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Dear Well Wishers,

Greetings from Intercooperation!

It is three decades since Intercooperation (IC) started working in India. There have been many changes in the organization over the years, final being the transformation in 2005 into Intercooperation Social Development India (ICSD).

Over these years, we have worked with a large group of organizations and people across the country and beyond. It starts from SDC who mentored us through out, bilateral and multilateral agencies, governments at various levels, INGOs, partner organizations, and various other institutions and people who supported us in our joint endeavor to make the lives of the disadvantaged in India a little better. It is these relationships with all of them which keep us moving forward. And this News Post reaches you with our renewed commitment to strengthen these relationships.

We have a lot to share on the happenings during the period from July to September 2011 -organizational changes, actions in the field and news from our partners. As this News Post itself is a new venture, we request your feedback and suggestions on the newsletter as well as on the functioning of ICSD.

Looking forward to your continued guidance and support

With best regards
ICSD Team

Rupa Hands over the Mantle

Ms. Rupa Mukerji, who has been at the helm of affairs in ICSD since its inception left ICSD in June 2011 to join HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation as Co-Head of the Advisory Services division in Switzerland.



Rupa joined IC as Delegate for Intercooperation India in July 2004. She had been heading ICSD India as Chief Executive Officer as well. It was under her able leadership that ICSD took its present form and status.

We thank her for leading ICSD to what we are today and wish her all success in the new assignment!

To You, Joy

Dr. Joy Elamon assumed office as the new CEO from June 2011.



Joy is a medical doctor and public health specialist by training, but found his true vocation in supporting decentralized planning, local governance and rural development. He has earlier worked with Kerala State Planning Board, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and recently has been functioning as Moderator for the Decentralisation and MCH Communities of Practice of UN Solution Exchange.

It is HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation

Our parent organization too has undergone a major change recently. Intercooperation and HELVETAS, another highly regarded Swiss organization, have merged to form **HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation**. It was in 2009 that they started having a strategic partnership. Based on the successful experience of the partnership, the merger process was initiated and in July 2011, the new organization came into existence.

New Directors for ICSD

Mr. V. Padmakumar joined the Board of Directors of ICSD with effect from September 2011. A veteran in the field of livestock and livelihoods, he has earlier worked with ICSD too.



Ms. Rupa Mukerji also joined the Board of Directors during this period.

Welcome Padma and Rupa!

Board of Directors Meets

The meeting of the Board of Directors was held on 15 September 2011 in Hyderabad. It reviewed the activities and financial statements, and also dwelt on the future plans.

Annual General Body

Annual General Body of ICSD was held on 15 September 2011 in the registered office in Hyderabad. Audited Statement of accounts for the year 2010-2011 was placed before the AGM, which considered and adopted it. The meeting also reappointed Ms. Nandita Ray as a member of the Board of Directors.

The Team Expands

Dr. Raja Rathinam National Domain Head – Livelihoods



With a Doctorate in Dairy Sciences from National Institute of Nutrition, Agra University and having more than 28 years of experience in handling dairy projects, supporting the training and formulation of livelihood promotion programmes, Dr. Raja Rathinam joined ICSD as the National Domain Head – Livelihoods.

Shazneen in Climate Change Domain



Ms. Shazneen Cyrus Gazdar joined as Subject Matter Specialist – Climate Change. She has a Masters in Environmental Conservation and has experience in issues related to climate change, sustainable development, biodiversity and conservation.

Distinguished Visitors

Mr. Hans-Peter Egler and Mr. Suresh Kennit from SECO visited Hyderabad on 23rd September 2011. Dr. Joy Elamon and Mr. Mustak Khan presented the status of the Cashew Value Chain Development project in Goa and Maharashtra. The team also discussed the potential initiatives in the organic and fair trade sector.

Joy in Kathmandu

Dr. Joy participated in the Regional Policy Dialogue on Decentralisation, Equity and Children in South Asia held on 12-13 September 2011 in Kathmandu. The workshop was organized by UNICEF Regional Office.

Notes from the Field

Re-launching Small Ruminant Value Chain Analysis Project

ICSD had implemented a pilot project during 2009-2010 on 'Innovations in Small Ruminant Value Chain' in Bommaraspet Mandal of Mahabubnagar district. This was implemented with the support from Rural Innovation Fund of NABARD and in partnership with Veterinary University, Department of Animal Husbandry, WASSAN and Women federations. With the learnings from the pilot phase, the project was redesigned and re-launched on 30th September 2011.



A participant of the SR Project

Organic and Fair trade Rice Project Launched

The project on Sustainable Production of Organic and Fair trade traditional Basmati Rice in India and Thailand was launched on 14 July 2011 in Ramnagar of Nainital district of Uttarakhand. Supported by COOP, the project has HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation, Nature Bio Foods, RICE Fund Surin, Uttarakhand Organic Commodities Board and ICSD as partners. SARG and International Competence Centre for Organic Agriculture also are active partners in the various components of the project.



Buyers interacting with SR rearers

Basmati Rice in Hills

In the remote hilly areas of Almora and Bageshwar, farmers were growing Basmati rice for their own consumption, as they did not have marketing avenues. As the population and market grew and landholding became smaller and smaller, they switched over to high yielding varieties. Along with that was the introduction of high chemical inputs. Now they are experiencing the impact of land degradation, which is happening at a fast rate. While growing Basmati organically, they can enjoy more revenues due to the higher price and huge demand for Basmati and improved marketing channels. Initial trials are showing encouraging results. If this potential is harvested to the fullest, it could change the lives of thousands of small hill farmers.



Farmers at rice field taking inputs

Organic and Fair trade Cashew Value Chain in Goa and Maharashtra

A joint initiative of FiBL, Intercooperation and ICSD with Ajanta Cashew Industries as the processor partner and supported by SECO, the project is about to complete one year of activities.

- Farmer organization has been established with a democratically elected, well functioning board and sound governance practices. Organic and fair-trade certifications have been completed.
- Improved Internal Control System and regular monitoring in place.
- Productivity has increased to match the national average.

Farmers are supported with exposure visits to cashew processing plants and organic trade fair.



Quality of Cashew being checked



Farmers exposure visit

Water and Sanitation in Sobara Gram Panchayat

Supported by Arghyam Trust, ICSD in partnership with Institute of Women Development and Sobara Gram Panchayat has been implementing a project 'Empowering Gram Panchayats for Improved Planning and Delivery of Water and Sanitation Services' in Gajapati district of Odisha. Preceding quarter was full of activities like

- Sanitation Rally under the leadership of Sarpanch, elected representatives of the Panchayat and community leaders
- Innovative training for the village youth on water testing organized at Sobara Panchayat office



Community Toilets



Sanitation Rally in the village

Decentralisation and Equity in Child Rights – India Case Study

ICSD prepared the National Case Study on Decentralisation and Equity in Child Rights for UNICEF Regional Office, Kathmandu. This is part of a larger study on the theme covering the entire South Asia region. The national case study was based on the experiences from Bihar, Rajasthan and Kerala.

Mid-Term Evaluation of the GOI-UN Joint Convergence Programme

We have been assigned the task of conducting the Mid-Term Evaluation of the Government of India-United Nations Joint Convergence Programme. ICSD team consists of Dr. Meenakshisundaram, Dr. Joy Elamon and Ms. Priti Sharma.

State Action Plans for Climate Change

Continuing our engagement with the hill state of Sikkim, ICSD facilitated the preparation of the State Action Plan for Climate Change. This led to another assignment to prepare the same for West Bengal. In the process, we supported several thematic working groups to understand the vulnerability of economic sectors and regions of the state to climate change, assess the likely impacts and develop plans that incorporate aspects of both mitigation and adaptation to climate change. Both the assignments were supported by GIZ.

Ms. Rupa Mukerji, Dr. Sumana Bhattacharya, Dr. C.K. Rao, Mr. Rajiv Raman and Mr. Pratim Roy were the key members of the team.

Experiences to Cherish – the Bonthi Story

It was in July 2005 that the Bonthi PRI Pilot project was started with the support of SDC in strengthening Panchayats, especially for natural resource management. Later in June 2009, a second phase was launched known as 'Enhancing the Socio Economic Status of Women for Additional Income and Improved Local Governance – Gulbarga and Bidar districts of Karnataka' with MYRADA as implementing partner. This was supported by Zurich City of Switzerland. As the project concluded on 31 August 2011, and looking back, one finds that a lot of activities and efforts were undertaken to strengthen Bonthi Gram Panchayat and neighbouring Panchayats.



Bonthi Panchayat is now being talked about for many of the initiatives – the WUMP exercise as part of the project and the follow up based WUMP through government resources, 'zero corruption' programme and many others.

ICSD Team

Joy Elamon, Raja Rathinam, Mustak Khan, Ashish Srivastava, Abhijeet, Shazneen Cyrus Gazdar, Sreelatha, Madhuri, Shobha, Janardhan, Venkatamma

Board of Directors

G.Sree Kumaran Nair, Nandita Ray, V. Padmakumar, Rupa Mukerji, Sreeram