

Advancing Development *towards Sustainable Livelihoods*



Madurai Symposium 2011
Fostering Development Knowledge

September 14-18, 2011

Madurai Symposium 2003

Advancing Development



Madurai Symposium 2005

Advancing Development



Background

The Madurai Symposium is a development platform where development stakeholders-community institutions, civil societies, the Government, non-government organisations (NGOs), financial institutions and academia-converge at Madurai for conventions, and conferences. Four biennial symposiums were organised in Madurai between 2003 and 2009, each attended by over 15,000 participants. The 2009 Madurai Symposium brought development stakeholders together to share and learn from each others' experiences and practices with respect to *Advancing Development: Towards Millennium Development Goals*.

It can be argued that one of the most effective methods for achieving the Millennium Development Goals is through livelihoods promotion. Building upon the experiences of the earlier symposiums, the theme for 2011 is *Advancing Development: Towards Sustainable Livelihoods*.

The purposes of the 2011 Madurai Symposium include building knowledge on the best practices for livelihood promotion including approaches, frameworks, and models; promoting networks among the development players; fostering collaborations for action; sharing opportunities for resource mobilisation; and identifying leads for action in relation to policy areas and field practice.

For India's poor, livelihoods promotion is an important tool to improve self-reliance. Poor households possess different levels of livelihood assets and skills, and their livelihood decisions are often influenced by the stage of their family life cycle and degree of vulnerability to shocks and uncertainties. Sustainable livelihoods interventions should be designed to move households from a state of survival (high vulnerability) to subsistence (endurance with limited security) to self-employed (a state of stabilisation and security).

However, implementing programmes that achieve livelihood mobility requires a clear understanding of the complex interplay of personal, familial, social, and political factors. This understanding is often facilitated by using the frameworks on livelihoods, many of which identify economic, human, political, socio-cultural, and protective capabilities as important factors in understanding households and communities.

India's development actors from all sectors have had decades of experience in promoting and strengthening livelihoods, whether directly or indirectly. In the process, many additional frameworks, specific to the operational areas (whether geographically or socioeconomically distinct), have been developed.

The 2011 Madurai Symposium will provide opportunities for development stakeholders to learn from each others' experience, collaborate to develop further interventions to help eradicate poverty, and identify ways to sustain, enhance, and diversify livelihoods of the poor.

In addition to the conventions, conferences, and seminars there will be events for the public such as film festivals, business fairs, cultural shows of traditional and modern performing arts, poster sessions, and exhibitions of crafts by communities and self-help groups.

Outline of the Events

The Symposium focuses on the theme of sustainable livelihoods in rural, urban, coastal and tribal contexts. Topics of the events would be related to different sectors and sub-sectors within each context. Across the contexts, the events would focus on current issues in livelihoods, emerging opportunities and threats, existing policies affecting livelihoods, sustainable and replicable livelihood

intervention models and their relevance, and financial and human resource requirement for livelihood promotion.

Rural Livelihoods

Access to land and water has direct relevance on livelihoods of millions of rural households as farming and livestock are their primary livelihood strategy. Three fourths of Indian farmers are dependent on rainfed farming for their livelihoods, which is complex, diverse and risk prone, and characterised by low levels of productivity. It results in perpetuating poverty and large scale migration leaving the farmlands waste and derelict. Enhanced performance of common water resources and creation of new water harvesting structures, interventions in farming and allied activities to improve productivity, risk mitigation and support for the poor and landless households are some of the challenges in sustaining rural livelihoods.

Indicative topics relevant to this context are

- ✘ Watershed development
- ✘ Conservation and development of water resources
- ✘ Overcoming production and marketing risks in farming
- ✘ Technology options for enhanced farm productivity
- ✘ Finance for sustaining livelihoods
- ✘ Post-harvest technology
- ✘ Current trends and the future of agricultural marketing
- ✘ Emerging organizational models for production and marketing
- ✘ Tourism based livelihoods: Emerging opportunities
- ✘ Mission approach: MRLM, National Horticultural Mission, Rainfed Farming Development Authority, NREGS.

Urban Livelihoods

Urban livelihoods strategies are largely dependent on selling labour, often within the informal sector or within service industries of the formal sector. Living closer to the employment opportunities, the poor often stay in squatter settlements with limited access to civic services. Producers and processors located close to cities have comparative advantages of supplying to these markets. Urban poverty reduction requires diverse livelihood strategies including urban-rural market linkages, skill building, access to financial services, arresting income drainage, and housing

Indicative topics relevant to this context are

- ✘ Linking rural producers and urban consumers
- ✘ Skill building for enhanced employability
- ✘ Livelihoods of poor and urban renewal mission
- ✘ Issues of migrant workers
- ✘ Housing for the urban poor and their livelihoods
- ✘ Microfinance for urban livelihoods

Coastal and Marine-based Livelihoods

Coastal and marine areas offer diverse and abundant livelihood opportunities. The traditional and small scale fishers are highly vulnerable due to depleting marine resources, exploitative markets, risks and uncertainties associated with the work, lack of access to investment and lack of working capital. Support to the reduction of pressure on coastal and marine ecosystems through enhancing and diversifying livelihoods and supportive market mechanisms are the critical needs in this context.

Indicative topics relevant to this context are

- ✘ Coastal and marine conservation
- ✘ Livelihoods and disaster risk reduction
- ✘ From sea to table: Fishers and their market

- ✗ Microfinance and coastal livelihoods
- ✗ Women and marine based livelihoods
- ✗ Different livelihood models in coastal contexts
- ✗ Coastal zone regulation acts and fishers' livelihoods
- ✗ Climate change adaptation

Tribal livelihoods

The livelihood security of tribal communities is determined by forests, land and water. Understanding the lifestyle, culture and socio-economic reality of the tribal people are critical for creating a favorable environment for building sustainable livelihoods for the tribes. Since they are deprived of health and educational entitlements and exposed to high levels of exploitation by outsiders, tribal livelihoods development needs an integrated approach with a combination of freeing them from financial bondedness of exploitative traders, creating and strengthening forest-based livelihoods, water resource development, and ensuring health and educational services.

Indicative topics relevant to this context are

- ✗ Forest based livelihoods
- ✗ Development at the cost of tribal livelihoods
- ✗ Eco-tourism: An emerging opportunity
- ✗ Conservation of indigenous knowledge
- ✗ Different models and approaches for securing tribal livelihoods

Outcomes

Some of the concrete outcomes of the 2011 Madurai Symposium include launching new development initiatives, shaping the agenda for people movements, generating a

livelihood-focused development policy, and coming out with enabling policy packages for livelihoods promotion. The compilation of the outcomes will be taken to the decision makers at the central and state level.

Conferences, Seminars and Workshops



Many development stakeholders have already had many years of experience on working with livelihoods development in different contexts and sectors. Understanding livelihoods is complex and requires an understanding of these contexts and sectors, as well as an understanding of the many cross-cutting themes—for instance, gender, migration, and finance—for livelihoods. The conferences, seminars, and workshops provide a platform to facilitate cross-learning by sharing cases, success stories, research findings, programme designs, and livelihood theories evaluations. By understanding the different dimensions of livelihoods through paper presentations and discussions, participants will be able to refine their livelihoods development activities for greater impact.

People Conventions

The success of any intervention lies in the extent of participation and involvement by the target community in the development process. Community organisations are promoted by NGOs and the Government in different social capital forms such as federations and associations. In order to create a long-lasting impact, the vibrancy of governance (community leadership) and local management built through enabling and empowerment is crucial. The experiences of such development processes need to be shared. The people conventions will facilitate such learning and knowledge-building processes among the communities and across the stakeholders on the theme of sustainable livelihoods development.

Events for the Public

Cultural evenings: It is important to revive and preserve traditional folk arts, many of which are still relevant to the present context. The Symposium will create opportunities for the folk and traditional artists to perform a variety of cultural programmes to exhibit their talents. This would facilitate the development stakeholders to find ways to promote and preserve traditional folk arts which are symbols of ancient Indian culture, and in many cases, traditional livelihoods.



Exhibition: Public awareness of the development sector and its contribution for the country's growth and development is very low. The 2011 Symposium will attract the public from the city and



expose them to the talents and creativity of poor communities through an exhibition of crafts and wares made by them.

Development Film Festival:

Screening development films for development stakeholders and the public is one of the conventions in the Symposium. Exciting experiences of different development interventions will be displayed through this event to sensitise the stakeholders, communities and common public on various development initiatives and interventions. The best films would be recognised and suitably awarded.



Nominations for Events

The Facilitation Committee of the 2011 Madurai Symposium invites NGOs, academic and research institutions, Government organisations, industries, banks, donor organisations, entrepreneurs, producer's companies, and cooperatives to host conventions, seminars, workshops and conferences on topics relevant to the theme of the Symposium. The Committee would facilitate logistics and other needed support for the events organised by the host organisations.

For further details or information, please contact:

Facilitation Committee
Madurai Symposium 2011
DHAN Foundation

18, Pillaiyar Koil Street, S.S. Colony, Madurai - 625 016
Tel: +91-452-2610794 / 805 Fax: +91-452-2602247
Email: maduraisymposium@dhan.org
Website: <http://www.maduraisymposium.in>

Madurai Symposium 2007

Advancing Development - Building Alliances



Madurai Symposium 2009

Advancing Development towards Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)





Facilitation Committee
Madurai Symposium 2011

DHAN Foundation

18, Pillaiyar Koil Street, S.S. Colony
Madurai - 625 016. Tamil Nadu, INDIA
Tel: +91 - 452 - 2610794 / 805, Fax: +91 - 452 - 2602247
E-mail: maduraisymposium@ghan.org
Website: <http://www.maduraisymposium.in>

