impacts of Ukraine War in India, Globalisation and Climate Change, International Language Day, Adivasi Samaj ke Badalte Haalaat- Kuch Vichar Kuch Sawal.

4) ACCOMPANIMENT PROGRAMME

ISD has initiated an Accompaniment process on Composite Heritage through which the idea is to mainstream this approach in the organizational work culture, strategies and policies for a sustained, long-term change at a personnel as well as structural level. The main idea behind the accompaniment process is to help organisations incorporate shared heritage values through a sustained hand-holding by ISD. The process is an extension of introducing the concept to organizations, to walk along in the journey of mainstreaming it and making it a cross-cutting issue.

Under the process of accompaniment, ISD has conducted various Composite Heritage workshops with organizations at the national level. Our accompaniment process partners at the national level, are Peoples Action for Development (PAD), Tamil Nadu and Lok Samiti, Banaras (Uttar Pradesh).



IGNITING MINDS of YOUTH for BRINGING PEACE in SOCIETY



India has a largest population of youth in the world. Considering this fact, nearly 70% of India's population is below 35 years old. This young population is the future of the country and we need to preserve their strength and innocence in a positive way. Hence, we need to promote youth development. We need to realize the role of youth in the development of India. In order to preserve our unity and diversity in the country and bring peace in society, we should focus on cultivating positive traditions and ideas among youths thereby igniting the young minds so that they productively contribute to nation-building with a culture of peace.

ISD believes that youngsters can play a fundamental role in disseminating any knowledge. Keeping this in mind, we formed youth groups so as to strengthen the concept of Composite Heritage at the grassroot level. The youth play a significant role in bringing two generations on the same platform so incorporating their role within our work was considered important. We formed several youth groups in our field areas with the aim of engaging them and providing them the tools to build a society based on values of peace and harmony.

We have been conducting workshops and trainings for women and youth groups. The workshops/trainings can be categorized as following—workshop on Composite Heritage, Gender-sensitization workshops, DO NO HARM-LCP workshop, training for Conflict Transformation etc. This also includes meetings on issues of social and political significance. These meetings also help in developing critical thought process amongst the participants which can subsequently help them in carving out a distinct identity for themselves on progressive ideals. Our methodology entails organising orientation workshops, seminars, community meetings, capacity-building workshops, exposure visits, celebrating festivals and important events throughout the year.

As part of the efforts to build a culture of peace, and to develop an understanding of the diversity of India, it became necessary to bring these young people together on one platform and provide them with a space for learning about different states, cultures and traditions. Keeping this in mind, we organized a **Youth Convention** in Delhi.

Youth Convention

ISD, for the very first time, organised a youth convention in Delhi where in ninety participants from our youth groups all across our fields spent three days together. The aim of the convention was to give a common platform to the youth groups where they can learn from each other as well as take our learnings back home so as to keep continuing the work. The convention was a bag full of seminars. The themes included discussion on Indian Constitution in which the speaker traced the historical process which led to the formation of the Indian Constitution. The speaker further stated that the Constitution isn't merely a name given by intellectuals sitting at a table, but it was brought in through struggle. It has been an amalgamation of years of social and political engagement, debates and conversations. The discussion on historicity of Adivasi culture, their heritage and their contribution to society was also held during the convention.

When we discuss the development of youth and their protection from negative elements in present times we believe that the biggest damage to the young generation and coming generations, is to fill them with fear and hatred through distortion of culture and history. Large number of youths in present times are being influenced by the negative forces in society and one of the key instrument for influencing their ideas and filling them with hatred is social media and fake news. In light of this, the necessity of identifying fake news on social media channels was also discussed. The speaker shared strategies which one can use to figure out whether an image being shared online is legitimate or not. He shared websites and online portals which work as fact checkers so as to dispel wrong news. A movie screening of Nakul Sawhney's documentary, called 'Immoral daughters in the land of honor', was also held wherein the movie succinctly underlined how in the name of honor, families will go to any extent to defend their actions.

A session on Gender and power was also had to understand gender structurally and how gendered practices influence our everyday lives. Additionally, a lecture on Religion Myth and History was also organised to discuss the religion and how it has been used to create violence by creating myths in society. How myth about religions and communalism become hurdles in the path of peace-building and progress. Another theme was 'Environment and Politics' where the speaker discussed how a few capitalists of the world have access to the world's resources. Their idea of accumulating resources is the reason why the entire world is suffering. The youth convention also included cultural events in which our youth groups performed traditional dances, songs, plays etc. Theatre and craft activities also were included. This idea of bringing the youth together and providing them knowledge on different issues to enhance their skills is one of the initiatives which we believe to continue in coming days as well.



LEADERSHIP AMONG YOUTHS and INITIATIVES

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ISD, while working with youth, have developed different youth groups in its intervention areas. The youth groups developed by ISD have become very active and strong. They have not only found their own development and self-confidence, but are becoming helpful in the development of their respective villages and Bastis in various situations.

Leadership among youths has increased, they have become confident and responsible towards their family and society. Moreover, they have also become aware of different social and cultural issues and taking initiatives on their own.

In Jaunpur - Youth Jamghat, one of ISD's activities has shown a positive impact on youth and community. After gaining learnings from Youth Jamghat, the youth themselves have started conducting small meetings in their village areas. They have started talking about various social issues, such as caste, class and gender discrimination. One of the major tasks which the youth had performed under Youth Jamghat was showcasing documentary of Gauri Sawant (a transgender person). Discussing issue of third gender-that also in rural community!

Youths of both Jammu and Kashmir came forward to learn about the religious and cultural practices of different states and communities. Their misconceptions towards each other were removed as they learned to respect each other's beliefs and cultures. Moreover, they have become the agents of change while bringing theory in practicality against gender discrimination and inequality, particularly defeating the social evils through awareness building. Also they practically fight against the negative social constructs and myths that are being prevailed in society.

In Jharkhand, the youth of Patipani village, with their understanding, managed to reconcile two neighbours of their village. Similarly, in Govindpur Basti also, the youth with the help of ISD field coordinator and associate, helped in reconciliation of two Tolas.

In Uttarakhand, the youth are continuously engaged in preservation and protection of their Forest and Natural Water resources. They have started conducting small meetings among their communities to build awareness for preservation and protection of Composite Heritage and natural resources.

In Allahabad, working with the youth of both Nishad and Bhartiya communities together, has shown a positive impact. After taking part in ISD activities, youth of both the communities shared and learnt from each other's experiences. While sharing, they started resolving myths about each other in their own basti and brought their conflicted communities together.

In Himachal Pradesh also, youth are engaged in different ISD activities. They are helping women of their village area in their campaign against alcoholism. They are also learning Musical instruments from local musicians for the preservation of their local folk art and building inclusive culture in society.

In Jharkhand, the youth are taking self-initiatives, they are sensitising people and building awareness among them through street plays. They prepare and perform street plays about social issues such as caste and gender discrimination, witch hunting practices, superstitions, environmental and hygiene related issues on their own.

In Allahabad, the youth have also started small Bal Bageecha centres on their own for conducting activities. They have taken ownership of the concept of Composite Heritage and other related activities.

GENDER INCLUSION and COMPOSITE HERITAGE



Mainstreaming of Composite Heritage along with gender inclusion is among our key areas and we have made continuous efforts for bringing women out of their shells. Women empowerment, through the formation of strong women groups in field areas and conducting activities among them, has enabled women in villages and Bastis of Uttarakhand, Jaunpur, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir to express their views without any hesitation.

Women, who got connected through Composite Heritage meetings, have become more aware about their rights; they have developed small financial committees and help each other during economic difficulties. This shows how women have become financially independent.

In Allahabad, ISD had to face various challenges due to political-religious conflicts. We had to slow down activities in one of Muslim bastis (Munna Masjid Mohalla), but team with their efforts and strategies, brought Muslim women out of their shells and back in the meetings and programmes. After ISD's efforts, women themselves started taking initiatives and provided space for organising meetings in their basti.

During Chetru Vith festival, women of Teel village challenged men for Tug of War and defeated them. This news was published in the local newspaper and these women became the role model for other villages as well.

The people in the area of Dhollian and Govindsar are of marginalised section. Women get very less chances to explore and speak for themselves. After some months of working with them, they developed an understanding on gender-based issues and started speaking for their rights. They were given additional information on the laws and rights of women provided by the Constitution during the activities.

They have started **challenging patriarchal norms**. They have come out of their private sphere and started participating in various public meetings. In Sayed Gorari village of Jaunpur, women became part of the Ambedkar rally, even though their husband tried to stop them from doing so. In Machhli Shehar village of Jaunpur, for the very first time during Ambedkar Jayanti programme, a woman shared a stage with 10 other men. It was the biggest achievement for all the women of the village. In a rural village where women are not even considered to be part of such activities, one woman managed to hold a seat among men and shared her views from the dais.

Women groups who attended ISD meetings made efforts for their rightful entitlement as farmers. In Uttarakhand, women groups submitted applications to government officials that they should be considered as farmers and have some rights over farmlands because without land they don't have any say over resources and produce. After their efforts, the government has issued an order in which single and widowed women have been entitled as the owner of their share of land. Despite this, the fight for the entitlement of women farmers is still going on.

A BRIEF REPORT of PROJECTS and ACTIVITIES

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A) ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED at THE GRASSROOT LEVEL

- In all our fields, we conducted gender-sensitization workshops in which we discussed gender specific roles, gendered upbringing and knowledge production, women's rights and recognizing the amount of labour done by them on an everyday basis. The aim of these activities is to mobilize the youth to understand the relevance of gender equality.
 1. We conducted one-day, two-days' and three-days' Gender workshops in Allahabad, Jaunpur and Haryana respectively.
 2. We conducted several meetings with women of Allahabad, Jaunpur, Jharkhand and one meeting on women's health and hygiene in Haryana.
 3. In Jammu and Kashmir, we organised regular meetings with communities to combat sexual and caste-based violence.
 4. In Kashmir, we organised activities to understand how traditional healing practices help cope with extreme chilly winters.
 5. In Kashmir, we discussed role of communities in building peace.
 6. In Kashmir, we did activities to understand the economy generated through local crafts. The aim of this activity is to understand how traditional crafts have been forgotten, which actually enacted as a source of livelihood etc.



- We conducted theatre workshops and street plays across our fields. These informal spaces help the participants to ensure their presence fully while simultaneously giving us the space to critically engage with them on socio-political issues.
 1. We conducted one-day and two-days' theatre workshops in Allahabad, Jharkhand Haryana. Besides the theatre workshops, we organised various street plays in Jharkhand, Jaunpur and Allahabad. In Jammu and Kashmir, we organised perspective building workshops on gender, caste and value of Composite Heritages with our youth groups.
- In Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Jaunpur we conducted meetings/workshops with farmers on organic farming and traditional agricultural practices as forms of Composite Heritage. A women farmers' Convention was also organized at an Inter-college in Bheedapani.
 1. In Jaunpur, we organised a two-days' workshop on Organic Farming with women.
 2. In Uttarakhand, we organised a Female Farmers' convention to make people aware about Organic farming under local composite heritage.
 3. In Himachal Pradesh, we organised a two-days' meeting on Composite Heritage with farmers to address agricultural issues.
- In all our fields, we celebrate International Women's Day, Holi, Independence Day, Ambedkar Jayanti, Gandhi Jayanti etc. Apart from these, we, along with the communities, celebrate region specific festivals such as Kajri Utsav in Jaunpur, Vishwa Adivasi Diwas in Jharkhand, Chetru Vith in Himachal Pradesh etc.
 1. All the important days like Gandhi Jayanti, Ambedkar Jayanti, Children's Day, Swami Vivekanand Jayanti, Independence day, Republic Day, Women's Day, Labour Day etc. are celebrated at all the centres of each field with children for their better understanding.
 2. We also organised Lok Kala Utsav, Barkha Utsav and Kajri Utsav as forms of local festivals in Allahabad.
 3. Raska Raso Porob celebrated at Jamshedpur, Kharkhand is an annual cultural celebration of indigenous people where they perform folk theatre, music and dance of their community.
 4. In Jharkhand centre, we also organised Birsa Munda Jayanti.
 5. In Jammu and Kashmir, we organised events on Savitribai Phule Jayanti, Ambedkar Jayanti etc.
 6. In Kashmir, we celebrated Navroz and how it can help in building peace.



- To mainstream the concept of Composite Heritage, we organize meetings/seminars/workshops in all our fields, i.e., Himachal Pradesh, Kashmir, Jammu, Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand. The activities involve various stakeholders such as village heads, communities, journalists, youth and women groups or revival of bonds within communities in an effort to invoke a collective harmonious past. The primary aim of the activities, however, remains to build an understanding on the importance of communal harmony and how communities, on a collective level, can promote democratic values.
 1. We organised several workshop on positive as well as negative Composite Heritages for a deeper understanding of the same.
 2. We also organised follow-up meetings with the participants involved in Composite Heritage workshops in all the field areas.
- We have been organizing various cultural programmes across our fields, to give the communities the opportunity to explore themselves. In Sonari, near Jamshedpur, we organized a Yuva Mahotsav to mainstream the concepts of Composite Heritage through cultural activities. In Haryana, we conducted a five-days' sports and cultural program workshop through which themes of communal harmony were explored. Another cultural programme was conducted in Jaunpur in the form of Youth Adda and Kajri Utsav to create a shared space for communities facing inter-caste conflicts. Another objective was to explore the importance of traditional songs/dances in our everyday lives. Sirjan Mela of Allahabad, organised annually by our team, is great cultural festival of Allahabad. In Jammu and Kashmir, we organised activities on the importance of Unity in Diversity.

B) CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOPS

- In Jaunpur, Himachal Pradesh, Allahabad, Jharkhand and Machhli Sheher, we conducted workshops under Do No Harm (DNH) and Local Capacity for Peace (LCP) with our youth and women groups. The trainings were also held with NGO partners and CBO leaders in Jaunpur and Himachal Pradesh.
 1. In Jaunpur, Machhli Sheher and Himachal Pradesh, we conducted cluster level meetings on Gender/LCP/DNH/Gender/Conflict Transformation with the youth and women groups.



2. In Jharkhand, street plays were organized in three villages under the LCP programme.
3. In Jharkhand, we organised two-days' DO NO HARM/LCP workshop at Sonari, Jagannath Sabhagar in Jamshedpur.
4. On Ambedkar Jayanti we organised a DO NO HARM/LCP meeting with the people of Ruidas community in Jharkhand.
5. LCP workshop with girls and women was organised at Munna Masjid, Bhadohi in Allahabad.
6. Several meetings with youth and women were organised under LCP for harmony and democracy in Jaunpur.
7. In Jammu and Kashmir, we organised perspective building workshops on Composite Heritage, involvement of youth in peace-building initiatives, using traditional ways to resolve conflict etc. We also organised activities on the importance of mother-tongue in preserving Composite Heritages and the like.

C) EXPOSURE VISITS

Exposure visits can play a fundamental role in widening one's horizon in terms of how one views oneself with relation to the society at large.

1. The youth group from Uttarakhand and Haryana participated in a trip to Allahabad on an educational tour. Since ISD has been working to mainstream Composite Heritage as a concept at the grassroot level, a meeting with the youth groups from two different regions would help them in understanding each other's culture.
2. Similarly the youth groups of Jaunpur visited Uttarakhand for an educational tour where they learned about their culture and lifestyles.
3. Exposure Visit of youth of Mau Saraia and Sanjay Nagar Basti to Hathi Park in Allahabad was carried out.
4. Exposure Visit of the youth to north central zone cultural center in Allahabad was also conducted.
5. In Jharkhand, the youth were taken for an educational tour to Dimna Dam and Dimna Lake, where they learned about the shared struggle and environment issues encompassing Jharkhand.



D) CELEBRATING FESTIVALS and EVENTS

Festivals add a significant value to any society. They teach us the importance of living together in harmony. Similarly, remembering people who have played important roles in moulding the society on ideas of justice and equity is equally important. Keeping this in mind, ISD and our field staff ensure that they keep underlining the importance of festivals through our work. The following are some of the festivals and events which were organized by ISD in the last year. It is not an exhaustive list but an overview of our activities in our various fields.

1. In Allahabad, International Women's Day, Holi and Independence Day were celebrated. The events were marked with playing games, singing songs and performing plays so as to understand the importance of these events in our lives.
2. Major festivals like Holi, Christmas, Eid-Milad, Barkha Utsav and Kajri Utsav programs were also organised to bring people together for celebration in Allahabad.
3. In Jaunpur, Holi Milan programme, Kajri Utsav and meetings on the birth anniversary of Kasturba Gandhi were organized.
4. Events like Baal Mela and Haji Miyan ka Mela, Iftar party were also organised to promote harmony in Jaunpur.
5. In Jharkhand, events on International Women's Day and Vishwa Adivasi Diwas were organized.
6. In Himachal Pradesh, Chetru Vith was organized. Chetru Vith is an annual program of ISD in Himachal Pradesh.



CHALLENGES and ACHIEVEMENTS



Present social, political and economic policies and rules alongwith various instances which erupted carrying religious extremism and discrimination made situations very difficult. Ban of hijab in schools, Buldozer episodes in Uttar Pradesh, Agnipath scheme, Reservations based on economic status, Land Right laws, are but a few examples that has created unrest in the country and obstruction in the ongoing activities.

Struggles to keep the democratic values alive became harder. Rise in hatred towards Muslims and their systemic discrimination does not seem to have any limits. Such instances and ongoing chaos has further led to the shrinking of spaces for conducting activities and programmes wherein, sometimes, ISD has had to take a step back.

Dominance of powerful people over marginalized sections became very visible and prominent, and violence towards the poor and marginalized led to further challenges. The circulation of distorted culture and history through social media created tensions and conflict among communities. Youth are becoming the main target of such negative forces. As a consequence, dealing with such negative forces and perspective building of youth on actual socio-cultural history has become a big challenge.

Inspite of these challenges, our team and fellow network partners continued their interventions and helped the communities in understanding their regions and maintaining peace in difficult times along with celebrating all the Composite Heritages.

It can be seen through the spirit of community and their increasing support for helping in conducting programmes in terms of financial and human resources. This shared struggle brings people together in many ways. **Community engagement and contribution has also increased.** For instance, in Allahabad during the Lok Kala Utsav, Basor community prepared the musical instruments on their own and participated in the programme with great enthusiasm.

It is a great boost to see the eagerness of the youth and their self-initiatives for their village alongwith their zeal for leadership and ownership towards the concept and cause.

In Haryana, **leaders from the marginalised communities** (Dalit community) have come forward. In Titram village of Haryana, there is a huge caste and gender discrimination issue where women and Dalit people are always being discriminated and not allowed to even share the same space together. But after ISD's interventions and efforts, for the very first time in Titram village, Ravidas community (Dalit community), came forward and organised Ambedkar Jayanti.

Increasing support of key people such as the village head and leaders, people from NGOs and women leaders etc. has been very encouraging. These key people had shown their support during different events on field - this has developed a trust amongst the community and towards the organisation. **Involvement of key people** in ISD's activities in different field areas have also increased. After attending ISD's meetings in the villages, New Gram Sabhas took the initiatives for preserving local traditional water resources (Naula). With the aim of preservation of the water sources, the community has also made efforts for the revival of the Composite Heritage associated with it.

Above all, **Promotion of Composite Heritage** concept as a peace building tool and awareness among communities regarding forms of Composite Heritage have increased. As a result, they have taken up various steps to promote and preserve their Composite Heritage.

STORIES of CHANGE



FREEDOM is WORTHY

Misra Bano, Bathnoor Village, Kashmir

"As a house-wife, I never experienced the taste of freedom and rights, because we are kept in chains everywhere. Woman is considered as the half human who can't speak, can't take decisions, does not have freedom of choice and speech". These are the words of "Misra Bano" who further added "while participating in the activities of ISD, I realized how precious freedom is and nothing can replace the price of freedom, no one is ready to fight for us but it is we who need to take a stand against the oppression and subjugation".

A strong lady from Bathnoor, who became the symbol of bravery and sustained even after she reached the brink of giving up, Misra Bano, is well educated in the contemporaries of her times. She got married at the age of 16 when she had no idea about the responsibilities and roles after marriage. She said besides this, her in-laws were totally uneducated and never understood or gave any value or appreciation for her efforts. She added that her potential and capacity was diminished in anxiety and stress as her decisions were considered vague. Whenever she talked or participated in decisions of her in-law's family, she was ignored under the inherited statement "Zanan Raj" or women's rule that is not accepted in her culture. While participating in the activities of Institute for Social Democracy, she shared, *"I am glad about the efforts of the organization working on women's empowerment, particularly gender inequality. This is probably the very first initiative in our village where women share such a worthy type of platform where we can attain orientation of recognizing our self".* ISD has marked a difference in shaping the mindset of the youth and children that they now practice the learnings of ISD at home. This includes appreciating their females and now being able to understand the loopholes in the structures of gender bias. She added that the type of orientation given to our youth and children is having a tremendous impact on them. *"The process of peace has started and there may be hurdles, but it will surely sustain because ISD is preparing a ground of humanity and harmony,"* said Misra.

THE BEGINNING of A NEW ERA

Shagufta Jan, Bathnoor Village, Kashmir

*"I always encourage my children and my near ones to participate in ISD's activities and I support the cause of ISD". These are the words of Shagufta Jan from Bathnoor. She is actively participating in the activities, always sharing her opinions and thoughts. Initially she was reluctant in participating in activities as she said that "earlier I believed that it is ambiguous or a waste of time, but my children used to participate, then I found some rapid positive changes in them. When one of my daughters shared with us about good touch and bad touch, that very thing touched my heart and my perception changed. Thereafter, I started participating actively and now there are numerous positive changes in my personality as well. There are hardly such platforms where women can share their opinions, where social evils can be fought at the very grassroot level with a smooth and gradual process of peace, it is **the beginning of a new era** that will distinguish the future of Bathnoor with that of what is it now". All she wanted to*

convey was that Bathnoor is lagging behind in every aspect- where, social evils have engulfed youth. But, with the work of ISD, an understanding has developed that will expose the common links of injustice in the society. She made efforts to connect new people with ISD's programmes. In every program, she takes a lead and initiates dialogue and has a quest for new learnings.

Although Shagufta is living with her in-laws, that makes it difficult for her to manage time, but still she manages and shows more interest and change in her behavior with a positive attitude. She added *"most of the times, women become prone to manipulation and exploitation. At times we become victims of domestic violence and the tragedy is that we are unaware about it. I am thankful to ISD for releasing us from the chains of subjugation and oppression psychologically"*. She is now more confident and she believes that peace starts at home, with the efforts of a mother who has an understanding of things.

CHANGE in BEHAVIORS and TOLERANCE among COMMUNITY

Govindsar Kathua Village, Jammu

Institute for Social Democracy started working in the field of Govindsar in August, 2021. Govindsar is a village in Kathua district of Jammu and Kashmir. The village has composition of people from all castes and religions. It is a well known part of history that there was caste hierarchy in our society. Such hierarchy is followed nowadays too. Govindsar has a history of caste conflicts, there had been many small issues due to castes. There was disharmony among people and people from different castes (i.e., people of General, OBC and Dalit communities never sit together). Even within the Dalits, there is superiority and inferiority complex. They can be seen together only during political rallies, and we could see people from different castes. Institute for Social Democracy selected this village as an area of intervention because in its initial visits, ISD had witnessed different types of multilayered conflicts in the village. ISD realized that it should intervene in this village to establish peace and harmony amongst different communities.

Narratives Before ISD's Intervention

Suristha Devi shared that caste conflicts in the village is prevalent. There is a huge gap due to economic reasons as well- people who had sold their lands to factories have become financially healthy and with that, they have gained education and status causing them to feel superior. Though there are families who belong to the same caste, but due to being economically wealthy, they have declared themselves slightly above the others.

ISD observed that people from different castes do not visit each other's houses and there is untouchability in the villages. We observed hate and abusive language for other communities. One more thing observed was that they believe different castes are made naturally, and it is ancient practice. It cannot be solved because it is made by the ancestors.

Kamla Devi shared, "Children from that community are not good. Their behavior is very bad, they use abusive language and drink alcohol. So we can not sit with them".

Priyanka Devi who belongs to the caste that is different from Kamala Devi and Shushrita Devi shared that *"People from that community (referring to others), do not invite us for any public activity and always hate us. Historically, we are more oppressed in comparison to them. We have less area to live. More population in less area is also one of the reasons for their hatred"*.

Strategy Adopted by Team ISD to Bring Communities Together

Institute for Social Democracy adopted a strategy to bring them closer to each other and discussed the issues of differences among them. It was not easy for us to do this smoothly. Participants from one caste (OBC) were not ready to attend the meeting with other caste (Dalit). We planned to have a common programme for them at a common venue where people from all communities could attend. For

this, an activity on the birth anniversary of Shaheed Bhagat Singh was organized at a common venue. The venue was an open area across the road which was used by all the community people. After discussion with the target groups about the activity and its venue, all agreed to attend.

It was the first time that people from different castes came and sat together for a long programme and had conversations. It created a platform for them to have sharing and discussion. At the end of activity, participants from all communities volunteered to distribute refreshments to all and everyone accepted that without any hesitations. Everyone had refreshments together and it was planned to have an activity together as well. We also took all the participants on an Exposure Visit together. We planned the journey in a bus for all with an intention that it will diminish discriminatory practices like untouchability and communal hate towards other.

Narratives After ISD's Intervention

Nowadays it can be seen that during the activities, people from different castes in the village come together and sit. There is a change in the behaviors of the target group. They stopped passing casteist comments on each other. Participants from one community always asked about other community people if they did not come for the activities. Same is observed with participants from different religions.

Anita Devi shares, "I used to feel discrimination within the community earlier. But after attending meetings and participating in the activities with ISD, I feel positive and secure. Earlier people use to comment on me and my family and they stopped visiting my house when I changed my religion to Christianity, but things changed after ISD's efforts- when people started meeting and sharing together. I have also become part of that group. One day, a meeting was organised at my house, we cooked lunch and all the participants from all the communities attended the meeting and had lunch there. It was a very joyful day for me and I realized that how Composite Culture can bring people of different attitudes together. I have learned a lot, activities conducted by ISD gives me joy and helps me relieve my anxiety.

Shushma Devi shares, "We should understand that everyone is not inherently bad in his/her behavior. We should respect each other and never discriminate anyone. Character of any community cannot be decided by character of one or some individual." It is a success for Institute for Social Democracy that we are successful in bringing harmony in this society and we will continue doing so.

LEARNING FROM ELDERS-PROMOTING and PRESERVING COMPOSITE HERITAGE

Dhollian Village, Bari Brahman, Jammu

Elder folks are assets of our society. They possess knowledge of all historical incidents and cultures of the area. Institute for Social Democracy (ISD) also works for the revival of different forms of positive Composite Heritage. This is the story of ISD's field Dollian. Dollian is a village in District Samba of Jammu Kashmir. In Dhollian village, we have developed a women group. In this, we have both elderly and young women who participate in different activities and share their day-to-day life experiences. Activities conducted by ISD provides them a platform to share and learn a lot from each other.

Soma Devi shares "We were aware of different traditions and cultures but after the intervention of ISD, I came to know the importance of Composite Heritage and the need of promoting different forms of Composite Heritage. I realised the importance of preserving our folk songs. Earlier I use to sing songs at my home or occasionally in some festivals, but now it has become part of our activities. It provides me a platform to share my skill and I feel very good. At the age of 70s, I feel empowered through my skills. When I share and teach folk songs to young ones I feel like I have potential to contribute for my village and society. I

have developed a sense of ownership towards my culture and my responsibilities towards young generation. I can say that there is curiosity among other females and young generations for this. Folk songs are part of our culture and identity. Its preservation and promotion is important because it has emotion and sense of belongingness. I have seen positive change in myself as well, earlier I was hesitant and never felt like singing and becoming part of activities, I was in view that we elderly people are useless and have no respect, but after participating in ISD's activities, I have gained self-respect and have become active. Along with existing knowledge I am trying to learn and revive other traditional folk songs as well."

Raj Kumari, shares, "I am an artist who made many traditional items from bamboos and other things. Earlier I used to make this item for livelihood, but after participating in ISD activities, I have shared my skill and art with others as well. I have demonstrated my art and other participants have learnt it from me." She added that, earlier people did not gave much importance to her art and items but after participating in the activities and visiting other places, people have realised the true importance of this art and traditional articles. "Now I discuss about these arts and items in my village through the lens of Composite Heritage and why it is important to preserve them. I have gained self-confidence and have sharpened my skills. I feel empowered when I share these learnings with others. I thank ISD for activities and talks on traditional items which are part of our Composite Heritage. These things which I make are environment friendly and much better than the baskets made of plastics. Some women in our locality are learning this skill. I am glad to teach them."

Dayawanti Devi who works at school as a cook for preparing mid-day meal shares, "I know how to cook many traditional dishes. Whenever any festival is celebrated in the community, people call me to cook traditional food items. During an intergroup interaction activity organized at Dollian, I had cooked food for all participants with the help of other participants."

She further adds, "our new generation is forgetting their traditional food items and moving towards junk food. I feel bad that delicacies which are part of our Composite Heritage, which helps in uniting people, is being totally forgotten by the new generation. I am happy that I got the opportunity to learn many new things about the culture, traditional foods, our language, folk songs etc. It is an impact of ISD's activities that many participants learned how to cook traditional food items from me. Whenever I teach others, I feel like I can contribute in reviving these traditional forms of Composite Heritage. I love sharing my skills. it has also benefitted us in other ways that we have started visiting each other's homes. Earlier we used to visit occasionally during any festivals or events only."

ISD's interventions and activities with Women, Youth and Children of Dollian are helpful in bridging the gap between them. It created a platform for sharing and learning for all. Especially women who are engaged in household chores and were not allowed to do other things. Institute for Social Democracy created a means for them, where they can share their skills and learn from each other. These are helpful in reviving various forms of Composite Heritage and bridging the gap within communities. This one step of learning from elders has helped individuals in gaining self-confidence and respect in society and it is a great initiative by the communities for building peace and harmony in society.

YOUTH GROUP HELPED in ENDING CONFLICT

Govindpur Gitti Machine, Jharkhand

Jharkhand is one of the tribal states of India. Surrounded by dense forests, this state is full of treasures. Treasure of natural forest products, local culture, traditions and local practices which are very much relevant in present times. Enriched with natural resources and minerals, Jharkhand has always been in conflict. Tribals, whose core principle is Jal, Jungle, Zameen, are in a struggle with the others who try to

destroy their Jal Jungle Zameen. However, there are other reasons as well due to which tribal people and others are always in conflict. The issue of land grab by the capitalist society, tribal versus non-tribal issues, issue of protection of their culture that is being destroyed in the name of mainstreaming of the tribal community are major conflicting concerns. Despite this, there are some other problems which they face in their daily lives always such as health, education, etc. In this context, ISD in Jharkhand is working in Jamshedpur Tata Nagar area, where ISD conducts various workshops with youth and community people on LCP and Composite Heritage to build their capacity on conflict transformation tool so that they can understand the conflict of their region and help in its resolution.

Govindpur Gitti Machine basti is one of the bastis where ISD works with the youth. This Basti is located nearby Tata Motor Plant and most of the people settled in this basti have migrated from nearby states of Jharkhand such as Odisha, Chhattisgarh and West Bengal. They migrated here in search of jobs and due to the availability of many jobs in Tata Motors, they started living here permanently by making small rooms and huts. There are two settlements in Govindpur Gitti Machine basti- the lower tola and the upper tola, a narrow lane divides both the villages. ISD works with youth of both tolas and conducts LCP and Composite Heritage meetings, workshops and cultural programmes with them.

It was the month of June, when ISD heard that a mutual tension and fight has arisen among both tolas. Few youth and people of both the tolas were in a fight because of their claim on Akhada (A common ground where all the people sit together and do leisure activities). There was mutual tension, conflict and fight among the youths. After this, the tension between the two groups increased. The youth of the lower tola and upper tola and their family members stopped going and visiting each other's places and eventually, stopped talking to each other.

The whole situation was discussed among the ISD youth group of the locality from both tolas and ISD reminded them about the learnings which they had received in the meetings. It was decided that something should be done to defuse this tension. Therefore, ISD organized a meeting with the youth group of the lower and upper tola in which an analytical discussion of the situation was held and ISD again shared the conflict transformation tools with them and told them, how with the help of Composite Heritage, we can reduce the conflicts.

After analyzing the situation ISD planned that a cultural programme should be organised in which youth from both tolas will participate. The programme will be conducted in the middle of both the settlements on the same Akhada due to which this conflict has arisen. The youth were asked to prepare local folk dance and songs and it was decided that the performance will take place on the festival day. It was planned on the day of the festival strategically because on that day, every one participates in functions and if this cultural programme will take place on festival day, people from both tolas will also come and participate in it.

According to the plan, a cultural programme was organized in July 2021 and the people of both villages were requested to participate. In the cultural programme, the youth of both the villages who were not involved in the fight participated enthusiastically. When youth were performing in the programme, slowly people from both the villages started gathering. Some of them even participated in the programme. The youth of the tolas who were in conflict also enjoyed the cultural programme while standing nearby.

This process of joining youth and people of the locality, through cultural programme was a strategic plan in which the youth group of ISD played a huge role. The programme was successful and gathering of the village people as an audience also worked. They were happy! At that moment, they forgot their enmity and started celebrating together. Gradually, the negative approach and ill-thoughts of the villagers towards each other started decreasing. After this cultural programme, people from both the tolas started visiting each other's locality and started talking to each other. The current scenario is that the conflicts of both the tolas is over and they are happy with the idea and approach that ISD had used for ending their conflict.

WOMEN GROUP LAUNCHED A CAMPAIGN AGAINST ALCOHOLISM

Himachal Pradesh

Himachal Pradesh is one of the many beautiful states of India. It is the land of Gods and known as Dev Bhumi as well. It is enriched with different cultures and traditions. It carries a unique identity and its geographical location captures the heart of everyone. People in this area are dependent on agriculture and horticulture along with animal husbandry as a source of income. Banjar, Mohani, Bhataad, Bachhut are a few districts where ISD works with the community people in different villages. ISD conducts LCP workshops and meetings with youth, women, farmers and key people of the village in the area. Through such meetings and workshops, ISD is building awareness against social evils and at the same time, capacitating community people on LCP's conflict transformation tools.

While conducting various meetings, ISD observed that alcoholism in the area is one of the main reasons of tensions and conflict in the area. During interactions in our meetings, especially youth and women shared that due to liquor consumption, many people in the village have lost their lives; domestic violence with women has increased and fight among neighbors has become a common affair in the area. Looking at the situation of the area and the major reason for conflict, ISD organized a DNH/LCP conflict transformation camp for women and youth at Tung Panchayat of Banjar subdivision. In the camp during sharing, it came out that most of the men are habitual of drinking and it is causing conflicts and tensions in society and families. Most of the time, male members are spending their whole earnings on liquor consumption, which is affecting the family budget meant for education, health and other daily uses. Men get alcohol from government licensed shops which are located in nearby villages and areas.

ISD, with the help of conflict transformation tools and meetings, did the capacity building of women and youth of the area helped them in building strategies against this conflict and how they can be reduced. ISD shared that in many places, women and youth have stopped this problem by organizing successful campaigns against it. After various round of meetings, women shared that they believe that one of the major causes of frequent alcohol consumption is easy access to the liquor from the wine shop. This creates tension and conflict in their locality. They were of the view that if these licensed shops are not in nearby areas, especially around residential localities, then it will be very difficult for men to get alcohol easily. Hence, all women decided that they will ask their husbands not to consume liquor and at the same time they will file a request to their local civil body/jurisdiction to send a motion to the government for closing the wine shop in their village area. If it is not approved according to their wishes, they will protest against these wine shops and will capture the streets. With this promise, women of the region have already started a campaign against alcoholism and the youth of the village also pledged that they will help women in this campaign. They are helping women in legal documentation and other aspects. What we have observed after this is that local women activists who have launched this campaign are challenging people of local areas who used to drink openly. Self-confidence among women has increased and they are building awareness among other women of the village that they should talk to their husbands and other family members and convince them not to consume alcohol. Furthermore, they should stop them from drinking openly without any reason and also they should become part of the campaign. Such initiatives are creating harmony in the society and ISD has observed that men are now engaged in livelihood activities. Though the campaign is still going on but the initiative and stoppage of alcohol at public places gives a sense of achievement to women and they are determined to remove all the wine shops from nearby village areas.

PUBLICATION of POPULAR MATERIAL



Writing, as a medium, is quite radical as it opens the space to reiterate one's values and bridges the gap between the writer and the reader. Because of the pandemic, we moved all our publications online. The following are the newsletters and booklets which we published during the last year:

SAMRATH : (April-June 2022)

This issue is dedicated to the World Environment Day. The booklet starts with a poem which talks about the necessity of giving back to the earth, as much as we take from it. We need to minister to our financial needs while simultaneously preserving the natural resources.

SAMRATH : (July-September 2022)

The introduction of the issue delineates the way 'Nation-state' has become an almost accepted way of organizing oneself in a country. Everyone born in a country are equal citizens and have equal rights. Even though these values played a prominent role in the freedom struggle, however, some social factors present at the time also led to divisions based on caste, religion and region which eventually resulted in partition. India could have been a one-religion majority state, but that could be avoided due to our founders' faith in diversity and egalitarianism.

SAMRATH : (October-December 2022)

This issue underlines how Indian society has been going through a socio-political change which is actually creating rifts across communities even further. It delves into how communalism has become so enhanced, that even the most grotesque cases of violence don't evoke any emotion and there is a constant need to project India as having a homogenous culture, religion, traditions etc. Rather than focusing on issues such as unemployment, dwindling condition of public health-care etc., we are, as a society, more concerned with issues of communalism.

SAMRATH : (January-March 2023)

Celebration of Women's Day was and still remains a day of assertion. It is a recognition of labour effectuated by women, at home and outside, and their continuous exploitation in the name of love. When Silvia Federici calls for wages for the household, she underlines work done by women at home as work and not only love. When Shulamith Firestone equates giving birth with shitting a pumpkin, she speaks of violence in the name idea of motherhood. The current issue of SAMRATH is dedicated to feminist struggles- on roads outside or right in our living rooms.

SACH : (April-June 2022)

This issue was dedicated to the International Worker's Day and the shared struggles and mass movements ensuring rights of the workers. Shared struggles are important legacies which are required to be remembered so that one can take insights from them while fighting against injustices at the contemporary juncture. Collective

struggles are also an important part of our Composite Heritage as they ensured an equitable society for not only one specific section, but for everyone.

SACH : (July-September 2022)

This issue of SACH is dedicated to the youth. The introduction traces the way the International Youth Day was conceived by the United Nations and how it came into existence. It highlights the recognition of the necessity of tapping into the power of the youth.

SACH : (October-December 2022)

On the occasion of World Children's Day, the current issue of SACH discusses various factors that need to be addressed for creating a more inclusive and equal future for all children. It denotes education as an important right for children across the world. This will help build a better future for kids around the globe.

SACH : (January-March 2023)

Scholarship/protests, which subvert or battle against patriarchal practices which have been normalized, make an essential part of the women's movement or any mass movement for that matter. This issue of SACH is also dedicated to feminist struggles- be it outside or right in our living rooms. The essays shared in this issue underline how laughter can be a form of subversion and mundane moments in our everyday lives can have a radical potential to turn into big events.

BOOKLET : SERIES – 97

This booklet covers the history of woodcraft in Saharanpur, Uttar Pradesh. The artisans of the town are internationally recognized for their dexterity in making handmade wooden products which are examples of nuanced and beautiful artisanry. The author traces the history of the handicraft along with the history of the town which depicts how the craft precedes the formation of the town itself. Documentation of such an art will also help in preserving history of the bond between communities and the way in which woodcraft is an essential part of our Composite Heritage.

BOOKLET : SERIES – 98

This work focuses on dalit-advansi community which is involved in making musical instruments. The community belongs to Uttar Pradesh and their marginal location within the caste hierarchy has also translated to their marginal position in Jharkhandi society. The research focuses on historical, social, political and economic aspects of the community and the everydayness of the exploitation they face. However, they continue to play a fundamental role in preserving the heritage of our society. Without any expectation of recognition, they have been seamlessly working to keep the historical traditions and art intact.

BOOKLET : SERIES – 99

This booklet is based on Subhash Gatade's lecture given in Chhattisgarh on 'movement for science'. Through various scientific examples, this lecture provides us with multifarious scientific alternatives to counter superstitions and inspires us to move away from prejudices. It calls for a collective struggle of people, activists and organisations to give a befitting reply to those who lead masses astray with their false narratives.

BOOKLET : SERIES – 100

This booklet consists of poems, songs, ghazals and protest music, which take inspiration from the freedom struggle, which seek to envision a world based on equitable values, see a dream of communal harmony and a society away from structural hierarchies. These songs and/or poems underline the importance of collective struggle. This collection gives us the strength to keep moving in the path of building a just society.

OUR TEAM

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Mr. Qamar Agha
Dr. Jayant Kumar
Ms. Bhasvati Chakravarty

Delhi

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INSTITUTE *for* SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

Flat No. 110, Numberdar House, 62-A,

Laxmi Market, Munirka, New Delhi-110067

Phone : 091-11-26177904 / Telefax : 091-11-26177904

E-Mail : notowar.isd@gmail.com

Website : www.isd.net.in