Participation of People in Developing Sustainable, Social & Solidarity Economy

Experiments of ASSEFA, India
Last 5 decades

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Mother ‘The EARTH’

- The Mother Earth is a precious gift by nature.
- All living beings have the right to exist.
- The man, considered to be superior among all living beings, has greater responsibility to preserve and protect the earth.
- This is possible only through **Green/Solidarity Economy**, which ensure permanency.
Preserving Planet, the Earth

- Nature consists of non living stock and animate life.
- The non living stock can be considered inexhaustible in the service of man when only the surplus is taken advantage of.
- Similarly, in animate life, the secret of nature’s permanency lies in the cycle of life.

Example: *The decomposed leaves, releases various elements absorbed from air, water, light and soil to be used for next generation.*
Mystery of Nature

- If this cycle is broken at any stage, at any time, consciously or unconsciously, it results in violence.
- When Violence intervenes in this way, growth or progress is stopped, ending finally in destruction and waste.
- Nature is unforgiving and ruthless.
- Therefore self interest and self preservation demand complete non-violence, co-operation and submission to the ways of nature to maintain “Permanency”
Types of Economies in Nature

- **Tiger Economy** (Parasitic Economy)
  - Feeding on other animals drinking their blood
    - (Introduce violence)

- **Monkey Economy** (Predatory Economy)
  - Self Interest without contribution
    - (Less violence, but destructive)

- **Economy of Honey Bee** (Economy of Enterprise)
  - Contribute their share and effort in obtaining the products
    - (Active Constructive Unit)

- **Cow/Mother Economy** (Economy of Services)
  - Feeds her young ones and risk her life in defending young ones
    - (Economy of Permanence)
An attempt to Promote

“The Green/Solidarity Economy”

- To move towards “economy of permanence” there is necessity to enhance the goodness in human being.
- The goodness in man is enhanced by practising a) **Love** b) **Truth** c) **Non-Violence**
- This leads to **Peace, Solidarity and Harmony**
- Here is a humble attempt by the Gandhians, in establishing a new Green/Solidarity Economy” by developing a self-sufficient and self reliant communities in rural India.
Who Are We?

- Vinobha Bhave, the spiritual heir of Gandhi, started “Land gift movement” to bridge the gap between landlords and landless as.
- He did a mission of trekking 14 years across the country since 1951 which enabled him to collect 4.38 million acres of lands as gifts from the land holding peasants.
- ASSEFA, with the blessings of Vinoba Bhave, undertook the followup of the Movement since 1968 of rehabilitating the landless farmers.
- Gradually, ASSEFA broadened its mission to bring in vulnerable for their holistic development.
What is our Motto?

“Establish Village Republic i.e., self-sufficient, self-reliant and self-managed communities based on the principles of freedom, non-economical parity with social justice”.
Where are we?

- ASSEFA works in rural India across eight states in India, intensively in the state of Tamil Nadu.
- Nearly 1.8 million families inhabited across 10,500 villages are part of this mission.
- Involved with multi facet socio-economic actions through 161 CBOs, promoted exclusively under this mission.
ASSEFA Steps to strengthen the Goodness in Human Being

- Promoting mutuality groups
  - To understand, care, love and support each other
- Ensuring Livelihoods
  - To meet the basic needs: food, clothes and shelter
- Providing Social Security
  - To make them feel secure against vulnerability
- Teaching holistic education for young children
  - To develop new generation
Mutuality Groups

- Action based groups with 5/20 members
- Working on mutual benefit concept
- Participatory system
- Decision on consences
- Independent operation
- Transparent
- Team being built to strengthen this process at group, federation and regional levels.
- Brought in about 8,00,000 families under mutuality groups
Livelihoods Promotion

- Opportunity for all to participate in income generation activities.
- Preference to land and cattle wealth based activities.
- Protecting and enriching Land and water via
  - Bringing waste land under cultivation
  - Rain harvesting structure to improve ground water
  - Promoting organic farming practices and
  - Tree crop cultivation
- Local capital built up to meet their credit requirements
- Separate marketing structure wherever necessary, preferably to meet the local demand.
Social Security

- Community based security:
  - Wage loss compensation for pregnant ladies
  - Human life loss compensation for children
  - Cattle loss compensation by replacing with new cattle
  - Productivity loss compensation for farmers.

- Well being of all:
  - Mother and child health by trained persons
  - Stress management
  - Health and Sanitation
  - Safe drinking water

- Community Marriage to address the social problems of poverty, vulnerability and bridge the hearts among the community.
Holistic Education for Children

- Rural Education:
  - Keep the children under mainstream educational system
  - Learn and respect livelihood activities practised by the local communities
  - Protect and preserve the local WEALTH of NATURE
  - Understand and appreciate their culture and traditions.
  - Learn and practice non-violence and Peace Making Skills
  - Good physique and sound mind through games, sports, yoga and meditation.

- Hundreds of thousand children undergone this training in the last four decades.
Graduating Local Communities to Sustain these initiatives

- Initiate development programs in the deserving areas.
- Simultaneously promote mutuality groups to participate in the development programs.
- Build up local resources to meet the development initiatives on rotation basis.
- Gradually, strengthen the mutuality groups through its federated and apex bodies formed at area and state levels respectively to manage the programs.
- Once these community structures are graduated to manage the programs, ASSEFA withdraw its support and moves on to other deserving areas.
- It, generally, takes between 12 to 15 years to graduate the communities.
Trusteeship Based Community Organisations

- All the federated as well as apex bodies of mutuality groups are formed under Gandhian Trusteeship Model.
- Promoted 161 such community Organisations with suitable legal entity with the following features:
  - Decentralised approach
  - Participation of community in governance
  - No individual ownership. Communities are the owners/trustees
  - Democratic approach
  - Profit/surplus invested through provision of extension services/social services to benefit the people.
Organizational Structure of Community Organisations

**E.g Dairy program**

- **Members** → **Dairy Groups**
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- **Dairy Groups** → **Federation of Dairy Groups**
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- **Federation of Dairy Groups** → **Dairy Company** (Apex Organisation)

- 15 - 20 members in each group
- 50 to 60 groups in each Federation
- 5 to 7 Federations in each Company i.e. serves about 5000 dairy farmers
Roles and Responsibilities at Each Level

*E.g dairy program*

**Dairy Groups**
- Sharing experiences
- Identifying members need
- Prioritizing and arranging assistance for members
- Clean milk production
- Marketing surplus milk at village level

**Federation of Dairy Groups**
- Arranging extension services
- Needs based training
- Credit support for milk producers via dairy groups through **Kosh, a company promoted for Social Capital mgnt**
- Transportation and disposal of surplus milk in bulk
- Social Security for Milk Producers – *Pension, life loss compensation, animal loss compensation, etc.*

**Dairy Company**
- Processing Milk and Manufacturing by-products.
- Marketing surplus milk through own outlets
- Introduce technology to enhance milk lifespan
- Sharing the profit for 1) capital building 2) social security for Milk producers 3) expansion to new areas.
At A Glance -

Mutuality Group in Action
Women Mutuality group in their business meeting..
AGM of women Federations.
Farmers Mutuality Group in Action
Farmers Mutuality Group in Action
Livelihoods Promotion At A Glance
Agriculture, the prime income source...
Training in Soil testing..
Farmers practising Vermi composting..
Organic farming, top priority for farmers..
Watershed in Action..
Drip Irrigation
Micro Sprinkler
Appropriate technology in farming to reduce production cost.
Rural Marketing Bazzar linking farmers and consumers directly.
Dairy promotion as alternative to agriculture farming.
Veterinary Care..
Surplus milk collection in the villages
Transporting milk to the factory..
Checking the quality of milk in process.
Processing of milk..
OUR BRAND
SEVA / SARVODAYA..
OUR PRODUCTS IN RETAIL CENTERS..
ANC services for pregnant members.
Regular Health camps..
Mass wedding for social harmony..
Couples in procession..
Women SHGs organise these events..

(As on date 2,830 couples solemnized as husband and wife)
HAPPY LEARNINGS..
INNOVATIVE TEACHING..
Regular practises of Yoga and Meditation..
Garden maintenance, Campus cleaning..

Practising Shramdhan..
Kutty doctor helping the mates to maintain hygiene
Science lab..
Training in software, hardware technology..
Whether Replicable?

Thanking You
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