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COMPAS ASIAN PARTNERS' MEETING

The Compas Asian Partners' meeting and Training programme was held in Bangalore during 20th – 29th September 2004. The meeting was hosted by the Foundation for Revitalisation of Local Health Traditions (FRLHT), Bangalore. The meeting had been convened to take care of multiple requirements that came up during the previous meeting of the Asian partners held at Chennai in May 2004 and subsequent developments.

Institutional development (ID)

The first three days of the meeting was devoted to discussion on Institutional Development. The overall process of institutional development (ID) was divided into two phases - the preliminary phase and the meeting held between 20th and 22nd September 2004. In the preliminary phase, the Regional Consultants (RC) held a meeting with the Regional Coordinator and the International Consultant (IC). On the basis of these meetings the RC (Mr. T.V. Ananthanarayanan and Mr. Atul Sapre) drafted a questionnaire which was sent to all the Compas

Asian Partners. The objective of the questionnaire was to assess the meaning of the Compas network in South Asia and its importance to the members. The questionnaire was filled and sent back to the regional consultants who analysed the responses and provided feed back.

On the first day, there was an introduction and sharing of the findings of the questionnaire, discussions on the purpose, principles and values of the institution, structure of the institution and an invited talk by an external expert - Mr. Anmol Vellani of the India Foundation for Arts, Bangalore. On the second day, there was sharing of the findings of the study of indigenous institutions by Mr.O.B.Ramasubramaniam, discussions of the current institutional form and responsibility of allocation of the new processes of the proposed institution. On the third day, Dr.Vijay Padaki, International Consultant shared the global context of Institutional development with the participants.

The group felt a strong need to relook at the institutional structure to bring it in line with the proposals that came through



Compas Partners in FRLHT

the previous day and examined inputs from Mr. Anmol Vellani and Mr.O.B. Ramasubramaniam. There were also group excercises on networks.

Research Methodology

On 23rd September as part of the Research Methodology program there was a presentation by FRLHT on Documentation and Assessment of Local Health Traditions (DALHT).

At noon there was a visit to Ramagondanahalli, a village nearby. A mock assessment of a PRA technique for prioritization of disease conditions in the village was demonstrated for the participants.

On 24th September, there was a presentation on Ethno-Veterinary Practices (EVP) by Mr. Jayasinghe of FIOH. He elaborated on the community mobilization program taken up by FIOH for poverty alleviation, the diseases documented and comparison of western and traditional methods of treatments. Following this, Dr. S.Raneesh and Mr. Hariramamurthy of FRLHT discussed the 'Participatory Assessment Model on Ethno veterinary Practices – Need and Significance. The methodology of RALHT (Rapid Assessment of Local Health Traditions) was also explained. During the post

lunch session, Dr. Sagari Ramdas of ANTHRA made a detailed presentation titled 'Towards Integrating IK into livestock development'. She presented a holistic approach to EVP and explained the traditional housing systems for animals, use of traditional fodder, selection of diseases for validation, region wise plant indexing, ranking and categorisation of treatments.

Field Visit

There was a field visit to Green Foundation's biodiversity conservation area at Thali village on 25th September. The participants were taken to the community seed banks set up by women self help groups with the intervention of Green foundation in Dinnur and Dasaiyanadhodi villages. There was also a trip around the fields where a check dam was constructed for ground water recharge, 'Participatory Breeding' of ragi was taken up along with the farmers, permaculture (permanent agriculture) are practiced.

Thematic working groups

In the Compas Asian partners' meeting held in Chennai in May 2004, the partners identified two topics – Seeds and EVP, that needs an elaborate e-discussion and convenors were also identified for the above mentioned topics. This was in order to assume responsibility of keeping in touch with the partners and encourage interaction and future exchange. In response to

this, on 27th September morning, there was a discussion on each of the themes, on aspects such as Key areas of importance, Areas of strength of partners, Mechanism of exchange of information, Mechanisms to keep in touch, Areas where we need to strengthen ourselves and Publications. It was decided to have a Compas Coordinated program on Seeds. Post lunch there was a presentation on the community diagnosis work undertaken by each of the groups. The methodology, approach to community diagnosis and limitations were discussed by each group.

Universities Consortium

The first session on 28th September was a presentation by Dr.Umnikrishnan of FRLHT on the 'Curriculum Development on Traditional Medicine' for university students, purpose, context, scope, outline and syllabi on Indian systems of medicine (Unani, Ayurveda, Siddha, and Tibetan medicine). This was followed by a presentation by Dr. B.N. Prakash on Research Initiatives for Traditional Anti Malarials (RITAM) – a collaborative work (as part of the Universities Consortium program of Compas) with Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences (RGUHS), Bangalore. Dr.D.K.Srinivas and Dr.K.P.Puthreya from RGUHS also attended this session.

Topical research by each partner

Following this, each one of the Compas partners made a presentation regarding the

TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR CIKS STAFF

In CIKS, one day is set aside for all the staff members to take off from the regular work once in every quarter for a Team day. On 12th August '04 the staff of CIKS both from the field and head office got together for a team day. Pulavar Kanagasubburatinam who has specialised in the traditional performing art of Sodasa Avadhanam (the art of attending to sixteen tasks simultaneously) was invited to conduct a training programme .He conducted a training programme for the staff on traditional Indian approaches to increasing concentration and mental capacity, to organize / focus events better. He also gave tips to maintain good health and ways to lead a happy and peaceful life.

chosen area in which they are carrying out topical research. Each partner spelt out briefly the identified area for research, the involvement of external experts and broad directions and conclusions of the study.

The last day started with the screening of a participatory video film produced by the local community of Kazakhstan. This was designed for training and capacity building of the local people. This was followed by a discussion on the usefulness of producing / screening the film for the farmers of South India / Sri Lanka. Later, there were

discussions on receiving regular inputs for the Compas website and CLARION, submission of proposals for the next phase etc. In the concluding session, the partners expressed that the meeting had indeed been rich and fruitful and they had benefited particularly from the sessions on research methodology. The roles played by the regional consultants, international consultant and also the special invitee during the discussion on institutional development were considered very valuable.



Presentation by Mr. Jayatissa, BRIT, Sri Lanka

SRI LANKAN PARTNERS MEETING

The Asian Coordinator, Mr. A. V. Balasubramanian of the Centre for Indian Knowledge Systems visited Sri Lanka between 16th and 20th August 2004 to participate in a series of events. On 17th August, there was a meeting organised by BRIT (Biodiversity Research Information and Training Centre) at Badulla on the theme of Traditional Vaastu culture. The meeting was attended by about thirty persons, which included experts in the area of Vaastu from the Badulla region, several academics and researchers who were interested in the subject. The participants discussed the progress that has been achieved in the area of documentation, identification of resource persons and collection of material relating to Vaastu. They also shared the progress with respect to documentation, analysis for which they have set up a collaborative programme with the University of Maritawa. Later in the same day, Mr. A.V. Balasubramanian had a meeting with a group of farmers who are being trained by FIOH (Future in our Hands) in the area of traditional agricultural practices. There was a discussion regarding the practice of various traditions relating to crop

protection including the use of Yanta, Manta and KEMS. A meeting of all the five partners in Sri Lanka was organized and hosted by Future In Our Hands at Badulla on 18th August. The partners made presentations regarding the progress of their projects with particular emphasis on the research and documentation work. A plan was finalised regarding the presentations and exchanges to be made in the forthcoming meeting of the Asian COMPAS partners at Bangalore in September.

On 19th August, a one-day meeting was organised at the University of Sabarugamawa at Buttalle. The Faculty of Applied Sciences at the University hosted the meeting. Various University faculty members, representatives of all Sri Lankan Compas partners as well as some farmers who are actively practicing traditional agriculture techniques attended the meeting. At the end of the meeting a work group was formed to draw up a plan of action regarding the manner in which the partners in collaboration with the University can take up documentation and research work.

REACHING THE UNREACHED-SEED YATRA

Green Foundation organized a seed yatra between 6th and 14th July 2004 in 56 villages of Kanakapura taluk, Karnataka and Denkanikotai taluk, Tamil Nadu. The purpose was to spread the message of conservation and multiplication of genetic varieties of traditional seeds and land races across the communities. A bullock cart was decorated with earheads, panicles of local paddy variety, fruits and gourds to reflect the culture of the communities. The messages on biodiversity conservation, values of local varieties, organic farming, traditional agricultural practices, soil and water conservation, revival and propagation of minor millets were displayed on the cart.

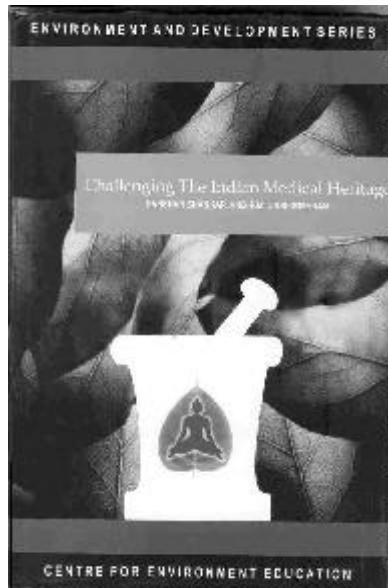
During the Yatra, seeds were exchanged between the communities and the seed banks. This provided the opportunity to the farmers to come across the existence of seed banks in the neighboring villages. The number and quantity of varieties of traditional seeds rose to a great extent in the seed banks. School children from primary and high schools were involved in creating awareness on the importance of biodiversity conservation. Street plays to highlight the harmful effects of chemical farming were staged in about 15 villages. Video shows were also arranged on these issues. The communities were motivated to take pledge for growing local varieties of seeds. More than 2000 community members particularly women participated in the seed yatra.

CONSERVATION FOR POSTERITY – PADDY CONSERVERS MEET

As a collaborative effort of Nagarika Seva Trust (NST) and Green Foundation, a two day field school on 'Paddy Conservers' Meet' was held on 20th & 21st September 2004 at Dakshin Kannada District. The purpose was to provide an opportunity to participants to witness all the varieties at one place. During the meeting Mr. Deva Rao, a well-known paddy conserver shared his experience. He also explained about the maintenance of nursery, preparation of land, manure, water management, seed selection etc. The participants also visited Namana community Seed Bank. An in-house session was held on the second day of the workshop at NST training center. The paddy conservers from all the districts shared their experience on the agricultural practices required for paddy. The meeting was concluded with the exchange of paddy varieties and an oath was taken by the farmers for growing local varieties.

NEW WEBSITE OF COMPAS
www.compasnet.org

NEW PUBLICATION FROM FRLHT



FRLHT has brought out a publication titled 'Challenging The Indian Medical Heritage'. The book is an attempt to introduce to the lay reader the medical traditions that exist in India. This attempt is along two lines. The first path is a general introduction to the codified system of medicine. It includes their recent history and their theoretical foundations. The second path addresses the realization that medical traditions are being ignored and that urgent action is called for to counteract this. The latter part of this book describes the work being done to document and revitalize the folk medical traditions.

It is a well-known fact that throughout India there exist numerous folk traditions of local health care in all walks of life. There are two schematically distinguished traditions of health in India. One refers to the written traditions of the great classical systems of Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and the other one is orally transmitted folk practices, which lack proper documentation. These traditional practices deal with a number of basic health techniques like treatment of common ailments and home remedies. In some communities there also exist special traditions like bone setting, visha chikitsa, treatment for certain chronic ailments, diagnostic methods such as naadi pareeksha. It is a fact that inspite of their great potential the paramparaas are today in a weakened state. It is however, our conviction that a revitalization of these traditions can be brought about by encouraging an interaction of these traditions with the organized Indian system of medicine.

For copies contact : Foundation Books, 4764/2A, 23, Ansari Road, Daryaganj, New Delhi - 110 002.

NEW PUBLICATION FROM KPP

Krishi Prayoga Pariwara has brought out a book 'Kadiru' in Kannada. It is a documentation of traditional paddy varieties of Sagara taluk, Shimoga district, Karnataka. The book has information on 60 traditional varieties of paddy that is still grown in Sagara taluka. Varietal name, duration, height of the variety, size of paddy, colour of paddy and rice, on which soil and topography the variety is grown, special characters like pest and disease resistance characteristics, type of cultivation, season, major purpose of cultivation, villages growing the variety, yield, rice recovery percentage per quintal of paddy and name & address of farmer growing the variety are listed in the book. The book also lists the reasons for the absence of the cultivation of traditional varieties on a large scale in Sagara taluk.

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