Summary Annual Report 2013-14

Women Empowerment through SGHs

The target group of this initiative is women and rural households. They are mostly farmers. They are victims of general socio-economic backwardness, inadequate and inefficient finances and marketing services. The size of their land holdings is small and are often over-man aged resulting in low productivity. Their agricultural practices are neither economically nor environmentally sustainable. They are not able to make use of modern agricultural practices hampered by ignorance of such practices, high costs and impracticality due to small land holdings. Irrigation facilities are inadequate and dependent on rainfall. Many of them are indebted. Women Empowerment through SHGs covers members of these households. The geographical extension of this initiative is limited to Belgaum District of Karnataka State, and Chandgad Taluka of Kolhapur District of Maharashtra State.

The direct beneficiaries of new shg formation are 787 women in the age group of 18 to 65 from low socio-economic strata of society distributed mostly over Belgaum, Khanapur, Bailhongal and Hukkeri revenue blocks of the district. They are organized into 52 SHGs.

All of them are regular with their savings with their respective groups from the date of the formation of their SHGs. Their savings as on 31-12-13 was a sum of Rs. 1,123,032/-. Direct beneficiaries of accompaniment of old shgs and formation of shg Federation are 714 old shgs consisting of 11630 members. Their savings as on 31-12-13 was a sum of Rs. 96,627,809/-. 

Women Empowerment through SHGs and SHG Federation:

As of Dec 2013 we were animating and guiding 714 SHGs in Belgaum district. During the reporting period Jan – Dec 2013, of the old 699 SHGs 37 opted out to be on their own. Hence at the end of Dec 2013 we were animating 662 old + 52 new shgs. These 714 SHGs with 11630 members are distributed over Belgaum District of Karnataka State and Kolhapur District of Maharashtra State. They are well organized at the group level and are doing well in their respective group activities like saving and micro credit and income generation initiatives and in developing life coping skills.

The aim of the formation of SHG Federation was for creating a wider platform in order to address various issues faced by SHGs in particular and women in general. Such a platform is very useful for helping the government departments to deliver welfare measures and development programs to the target groups. SHG federation plays a vital role in resisting the evil of corruption and in asserting women’s rights as women and as human beings.
Specific activities realized during Jan – Dec 2013:

a. Our staff visited villages and families and motivated women who were not yet part of our SHG movement. SAS formed and animated 52 new SHGs with a membership of 787 women. Members of old SHGs assisted us in this task.

b. All these groups were initiated into credit and thrift activities and linked with the nearest bank with their own bank account. And all 787 (100%) new SHG members save regularly from the day of the formation of their SHG.

c. Women representatives from the new groups were trained in book keeping and financial management. We conducted for them 5 days training program on 21st June, 13th, 14th and 28th August and 12th September. 147 persons participated in that program.

d. We conducted for all the women in the new groups training in personality development and group dynamics - 10 training program spread over 11 days for personality development of new SHG members. 820 persons participated in those programs.

e. Our staff accompanied all the SHGs on a monthly basis and organized various capacity building trainings/exercises for them. During 2013 they conducted 8177 meetings with the participation of 108417 women from 714 SHGs.

f. We cultivated among SHG members the habit of constant saving – Outcome: 3,510 of them took up income generation activities, mostly agro-based - 900 women took up goat, cow, buffalo rearing; 450 women started and maintained kitchen gardens; 1800 women went in for improved agriculture/ horticulture; 180 went in for vegetable vending; and another 180 engaged themselves in petty business; and practically all of them freed themselves from indebtedness and live a life of self respect.

g. Implementation of MGNREGA – Because of SAS’s intervention many persons who wanted to work under MGNREGA got job cards and work. Outcome – 2032 families put in 127,605 workdays and earned a sum of Rs. 18,011,170/- as wages during the calendar year 2013. They were from 25 villages spread across 18 panchayats of 3 revenue blocks of Belgaum District.

h. We organized 39 capacity building training with the help of 88 resource persons for 329 SHGs from 127 villages with the participation of 5332 women SHG members.

i. All the SHGs were introduced to the concept of SHG federation and helped to form federations. Federations were formed at Village level, Village Panchayat level, Taluka level and District level. We conducted 6 meetings of federation at taluka level with the participation of 257 persons. We also conducted meeting of federation members at district level with the participation of 100 persons; conducted 38 special meetings for the formation of federation with the participation of 453 women; conducted 50 public meetings of federations with the participation of 4414 persons.

j. Organic farming is a new dimension to the women empowerment program. The vital role played by women in Indian agriculture is a well-known fact. Agriculture in India has been a joint venture of male and female members of the family. Women are said to devote 40 per cent of their efforts towards farming and 60 per cent for food preparation. So, it becomes all the more
important to involve women while transferring farm technology. The ill effects of excessive use of fertilizers and pesticides on the soil and human health are well documented and scientists have now become aware of the grave dangers from using chemical fertilizers and pesticides in farming. If the farming community is to be made aware of these dangers, involving women in organic farming is very important. Women, since ages, have been using many traditional practices such as use of cow dung, animal urine, farm and animal wastes for agriculture. If women can be educated and trained in using these wastes effectively and efficiently it would help agriculture go the organic way.

During the reporting period SAS created awareness on organic farming among the SHG women and took up following activities:

- Lectures, exhibitions and demonstrations for 1078 women from 98 SHGs across 14 days on organic farming and the use of farm residues and animal wastes.
- Motivation and assistance to 280 SHG women for initiating organic farming and kitchen gardens.

Role of Supervisors in Women Empowerment:

The project staff was fully engaged with SHGs. They saw to the formation and animation of new SHGs and constantly accompanied new and old SHGs through training/exercises in book keeping and financial management and women’s personality development; monitoring their thrift and credit activities; assisting in the process of group building and sustenance; initiating them into the idea of kitchen garden/organic farming; creating awareness on issues affecting women and children and their village; creating linkages with bank and mobilizing finances/subsidies from the government; initiating income generation activities; forming federation of SHGs at the village and panchayat, taluka and district levels. They also motivated and helped members of all SHGs to participate actively in the federation process at village, panchayat, taluka and district levels.

Functional Vocational Training

**Target group** – Rural girls, who are school dropouts, mostly in the age group of 15 to 25 from low socio-economic strata of society.

**Direct beneficiaries:** 55 rural women who were trained and appointed as teachers, 675 girl students who were trained with functional vocational skills.

**Indirect beneficiaries:** The families of the 55 teachers, the families of 675 girls, and the village community as a whole.

Functional Vocational Training aims at the overall development of adolescent rural girls with emphasis on enhancing their personal growth and income generating capacity. The program helps them to pick up life coping skills and prepares them to face their future with courage, self confidence and a sense of self worth. SAS does this by training them in garment making skills. The training incorporates value education, sex and family life education and other life coping skills. It keeps the girls meaningfully engaged for yet another year and automatically postpones
their marriage and gives them a golden opportunity to be better prepared for their marriage and the future.

Activities:

a. Garment making skills: The FVT centers which began in June 2012 wound up their program in April 2013. The new centers began in June 2013 and functioned for 10 months i.e., till March end, 2014. It functioned 6 days in a week; Sundays were holidays. The training was for a period of 3 hours daily for 6 days a week. The timing of the center was decided by each center to suit the convenience of the students. At the end of the ten month period there was an exam to assess students’ skills and they were awarded certificates.

b. Personality development and life coping skills: During the 10 months’ period students got training/exercises in personality development and inputs in life coping skills. As part of this training they got opportunity for singing, dancing, public speaking, enacting skits, sharing personal experience; and opportunity to critically examine traditional attitudes and practices regarding women’s education, employment, mobility, women’s status in family and society and inputs on women’s right, health, hygiene, nutrition, marriage and family life, HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases and socio-cultural taboos affecting the girl child and women. They got opportunity to take part in cultural activities organized at village and inter-village levels. All these activities were carried out faithfully.

c. Common gathering and outings: During the year they participated in two common gathering in which they put up cultural programs and showcased their progress and achievements in life coping skills in the presence of their parents, villagers and other invitees. Some of them got an opportunity for an outing to a historic/religious/touristic place.

In short, without spelling out all the details, SAS makes sure that during the 10 months period the students get ample opportunity to become proficient with garment making skills, to become better persons with social skills and good etiquettes, to become courageous and self confident with various life coping skills, to have a good knowledge about women’s right and laws that safeguard women against gender discriminations, e.g., domestic violence, sexual abuse of children and women, child labour, child marriage, female feticide, dowry, divorce, maintenance, cultural and religious taboos and the like. They also got valuable information about possibilities of self employment and other venues of additional income generation.

Some highlights of 2013-2014 programs is provided below:

- 55 teachers trained and employed - 9 teachers had 2 batches of students.
- Conducted 64 FVT Centers with 675 students.
- Supplied learning materials for 675 students.
- Organized 10 months’ training for all the students in garment making skills and personality development.
- Conducted 2*3 days Seminars for 330 (man days) for 55 teachers of functional vocational training centers at Xavier Farm Machhe on personality and leadership development and professional skill (fashion design) development.
Conducted 10 monthly follow up training for 55 teachers - with 524 man days participation.
Conducted 34 one day training for FVT students - with 3384 man days participation on personal and social empowerment, on health, hygiene, nutrition, marriage and family life, aids and other sexually transmitted diseases.

Community Health

Doctors are needed to help us remain healthy. Can we also take care of our health? To enable the villagers to protect their health, our CHWs played a vital role. Besides ensuring health facilities, the program motivates people to get health services under the National Rural Health Mission of the government.

Direct beneficiaries:
- 45 rural women who were trained and appointed as community health workers and their families.
- Direct and immediate beneficiaries were 21168 persons (10387 male + 10781 female), who approached the CHWs for medicines for common ailments.

Indirect beneficiaries:
- The population of 45 villages (around 55927 persons) who got access to basic health with the help of CHWs/ASHA from the primary health centers and hospitals.

Activities and outcome

- Trained, and monitored the work of 45 Chws across 5 revenue blocks of Belgaum district and provided them with medicines for common ailments.
- The program facilitated immediate treatment of fever, malaria, diarrhea, scabies, cough, cold, wound, eye, ear and other minor/common ailments and referral services.
- Our staff regularly visited the villages for training and logistic support to the Chws.
- Helped the villagers to access government facilities.
- Conducted health awareness programs in the villages.
- Created health awareness in the general population, motivated and organized people for preventive measures eg- safe drinking water, waste disposal, construction of toilets and biogas plants.
- Sensitized people about preventive measures and collaborated with the primary health centers of the government and the people for the administration preventive measures - vaccines to children and TT injections to pregnant women.
- Popularized traditional / indigenous system of medicine in all the villages under the project.
- Promoted biogas plant cum toilet units for many rural households.
- Promoted kitchen garden and income-generating activities in many villages.

Majority of the beneficiaries of the program were women and children and persons from the socio-economically disadvantaged groups.
Work with the Shepherd Community of North Karnataka
August 2013 to January 2014

Area of operation: 12 Districts of North Karnataka divided into 3 zones. These are covered by different Village Level Workers. Self Help Groups of shepherds across 12 districts divided into 3 zones constitute the zonal federations of men and women and all these three zones combine to form the Apex Federation of Men and Women. Apex Federation of Men and Women take the help of the leaders of registered shepherd cooperative societies and traditional leaders from the community and elected panchayat members from the shepherd community of the area.

Implemented measures and activities

a) Capacity building of Men Federation Leaders at Zonal level:

The zonal fed leaders were assigned various tasks depending on issues pertaining to their shgs; they were constantly in touch with the members and leadership of the shgs. They interacted with the concerned officials locally and tried to find the solution to problems. These were brought to the zonal fed body for their information and documentation. Difficult issues were passed on to the apex federation and the lobbying team wherever necessary.

The zonal fed body was very happy with the result for their initiative with the Govt of Karnataka which made most of the vaccines freely available to the shepherds in the project area. Vaccines against Blue Tongue and Micoplasma were not available. The federation members have again requested the NK federation to take up this issue with the advocacy team. The zonal feds are happy with training offered by us to the shepherd cooperatives leaders and non shg leaders. This would give them additional strength for bargaining with the government.

The NK fed (men) got first hand information from the department of Handloom and Textile. Mr. Somshekar from the dpt. presented the scheme to shepherd spinners and weavers in Belgaum where most of wool value addition takes place. The mediclaim and accident insurance policies are very popular among the members of the coop societies. He distributed the hand outs of his department to the trainees. He was informed by the participants that hundreds of shepherds’ society members from Karoshi, Benakatti, and Salapur have availed these benefits.

Mr. M.S. Jamadar for Horticulture department suggested that shepherds must go for horticultural plants due to good cash value and good harvest of coconut, chikku, mango and Banana plants. He promised his assistance for subsidized plants and incentives for digging water ponds.

b) Lobbying by NK fed leaders both men and women

The lobbying team put forth before the Chief Minister of Karnataka the issue raised by the shepherds both at zonal and NK level fed meeting. Rs.100 million was requested for 15 million sheep and goats of the state population. He was also requested to arrange for the immediate release of BT vaccines and start the production of trial vaccine for mycoplasma.
There is a gradual increase for the demand for wool blankets; there has to be support price for wool procurement and subsidy on woolen blankets produced, so as to improve the wages of spinners and weavers.

There needs to be a breeding policy for Deccani and other local sheep and Usmanabadi Goats to preserve these hardy breeds, and bring policy change to preserve them.

Most important issue of lobbying team once again was to press for change in APMC (Agricultural Produce Marketing Cooperatives) Act and introduce marketing of sheep and goats on live body weight basis, thereby removing butcher and middle men’s nexus and let the shepherd get a reasonable price for their livestock. The C.M. has agreed on the importance of these issues and promised to bring suitable orders and legislations.

The NK Federation team has met the prominent state shepherd leaders in the Karnataka Shepherds Association Building. The secretary Mr. Ramchandrappa and executive committee member B.V. Ravi and Mr. Mallika Ghanti welcomed the NK fed lobbying team and appreciated their efforts to build a strong shepherds’ body. They promised their support in the next meeting of the lobbying team with the State government officials.

c) Capacity building of Women Federation Leaders

The zonal training programs are designed keeping in mind the prevailing conditions of the area. For instance the backward zone Gangavati needs sufficient care to guide the members in relation to approaching the Govt officials, the banks, and officials of the Gram Panchayats. JJ staffs accompany the shg members and leaders while presenting their issues to these authorities. The efforts in obtaining finances from the banks, the education of the children, health and hygiene and infrastructure of the villages has helped them immensely and we hope that their leadership will ably handle their affairs in future, as done by the shgs of Yargatii and Haveri zones.

d) Capacity Building and Training of North Karnataka Shepherd Women

The NK leadership was addressed during training sessions by resource persons from Belgaum District Central Cooperative Bank, the Handloom and Textile department and resource persons of SAS, Mr. Appasaheb Vibuti the Taluka councilor and Branch Manager Mr.B.M.Patil of DCC bank. They explained about the subsidised finances the banks are providing to the shgs of our area (interest 4%). He also encouraged the SHG and Federation staff to popularize Janashree Bheema Yojane (Insurance against accidents) and Yashashwini Mediclaims. The first scheme costs Rs.100 per year for an insured sum of Rs.1.5 lakh for accidental death and Rs.75000 for major disability. This scheme also entitles a scholarship of Rs.1200 per year for two children of the beneficiaries between 9th and 11th Standard. The Yashashwini Mediclaim costs Rs.250 per year and covers the cost of Hospitalization and treatment for 4 family members.

e) Training for Non SHG Leaders (men & women)

We conducted 4 trainings for 112 men and one woman, with the support of 13 resource persons. The impact of the training was highly encouraging as many leaders expressed their desire to
organize the people in their locality to form SHGs and later join the federation meetings and help solve the local issues.

f) Training of Functionaries of Shepherds’ Cooperatives

The Karnataka State Sheep and Wool Development Corporation congratulated the members of our zonal and Apex Federation and our VLWs for conducting a survey of the North Karnataka and collecting data on the status of shepherds’ cooperatives. The training program addressed by the Commissioner of Animal Husbandry and the Managing Director of Sheep and Wool Dev Corporation is one of its kinds so far in Karnataka State. This meeting in collaboration with the department of textile and handlooms, department of cooperatives society Belgaum and officials of District Coop Bank and an Auditor specialized in coop accounts gave firsthand information on organizing and managing the cooperative societies.

g) Training for EthnoVeterinary Practices (Zonal Level)

Training and production of Ethno Veterinary Medicines has been a boon for the shg women. They enjoy the collection of herbal plants in the fields and hills around the villages. Identification of the medicinal plants is a special art which they learn during the training. We trained 337 persons from the shgs of zonal federations through 6 training sessions and the trainees prepared 8 medicines as per their needs.

h) Training in Production of Ethno-Vet Medicines at Cluster Level

We conducted training for 513 shg members from different clusters of shgs across 30 places and produced 14 medicines required by the shepherds of the area. During the trainings there was the full involvement of trainees in the collection the local herbs, preparation and packing and labeling. The medicines produced were for diseases such as Diarrhea, Fever, Dysentery, Sprain, Conjunctivitis, FMD, Lamb Dysentery, Bloat, Yoke Gall, Foot Rot, Eczema, Wound, Joint Pain, Ectoparasites. These had already proved very efficient in other villages.

i) Net working with NGO/Government Officials

11 net working sessions were organized across 14 different places for resolving most of the shg issues at the local level. The federation officials were well prepared and theirs was a friendly approach and officials collaborated with joy in a win win situation.

Theft of sheep in Khangaon KH, Rakaskop, Sonoli, Benkanhalli, Balekundri, Honyal, Sulaga and other villages of Belgaum brought the shepherds on the street. 50 shepherds under the leadership of Yargatti zonal federation marched to the office of the Superintendent of Police demanding the arrest of the culprits, who were causing havoc by stealing sheep from the flocks. More than 12 FIRs were filed. Dr. Chanragupta, Commissioner of police is doing his best through periodic checks and barricades at the intersections of the roads to reduce the menace.
Two of our staff along with 10 members of Haveri zonal federation submitted memorandum to Tahasildar of Hiriyur for improved supplies of medicines and provision of drinking water for sheep and goat as the taluka was badly affected by drought. They also emphasized the need for early release of B T vaccine. The Tahasildar assured to take up these issues with taluka panchayat and also to pass on their request to the Commissioner of Animal Husbandry.

With regards to the preparations for training of the functionaries of shepherds’ cooperatives societies of NK, our staff met and appraised Mr. Shiva Kulkarni, the Registrar of Cooperative Societies and his staff to help in updating the data on actively functioning and defunct cooperatives. They also met and requested Mr. Kittur, Joint Director of Handlooms and Textile Department to address the cooperative societies’ functionaries and share his department’s schemes for spinners and weavers of wool. The presence of these officials was highly beneficial to the trainees and they invited us to carry on our future programs successfully with the help of these departments.

FMD out breaks were causing huge losses among the cattle and buffalo owners. The zonal fed officials with our staff submitted a memorandum to Asst Director Dr. B.M. Patil. The mortality was arrested with immediate FMD vaccination for nearly 200 animals; at the same time 500 doses of de worming medicines were given to sheep and goats. They advised the members to take timely prophylactic vaccinations and safeguard their livelihoods.

**Income Generation Activities**

**Value Addition to Wool**

We are monitoring the work of 12 shgs at 8 different villages which involved 171 spinners and weavers for the production of nearly 3600 blankets per year with the value of Rs.2.52 million. The addition of two more men’s shg at Karoshi and Benakatti has encouraged the other spinners and weavers. The inclusion of 85 registered shepherd cooperatives societies into shepherds’ organization will consolidate shepherds leadership further and stimulate the wool value addition. Many of these societies have infrastructure readily available for wool utilization and production of blankets. We are confident that wool value addition will be further stimulated due to our efforts in reviving the shepherds’ cooperatives.

**Seed Ram Production**

Traditionally seed ram production used to be common a phenomena among the shepherds but for some reason this activity declined. We had taken up seed ram production with shgs in the villages of Chunchanur of Yargatti Zone and Bassapur of Haveri Zone. This had motivated many more shg women in the project area; during the year 17 shgs in 15 villages produced 80 seed rams. The shgs have earned handsome profits ranging from Rs.5000-7000 per seed ram during the season. All the above seed rams were of Deccani Breed. If the trend continues the process of seed ram production and seed ram exchange will become sustainable due to the high priority given to it by the zonal federations. We are happy with the people’s participation in preservation of Deccani Breed which in turn improves the quality of wool produced.
Fattening of Weaned Lambs as an Income Generation Activity in highly backward areas

Lamb fattening has become a self sustainable income generation activity in the project area; most of the shgs and non shgs men and women participate in this activity. As usual the bank finances are easy to access and the return on investment is quick. It is difficult to document hundreds of people involved in this profession, we document only the ones regularly visited and guided by our village level workers. During the reporting period 208 shgs of 120 villages had taken up fattening of 1528 lambs with an investment of Rs.6.8 million.

**Goat breeding**

The consistent approach of our vlws in association with the zonal federations has brought very high level of awareness on the benefits of goat breeding in the project area. As a result a large number of shg members and non shg men and women including farmers have started maintaining the goats. This profession is highly sustainable and self driven. The exact number of goats that are bred all over the project area has become difficult to document. Our vlws have documented the purchase of 2889 goats by 215 shgs in 108 villages with an investment of Rs.17.33 million. The market report also indicated a huge demand for goat meat due to its low fat content and preferred status. We continue promoting goat breeding with the active support of zonal federations and the functionaries of registered shepherd cooperatives.

**Buffalo Breeding and Dairy Farming with our Assistance**

Many shg women in the project area taking up dairy farming and buffalo breeding is a clear indication of the growing prosperity due to our shg movement. Various incentives such as Rs.4 per liter of milk produce, subsidized loan, fodder seeds and feed concentrate, service delivery to the door step are important features. Disease prevention and the artificial insemination services offered by the KMF is slo greatly appreciated.

The Karnataka Milk Federation is assisting in the collection of milk and also providing training on dairy farming to shg women and cooperative society members. Our vlws have taken full advantage of these facilities by liaising with the officers of KMF and have assisted shg members in procuring loans to establish dairy animals. During the reporting period 1108 cows and buffalos were purchased by 183 shgs from 103 villages with an investment of Rs.27.7 million. During the recent outbreak of foot and mouth disease few cross breed cows died and the state government gave compensation of Rs.20000-25000. Due to the high value of the animals the shepherds started to raise their own fodder which also benefits lamb fattening and goat breeding activities.

**Fodder Production**

For those shepherds who dependent on extensive shepherding activity and part dairy farming and buffalo breeding, fodder production seems to be the only way to survive. The acute shortage of fodder and water is making migration very difficult and unsustainable, compelling the
shepherds to look for alternative sources of fodder, such as contract grazing of the residual fodder and purchase of hay particularly during the summer season.

The efforts of the government to provide fodder seeds and the technical knowhow are a step towards augmenting fodder production. The govt is aware that the shrinkage of community grazing lands and depletion of water sources. It is going to be the great challenge in the near future.

During the last six months we distributed 23.8 kgs of Shede seeds for 62 shepherds from 8 shgs. That will produce around 63 tons of fodder per annum from 15.8 acres. We have made good progress in promoting fodder production. Cumulatively we have brought in 2463 acres of land under fodder production to produce 1563 tons of fodder for the sheep and goat. The Govt of Karnataka and Karnataka Milk Federation are sourcing hundreds of tons of fodder seeds to farmers, shepherds and other livestock owners in the state.

**Staff Capacity Building**

The staff training programs were especially designed to enable our vlws to train the shgs on account keeping, bank linkage, dividend distribution and scaling up of the income generation activities. We focused also on identification and training of shepherd cooperative society functionaries and traditional shepherd leaders from the project area. The training conducted in those areas proved to be very successful. The participation of the Commissioner of Animal Husbandry Mr. Mohmad Sallahundin and Dr. Sayeed Managing Director of Sheep and Wool Development Corporation and officials responsible for helping cooperative societies further motivated the trainees and enthused our vlws to make the program a grand success.

**Strengthening and Consolidation of Organization Building Process**

The organization building process through formation of new SHGs, the training of zonal and apex federations and the lobbying at District and State level has been a continuous process with innovative ways of net working, personality development and income generation initiatives.

The inclusion of the functionaries of registered shepherd cooperative societies and traditional shepherd leaders into the shepherds’organization building process and training programs added new vigour and strength and sustainability to our efforts at Organization Building of traditional shepherds..

During the reporting period 72 men and women shgs with membership of 1302 persons were added to the movement. That cumulative strength is 977 shgs of men and women with the membership to 14219 persons. The credit of building this strong organization goes to the organizing and planning skills of our team dedicated to the shepherds’ cause, the leadership of zonal and apex federation and other leaders from the shepherding community, the elected representatives of gram panchayats, the traditional healers and the youth from the community.
The attraction to OB initiatives are programs such as lamb fattening, goat breeding, buffalo breeding and dairy farming, ethno veterinary trainings, capacity building trainings, fodder cultivation and wool value addition, and most important - the atmosphere of friendship. Creating an atmosphere of peace, communal harmony and prosperity among the village population has been the landmark signature of our organization. 

**Summarized appraisal/self assessment regarding the reporting period**

The changes in the shepherding community are conspicuous; their moral is high; their attitude is dignified; and their leadership strong. The people who had suffered years of marginalization is responding well to the new initiatives of development. The secrete lies in their organizing capacity with a lot of input from our organization and our staff. Outcome: the village populations respect our staff and the shepherd community for their positive contribution to the overall development of the village, especially contribution to shg movement, propagation of ethno veterinary knowledge, fodder production, promotion of IGAs, better functioning Panchayati Raj and infrastructural development. The shepherding community brought in networking, improved banking norms and institutional relationship to the villages; they worked shoulder to shoulder with others in the villages on issues such as gender equality, reduction of untouchability, child marriages, alcoholism, promotion of education, employment, health and hygiene and many more measures. 

The zonal and apex federations worked as a catalyst and gave their support and boosted their leadership. They accompanied people in resolving local issues promptly and established good working relationship with Government authorities. Their networking and lobbying not only helped the shepherds but also the village populations. The indications are that this process will be self sustaining in the years to come. The incorporation of registered shepherds cooperative societies and non shg leadership into this empowerment process will further widen the horizon of leadership and make it a formidable force to tackle the present and future issues of the community. We will continue our work of empowerment with more vigor and determination until a total consolidation phase is achieved.

**Boiogas and Rural Sanitation**

The project is being implemented in the Belgaum district. During the financial year 2013-2014 we constructed Biogas Plant cum Toilet Units in Belgaum (748), Gokak (18), Hukkeri (40), and Khanapur (146) talukas - total 952 units. The project villages were selected on specific criteria: The villages are already in contact with us through our earlier interventions or via local staff and volunteers. The selected households have enough space for the construction of the unit and enough cow dung and water to maintain the plant. The beneficiaries are willing to contribute to towards construction costs. The beneficiaries are eligible for subsidy through ZP Belgaum. The households are ready to have their Toilet attached to the Biogas Plant and have overcome personal and cultural barriers to use biogas for their regular cooking.
Construction of biogas plants cum toilets

We supply the materials needed for the construction and commissioning of the unit. The project coordinator sees to all the logistics. The supervisor monitors on a day to day basis the construction work. The local supervisors with the help of the beneficiary household see to the digging of the pit, supply of construction materials and organises the necessary unskilled labour and collection of cow dung needed for the initial charging of the plant. He coordinates the work of unskilled labourers and masons. The beneficiaries participate with their contribution. They also authorise us to prepare and present the documents needed for claiming subsidy and also to collect the subsidy for the biogas plant on their behalf.

Training of the beneficiaries

From the beginning of the construction of the unit till its commissioning, the supervisors and masons interact with the beneficiaries and instruct them in plant maintenance, proper use of biogas stove, proper use of biogas and organic manure. We take pains to demystify the technical details and functioning of the biogas plant by involving the beneficiaries at every stage of the construction.

Claiming subsidy from the Government

The beneficiary households authorise our organization, which is a registered Turn-Key agent with the government, to collect the subsidy for biogas plants on their behalf. The subsidy received from the govt is utilized for building more units.

Further development due to Biogas Plant cum Toilet Unit

Biogas Plant cum Toilet Unit has made a remarkable difference for the selected households. It has a very positive gender dimension. Biogas Plant cum Toilet Unit is a boon to the poor rural women; they benefit the most from it. It provides them a better living environment. Their scramble for fuel to cook their food, often a day’s work, their dependance on dried cattle dung as cooking fuel with the resultant smoky kitchens, the wastage of cattle dung badly needed for agriculture – all these issues are tackled by the introduction of the biogas plant cum toilet units. The Biogas Plant puts an end to the smoke filled kitchens - a major cause of lung and eye diseases in rural households.

Whether it is North Karnataka, South Karnataka or Central Karnataka, the situation is the same as far as toilet facility is concerned. There is a long wait until dark for defecation in the open. The situation of women waiting for darkness to relieve themselves is the sad story of our State. The project gives them the luxury of a clean and safe toilet.

The project provides a large quantity of high-class organic manure and many households have started kitchen gardens and are motivated to try organic farming.

The project has been a great help in the area of non-conventional energy. It achieves directly and explicitly the goals of climate protection and conservation of forests and biodiversity, sustainable development and gender mainstreaming.
Impact of the “Biogas Plant cum Toilet Unit” Initiative

The impact of this initiative is very impressive and easily noticeable in the following areas:

- Contribution to improve the livelihoods of rural poor households in the project area.
- Contribution to improve the land productivity through increased soil fertility.
- Contribution to women empowerment/gender equality (health, leisure).
- Contribution to the environment through the protection of forest and reduction of CO₂/CH₄ emissions.

Biogas Plant and climate change:

Biogas Plant is a fantastic device for reducing CH₄ emissions through improved manure and night soil management. It is assumed that biogas plant can achieve a 50% reduction in emissions from manure in cool climates. For warmer climates (where methane emissions from liquid slurry manure storage systems are over three times higher), a reduction potential of 75% is possible through biogas plants. Biogas systems also produce slurry that can be applied directly to agriculture fields instead of using untreated dung. This also leads to reduced methane emissions. Anaerobic digestion in biogas production substantially mitigates nitrous oxide and methane emissions. (For more details refer to the book: “Livestock’s Long Shadow” – Environmental Issues and Options – FAO 2006).

Community College Nesargi

During the year 2013-14 through Community College at Nesargi we conducted computer and English courses for rural youth and Christ Niwas Hostel Boys. Thirteen rural youth and 25 boys from Christ Niwas Hostel benefited from these courses. Rural boys and girls picked up computer skills and English speaking abilities. Christ Niwas Hostel boys did basics in computer and attended English speaking classes. At the end of the course a test was given to assess the computer skills and English speaking abilities of the students. The result was very good. Fr. Tom, Sch. Anderson and Mr. Dundappa Badlakkanavar conducted this program.

Pre-School Centers

We conducted 7 preschool centers in the Belgaum District of Karnataka State. The beneficiaries of the program were children from poor families. The program aimed at the integral, i.e., mental, physical and social development of children. Preschool teachers get monthly refresher training during which they do practical with the syllabus that they have to cover during the month. Three topics are covered every month - one topic for a week and the forth week is used for revision.

We conducted 7 Pre-school Centers with great success and initiated 168 children - 76 girls and 92 boys, into the school system. As an essential part of this program we organized 12 trainings for teachers during the year. The teachers received also in-service training in the village under the supervision and guidance of our staff.
Sounskara Kendra (Value Education Center)

Sounskara Kendra initiative aims at creating better opportunities for the rural children. Basic education is available in all the villages. Number of school going children is increasing. There is marked increase in the number of girl students. However the villages often miss quality education. Nobody accompanies children after the school hours. Most of the teachers come from outside and they go back to their villages/city after the school hours. Children live in small houses with no facilities. They do not have a place where they can study quietly, no proper light. Children get no help or guidance in their studies. All these factors contribute to high rate of school dropout.

Sounskara Kendra is a modest attempt to change the situation. We motivate the children to come together in a common place under the guidance of an able guide from the same village. The guide helps them and supervises their studies. These children get special inputs in personality development and human values, etiquettes and opportunities for singing, dancing, dramatics, drawing and public speaking. Sounskara Kendra is tailor made to the needs of the students; students are grouped according to the class and are helped with their studies. Questions or doubts of the children are answered. Students are encouraged to ask questions.

We conducted 32 centers during the reporting period. Through this initiative we reached out to a total of 890 children. Of these 890 children 423 were boys and 467 girls. Sounskara Kendra, among other things, also becomes a catalyst in bringing about communal harmony, inter religious and cultural understanding and in promoting eco-friendly practices in the villages.

‘Mahadevi Project’ - Student Sponsorship

‘Mahadevi Project’ initiated in 2004 has completed ten years of association with 207 students and their families - reaching out to them with educational assistance and interest free loans to meet the expenses of their professional courses.

‘Miss Mahadevi Bhadarwadi’, the inspiration behind Mahadevi Project now works as a staff nurse in a government hospital at Ramdurg not very far from her village and earns a handsome salary. The determination, confidence and joy that we see on her face is amazing. The girl who otherwise would have been engaged in normal village life earning Rs. 80 a day as a daily wage earner has realized her potential and created her own special identity in the world.

During 2013-14 Mahadevi project enrolled 14 students who took up job oriented degrees and courses like General and BSc Nursing, Bachelor’s degree in Social Work, Electronic Engineering, and Mechanical Engineering, Diploma in Hotel Management and Catering and Masters degree in Computer Applications and Business Administration.

Xavier Farm

Xavier Farm continued to be the venue for conducting many overnight training for our initiatives in the area of Women Empowerment, Community Health, Preschool, Functional Vocational
Training, Saunskara Kendra, Organization Building of Nomadic Pastoralists, Training in Organic Farming, Training in Herbal Medicines for human and veterinary use. We also used the facilities at Xavier Farm for conducting various seminars for different groups and NGOs. The Xavier Farm House provided lodge and board facilities to groups of students, who came to our organization for a lived in exposure cum experience in the field of Integral Rural Development. The farm provided livelihoods opportunities for farm hands and many agricultural laborers from the neighboring villages.

JJ Staff
Shramik Abhivrudhi Sangh and its staff over the years transformed themselves from service providers to organization builders. SAS movement is a story of teamwork, high motivation and dedication and commitment of its staff. SAS makes a difference because all the players honestly and sincerely try to ‘walk the talk’.

SAS sees development as a process that leads to the total liberation of the human being. In a truly developed society there is no room for exploitation of man by man, domination of man over man, man over woman, man over nature, group over group and caste over caste. In such a society justice, equality, equal opportunity, freedom, solidarity and human dignity prevail and it is free from revenge, hatred, greed, violence, exploitation and terrorism. Such a society is our dream and our goal.

We have a team of highly motivated and committed staff. They are with us over a long period of time. Our team represents the cross section of peoples and cultures with whom we work. Our initiatives address people of all cultures and social groups in our area of operation. We believe in the active presence and working of God in all cultures and peoples. So we avoid imposing a particular culture or cultural values on people with whom we work and try sincerely to acknowledge the wonders that God works with all peoples and cultures. In the context of widespread cultural prejudices and religious fundamentalism we work with men and women of all cultures and religions to promote peace, justice and harmony.

Concluding Remarks
As we present our annual report for 2013-14 we express our deep and sincere appreciation and gratitude to ASTM Luxembourg, Andheri-Hilfe Bonn, Jesuitenmission Nuernberg, Intersol Austria, Rudolf Schleicher Muenchen, Paola Russo Italy, Belgaum Xavier Company Belgaum, Goa Jesuit Provincial and Province, Jesuit Community Belgaum, Bishop Peter Mchado and the Catholic Diocese of Belgaum, for their generous support to us over the last many years. Our sincere thanks to our President and Managing Committee Members for their continued assistance and encouragement! The unstinted loyalty, hard work and dedication of our office and field staff, continue to be our strength at all times. May God bless all the people, our partners, friends, benefactors, well wishers!

Joseph Chenakala
Secretary
Shramik Abhivurdhi Sangh

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