ACTIVITY REPORT

APRIL 1991 - MARCH 1992

SOCIETY FOR PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH IN ASIA
42, Tughlakabad Institutional Area, New Delhi - 110 062
Overview

The year that went by was one of hectic activity. Having moved into the new building meant a lot of adjustments in the new environment. That was only the beginning and was followed by action, reflection and celebration on the occasion of PRIA's ten years of existence. It was an opportunity to take stock and pledge ourselves to looking ahead with renewed faith and hope for the future.

The new building gave more physical space for us as well as for use by our partners and other members of the constituency. It also entailed taking up new responsibilities and roles for maintenance and other related tasks.

This year also saw a further strengthening of the PDRC by way of expanding work responsibilities and additional infrastructure to be ready to support constituency and programme teams on an ongoing basis.

An intensive inhouse reflection on the experiences of PRIA's involvement in various sectoral and other issues led to a restatement of its mission and re-mapping of the constituencies in the context of changing socio-economic scenario. This exercise gave closer insights into our future role as a support organisation.

- It became clear that PRIA should work towards enhancing critical control of the marginalised and deprived people over production and use of knowledge in order to enhance their capacities to intervene in the processes and structures shaping their lives.
- In the above context, PRIA would be strengthening existing people's organisations, social movements, networks, field-based groups and voluntary organisations in multiple ways.
- The support through issue-based programmes and capacity-building programmes should increasingly converge as far as possible.
- PRIA would continue to be strategically involved in interventions with concerned State and para-statal organisations with a view to influencing governmental thinking and policies.
- A more intensive involvement with the groups, it was realised, would mean simultaneous and increased attention to developing inhouse capacities and capabilities within PRIA.
* PRIA would continue to collaborate with and strengthen other Support Organisations within the country and the Asian region.

* Alongside, PRIA would continue to play regional and international networking roles.

* A brief account of the work done and activities undertaken during the period is presented. Essentially, the nature of all activities of PRIA is educational. Depending on the programme, a combination of workshops, trainings, seminars, studies, preparation and dissemination of learning materials has been undertaken during the year.
Issue Based Programmes

1. Women’s Empowerment

* A camp for women leaders from various women’s groups in West Bengal was organised on April 25-28, 1991 at Taj Mahal Gram Bikas Kendra, in collaboration with Development Dialogue, West Bengal. Twenty women attended the camp for developing an understanding of various aspects of managing women’s economic activities.

* A two day consultation with a select group of organisations and individual women activists was organised on April 29-30, 1991 to share our perspective and chart out future directions of our work with women. A ‘Perspective Paper’, outlining PRIA’s perspective on its involvement with women, was the basis of the discussion. A report of the consultation has been prepared.

* PRIA participated in a workshop organised by EZE to discuss the role of the Forum on Women’s Development, held in Madias in April 1991.

* A training programme in Hindi for functionaries from NGOs in Maharashtra and Gujarat was organised at Pune between 7-14 May, 1991. Thirty four participants from 16 organisations attended the training which was aimed at strengthening the managerial capacities for organisation of women’s economic activities.

* PRIA is supporting a rural education network being facilitated by SPARC. We participated in their four day workshop held in Bombay from June 6-9, 1991.

* Another camp with a similar objective was organised during 19-21 June, 1991 at Tezpur, Assam. Twenty eight women members of primary mahila samities of Tezpur District Mahila Samiti attended the camp.

* A follow up training in ‘marketing’ and ‘organising’ in the context of management of women’s economic activities was organised in July, 1991 in collaboration with Development Dialogue, West Bengal.

* Another follow up training in ‘co-operatives’ for functionaries of voluntary organisations involved in managing women’s economic activities was organised at Lucknow from 6-9 August, 1991. Eighteen participants from seven states attended the training.

- A Needs Assessment Workshop with a select group of women activists of Ekta Parishad, Madhya Pradesh, was held between November 19-21, 1991 at Katni. The purpose of this workshop was to identify areas where these women activists could be supported on a long term basis through training and other interventions to build their perspectives and capacities for working with women and playing larger roles in ongoing struggles of the poor as well as within their organisations.


- PRIA was a member of the Thematic Planning Group in womens' education and empowerment towards ASPBAE's first general assembly. PRIA also facilitated a three day session on this theme at Tagaytay city, Manila during December 1991.

- PRIA is involved in developing the capacities of the members of Angul team, ISED, Orissa. We participated in a two day workshop during February 25-26, 1992 at Angul, in this context.

- A visit was made to Gram Vikas, Orissa, during 27-28 February 1992, to plan interventions with women activists in an effort to strengthen their perspectives and capacities to work with women and to play leadership roles at different levels within the organisation.

- In an effort to develop an understanding of women's issues a day long interaction was facilitated on March 18, 1992 among the professional staff. Ms. Kamla Bhasin, a noted feminist gave a stimulating start to this interaction by sharing her own understanding and thoughts on feminism and patriarchy.

- PRIA team visited Himalayan Action Research Centre (HARC) on March 22 and 23, 1992 for preliminary discussions with their team on supporting their work with women's groups in four districts of Uttarakhand region where HARC is active.

- PRIA has also been supporting the capacity building efforts of some of the trainers in West Bengal. A number of training programmes and workshops for women activists have been held.

- As a member of a Delhi based Forum for Women and Politics, it has been attending its meetings. The Forum had been actively pursuing the setting up of the National Commission on Women, and raising awareness on issues such as impact of new economic policies on women.

- National Institute of Urban Affairs organised a training programme for Delhi UBSP Programme Officers, Project Officers, Assistant Project Officers and Area Volunteers. A team member participated as a Resource Person on Team Building and Perspectives on Women's Income Generating Activities.
II. Workers' Education on Occupational Health and Safety

* Training in Occupational Health and Safety held at Raubkala from April 9-11, 1991. Twenty nine participants comprising trade union members, environmental activists and lawyers attended the programme.

* Two day training programme for the members of Maha Gujarat Kamgar Union of Baroda was held at Baroda on June 1-2, 1991. This was the first phase of a three phased training which will cover a range of issues relating to strength and unity in trade unions, broader approaches to dealing with problems, role of unions in collective bargaining and negotiations; and various Act, and regulations governing trade union activities.

* A workshop was organised in collaboration with Information for Action (INFAC), from July 2-5, 1991 at Cochin. Twenty five participants discussed issues concerning health and safety of workers in tobacco plantations, prawn peeling, fire cracker industry, stone quarries, crushers and forest workers.

* A two-day workshop was organised in collaboration with INFAC, Cochin on July 4-5, 1991 on how to conduct participatory research on the issue of occupational health hazards among women workers engaged in prawn peeling.

* A day-long discussion on occupational health training for activists was held on July 18, 1991 at Delhi. Thirty participants included representatives of central trade unions, experts from ITRC, NIOH, lawyers, engineers and doctors. A core group was formed to work on details of the training design.

* A day-long seminar was organised at Cochin in collaboration with INFAC on August 22, 1991 to share the findings of a study on health hazards of women workers in prawn-peeling. About 125 participants attended the seminar.

* Meeting of Occupational Health Hazards of Women Workers was organised in collaboration with UNNATI, Ahmedabad on October 22, 1991. The meeting was part of the follow-up of a study of women workers in stone mining, crushing, agriculture and tobacco cultivation and processing. Experts from NIOH, NDC, doctors, environmental activists and trade unionists attended the meeting.

* In collaboration with INFAC, a meeting on occupational health hazards for women workers in prawn peeling industry was held at Cochin on November 23, 1991. Two hundred participants from trade unions, fisher folk groups, women workers shared their experiences in the meeting.

* Visit to Raniganj/Dhanbad coal fields was made to study and discuss the health and safety problems of miners and the health hazards present at the workplace. It is intended to contribute to the workers' efforts for a safe and healthy workplace and living.
Keeping the same objective in mind, a second visit was made to Rourkela, Tensa, Kalia and Talchar areas of Orissa. Interaction was initiated with the workers at iron ore mines and steel, cement, asbestos, thermal power and heavy water industries.

Campaign Update

* During April 9-11, 1991, a meeting for activists in the eastern region was organised at Rourkela in collaboration with Council for Professional Social Workers, Bhubaneswar.

* A regional meeting was organised at Cochin in collaboration with INFACT on July 3-5, 1991.

* National level meeting in Delhi was organised on July 17, 1991 to review the objectives, strategy and structure of the National Campaign on Dust Related Lung Diseases (DRLD). Thirty participants, including leaders of trade unions, experts from ITRC, NIOH, and heads of voluntary organisations attended. It was decided that PRIA would function as the secretariat for the campaign for one year.

* Students of class XII of Delhi Public School, R.K. Puram were addressed on July 19, 1991, to raise their awareness on occupational health and safety issues in general and dust related lung diseases in particular.

* On December 8, 1991, a diagnostic camp was organised by UNNATI in collaboration with PRIA, Vyavasayik Swasthya Suraksha Mandal, Pottery Kamdar Union, medical students, Lions Club and doctors at Naroda, Ahmedabad. Camp was arranged in continuation of a survey of workers suffering from respiratory disorders.

* The Marathi version of a Reference sheet on Diseases for which compensation may be claimed was completed for use by field-based groups and activists.
III. People's Access to and Control Over Natural Resources

* PRIA team visited CANE and EQUATION, Bangalore during April 24-26, 1991 to discuss various issues of mutual interest, especially those relating to peoples' access to water as a source of livelihood.

* During May 5-10, 1991 the team visited Subarnarekha dam site in Bihar to study the problems of ecology and displacement due to the dam.

* A meeting on legal aspects of Mansi-Wakal project in Udaipur was held at Delhi on May 17, 1991. Besides local groups and legal activists, field workers of ASTHA, Chandeswar Kisan Sangharsh Samiti, and Ubeswar Vikas Mandal attended the meeting.

* Visits were made to Bombay-Thane region between June, 2-7, 1991 to meet groups working on land related issues and to plan future activities in Raigad district of Maharashtra. A participatory study on Dali land issues was initiated.

* During June 6-15, 1991, a visit was made to ‘PRAYOG’, and ‘Parivartan’ in Bastar. Discussions on land and forest issues as well as future work with ‘Prayog’ were held with various district co-ordinators.

* A workshop was held at Delhi on July 15-16, 1991 to discuss the issues of land records in Madhya Pradesh. It was decided that a popular document would be prepared for activists and others involved in land related struggles in Madhya Pradesh, equipping them with relevant information and procedures concerning access to land records.

* Between August 8-16, 1991 PRIA team visited Sarvahara Jan Andolan, Mangaon, Raigad to discuss and participate in the Dali land (forest land) study.

* PRIA, along with ISED, Bhubaneswar, organised a workshop at Prayog, Raipur during September 8-10, 1991 on Women in Social Forestry programmes.

* PRIA team participated in ‘Nahar Yatra’, organised between September 17-30, 1991, to study the impact of Indira Gandhi Canal on the people inhabiting the area. The Yatra brought out various issues relating to settlement, allotment and possession of land, water logging, and salinity, drinking water and effects of the canal on the health of women and children. The Yatra was organised by Urmul Trust, Bikaner.

* In collaboration with Vrikshamitra - Maharashtra, PRIA organised a workshop on "Local Governance over Natural Resources in Tribal Areas". This was held at Wardha during November 12-15, 1991. Thirty participants from Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra participated.

* A training workshop on "The Impact of Irrigation Projects" in Palamau district, Bihar was organised in collaboration with 'Lok Chetna' at Bettla on December 16-17, 1991. Activists working on land and irrigation related issues participated in this programme.
PRIA team attended a consultation on 'Tourism and Environment' on January 11-12, 1992 in Delhi. The consultation was organised by Equation, Bangalore to discuss the adverse impact of the tourism industry on the local environment, culture and economy.

Visits were made to groups in Anantapur and Hyderabad from January 15-25, 1992 to develop an understanding about watershed management and permaculture.

PRIA team attended Janvikas Andalan meeting held at Anantapur, Andhra Pradesh during January 18-19, 1992.

During March 8-15, 1992, a visit was made to Mandhalekha and Lahi villages of Gadchiroli district, Maharashtra to assist in the documentation of the process of people's governance of local resources.

PRIA team attended "Peninsular India 1992", a meeting to discuss environmental issues in the Indian Peninsular belt at Pune on March 20-22, 1992.

During March 28-30, 1992, PRIA participated in the COPDANET (Coastal Poor Development Network) meeting at Visakhapatnam and organised a day long participatory planning and orientation programme for the activists.

PRIA, in collaboration with Lok Chetna, Daltonganj, Bihar, has completed a participatory study on the impact of irrigation projects in Palamau district.

PRIA supported 'PRERNA BHARTI' Madnapur, Bihar, to do a case study on the issues related to women's involvement in the collection, processing and marketing of Minor Forest Produce (MFP).

A popular document on the Chhotanagpur Tenancy Act is being prepared.

A study report on the comparative assessment of BhooDhan Acts/Legislations in various states is being prepared.

A study on Role of Women in Social Forestry programmes in Madhya Pradesh and Orissa is being conducted in collaboration with Institute of Socio-Economic Development (ISED) Bhubaneswar, Orissa.
Capacity Building Programmes

1. Enhancing Competencies

Following activities/programmes were conducted to enhance the training capabilities of activists and groups:

* Phase II of TOT (Round VII) was held in Bangalore between April 16-23, 1991. Twenty nine participants attended the second phase.

* Phase II of the national TOT was held at Pur during September 21-29, 1991. Twenty participants attended.

* PRIA team supported Total Literacy Campaign initiated by Delhi Saksharta Samiti for Delhi in the conceptualisation and implementation of a strategy of training for the campaign. Master Trainers’ training was conducted in two rounds by PRIA team during November 11-17, 1991 and December 12-20, 1991.

* Training of Trainers – Phase I was held at Panchmahals, Madhyapada from December 10-17, 1991. Thirty Women and Child Development Extension Officers participated in the first phase of the five phase intervention.

* Fourteen Women and Child Development Extension Officers participated in the second phase of training held between January 18-25, 1992 and March 4-11, 1992 at Jabalpur. Second phase entailed organisation of training programmes in teams, with support from the trainer team.

* Regional Training of Trainers

  - Hindi Regional TOT phase II was organised at Dehradun from June 19-26, 1991 by Sanabhagi Shiksha Kendra, Lucknow. Nineteen participants attended.
  - Second phase of Gujarati Regional TOT programme was held during August 6-13, 1991.
  - Phase III of Hindi Regional TOT was held at Varanasi from September 21-28, 1991. Sixteen participants attended.
  - First phase of Telugu Regional TOT programme was held during October 26 – November 3, 1991.
  - Third phase of Bangla TOT was held during December 17-24, 1991.

* General follow-ups were initiated during the year to national and regional TOTs to support the learning developed during the programmes.

* A workshop on Role and Strategy of Training was held at Dumduma, Haryana during March 23-26, 1992 to explore new horizons in training and dealing with learning agendas for members of an informal network of Participatory Training.
* **NLM Training**

PRIA continued supporting Phase II of NLM training. PRIA participated as a resource person in SRC - Orissa, SRC - Delhi and the Department of Adult and Continuing Education, JNU, Delhi. PRIA also provided support in terms of learning materials and inputs into designing during this period.

* PRIA facilitated a training programme of trainers from the Asian region organised by Asian Health Institute, Nagoya, Japan from May 24-30, 1991.

**Strengthening Organisations**

* Workshop on 'Organisation Building and Management' - Phase I was held at Lucknow from July 23-27, 1991. Thirty three participants, mainly heads of NGOs from Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, attended the workshop.

* A workshop on Accounts was held for a group from North India during October 25-27, 1991 at Delhi.

* Phase II of the ‘Organisation Building and Management’ workshop was held at Dehradun from October 8-12, 1991. Twenty five participants attended. Phase III of the workshop was held at Dumardaga, near Ranchi, from January 17-22, 1992. Sixteen participants attended the third phase.

* **Process Documentation**

Ongoing support was provided to following organisations in carrying out process documentation of their own experiences:

(i) Disha Kendra, Karjat, Maharashtra

(ii) Chetna, Ahmedabad, Gujarat

(iii) Sharan, Delhi

(iv) SIRD, Madurai, Tamil Nadu

(v) Shramik Bharati, Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh

* **Organisational Support**

Organisational development support was provided to the following organisations:

1. Mobile Creches, New Delhi

2. ISED, Bhubaneswar, Orissa

3. WESA, Betul, Madhya Pradesh
4. Ekta Parishad, Madhya Pradesh
5. Prayog, Raipur, Madhya Pradesh
6. CASA, India
7. Astha, Udaipur, Rajasthan
8. Gram Vikas, Orissa
9. SPARC, Bombay, Maharashtra

* Support to Support Institutions

Following Support Institutions were supported during this year in various areas of their development:

1. Sahabhagi Shikshan Kendra, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
2. Unnati, Ahmedabad, Gujarat
3. Sahayi, Trivandrum, Kerala
4. Peoples' Learning Centre, Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh
5. Centre for Workers' Management, Delhi
6. Public Interest Research Group, Delhi
7. LEADS, Madras, Tamil Nadu
8. Third World Study Centre, Delhi
9. CENCORED, Patna, Bihar
10. Centre for Creative Learning, Delhi
11. RCPED, Madurai, Tamil Nadu

* Other Activities

i. Input was provided to EZE consultation on HRD in Bangalore

ii. A two day workshop on Participatory Research for the faculty and students of Tata Institute for Social Sciences was organised in Bombay during January 10-11, 1992.
**Sectoral Activities**

* Supporting VANI through its programmes and activities continued during the year. In particular, support was given to VANI's campaign on secularism and the role of voluntary action, including participation in a national convention on the theme.

* With the announcement of new economic policies and Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) by the Government of India in July 1991, sectoral interventions in raising a debate on the implications of SAP on the role of voluntary action were pursued. In particular, PRIA participated in the seminar and meetings organised by other organisations (e.g., Seminar convened by UNNATI at Ahmedabad on March 13-14, 1992).

* Participation in several meetings and workshops as Resource Persons on sectoral issues, NGO-Government collaboration, Role of NGOs, etc. took place. (e.g., World Bank-NGO Committee seminar at Delhi in February 1992; IRED seminar at Colombo in January 1992).
International Activities

* Active participation in the revitalization of ASPBAE was exemplified through the Thematic Planning Meetings and the first General Assembly. The mandate given by the General Assembly is now being translated into reorganized ASPBAE programmes and organizational mechanisms.

* Support to strengthen new organizational and programmatic forms of ICAE continued.

* Asian Regional Support Organisation programme witnessed consultation for planning further in-country activities in South Asia (in particular, Nepal and Sri Lanka).

* Follow-up consultations for planning a regional policy workshop in Asia and preparation and publication of popular report based on the study of Development Partnerships were undertaken.

* Support to programmatic and institutional strengthening of IDR, Boston was continued. In particular, IDR was assisted in conducting a study of mechanisms for Governmental financing of NGOs in India.
Institutional Development

* PRIA celebrated its tenth anniversary on February 5 - 6, 1992. Around 150 people from voluntary organisations, people’s organisations, academia, media, trade unions and many others joined us in the celebration. The two days provided space for rejoicing, reflecting and affirming solidarity on issues of common concern. A debate on the theme “De-regulating the Mind: Democratising Society” reminded many of us about the urgency of coming together in the context of recent policy changes and their impact on lives of the poor.

A report highlighting the issues raised and concerns voiced during the two day reflection has been prepared.

* Various staff development programmes were organised during the year to develop team building and better understanding of organisation, tasks and growth of people.
Popular Documentation and Resource Centre

* The PDRC has slowly acquired a formal structure in the last year. It has been supporting the programme teams in publishing all the periodicals stemming from the programmes. All periodicals in English have been produced in-house since June, and those in Hindi since February 1992. PDRC has launched two new periodicals - 'SRIJAN' and 'KRITI' this year in English and Hindi.

PDRC is also building up its capacities in the preparation of materials to support activists in the constituency.

A. Publications

* Four issues of OH bulletin in Hindi and English.
* Four issues of Land and People in English.
* One issue of Dharti Aur Log focussing on land related issues and struggles in Bihar.
* First issue of Kriti - Newsletter on Women and Empowerment (English and Hindi).
* First issue of Srijan - A package of learning materials on training in English and Hindi.
* Four issues of PRIA Newsletter in English and Hindi.
* Work and Empowerment (English) - A manual for voluntary organisations and others involved in managing women's economic activities based on PRIA's experiences of organising training for functionaries in the last five years.
* Diseases at Work - Part III - A story of workers' struggle on compensation for silicosis.
* Hindi version of the manual on 'Land Records'.
* Oriya version of Land Records, Land Acquisition Act and Organising for Land was prepared.
* A simplified version of Madhya Pradesh Land Records was prepared and this will be published shortly for wider dissemination among the groups in Madhya Pradesh.
* Holding Together - A popular document based on cases presented and collective analysis generated during case writers' conference. Experiences of various parties involved in doing the cases was the material base for this document.
Voluntary Development Organisations in India - A study of History, Roles and Future challenges.

Hindi popular document based on the above study.

Preparation of Material for the Constituency

Published the first bulletin for the Delhi based Centre for Workers Management.

Provided on-going support for bringing out materials for the constituency. This included translating, editing and publishing their materials for presentation at conferences, etc.

B. Video Documentation

PDRC supported production of video film: "Bua Bhatij", covering various aspects of management of women's economic activities, for use as educational material in training and learning situations.

"Dhal Akhar": a video film and an audio-cassette on adult literacy were produced as part of materials for use in National Literacy Mission.

C. Presentation by Guests

PDRC invited eminent experts and activists, folk media groups to make presentations on issues relevant to the work of PRIA.

Lecture cum slide show on 'Pollution in Yamuna and traditional Water Harvesting Systems' on June 18, 1991 by Dr. D.N. Kallya of P.G.DAV college, Delhi.

Slide show on 'Water Harvesting Systems in Rajasthan' presented by Anupam Mishra, a noted environmentalist from Gandhi Peace Foundation.

Prof. B.K. Roy Burman, a well known social scientist, shared his thoughts and work on Land Reforms and Land Legislation in India.

Prof. Yash Tandon of Zimbabwe gave a seminar on Role of NGOs in Africa.

PDRC has initiated a process of supporting grass root groups and activists involved in identifying and reviving folk forms of expression and popularising their use as educational interventions in struggles/movements of the poor.

Support for translations was extended to programme teams as well as the constituency.