

# Sanchal Foundation

## Annual Report

### 2009-2010

## Coverage

The Sanchal Foundation has undertaken several projects during the year ending March 31, 2010 and the range and number of its activities has grown significantly with the growing needs and rising vulnerabilities amongst community groups in the year under review. Table 1 indicates the range of projects and their funding sources.

**Table 1: Projects**

No	Donor Name	Project Name	Project Period	Amount
<b>(A.) Grant Received by Sanchal for Hazards.</b>				
1.	Ford Foundation	Urban Governance, Alternatives and Sustainability	Jan 2009 - Apr 2011	34,01,449.00
2.	Action Aid India	Urban Resistance	Jun 2008 - May 2009	2,50,000.00
3.	Action Aid India	Alliance Building for Urban Resistance	Apr 2009 - Dec 2009	5,00,000.00
4.	Christian Aid	Climate Change in Urban Areas	Oct 2008 - Dec 2010	17,83,754.99
5.	Climate Works Foundation	Bus Rapid Transport System in Delhi	Apr 2009 - Feb 2011	11,28,264.00
6.	All India Artisans & Craft Workers Welfare Association	Baseline Study on Environmental and Occupational Health Impact of cottage industries (Rajasthan)	Jun 2009 - Jul 2009	3,84,600.00
7.	All India Artisans & Craft Workers Welfare Association	Baseline Study on Environmental and Occupational Health Impact of cottage industries (Orissa, Rajasthan)	Sep 2009 - Nov 2009	4,00,000.00
8.	All India Artisans & Craft Workers Welfare Association	Baseline Study on Environmental and Occupational Health Impact of cottage industries (Pochampally)	Feb 2010 - Mar 2010	1,46,000.00
9.	Water Aid	Evaluation of Quality of Drinking Water Sources in Delhi	Feb 2009 - May 2009	7,50,000.00
<b>(B.) Grant Received by Sanchal for Support of Other Community Groups</b>				
10.	Aid Austin	Bhalaswa Lok Shakti Manch	Sept. 2008 - Aug.2009	2,50,000.00
11.	Indo-Global Social Service Society	Workshop on Domestic Violence on Women	Dec 2009	25,000.00
12.	Indo-Global Social Service Society	Workshop on Rights of the Homeless	Dec 2009	50,000.00
<b>(C.) Grant Received by Sanchal for South Asia Forum for Human Rights</b>				
13	South Asia Forum for Human Rights	Safe Home and Resource Centre for Srilankan Journalists in Exile	Dec 2009 - Dec 2010	24,95,391.00
	Approximate overlapping total through the Year 2009-2010			<b>1,15,64,458.99</b>

The above projects may broadly be categorized under the **five** broad themes of Urban Governance, Urban Resistance, Climate Change, Health and Safety, and Community Support.

## Urban Governance

A two-year grant of \$170,000 for a project on “Urban Governance, Alternatives, and Sustainability”, from January 2009 to January 2011, was approved by the Ford Foundation for which the first instalment of about Rs 34 lakh was released in February 2009. The Objectives of this project were:

1. ***To assist communities to negotiate with service providers, government agencies, and policy makers for provision of better Services***
2. ***To provide inputs on Governance, with respect to rights, services, and democratic institutions, to community groups and organisations***
3. ***To promote community-based research that would set out Alternatives and build alliances for urban development and management***
4. ***To investigate the theme of Sustainability and build a campaign around the issue of availability and use of resources by different strata***

Through this project, support activities were to have been extended to 20 towns and cities around a critique of the Jawaharal Nehru Urban Renewal Mission in order to explore the possibilities of an alternative pro-people perspective of urban growth that is participatory and sustainable. Much of the process was based on the lessons learnt from the various actions in the city of Delhi over the last few years, and how participatory research, documentation, dissemination, policy formulation, and advocacy can challenge the dominant paradigm of development. The anticipated results at the end of two years were:

- People being able to access services that will protect shelter and livelihoods
- Community groups that can intervene in governance in their local areas
- Alliances that can assert their right to a better, safer, more secure city
- Campaigns that can demonstrate the improved sustainability of such a city

The core activities of the project were pursued through the Hazards Centre set up by the Foundation. Table 2 below gives an overall idea of the performance through the year, wherein the achievements by the 5 Researchers of the Centre are separated from those of the 5 community Fellows who were supported by the Centre.

**Table 2: Achievements**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Targets</b>	<b>Centre</b>	<b>Fellows</b>	<b>Total</b>
Research Studies	9	34	5	39
Volunteers	12	56		56
Orientations	2	5		5
Institutions	12	10		<b>10</b>
Modules	2	1		<b>1</b>
Reports	9	27	37	64
Booklets	3	2		<b>2</b>
Pamphlets	11	9	8	17
Books	2	2		2
Newsletters	12	1	1	<b>1</b>
Posters	7	13	3	16
Audio-visuals	1	2		2
Seminars	5	18	43	61
Trainings	15	16	36	52
Workshops	18	18	116	134
Consultations	5	64	17	81

Advocacy	25	7	64	71
Public meetings	10	21	290	311
Public hearings	12	3	20	23
Conference	2	1	10	11
Exposures	4	2		2
RTI applications	50	768	55	823
Internal training	5	12	54	66
Convention	1		21	21
Exhibition	1	7	7	14
Cultural	7	1	37	38
Festival	1	0		0
Screenings	30	17		17
Press release	9	30		30
Press conference	3	38		38
Media consultation	2	10		10
Cities	20	26		26
Support	3	8		8
Managers	3			2
Researchers	7			5
Administrators	2			2
Trainees	3	8		8

It may be seen from the above table that targets have been satisfactorily achieved in most respects, and the contribution of the community-based Fellows has been most notable – particularly in the areas of reporting, seminars, trainings, workshops, advocacy meetings, public meetings and hearings, conferences and conventions, internal trainings, and cultural events. Hence, it can be assessed that the investment made in community organisations in earlier years is now bearing fruit, and the qualitative aspects of community mobilisation, capacity, innovation, and self-reliance have begun to emerge on stable foundations.

However, there have been some shortfalls (in red) in the following activities: institutional interactions, training modules, booklets, pamphlets, newsletters, exposures, festivals, and screenings. This has partly been because the Centre has ceased to be the secretariat for the Delhi-based groups and is now essaying a new role as the pivot for a national alliance; and partly because there has been a serious limitation in recruiting and keeping competent and committed researchers. Hence, the Board will have to seriously address this issue in the coming year and decide whether it is the lack of attractive salaries or the career paths that is responsible for the absence of good researchers, or there are other factors that need to be considered.

There has been a significant strengthening of community participation and self-reliance this year and it has been powerfully facilitated through the support extended to the community Fellows. Although there are problems with the articulation and research of the Fellows, this could be a focus for more intensive action in the coming year. The work on the use of Right to Information has correspondingly expanded, but a weak area remains the use of the 74<sup>th</sup> Amendment for governance and this will definitely be addressed in the next few months, as also promoting the campaign for an Urban Right to Work legislation. The community extension work and the linkage with groups in over two dozen cities have been strong and creative, but limitations exist in publication activities and reaching out to larger civil society organisations and policy makers. The critical organisational area is the identification and recruitment of competent and committed researchers.

## **Urban Resistance**

The process of community resistance to the exclusion created by urban renewal has been continuous. The Foundation has been providing professional assistance to the affected groups and communities not only in Delhi but in Indore and Patna also. Support for this Project came from Action Aid India during the previous years of which some part was available from June 2008 till May 2009. To continue the study the Foundation submitted another proposal before Action Aid India titled “Alliance Building and Urban Resistance” and this was eventually approved for a period of nine months from April to December 2009 with a budget of about Rs 5 lakh, to **assess and facilitate the forms of urban resistance within a national context** in seven cities.

The first study of Urban Resistance in Delhi revealed many parallels with Indore and Patna, such as the trends in demolitions of homes and eviction from work, the exclusionary principles and the move towards slum clearance. Self-organisational processes were revealed and the protests were led by workers and their families, facilitated by non-government and non-party groups, rather than by political parties and large labour unions. The role of data collection and creation of knowledge in a participatory manner was also incipient in all three cities as a marker of new modes of empowerment that are emerging.

At the same time, groups and organisations in all three cities seemed to be wrestling with issues of participatory democracy, public debate, and alternative visions of the city – although these issues were yet to find a common platform for engagement. These were issues requiring further exploration in practice and theory. The study suggested that further research could focus on the specific questions of how ideology and political structures, informed mass mobilisation, internal rifts and animosities, participation and transparency, and the imaginations of the vulnerable groups contributed to building of larger alliances of those resisting the onslaught or processes of exclusion.

In order to address these questions, the second study was taken up in April 2009 in the above three cities and four more in Jaipur, Lucknow, Mumbai, and Hyderabad with the following Objectives:

- ***To facilitate the process of understanding the changing patterns of alliance building***
- ***To facilitate participatory research by community workers to build broader alliances***
- ***To coordinate with groups in other cities for sharing experiences on resistance***
- ***To support campaigns across issues and sectors to strengthen and deepen democracy***

Based on the case studies from the seven cities it was possible to attempt a tentative answer to the five research questions that powered this research:

*What is the role of ideology and political structures in promoting a more humane pro-poor view in the judiciary, legislature, media, and intelligentsia and how may it be restored?*

Ideological structures of exclusion of the poor appear to be prevalent in all the cities, especially in the context of the National Urban Renewal Mission’s attempt to build “world class” cities, and these have been internalised by all the

governments. The humane pro-poor view seems to be markedly absent in all the cases, and there is little experience to show how it may be restored.

*When does informed and knowledgeable mass mobilisation make its impact felt in governance and how is it counter-posed in the long-term against the threat or act of violence?*

There are many cases of informed mass mobilisation in all the cities. There is also the evidence of enlarging upon the issues which animate these movements. Thus groups which have begun with children's issues are forced to respond to evictions; shelter concerns are supplemented by the need for ration cards; women's empowerment is coupled to protecting the livelihoods of vendors; and the issue of violence is often addressed directly or indirectly by the communities.

*Can the process of alliance building overcome its internal animosities or will it require the emergence of a new political force to develop a disciplined cadre-based movement?*

Alliances have come up in virtually all the cities – as collective responses to the policies of exclusion practiced by the state and the vacuum in the absence of political forces to lead the struggle. In some cases, in fact, these alliances have been formed by the affected communities themselves after witnessing the disarray in the voluntary groups too. But it is still unclear whether these alliances will be able to replace the concept of cadre-based movements.

*Can more participatory and transparent structures lead to a society-wide debate on democracy and a new understanding and vision for the city, or is a centralised institution required for this?*

The growth of the debate on democracy can be glimpsed in many of the cases presented in the study. Thus social justice issues have emerged as have civil society interventions on behalf of the vulnerable; some alliances have moved towards electoral campaigns or developing a political discourse; there has been a demand for space for articulating resistance and for transforming information into a new articulation – all pointing to the real possibility of a decentralised form of participatory democracy.

*Will this participation benefit more from the imaginations of the vulnerable, the children, the women, the challenged, the homeless, the oppressed, and the exploited, or will it depend upon a new breed of inspired intellectuals?*

There seems to be little doubt that the participation of women, homeless, radical students, campaigners, vendors, hawkers, and labourers – are all pointers to the emergence of a new form of informed and participatory articulation of what people want from the city, both in terms of shelter and livelihoods. In fact, the discourse often seems to expand to an understanding of long-term social and environmental consequences on the landscape of the city.

## **Climate Change**

As part of the debate on urban governance and planning, a two year proposal on "Climate Change and Urban Settlements" was approved by Christian Aid for the period October 2008 to September 2010 with a total budget of about Rs 42 lakh, of which the first instalment of a little under Rs 18 lakh was transferred in the year. The Objectives of the project were to:

- 1. Disseminate information to launch a campaign on climate change and its impact on urban societies in several towns and cities***

2. **Encourage the debate on the social imbalance in carbon emissions and, therefore, the link between urban development and sustainability**
3. **Collectively analyse the resource use of different sections to explore the adaptation required to minimise climate change and its impacts**

It was expected that the activities under this project would be carried out in congruence with those under urban governance and resistance so that issue of sustainable use of resources, and thereby adaptation to climate change, becomes a powerful assertion for the urban workers to assert their right to a different kind of city. 16 cities in four geographical Zones were selected for this project on the basis of availability of active partners and accessible information on projects of urban renewal. But dissemination of material could be taken up in another 15 towns and cities where the Hazards Centre has potential contacts, if the opportunity arose and funds permitted at the end of the first year in the two years of the project.

Each specific urban activity has an impact on climate change. In each city, information on the general causes, impacts, and adaptation measures for climate change was collected and publicly presented to promote the debate on sustainable development. It was expected that there would be subsequent requests from organisations in each urban centre – mainly for information on urban renewal, and partially on climate change – and researchers from the Hazards Centre would be able to identify a nodal organisation in each of the four zones who, with some preliminary assistance and capacity building, would be able to conduct a public campaign on climate change within their zones. Recruitment of student volunteers was also emphasised, to enhance the involvement of the middle class population and promoting informed discussion within them. Table 3 gives some idea of the achievements of this Project.

**Table 3: Activities**

Climate Change and Urban Settlements																			
Oct 08 to Sep 10	Research			Publications-Documentation						Capacity Building							Media Communication		
	Research	Volunteer	Institution	Report	Booklet	Pamphlet	Book	Poster	Audiovisual	Seminar	Supplementary Workshop	Community workshop	Consultation	Advocacy	Public meeting	Conference	Internal	Screening	Press conference
<b>Targets</b>	16			4	9	16	2	12	2	4	18	16	16	16	16	2			2
<b>Achievements</b>	4	9	4	5		2		13	1	4	16		22	4	11	2	2	19	3

A background note has been prepared detailing the causes and impacts of climate change on urban areas, the prevailing notions of global warming, and challenges to the argument along with a few reports by student interns on the nature of resource consumption and contribution to global warming. Simple textual and visual materials like posters, pamphlets, PowerPoint presentations have been prepared for conducting workshops in different cities in order to launch a campaign on climate change.

Preliminary consultations were held in 16 different cities in India where a discussion on transformation of the city, its sustainability, resource utilisation by different social strata, and the possible impact on climate change was initiated. In between, a National Conference on Citizens' Review of the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission was held where the 3<sup>rd</sup> day was dedicated to urban development, climate change, and alternative planning through a presentation of an audio visual on alternative planning of the city through sustainable means of resource consumption. The conference ended on the note that subsequent workshops will be planned by the interested participants with local organisation of their cities.

Workshops have been conducted in 16 cities where the outcomes are given in the following pointers:

- The participants in the workshop look at the concept on which the workshops are based as very innovative.
- Almost all the sectors/issues in the workshops centre around the issue of livelihood, which is the most pressing concern in many of the cities.
- The workshops provide an alternative lens for viewing planning and development processes in the city.
- In the course of the workshops people realize the issues that are the most pressing and the pertinent themes on which research should be undertaken.
- Different cities have different histories and different manner in which they have been planned; therefore the problems in these cities are also different.
- The underlying factor which links all these vital issues – land, water, electricity, transport and waste management – is the skewed distribution of resources.
- A rough estimate is that the work of the Centre has reached out to roughly 900,000 people in the slums of these 16 cities.
- The debate on climate change is still new in the urban context and it is going to take time to understand the interconnection between resource use and warming.
- The arguments developed for sustainable use of resources are very strong but much depends upon the capacity of organisations to assert these arguments.

The Project continues into 2010 and will be completed by the year end.

The Hazards Centre has also been awarded a project on the Bus Rapid Transport corridor of Delhi from April 2009 to February 2011 by the Climate Works Foundation with the following Objective:

- 1. To develop a campaign on the Delhi BRT corridor that will reflect the rights of commuters with respect to the road space used and carbon emissions contributed by different sections of commuters.**

The following activities for this project are under way during the year under review:

- Preparation of materials like posters, stickers, caps and head bands to promote low-emitting modes of public transportation
- Distribution of these prepared materials on the BRT corridor
- Brief questionnaire survey of the commuters on BRT corridor along a modal distribution on a six monthly basis. This survey will be conducted through volunteers
- Seminars with experts will be conducted on the basis of the survey after every six months and policy documents and reports will be prepared
- Advocacy meetings with policy makers on the basis of the policy documents
- Conference and press consultation to bring the facts into the public domain
- Final publication of the findings and conclusions

## **Health and Safety**

The Foundation is also trying to expand the range of its support services in the field of environmental health and safety. Preliminary work has begun on assisting the TRIPP team at Indian Institute of Technology in doing safety audits on national highways. Researchers of the Hazards Centre have been documenting the health hazards for labour at various construction sites along the Lucknow-Muzaffarpur stretch of NH24 and the safety practices being followed by the construction companies. A basic booklet on the legal requirements for labour safety is also under preparation, as is a manual for best practices that should be adopted by the contractors and the principal employer.

Occupation health and safety issues have received a big boost in the year under review as the Hazards Centre obtained an assignment from the All India Artisans & Craft Workers Welfare Association (AIACA) in researching the safety of artisans in traditional arts and crafts in five different parts of India between June 2009 and March 2010 for a total sum of about Rs 9.3 lakhs, with the following Objectives:

- 1. To identify the hazards in home-based art and craft industries located in six areas of India where AIACA has a significant presence**
- 2. To conduct a baseline survey of occupational health hazards and environmental impacts of these six clusters of industries**
- 3. To prepare a draft manual on hazards in these clusters, their potential impacts, and methods for their mitigation at source**

The home-based crafts included hand block-printing of textiles, blue pottery, and leather in Rajasthan, handloom-*ikkat* in Andhra, bell metal casting-*dhokra* in Orissa, and carpets in Panipat (the last eventually could not be done). At each location, the process was documented and the potential pollutants and hazards identified. About 100 workers in each cluster were measured for their general physique, muscle tone, lung conditions, and eyesight, using simple techniques that can be available locally. In addition, a simple questionnaire was used to find out what health problems the workers themselves faced and how they were related to the work. Wherever possible, the study team also observed the environmental effects and any attempts to control them.

The important findings that have emerged out of the studies are:

- General body health, as measured by the Body Mass Index, seems to improve for the workers in all crafts – except partially for leather work – as they work for more years. This indicates that regular work (as opposed to contractual work) is more beneficial for workers in the long run.
- The measure of Pulmonary Function demonstrates that all the workers in all the crafts are exposed to significantly high levels of air pollution as only one-tenth seem to have normal lungs, over half suffer from shortness of breath, and the incidence of chronic distress increases with the number of years worked – except for those engaged in the production of blue pottery.
- In the textile printing, leather, and blue pottery units in Rajasthan, it was observed that the muscle tone of those workers engaged in repetitive laborious work, as measured with the Hand Grip Meter, declined with increasing number of working years. [This was not measured for Orissa artisans.]
- The eyesight of most workers was deteriorating over time at all locations, as shown by the use of the Snellen Chart, and this is to be expected as the artisans age, but a comparison within the workers showed that it was declining rapidly particularly for those engaged in certain tasks requiring great and constant attention to detail.
- Interviews with workers yielded a range of complaints about body aches, sores cuts burns and calluses, lung and eye problems, deafness, fatigue and



sleeplessness, and stomach problems – most of which seem to be related to working conditions, especially since they appear to increase as their work history increases.

- However, some of the problems are made worse by habits such as smoking, chewing tobacco, drinking alcohol, and taking intoxicating materials (by one-fourth to half the workers) – which, interestingly enough, are all used to reportedly decrease the fatigue and pain of hard work and provide some relief.
- Environmental impacts are visible only in the case of textile printing in Bagru and leather tanning in Beawar; and there is an initial attempt in the former case to begin addressing the issue.

Because of various organisational delays, the study has had to be extended beyond the current year in order to complete the tasks that were agreed upon with AIACA. The manual has to be completed, and AIACA has commissioned a further study to prepare safety kits, organise training workshops, and set up a pilot effluent treatment plant for the block printing units in Rajasthan. This represents a new innovative area for the Foundation's work.

Based on community requests for EIA analysis, research continues on critiquing the development of hydro-electric potential in the Himalayan states. In addition, the Hazards Centre has also responded to requests for analysis of the impacts of Bt Brinjal, remediation measures in Bhopal, and thermal power generation in the Singrauli region. Assistance has been provided for monitoring health impacts, environmental damages, tracking these on to maps, and preparing reports. A proposal is also being prepared to examine and document the long-term effects of the Bhopal gas leak.

To supplement this activity the Foundation also received a grant of about Rs 7.5 lakh from Water Aid in February 2009 for a period of 4 months to "Evaluate Drinking Water Quality" of different water sources in Delhi and establish the socially differentiated use of this very valuable resource. This research was based on a number of requests from community groups across the city. The Objectives of this research were:

- 1. To encourage community based monitoring of water quality and aquatic ecosystems**
- 2. To enhance the community skills for sustainable use of water resources through people's participation**
- 3. To contribute to informed policy-making taking into consideration the linkage between development, environment, and occupational health**

The research findings were as follows:

- Of 27 samples of surface and ground water sources only 1 from a canal was free of biological and chemical contaminants.
- Indirect measurements of the 7 water treatment plants showed that none of the inlet water samples and only two of the outlet samples were potable.
- Of the 26 samples of treated water supply, 17 were biologically contaminated, 19 were chemically polluted, and only 2 samples were fit for drinking.
- The most common pollutant was faecal coliform, followed by fluoride, arsenic, organo-chloro and organo-phosphorous pesticides, lead, and cadmium.

The above findings raised two crucial questions about the veracity of the data prepared by official agencies to project the quality of drinking water sources; and the efficacy of the Delhi Jal Board water treatment plants. The report was extensively covered in the media and the Central Information Commission ordered the Jal Board to place their monitored data on the website, while the National Human Rights Commission issued a show cause notice on the possible violation of human rights.

## **Community Support**

The Foundation is increasingly being able to support independent initiatives that are emerging out of the work of the Hazards Centre. Thus, five Fellows from community organisations in different parts of Delhi were supported in the year under review. As reported earlier, the Fellows did sterling work in addressing community issues and both collecting as well as disseminating information in over two dozen settlements in Delhi. Several instances of informed community mobilisation resulted as a consequence of this initiative and these are being documented for publication. The Fellows are now being invited to meetings and seminars to present their experiences so that other groups may benefit from the initiative. The Foundation is also trying to find financial support for some of them and their organisations.

For instance, one of the Fellows was a member of the Bhalaswa Lok Shakti Manch, a group of a dozen women from a resettlement colony in north Delhi, and they have been supported with a grant of about Rs 2.5 lakh from Association of Indians for Development, Austin for the period September 2008 to August 2009. The Manch has negotiated with the private company New Delhi Power Limited to provide meters at Rs 600 instead of Rs 3600, thereby benefiting 550 families or 3000 people. It has confronted the rampant corruption and fraud in the Public Distribution System through extensive use of the Right to Information and dialogues with the officers. It is continuing its participatory attempts to obtain water, sanitation, roads, drains, pavements, and schools. The Foundation has applied for a follow-up grant to AID Seattle and Troy for supporting this initiative and this is likely to be approved in the next financial year.

The Foundation has similarly tried to support other groups associated with the Fellows that have emerged in Delhi over the last few years to take up their community concerns. These groups are variously arranging coaching classes for students, meeting with the elected representatives to address the issues of service provision, organising protests against harassment, promoting cultural activities amongst the youth, intervening with the police to protect the vulnerable, providing assistance during medical emergencies, running night shelters, advocating for regularisation of unauthorised colonies, and raising issues of human right violations while providing skill development. The experience is that such individuals are rooted in their communities and can be equipped to undertake the work of research, documentation and publication, dissemination, and policy formulation that constitute the essence of what the Foundation is trying to encourage through the Hazards Centre.

Since these are all very small groups with very little financial support the Foundation has also assisted them in preparing proposals to seek funding from different agencies. In addition, the groups are seeking to upscale their skills to be able to mobilise community groups to obtain their entitlements in services and shelter as well as improve their documentation and analysis. The Foundation, through the Hazards Centre, provides the training and professional inputs as and when required to enhance their skills and capacity. In this manner the Foundation has obtained financial support for these activities through small grants from agencies such as Indo-Global Social Service Society. It is proposed to further enlarge the scope of this assistance in the coming years with further interactions with funding agencies. In this manner, it is hoped that the work of the Foundation will get increasingly decentralised with the Hazards Centre providing core support.

The Foundation has also been able to support research efforts by other groups and institutions. In March 2009 Hazards Centre researchers assisted the Peoples Action for People in Need in Sirmour District of Himachal Pradesh to conduct a Baseline Study in

their project villages, and subsequently analysed the data to prepare the final report which suggested the following areas for intervention:

- Land title is an issue of great concern
- An activity for land rights may be an optimum starting point
- There is potential for developing the dairy industry
- A system for harvesting the rain water would be important
- Health issues are also of particular significance
- There is need for awareness and mobilisation for entitlements with respect to livelihoods, sanitation, and schemes for the vulnerable and depressed sections
- This will also address the issue of bias reported in government offices

The Foundation also received a grant of about Rs 25 lakhs late in 2009 from the South Asia Forum for Human Rights to provide a safe home and resource centre for Srilankan journalists who have been forced into exile because of the unfortunate developments in our neighbouring country and the crisis of human rights there.

## **Concluding Remarks**

The Foundation's work has substantially increased as has the capacity of its young team at the Hazards Centre. This, however, has demanded that the team be better equipped to deal with the future. One of the measures taken by the Foundation in the year under review was to increase the salary scales substantially to be able to attract and retain committed and competent researchers and administrators, although this is till not adequate to keep up with the galloping inflation that the economy is experiencing in the year under review. The other has been to expose more of them to new training opportunities so that they may enhance their skills. And the third has been to contact and involve more and more professionals and students from multiple disciplines so that the work may be better guided and developed. It will be the task of the Board of Trustees to critically examine the work in the past year and provide guidelines for the future while appreciating the work of the young researchers who have taken the Foundation so far.

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