



Annual Report 2022-2023

Foreword

It gives me immense pleasure to present this annual report for the year 2022-23.

The aftermath of Corona pandemic during 2019 – 2021 resulted in slow progress of work during the year 2021-22 as well due to impact on lives everywhere. Most of the agencies invested in relief and recovery from the crisis as the impact was tremendous in nature. The pandemic left all of us thinking about need of planning our development interventions from broader perspectives of disasters and for better preparedness. At DST we too were reviewing the situation internally and externally trying to learn from the situation and overcome the impact to continue our work with the communities and the sector. The pandemic although brought in many uncertainties and helplessness, it taught us numerous lessons for all of us especially that such disasters can in-fact help us develop our resilience, enhances our ability to address vulnerability and help each other to work with communities and organisations and thus overcome the adverse impacts. The pandemic was a result of climate change and demanded work from us to address the emerged challenges for the people, especially poor. Some of the most impacted areas of their life were health and livelihoods and we felt that our response needs to be on these areas.

Working with communities and fellow NGOs, DST organised series of consultations, workshops and trainings on climate change, health issues and livelihoods bringing together NGOs and women groups from communities. The state consultation on climate change and its impact on health opened up new area for our intervention in the health sector. A most neglected or side-lined aspect in the process of relief and rehabilitation was that of mental health and it came up for discussion during the event and related deliberations. It was strongly felt that this aspect of health need to be addressed on priority as this has a direct fallout on lives of millions of people, their families and in turn on the society proving disturbing for all. DST has proposed to take this issue forward along with its commitment to work within the sector on the issues of climate change and agriculture, gender equality, natural resource management and livelihoods and response to natural calamities, as and when they occur.

Some new members have joined DST during the year and we look forward to benefit from their experience and expertise to further improve our effectiveness in the sector.

We have undertaken Organisational Development (OD) exercise through an experienced professional and we look forward to review and update our systems, strategies and program priorities to become further useful, relevant and impactful to contribute in the development sector. We will keep you posting.

I, along with our Board Members and the staff take this opportunity to thank all our associates and well-wishers for their valuable contribution in the DST operations during the year. We have tried to put the gist of our work through this report, and hope to receive feedback from all of you.

Thanking you all.

Shirish Kulkarni
Chairperson
Development Support Team

Brief Background

Development Support Team (DST) was established in 1984 primarily to cater the needs of the very small NGOs/Community Based Organizations(CBOs).DST owes its existence to CAA,Oxfam (Australia).DST started as a support service organization in a small way and accepted a variety of challenges in its growth path and journey. DST has grown into a multifaceted organization responding to the needs of the development sector and to face the current challenges.

DST has been working towards capacity building of the weaker sections of the society with a special focus on women for over three decades. DST believes in women's active participation and involvement in the development process which is necessary for the better future of the sector.

Over the past two decades has worked towards Socio-Economic Empowerment of Women through the promotion and strengthening of a community-based, community owned institution – Self Help Groups (SHGs) and Federations. The focus has been on working towards, Financial Planning and Financial Literacy of the women.

Organizational Structure

DST is registered as a Society and a Trust and is governed by the rules and regulations applicable under the respective acts. The governing body comprises social workers, activists, academicians and individuals committed to the field of development.

DST's Objectives

- *To provide information, research, training, finance and other support to voluntary agencies working in the field of socio-economic development.*
- *To undertake and to assist studies and research in the field of development.*
- *To provide facilities for the exchange of information and experience among different voluntary agencies working in the field of development.*
- *To undertake and to assist organization of workshops, seminars and training courses for workers engaged in development.*
- *To undertake all such programmes and activities, which promote development?*

Following activities, events and programs were undertaken by DST during the year

1. A small pilot study on impact of enhanced/inappropriate use of mobile/smart phones on adolescents (13-16 years) with reference to COVID situation in Pune slums was conducted in the month of June 2022. The data was gathered through the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with the adolescent girls, boys and their mothers.



Highlights from the data

- The response received for FGDs was quite good. The participants seemed happy to be part of this discussion and also suggested to conduct similar session with the children so as to make them aware of the dangers of the excessive usage of smart phones.
 - Once the schools started in person, the use of smart phones went down considerably in many cases.
 - In general, the boys seem to be more on phones as compared to girls. Where the girls were older, they were more understanding and let their brothers use the phone and where the girls were younger; the brothers fought with them and took away the phones.
 - Mothers also reported the fights amongst siblings for the phone and they got agitated and destructive if the phone was snatched from them while they were playing games.
 - It felt that the children were more in fear of their fathers and keep the phones away if reprimanded by them.
 - The adolescent boys and girls were not very much worried about the (excessive or otherwise) use of the smart phone by them as compared to mothers.
2. The mothers were confused as what can be done to reduce the time spent on the phones since prior to COVID, children hardly used smart phones. The parents were concerned about the use of the smart phones as the habit of excessive use of mobile phones does have positives and negatives.
 3. DST in collaboration with Stree Adhar Kendra (SAK), Pune organised a one-day consultation on “**Climate Change and Women’s Health**” at Pune on **16th November 2022** to provide a platform to the participants of NGOs to share their field experiences on

the impact of climate change on women's health. The consultation was attended by senior and middle level managers (49 participants) from 21 organizations.

- The keynote address was delivered by Dr. Roxy Matthew Koll, Climate Scientist at the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune. The address covered the impacts, adaptation and vulnerability of climate change. Changes in temperature due to global warming and severe weather events such as, increased heat waves, cyclones, and delayed excessive rains, which impacted on the most vulnerable sections such as, women and children.
- Dr. Mridula Apte spoke on Mental Health Issues of Women. She spoke about the stigma associated with mental health and the neglect of mental health of women.
- Dr. Pradeep Awate, State Surveillance Officer, Integrated Diseases Surveillance Programme, spoke about the access to health services and various schemes and programmes being implemented by the Government as well as the issues & concerns in this regard.
- Dr. Neelam Gorhe, set the context by sharing relevant information about various consultations and workshops initiated by the State Government to increase awareness and lay out the policies and also involve the elected representatives and Govt. official in the process and to implement these policies effectively.



Dr Roxy Mathew of IITM



Dr. Neelam Gorhe, Dy. Speaker Maharashtra Legislative Council



Dr. Mrudula Apte





Shri Shirish Kulkarni,



Dr. Anil Paranjape

4. Partnership with Param Health Centre

DST in partnership with Param Health Centre in continuation of the project- Health Promotion and Disease Prevention- Vitamin D tablets were distributed in the rural surroundings of Sangamner city. Besides, a project of four months duration was undertaken through the NGO – ‘Lokpanchayat’ in order to reach out to 1,000+ beneficiaries staying in the villages from the vicinity of Sangamner. Initially, Vitamin D was tested for 50 persons, and baseline information was collected vide questionnaires to demonstrate the impact of Vitamin D on improving general health.

This program included dissemination of information regarding the dosage and to train the field level staff of Lokpanchayat to distribute the tablets to the beneficiaries. Google forms were introduced to collect information of beneficiaries, to monitor this activity and also, to assess the impact of Vitamin D tablets. The response was very encouraging.



5. A special Workshop on **Climate Change and Mental health** was organized for Community Workers on **22nd Feb. 2023** at YMCA, Pune.

As part of the follow up to the earlier consultation, a simpler version of the presentations were shared with Community Workers from various organizations like CASP, YouthAid, SAK, SJVS etc. in order to demystify the issues regarding climate change and mental health. This workshop was attended by 23 participants from 10 organizations.





6. Organisational Development (OD) workshop was held on **28.3.23** at MCCIA. The workshop was attended by all the trustees of DST and staff. This OD process is expected to continue over a period of next six months to one year. Under this exercise, DST trustees and staff shall reflect on the important issues such as, governance structure, operational systems, constitution/Rules and Regulations, compliances as prescribed under the Laws, how to prioritize development issues and programs, imparting training to enhance skills and capabilities of the Office Bearers and staff etc. DST is also working on developing the Strategic Plan with a long-term perspective as per its mandate and role as a support service organization. An experienced OD expert who has been formally associated with DST will also facilitate the entire OD process and exercise.

7. Workshop on livelihood at YMCA.

On **15th March, 2023**, a workshop was held for about 30 women from various Self Help Groups promoted and supported by DST over the years. The objective of the workshop was to enable the women to develop a better understanding of financial management and product development to sustain in a highly competitive market.





8. Technical Support to Samruddhi Welfare Development Foundation (SWDF)

DST provides technical and financial support to Samruddhi Welfare Development Foundation (SWDF), which caters to the credit needs of the members of Self Help Groups. After COVID pandemic, SWDF began to give loans to non-members of SHGs also. Loans to the tune of Rs. 67,90,000 have been disbursed through the SHGs to their members as well as to the non-members through Community Workers.

9. Capacity Building and Interaction with Community Workers

DST supports the grassroots cadre of Community Workers, who work as the link to all the urban community-based initiatives. Five in-person meetings (April- 2022, June-2022, August-2022, October-2022 and January-2023) were conducted this year to enhance their capacity of dealing with the community development work.



DST's Participation at various National events:

1. MAHAVAN meeting:

Medha Ranade attended MAHAVAN meeting held on 21st Nov. 2022 at Nagpur.

The main Points discussed were:

- Willingness of existing Office-bearers and officers of NGOs to hand over responsibilities to the second line officers.
- A need to empower and accordingly train the second line leadership.
- Preparing a module for their capacity building.

2. VANI meeting:

Medha Ranade attended a meeting on the topic, "New routes for grass root CSOs to exist- What does the future hold?". This meeting was arranged on November 22, 2022 at Nagpur by VANI. The following issues were discussed in the said meeting.:

- FCRA renewal and its compliance.
- Limitations of CSR funds.
- Shortage of funds for CSOs.
- Strategies of Government and overpowering rules against CSOs.
- Insecurities experienced by CSOs.

3. National Conference organised by APMAS under ENABLE network:

On behalf of DST, Medha Ranade attended "National Conference on 3-decades of SHG bank linkage program" held on 16th -17th Dec. 2022 at Hyderabad. It was a celebration of the achievements of three decades of SHG bank linkage program. There were about 100+ participants from 20 states, including the states like, Jammu-Kashmir, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, Assam, Bihar, etc.

Linkages

1. Voluntary Action Network India (VANI)

VANI is a network of voluntary development organizations with a purpose to provide a platform for safeguarding and highlighting activities and actions of the Voluntary Organizations in India. The Managing Trustee of DST is an ex-officio advisor to VANI. Besides, the DST is actively involved in VANI's decision-making process on policy related issues of the NGOs.

2. MAHAVAN

VANI has promoted independent state chapters to bring together CSOs/VDOs in Maharashtra. The members of VANI from Maharashtra have initiated MAHAVAN (Maharashtra Voluntary Action Network) as an informal forum of Voluntary Organizations to share knowledge, strengthen organizations and negotiate with the Government as well as the Corporate sector on the basis of equal partnerships. DST is working at the Pune District level to support this network.

3. ENABLE network

DST takes pride in mentioning that it is one of the founder members of Hyderabad based National Network. This network supports mainly SHGs and their Federations and FPOs.

4. Stree Aadhar Kendra (SAK)

Stree Aadhar Kendra is a Pune based NGO working mainly on the issue of women and domestic violence. DST has been closely associated with SAK since many years and organized many workshops jointly.

Acknowledgement:

The Board of Trustees gratefully acknowledges the support received from MCCIA, Pune; Dr. Renu Mahtani from Param Health Centre, Pune; Dr. Mridula Apte from Vidula Psychological Consultancy Services, Dr. Roxy Matthew Koll, a Climate Scientist at the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Dr. Neelam Gorhe, Deputy Chairperson, Maharashtra State Legislative Council and Founder President of Stree Adhar Kendra, Pune and Shri. Vivek Atre, NGO expert.

The Board would also like to place on record its appreciation of DST staff for their dedication and active involvement in successfully carrying out various programmes and activities of DST. We are also grateful to CBOs, Federations and SHGs for their valuable contribution in providing microfinance services and participating in various trainings programs and activities organised by DST. We are also thankful to our auditor 'Ramesh Ramu and Associates' for their guidance and auditing the accounts of DST.

Board of Trustees:

Sr. no.	Name	Designation
1	Mrs. H. Bedi	Managing Trustees
2	Mrs. Medha Ranade	Secretary
3	Mr. Shirish Kulkarni	Treasurer
4	Dr. Anil Paranjape	Trustee
5	Mr. Prashant Kothadiya	Trustee
6	Mrs. Jyoti Desai	Trustee
7	Mr. Adinath Ombale	Trustee

Staff:

Sr.No	Name	Designation
2	Jayant Navale	Finance Manager
3	Suresh Chavan	Project Assistant
4	Sonal Walzade	Office Secretary

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

