

-- ASTHA --
A FIELD-BASED RESOURCE ORGANIZATION
Report of the Work of Astha
April 2004 - March 2005

In this year, the work of Astha moved into its new phase which was characterized by two strategies:

- a) Helping the 8 People's Organizations formed during the last 13 years, to become more self-sustaining, self-directing
- b) Forming issue-based Resource Units to work as resource units not only for the 8 peoples' organizations if needed, but also for other organizations in Rajasthan, and beyond.

A Summary Overview of This Transition Year--

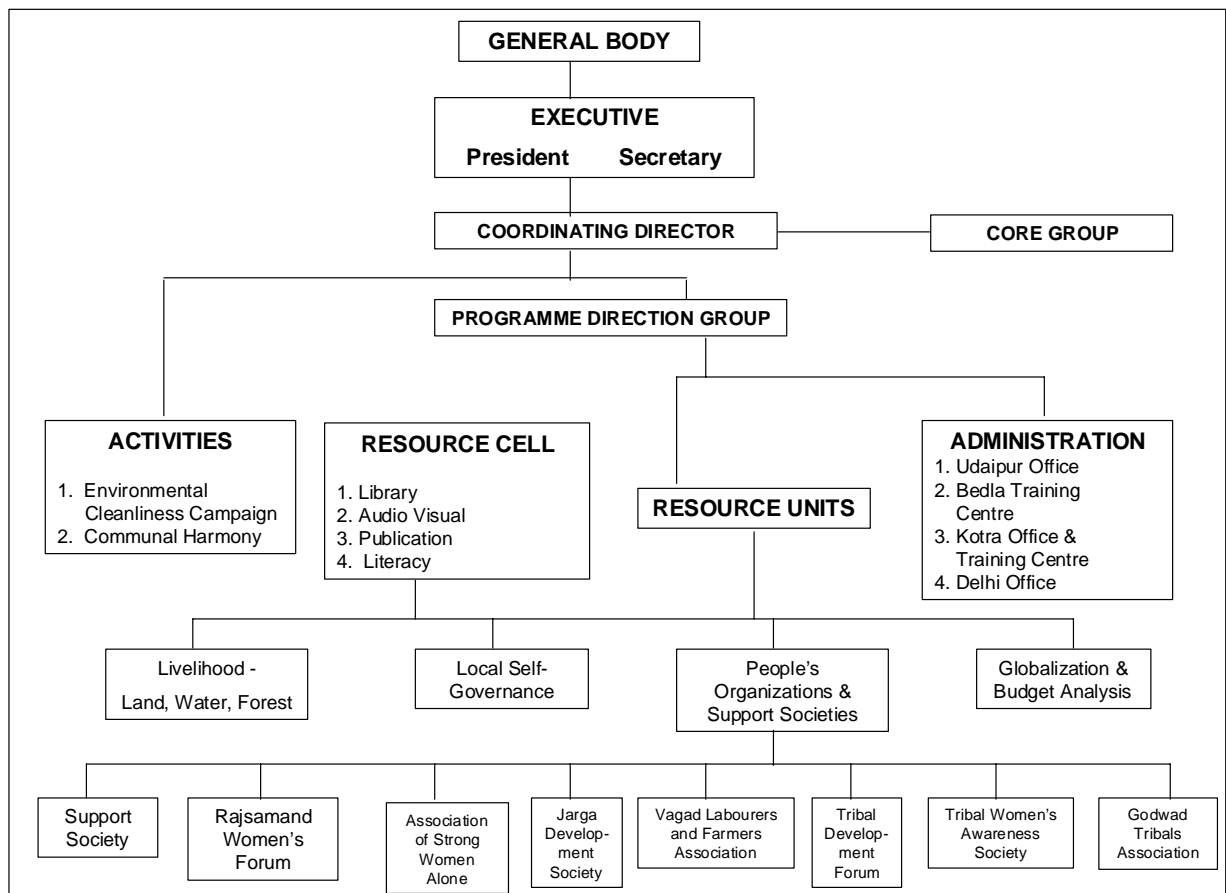
An organogram of the "structure of the work of Astha" at the beginning of the year, is found on page two of this report

It was found that not all the People's Organizations were at the same stage of maturity, not all were of a similar size and spread, not all were equally strong. Therefore, the Resource Unit that was established to work with all the P.O.s found that it had much less work with the "Samarthak Samiti" or Support Society for the Non-Timber Forest Produce. The Samarthak Samiti has a membership of groups and cooperatives, and some individuals, but has its own office, own paid staff, has an FCRA number, and funding sources. Likewise, the Association of Strong Women Alone (Ekal Nari Shakti Sangathan) works state-wide, now in 25 of the 32 Districts of Rajasthan. This is in contrast to the tribal P.O.s which work in several Blocks, sometimes spanning 2-3 Districts, but generally in a more compact geographical space. The kinds of resource support each P.O. needed varied a lot. However, there was a clustering of similar and common issues among the tribal P.O.s (1. The Tribal Development Forum – Adivasi Vikas Manch, 2. The Vagad Area Labourers and Farmers Association – Vagad Mazdoor Kisan Sangathan, 3. The Jarga Development Society -- Jarga Vikas Samiti, 4. The Godwad Area Tribal Association – Godwad Adivasi Sangathan, and 5. The Tribal Women's Awareness Society – Adivasi Mahila Jagriti Samiti) The Rajsamand Women's Forum (Rajsamand Mahila Manch) is somewhat different again, although working in about 5 Blocks of one District, there is a large number of non-tribal women, and their work is mainly addressing cases of atrocities on women.

Still looking at the same "Structure of the Work of Astha" chart, the number of Resource Units should be modified somewhat. The 3 planned Resource Units –Livelihood Resource Unit, Local Self-Governance Resource Unit, People's Organizations and Support Societies Resource Unit – are working as Resource Units. The Budget Analysis Resource Unit – BARC – The Budget Analysis Rajasthan Centre – has developed a lot over the last year, and now really stands as a Resource Unit on its own. The Globalization work has survived, but it has not been possible to attract any new worker who can network in English, use the internet to search out data about trade, WTO, and other matters needed. Therefore, the work did not expand in the year. However, there is virtually a new and embryonic Resource Unit, and that is the Literacy Resource Unit. Astha had been running crash, condensed, residential literacy courses in 3 phases, for leaders of People's Organizations,

bringing the leaders up to about a Class 5 level of reading, writing and arithmetic. In this past year, the small Literacy team has made it known around the state, that if other NGOs or People's Organizations want such a course for their leaders, or want to learn the methodology of these crash condensed residential courses so they can run them in their own area, then the Astha literacy team will be available to go to conduct courses in their organizations, or the literacy learners are welcome to join the courses going on in the Astha Training Centre. Several organizations across the state have shown interest, and some have called the Astha team members to their organizations. A beginning has been made.

STRUCTURE OF THE WORK OF ASTHA - 2004-2006



Another change in the “Structure” chart, is that the “Shuche Abhiyan” or the Collecting and Processing of Urban Household Waste in Udaipur by Vermiculture Processes, has become an independent Registered Society. It is no longer a project of Astha, although there are historical linkages which continue. The project makes money from the sale of the vermiculture, and from the monthly membership fees paid by each neighbourhood household, to have their garbage picked up and taken away.



Environmental sanitation – households become members of the Shuche Campaign by paying Rs. 40 per month. They agree to sort their waste into “compostable” and “non-compostable” categories. The three-wheel tricycle of the Shuche Campaign worker goes door to door, and collects both types of waste.



Women’s and men’s groups visit the vermiculture project work of the Shuche Campaign, and learn how to begin a vermiculture project in their own villages. They can earn from the sale of worms, which multiply very quickly, and can use, and sell, the high quality fertilizer.

So, at the end of March 2005, it can be seen that the Structure of the Work of Astha for the next year, 2005-2006, starts with

People's Organizations, with Support Societies (registered bodies)	Resource Units	Projects
The Support Society (The Forest Produce Collectors and Processors Groups Support Society) all Rajasthan	Livelihood Resource Unit	Communal Harmony
	Local Self Governance Resource Unit	Current Issues
The Rajsamand Women's Forum – Rajsamand District	People's Organization and Support Societies Resource Unit	
	Budget Analysis Resource Unit – BARC	
The Association of Strong Women Alone all Rajasthan	Globalization Resource Unit	
	Literacy Resource Unit	
Jarga Development Society – Rajsamand District, based in Kumbalgarh Block		
The Vagad Area Labourers and Farmers Association – Dungarpur & Banswara Districts		
Tribal Development Forum, based in Kotra Block, Udaipur District, expanded to other Blocks in Udaipur, Pali & Sirohi Districts		
The Tribal Women's Awareness Society –Jhadol & Girwa Blocks, Udaipur District		
Godwad Area Tribal Association – Pali District		

The Resource Cell of Library, Audio Visual and Publications has been strengthened by the recruitment of a young man who writes well in both Hindi and English, and who has taken his university studies in film-making! The Cell has acquired some new editing equipment, which makes the production of VCDs possible and economical. One film on migrant labour has already been produced. The Cell helps with the publishing of 3 Newsletters, bi-monthly, quarterly, and every 4 months.

The Programme Direction Group, as envisaged, has worked well for sharing and coordination. It meets every 3 months, the Team Leaders of the various pieces of work of Astha, and each person brings a written report with a copy for everyone, about the work of the last 3 months.

THE WORK OF THE RESOURCE UNITS

1. The Livelihood Resource Unit

Astha's approach to issues of economic empowerment has been to work on issues that will affect hundreds and maybe thousands of poor people – issues of minimum wages, pensions, forest produce, etc. The Livelihood Resource Unit began working as of April 2004, and the focus was on the basic resources for the livelihoods of the people, particularly in this southern part of Rajasthan – Land, Water, Forest.

The work of the Unit also built on work of the previous years, around the tribal forest land rights. Some tribal families who have been living on their lands for the past many decades are threatened with displacement because in between, the Forest Department declared their land to be “forest land”. However, there is a law which says that those who were living there from 1980 or before, can have legal rights to their land. But the forest department is impatient, and often harasses them as “encroachers”. The whole issue of land rights, and tribal land rights especially, is one main issue of the Livelihood Resource Unit.

Work under taken by the Unit –

S.L.	Date	Activity	Objective
1	7th of Every month	Regional meeting	Forest Land dwellers rights Issues (Jungle Jameen)
2	26 April, 04	Before election a direct dialogue of party candidates and tribal community was organized	To draw attention to the historical injustice against the tribals.
3	28-29 July, 04	Meeting held in Baran district's - Sahabad Block where Saharia tribals live.	On the Issue of Forest and Land rights and and Livelihood issues.
4	August, 04	Meeting on Land rights of oppressed (Western Rajasthan)	Livelihoods based on natural resources.
5	Camp	Representatives from blocks & Districts of western Rajasthan gathered for two days to protest against eviction from forest, land. Strategy made & regional committee was re-elected.	to protest against Eviction .
6	3 November. 04	Important meeting was held with Forest & Environment Minister.	To regularize the Rights of tribals to collect Non Timber Forest Produce etc.
7	5 November, 04	Meeting with the Prime Minister was a new direction towards addressing the historical injustice against tribals and to discuss the Scheduled Tribe (Forest Land Recognition) Bill.	To find out the permanent solution for the historical injustice against tribals.

8	7-21 March, 05	Demonstration and sit-in of 550 Tribal men and women in front of the Parliament, New Delhi, to pressurize the government to formulate policies for Non Timber Forest Produce collection, forest land rights, other livelihood opportunities for the tribals and forest land dwellers.	People gathered outside the Parliament to draw public attention and to show the large number of people affected, and who were demanding the new legislation.
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Most of the work Astha has done to date has been with Bhil tribals -- Bhil Gameti, Bhil Garasia, Bhil Meenas. In this year, some work was done with the Saheriya tribals of Baran District. Along with SANKALP Sansthan, Astha held a workshop with Saheriya tribals in July 2004, and opened up the issue of Saheriya land rights and forest land rights. There are many cases of non-tribals occupying the lands of Saheriya tribals, and Astha helped over 1,000 Saheriyas file land cases in the revenue courts. The contact with the tribals of that area continues.



A delegation of the Rajasthan Forest Land People's Movement, meeting with the Central Government Forest Minister in New Delhi, to press for rights to homesteads and non-timber forest produce in Forest Department areas.

The Campaign for Forest Land rights for tribals, has led to a national campaign for forest rights for tribals, and Bhanwar Singh Chadana¹ of Astha has been a part of that national committee. There were meetings in November 2004, which included meetings in Delhi with senior Ministers of the Ministry of Environment and Forests, the Tribal Ministry, and the Prime Minister. This led to the Government of India formulating a draft Scheduled Tribes (Recognition of Forest Rights) Bill 2005. It is “a comprehensive legislation to redress the historical injustice done to forest dwelling scheduled tribes on account of non-recognition of their rights over their ancestral lands and their habitat though they have been residing on such lands for generations.”² A note indicating the background of the case leading to the formulation of the Bill, and a copy of the draft Bill, can be found in the Ministry of Tribal Affairs web site (www.tribal.nic.in).



Large rallies, followed by meetings sitting in front of the Tribal Commissioners office, give a good opportunity to educate the masses of people who come, in the goals of the work – inform the men and women gathered about rights, laws, principles, goals, atrocities, strategies. Also, new leaders gain confidence in addressing a large group in public



“Forest Land, Whose Is It? -- It is Ours! It is Ours!” speak the placards held by the women, part of the Forest Land People’s Movement during a large meeting.

In December 2004, a 2-day Workshop on tribal land rights was held, and 10-12 MPs came. There were 400 participants from the states where Schedule V tribals are living. In March, a 14-day “Sit-In” was organized in New Delhi by the Campaign for Survival and Dignity, and in this open forum, the media, parliamentarians, tribals from 15 states gathered. There was a system of rotation of tribal delegations from different states coming for between 2-4 days each. The demand was that the Bill be passed by the Parliament. Astha was one of the key organizers of this event.

Astha has also been part of the work being done on state tribal policies. In this connection, Astha has been part of the organizing groups for regional and national meetings, monitoring the state tribal policy drafts from the point of view of exploitation,

¹ Bhanwar Singh Chadana is a senior staff person of Astha, and at present, is head of the Livelihood Resource Unit of Astha.

² From Government of India, Ministry of Tribal Affairs advertisement in the Times of India, June 7, 2005 asking for public views/comments/suggestions on the draft Bill.

atrocities, violence, survival, tribal history and traditions, rights over natural resources. The Resource Unit has made available materials it has written, and copies of the draft tribal policies in Hindi to tribal groups and NGOs working with tribals.

Also on the land issue, the Unit organized a Dalit Land Workshop in Western Rajasthan, in August 2004. It was a workshop with/for NGOs which work with Dalits, and to help them to know how to take up land issues of Dalits. There is a major issue of non-dalits encroaching on dalit lands, and from Astha's experience, how to go about establishing their possession and rights over their lands. After the Workshop, a "Land Awareness Foot March (Chetna Yatra)" was organized. There is a Dalit Rights Forum, and as a result of the workshop, there is now a Dalit Land Rights Forum as part of the umbrella Rights Forum. The Workshop was conducted in collaboration with the NGO Unnati, which had been working on Dalits. Astha's experience and work on land was experience they did not have, and so the collaboration was helpful to the cause. Unnati will follow-up, keeping in touch with Astha. The participants were from the Rajasthan Districts of Jaisalmer, Barmer, Jodhpur and Pali.

The second major national campaign in which the Livelihood Resource Unit has taken action, is the campaign for the Employment Guarantee Scheme. The EGS forms part of the Common Minimum Programme of the Central Government, and the people's campaign is to help to see that it happens! Astha has helped with signature campaigns, holding meetings and workshops at the village, cluster, regional, levels, and participating in the national level events promoting the EGS. Along with the Drought Struggle Committee in Rajasthan (the Akal Sangherash Samiti), the Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS), Astha organized a state level convention on the issue of the Employment Guarantee Scheme. A national level Workshop was also organized with major input from Astha, in March 2004, in which Rajasthan, Jharkhand, M.P., Delhi, U.P. and Uttaranchal organizations participated (110 people). The focus was in working out how to work on the issues of the Employment Guarantee Scheme, and the Food for Work scheme.



Mass Mobilization around the issue of the Employment Guarantee Bill which was to go before Parliament.

Also on the issue of employment, the Unit studied the migration patterns in Kotra Block, Udaipur District, and Kumbalgarh Block, Rajsamand District, to understand better the issue of migrant labour in south Rajasthan. This led to a collaborative effort in the making of a VCD film on migrant labour, which has been completed, titled “Between Two Worlds”.



The Livelihood Resource Unit works with an Action – Reflection strategy, with action, followed by reflection on action, followed by more action! Here, a workshop is going on, on Livelihood Rights, Challenges and Solutions, held June 2004.

On the issue of Water, not as much work was done. The monsoons of 2003 and 2004 were better in many places, than the drought conditions that had prevailed for the previous 4 years. Some areas were declared “drought affected”, and Astha organized a state level meeting of the state Drought Struggle Committee in Udaipur. Also, water policy continues to be debated in the state and in the country, and Astha is a part of those discussions, always opposing the privatization of water. The water policy documents were collected in Hindi, and made available to those working on water. A study tour for leaders of People’s Organizations on the issue of water was organized to Thanagazi, Lapordia, and Bhilwara to see water harvesting structures and talk to the local people.

Documents were prepared on livelihood, tribal policy, forest bills and tribals, and a major document is under preparation on the Forest Land People’s Movement. All are in Hindi, all in “report form” or photocopied form. In the work of the Unit in this first year, networking and collaboration with other organizations was a feature of the work. And the staff team of the Unit is still being developed. The head of the Unit has over 30 years of experience in development work in south Rajasthan, and he will build up the team working with him. A beginning has been made.

2. The P.O. / S.S. Resource Unit –

The People's Organization / Support Society Resource Unit is the Unit that has the overall mandate to help the People's Organizations which have come into existence as a result of the work of Astha over the last 15-19 years. Most of these 8 People's Organizations have a registered society, or "support society", which has been formed with key leaders of each People's Organization. These "support societies" have been formed to help the work of the People's Organization to sustain over the long term, independent of what else may or may not be the strategies of Astha. The P.O./S.S. Resource Unit is to help both the People's Organizations and their Support Societies to mature to the next stage of their evolution.

There is at least 1 Astha worker placed with each of the People's Organizations to guide the day-to-day work. The Resource Unit works with and through these Astha workers, for the most part.

Also, in the field areas of 2 of the People's Organizations – the Tribal Development Forum in Kotra Block, Udaipur District and the Tribal Women's Awareness Society in Jhadol and Girwa Blocks of Udaipur District, a UNDP project was sanctioned for implementation. The decision to take on the project was made in consultation with the 2 People's Organizations. The objectives of this project are: social mobilization, poverty alleviation and women's upliftment; improve poor women's economic condition by rejuvenation of natural resources. The project has components of physical development related to soil and water conservation, as well as the promotion of income activities related to agriculture, like vermiculture. The decision-makers in the P.O.s were ready for the combination of physical and social components of the project. However, the UNDP reporting standards are very demanding, and so the Resource Unit also has the role to help the P.O.s to implement the work they take in hand. This UNDP project is also a responsibility of the Resource Unit.

The activities of the P.O./S.S. Resource Unit that were carried out in the last year were:

a) Orientation of the Astha workers who work with the P.O.s –

- In April 2004, a workshop was held with the team members, to help them to understand their role in helping the P.O.s to become more independent, and in helping the S.S.s to understand their roles. How to help the P.O.s to become "independent"? How to help them to become "sustainable"? What is the role for Astha workers, in the field, and in the Resource Unit? All these matters were taken up.
- About 4 months later, the Unit organized a capacity building workshop for the Astha workers on the topics of: helping a People's Organization survive, how to manage a P.O., how to maintain continuity in issue action, how to pick uplocal issues and link them to larger issues. This training was 3 days.
- The Unit staff held a special meeting with the Astha staff working with the Tribal Women's Awareness Society and The Rajsamand Women's Forum to understand the organizations, activities, problems and problem solving patterns. Then the Resource Unit staff held a workshop with the women leaders/workers of the Rajsamand Women's Forum.

- Regular meetings were held with the workers who work with the People's Organizations, in which the ongoing work is analysed, and planning for the future is done.
- With the UNDP project, the implementing organization in each of the 2 project areas was the "S.S." – (1) The Tribal Women's Awareness Organization and (2) Kotra Tribal Organization. The Resource Unit staff held orientation and planning meetings with the leaders of these two organizations and the Astha Staff working with them.
- The training design for the Self Help Group leaders of the UNDP project was done by the Resource Unit, and the Astha staff were given orientation in how to carry out the training programmes with the SHGs.
- The Resource Unit organized a training for the NGO workers in Udaipur, who were working on UNDP projects, to learn about micro planning, Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), and educational tour planning. The Astha staff also participated.
- For the UNDP project, the Astha staff went to Delhi to learn about the management of the project work.
- The Resource Unit worked with the UNDP S.S. leaders groups, and the Astha staff, quarterly for 3-monthly review, planning and problem solving.

b) Leadership Training of P.O. Leaders, and S.S. Leaders, in How to Manage and Sustain an Active and Effective People's Organization :

- The senior programme staff of the Resource Unit regularly attended the P.O. Leaders Group Meetings, workers meeting, in order to understand how the leadership was developing, and to help them to establish regular and systematic meeting systems
- The Resource Unit staff conducted Leadership Training Programmes for the leaders of all the tribal People's Organizations
- Likewise, the Resource Unit staff conducted a training for the Support Societies' executive group or leadership group, on how to manage a P.O., planning, proposal preparation. They also, near the end of the financial year, took a look at what had been budgeted, what the P.O. had spent, and helped them to make a better budget for 2005-2006 – learning how to plan budgets systematically and thoughtfully. Also, an Accounts Workshop was held for the persons of the P.O.s and S.S.s who deal with accounts, on how to write accounts, how to prepare annual reports of accounts.
- With the P.O. leaders and S.S. leaders of the areas where the UNDP project was being implemented, the Resource Unit helped them to know how to conduct the Baseline Surveys.
- The Resource Unit organize P.O. Leadership Group (*Sanchalak Mandal*) 2-day meetings every 3 months, in which larger issues like the local self-governance elections (Panchayati Raj elections), the Rajasthan tribal policy, and other common issues were discussed and planning done.
- On the issue of Tribal Self Rule, the Resource Unit organized a training with Gram Sabha Committee leaders and P.O. leaders with Dr. B.D. Sharma, to develop conceptual clarity about TSR. 30 people from Dungarpur, Banswara, Kotra and other places attended.

c) The Resource Unit Acted as a “Resource” for Issue-Based Action Taken Up by the P.O.s., Sometimes by Being a Resource Person in the Field, Sometimes by Alerting Them to Network Actions In Which They Could Participate

- The issues on which the Unit acted as a “resource” were:
 - Tribal Self Rule* – guided the Gram Sabha committees
 - Forest Land* – in Bali Block, Pali District with the Godwad Tribal Association, the Unit joined the P.O. leaders in meeting the District officials (Collector, S.P.) after the Forest Department demolished the homesteads of 35 tribal families and ploughed under their crops with a tractor. In other places, linked to the larger People’s Movement.
 - Loaning and Credit* – helped the Jarga Tribal Association to file a test case in the courts against a money-lender. In other areas, help with legal advice and court linkages.
 - Panchayati Raj Elections* and the role of the P.O. in these local self-government elections. Also near the election, the Unit helped to contact the political parties for the “face to face” (amnay-samnay) meetings of candidates. Also helped with fund-raising for election expenses of candidates for posters, etc.
 - Threatened Displacement from Homesteads in Game Sanctuary* – In Kumbalgarh (Jarga’s area), the people were given notices by the Forest Department, and the people had to give a written reply. The Unit helped them to reply, and to feel confident enough to stop the boundary wall construction work that was going on.
- Planning and Implementation help to P.O.s when they conducted *Big Events*. In some programmes, the Unit staff were resource persons in the programme. Jarga Development Association, Rajsamand Women’s Forum (International Women’s Day Programme), Gorwad Tribal Association, Vagad Area Labourers and Farmers Association (Annual Tribal Self Rule Convention), the Tribal Development Forum (Annual “Milan Mela” or Sharing Fair), and the Association of Strong Women Alone (National Convention of Women Alone) all benefited from the Resource Unit’s help.
- Helping to make networking links for the P.O.s to join with others on common issues:
 - The Employment Guarantee Scheme* – Motivated the P.O. leaders to attend the Jaipur state-level convention on EGS, and to speak out in the event. The Resource Unit also went to Jaipur. A meeting was held with the MKSS (Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan – Labourers and Farmers Strong Association) planning what could be done by the P.O.s of South Rajasthan.
 - Drought* – the Unit motivated the P.O.s to join the Drought Struggle Committee in the state – Akal Sanghersh Samiti, and to raise their voices about drought policy
 - Water* – the Gandhian organization, Samagra Seva Sangh organized a padyatra on the issue of water privatization, and the excessive exploitation of underground water by companies such as Coke Cola. The Resource Unit informed and motivated the P.O.s to send representatives to take part in this issue action
 - Tribal Forest Land Rights Bill* – the Unit informed and helped the P.O. members to participate in the Udaipur and New Delhi meetings and Sit-In on this issue
 - Tribal Self Rule* – the Unit helped to form a Core Group of those who have declared their village a TSR village. The network covers 3 Blocks.

Overall, the P.O./S.S. Resource Unit staff feel that in the year, the People's Organization Leaders have made progress in their abilities to conduct meetings, do planning, and make decisions. Up to now, only about 20% of the written work is done by the People's Organization Leaders, and the office systems are not yet set.

However, this is only the first year of focused work with the P.O. leaders and S.S. leaders, and the Unit is confident that greater self-sufficiency, and less dependence on Astha is certainly possible in the future.

3. The Local Self-Governance Resource Unit –

The Local Self-Governance Resource Unit covers work in 2 areas:

- a) The Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI) – Gram Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti and Zila Parishad elected bodies
- b) Tribal Self Rule – based on the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act 1996, a Central Act. State Acts to operationalize PESA³ at the state level in Schedule V areas have been passed.

a) Strengthening the Gram Sabha of the Gram Panchayats (PRI work) --

For 11 months of the year under reporting, i.e. up to February 2005, the Resource Unit was working to strengthen the Gram Sabhas in 48 Gram Panchayats of South Rajasthan. Astha was the nodal agency that worked with, and monitored, the work of 23 NGOs doing this work under the direction of Astha, including Astha itself!

The Gram Sabha, literally "Village Assembly", of all adult citizens of the village, meets 4 times a year. The NGOs working with Astha formed 1 Jagrook Manch (or an Awareness Forum) per Gram Panchayat, of citizens committed to strengthening grassroots democracy. The role of this group of citizens, was to see that the Gram Sabha was strong. As such, the Jagrook Manch would inform all people in the Gram Panchayat area (often 4-6 villages) of the date and place of the Gram Sabha meetings. They would arrange drinking water and make other arrangements. They took special care that the women of the Gram Panchayat area attended the Gram Sabha meetings. Before the meetings, the members of the Manch would identify the real issues of the village people in the Gram Panchayat area, and made sure that they got raised in the Gram Sabha, were taken up, and worked on. The Gram Sabha has in many cases been a farce as locally powerful politicians used it for their own purposes. The Jagrook Manch would follow through with the decisions passed, and lobbied the CEO and Zila Pramook to get the work implemented. There was work done on making the Gram Panchayat financially transparent, with clear reporting on how much money came in, and how much was spent. A Social Audit was done in the Gram Sabha, with the help of the Jagrook Manch.

Astha conducted a Training of Trainers programme for the partner NGOs in this work, on how to give training to the Jagrook Manch members. How to raise issues in the Gram Sabha was one of the key components of the training. And Astha also trained the PRI elected representatives, the panchayat officials like the Secretary and Patwari. And for the Gram Panchayats for which Astha took responsibility, we also trained Jagrook Manch members.

³ A copy of the Central Act, PESA, is attached to this report as Appendix No. 1

Near the Panchayati Raj Elections, held in Rajasthan the end of January and the first week of February 2005, the Resource Unit mobilized a large Voter Awareness Campaign. For state level planning, a steering group was formed, and Astha was a member of the steering group. 8 organizations divided the work of printing 10 lakh posters (Astha got 35,000 poster printed), which were distributed around the state. Astha took the responsibility for voter education in 212 Gram Panchayats of South Rajasthan. The 23 partner NGOs which had been working with Astha on the Gram Sabha work, took some of the responsibility, and Astha took care of Dungarpur, Banswara, and a few Gram Panchayats in Bhilwara District.



Voter Awareness at the village level, small meetings, big meetings – election time is a good time to help people understand about grass roots democracy. The Local Self-Governance Resource Unit worked hard to spread messages of rights and responsibilities.



Local Panchayati Raj Institution elections were held January-February 2005. The Unit worked on Voter Awareness. These meetings in the villages, in village squares, helped people to understand the role of the Village Council, their role as voter for the representatives of the Village, Block and District Councils. A little music helped people to gather!

Once the local self government elections were over – it was time to train the elected representatives about their roles and responsibilities! For this task, the Rajasthan state Indira Gandhi Panchayati Raj and Grameen Vikas Sansthan (IGPRGVS) took the lead. The Institute called a meeting of NGOs to plan at the state level how to train all the elected representatives in the Panchayati Raj structures in the state. Astha participated in this meeting, and it was decided that there would be 7 organizations conducting training, and Astha was one of them. The training that Astha did was:

- a) BDO and Pradhan⁴ training in Udaipur Division
- b) Training of Trainers (TOT) of government officials at the Block level, of Pali and Udaipur Districts, who would train the ward councilors (ward Panches and Chairperson of the Council of Villages (Sarpanch of the Gram Panchayat).

Astha facilitated and supervised the ward councilor and Chairpersons' training programmes, and the Resource Unit documented the whole process. This documentation can be useful in the future, and to other states as well. The documentation is in Hindi.

⁴ BDO = Block Development Officer, and in Rajasthan, the "Pradhan" is the elected Chairperson of the Block Development Committee, elected from amongst and by the elected Members of the Block Development Committee – the Panchayat Samiti.

The follow-up to this initial work of training is going on. There has been a state-level network built up of like-minded NGOs, and they are thinking how to make a movement of women's elected representatives.

Every 2 months, a newsletter is published, called the "Panchayat Jagrook Manch Samachar Patra" (The Panchayat Newsletter of the Awareness Forum). It carries news about government schemes, amendments and government orders, gazetted notifications, laws, case studies, stories of women elected representatives, etc. At present, it is given to NGOs working on the local self-governance issue.

b) Work on Tribal Self Rule –

In Rajasthan, the Panchayati Raj Institutions are in all parts of the state, including the Schedule V Areas where tribals are in the majority. The Central Government PESA Act has been passed in 1996, and in 1999, the Rajasthan Government also passed an Act to operationalize PESA in Rajasthan, but has done nothing about doing so.

The scope for tribals to have control over their resources, to keep their traditional dispute resolution systems, to control liquor shops and money lenders in their villages, is much more under Tribal Self Rule, than under the Panchayati Raj Institutions. Astha is working with the tribal people in Schedule V areas to see how this greater autonomy can be achieved. The Gram Sabha, or Village Assembly of all adult citizens in the village, is the decision-making body.⁵

Astha, with the people, has begun a field experiment to see how to interface the Tribal Self Rule villages with their Gram Sabhas, with the Panchayati Raj system. There seems to be no clarity on this – indeed, very few states or NGOs in the country are working on the issue of Tribal Self Rule.

Astha has selected 4 Gram Panchayat areas in Dungarpur District. (The Vagad Labourers and Farmers Association is also working in Dungarpur, and is also working on the issue of Tribal Self Rule, and has helped 102 tribal villages to declare themselves "Village Republics" and establish their Gram Sabhas or Village Assemblies. The Resource Unit collaborates with the Vagad Association in this matter.) Within these 4 Gram Panchayats, there are 27 Village Republics where Village Assemblies have been formed. The Village Assemblies have all informed the District Collector and the State Governor about their Village Republics. The Governor is Constitutionally responsible to protect the rights of tribals.

In each of the TSR villages, there is a Gram Sabha meeting once every 2 months, and each of the Gram Sabhas has elected/selected a Committee of the Gram Sabha to act as an executive of the Gram Sabha. In each committee, women, men and youth have equal representation. There is also a Committee of the TSR village Assemblies at the Gram

⁵ Unfortunately, the term "Gram Sabha" is the same for the Assembly of all adult citizens in the Gram Panchayat of the PRI system, but the number of villages covered under one Gram Panchayat can be many – Gram Panchayats are delineated on the basis of population. In tribal areas, where people live scattered in small villages, often 10 or 15 or even more "villages" can come in one Gram Panchayat. But in the TSR definition, one village, one Gram Sabha.

Panchayat level too – representatives of all the Committees of the TSR Gram Panchayats in one Gram Panchayat geographical area, meet together to coordinate work, and share amongst themselves. This is an informal body – the decision making power is with the Gram Sabha.

The Chairperson of the Committee of the TSR Gram Sabha has made a seal, printed letterhead, and when the Gram Sabha makes a decision, they write their decisions on the letterhead, sign it, and give it to the Administration (BDO, Collector, Tehsildar, Forest Ranger, etc.) informing them that they are going to work accordingly. Because everyone is well known in the Gram Sabha, the selection of the beneficiaries for government programmes has been the poorest of the poor; the Committee members help those persons to get the benefits of the government schemes. They have worked to get the poor families linked to various schemes – the Rs. 2 per kg. grain from the ration shop, the food for work employment, etc. The Gram Sabha Committee puts the names of these TSR village residents forward to the Collector for further action. Whatever government works that go on in the area of the Village Republic, are monitored by the Committee members, and a Committee member is the “mate” of the labour gang.

In Valota Gram Panchayat, micro-planning was done with 7 TSR Gram Sabha Committees. They did 5 years planning. The 7 Gram Sabhas decided on the place of a school, drinking water sites, animal fodder depot, health center place, etc. Not only physical works, but social development also is put forward – what is the Gram Panchayat able to do about illiteracy in the 7 Gram Sabha areas, what about violence against women’s problems, problems of widows and separated women. Plans to check soil erosion, and water management plans were made collectively. A Perspective Plan was made. Within the funding provided to Astha for this work, is provision for an “untied fund” of Rs. 3 lakhs of rupees, which can be used to implement some physical work in the project area, if there is no government or other source of funding. A Utilization Certificate must be given by the TSR Gram Sabha for this work. This Valota Gram Panchayat effort can be a demonstration of how TSR Gram Sabhas can work with the Gram Sabha to make appropriate area plans. Other Committees at the Gram Sabha level, and the Gram Panchayat level, can learn from this. Astha is also learning by doing, step by step, with the people!

Most of the 27 Gram Sabhas are controlling money lending in their village area, making sure interest rates are legal and reasonable, controlling the kinds of and amount of collateral (land, jewelry, etc.) that is given. Minor Forest Produce is controlled by the Gram Sabha -- sometimes the Gram Sabha takes the contract, for example for Gum. Minor minerals are also in the control of the Gram Sabha, and one Gram Sabha also took action in controlling the sale of liquor. In one TSR village, the Gram Sabha took the contract for the sale of sand from the dry riverbed, and made about Rs. 50,000. Since there are no Rules and Regulations, the money sent into the Gram Panchayat bank account, and should be returned to the Gram Sabha of the village that did the work. But this area of financial control is one area on which clarity is still needed – Rules and Regulations for the powers and authority of the Gram Sabhas need to be worked out by the Government of Rajasthan. The GOR passed the Tribal Self Rule Act in 1999, but has done nothing else about operationalizing it! This is just one example of needed rules. The Gram Sabha leaders will have some views and suggestions about the rules and regulations needed, and can bring pressure from below to make the Government of Rajasthan get down to work to formulate these Rules and Regulations.

The role of the Resource Unit in all this, is training, awareness raising, and documentation. The whole effort is a kind of action research.

The training work that has been done by the Resource Unit has been to build up the leadership of the Gram Sabhas. The Unit has conducted training programmes for all of the 27 Gram Sabha Committees' members, and for all of the members of the 4 Gram Panchayat level TSR coordinating and sharing Committees. Training for all members of the Gram Sabhas have been held in 20 Gram Sabhas, and 7 more trainings will be held in the months to come. In addition, Women's Leadership Camps, and Youth Training has been held in the project area.

For about 2 years, Astha has been preparing for advocacy work with the Government of Rajasthan. A comparison has been done to compare the differences between the Rajasthan Act and the Central Act of PESA. In some important ways, the State Act has not reflected the Central Act. Also, work with the people has been going on to try to get the government to formulate Rules and Regulations. This advocacy work will be done in the next year.

Since this is an experimental piece of work, documentation has been extensive, and process documentation and case studies are available in Hindi.

Awareness raising about just what is this Tribal Self Rule, what is the 1996 Central Act and information about the 1999 State Act, has been done with the elected representatives and indeed, citizens in the 4 Gram Panchayat areas generally. Government officials workshop has been held at the Panchayat Samiti (Block) and Zila Parishad (District) levels. There has been a workshop for District Officials in Dungarpur. Information has been given to the state level officials about the project work.

Outside the project area of Dungarpur District, the Resource Unit has held an NGO workers training to make the workers aware of the provisions of Tribal Self Rule in Schedule V areas. NGOs were called from all over the Tribal Sub-Plan area. Tribal leaders have been helped to understand TSR, and the Resource Unit is also contacting the anthropological department, political science department of Sukhadia University, research scholars, tribal women experts, lawyers. 32 Blocks are Schedule V Blocks in South Rajasthan, and Tribal Self Rule needs to be implemented in all these Blocks, in Chittor, Sirohi, Udaipur, Dungarpur and Banswara Districts.

This Resource Unit has become somewhat established in this one year, but the one gap is in a senior person to work on the Tribal Self Rule. This is really pioneering work, and the beginning that has been made is important for tribals, and has lessons for non-tribal areas as well.

4. The Budget Analysis Resource Unit –

The Budget Analysis Rajasthan Centre – “BARC” is the Resource Unit for budget analysis. The budget analysis work started in 2002 after a state-level workshop on budget analysis was conducted by Astha in 2001. By May 2004, the Centre had established itself, and was ready to expand. Funding had been secured for 3 years, which included the hiring of a Senior Budget Analyst who has given leadership to the team. In the period 2004 up to March 2005, many activities were carried out, solid budget analysis work was done, and the visibility of the Centre increased.

One Day Issue Based Meetings –

1. “A View of the State Budget” -- July 23, 2004
2. “The Agriculture Budget” – 4 December 2004
3. “The Budget and Women” -- 25 January, 2005
4. “Animal Husbandry Budget” – 7 February, 2005

Regional Budget Orientation and Awareness Events –

These training programmes are to make field organizations aware of how to use budget data in their advocacy work. The 2 days covers some presentation of analysed material, some introduction to the budget books and how they are ordered, some field exercises to give insight how the local concerns of those participating can use budget data.

1. August 26-27, 2004 Held in Bikaner District with support of Urmul Trust. 17 representatives from different organizations attended
2. January 17-18, 2005 Held in Jhunjhunu District, with support of Jhunjhunu Paryawaran Sudhar Samiti (The Jhunjhunu Society to Improve the Environment)). 64 participants.
3. February 18-19, 2005 Held in Kota, with support from Hadoti Hast Shilp Sansthan. 32 participants from 22 different organizations attended.

Budgets and Panchayati Raj Institutions –

In Rajasthan, the Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangatha (MKSS – with Aruna Roy) in the early days of the Right to Information campaign, used Public Hearings as a methodology to expose the rampant corruption at the Gram Panchayat level. The people heard how the Sarpanch, the Village Secretary, the J.Eng. or some other functionary looted the people’s projects. It was thought that if the people at the grassroots know how much money is coming into their Gram Panchayat for various projects, *before the project starts*, that they will be able to monitor the expenditures, and not have to hear after everything is over, how much money got “diverted”. We in Astha think that the elected representatives in the Panchayati Raj Institutions should know how much is coming from where for what. With a few Gram Panchayats, Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishads, we are trying to get this information. Once, with the people, we figure out how to pull all the budgets together, we can then advocate that the Local Self Governance training institutes include in their training programmes for people’s representatives, budget analysis -- functional budget analysis – of the monies coming into their area.

To this end, in this year, a beginning was made with a 2-day workshop at Nokha, Bikaner District.

MLA Orientation Programme –

The orientation programme was held on March 11, 2005, and the state budget was scheduled to be presented in the Assembly on March 24, 2005. The orientation would give budget knowledge to the new MLAs and refresh the memories of the old MLAs. Since the objective of BARC is to get the state's resources allocated in a way that helps the poor, it is important to make contact with MLAs and to feed them information to raise in the Assembly. By involving the Speaker of the Rajasthan Assembly, as Chief Guest, and getting her to help invite the MLAs, it was possible to have 63 MLAs out of the 200 MLAs attend the workshop. Out of the 63 MLAs, 8 were Ministers, and the representation was from 26 out of 32 Districts of the state.



The Budget Analysis Rajasthan Centre held a budget orientation workshop for the MLAs of Rajasthan, just before the Budget Session in the Assembly. Budget shortfalls in relation to tribals, women, agriculture, dalits, were put before the MLAs. Also, the basic terms and approaches to budget formulation were explained. The MLAs were also referred to other documents, like the Auditor General's Report, to get more clarity on the effectiveness of the budget expenditures.

Following the Orientation programme, many MLAs have been visiting the BARC office and getting data to use in their questions and speeches. The BARC staff has also come closer to the MLAs, and has complete lists of addresses, phone numbers, cell phones, etc. These resources are made available to People's Organizations and NGOs in their advocacy work.

Press Conferences --

BARC held 2 press conferences in this year – both just before the budgets. Because of the Lok Sabha elections in April/May 2004, the Rajasthan state budgets were only put up in the Rajasthan Assembly in July 2004. One press conference was held July 10, 2004 on the subject “A Review of the State Budget 2004-2005”, and a second press conference was held March 22, 2005 before the end of March / early April introduction of the budget in the Assembly, titled “State Budget 2005-06: Possibilities and Expectations”. Both were well attended by print and electronic media reporters, and the issues raised in relation to what the budgets’ allocations for the Poor, were well publicized.

Responding to Requests for budget Information from Different Organizations –

As a resource centre on budget analysis, BARC responded to requests for information from a wide variety of organizations. The list of those organizations and their requests is found in Appendix No. 2 of this report.

In addition to those organizations, many MLAs use BARC to get specific data for their questions, speeches, and work. The Rajasthan State Women Commission has used the Centre’s analytical data for a UNICEF project they have. The Centre has also received requests from Delhi for information.

Micro Studies –

Micro studies assess the impact of the government policies and budgeted expenditures which have been meant for the Poor. In this year, one micro study was done to assess the overall condition of widows in the state, and to assess the impact of the widow pension scheme. The study was carried out in 22 Blocks of 8 Districts, with a sample of 200 widows. The study will be published as a booklet.

Publications –

The Newsletter, called “Budget Samachar” is published 4 times a year. It is widely distributed to NGOs, activists, legislators, government departments and directorates, bureaucrats, policy makers, research organizations, academicians, journalists, District level key persons, and freelance social workers. It is in Hindi, and is of 4 pages.

One booklet was published. The booklet explained most of the technical words of the budget books. These booklets are used in training programmes, are used by new MLAs, are used by anyone wanting to understand the basics of the state budget. 1,000 copies were published, in Hindi.

The Advisory Committee Meetings –

There were 2 Advisory Committee Meetings in the year, July and November 2004. The Advisory Committee is made up of NGO representatives from various parts of Rajasthan, an academic, a government officer, a journalist, and 2 persons from funding agencies. Together, work done is assessed, and plans are made for the future.

In addition, the rented office of BARC shifted to P-1 Tilak Marg, C-Scheme, Jaipur which is about 5 minutes walk from the Secretariat, and easily accessible to all.

5. Globalization Resource Unit --

Astha is a Lead Organization for India of the South Asia Alliance for Poverty Eradication (SAAPE). This is an alliance of organizations working in the 7 countries of South Asia, on the root causes of poverty in the region. This alliance was formed in 2001, and the Secretariat is in Nepal. There is a common analysis that the globalized and privatized economic policies are very much a part of the root causes of poverty in the region.

Trade, and trade related rules and policies of the WTO and the World Bank, are a major part of what is wrong with the globalized economic policies. In January 2005, Ginny Shrivastava from Astha, went to England for the Christian Aid “Fair Trade not Free Trade” campaign.

The person from Astha who works on Globalization, trade related issues, and who relates to the South Asia Alliance is the Coordinating Director. But she does not get enough time to do more than the minimum amount of networking, writing and contacting work, aside from attending meetings. The Unit needs an assistant, who has a regional perspective, and who can see that the macro economic policies are a major root cause of poverty in the region. Because it is a South Asia network, English is required, as are computer and internet skills. Astha is looking for a suitable person.

6. Literacy Resource Unit –

For several years, Astha has been conducting crash, condensed, residential courses in literacy for leaders of People’s Groups / Organizations. If poor people are organized into a group or an organization, and if they are illiterate, they will still be exploited. However, if those giving leadership to the group are literate, then the group has literacy skills available to it – and petitions can be written, letters can be written, labour payment records can be read, group finances can be managed, communication from outside can be read, etc. And so, Astha has developed an effective 10 + 5 + 5 = 20 day 3-phase course for leaders.

This year, a promotional booklet was written, in Hindi, titled “Jadoo ki Poatlee” or “The Magic Bundle”. Often, people carry their belongings in a cloth bundle, and so the alphabets, and literacy skills, are a magic bundle to carry with you! The booklet gives the rationale, methodology, and some case studies and photographs of the literacy programmes. It was sent to NGOs all over Rajasthan who work with poor people’s organizations and groups. The staff team of the Literacy Courses followed up on inquiries, and in the past year, responded to requests from Jaipur, Jodhpur, Banswara, and other Blocks of Udaipur District. The courses to meet the needs of the south Rajasthan People’s Organizations of course continued.



Literacy games, a cooperative atmosphere of helping each other, not a competitive one, practice sessions, literacy input, reading, writing, arithmetic mark the courses conducted for leaders of Groups and Organizations all over Rajasthan.



The crash condensed residential literacy training course for leaders of People's Groups and Organizations is a resource support that Astha makes available to strengthen the new leaders. The participants work about 10-12 hours a day – they know, from their organization's work, just how important literacy skills are, and they are highly motivated!

This resource unit is small, but, we feel, an important resource for the state and for poor people's empowerment. It is not a mass literacy approach, and all participants have to be in leadership positions somewhere, in their organizations.

HIGHLIGHTS OF WORK ASTHA PROMOTED WITH THE PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATIONS --

1. The Support Society for Forest Produce Collectors –

The Support Society is a Federation of non-timber forest produce collectors and processors groups and cooperative societies. At present the Support Society has 5 Cooperatives and 35 minor forest produce groups as members. The Society has also taken up a UNDP project, with 20 Self Help Groups (SHGs) in 4 Blocks of Udaipur District (Kotra, Gogunda, Jhadol, Salumber). A baseline survey was conducted in each of the 20 villages. Later, all the SHGs under the UNDP project were provided with a sum of Rs. 10,000 each as revolving fund, and 10 groups used it to buy forest produce collected, which was later sold for a higher price. 10 groups used the funds for consumption loans, to be returned at 2% interest.



Forest produce collection is a family occupation. Here, a Dungarpur family has collected goose berries, or “awla”, used in jam or pickles, for hair oil, and dried and salted as a digestive. The Support Society helps with market linkages and quality control.

Cultivation of Minor forest produces:

The Support Society (Samarthak Samiti) promoted the cultivation of medicinal plants such as Safed musli (*Chlorophytum tuberosum*) and Ashwagandha among its group members in the project villages, as well as other enterprising farmers in Jhadol, Kotra, Salumber, (all in Udaipur District), Dungarpur District, Kumbhalgarh, (District Rajsamand), and Pindwara (Sirohi District).. A total of two hundred families were provided with the seeds of Safed musli and fifty-four families with Ashwagandha for cultivation. Each family also received *one to five kg of Safed musli and Ashwagandha seeds.*

Cultivation of Safed musli (*Chlorophytum tuberosum*) and
Ashwagandha (*Withenia somnifera*) during 2004.

SL No	Name of the cluster	Beneficiaries (Family)	Seeds provided		Total Production in kg
			Safed musli (kg)	Ashwagandha (kg)	
1	Devla	75 & 46	100	70	225
2	Bedaval	49	50	Nil	250
3	Jhadol	17	50	Nil	325
4	Dungarpur	40	75	--	375
5	Kumbhalgarh	1	5	--	30
6	Pindwara	1	20	--	100
	Total	182 & 46	295	70	1305

Plantation of Ratanjot (*Jatropha curcas*) by the end of March 05

SL	Name of Cluster	Number of plantation
1	Biroti	34483
2	Bedaval	31585
3	Devla	24638
4	Saira	2664
	Total	93370



Custard Apples, or “Sita Phuld” a forest fruit, is one of the non-timber forest products that has been promoted by the Support Society. Fruits, seeds, leaves, herbs, gum, honey, roots, are all sources of income for thousands of people living in or near the forests. They protect the forest, because it gives of its bounty

Seven training and awareness camps were held for members of the groups associated with the Support Society, on leadership, cultivation of medicinal plants, value addition on minor forest produce, and technical training for community workers.

SL No	Name of the trainings	Topic/Issues	Number	Number of participant
1	Leadership training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening of the groups and capacity building of group members Maintenance of the group's records Sharing of government's development schemes 	2	120
2	Skill enhancement training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soap making (from Jatropha oil), Surf making and washing powder, etc. 	3	50
3	Cultivation of medicinal plants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detail information regarding cultivation of Safed musli and Ashwagandha 	2	22
4	Value addition training on minor forest produces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harvesting and processing of Safed musli and Aloe vera Preservation of seeds for sowing Processing of Aonla 	2	50
5	Technical training for community workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultivation, processing and value addition of Safed musli, Aloe vera and Aonla. 	1	3
6	Staff training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Livelihood promotion Rural market structure and marketing avenues for rural products Micro and Macro livelihood planning strategies at the SHG, village and cluster level 	1	1

Details of the awareness camps held during the period April 04 – March 05:

SL	Place of the awareness camps	Number of participants	Date	Issues discussed
1	Birothi	48	18-May-04	Economic importance of minor forest produces, its sustainable use and management
2	Devla	85	28-May-04	
3	Salumber	52	05-June-04	
4	Semed	57	14-July-04	
5	Semed	31	9 th March 05	Sustainable management of MFPs.

Exposure visits were organized (3 visits) to learn about Bee Keeping, processing of Gooseberry (Awla), and to see the functioning of SHGs and entrepreneurship.

SL	Purpose of visit	Place of visit	Date of visit	Participants
1	To have a practical experience of the process of bee keeping.	LUPIN Bharatpur	20–23 rd of Dec 04	8
2	To see processing of minor forest produces	BAIF, Jhadol	4 th January 05	2
3	To see successful functioning of SHGs.	AKRSP and DHRUVA Gujarat	15–20 th March 05	22

The Support Society helped 11 groups to sell their minor forest produce of
 Ratan Jote (*Jatropha curcas*) earning a total of Rs. 6,772
 Custard Apple (*annona squamosa*) earning a total of Rs. 5,400
 Puhar (*Cassia tora*) – used in animal fodder – earning a total of Rs. 250
 Gooseberry (*Phylenthus imblica*) or Awla – earning a total of Rs. 35,000
 Safed Musli (*Chlorophytum tuberosum*) a medicinal root, earning Rs. 8,000
 Honey earning a total of Rs. 1,500

SL	MFPs name	During 2004		During 2005 till March 05	
		Quantity in kg.	Amount in Rs.	Quantity in kg.	Amount in Rs.
1	Jatropha (Non-edible oil seed)	2008 @ 12.5	25,100	4,235 @ Rs. 12.5 3,000 @ 8	52,937 24,000
2	Safed musli (Medicinal herb - a root)	10 @ 800	8,000		
3	Honey	93 @ 85	7,900		
4	Aonla (Gooseberry)	6,400 @ 25	1,60,000	1,600 @ 25	40,000
5	Puhar (Fodder)			743 @ 4.25	3,158
6	Ber (A berry)			360 @ 3	1,080
7	Tuwar (A lentil)			700 @ 16.5	11,550
8	Custard apple (A fruit)	3,000 @ 70	2,10,000		

The Support Society has lobbied and negotiated on behalf of the forest produce collectors, and has been successful in getting the authorities to agree to transport of the MFP outside the area, under the conditions of the Tribal Self Rule legislation. Marketing was done in Gujarat, where the prices are higher.

Liaison work with Government Departments, Research Organizations and other NGOs was done by the Support Society. An awareness camp was held for members of the Tribal Tendu Leaf Cooperative members of Kotra Block, Udaipur District with the support of the Central Board for Workers' Education. A staff member from the Support Society attended a Seminar on Honey Bee Keeping organized by the State Agriculture Institute in December. A representative from the Support Society attended a national level Seminar on Bio-Diesel organized by the Department of Science and Technology in New Delhi – the common forest produce of Ratan Jote has been found to be a diesel substitute!

Exhibitions were put up in 3 big conventions held by the People's Organizations with which Astha works.

Astha provides the Support Society with one worker, and the rest of the staff and activities, the Support Society manages from funds raised and work planned with the members.

2.

The Association of Strong Women Alone –

In October 2004, a large national Convention of Women Alone (low income widows and separated women) was held in Jaipur, in which over 1,500 women participated for 4 days. NGOs and women alone from 11 states of northern India came. After the Convention, 4 of those states – Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Bihar and Gujarat – said that they would like to start a “sangathan” of widows and separated women in their states as well. Astha drew up a proposal and got funding to enable this work to expand, and get started in these states. Some of the strong leaders of the Association, and 2 experienced staff of Astha and of the Kota based NGO working with Astha, are implementing this expansion.



During the last session, a woman from each state took one rope end, and wound her rope in with those of the women of other states, creating a huge rope! This symbolized the strength that low-income widows and separated women could have in the country, if there were Organizations or Associations in each state, which came together in a federation or forum for work and advocacy together!

The Convention itself did a lot to give visibility to the Association – the media coverage was excellent, and the identity of the Association is now established in Rajasthan. The event gave a boost to the 1,200 Rajasthan women alone who were attending, and the work in the field has seen renewed activity, the making of new members, etc.

The work expanded in this year, and now there are Block Level Committees in 75 Blocks of the state, in 25 Districts, and the number of members is 17,198. The registered society of the Association held its annual meeting in December 2004, and according to its constitution, elected a new Executive Committee. The Executive took decisions about making a grant proposal for about Rs. 5 lakhs of rupees, to the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust.



October 2004, the big national convention of widows and separated women was organized by the Association of Strong Women Alone, and held in the state capital, Jaipur. Over 1,500 women from 11 states participated, and got so excited and energized, that several states decided to start something on a state-wide scale in their state too!



During the October 2004 convention, the women felt confident enough, with the strength of numbers, to break social customs, including the custom that widows do not put “mahendi” or “henna” on their hands – a custom associated with auspicious and happy occasions.



The convention moved to the streets – and took out a procession to the Secretariat of the Government of Rajasthan, and gave a petition in to the Chief Minister who refused to come out to meet them. The petition demanded various actions, -- on economic, social, health, legal issues --that if taken by the government, would improve their lives

Activities Under Taken by ASWA:

S.N	Programme	Date	Partici- pants	Objective / Purpose
1.	Udaipur District Level Conference	7-9 April, 04	224	For Association members in Udaipur District, sharing, learning, motivating
2.	Advisory Committee Meeting	15 April, 04	16	Lawyers, Medical, Government officer, other NGO, women's movement women advise about the future
3.	Executive Body Meeting	16 April, 04	8	11 Members of the Association, elected as Executive, met to discuss October Convention
4.	Conducted Rally on Women Empowerment day	1 June, 04		Of the 69 Blocks where there are Committees, most held meetings, rallies with men, women, children who think women's empowerment is important
5.	Selected NGOs from several districts of the state were called together to finalize plans and to involve them in the Sangam.	10 June, 04	38	The October Convention wanted to broad-base the event, and involve many in working with and for Strong Women Alone
6.	State Level Committee Meeting, Jaipur	9-11 July, 04	43	Women from 25 Districts reported, made plans for the Convention and other activities
7.	Press Conference was Organized at Pink-City Press Club, Jaipur	11 July, 04	10	Well before the Convent-ion, the women wanted to make their issues public
8.	Research done on the issues of Widows Land and Property Rights	1 August, 04 to 28 February, 05		Topic – How widespread is the problem of widows not having possession of their land and property? Result: at least 1/3 of all widows.
9.	Executive body meeting was held for the Ekal Nari Shakti Sangam	11-12 September, 04	9	Shortly before the Convention in October, met to finalize plans, and invite important resource persons
10.	Media Committee Meeting, committee was formed for Ekal Nari Shakti Sangam in jaipur	15 September, 04	9	Met with journalists who would be working with the media on the Convention in October. Told our expectations and needs

11.	Convention of Strong Women Alone – organized in Jaipur by Rajasthan Association of Strong Women Alone.	5-8 October, 04	1539	“Women Alone” from 11 states of India attended, learned, sang, analyzed, shared and made the issues of “women alone” known. Other states decided to start work in their states too.
12.	Meeting of Gujarat Single Women Forum held at Ahmedabad,	24 November, 04	2	As part of October Convention follow-up in Gujarat, attend their meetings when called
13.	Training was organized for Block Committee Members.	27-30 November, 04	50	Leaders from 3 Blocks attended training in government policies, counseling, land laws, etc.
14.	Peoples Organization Meeting, held at Astha Training Centre, Bedla, Udaipur	10-11 December, 04	4	All POs initiated by Astha hold leaders meeting 4 times a year, to share, support each other, strategize, reflect on action
15.	State Level Committee Meeting organized in Nagour.	26-27 December, 04	65	Members of Association and Organization (registered body) held meetings, Executive elected, plans for the future
16.	Ekal Nari Shakti Sanghathan's Udaipur & Hadoti Staff Training & Meeting held at Jaipur	28-30 December, 04	20	The programme staff of the 2 supporting NGOs met to learn, share, sort out problems
17.	Block Committee Training Programme was held at Jhalawar. Participants were from Shahbad, Kishanganj, Jalara-Patan, Khanpur and Suneel	11-13 January, 05	86	Strong women leaders of the Block Level Committees learned about holding meetings, solving problems, accessing resources, counseling in-laws, claiming land rights, etc.
18.	Training was organised on "Women Beneficiaries Schemes and Budget" -- at Jaipur	25 January, 05	58	BARC Jaipur organized a training about what is in the Rajasthan budget for low-income widows and separated women
19.	Block Committee Training was organised for Gadhi, Dheriawad, Kherwada and Bhadesar Blocks	5-8 February, 05	40	Strong women leaders of the Block Level Committees learned about holding meetings, solving problems, accessing resources, counseling in-laws, claiming land rights, etc.

20.	Meeting of Gujarat Single Women Forum was organised in Ahemdabad	11 February, 05	4	As part of October Convention follow-up in Gujarat, attend their meetings when called
21.	Literacy Training Camp was organized for Kota Cluster	15-25 February, 05	51	Women leaders of Block Com-mittees Phase – 1 of crash, con-densed residential training in literacy and arithmetic
22.	District Level Members Camp was held at Jodhpur	22-24 February, 05	23	Western Rajasthan Association members from Jodhpur District, although few, learned a lot
23.	District Level Members Camp from Dudu, Sanganeer Blocks of Jaipur District	6-8 March, 05	212	Members of the Association met in solidarity, to learn about health, laws, how the Association can help solve their problems, women's equality
24.	A District Level Members Camp was held for Dausa District, Members from Lalsounth, and Dausa Panchayat Samitis attended.	10-12 March, 05	304	Members of the Association met in solidarity, to learn about health, laws, how the Association can help solve their problems, women's equality
25.	Executive Committee Meeting held at Sawai Madhopur	19 March, 05	6	To plan for the work of next 3 years, prepare for State Level Meeting
26.	State Level Committee Meeting, held at Sawai Madhopur	20-21 March, 05	53	Committee Members finalized plans for Sit-In during State Government Budget Session, and present petition, to plan for expansion of work to Himachal Pradesh and Jharkhand.

Widows land rights have been an issue, on which the Association has been working, and in this year, not only did more women get possession of the land over which they have legal rights, but a booklet of case studies of successful land struggles was published in both Hindi and English. "Arambh" in Hindi, "A Beginning..." in English.

3. The Vagad Area Labourers and Farmers Association –

This People's Organization works in Dungarpur and Banswara Districts, across 5 Blocks. The monsoon of 2004 failed in the area, and the Association listed out what work for how many families was needed in order to help the people to survive the drought. They gave their demand to the Dungarpur and Banswara District Collectors, and mobilized the people to demand that drought relief work be started. They were successful in getting the area declared "drought affected" and got more work started, which helped the people a lot.

The work across the whole District on Tribal Self Rule continued, and there was special effort made to increase the women's participation in the Committees of the Gram Sabhas of the Village Republics.

The Forest Land Struggle Committee continues to meet monthly at the District level, and continues to meet the Forest Department, and the MLA and MP regularly about the issue.



Vagad Labourers and Farmers Organization worked hard to build ground awareness and pressure for The Employment Guarantee Bill, with provision of 100 days of work per year for one family member of poor families. Here, a Rally is in process, displaying the banner on which hundreds of Dungarpur 's poor have signed.



Declaring their village a Village Republic, under the Tribal Self Rule legislation. The plaque in the middle of the group of "republicans" lists the various rights that are now theirs – rights over minor forest produce, over minor water bodies, over placement of liquor shops, over dispute resolution, etc. And the plaque is garlanded – these rights are welcomed into their midst, with honour.

Meetings in a year-

- Executive Committee (Sanchalak Mandal) - 10
- Field workers meetings - 13
- Planning with field workers - 11
- Area wide meetings per month - 15 (in a year 150-160 meetings)
- Village Level meetings per month - 26 (in a year 310-330 meetings)

S.N.	Programme	Date	Participants
1.	Training of Trainers was organized on "How to strengthen organization & leadership quality"	11-13 August, 04	
2.	Camp was organized for village level committee members	18-20 August, 04	
3.	Camp for Women Literacy was organized in Udaipur	18-24 August, 04	26
4.	Micro planning was done in the Village Assembly (Gaon Sabha) at Valota Panchayat, as part of the PRISMO programme	August, 04	
5.	Literacy Follow up Camp was organised.	9-10 September, 04	19 leaders who took part in earlier literacy trainings
6.	Women Awareness Camp held at Kushalgarh	8-10 September, 04	
7.	Workers leadership training camp at KVK Dungarpur,- on what should be the political approach of the organization.	13-14 September, 04	
8.	Village Assembly (Gaon Sabha) Camp at Simalwara under the PRISMO programme	19 September, 04	
9.	Village Assembly (Gaon Sabha) Camp at Sibeem Rediya - under the PRISMO programme.	18 September, 04	
10.	Attended large tribal gathering of the Tribal Development Forum at Kotra	23-24 September, 04	75
11.	Walking Tour from Jaipur to Kaladera against Pepsi-Cola and tribals demonstrated in support of their rights over Natural Resources.	25-26 September, 04	6
12.	Workshop was held in Jaipur on the "Right to Work" and "Right to Information."	29 September, 04	7
13.	In 5 Panchayat areas, 15 PESA Gaon Sabha Committees were re-elected	October, 04	
14.	Six Gaon Sabhas reviewed the work of the Committee members, and reformed those Committees.	November, 04	
15.	Women awareness camp – held at Rampur Panchayat. The Issue discussed in the Camp was "Tribal Self Rule and Women's Participation in Village Assembly (Gaon Sabha)."	23-24 November, 04	80 Women and 10 Men

16.	Applications were submitted at Dungarpur Block Office under the Employment Guarantee Scheme	29 November, 04	491 women and 761 Men
17.	Under the Employment Guarantee Scheme, applications submitted at Block Offices- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simalwara - 200 Women and 178 Men • Sagwara - 140 Women and 236 Men • Dungarpur - 220 Women and 470 Men 	8 December, 04 9 December, 04 16 December, 04	
18.	Gaon Sabha Committee Camp in Valota	14-15 December, 04	49
19.	Village Republic Conference, 6 Committees were re-elected	24 December, 04	
20.	Block Camp at Charwara, Sagwara	9 January, 05	285
21.	Regional Meeting of Kodyagun area	10 January, 05	70
22.	Camp of Gotiya Amba, Bagidora	11 January, 05	175
23.	Area Wide Meeting of 9 Villages of Talliya area	13 January, 05	82
24.	Camp of Anpura, Simalwara	16 January, 05	248
25.	Follow up Area Wise Meeting of Rampur area	17 January, 05	65
26.	Women's Conference of Dungarpur and Banswara Districts	15-17 February, 05	460
27.	Zone wise Rallies on Forest & Land Rights issue	28 February, 05	150
28.	A Sit-In at Jantar Manter, New Delhi, in order to support the Scheduled Tribes Recognition of Forest Rights Bill, 2005 and 730 Postcards were sent to the Prime Minister	8-12 March, 05	105 in the Sin-In 730 postcard writers

The structure of the P.O. has modified somewhat, and in the leadership group of the Vagad Labourers and Farmers Association, they have given special responsibility to one person to follow-up on the work that is decided on, on different issues. i.e. one person will be responsible for the Employment Guarantee Scheme campaign, one person for Drought related matters, one person for Forest Land displacement work, etc.

For the first time, the people of Jalukua Gram Panchayat collected the forest produce, "awla" or Gooseberry. Up to now, over all these hundreds of years, the people have not collected this forest produce, which can be marketed widely for pickles, jams, hair oil, churan (digestive), etc. They earned a net profit of Rs. 50,000! No doubt this is just the beginning.

There was a Women's Camp, training for the issue of Credit and Loaning, the big event on December the 24th – the anniversary of the passing of the Central Government legislation on Tribal Self Rule (PESA).

In Banswara, the work has started in Kushalgarh Block, and leadership training was done, and issues that arise are being taken up by the members of the Association there.

4. The Tribal Development Forum –

The main area of work of the Tribal Development Forum is in Kotra Block, of Jhadol Block in Panarwa area of Udaipur District, and in Pindwara Block of Sirohi District. It has members and activity in 334 villages. The main leadership group of the Forum is composed of 23 men and women of which there are 16 men and 7 women. The members of the Forum number 5,525. There are another 2,105 members who joined this year, of which men are 1,460 and women are 645.

The tribal leaders of the Forum hold monthly leadership group meetings at Kotra, and at the village level and the Gram Panchayat levels, the workers/leaders of the Forum hold and conduct the monthly meetings on fixed dates. The cluster meetings of key people from the village groups associated with the Forum, meet in these monthly meetings at : Panarwa, Ambassa, Swarupganj, Pindwara, and Devla.

Work done in 2004-05

Forest Land – The Forum worked in this year with those tribal families, living on what is now Forest Department Land, in attempts to get the legal land papers to their homestead land.

- Opposing eviction of forest land dwellers, attempted by the Forest Department. Rallies were held, and Sit-Ins too, to oppose these evictions.
- The Forest Department sent notices to show cause why they should not be evicted, and in the court, 300 tribal farmers defended themselves
- The Forest Department tried to build a boundary wall around portions of the forest land, and the Forum opposed this construction. As a result, 285 families of 12 villages were able to save their homestead and farmland
- 935 tribal farmers put up their cases in the ACF (Assistant Conservator of Forests) Court against displacement.

The forest land displacement efforts of the Forest Department, to displace the tribal families from their homesteads on what is now forest land, continues. 535 families were given notices by the Forest Department, and the P.O. helped the people to give their replies to the Department. No displacements have taken place.

Tribal Self Rule – In this Schedule V Area, the Forum is working with the tribals on the issue of Tribal Self Rule, and 55 villages have declared themselves Village Republics under the law.

- The Gram Sabha of the Village, the people are solving their own disputes
- The Gram Sabha has taken responsibility to protect and control the forest areas in their Village, specifically in Peepli Kheda, Chabua, Ambal, and Toran of Kotra Block
- The Gram Sabhas have been able to establish the Village's ownership over the collection and sale of non-timber minor forest produce, particularly in Tuli ka Khet village.
- The Gram Sabhas have been able to collect taxes from those who have extracted minor minerals, including sand, from the area, especially in the Dang area.
- The government has approved proposals passed in 15 of the TSR Gram Sabhas for the purpose of development work, and has sanctioned work through them.

The 55 Tribal Self Rule Villages in Kotra meet monthly and passed resolutions and make proposals to the Block Development Officers for drought relief work and to provide drinking water. Up to now, 15 Gram Sabhas submitted their proposals about drought relief work, and the proposals were sanctioned and work was started.

Village Republic Committee Camp -- Each of the Tribal Self Rule Gram Sabhas, or Village Assemblies, have formed a Committee to make the Village Republics strong. These Committee members need to develop their analysis and mental abilities in order to help the Gram Sabha to claim its rights in full. For this, 3 camps were held. 50 Gram Sabha Committees sent members to the training programmes, 200 men and women participated.

Drought Relief – In January 2005, there was a Rally taken out in Kotra to raise the issues of the need for drought relief work, and the need to pass the central government Employment Guarantee Bill. 2,500 tribals participated in the Rally, and 3,225 applications were given to the BDO for employment. As a result of the Rally, 5,000 more labourers got drought relief work, and the total number of labour employed in drought relief work in Kotra was 21,000.

Regarding the demand about passing the Employment Guarantee Bill, the Block Development Officer sent a strong proposal to the Prime Minister that the Employment Guarantee Bill should be passed.

There were special monthly Block level meetings on drought, and a person from the Forum attended each meeting and conveyed the priority of where drought relief is most needed.

As a result of the efforts of the Forum, applications for deepening 100 wells were sent to the BDO, and 50 got sanctioned with free blasting of the wells.

Ratan Jote (*Jatropha curcas*) Cultivation – 500 farmers submitted their applications to the BDO for employment, and he sanctioned these farmers 52 days employment for land development and improvement, and so, 400 pits were dug to plant Ratan Jote on the lands of each farm family. Payment of 618 kilos of wheat is still pending. Each farm family contributed the value of Rs. 947 as voluntary labour in this plantation work.

“Employment Guarantee Bill” and “Food For Work” Rally -- The Forum conducted a 15 day campaign in February 2005, and organized meetings in 25 Gram Panchayats. In these 15 days, they prepared the written applications demanding employment by the people in need. In this campaign, they also made the people aware of the rules and policy of the Food For Work.

In this 15 days, a survey was also done, documenting the condition of the people in relation to employment, drinking water, fodder, and payment of wages. The survey report was sent by the Forum to the District Collector. On the issues of employment, drinking water problems, and the need to pass the Employment Guarantee Bill, rallies were taken out in Kotra and Sirohi.

Credit Issue – The Forum worked on the long standing issue of loans. The people of the area have taken loans from banks, Tribal Federation Societies, and money-lenders to improve their economic conditions. With a lot of difficulty, the poor tribal people have repaid their loans, but still, the records of those loaning money show that their repayment is not complete. From time to time, the government has written off the loans of poor people, but in fact, the poor never benefit!

In this year, the Forum did the following:

- Did a survey of the debt condition of tribal people in the area
- Talled the records of the farmers and the records of the banks
- The Forum consulted a lawyer, and prepared the cases, for those tribal farmers who got notices from the banks, that their land would be mortgaged or seized if they did not repay their loan.
- The Forum, with the elected representatives and the indebted people, put pressure on the banks and administrators in the area.

The Forum collated the findings of the survey.

- Many of those who were receiving notices from the banks, *had never taken loans! And many, had never stepped foot in the bank!*
- False loan papers had been prepared in the banks
- Many tribal farmers had taken a loan of about Rs. 5,000, had already paid back Rs. 20,000 – and still the banks were demanding Rs. 10,000 !!

Wildlife Sanctuary Issue – The threat of displacement from the Phulwadi ki Nal Game Sanctuary, is an ongoing one, and the people over the years have had to remain vigilant. The forest dwellers living in the forest villages of the Sanctuary, have been helped by the Tribal Development Forum, to use the law – that if the homestead was settled before 1980, then legal land papers can be given, and secondly, if the villages declare themselves Village Republics under the PESA legislation, they have rights over land and minor forest produce. The struggle continued in this year too.

Training Programmes –

- Leadership camp – the Forum organized 3 training programmes, in which 280 men and women participated. The participants included the village group leaders, and village traditional leaders. The objective was to improve the skills of the leaders, give them new knowledge, and teach them how to write strong petitions or applications.

- Second-Line Women Leadership Training – the training helped them to learn how to organize meetings, conduct the meetings, and how to solve problems. 80 women from Kotra, Panarwa and Pindwara Blocks came.
- Legal Awareness Camp – 105 men and women came to this 2-day camp. Information about commonly needed and used laws were given by lawyers.
- Forum Leaders (Executive) camp – How to take the issues forward, that had been raised by the Forum. Their analysis and strategizing capacities were improved as a result of the camp. 60 leaders attended.
- Training for Forum Workers – 14 members give more time to the organizing and other work of the Forum, and are considered “workers”. How to raise issues, how to analyse the issues raised or picked up, how to involve more people in the Forum and make members for the Forum.

Women’s Empowerment Convention – March 4-8, 2005, a convention was held. 300 women participated from Kotra, Panarwa and Pindwara areas. The convention is a place where women can raise issues and strategize together. Women’s social, economic and political conditions were discussed. They tried to analyse the problems, and work out strategies for their solution. Topics covered were income generating and employment, land and property rights, widow and old-age pension, and the importance of women’s participation in the Gram Sabhas of the Tribal Self Rule villages. The BDO came to the convention, and assured the women that he would give all help to them in accessing benefits from government programmes.

Work with Widows --The work with widows and separated women is a part of the work of the Tribal Development Forum. The Forum workers have been helping the women to get widow pensions, and help with getting a home (*jompree*) from a government scheme.

Women’s Self Help Savings and Loan Groups (SHG) – The Forum promoted women’s groups to start SHGs wherever they wanted to, and to use the fund created to improve their economic condition. There was a training programme for 52 SHG groups, and 80 leaders attended. There are 52 Savings and Loan Societies in the area of the Tribal Development Forum.

S.N	Area	Groups	Members	Savings Amount	Loan Amount
1	Kotra	45	785	2,40,000 Rs.	3,5000 Rs.
2	Panarwa	4	60	17,000 Rs.	5,525 Rs.
3	Pindwara	3	45	11,525 Rs.	-
4	Total	52	890	2,68,225 Rs.	40,525 Rs.

Pre-Election Voter Awareness Campaign – The Lok Sabha, or central government elections, came in April/May 2004, and the Panchayati Raj elections, or the local self-government elections, came in January/February 2005.

- Before each election period, a 2 day training programme was held to outline the voting systems, the importance of each citizen’s vote, how the electronic voting machines work, and the importance of democracy.
- “Face the Candidates Meetings” – The Forum called all political parties, and all candidates, to participate in a meeting in which they were all present before the people. The candidates could dialogue with the people, about their problems

and what they, as candidates, would do about those problems if they came to power. Two meetings were held – (1) in Devla, Kotra Block in which 1,000 men and women participated, and (2) in Kotra in which 200 men and women participated.

75 Ward Councilors, 2 Sarpanches and 4 Block Committee Members were elected who are related to the Tribal Development Forum.

Education -- One of the major pieces of work that happened was in the field of Education. An award of Rs. 1,00,000 had been given to Astha from the state government, for literacy work. Astha decided to use the money to help the people establish schools where there were no schools. 8 primary schools are being run by the Tribal Development Forum in Kotra Block, for both boys and girls.



For adivasi girls, age 9-15, who have never gone to school, there is a new chance! Astha, along with the support of the Tribal Development Forum, has been conducting 7-month residential condensed courses which bring the girls up to Class 5 standard, so they can enter the government schools in Class 6, and continue their education. Over 80% of the girls who have gotten "caught up" in their schooling, have indeed enrolled in the government schools.



The condensed courses for tribal girls from Kotra enroll about 110 girls in each course. The course is held in a government building in Kotra, constructed to house a polytechnic training institute for tribals who had completed Class 12, but remained unused because there were too few Kotra tribals who had completed Class 12!

Also, there were 2 residential 7-month courses for girls who had missed school, who were age 9-15. One was funded by the Rajasthan government, and 1 by UNDP. About 100 girls were in each camp. One camp was held in a government facility, and the Tribal Development Forum, with labour of members, put an extension onto their building in Kotra, and adjusted one of the camps in their own building. These camps have given a big boost to girls education in this tribal Block, and most of the girls do continue their schooling, by entering class 6 or class 5 in the government schools.

At the moment, there are 23 leaders, 7 women and 16 men, who are the key leaders of the Forum. They themselves run their office (Astha has another office in Kotra), conduct meetings, and make decisions. Astha is the "friend, support, and guide- when-necessary".

The annual Big Event, the *Milan Mela*, on September 23-24 was held, and about 6,000 people came (many people from Kotra had migrated out of the area in search of work). The theme was Human Rights.

5. The Tribal Women's Awareness Society –

The Tribal Women's Awareness Society is working in 2 Blocks, and the members have formed 90 groups in the villages of Jhadol and Girwa Blocks of Udaipur District. The Society is well established, and the various committees of their structure, meet monthly to solve problems, and take the work forward.

In this year, the Case Committee has met to solve the problems of the women who contacted the Tribal Women's Awareness Society for help. Most of the problems relate to marital discord, often as a result of excessive liquor consumption on the part of the men. Since men are now associated with the Case Committee, and the Social Reform Committees, two things are happening:

- the men help the other men who have come before the "women's court" to understand their mistakes, and to give them support to improve in the future,
- and because the men are associated with the Case and Social Reform Committees, some men are bringing cases to the Tribal Women's Awareness Society, of fights between brothers, of trespass, etc.



The annual convention of the Awareness Society is a time when the members from all the village groups of the Society, meet to hear a report of the work in the past year, to learn new things from resource persons, to feel the strength and solidarity of numbers. Some men and children from the area also attend.

How men came to be members of the Tribal Women's Awareness Society Case and Social Reform Committees, is very interesting. In the tribal society, the "Jati Panchayats" or the dispute resolution committees of elders is a solidly male affair. Even when a woman's case comes before the Panchayat, there are no women added to the group of men sitting in judgement on the case. Attempts to have women included have

failed. And so, the Tribal Women's Awareness Society started taking up the cases that came to them. There were so many cases, that the systems became structured. A case comes to the leaders of the Society, they send 2 women to do an on-the-spot verification of the situation, the concerned parties are called to the women's court, the case is heard, the women collectively decide, the solution to the problem is written on a Rs. 100 stamp paper, both parties sign it. The disputes were resolved justly, in a short time, and without the costs of going to the courts, paying lawyers, etc. Many men of the area wanted to join the Tribal Women's Awareness Society! The women considered their requests for membership, and decided that men could not be members of the main Society, but they could be members of the Case Committee, and the Social Reform Committee. They reasoned that the cases almost always have men involved, and male members of the Case Committee could help the men involved to understand their erring ways, and as men, could give them support to reform. And Social Reform cannot take place without the cooperation and agreement of men, and so it would be helpful to have men on their Committee. Now, about 500 men are associated with the Tribal Women's Awareness Society, through these two committees. The area has come together to solve many disputes without the intervention (and expense) of the courts, and the lead has been taken by tribal women.

Activities Undertaken by The Tribal Women's Awareness Society in implementing The Project it Has Taken up, Funded by UNDP titled "Natural Resource Management Through Social Mobilisation:

SL	Date	Place	Activity	Objective	Participation
1.	1 June.04	IGPR& GVS ,Jaipur	State level workshop	Presentation and discussion on the work plan	UNDP, MoRD, approved NGO Partners, Potential partners
2.	4. June 04	Astha Training Centre, Bedla	Meeting of UNDP project team	Discussion on work plan and finance related issues	Project team of Astha, KAS and AMJS
3.	7-21 June 04	Field	Baseline survey	Information for micro planning	Project team, animators
4.	25-27 June 04	Jhadol	Health camp, by AMJS	Awareness about govt. health services, training to the traditional health workers., home remedies, seasonal diseases and their cure.	44 villagers, Project team AMJS, representative from Astha, resource persons: ACMHO, Udaipur, Deputy CMHO Jhadol ,A doctor ,Jhadol traditional health worker,and others.
5.	4. July 04	Astha Training Centre, Bedla	Meeting of UNDP project team	Discussion on work plan and finance related issues	Project team of Astha, KAS and AMJS

6.	8. July 04	Paduna	Cluster meeting	To help the SHG in carrying out their activities	Activities undertaken, work plan for 3 months
7.	10. July 04	Pai	Cluster meeting	To help the SHG in carrying out their activities	Activities undertaken, work plan for 3 months
8.	16. July 04	Makdadev	Cluster meeting	To help the SHG in carrying out their activities	Activities undertaken, work plan for 3 months
9.	17-18. July 04	Bedla, ATC	SHG leader training	To strengthen the SHGs	Resource given by Astha
10.	20-21. July 04	Bedla, ATC	SHG leader training	To strengthen the SHGs	Resource given by Astha
11.	25. July 04	kantahtia	Cluster meeting	To help the SHG in carrying out their activities	Activities undertaken, work plan for 3 months
12.	29 July 04	Pai	Regional meeting	Strengthening women	Various issues in the village, work plan , work done
13.	4.August.04	Bedla	UNDP project team meeting	Discussion on work plan and finance related issues	Project team of ASTHA, KAS and AMJS
14.	8.August.04	Paduna	Cluster meeting	To help the SHG carry out their activities	Activities undertaken and constraints faced
15.	10August.04	Pai	Cluster meeting	To help the SHG carry out their activities	Activities undertaken and constraints faced
16.	15.August 04	Makrdev	Meeting	Independence day celebration	Members of AMJS and ASTHA
17.	16August.04	Makrdev	Cluster meeting	To help the SHG carry out their activities	Activities undertaken and constraints faced
18.	17-18. August.04	Bedla	SHG leadership training	To strengthen the SHG	SHG members
19.	25.August 04	Kantharia	Cluster meeting	To help the SHG carry out their activities	Activities undertaken and constraints faced

20.	4.Sept.04	Astha Training Centre Bedla	UNDP project team meeting	Discussion on work plan and finance related issues	Project team of ASTHA , KAS and AMJS
21.	6 Sept.04	Halukhera	PRA, social mapping, resource mapping	To identify livelihood options and area for strengthening natural resource base	Villagers , volunteers
22.	7.Sept.04	Bediphala	PRA, social mapping, resource mapping	To identify livelihood options and area for strengthening natural resource base	Villagers , volunteers
23.	8.Sept.04	Paduna	Cluster meeting	To help the SHG carry out their activities	Activities undertaken and constraints faced
24.	16.Sept 04	Makradev	Cluster meeting	To help the SHG carry out their activities	activities undertaken and constraints faced
25.	17,18. Sept.04	Kaya	PRA, social mapping , resource mapping	To identify livelihood options and area for strengthening natural resource base	Villagers , volunteers
26.	27-29. Sept.04	Ahmedabad	study tour	to widen the outlook of women	SHG
27.	3.Oct 04	Udaipur	UNDP Planning meeting	Project reporting, action plan and understanding the issues of Natural resource management.	Project team of astha, KAS, AMJS, consultant on NRM
28.	8 Oct.04	Paduna	Cluster meeting	To help the SHG carry out their activities	Activities undertaken and constraints faced
29.	16. Oct 04	Makradev	Cluster meeting	To help the SHG carry out their activities	Activities undertaken and constraints faced

30.	09.Nov.04	Astha Training Centre Bedla	UNDP project team meeting	Discussion on work plan and finance related issues	Project team of ASTHA, KAS and AMJS
31.	08. Nov.04	Paduna	Cluster meeting	To help the SHG carry out their activities	activities undertaken and constraints faced
32.	10-29. Nov.04	Pai	Cluster meeting	To help the SHG carry out their activities	activities undertaken and constraints faced
33.	15. Nov.04	Makradev	Meeting	Independence day celebration	Members of AMJS and ASTHA
34.	25. Nov.04	Kantharia	Cluster meeting	To help the SHG carry out their activities	activities undertaken and constraints faced
35.	5-6.Dec.04	Pai	Women Conference	To strengthen the women and address issues of social, economic, political empowerment of women.	Around 600 men and women from Jhadol and Girwa Blocks, and special guests.
36.	10. Dec.04	Pai	Cluster meeting	To help the SHG carry out their activities	Activities undertaken and constraints faced
37.	16. Dec.04	Makradev	Cluster meeting	To help the SHG carry out their activities	Activities undertaken and constraints faced
38.	6 Jan. 05	Markadev	Health Camp	To give medical aid and counseling to the rural women about health	89 women and children
39.	8 Jan., 05	Paduna	Cluster Meeting	Reporting and interaction of the SHG	SHG Members
40.	10 Jan., 05	Pai	Cluster Meeting	Reporting and interaction of the SHG	SHG Members

41.	17 Jan., 05	Manas	PRA	To identify the livelihood options in the area and for strengthening natural resources.	Villagers
42.	18 Jan., 05	Kimri	PRA	To identify the livelihood options in the area and for strengthening natural resources.	Villagers
43.	24 Jan., 05	Pai	Regional meeting	Reporting and interaction of the SHGs.	SHG Members
44.	25 Jan., 05	Kanthria	Cluster meeting	Reporting and interaction of the SHGs.	SHG Members
45.	3. Feb.05	Ovra	PRA	Identify the resource base and the livelihood portfolio of the people	Villagers
46.	5. Feb.05	Saldari	PRA	Identify the resource base and the livelihood portfolio of the people	Villagers
47.	8. Feb.05	Paduna	Cluster meeting	Reporting and interaction of the SHG	SHG members
48.	9. Feb.05	Manas Masingpura	PRA	Identify the resource base and the livelihood portfolio of the people	Villagers
49.	12. Feb.05	Paduna	Health Camp	To give medical aid and counseling to the rural women about health	89 women and children
50.	19. Feb.05	Gadh hamli papli	PRA	Identify the resource base	Villagers

51.	21-22. Feb.05	Bedla	Income generation training	To increase the capacity of the women to undertake income generation activity	34 SHG members of Kantharia and Makradev
52.	25. Feb.05	Kantharia	Cluster meeting	Reporting and interaction of the SHG	SHG members
53.	26-27. Feb.05	Amarapura	Women conference	To strengthen the capacity of the women and develop organisational feeling	Around 300 women
54.	1 March.05	Pai	AMJS volunteer meeting	To report about the progress of the project and planning for the next quarter	AMJS , Astha
55.	8 March, 05	Paduna	Cluster meeting	Reporting and interaction of the SHG	SHG members

Another important initiative taken by the Tribal Women's Awareness Society is to organize a "Kishori Balika" Awareness Camp for 100 teenage girls of the area. In this camp, the women of the Tribal Women's Awareness Society share their concerns for the girls of the area, and help them to understand things they think are important – the need for education, knowledge about health and their bodies, some laws and policies that are relevant, knowledge of administrative and political systems including local self-government systems, an overview of employment vocations possible for girls, etc. They also share with them about the Tribal Women's Awareness Society and the importance of organization. Most of the daughters and sons of the leaders, and even members, of the Tribal Women's Awareness Society have gone much farther in school, than if their mothers had not been associated with the Society.

The Tribal Women's Awareness Organization, the registered body of the Tribal Women's Awareness Society, has entered into a contract with Astha, to be the implementing partner organization for a UNDP project in Jhadol and Girwa Blocks of Udaipur District. This is a natural resource management project based on community organization. The Tribal Women's Awareness Society village level groups provide the base for the work, and the women, once organized, have been working on soil and water conservation, vermiculture compost production and the sale of worms, and other land based economic activities. Through this project work, they are not only improving the natural resource base of their area, but learning how to manage funds, deadlines, progress reports, and planning meetings.



Members of the Tribal Women's Awareness Society, preparing to take out a Rally – The words on the placard are: "Hum Sub Ek Hai" -- "We Are All United!"



Women and the Police, working together. Ever since the Tribal Women's Awareness Society started working as a community dispute resolution structure, and working on social reform, the police have been supporting their work. To every "case committee" session, the women phone the police station, inform them of the date and place, and ask them to send a constable or two, just to see that no fights break out on the fringes. The police come. Here, in this photo, they are part of a training programme organized for group leaders of the Society.

In addition to this new work, the Society members continue to mobilize both men and women of the area around the issue of forest land rights, improved prices for non-timber forest produce, the Employment Guarantee Scheme and other larger issues. The Society is an important presence, and voice, of the tribal women of the area.

6. The Godwad Area Tribal Association --

The Godwad Area is not an area where tribals are in the majority, unlike most of the other places where Astha works. The tribal belt is south Rajasthan, and this area is to the north west of what is known as south Rajasthan, and the area has many Rajput and other upper caste communities, that for centuries, have been oppressing the tribal minorities. The political pressure on the Association is such that it is difficult for the tribals to build a strong Association.

Meetings -

1. **Core Group** - on the 2nd of every month, Core group meetings are conducted. The agenda of this meeting is to analyze the work of the previous month and to prepare action plan for the coming month. Plan of action and issues related to the organization are also discussed in these meetings.
2. **General Body Meeting** - on the 28th of every month General Body Meeting is organized at Kuran choraha in Kuran panchayat.
3. **Village Level Meeting** - every month meetings are organized in each Village. The workers of the organization or a representative at village level participate in these meetings. The issues related to drought, water, employment, forests and land and the issues related to century are discussed in these meetings.

Details of the Women Self Help Groups

S.N.	Village and Group Name	Deposited Amount (in Rs.)	Type of all group
1	Malnu	3500	Old
2	Malnu	6220	New
3	Rotia (Bajrangbali group)	1300	New
4	Kurka	800	New
5	Kuran (Rupan Mata group)	1700	Old
6	Chetna group	600	New
7	Citranta Bhata	1370	Old
8	Bhimana	750	Old
9	Koyalav	1100	Old
10	Kundal	7000	Old
11	Pipla	4200	Old
12	Garacia Colony	3600	Old
13	Goria	550	New
	Total Amount	32690	
14	A new Self Help Group is recently formed in Koyalav (Chauderi group)		

Women's Convention

The condition of women in Gorward is very poor as compared to men. These women don't have the capacity to bring forth their problems and to solve them in terms of social, economic and political perspective.

They are also less developed in the area of education and health. Looking at their present status and how these women come forward for their rights and also how their financial condition can improve are some of the issues. Which are discussed in Women's Convention organized by Gordwad Tribal Organisation (Gordwad Adiwasi Sanghathan). This year Women's Convention was organised on 4-6 March, 05 at Nimbeshwar Mahadev.

Objectives of Women's Convention –

1. To understand the social, economic, political and educational status of women with a broader perspective.
2. To Provide information about rights and laws related to the women
3. To give information about development programs
4. To understand the process of integrated efforts to eliminate violence, abuse & discrimination against women.
5. To enhance their leadership qualities and also provide knowledge/information regarding health.

140 women from Bali and Desuri participated in this Women's Convention and made efforts to understand the importance of education and health in their lives.

Rally on the issues of forest and land

Members of Gordwad Tribal Organization (Gordwad Adiwasi Sanghathan) participated in the social action organized by Astha Sansthan at state and national level on the issues related to forest and land rights. The details are as follows-

- 35 People from organization participated in a rally organized in Udaipur in the month of February. A memorandum was given to the tribal Commissioner on the issue of forest and land rights.
- To create laws for the "rights of tribals and forest dwellers". 52 members of organization participated in the sit out at Delhi.
- 13 members participated in a demonstration at Jantar Mantar, Delhi, on 5th May, in order to support the Tribal self-rule bill.
- 40 tribals participated in the dialogue with Panchayt representatives. Program was organized to pass the Tribal self -rule bill in Udaipur on 21st June, 05.
- Meetings were organized to create awareness on the issue of forest and land at village level.

S.N.	Programme	Date	Participant
1	Training on Legal issues	November, 04	62
2	Participated in Village Republic Conference	December. 04	12
3	Leadership building Training program	January, 05	28
4	Women Self Help Group Training	February, 05	42
5	Women's Convention	4-6 March, 05	140

Up to now, Astha has been helping the Association members to be part of the area wide Forest Land People's Movement. Those tribals whose homesteads are on what is now forest land, have faced tremendous pressure. In the area, in this year, 35 families were evicted from their land and their homes by the Forest Department. The Forest Department tore down their homes and ran a tractor over their crops. When the Astha photographer went to the area to photograph the site, the Forest Department instigated labourers to attack the photographer, seize and destroy his cameras, which they did. Astha filed a case against the Forest Department person involved, and in return, a false case was filed against the Astha photographer! The year has seen many trips to the court in Bali, District Pali, over this matter.

As a result, Astha and the Association members have decided to work on natural resource management, soil and water conservation, and Astha, with the people, have taken up a CAPART funded project which will work on contour bunding, improvement of pasture-lands, vermicomposting, etc. It is hoped that these activities will also unite the tribal people in planning for and improving their natural resources, and be less threatening to the dominant elites of the area. The Gordwad Area Tribal Association people can build up their organizational strength, develop alternate leadership, and slowly make changes in the area that lead to a society marked by more equality than it is today.

7. Jarga Development Society –

The work in this area of Kumbalgarh Block, Rajsamand District, consisted of monthly meetings, leadership training, and a large women's camp.

The issue of Forest Land Displacement continued, and the people are continuing to hold on to their land in the face of threatened displacement from the Forest Department.

There were 3 groups of women's Self Help Societies, that got bank loaning to market milk from their goats and buffalos.

The Society took a contract for collection and sale of Ratan Jote, a seed collected from the forest, and used for the oil for making soap.

The work in this area was not as strong in this year as it should have been, due to some staff problems.



The Jarga Area Development Society, Kumbalgarh Block, Rajsamand District displays posters of the issues and activities that the people have worked on in the last year. This is a Booth, at the annual meeting of the Society.

Activities Undertaken by JARGA :-

Women's Self Help Societies -

S.N.	Villages	Panchayat	Loan Amount Rs.
1	Sanduko ka gura	Aantri	4,60,000.00
2	Siya	Kadia	3,60,000.00
3	Undawala	Kadia	2,60,000.00
4	Kuria ka wanga	Vardara	14,000.00
5	Dudalia	Vardara	20,000.00
6	Borata ki Bhagal	Vardara	-
7	Pipla	Pipla	14,000.00
8	Machda	Pipla	20,000.00
9	Kedhlia Bhilwara	Badgoan	20,000.00
10	Mamadev Ka Bhilwara	Badgoan	20,000.00

Other Activities -

SL	Date	Programme	Objective	Participants
1	15 of every month	Executive committee meeting	Discussion on various activities conducted by the society	30
2	30 of every month	Block level committee meeting	To bring the problems at block level, by people associated with the organisation.	50
3	11-12 Oct., 04	Workers meeting	Leadership of the organisation in our hand.	21
4	9-10 Sep., 04	Meeting of the members of support society	Discussion held on the positive and negative points of the society	21
5	28-30 Dec., 04	Women's convention	Topics covered were income generating and employment, land and property rights.	200
6	2 March, 05	Jarga's Convention	Annual activities of Jarga society were discussed with the people.	1600

8. The Rajsamand Women's Forum –

In this year, the Forum submitted a proposal and took up the work of a women's counseling centre in Rajsamand. The funding is coming directly to the Forum, and the Forum leaders are managing the accounts with the help of an accounts clerk. The Astha Resource Unit staff has given training to the leaders of the Forum in record keeping, accounts keeping. This is a concrete beginning in the efforts to learn how to plan for work, seek and manage resources.

So far forum has done various programmes to bring up issues related to women and girls in four blocks of Udaipur district namely - Rajsamand, Railmagra, Kelwara and Khamnor. It is working in a total of 69 villages of 210 Gram Panchayats on issues of women empowerment. In April Forum conducted/held a large campaign against child marriages and dowry. It has also formed its own cell, which deals with cases of violence against women. It also organises its own capacity building camps. Recently an education tour was conducted where women interacted on income generation activity and self help group at against. The Forum has a total of 4683 members and they deal in all the above issues.



When women become aware, they want their daughters and girls in their area also to become aware, to get educated, to become bold, to prevent exploitation. The Women's Forum organizes awareness camps for teenage girls – lectures, discussions, games, songs – various activities.



The members of the Rajsamand Women's Forum come on the street in procession, shouting slogans, and symbolically showing the numbers of women who are against atrocities on women, excessive liquor consumption by men, child marriage customs, etc.

Activities undertaken by the Forum -

SL	Date	Programme	Objective	Participants
1.	7th of every Month	Workers Meeting	Leadership of the organisation in our hand.	
2.	2, 3, 4 and 6th of every Month	Block Level meeting	Block Level Committees meetings were held to solve problems and accessing resources.	
3.	11-13 Aug., 04	Training related to Law Information	Social, Economic and political conditions were discussed. Analyses the problems and strategies for their solution were made.	80
4.	Sep., 04	Group Leader Training	To strengthen the organisation and upbring there activities.	175
5.	19-21 Dec., 04	Training of Cultural Team	Cultural team prepared songs and skits to make people aware of there voting rights (PEVAC)	25
6.	11-14 Jan., 05	Educational Tour	Overview on Income generating activities and how SHGs are working in other States.	11
7.	8 March, 05	World Women's Day		500
8.	17-18 June, 04	Adolescent Girls Camp (One Camp was held at Railmagra, Khamnor Block and the second one at Rajsamand and Kelwara Block)	To educate them to prevent exploitation, Health and sanitation.	380
9.	7 July, 04	Worker's Training Programme	To Developed the strategy and action plan for the future.	26
10.	21-22 Jan., 05	Jagruk Manch Training Programme	Pre Election Voter awareness campaign was held just before the Panchayati Raj Election	240
11.	3-4 Dec., 04	Panch Sarpanch Training Programme	To Promote deprived and humble man and women as panchayat representative.	180

CONCLUSION

It is hard for any staff team to change roles – in the beginning of Astha’s work, the Astha staff team went on Padyatras (walking tours of several days) throughout the rural areas, to bring awareness about the possibility of change and organization, and at the same time, to become aware about the issues and problems of the area themselves. The Astha staff team formed groups in villages, conducted leadership training programmes for the group leaders – and now, the leaders and members of the People’s Organizations do all those things themselves! Including, conducting leadership training for second line leadership! Now, the help they need from the Astha team, is to help the first line leaders to be able to manage their People’s Organization on their own. To plan the work, to put budgets to plans, to mobilize human and monetary resources, to carry out the work they plan, to report about what they have done, and how much it cost. They also need help in solving people-problems – one People’s Organization worker doesn’t work, but claims she does; one PO leader comes so close to a political party that he is known in the area as a Party Worker (more than the People’s Organization worker); some PO leader is careless with money; and so on. Although the emotional and intellectual change from being a field worker to being a trainer, from being “out front” to being “behind the scenes”, and mentoring People’s Organization leaders in skills they themselves feel unsure about (like fundraising), is not easy. But in the previous year, the Astha field staff and those who work with the People’s Organizations have done some commendable work.

And the Resource Units have indeed come into existence. The experienced activist-educators who have “started something from nothing” have articulated a “mission” and “objectives”, have pulled together a team of workers, have mobilized resources, and have planned and carried out work in the various areas of specialization. The hope that the scope of work would broaden (from the focus on building up the 8 People’s Organizations) has in fact come about. Even the work on Literacy Training for Leaders of People’s Organizations has expanded to work with people’s group and organisation leaders from Districts in all parts of the state. The Budget Analysis Rajasthan Centre, which was started as a resource centre in 2002, has strengthened its resources and is making a more significant contribution to social action groups in the state, than before. The only area that is still comparatively weak, is the work on Globalization.

The Astha Team has taken a giant step forward in its efforts to be “A Field Based Resource Organization”. More needs to be done, but then, there is always more to do.....

**THE PROVISIONS OF THE PANCHAYATS (EXTENSION TO THE
SCHEDULED AREAS) ACT, 1996**

No.40 OF 1996

24th December, 1996

An Act to provide for the extension of the provisions of Part IX of the Constitution relating to the Panchayats to the Scheduled Areas.

Be it enacted by Parliament in the Forty-seventh Year of the Republic of India as follows:-

1. This Act may be called the Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996.
2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires, "Scheduled Areas" means the Scheduled Areas as referred to in clause (1) of article 244 of the Constitution.
3. The provisions of Part IX of the Constitution relating to Panchayats are hereby extended to the Scheduled Areas subject to such exceptions and modifications as are provided in section 4.
4. Notwithstanding anything contained under Part IX of the Constitution, the Legislature of a State shall not make any law under that Part which is inconsistent with any of the following features, namely :-
 - a) A State legislation on the Panchayats that may be made shall be in consonance with the customary law, social and religious practices and traditional management practices of community resources;
 - b) A village shall ordinarily consist of a habitation or a group of habitation or a hamlet or a group of hamlets comprising a community and managing its affairs in accordance with traditions and customs;
 - c) Every village shall have a Gram Sabha consisting of persons whose names are included in the electoral rolls for the Panchayats at the village level;
 - d) Every Gram Sabha shall be competent to safeguard and preserve the traditions and customs of the people, their cultural identify, community resources and the customary mode of dispute resolution;

- e) Every Gram Sabha shall -
 - i) approve the plans, programmes and projects for social and economic development before such plans, programmes and projects are taken up for implementation by the Panchayat at the village level;
 - ii) be responsible for the identification or selection of persons as beneficiaries under the poverty alleviation and other programmes;
- f) Every Panchayat at the village level shall be required to obtain from the Gram Sabha a certification of utilisation of funds by that Panchayat for the plans, programmes and projects referred to in clause(e);
- g) The reservation of seats in the Scheduled Areas at every Panchayat shall be in proportion to the population of the communities in that Panchayat for whom reservation is sought to be given under Part IX of the Constitution.
 Provided that the reservation for the Scheduled Tribes shall not be less than one- half of the total number of seats:
 Provided further that all seats of Chairpersons of Panchayats at all levels shall be reserved for the Scheduled Tribes.
- h) The State Government may nominate persons belonging to such Scheduled Tribes as have no representation in the Panchayat at the intermediate level or the Panchayat at the district level;
 Provided that such nomination shall not exceed one-tenth of the total members to be elected in that Panchayat;
- i) The Gram Sabha or the Panchayats at the appropriate level shall be consulted before making the acquisition of land in the scheduled Areas for development projects and before re-settling or rehabilitating persons affected by such projects in the Scheduled Areas; the actual planning and implementation of the projects in the Scheduled Areas shall be coordinated at the State level.
- j) Planning and management of minor water bodies in the Scheduled Areas shall be entrusted to Panchayats at the appropriate level;
- k) The recommendations of the Gram Sabha or the Panchayats at the appropriate level shall be made mandatory prior to grant of prospecting licence or mining lease for minor minerals in the Scheduled Areas;
- l) The prior recommendation of the Gram Sabha or the Panchayats at the appropriate level shall be made mandatory for grant of concession for the exploitation of minor minerals by auction;
- m) While endowing Panchayats in the Scheduled Areas with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as institutions of self- government, a State Legislature shall ensure that the Panchayats at the appropriate level and the Gram Sabha are endowed specifically with -

- i) the power to enforce prohibition or to regulate or restrict the sale and consumption of any intoxicant;
 - ii) the ownership of minor forest produce;
 - iii) the power to prevent alienation of land in the Scheduled Areas and to take appropriate action to restore any unlawfully alienated land of a Scheduled Tribe;
 - iv) the power to manage village markets by whatever name called;
 - v) the power to exercise control over money lending to the Scheduled Tribes;
 - vi) the power to exercise control over institutions and functionaries in all social sectors;
 - vii) the power to control over local plans and resources for such plans including tribal sub-plans;
- n) The State legislations that may endow Panchayats with powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as institutions of self-government shall contain safeguards to ensure that Panchayats at the higher level do not assume the powers and authority of any Panchayats at the lower level or of the Gram Sabha;
- o) The State Legislature shall endeavour to follow the pattern of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution while designing the administrative arrangements in the Panchayats at district levels in the Scheduled Areas.
- p) Notwithstanding anything in Part IX of the Constitution with exceptions and modifications made by this Act, any provision of any law relating to Panchayats

in force in the Scheduled Areas immediately before the date on which this Act receives the assent of the President which is inconsistent with the provisions of Part IX with such exceptions and modifications shall continue to be in force until amended or repealed by a competent Legislature or other competent authority or until the expiration of one year from the date on which this Act receives the assent of the President;

Provided that all the Panchayats existing immediately before such date shall continue till the expiration of their duration unless sooner dissolved by a resolution passed to that effect by the Legislative Assembly of that State or, in the case of a State having Legislative Council, by each House of the Legislature of that State.

APPENDIX No. 2**Data/Information Supplied to Organizations, Legislators, Media and Individuals by the Budget Analysis Rajasthan Centre (BARC)**

SL. No.	Organisation/Individual	Data/information supplied by BARC
1.	Action Aid, Jaipur	Overall State Budget
2.	Institutes of Development Studies, Jaipur	Budget for drinking water
3.	National Centre for Agricultural Economics & Policy Research	Livestock related data
4.	Samantar Sansthan, Jaipur	Budget for Mewat area development programme
5.	Save the Children, Jaipur	Data related to natural calamity fund
6.	Mahila Mandal Barmer Agor	Budget for disabled people
7.	Astha Sansthan	Budget for Tribal Area Sub-Plan
8.	The Hunger Project	Panchayati Raj and women welfare budget
9.	Sukshma Vikas Sansthan	Education budget
10.	Action Aid, Jaipur	District and block level Census data
11.	Centre for Dalit Human Rights, Jaipur	Data on Sahariyas' Rights
12.	Rajasthan State Women Commission	Budget for women
13.	Sandhan, Jaipur	Education budget
14.	Education Resource Unit	Education budget
15.	Hemant Bhai Goyal, Journalist	Budget for disabled people
16.	Centre for Women's Development Studies, New Delhi	Budget for women (including widows)
17.	Channel 7 (A TV channel of Dainik Jagran Patrika Group)	State Budget
18.	Khejri Sarvodaya Health Centre, Jaipur	Health Budget
19.	Unnati, Jodhpur	Budget for scheduled caste and scheduled tribe (SC & ST) community
20.	Institute of Development Studies, Jaipur	Education budget
21.	Astha Sansthan, Udaipur	Budget for widows
22.	Institutes of Development Studies, Jaipur	Budget for children
23.	Social Policy Research Institute	State Budget
24.	Sukham Vikas Sansthan, Jaipur	Education budget
25.	Vishakha, Jaipur	Women and education budget
26.	Institutes of Development Studies, Jaipur	Budget for drought
27.	Centre for Child Rights	Budget for children and data on child population

28.	Disha Patheya, Ahmedabad	Overall State Budget
29.	Nira Sansthan, Jaipur	Health budget
30.	Rajasthan Voluntary Health Organisation	Health budget
31.	Social Policy Research Institute	Budget for water resource management
32.	Prayas, Chittorgarh	Overall State Budget, health budget, education budget, and Dalit budget
33.	Hadoti Hast Shilp Sansthan, Kota	Budget for widow pension
34.	Sambhav Sansthan	NGO's list of Rajasthan
35.	Prayatna, Dholpur	Budget for special area development programme
36.	Jaipur Pahal Sansthan	NGO-list of Rajasthan
37.	Vasundhara Seva Samiti, Barmer	Budget for border area development programme
38.	Urmul Jyoti Sansthan, Nokha, Bikaner	Overall State Budget, and budgets for public health, Panchayati Raj and rural development
39.	Urmul Trust, Bikaner	Budgets for Panchayati Raj, rural development and border area development programme
40.	Vagar Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan, Dungarpur	Budget for Tribal Area Sub-Plan
41.	E-TV, Jaipur	Overview of the State Budget
42.	The Hindustan Times, Jaipur	Overview of the State Budget
43.	Rajasthan Patrika	Overview of the State Budget
44.	The Hindu	Overview of the State Budget
45.	Dainik Bhaskar	Overview of the State Budget
46.	The Indian Express	Overview of the State Budget
47.	Vividha, Jaipur	Budget for women
48.	People's Union for Civil Liberty (PUCL), Jaipur	Overall State Budget and budgets for women, Dalit, and handicapped people.
49.	Institute of Development Studies, Jaipur	Agriculture budget
50.	MLAs from ruling (including some Ministers) and opposition parties	Overall State Budget and Department-wise Budgets
51.	Different Research Scholars	Overall State Budget
52.	Lok Sevak Sangh & Transparency International India	Budget for MP Local Area Development (MPLAD)
53.	Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability	Overall State Budget and Budget for MP Local Area Development (MPLAD)
54.	Protection for Public Properties, Jaipur	Budgets on health, education, forests etc.

**A FIELD BASED RESOURCE ORGANIZATION
REPORT OF THE WORK OF ASTHA
April 2004 – March 2005**

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