

# Annual Report Summary 2005-06

## Foreword

Samarthan began its journey in undivided Madhya Pradesh ten years ago. The situation analysis demonstrated examples of weak voluntarism base, which can promote people-centred-development. The top down model of development was now benefiting the poor and the marginalized. Involvement of local organizations is imperative in solving development problems of the communities. Identification of well meaning groups was initiated, and supported to building their capacities on participatory planning, implementation and monitoring of programmes. Large number social initiatives were supported by Samarthan to develop them as value based voluntary organizations. There are several examples of organizations that grew out of Samarthan's support in the last 10 years of experience.

Samarthan believed in people-centred development, therefore realised the opportunity for deepening participation in local self-governance institutions soon after the enactment of 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Amendments. It was pertinent to engage with Panchayati Raj Institutions to strengthen their capacities to function as institutions of local self governance.

Samarthan visualized an opportunity of strengthening women headed leadership as 1/3 seats are reserved for women and proportional representation for Dalits and STs. Special handholding support was provided to the leaders of such category.

It was also pertinent to help Panchayats perform their economic development and social justice function, therefore micro planning at the local level was promoted. Moreover Samarthan also initiated a information centre for every access of information to the citizens who otherwise are deprived of development justice and equity.

It is necessary to build examples of success at the grassroots on various dimensions of participatory governance, however, it is equally important to identify bottlenecks in policies and practices of the government through systematic research to overcome such impediments. There are several studies undertaken by Samarthan to engage with the Government for necessary policy change.

It is important to relate at a national level with higher institutions of policy making, therefore, Samarthan is a part of a national coalition on Social Watch. Social watch brings out a national report on governance accountability from citizens perspective to hold institutions, like Parliament, judiciary, executive and local self governance to account.

Samarthan is moving ahead to become a strategic support center on participatory governance so that grassroots-democratic processes may be strengthened for active participation, equity and justice of the marginalized sections of the society.

Yogesh Kumar  
Executive Director

## Organisational Update

The consistent aim of Samarthan over the past decade has been to strengthen participatory governance and development from the perspective of the poor and the oppressed. In pursuance of this it has on the one hand supported voluntary organisations to pursue social change process, and on the other, sought to develop Panchayati Raj institutions as institutions of local self-governance. It has also pursued the issues of effective decentralized governance through research and engagement with the policy-making institutions.

This year Samarthan has gone through programme evaluation as well as internal organizational review for self-reflection to understand relevance of its endeavour from the stakeholders' point of view, to identify strategic directions, and to maintain relevant and impactful existence.

### Organisational Review Process and Findings

On the eve of its tenth anniversary, Samarthan initiated a self-evaluation effort to understand relevance of its endeavour from the stakeholders' point of view and identify strategic directions. The evaluation findings confirmed Samarthan's vital role in seeding voluntary organizations, and building their capacities particularly on the issue of governance. Samarthan has also made a mark on the national scene by playing a lead role in the National Social Watch Coalition to influence governance at a national level. It has built strong alliances and networks to take collective action and policy advocacy, and empowered communities for local actions and change, especially among women. The findings also underscored that Samarthan need to change from its role of a support organization only for the small and medium-size NGOs, and take up higher order roles to make a greater contribution in the development sector of the state.

### Strategic Planning Process

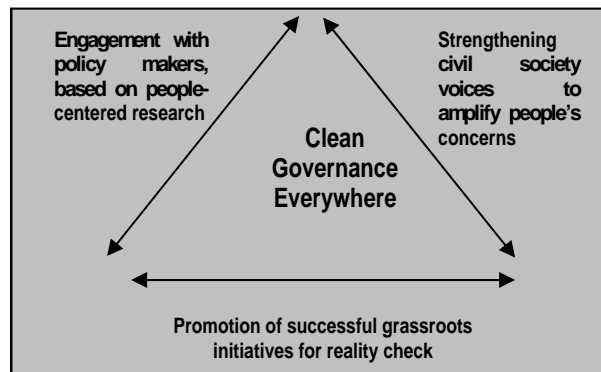
The Strategic Planning Process was initiated in December 2005. Mr. Prem Chadha, an eminent Strategic Planning and Organisational Development expert facilitated the process. A core group of Samarthan's senior staff and some of the long-term associates of Samarthan was formed to carry forward the strategic planning process. The core group provided their expertise in developing the vision and directions of selective taskforces. This core group reviewed the strengths and concerns that emerged from the evaluation as well as from the organizational self-assessment done to get the perceptions of various stakeholder groups on organizational dimensions.

**Samarthan's Proposed Vision & Identity:** The Strategic Planning process helped in determining new identity and societal vision for Samarthan. It evolved that Samarthan should put in efforts to become a strategic organization on the issue of local self-governance undertaking evidence based research for policy level advocacy in order to support the grassroots initiatives being undertaken by the civil society organisations.

**Societal Vision:** The team decided to take the motto "Clean Governance Everywhere" for Samarthan since mis-governance resulted in wastage of public resources and denied justice and development to the poor and underprivileged citizens. Samarthan believes that a more transparent and accountable governance in all spheres is a pre-condition for equity for the poor and the underprivileged.

**Desired Identity:** The desired identity is that of a strategic support organization in the areas of evidence-led research-based monitoring and advocacy, with a view to promoting decentralized governance.

Samarthan's 'Identity' will, accordingly, be led by three core initiatives: (a) Engagement with policy makers, based on people-centered research, (b) Promotion of successful grassroots initiatives for reality check, and (c) Strengthening civil society voices to amplify people's concern.



## Key Achievements of the Year

### Civil Society Strengthening in Madhya Pradesh and Chattisgarh

Being a support organisation, training forms a core activity and the organization has conducted several structured trainings on programme management in the voluntary sector.

- ❖ Empowering Youth for influencing governance - In the current year 78 orientation programmes, 208 trainings were conducted in Sehore and Ajaygarh. Total 2939 youths have been trained on various issues pertaining to local self-governance i.e; Right to Information, social audit, community mobilization and community based monitoring system. These trained youths are involved in conducting regular meeting at Panchayat and wards level and raising issues before the district administration.
- ❖ Forming Women's Collectives - To encourage women's participation in development process, Samarthan conducted seven trainings on panchayati raj and mahila sarpanch empowerment which resulted in a women's federation being formed at the block level in Sehore.
- ❖ Capacity Enhancement of PRIs Representatives - Samarthan trained nearly two thousand elected representatives particularly women, dalits and tribals who had inadequate knowledge and skills to deal with their respective responsibilities on panchayat, planning, meeting management, budgeting and proper handlings of accounts for various development programmes. A total of 193 orientations and training programmes were held during the year. These training programmes were held in Sehore, Ajaigarh, Ichchawar, and Pawai in Madhya Pradesh and Sarguja, Rajnandgaon and Bastar in Chattisgarh.
- ❖ Training of Civil Society Organisations – During this year the focus of trainings was on Panchayati Raj with a view to prepare a cadre of quality trainers in voluntary organizations to work on the issue of governance. This year's ToTs included various training programmes as illustrated in the table given below.

SN	Training of Trainers	Participants	Place	Date
1	Training on Micro Planning and resource mobilisation for panchayats on five different issues in Dongargaon and Bastar blocks of Chattisgarh	6120	Bastar & Rajnandgaon	Apr-Dec06
2	Key Government Schemes in Panchayats for	50	Raipur	Dec 2005

SN	Training of Trainers	Participants	Place	Date
	NGOs in Chattisgarh			
3	Gender Sensitivity and Panchayati Raj	22	Panna	Nov 2005
4	Disability and inclusion in governance and Panchayati Raj Institutions	28	Bhopal	Dec 2006
5	Nigrani Samiti (Monitoring Committee) for SGRY and FFWP	18	Sarguja	Nov 2005
6	Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)	50	Bhopal	Sep 2005
7	Community mobilisation and monitoring	19	Raipur	May 2005
8	Visual Communication using cartoons as a method	29	Raipur	Dec 2005
9	Right To Information and Urban Governance	18	Bhopal	Mar 2006

Apart from Structured trainings, Samarthan also conducted need based trainings for the concerned State and National level voluntary organisations. Among the key trainings conducted were an international training on Participatory Impact Evaluation for Help Age India (Sep 05), Good Governance and Self Help Groups for CASP-PLAN, ToT on Participatory Planning and Development for DPIP, Women Empowerment and Gender Sensitisation for Institute of Social Development, Udaipur, Training of elected representatives on Birth Registration for UNICEF.

## Field Experimentation

### Strengthening Local Self Governance Institutions

Samarthan has been working on the issue of strengthening local governance institutions. Though the focus is still largely on Rural Governance, the issue of Urban Governance was taken up as a major thrust area from the current year onwards.

#### Urban Governance

Samarthan is working in the towns of Ajaygarh, Panna, Sehore, Ichhawar, Katni, Sidhi and Naugaon in Madhya Pradesh and Ambikapur and Sitapur Towns of Chattisgarh to demonstrate models of participatory urban governance.

Some of the key interventions undertaken in Urban Governance are as follows:

- ❖ Campaign on birth registration - Samarthan had conducted a study to test the effectiveness of national campaign to promote issuance of Birth Certificates and to identify the actual status of birth registration in two selected urban wards of the Municipality Sehore.
- ❖ Pre-Election voter awareness campaign – Samarthan conducted a pre-election voter awareness campaign in the town of Sehore during the current year. The election in this municipality was postponed as Samarthan brought to the notice of the State Election Commission how some citizens in the municipality were enrolled neither on the rural nor the urban voters list. The campaign covered all the 35 wards in the town and it involved more than 6000 citizens in the campaign.
- ❖ Women Partnering in Monitoring the Services - It also facilitated the formation of women self help group in urban areas in Panna and Sehore. These groups took initiatives to sort out problems pertaining to solid waste management, PDS, supply of drinking water.

### Community Hall Constructed under Women SHG's Supervision

Aarti Mahashakti – Women's Self-Help Group of Sehore has unique contribution towards Community Based Monitoring. Sehore Municipality had funds earmarked for a community hall, but not the land for its construction. Taking initiative, Samarthan organised a meeting with Elected Representatives and concerned Municipal officers for identifying a piece of land so that a community hall may be constructed thereon. After four rounds of meeting, the community identified a land in Indira Nagar (Ward No. 9) and informed the Municipality accordingly, who concurring with the suggestion, had appointed a contractor to commence the construction work. The SHG voluntarily offered supervision of the work and the same was assigned to SHG – Aarti Mahashakti. During the supervision, upon noticing the usage of inferior material in the construction work, not only lodged a complaint against the contractor but also built pressure on the district administration to immediate stop of work on hold till further orders. Accepting the usage of inferior quality, the contractor not only apologised but also replaced the inferior quality material. Thus with the alertness of the SHG, the work was completed with required quality construction.

- ❖ Strengthening Mohalla Samities in Chhattisgarh – During the current year, interventions on strengthening Mohalla Samities and citizens' collectives was done in Ambikapur and Sitapur Municipalities of Chattisgarh. Orientation programmes were organised for the Mohalla samiti members and other citizen collectives.

### Rural Governance

Some of the key interventions undertaken in Rural Governance are as follows:

- ❖ Promoting accountability and transparency through RTI – With the enactment of the RTI Act, Samarthan took large scale interventions on the issue to promote accountability and transparency among panchayats. The intervention strategy involved the effective use of mass media like newspaper and radio. Radio Jingles, Live phone-in programmes on Radio on hyper band channels were instrumental in awareness building on the issue. Print media was also extensively used at the district level for carrying out stories. Simple learning material in form of folk songs were prepared and distributed



extensively in the rural areas. Other learning materials like posters, pamphlets, manual and calendars were developed and used for the mass education. A large scale campaign called "Kyaa Aapne Poocha Kyon" was launched during the year in which more than 45 Panchayats from Sehore and Panna districts were covered intensively. During the year 540 elected representatives and concerned citizens were oriented on RTI and 200 applications were filed in Sehore, Panna and Ajaygarh.

Block	No. of applicati	No. of department	Outcome	Outcome of application went in appeal.
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	on filed	approach- ed	No. of application accepted	No. of application rejected	No. of application accepted	No. of application rejected
Sehore	90	15	52	38	18	11
Panna	70	13	45	25	15	08
Ajaygarh	40	08	25	15	06	05

Several learning material were prepared during the campaign. These included several posters, handbills, audio cd and manual on Right to information. A manual on Social audit, was also prepared to help the village level committees and NGOs to conduct social audits.

- ❖ **Building Models of Effective Implementation of NREGA** – Since the inception of the Madhya Pradesh Grameen Rozgaar Guarantee Yojana in February 2006, Samarthan intervened in understanding the issues emerging from the field and developing exemplars on better implementation of NREGA. These interventions were focused in 25 panchayats from 5 districts in Madhya Pradesh. In Chattisgarh, 190 cluster level trainings of Village Vigilance Committee were organised in Sarguja District. The programme was held in collaboration with the district administration and it covered 7633 committee members. A manual 'Madhya Pradesh Rozgar Guarantee Yojana' and a manual on NREGA and Micro Planning was prepared for large scale dissemination.
- ❖ **Micro-planning Initiatives** – Local Self-governance institutions are expected to develop and implement their own plans, on the issues of economic development in participatory manner by involving Gram sabhas throughout the process. Comprehensive micro plans were developed in Dongargaon and Bastar blocks of Chattisgarh. The project "Rural Decentralization and Participatory Planning for Poverty Reduction" is a joint initiative of Government of Chhattisgarh and Samarthan. Decentralization is a vital means to achieve greater impact in combating poverty, as decentralized governments are likely to be closer and responsive to the needs of the poor and to implement policies and programs in a pro-poor manner. The project seeks to show how untied panchayats can help in development of better plans at the village level. Samarthan facilitated the panchayats by conducting house to house contacts to gauge the aspiration of people. The plans were then prepared with the gram sabha and were approved by it. Each of these plans are being sent to the District Planning Committee for further action. The budget for the annual plans in the two blocks is as mentioned in the table below

Block	No. of panchayats	Budget of the micro plans (in INR)				
		Infrastructure development	Social Development	Agriculture development	Human resource Development	Management of community- owned asset & taxation
Rajnandgaon	23	129188366	4301050	11889849	498200	395049
Bastar	25	93647345	4548726	18075789	1340500	4111100

## **Researches and Policy Advocacy for Participatory Development**

Samarthan is making efforts towards creating a space for voluntary organisations in the development process. For this Samarthan has engaged with diverse civil society organisations, government and development agencies for bringing policy changes.

❖ Influencing Millennium Development Goals in Madhya Pradesh:

A two-day state level seminar on the role of Panchayati Raj Institutions in achieving the development goals of Madhya Pradesh was organised in December 2005 which was attended by over 300 elected representatives of PRIs and selective civil society organizations. Representatives from Panchayats and NGOs shared their experiences in delivery of basic development goals and



the bottlenecks faced by them. They narrated their perspective as grassroots institutions of governance over a range of issues such as Right to Employment, Right to Information, Right to Health, Right to Education and Right to land, water and forest. The participating elected representatives resolved to build a state level network of representatives of three-tier structure. The participants drew an action plan to address the different issues raised during the meeting. The findings of the convention were shared with the panellists constituting the Secretary, Rural Development, Government of MP and Director of UNMDG Campaign. A documentary called 'Inpursuit of MDGs' (English/Hindi) was also prepared during the meeting.

- ❖ Study on "Women Leadership in Panchayat" - Samarthan conducted a research study to assess the traits responsible for good leadership among the women Panchayat representatives. The study sample comprising of 283 women and men associated with respective Gram Panchayat were randomly selected from 5 blocks of Sehore, Tikamgarh, Seoni and Panna districts. The study reinstated the fact that women representatives had all the traits of being just and able public leader instead of remaining as proxy representative for influential men in the family, Panchayat or the Society. Some traits were sharpened up in due course of exposure to different roles and responsibilities and may have been helpful in bringing successful change at all levels in the life of village people and the Panchayats. The views and opinions of the women elected representatives was also captured electronically in a documentary called 'Voices of Women Leaders' *'Buland Awaz'* (English/Hindi).
- ❖ Report Card Survey of Ichhawar Nagar Panchayat- Samarthan carried out a Report Card Survey in six wards of Ichhawar to analyse the status of basic services provided by different departments of the Government and local institutions. The objective of the study was to understand the citizens' perspective on availability/accessibility, utilisation and satisfaction of services provided by the Nagar Panchayat. The study emphasized the need of partnership between citizens and the Nagar Panchayat for improvement of services. Joint action was required to develop plans and community based monitoring to ensure availability of improved basic services.
- ❖ Study on Status of Right to Information - A study on the status of Right to Information was conducted during the current year. This study aimed to understand the information needs of the people as well as the role of Right to Information (RTI) in strengthening and promoting good governance in Madhya Pradesh. For this purpose Sehore Block of Sehore district of MP was selected as the study area. The study was conducted in the background of the enactment of National RTI Act 2005 and tried to understand the operational difficulties in implementation of the existing Acts. The study revealed that there were district specific experiences with respect to receptivity of the RTI in the district. It also brought forward several bottlenecks in implementation of the act at the block level and below. The findings were shared with the State Information Commission and the General Administration Department, Government of Madhya Pradesh.

## Future Directions

Samarthan, in its new identity would focus its interventions on Right To Information and the implementation of NREGA in Madhya Pradesh and Chattisgarh. It would work in the directions set up during the strategic planning exercise done in the beginning of the year. Samarthan has identified 5 partner organisations in 5 districts with whom initiatives on model building on the issues of NREGA and RTI would be implemented. On Right to Information, large scale awareness generation and capacity building initiatives would be taken up in the coming years. In addition to this, Samarthan would build the capacities of the staff on Research, Monitoring and Evaluation.



## Financial Statements for the Year 2005 - 06

### Abridged Balance Sheet as on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006

<b>PARTICULARS</b>	<b>AMOUNT (Rs.)</b>	<b>AMOUNT (Rs.)</b>
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Fixed Assets		7519803.66
Current Assets		
Cash & Bank Balance	14025178.60	
Sundry Receivables & Advances	1987086.88	
Other Assers	660866.00	16673131.48
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>24192935.14</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Corpus Fund	2000.00	
Capital Grants	3876632.09	
Reserves & Surpluses	11332642.31	15211274.40
Current Liabilities & Provisions		
Project Funds	8575142.74	
Provision for Expenses	406518	8981660.74
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>24192935.14</b>

### ABRIDGED INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2006

	Amount in RS.
<b>INCOME</b>	
Income from projects/assignments	1981732.44
Interest & other income	842643.00
Organisational service charges	651475.12
Reimbursement of project expenses	24015693.02
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>27491543.58</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	
Program & operational expenses	24142436.89
Depreciation	698981.00
Excess of Income over Expenditure	2650125.69
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>27491543.58</b>

## **Our Donors**

### **Direct Partnership**

- Cordaid, The Netherlands
- Oxfam (India) Trust, Lucknow
- Sir Ratan Tata Trust, Mumbai
- PACS (DFID), DA & PWC, Delhi
- DPIP, Government of Madhya Pradesh.
- Ford Foundation, Delhi
- GVT, Bhopal
- Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, Mumbai

### **Association under the Panchayat Raj, Urban Governance through PRIA, Delhi**

- Ford foundation
- SIDA, Delhi
- SDC, Delhi
- Cordaid

### **Association under Anubhav Shiksha through YUVA, Mumbai**

- IGSC, New Delhi
- SIDA, New Delhi

### **Issue Specific collaboration**

- National Social Watch Coalition
- CDF, Hyderabad
- ILO
- UNDP
- Rajiv Gandhi Watershed Mission, M.P.
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