

# Paul Hamlyn Foundation

Review of Panchayat Knowledge Centre,  
Sushasini. December 2006 – December 2008.



## **Acknowledgements**

We would like to thank Ms Sushma Iyengar and Ms Lata Sachde for giving us this opportunity to review the work of the Panchayat Knowledge Centre, Sushasini. This review was possible only due to the whole hearted support of the Sushasini team who provided their time, energy and insights to analyze the programme. The review provided us an opportunity to interact with women elected representatives and members of the KMVS Mahila Sangathans. The energy of Mahila Manch members, the women sarpanchs and ward members in the Panchayats to struggle for justice and due recognition makes us optimistic that change is possible. Interacting with significant men in the system was a learning experience demonstrating change in gender attitudes.

The programme review was carried out jointly by Ms. Nandini Narula and Rukmini Rao. The financial review was carried out by Ms. Nandini Narula.

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## Index

<i>Executive Summary</i>	4
1. Background	7
1.1 KMVS	7
1.2 Sushasini – Panchayat Knowledge Centre	8
1.3 Terms of Reference (TOR) for Current Review	9
2. Methodology	10
3. Programme Review – Strengthening Elected Women Leaders	11
Outreach	11
3.1 Facilitate formation of Mahila Manch of all elected women leaders at Taluk and District Level	12
3.2 Promote Village Development	16
3.3 Create a Learning Environment	21
3.4 Panchayat Information Centers	23
3.5 Advocacy Issues taken up	26
3.6 Sensitizing Voluntary Organizations in Kutch to promote local self governance and the critical role of Panchayats	29
3.7 Sushasini and its relationship with Sangathans	32
3.8 How others see elected women representatives	34
4. Overview of the Results	35
4.1 Relevance	35
4.2 Efficiency and Efficacy	36
4.3 KMVS mandate to work with elected women representatives	37
4.4 The Semi-Autonomous Form of Sushasini	38
4.5 Suitability of Paul Hamlyn Foundation as a donor to the Programme	38
5. Comments on Future Plans and Recommendations	38
Part II	43
Financial Report	43
Annexure	
<i>Annexure I: Terms of Reference</i>	47
<i>Annexure II: List of People Met</i>	50
<i>Annexure III: Itenary</i>	56
<i>Annexure IV: List of Documents Referred</i>	58
<i>Annexure V: Lecture Series</i>	59
<i>Glossary</i>	61

## **Executive Summary**

### **Background**

Sushasini the Panchayat Knowledge Centre within KMVS was set up to build the capacities of elected women representatives in Kutch. Originating as an action plan to promote women in governance structures after the UN Conference on women, held in Beijing in 1995, KMVS has anchored the current programme within the framework of supporting sangathans and social justice agenda.

The programme to promote women centered good governance is supported by The Paul Hamlyn Foundation with a grant of Rs. 70,72,032 for the period January 2007 to December 2009. Ms. Nandini Narula and Dr. V Rukmini Rao were contracted to review the programme with a view to plan for the next phase.

### **Terms of Reference**

The objectives of the Review are:

- To assess the approaches of Sushasini and its relevance to accomplish the objectives
- Suggest changes in direction if necessary
- Assess current positioning of Sushasini to empower women in Panchayats to strengthen local governance
- Make recommendations for future course of action

The review was carried out in May – June 2009, with preparatory work carried out in April and field work carried out from 11<sup>th</sup> May to 16<sup>th</sup> May 2009.

### **Methodology**

A participatory approach was used during the review. Women Sarpanchs, elected women representatives, male political leaders and KMVS supported groups, NGOs and Sangathans were met. Individual interviews, focus group discussions and small group discussions in a workshop mode were utilized to gather data and create a meaningful dialogue. More than 137 people were met during the review.

## **Main Findings**

The programme has developed a wide outreach, with Sushasini working directly in a total of 163 villages in six blocks of Anjar, Mandvi, Nakhatrana, Bhuj, Abdasa and Mundra. In collaboration with nine partners it has reached out to 596 villages. In addition it is networking with state and national level NGOs to take up issues to further deepen democratic functioning by giving marginalized women a voice.

Sushasini has created a platform at block level for women representatives in six blocks. This has enabled women to meet regularly, share ideas, success stories and learn from each other. The block level platform have made women representatives visible in the political arena and has given them an improved status vis-à-vis the bureaucracy. Regular manch meetings have created a learning environment with inputs provided on a variety of developmental issues. District level manch is in the process of being formed.

Women Manch members have become more sensitive to the poorest sections and are willing to take on the challenge of creating a public space for themselves. By forming Panchayat Information Centers the women representatives have supported more than 2000 individuals to access their rights. The focus has rightly shifted from providing information passively, to help individuals actively. Information and support is provided for a variety of issues including accessing Ration Cards, disability care and protection from domestic violence. The Panchayat information centre has led to the strengthening of networks of women elected members. The lecture series organized by Sushasini widely attended by local common unity has created an impact among the public, with women gaining recognition in public life.

In addition to collective strength being demonstrated, individual women sarpanch have reached out to women to help them solve their problems. Interventions to stop domestic violence and bring rapists to justice are some of the important interventions.

Sushasini's work with NGO partners has been of mutual benefit. Outreach has increased, learning is systematized and the possibility for village level planning established through SETUS efforts at micro-planning. The GWLO has worked together with Sushasini to

promote equal land rights for women. However much remains to be done to promote livelihood rights.

A number of advocacy issues were taken up related to creating a public space for women. As a result the women representatives will be provided a separate building to run the PIC in Mundra and this is likely to be emulated in other districts. A demand to organize training of women representatives in their own district rather than Gandhi Nagar has been made. This is being processed. More importantly several people oriented advocacy initiatives have borne fruit. With Sushasini support, five villages have gained recognition as revenue villages in Lakhpat where people were termed encroachers. Equal land rights for women are being advocated throughout the region.

### **Recommendations**

The programme design was suitable for the current level of development of elected women members. The interventions have helped them to organize at block level, and support vulnerable and below poverty line families to access their rights. Networking with like minded NGOs has led to deepening the understanding of how to work in the future to increase participation of women and develop village based micro plans. In the next phase there is a clear need to push forward on issues related to livelihoods utilizing NREGA, advocate for institutionalize reforms within the Panchayat system and deepen modes of good governance through advocacy.

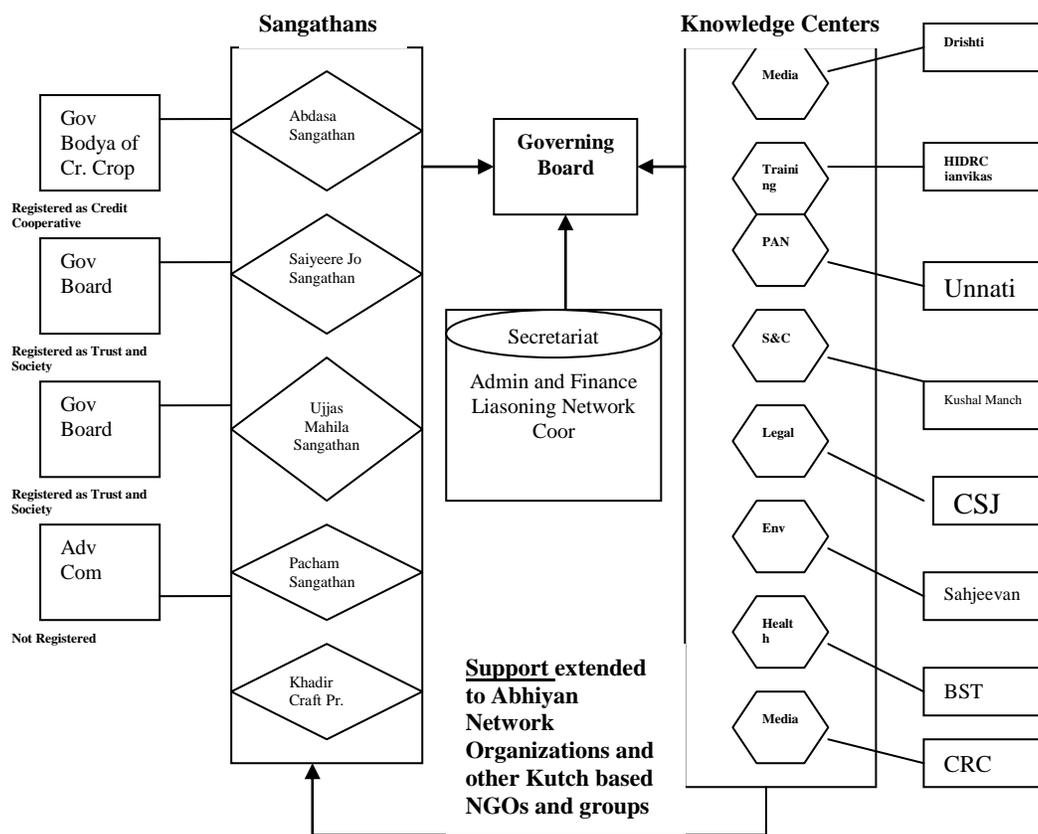
## **1. Background**

### **1.1 KMVS**

The Kutch Mahila Vikas Sanghatan (KMVS) set up in 1989 is a dynamic and evolving organization. The original founders were aware of the need to combine economic development with gender justice, particularly to address violence against women which is widely prevalent in the area. “Starting with the organization of craft women it has evolved into an organization looking at “handicrafts, credit and savings, health, education, Natural Resource Management and capacity building of Mahila Sarpanches.”

With Support from Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, KMVS has decentralized its activities, helping mahila mandals at the village levels to grow into Taluk (Block) level Sangathans – The federations of the Mahila Mandals are now registered as independent bodies that have established their own specific identity and capacity to work on issues of gender transformation. Each Sanghatan has a member on the KMVS governing Board along with three state officials and two representatives from Janvikas. The Sangathans comprise multi-ethnic and religious communities. Most of the members are vulnerable to socio-economic and environmental shocks, such as loosing grazing lands to industry, drought etc. The four Sangathans are based in Abdasa, Nakhatrana, Mundra and Pacham Blocks.

Knowledge centers have been set up by KMVS to provide specific skills and services to the Sangathans. These centres are the Knowledge centre for Media, Panchayat center Shushasini to provide support to women in Panchayats, Qasab the handicraft support centre, and Hriday providing capacity building support to human resources towards reducing gender discrimination and strengthening organizations working for development. The centers in turn are networked at the state and national level. Other centers promote savings and credit support; provide legal aid and health and environment education. The organogram of KMVS below highlights its structure.



## 1.2 Sushasini – Panchayat Knowledge Centre

The origin of Sushasini can be traced to the UN conference on women held at Beijing in 1995. Activists from Gujarat who participated in the conference set up the Working Group on Women in 1997, to take forward the agenda of women's rights in Gujarat. KMVS took on the responsibility to build the capacities of elected panchayat women representatives in Kutch district. The Panchayat cell was set up within KMVS to implement this task. Through the process of decentralization and restructuring of KMVS, the Panchayat cell Sushasini, has emerged as an important centre to continue the work. Initially it was planned to register the center as an autonomous, independent organization but subsequently it was decided to keep it within the overall administrative structure of KMVS while it continues to develop programmes autonomously. This helped the centre to be anchored within the framework of supporting Sangathans and social justice agenda, within which women elected representatives are to be empowered.

The Panchayat Knowledge Center, Sushasini is uniquely positioned within KMVS since it does not confine itself to supporting only the Sangathans. It works across the Kutch district even where KMVS does not have an institutional presence. As noted in the current proposal and plan of action. “This has opened up a new vista for KMVS interventions – that of strengthening the Mahila Mandals to take part in activating and strengthening the Gram Sabhas as its subsets thus affecting the political life of the community directly”.

### **1.3 Terms of Reference (TOR) for Current Review**

The Paul Hamlyn Foundation has been supporting Shushasini to implement the programme to politically empower the rural women through the Panchayat Raj Institutions and create an environment for greater transparency in village development process. The Paul Hamlyn Foundation has provided a grant of Rs. 79,72,032 for the period January 2007 to December 2009. This review is planned to take stock of the programme and help plan for the next phase. The review team comprised Dr. Rukmini Rao and Ms Nandini Narula. Ms Narula provided continuity to the assessment since she was involved in the previous review, carried out in 2006.

Following objectives were set up by the centre for programme implementation:

- To facilitate the formation of a Mahila Manch of all the elected women representatives in the Panchayats, both at the Taluka level and at the District Level.
- To sensitize Voluntary Organisations (VOs) working in Kutch on the issue of local self governance and the critical role of Panchayats.
- To develop training material with regard to Panchayati Raj Institutions, laws, etc. in Gujarati and Kutchi
- To document the experiences of Panchayats who are working in the direction of being model Panchayats in Kutch.

The objectives of the review are:

- To assess the approaches of Sushasini and its relevance to accomplish the objectives
- Suggest changes in direction if necessary

- Assess current positioning of Sushasini to empower women in Panchayats to strengthen local governance
- Make recommendations for future course of action

(For detailed TOR see Annexure I)

The current review was carried out in May and June 2009. Preparatory work was carried out in April and fieldwork carried out from 11<sup>th</sup> May – 16<sup>th</sup> May 2009. The guidelines on evaluations April 2007 provided by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, was used to guide the review process. Mr. Ajit Choudhuri, Programme Officer of the Foundation also shared his concerns with the evaluation team which are addressed here.

## **2. Methodology**

The review team adopted a participatory approach during the process. As development practitioners we are in accordance with the view that community members must play an active role in shaping their own development. Therefore it was our endeavor to understand ongoing processes by meeting a cross section of women (mostly elected PRI members and other leaders) and men who are benefiting / interacting with the programme. We maintained an open dialogue with Shushasini team during the review process. We gathered ideas from other NGO partners who are strengthened by the programme.

We interviewed women sarpanchs, male political leaders and officials, held focus group discussions with elected Panchayat women leaders at the Manch level, facilitated group reflection at Panchayat level to understand and assess the outcomes of the programme. We also gathered views from women leaders as to their future needs. We met officials whenever they were available. The Sushasini team also carried out a self assessment of skills in the context of projected needs for the next phase of the programme. We met more than 137 people associated with the programme. For details see Annexure II. Itinerary can be seen at Annexure III. Ms. Nandini Narula in addition spent time reviewing the financial status of the organization, administration and governance. Secondary material was reviewed. List can be seen at Annexure IV

### 3. Programme Review – Strengthening Elected Women Leaders

#### Outreach

KMVS has an outreach to 165 villages across the four blocks of Pachcham Bhuj, Nakhatrana, Abdasa and Mundra. They work with 12,000 women organized into 4 Sangathans. Sushashini works with two of the KMVS Sangathans, Ujas Mahila Sangathan and Shiyare Jo Sangathan. Through the current programme it has expanded its coverage in two ways. It has started working directly with elected women representatives in six blocks. These are Anjar, Mandavi, Nakhatrana, Bhuj, Abdasa, and Mundra in a total of 163 villages. Secondly, the sensitization programme of NGOs has resulted in their increased interventions and work in collaboration with Panchayats. Overall Sushasini has reached out to 596 villages. See table below for details:

<b>Sushasini Partners and Working area</b>			
<b>Sno.</b>	<b>N.G.O. Name</b>	<b>Block</b>	<b>village</b>
1	Cohezan	Rapar	35
2	Marag	Anjar	30
		Nakhatrana	20
		Khavda	24
		Bhuj	30
3	Sahjivan	Abdasa	165
4	Pryas	Anjar	
5	Gram swarajsangh	Rapar, Bhachau, Vandh	140
6	Sahiyare Jo sangathan	Nakhatrana	42
7	Ujas mahila sangathan	Mundra	50
8	Setu	Kutch	320
9	Swami Vivekanand	Lakhpat	30
	<b>Total</b>		<b>596</b>

Sushasini in addition, provides inputs to networks of women's organizations outside Kutch. These are Utthan, Anandi Madiya and Mahila Swaraj Abhiyan. Together these organizations cover eight blocks and seven districts.

It should be noted that SETUs (meaning bridge) emerged as a response to the 2001 earthquake and became centers for information. Subsequently they were transformed to provide people

centered development support. Each SETU supports a cluster of 15 – 20 villages to undertake development initiatives. “Setus facilitate the Panchayats to plan, budget, make proposals, seek funding, implement, supports monitoring and audit. SETUs have introduced the concept of a Village Development Fund (VDF). This untied fund provided to a Panchayat enables it to undertake the developmental agendas along the parameters of good governance, social justice and equity.

Sushasini has provided sensitization training to make SETU staff aware of the need to nurture women's leadership in the Panchayat in the process of planning and implementation of development programmes. (More about roles later)

**The data shows that Sushasini has successfully reached out to a wide area within Kutch and also made its presence felt outside Kutch.**

### **3.1 Facilitate formation of Mahila Manch of all elected women leaders at Taluk and District Level**

#### **Formation of Block level Mahila Manch of elected leaders**

One of the indicators of the success of the programme is the formation of block level manchs of women elected representatives. Sushasini has rightly strategized to make the Manch a broad based platform. Currently the Manchs’ comprise, elected representatives, ex sarpanches and ward members, current ward members, other strong women leaders and potential leaders. These are women who have shown some leadership qualities by supporting the poor, struggled for their own rights within the family or with the PR system at block and district level. The manch members are used for exchange of information learning about new issues and creating solidarity. See tables below for details:

#### **Details of Manch Meetings 2007**

<b>Sno</b>	<b>Block</b>	<b>Women Sarpanch</b>	<b>Women Members</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Manch Members</b>	<b>% Covered</b>
1	Mundra	15	113	128	61	47.65

2	Mandavi	25	164	189	82	43.38
3	Nakhatrana	33	180	213	72	33.80
4	Bhuj	37	177	214	50	23.36
5	Abadasa	29	176	205	40	19.51
6	Anjar	15	134	149	40	27
	<b>Total</b>				<b>345</b>	

### Details of Manch Meetings 2008

	Block	Total Monthly Meetings in years	Villages	Manch Members	Panchayat Members	Maji Sarpanch and other leaders	Topics
1	Anjar	9	16	62	32	30	Laws, health schemes for society, sharing of experience, Loan schemes
2	Mandavi	10	36	72	55	22	E-gram Panchayat, Anganwadi, Hierarchy of Police department
3	Nakhatrana	12	36	92	76	15	Anna Suraksha, Ration card, NREGA, Panchayat and budget, farming
4	Bhuj	10	23	66	52	24	Duties of government officers, Panchayat budget, health, employment, Samaj Suraksha
5	Abadasa	11	26	76	50	26	Anganwadi, Primary Health, NREGA, Gram Sabha, Budget
6	Mundra	12	26	92	55	36	Land Rights, Gram Sabha, Krushi Rath, Crime
	<b>Total</b>						

Regular Manch meetings were planned through the year (at least 10 in every block annually) and we can see that in 2008 Anjar block held 9 meetings and the others have met according to

plan. A wide variety of inputs were provided to the women leaders as can be seen from the 2008 data.

Each manch was expected to have at least a membership of 30 women. As the table above shows, in 2008 the target has been exceeded in 3 blocks, is slightly lower in 2 and 1/3 less in Bhuj.

It is reported that the manch membership was 150 in 2006 and this increased to 345 in 2007 which is an increase of 130%. In 2008, the growth in membership reflects an additional 33% increase growing from 345 members to 460. Overall in 2008 Manch membership comprised 67% elected representatives and 33% other leaders. The manch meetings have stabilized, but the attendance varied according to season (work/festivals) and issues raised. The Manch meetings have become a source of power for women members.

It was expected that, 2 to 3 women leaders would emerge from the Manch at the end of each year due to the inputs provided.

During the review we participated in Block level manch meetings in Nakhatrana, Mundra and Mandvi. Women from Abdasa and Lakhpat also participated in the meetings. In Nakhatrana we met a number of women who had benefited greatly by associating themselves with the manch. Noor Bahen a member said “when I was a Sarpanch I faced many problems because there was no Manch. I was told not to come to the Panchayat Bhavan. I was told not to come to the Panchayat Bhavan. For three years I cried every day. Now I have no fear, I did a radio programme to broadcast our views. The training here has helped all of us. It has also benefited our villages. I exposed illegal production and consumption of alcohol and put an end to it”. Devi Bahen from Abdasa who is a UPA Pramukh said, “We had a serious drinking water problem. The Sarpanch was supportive of my demand to arrange for drinking water and now. We have a water tank in the village. Kanta Bahen who is the Block President said her family was supportive. She had implemented drinking water programme and built “gutter lines” to improve sanitation. When the women went to Gandhi Nagar for training they managed to meet the Chief Minister, establishing their political presence. They did not put forward any demands.

The manch members were asked to reflect on what they would like to do in the next five years.

Working in three groups they suggested the following:

- Continue Regular meetings
- Pay a membership fee so that the Manch has a fund
- Increase manch membership and include all women representatives
- Run the Panchayat information centre and prevent female feticide
- At District level take up women's issues
- Prevent corruption
- Create a manch in every block of Kutch
- Create awareness to demand Panchayat meetings
- Information should be given to new leaders systematically
- Demand an honorarium for sarpanches because we have to meet travel and other expenses
- Make all Mahila sarpanches active
- Ensure that widow pensions and pensions for disabled are given regularly
- Identify BPL families correctly and issue cards to those who don't have them
- Ensure facilities such as roads and lights are available
- Create health facilities at village level
- Struggle for land for landless
- Create employment through NREGM
- Provide literacy for women in the Manch

**From the above list it is clear that manch members have become sensitive to provide leadership to marginalized (BPL cards, NREGA), appreciate the need for information sharing to enable themselves to act effectively. They are interested to implement existing schemes as well as take on new challenges such as struggle for land.**

**While the manch has stabilized it has yet to attract the majority of elected women. As we can see from the table less than half have joined the manch. In the next phase a targeted approach is necessary to bring the women onto the manch. We can assume that women**

**who have not joined are probably those who are “controlled” by their husband. Such women are the ones who need the support most. The programme must develop a strategy to reach out to the most vulnerable women.**

### **District level Manch with 250 members**

In the last 2 years it is clear that block level manchs have been strengthened. Core committees of 20-25 women were set up in each block and these women took up issues at the block and at the District level. To make the presence of women elected representatives visible at the district level and create a pro women atmosphere, District Sammelans were organized in 2007 and 2008. The two day district Sammelans brought elected women from eight blocks together. At the Sammelans, information booths were set up giving information about schemes and various beneficiary forms. Women were honored for their work and cultural activities organized. In 2007, three hundred and fifty women participated in the Sammelan and in 2008, four hundred and one women from 8 blocks came together. Two hundred and fifty women also received leadership training within the context of Panchayats. A book, “Ranbheri” about the struggles of women in Panchayats was released in 2008. Information was disseminated about Panchayat and schemes, health, water issues, land reforms and women, how to deal with domestic violence and the related laws. At these public meetings commitments were given by male leaders that they would support women. **The district level platform has not stabilized into an organized body. Strong leaders from the block level take up issues at the district level from time to time.**

### **3.2 Promote Village Development**

The Project envisages that five Mahila Sarpanches supported by Sushasini will develop people centred plans and implement them. While a comprehensive overview is not available as to the significant changes brought about in the last two years, our field visits and review of available material shows that women sarpanches have gained confidence and moved forward to promote people oriented development over the last few years.

The case of Amrit Bahen majhi (ex) sarpanch of Kara Ghoga Juth Panchayat, Mundra block is illustrative. Amrit Bahen belongs to the Dalit community and she is non literate. She was

worried and hesitant to stand for election since she could not read and write. She decided to go ahead, with the help of Ujjas Mahila Sangathan.

When she was elected she felt lack of drinking water was a big problem in the village particularly for women. Women and men had to travel daily to nearby villages to work in the fields. On their return, women found it very hard to again spend several hours collecting water from a distance. She got information about drinking water scheme WASMO, from Sushasini and Lata particularly supported her efforts. According to her, upper caste people felt she could not raise the minimum amount of money required to open a bank account with people's contribution. She managed to raise Rs. 7000 with the help of Sangathan leaders and ICDS staff support (Now Vanita Bahen ICDS staff is the sarpanch) With the people's contribution to implement the scheme. She was able to raise Rs. 16,00,000 to build five water tanks which supplies water to the whole village. One technical person and one social worker supported her initiatives. She struggled to establish her leadership and for the first time in the history of the village a dalit couple (Amrit Bahen as the Sarpanch and her husband) inaugurated the scheme with "Bhoomi Puja".

Sixty five BPL families were also supported to build their homes after the Earthquake circumventing norms. However the homes were not electrified due to bureaucratic norms. Amrit Bahen managed to get water and electricity connections for them.

Currently Vanita Bahen who belongs to the Darbari community is the sarpanch. She is also the ICDS staff member in the village and is literate.

Vanita Bahen pointed out that the village had erratic electricity supply. She had interacted with the MLA and he supported her demands for funds. As a result of her efforts the village now has 24 hour supply. She had also utilized MLA funds to improve sanitation. Ninety families in the village who did not have sanitation facilities were identified. She approached the Adani Foundation who provided a grant to build 50 toilets. Forty more are in the process of being constructed.

She found that very poor families were not in the BPL list while others had their names included. She had utilized public pressure in the Gram Sabha to ensure the poor were given their cards. She had also managed to build four check dams on the near by stream with a budget of Rs. 40 Lakhs under the Hariyali Kranti programme. An interior CC road is to be built with a budget of Rs. 500,000. A new Panchayat Bhavan is due to be built since the old one was donated in 1956 and was too small to be utilized.

NREGA work was also taken up for two months in the village but the payments were not made. Forty to forty five families have job cards in the village and had worked in the programme. However payments were delayed for several months and she complained to the MLA who in turn asked the Taluk Development officer to make the payments. Vanita Bahen had also supported seven families to file applications for waste land development. Being the Anganwadi staff she also supported a women's savings group. She took permission from the Panchayat and utilized a small fund to support a family to travel to Ahmedabad to get their son treated for a kidney problem. Due to the timely help, the boy had recovered completely.

Two administrative functions she had successfully undertaken were:

- Re evaluation of house tax so that Panchayat income increased
- Regularized the Panchayat meetings and distributed the minutes from the meeting to members

Between the two mahila sarpanches, Amrit Bahen and Vanita Bahen, the village has been transformed. The Ujjas Sangathan members Radha Bahen, Meghi Bahen and Javji Bahen, trustee KMVS had supported this process. A comparison of the experiences of the two leaders shows that the Dalit Sarpanch had to struggle a great deal and she was successful due to the support of Sangathan members. Lack of literacy was also a problem because the Village Secretary took advantage of these officials who came to the village by passed her authority. On the other hand Vanita Bahen who came from an upper caste and was well connected to the MLA could accomplish a lot more easily. While there was some rivalry between the women it was friendly and the Sangathan acted as a bridge.

### **Two women's issues prioritized**

In the process of strengthening women elected representatives, the capacity building initiatives include gender sensitization and an awareness to support women's development since they

carry a triple burden of class, caste and gender. In addition to “mainstream” development within the Panchayat framework, the programme has empowered women to take up rights issues. Several issues have been addressed in the last two years. One, awareness was generated among the women, on women's rights to property, particularly land. Protecting land rights of vulnerable women such as elderly and widowed has been an important initiative. Women who wanted their names to be included in their land records were invited to a meeting where they were informed of the law and their rights. Songs were created on the subject and audio cassettes were widely distributed. As a result of this, fifty six women have their names registered in joint property documents. The process continues in 2008. Women have now been encouraged to apply for wasteland development. Sushasini takes this agenda forward through its sensitization programme with partners. The Working Group for Women and Land Ownership (WGWLO) network has been active in this regard.

Violence against women is another important issue that has been raised regularly. Cases of rape have been taken up by women sarpanches and the guilty punished. When men have abandoned their wives and children the Panchayat has intervened to settle disputes and restore dignity to women. In one case, Vinod (name changed) had bought a bride from West Bengal. After living with her for some years, he wanted to throw her out along with their child. The Mahila Sarpanch in the village intervened strongly and threatened to have him arrested. Due to the social pressure in the village Vinod has started taking care of his wife. In the Manch meetings we were informed that women in the villages were feeling more secure because women Panchayat members had started taking up their issues.

Another issue taken up at the block level was the recognition that adolescent girls were missing school days because they did not provide sanitary napkins. As a result of this understanding, a resolution was passed requesting all schools to store sanitary napkins and make them available to girls when necessary. Anti alcohol movement was also taken up locally in some villages.

While a number of gender issues have been taken up in the programme and women leaders in Panchayat sensitized, the issues have not been mainstreamed. For example, while a few women have their names entered in the land records it is not the norm. (All the land to be held

in joint pattas so that spouses or children cannot sell land without taking women's permission would be a significant gain for women.) There is a need to identify Advocacy issues which will bring systemic change. These will be issues which may not result in immediate change during the project period, but the right efforts could lead to significant progress.

**Women's participation in Panchayat body meetings in gram Sabha will increase; become pro active and regular**

One of the main concerns of the programme interventions is to motivate increasing numbers of women to participate in the Gram Sabhas and put forward their views. The formation of the Mahila Manch with elected representatives as well as potential leaders has brought about some changes. Manch members have shared that they have become active in the Gram Sabha and are not shy because they are receiving training. Though records of Gram Sabha attendance were not available centrally, most of the women met during the review process voiced the opinion that women's participation in the Gram Sabha was increasing. Particularly in village meetings we were able to meet women Sarpanches, women ward members and ordinary women members who stated that they had become active, because of increased understanding of the role of Gram Sabha. Experience elsewhere shows that marginalized sections do not attend meetings because their voice is not heard. Only potential beneficiaries go to the gram Sabha to register their names for eligible schemes. Since Gram Sabhas are not yet a forum for participatory planning for village development, it is difficult to attract ordinary citizens. We visualize Gram Sabhas as fora for accountability but this is yet to happen.

**3 – 4 women per village will articulate their concerns publicly**

The formation of the block manchs has led to increased confidence among women members. They reported sharing their experiences in their own communities and Panchayats. Meeting with Sangathan members and elected members showcased that the number of active women was increasing in each Panchayat though the actual numbers are difficult to assess. In the Panchayats visited during the review, we found several women were articulate and able to put forward their thinking.

**20 – 25 women from five Taluka manchs will represent and provide leadership to address village concerns**

During Manch meetings we were informed that the Core Committee of the manch traveled to different Panchayats for two days in a month to support the mahila sarpanches in their own Panchayat. This was done particularly when women were threatened with “no confidence” motion or were facing caste, and gender discrimination. In addition to the elected members, sangathan members also supported women in the Panchayats. Two of the Sangathans have seconded a person to work with the Sushasini team. These members take learning back to the Sangathan. They also strategize on how the sangathan strength can be utilized to promote women's leadership. The women organized in a manch are learning actively from each other and support each other informally.

### **3.3 Create a Learning Environment**

#### **Tri-monthly Taluk level manch meetings to learn about and address emerging development issue**

Sushasini has taken several steps to create an enabling environment where women leaders can learn about new issues, schemes and programmes to implement at the Panchayat level. It has encouraged individual learning, group learning through interaction between Mahila Manch and institutional learning for NGOs and Sangathans. The main learning fora for elected leaders have been the block level meetings where information is shared on a regular basis. Information is provided on various government schemes and programmes which can be implemented through the Panchayats. Capacity building of individual leaders has focused on developing leadership at the Panchayat level. This training focuses on relevance of political participation of women, the history of women's movement and women's struggles for their rights. This type of programme motivates women to situate themselves in the larger social context, overcome feelings of helplessness and creates solidarity.

Second focus for intervention is to increase women's knowledge on administrative rules and regulations, on how to prepare budgets, understanding financial acts of the Panchayat etc. Training is provided on understanding the role of different players in the Gram Panchayat including the village Secretary – Talati. Games have been developed to help women

understand processes in a simple way and demystify administration. When elected women leaders are non literate the Talati is likely to assume control. The training clarifies roles and gives control back to women.

A lecture series (Details 2006- 2008, Annexure V) was organized to disseminate information and reach out to women elected representatives, male Panchayat leaders, officials, NGOs, and their networks. The series of lectures organized over two years and a half covered topics such as social justice, role of Panchayat Samiti, violence against women, role of Panchayats in disaster preparedness and mitigation, Right to Information (RTI), right selection of beneficiaries for schemes, programmes, and strategies to eradicate child labor. These public lectures were well attended by men, women elected representatives and sangathan members as well as NGO staff and disseminated knowledge on a wide variety of issues. The presence of local officials who occasionally acted as resource persons clarified issues, or otherwise the meetings led to increasing the visibility of women. The lecture series also encouraged women to take up issues for action.

Sushasini has published a number of posters depicting structure of Panchayat administration, budget making process and National Rural Employment Guarantee Act-2005 (NREGA). Panchayat Mitra booklet gives information about management of Panchayats and the development issues. Audio visual material was also developed in the local language and widely disseminated to elected leaders and issues.

### **Learning through Exposure Visits**

Women leaders identified through the manch to act as Core Committee members and potential leaders were encouraged to travel to other districts and states to interact with women elected leaders. In 2007, women visited Udaipur, Vododara, Nagpur, Delhi, Bhopal and Jaipur. These visits resulted in strengthening of the women's manch and increased the participation of women in Gram Sabha. Women were reported to have become more articulate. In 2008, exposure visit was made to Sahbagi Shikshan Kendra, Lucknow, and Uttar Pradesh. The women saw that the local Panchayat Information Center was run by senior citizens on a voluntary basis. They also found that literacy classes were conducted before initiating work with women. The need to train adolescent girls to become active participants in the Panchayat

was also realized after discussions with Chirag which facilitates the 35 day training. Learning from Maharashtra was shared widely in the Manch meetings. The women leaders overall gained confidence and a better understanding of how to manage their own affairs.

### **3.4 Panchayat Information Centers**

Initially when civil society organizations started interventions to support grassroots documentation, the Panchayat Information Centers (PICs) were visualized as a space where elected representative's, men and women could access information about different government schemes etc. It is reported that when Sushasini started its work, it made information available, but it was left up to the elected representative's to use the information. Information was used by a few active women.

Now with the formation of women Manch's at the block level, the PICs have moved beyond passively offering information. The Centers make available, application forms for people to access individual benefits, and the PICs have become a source of active support. In Mundra Block, where the PIC is most active we met Ranjan Bai Jadeja, Ward Member, Malini Bahen, Sarpanch and Jhanak Bai Jadeja also a ward member. We were informed that the centre is open two days a week. Two elected representatives one literate and one non literate work together to support individuals who seek help. Guidance is provided when necessary and existing political and administrative networks used to resolve problems. The objectives of the centre to enable elected women representatives and others to find solutions to their problems are being met.

In 2007, PICs were functional in four blocks and in 2008 they are extended to six blocks. A wide range of issues have been addressed, ranging from accessing ration cards for the poorest to getting caste and disability certificates and information of government schemes. The PICs have moved beyond traditional issues and dealt with land rights, supporting individuals to file Right to Information applications and settling issues related to Domestic violence. The tables below provide details:

**Information Center (January to December 2007)**

<b>Sno</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>Mandavi</b>	<b>Abadasa</b>	<b>Nakhatrana</b>	<b>Mundra</b>	<b>Total</b>
1.	Domestic violence	25	1	2	13	41
2	Ration Card	50	37	51	44	182
3	Widow prison	45	20	18	51	134
4	Support to disable	22	0	02	6	30
5	Chirnajivi Scheme	01	0	02	0	03
6	Kuvarbai nu mameru	03	0	01	7	11
7	Certificate to SC/ST	60	8	05	11	81
8	Application under RTI Act	0	3	0	0	03
9	Affidavit	0	4	0	08	12
10	Form – Grammitra	0	0	0	29	29
11	Land/plot on women's name	16	10	13	17	56
12	National family support	0	2	0	0	02
	<b>Total</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>587</b>

### Information Center (January to December 2008)

Sno	Name of Scheme	Mandvi	Mundra	Nakhatrana	Bhuj	Abdasa	Anjar	Total
1	Ration card	47	60	84	33	29	6	259
2	Widow Support	45	48	9	8	45	0	125
3	Dependence/old support	174	317	33	50	73	0	647
4	Certificate/Sogan dnamu	49	46	5	3	33	0	136
5	Land/Plot/Residence	87	74	5	4	20	0	187
6	Domestic violence/legal case	36	31	3	2	13	0	85
7	Disability identity	28	3	12	7	0	0	50
8	Government loan scheme	32	59	40	20	11	17	179
9	Employment (Anganwadi, Manav garima)	3	0	0	7	3	0	13
10	Sant Surdas	6	0	13	7	0	0	26
11	Information guidance	9	24	9	5	26	7	80
12	Kuwarbai nu mameru	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
13	Balika Samruddhi	0	0	10	0	0	0	10
14	Health (insurance, HIV/Aids Chiranjivi)	3	4	1	0	2	0	10
15	BPL	0	1	21	0	0	0	22
	<b>Total</b>	<b>486</b>	<b>669</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>1831</b>

The active support provided by the PIC has led to the setting up of a wide network of friendship which has given women greater confidence in themselves and their ability to resolve problems at the Panchayat level. According to Ms. Malini Bahen, Sarpanch “we don’t give information passively, we help actively. I have the telephone number of all the male Sarpanchs in the Block and we take help from each other. Last year we must have supported 50 sarpanches and 100 ward members”.

**The PICs are working successfully as per the indicators mentioned in the project document. An important development in the process is the recognition given to centres by the system. In Mundra, the office was currently located in a temporary premise, but will eventually shift to the block centre of PRI offices. There is a demand with each block to provide space for women manch to meet and set up the PIC.**

### **3.5 Advocacy Issues taken up**

The main advocacy Agenda Sushasini has promoted is to gain recognition and respect for women in the PRI institutions. The formation and activation of Mahila Manch at the block level, the setting up of PICs and the lecture series where the larger public and officials participated has gained women representatives an improved profile. The land allotted to build PIC in Mundra is likely to spin off similar benefits in all the blocks in the districts.

One of the issues raised during the review at Manch meetings was the need to provide an honorarium to women sarpanches so that they gained autonomy from family interference. This issue is pending. Several states in the country do provide an honorarium to all sarpanchs and this matter could be pursued.

As per current practice newly elected women representatives are trained in Gandhi Nagar. Since many women are tied down by family and not mobile, advocacy is being carried out to shift the training of women sarpanchs to the district level. NGOs with appropriate experience can also be identified as training institutions at district level. This issue is yet to be strongly advocated.

In 2007, advocacy was carried out to recognize 27 villages of Lakhpat as revenue villages. With support from Sushasini, Pipar Panchayat with five villages gained recognition which has resulted in great benefits to the people who were living as encroachers and were deprived of basic necessities.

There is an ongoing struggle for land in the whole region. With industrialization gaining momentum, Panchayat lands are under threat – being given away as wasteland or sold

privately by farmers. A clear cut policy demand is yet to emerge within the context of Panchayats, though a general resistance movement is underway.

Earlier women sarpanches were paralyzed and non functional in many instances because of no confidence motions taken up by their Upa Sarpanches. The issue was taken up without clear policy guidelines emerging. More recently the women have started aligning themselves politically and have gained some protection from no confidence motions.

To enhance the effectiveness of Panchayats and improve women's status it is clear that advocacy issues need to be taken up at the state and national level. A state level committee has been set up at the initiative of Unnati, IRMA, BSC and other organizations to identify and address policy address. A representative from the women's manch is nominated as a member. Sushasini is working in a variety of ways with Anandi, BSC, Mahila Swaraj Abhiyan, SWATI and GWLO, bringing gender sensitization inputs.

At the National Level, network initiatives involve contact with, The Hunger Project, Aagas Academy, Ekta Parishad – Delhi, IGSSS – Pune, Peaceful society Goa, and the Hunger Project Rajasthan. Network linkages are at a nascent stage and clear advocacy issues yet to be identified.

One of the limitations of the current advocacy strategies is that it is not based on a strong people's mandate. While all the issues discussed are relevant, a small number of NGOs cannot bring about change in the spirit which is mandated by the 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment. Powerful political forces are resisting change and this can only be countered by mobilizing large number of people who will demand democratization and change.

Several hard issues have to be addressed. There is little money in the Panchayats for women's development and health care. Can devolution of funds to Panchayats be increased? There is an urgent need to understand the current status and take up gender budget analysis to demand greater flow of funds for meeting women's basic needs and more importantly rights. Unless this is done, we cannot expect long term sustainable change.

The patriarchal nature of Indian society is changing very slowly; in some ways the situation appears to be deteriorating (examples increasing female feticide and VAW in Gujarat). Advocacy efforts then will have to be directed not only towards developing better policies, but ensuring change of attitude in all levels of society.

While there is a need to advocate strengthening women's position within Panchayats, we find that the institution itself is under threat. The threat is posed by a range of developments. Parallel institutions are set up with higher budgets, under central schemes (watershed development), undermining the role and importance of the Panchayats. The setting up of SEZs and industrialization has resulted in pollution, environmental imbalance and loss of traditional livelihoods. The current leadership in the Panchayats does not have the skills or the means to deal with the emerging crisis. Advocacy to genuinely strengthen Panchayats must ensure that women leaders are enabled to deal with all the above issues. Currently they are learning to help individuals, and take up existing schemes but in the future, socio-economic and environmental issues need to be addressed.

Another major threat to the spirit of democratic governance is the “Samras Yojana”, which encourages unanimous election to the village Panchayats through consensus. (Ref: Samras Scheme and Democratization Process: An Analytical Study) Under this scheme financial incentives are provided to villages, where leaders are chosen unanimously without elections. For a first time Samras village, a grant of Rs. 1,00,000 to 1,50,000 is given based on the size of the village – up to 5000 population and between 5000 to 15,000 population respectively. An additional 25% of the grant amount is given to the villages which opt for “Samras” for a second consecutive term.

The scheme operationalized from 7/11/2006 drew protests from members of marginalized communities, because their voices were not heard during the consensus building process. The Sushasini team participated in a research project (responsible for Kutch district) to study the impact of the Samras Scheme. The study undertaken by the Mahila Swaraj Abhiyan is recently concluded. It highlights the following:

“The Samras Scheme, in our assessment, is located at the intersection of socio-political domination and the rise of neo-liberal economic forces. In our contention the samras scheme

emerges as yet another systematic attempt by the state to stem the rising tide of subaltern assertion, particularly in the wake of the very radical forces unleashed by the 73<sup>rd</sup> CAA. This coincides with the needs of a neo-liberal economic order, ‘the Gujarat model’ as it has now come to be popularly termed, which require swift decisions, secrecy shrouding the decisions and the manner of decision-making in order to realize profits. Under the BJP dispensation, however, it additionally acquires a right-wing fascist color”.

Other issues highlighted by the study are:

- The samras process has been a closed-door affair not involving the large mass of marginalized sections of society and women. Samras has been a largely non-inclusive process, where the participation and consensus of all was never sought or attempted. Dalits, Adivasis and women are excluded. (On reserved seats they will be chosen at the mercy of the Socio-economically powerful.)
- Samras is discriminatory, giving preference to selected villages and undermines genuine debate. It goes against the spirit of the “Representation of the People’s Act” Vis the unfettered and unhindered right to contest free and fair elections and the right to vote in elections.

It should be noted that in 2006-07, 29.1% of the Panchayats had chosen samras process (total number 4,306). Having participated in the study and as part of the network Sushasini now has the task to develop and implement an ‘educational’ strategy for the community to refuse samras and an advocacy strategy for the state government to stop the implementation of the samras scheme. The problems of land alienation, environmental degradation etc, all have to be studied in depth and evidence based advocacy taken up to strengthen Panchayat Institutions and their women members.

### **3.6 Sensitizing Voluntary Organizations in Kutch to promote local self governance and the critical role of Panchayats**

As mentioned earlier Sushasini has worked with NGO partners, to sensitize them to support elected women representatives and strengthen the PRIs. This process of partnership has also been mutually beneficial. The NGOs have brought their specialized skills and participatory methodologies to support development planning at the Panchayat level. This relationship

however is not always smooth. In 2007, four NGOs received inputs. Their staff also received training on how to carry out voter awareness campaigns and to help women to file nominations. The NGOs were not always able to complete planned tasks and Sushasini had to shoulder the main responsibilities. See table below for trainings provided:

**Table: Training provided to partners**

Sno	Subject	Organization
1	Panchayat's role in drinking water issue and its administration, formation of Pani samiti	Sahajivan, people's organization
2	Orientation on Panchayat issue and its various aspects	Setu(16) Kutch Nav Nirman Abhiyan
3	Developing women leadership in Panchayats issues amongst village women, sensitize the associations for solving issues of women	Sahiyare Jo Sangathan – Nakhatrana, Ujas Sangathan – Mundra, Abdasa Sangathan
4	Participation in women's leadership workshop and allocation of responsibility as per skill	Marag, Kohesion, Ekalnari Shakti Manch, Unnati, Mahila Swaraj Abhiyan, Setu, KMVS centers

In 2008, a systematic effort was made to orient – partner NGO staff to understand:

1. The structure of Panchayat
2. Role of Sarpanch, ward members, Talati and Gram Sabha
3. How to conduct meetings – procedures to be followed to hold Panchayat meetings
4. The importance of Gram Sabha

As mentioned earlier, the organizations working towards earthquake relief and rehabilitation moved on to take on developmental roles. SETU's which were set up to promote people centered development needed support to integrate their work within the Panchayat framework with gender sensitivity. For example, participatory planning for water and sanitation management at the Panchayat level and management of wastelands. Sushasini oriented staff in the SETUs to become more sensitive to the needs of women (for ex, if a woman sarpanch was

in place, to talk to her, instead of her husband, and ensure participation of women in the Gram Sabha). In 2008, following training was provided to NGO staff:

<b>Sno</b>	<b>Month</b>	<b>Organization members</b>	<b>Supported members</b>	<b>Days</b>	<b>Topic</b>
1	March	Gram Swarajsanja, Cohesion Ekalnari Sakti manch, Kutch Joiti Trush, Ujjas, Shrujan, Swathi Vivekananda	26	2	Panchayat Raj, Village Panchayat, Women's participation
2	April	Setu	26	2	Panchayat Raj, Village Panchayat
3	August	Setu	26	2	Panchayat and Drinking water
	<b>Total</b>		<b>87</b>	<b>8</b>	

The close interaction and motivation has led to overall benefits. For example the Mahila Manch in Anjar is supported by the local SETU. The SETU's have received a variety of support from Sushasini. This included training on:

- Role of Panchayats in education
- How to make utilization of Village Development Funds transparent
- Simple and useful learning material on Panchayat and development
- Public forum/lectures leading to information booklets in the form of Panchayat Mitra
- How to ensure active participation in Gram Sabhas
- How to be sensitive to and plan for women's needs

The review process highlighted that participation in networks such as GWLO had helped marginalized women to access benefits. Training has been provided on individual land rights for women, leading to their ownership in a few cases. Though the numbers are small, gaining land rights is a significant gain for women in a patriarchal world where women own only 1% of assets in the world. Land has also been cultivated by women independently to grow vegetables etc. The GWLO network coordinator voiced that working with Mahila Manch and the Sangathans supported by KMVS gave them access to a large number of women who could be sensitized and encouraged to demand their rights.

Sushasini is sensitizing Village Secretaries to gender issues and the Talaties (60) to record women's ownership of land. In addition, efforts are on to ensure collective rights to grazing land and forests are not violated.

Sushasini has provided inputs to groups on how to help Panchayats to develop guidelines on water conservation, how to conserve natural resources and how to file RTI petitions.

### **3.7 Sushasini and its relationship with Sangathans**

Sushasini started its work with Panchayats by motivating KMVS promoted Mahila Sangathans to play an active role in strengthening the elected women members in the Panchayats. A few senior women leaders took an interest in the issue, but initially a large majority had other priorities. Continuous efforts are underway however to maintain links with Sangathans. Two Sangathans, Ujjas Mahila Sangathan and Saiyeere Jo Sanstan are working with the programme by nominating one leader each, to learn from the team, facilitate problem solving at the Panchayat level and motivate increased participation of women in Gram Sabhas.

The Abdasa Mahila Vikas Sangathan is undergoing reorganization due to several reasons. The focus of the sangathan was restricted to providing health and legal services, but the members and leadership team were bogged down due to poor management of savings and credit groups. The sangathan is in the process of revival and an internal KMVS review has suggested future focus on health, legal and Panchayat issues.

The Pacham Mahila Vikas Sangathan is also in the process of reorganization, particularly their health programme. The sangathan in the past has provided critical and essential health care for

women, running Ante Natal and Post Natal clinics as well as paid ambulance service. With the improved and free services (free ambulance service 108 and Rs 400 paid for hospital deliveries) now offered by the government, the sangathan plans to shift its focus to health education and awareness and to run need based health camps. This would be done in collaboration with government institutions and integration of active health workers into the system. This is a huge opportunity to integrate health services into the Panchayat system.

During the review, we met 10 senior activists from the Ujjas Mahila Sangathan. The Sangathan with a membership of 4500 women promotes livelihoods in five clusters. Senior activists are involved in training Panchayat leaders and orienting them towards social justice issues. Some of the actions and issues they were involved in are:

- Teaching/learning about budget preparation to sarpanch
- Learning about importance of Gram Sabha and increasing women's participation
- Increasing Transparency in decision-making

The sangathan members were alive to issues facing women. They keenly observed that strong women were not elected to the PRI institutions, because men in the village were worried that women were getting “very strong”. They also pointed out that one woman sarpanch was suspended (on false charges) because she did not fall in line with a local company policy on environment.

The Sushasini team shared that Sangathans had several priorities and they made limited interventions to strengthen women in Panchayats. NGOs usually worked with male leaders in Panchayat and rarely worked with women though they may be organized. There was a tendency to involve women only where Sushasini intervened.

In spite of the many limitations faced by women in Sangathans it is clear that the vast potential of members needs to be tapped. As Ms. Sushma Iyengar founder of KMVS stated “we have strong organization of elected women representatives in Gujarat, but we have missed out on building a holistic, gender sensitive and pro poor perspective among them”.

In the programme we find the Mahila Manch active to varying degrees on the issue of social justice. The operation of PICs shows that individual needs are being met but the manchs have not been able to take up any sustained advocacy campaigns. To enable this, strategic alliances have to be built between Block level manchs and the Mahila Sangathans.

### **3.8 How others see elected women representatives**

Officials and male elected representatives had varying views about the current status of elected women representatives and their potential.

At Nakhatrana, the Block Development Officer felt that lack of education hindered women. Non literate women usually relied on their husbands to get work done. They insisted on husbands accompanying them when they went for training to Gandhi Nagar. They were also forced to sign on papers without understanding them. He was of the view that literacy was compulsory to enable women to make a meaningful contribution.

He mentioned that Indira Awaas Yojana, Nirmal Gaon programme and NREGA work was on going in 32 villages. (Wages not paid for several months after work was done). There were 166 schools in the Block, but the Village Education Committees were not active. Social Justice Committees were set up to follow the development of ST, SC and OBC communities. It was reported that there were 4,463 families in the block who were living below the poverty line. (Can their welfare be followed up?) He felt that women must learn to understand budgets making process and they should learn to follow up on implementation of different schemes. Though unstated he appeared to think that women were less than able to manage their responsibilities.

The Rotary President at Mundra Sri Aravind Bhai interacted with Mahila Manch along with Sri Arvind Bhai, Social Justice Committee member at Block level.

Aravind Bhai was very supportive and appreciative of women entering politics. He had read the book “Ranbheri” about women's struggles in Panchayat and felt that women are very strong. They brought a quality of “Frugality” to the management of the Panchayat and could manage finances well. He also felt that larger number of women should be promoted in

politics and this would lead to greater transparency in governance. He offered to work with elected representatives to promote legal rights and education. He was willing to support setting up of fluoride treatment plants in school where necessary. Many of the manch members knew him personally.

Block Panchayat President, Sri Veeram Bhai was extremely positive about women's role and participation in PRIs. According to him, women's wings of the party (BJP) are strong at the village level. He was clear that women needed space at the Block level. He was willing to provide them office space. In his view, "I help women, but women help me too". The mahila manch was considered to be an excellent fora because women in need approached the manch for help and if they could not help, it was a conduit to reach him. Sri Veeram Bhai recognized Ms. Lata Sachde and was appreciative of the efforts to bring women representatives together on a platform to help each other.

At Virani Panchayat, Nakhatrana Block, the male sarpanch Sri Jadeja had good relations with the women ward members. The village had opted for 'samras' and received the monetary benefit. The team was in place for the 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive term. The village was dominated by Patel community with 50% of Dalit and Rebari families. According to him "women will come forward if they feel they are getting some benefits". According to him Panchayats did not get due recognition from government. The community needed work, fodder, and alternative business opportunities because lignite mines were closed down, shutting down allied business such as trucking. According to him, transparency in management of accounts, kept people together. The Panchayat had developed a beautiful park which was maintained by a differentially abled young man. The entry fee charged gave him a living.

Comments from significant actors in the PRIs highlighted recognition that women could play an important role in politics but that they had to be supported to establish their presence and make a meaningful contribution.

## **4. Overview of the Results**

### **4.1 Relevance**

The overall aim of the current programme to “politically empower rural women through the Panchayat Raj Institutions” is not only relevant, but of critical importance to promote democratic practice in the country. India with its diversity of people and cultures needs to strengthen bottom up planning so that marginalized sections such as Dalits, minorities and women have their voices heard. This programme is a step in the right direction.

The current process of globalization is creating a new world order. While it has promised growth and development it has failed to deliver. Within the country, we find positive developments with improved access to education and high paid jobs for a minority. A vast majority of people continue to hover around the poverty line (280 million officially and 400 million unofficially) Gujarat state is known to have a fast track growth model but at the same a vast population of undernourished children. The GOI has legislated the Right to Employment for 100 days and the Right of Tribal People’s to forest lands they were cultivating. For both these Acts to be implemented meaningfully, PRIs have to play a significant role. Women representatives from marginalized communities carry the triple burden of class, caste and gender and need to be supported to play their role to protect and promote women's rights as well as children and marginalized communities.

According to the law, Panchayats should develop their own micro-plans. To enable this citizens and Panchayat leaders must be trained to assess their available resources and how best to use them to support livelihoods of the poor. Women as the most marginalized need to be centered. In the last two and half years Sushasini has supported women to take the first steps to strengthen their own organization and learn about basic administration. In the next phase it needs to concentrate on developing models of good governance and advocating up scaling with government resources.

#### **4.2 Efficiency and Efficacy**

Sushasini works with a team of six field staff and two administrative staff. Considering the complexity of the task and the vast area over which the programme is spread, they have made tremendous efforts to meet the objectives of the programme. The mahila manchs are functional and stable, though the issue of long term sustainability is yet to be addressed.

The team has not only worked with elected representatives but reached out to NGOs. During the review, the NGO partners including SETUs outlined the benefits they received. However the impact of the training on institutional practice and in turn its impact on the community could not be assessed in depth. This may be done at a future date to get a realistic assessment of overall benefits of the programme. As mentioned earlier, SETUs have taken the message of “women's empowerment” on board and are supporting the Mahila manch at Anjar. Their practices at the Panchayat level need to be strengthened.

Sushasini receives support from the Sangathans in the form of two seconded members. They add to the overall outreach, create a link to the Sangathan and deepening sensitization to gender issues.

The team has successfully gained recognition at the block level. Officials as well as political leaders across party lines recognize that Sushasini has played an important role in strengthening women's participation. Advocacy issues taken up at the local level have been addressed by block and district administrative who have passed on demands to the state level.

Advocacy at the state and national level has been slow to take off. This is partly inherent in the situation, because state and national networking have to follow consultative processes. Secondly advocacy issues of strategic importance must be taken up. Sushasini is yet to develop clarity and a mandate for this.

### **4.3 KMVS mandate to work with elected women representatives**

KMVS mandate to work with elected women representatives flows from its objective of promoting the rights of the most marginalized women. The 1995, UN conference on women at Beijing had set the stage to promote women's participation in governance. This was seen as a strategic intervention to enable women access development rights. It is to the credit of KMVS and women's organizations in Gujarat that they have consistently worked on the issue. The leaders of Mahila Sangathans promoted by KMVS are strongly agreed in principle, that interventions in PRIs are necessary to safeguard the interests of marginalized women. In spite of this, they are handicapped in promoting awareness and action among the total membership, due to poverty, need to struggle for livelihoods, migration and other factors. As awareness

increases and better coordination developed between Sushasini and the Sangathans we can expect to see a change in perspective among women from being “Sangathan members to Gram Sabha citizens”. (Sushma Iyengar)

#### **4.4 The Semi-Autonomous Form of Sushasini**

The Semi-Autonomous Form of Sushasini within the KMVS structure makes it possible to act independently to follow the developments of the programme. On the other hand being rooted in the Sangathans gives it legitimacy to carry forward the agenda of social justice.

#### **4.5 Suitability of Paul Hamlyn Foundation as a donor to the Programme**

The foundation works in India with the “aim to increase the access of disadvantaged communities, especially youth, to health, education, aid with disability, shelter and other social development activities”. (Src: [www.phf.org.uk](http://www.phf.org.uk)) Among other priorities it wishes to support work that

- Is innovative, challenging and interesting
- Is specific, and yet cuts across sectors and addresses larger issues
- Is a model intervention that can be replicated by others

Given the above mandate, the current programme is eminently suitable to be funded by the Foundation. In the next phase of work, when model Panchayats and programme interventions are developed, these should be promoted for replication through advocacy, utilizing government resources.

It is not necessary for the Foundation to provide specialist inputs. The mandate for the programme interventions ought to flow from people’s organizations and network partners who have been advocating good governance at the grassroots for decades.

### **5. Comments on Future Plans and Recommendations**

**5.1** Sushasini has come forward with a plan of action for the next phase. Given the relevance and progress in the programme, it is recommended that the next phase be supported with some changes in the strategy to make the programme more effective. The next phase can be viewed at two levels, one as a continuation of existing processes and second taking new initiatives.

## **5.2 Continue Capacity Building**

It is planned to increase the membership of the Mahila manch and provide them training inputs on existing schemes and laws such as NREGA, DV Act, RTI and gender budgeting. At present the membership in block level manchs comprise current members, ex members and potential members. There is a need to increase the membership of elected women representatives so that outreach to Panchayats is increased effectively. The training to be provided should not be restricted only to understand the existing laws, but must provide skills to women to transform ideas into action. For example, NREGA Programme envisages creating employment through asset improvements of small and marginal farmers, ie (bundling) water conservation and related works. Women must be empowered with knowledge to plan a set of activities to be implemented. This implies a move away from only class room teaching to learning from the field. Part of capacity building inputs can be planned along with SETUs or any other organization which has relevant skills.

A second set of issues to be addressed, relates to the larger socio-economic changes underway in Kutch. Women leaders must be oriented to understand the impact of industrialization in their neighborhoods, loss of land and livelihoods, pollution, possibility of increasing Panchayat incomes through taxing industry etc. The exercise of rights of Panchayats to prevent alcoholism must also be made known.

### **Sustainability**

An important issue related to the block level manchs is ensuring their sustainability. As a first step, office space has been offered to the manchs to hold meetings at the block level. The manch members have started paying a membership fee to create a block level fund. It is critical now, to work out a system to ensure continuity of the body. Collective reflection is necessary to ensure sustainability which will require leadership skills, institutional rules and norms and financial stability.

### **5.3 Increasing women participation in Gram Sabha**

This should not focus only on women sarpanchs. A further strategy to involve sangathan membership in Gram Sabha's should be worked out. Data of Gram Sabha participation should be maintained at block level and analyzed. Corrective actions can be taken when necessary. It is recommended that Gram Sabhas with good attendance and transparent reporting should be recognized and rewarded.

### **5.4 Mahila Sansad**

It is recommended that in addition to mahila sarpanchs, ward members should also be facilitated to create an identity at the block and district level. Currently ward members are completely sidelined. As one member said "we ask the sarpanch questions and he ignores us". This situation needs to be remedied.

### **5.5 Exposure visits**

Exposure visits are planned and should be continued. It is recommended that exposure visits should include sites, where the Gram Panchayats have implemented innovative programmes through micro-planning or use of NREGA funds. For example, in Andhra Pradesh, Gram Panchayats have resolved and are undertaking waste land protection and development by using NREGA funds. Gujarat as well as Rajasthan (including SETU experiences) can be studied to evaluate and plan "centralization" of women's needs.

### **5.6 Pre Election Voter Awareness Campaign - PEVAC**

PEVAC is planned for next Panchayat elections. In addition, a strategy must be worked out with Sangathans to ensure concerned women are elected. In the last phase we were informed that men in villages ensured strong women were not elected to PRIs. (Can this resistance be reduced?) Sushasini may need to include men in their strategizing. For example, families of Sangathan members and manch members. Though the elections are meant to be free of party influence, this has come to stay therefore Sushasini needs to deal with the issue sensitively.

### **5.7 Model Panchayats**

The programme staff have outlined the contours of a model Panchayat as, holding regular meetings with good attendance, displaying budgets on notice boards to maintain transparency and addressing women's concerns. This is a narrow understanding of ideal Panchayats. The PRIs to be considered “ideal” must move beyond narrow administrative norms. They should address issues of livelihoods, improve the village environment and implement social justice. The mahila manchs and Sangathans should together work out the parameters of an ideal Panchayat which combines transparency, livelihood generation and social justice. Given the ground reality however it may be difficult to develop “ideal Panchayats” in isolation. What may be more feasible and possible is to identify good practices and upscale these at the block and district level to create significant changes. Such practices can be documented and shared within the state and with national networks.

**5.8** In addition to developing learning material for women in the programme it may be necessary to develop material directed towards significant men, on how to support women to become strong PRI leaders. In the last phase, Talaties were trained on issues related to women and land rights. Similar and other gender sensitization material should be developed and used to reduce gender discrimination in the family and system.

**5.9** Public hearings are suggested on following topics, NREGA, Widow Pension, PDS, BPL, Social Justice Committee and Panchayat Budget including gender budgeting. It is recommended not to take up too many issues, but rather to concentrate on a few and follow up to implement change.

### **5.10 Capacity building of local organizations for sensitization to local self governance**

Since sensitization has already been carried out in the first phase, it is recommended to prioritize programmatic and focused interventions. For example, “how can we centralize women's interests in NREGA implementation through Panchayat? How can women's voices be heard when a water and sanitation project is to be implemented?” Since many private

foundations and individuals in Kutch are willing to provide funds for development, these could be used to demonstrate pro women and pro poor development planning.

**5.11** Given the limited human and financial resources available to Sushasini (6 programme personnel and 2 administrative) it is strongly recommended to work on a few issues in a focused way so that results become clear.

### **5.12 Need for Further Innovation**

The dream of “Village Republics” is currently strangled in bureaucracy and government systems which privilege MLAs and MPs (With local Area Funds) over Panchayats. The channeling of funds through the elected members fulfills the need to provide patronage at the cost of Panchayats. It is recommended that an in-depth study be carried out to understand the investment pattern of this fund, assess whether pro-poor and pro-women guidelines are followed as well as understand the dynamics of the implementation process. Overarching developments such as the above will critically impact women's well being and ability to exercise leadership.

**5.13** While some advocacy issues have been identified a number of important issues still need to be examined. The two child norm which debar mostly women and men from poorer communities from participating as elected representatives in public life needs to be repealed at the earliest. It is also discriminatory towards minority communities which prefer larger families. The state level networks should be encouraged by Sushasini to take up the issue.

Micro-planning at the Panchayat level for village development and finding the resources to fund such plans is another advocacy issue for the state and district level networks. There is a strong need to advocate for women centered livelihood planning at the village level and not confine planning only to infrastructure development. The central and state government continues to channel project funds through departments and this must be challenged by elected representatives.

### **5.14 Two last issues for consideration**

The programme is faced with the question of how much effort and resource should be made available to work with men to create an umbrella of support for elected women representatives. This phase under review clearly shows that public lectures to which men were invited, constant interaction with male officials and training has brought about some change in attitudes. Sensitization of NGO staff, men and women has also brought about changes. Sushasini may like to reflect on their next phase strategy to impact men.

This phase has resulted in individual empowerment of women and support to individual beneficiaries through PICs. Empowered women sarpanchs have demonstrated their ability in isolated cases. Sushasini may like to step up its impact by identifying critical issues for change at the block and district level. For example, demonstrate women centred micro-planning and implementation in a few Panchayats and advocate for replication in the whole block or district with government resources.

**5.15** In conclusion it is recommended that Sushasini plan for a second phase, maintaining continuity, but at the same time strengthen its advocacy role. It should consider demonstrating women centered micro-plans and their implementation at the Panchayat level and advocate up scaling with government resources.

## **Part II**

### **Financial Report**

#### **1 A Report of the Financial Review of KMVS - Sushashini**

##### **Background**

Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan is a grassroots collective of rural women in Kutch district. Since its inception in 1988-89, KMVS has heralded a movement of social change, especially for the rural women by addressing critical issues that touch the every day lives and livelihoods of these women and the larger communities they belong to. In the process, KMVS and its women members have defined women's empowerment as a spiral of securities against illnesses, droughts, violence, of being able to articulate and be acknowledged in the community, of being able to affect change in not only the socio-cultural fiber of the community but also be able to create a positive and visible dent in the economy and political life of the community.

The Sangathan has its presence in 165 villages across four blocks (talukas) of Kutch District namely Pachcham-Bhuj, Nakhatrana, Abdasa, and Mundra with a membership of around 12000 women.

To address and support the issues that each of the four Taluka Sangathans raised over the years, keeping in mind the local socio-political context, the parent KMVS body has nurtured various Knowledge Centres each specializing in one area namely, Media, Training and Capacity Building (HIRDAY), Saving and Credit (Kushal Manch) and work with **Panchayats (Sushashini)**.

The mode of operation of 'Sushashini' the panchayat knowledge centre is different from that of the other Knowledge Centres - its scope is not limited to KMVS or its Sangathans. The Centre works across the district even where KMVS does not have any institutional presence.

### **Legal Frame work**

KMVS is registered under the Bombay Trust Act 1950, and Societies Act the organization is governed by twelve members. These include four sangathan representatives, ex-officio DDO of Kutch and other eminent professionals from the field of development.

### **Governing Board**

As per the Trust deed of KMVS the trustees shall have a meeting once in six months. Normally however there are 3-4 meetings held every year. The KMVS Secretariat coordinates the Board Meetings, maintains meeting records which are mandatory and as per rules laid down by Charity Commissioner. The Board of KMVS has set up a finance committee comprising of two board members, the executive secretary, the internal auditor and the external auditor.

### **Relevant Registrations and legal compliances**

KMVS has received exemption under section 12A in the Income Tax Act as well as is registered under section 80G.

KMVS is also registered with FCRA

It has got Tax Deduction Account Number (TAN) and Permanent Account number (PAN number)

KMVS complies with the requirement of various legal regulations as applicable to them.

It has filed regular returns under the Bombay Public Trust Act, Income Tax Act, Tax deduction at source and FCRA.

KMVS also complies with requirement related to Employee Welfare Schemes- Gratuity Provident Fund, Accident and Health Insurance.

KMVS also complies with the Minimum Wage Act.

KMVS has assets, purchase register which is maintained by the secretariat

KMVS also covers its assets and cash under insurance.

The internal auditor is Dr Hafez Dalal. Internal audits are done once in three months. The Statutory auditor is Pravin C Doshi the audit is done once in six months.

## **Accounting Records, Documentation and Internal Controls**

KMVS has a secretariat which manages all financial, governance and other coordinating matters between all the knowledge centres. The four knowledge centres Media, Kushal Manch, HIRDAY, and Sushasini function as decentralized units. Each of them is independent cost centres having their own management structure for undertaking programmes including their own office locations.

Each Centre prepares a yearly budget and submits to the finance committee for approval. Based on the yearly budget they submit a three month budget once this is approved by the Finance committee then the secretariat releases 70% of the amount to the centre once 90% of this is utilized then the rest of the 30% is released. Variances beyond 10% need to be explained. The finance committee looks at the budget versus expenditure statements before approving the budgets for the next three months.

Each centre has a well spelt out book keeping, accounting and approval system. The accounts for the specific centre are maintained at the centre level. The internal audit is done at the centre level. The accounts go to the secretariat for consolidation and statutory audit purpose however a Balance sheet of each centre is also prepared.

Sushasini accountant prepares a monthly budget versus expenditure statement and gives it to the Chief Coordinator of Sushasini and the Finance in Charge at the secretariat these statements are then consolidated and given to the fiancé committee. The monthly statements are to be used by the chief coordinator for monitoring purposes which did not happen in the first year but was used effectively in the second year.

KMVS Finance in Charge visits each centre at least once a week to oversee and monitor the centre accounts.

KMVS has a very detailed finance manual in which they have spelt out the management structure, accounting procedure & accountability required, audit, budgets & MIS, compliances, documentation & reporting requirements. This manual is being tested hence as present it is in a draft form. They mentioned they will be soon finalizing the same. However filing of reports, budgets at Sushasini office and sharing this with the secretariat needs strengthening and a rigor.

Sushasini has been receiving financial support from Paul Hamlyn Foundation (PHF) since December 2006 in the first year (06-07) their budget was RS 25,05,910 versus utilization RS 15,14,024 of PHF funds this means there utilization was 60%. Whereas during the same period their receipt was RS 26, 57,344 and the expenditure was RS 15, 14,024 implying that there was 57% expenditure. As shared by the team this was due to the fact that they also received funds from other sources and therefore they could not utilize 43% of the funds received from PHF. The above data indicates that in the first year timely financial monitoring was not done which resulted in an under utilization of 43%.

However things have improved a great deal in the second year (07-08) their budget was RS 25, 05,296 versus utilization RS 24, 08,100 thus there was a utilization of 96%. Their receipt

during this period was RS 24, 76,079 and expenditure was RS 24, 08,100 meaning a utilization of 97% over receipts.

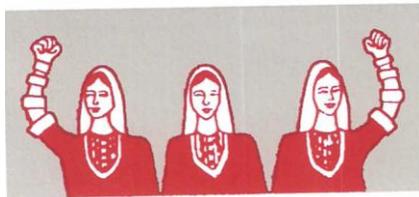
While there was an over expenditure of one half to three percent on programme (Budget RS 8, 60,400 expenditure RS 8, 63,137) and salaries (Budget RS 10, 20,096 expenditure RS 10, 51,485) there was under expenditure of eighteen percent in training (Budget RS 1,76,000 expenditure RS 1,43,937) and twenty two percent in administration ( Budget 4,48,800 expenditure RS 3,49,541).

Sushashini, HIRDAY and the secretariat of KMVS in 2007-08 had an expenditure share of 13-15% of the overall KMVS expenditure of RS 1, 75, 47,532. Where as the Media Centre were 9% and Kushal Manch 3%. In the overall frame of KMVS Sushashini is an important and crucial centre.

KMVS has a staff council of three members who are elected every two years representing the centres and the secretariat. A personnel manual guides personnel related issues like leave including maternity paternity, yearly appointment letters, provision for study leave, annual performance appraisals etc. Centres follow these policies with an oversight from the secretariat.

There is possibility for Sushasini to raise some revenue by offering its services to other NGOs, Networks within the state and outside. However they will have to decide on a strategy for this in terms of how much time they would like to put in generating revenue and time for advocacy and training women panchayat members within Kutch.

Overall KMVS and Sushasini seems to have its systems in place as compared to many other NGOs however there seem to be some gaps at the time of day to day management implementation which creates problems in reporting and retrieval of certain documents.



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## Annexure I

### Terms of Reference

#### b) **Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan**

### TERMS OF REFERENCE

#### 1. Agreement Between

c) Sushasini Panchayat cells KMVS at Bhuvenswari Apartment, 38/B Vijay Nagar Bhuj Kutch through its Chief coordinator Ms Lata Sachde

b) Dr Vijay Rukmini Rao 117, Navnirman Nagar, Road no 71, Jubilee hills Hyderabad-500033 for conducting evaluation of Sushasini cell under Paul Hamilton Project

#### 2. Time period

The resource person shall be retained by Sushasini KMVS for the evaluation period i.e. only May to June 2009 (15 days for completing the whole process)

#### Overarching Aim:

The Sushasini Panchayat knowledge centre aims to politically empower the rural women through the Panchayati Raj Institutions; and create an environment for greater transparency in village development processes.

To attain this goal, the Centre has laid down the following objectives:

1. To facilitate the formation of a Mahila Manch of all the elected women representatives in the Panchayats, both at the Taluka level and at the District Level.
2. To sensitize Voluntary Organisations (VO) working in Kutch on the issue of local self governance and the critical role of Panchayats.
3. To develop training material with regard to Panchayati Raj Institutions, laws, etc. in Gujarati and Kutchi
4. To document the experiences of Panchayats who are working in the direction of being model Panchayats in Kutch.

The scope of Evaluation work would include the following:

The objectives of the review

~ Ways and approaches of Sushasini followed is matching with the indicators mentioned in their respective proposals

~ The pathway or the direction followed by Sushasini should be changed or modify Sushasini position in handling the women and Panchayati issues in the current context

~ Lastly with the recommendation and suggestion

The scope of work would include

- ~ Conducting evaluation of Sushasini program and activities ~ preparing reports on the evaluation conducted
- ~ Discussion and meeting with Panchayati women, other related NGOs, and organization (Taluka and Zilla Panchayat) other well wishers and associates of Sushasini, (Experts and resource person)

This will however, not include the routine report generation, event documentation etc. The evaluation report will be done in English language only.

The overall responsibilities of the resource person includes:

- ~ Gain understanding on issues and broader frameworks
- ~ Meeting with the senior management for the reports (content and formats.) if required
- ~ Undertake field visits during the evaluation to understand the realities, dynamics at the field level, to collect authentic data for evaluation report.
- ~ To become oriented with the new interventions that Sushasini KMVS is presently involved in and those that it has completed.
- ~ To meet and record views of a sample of the communities ( including agewans and elected Panchayati representatives/ women leaders) and Panchayati manch as well as the organizational workers, key resource persons or partners.
- ~ To meet and record views of Government officials who are either associated with or are directly responsible for the interventions that Sushasini KMVS is involved with.
- ~ To meet interact and record the feelings and experiences of all or some of the partner/ network NGOs (SETUs) that Sushasini is associated with
- ~ The overall review process requires 15 days in total
- ~ To identify such areas where Sushasini can undertake studies so as to corroborate the facts. ~ Record the implementation and impact of the interventions.

Reporting requirements

- ~ Submit the reports on time by June 30<sup>th</sup> 2009, maintaining the quality level as required by the Programme. ~ Ensure that the final finished document is submitted as per the requirements. The final document will also be submitted in the soft copy version
- ~ Make the Evaluation report creative and user friendly ~ Add value to the reports and not more than 30 pages
- ~ The reports should contain recommendations and suggestions for Sushasini

### 3. Terms of Reference

The cost per day for conducting the review is Rs5000/day. In addition to that

Sushasini will bear the lodging boarding expenditure during the review process and also the Airfare and incidental travel expenses for both onwards and return journey

Any dispute arising between the parties would be settled by negotiation in good faith.

### **4. Responsibility of Sushasini KMVS**

- ~ **Sushasini KMVS** would support the resource person in arranging for local conveyance and facilitate the field visits, schedules, and logistical arrangements in Kutch.
- ~ Use of data -Sushasini shall kept administrative rights for editing and deleting the data or report where feels required
- ~ For communication it will be Gujrati or local language provided with a translator by Sushasini
- ~ For financial review Sushasini will arrange some expert during the review process

~ Notices, as under this contract shall be deemed to have been received if sent by registered mail or by, messenger services or by Email at the designation of

Sushasini (Ms Lata Sachde Chief Coordinator) and Ms V. Rukmini Rao have entered in to this Contract effective as the date mentioned herein above

**Sushasini**

**For Signature**

Nar~aChde

**Sushasini (Panchyat cell KMVS Bhuj)**

**For Signature -**



**Name- Dr Vijay Rukmini Rao**

**Annexure II**

List of People Met

<b>Meeting With EWRs -Date12/5/09</b>				
<b>No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Village</b>	<b>Block</b>
1	Urmilaben Nanji Nakrani	Sarpanch	Dhavda Mota	Nakhatran
2	Hansaben Karshan Suthar	Sarpanch	Angiya Nana	Nakhatran
3	Naarbhai Sumar Kumbhar	Ex. Sarpanch	Deshalpar	Nakhatran
4	Rambhiyabai Fakirmamad Kumbhar	Leder	Deshalpar	Nakhatran
5	Rameeben Arjan Parmar	Sarpanch	Devisar	Nakhatran
6	Kantaben Jethalal Patel	Warde Member	Nagviri	Nakhatran
7	Javerben jhakhu Garva	Warde Member	Nana Kadiya	Nakhatran
8	Ramiben Lalji Vaghela	Warde Member	Mathai	Nakhatran
9	Shakinaben Hajikasam Luhar	Ex. Sarpanch	Mathai	Nakhatran
10	Parvatiben Khimji Vagela	Warde Member	Rapmar	Nakhatran
11	Bhagvatiben Chaganlal Ramani	Warde Member	Rapmar	Nakhatran
12	Hansaben Karsanlal Pakar	Warde Member	Ravapar	Nakhatran
13	Kantaben Ramesh Aathu	Leder	Aiyear	Nakhatran
14	Ratanben Suja Meriya	Warde Member	Jadadar	Nakhatran
15	Purbvai Methu Kali	Warde Member	Ravapar	Nakhatran
16	Champaben Harilal Parasiya	Warde Member	Sayra	Nakhatran
17	Chandrikaben Hiralal Parasiya	Warde Member	Angiya Nana	Nakhatran
18	Hariba Ravubha Jadeja	Leder	Angiya Nana	Nakhatran
19	Lakximiben Premji Kapdi	Warde Member	Vithan	Nakhatran
20	Sarlaben Jethalal Joshi	Warde Member	Ravapar	Nakhatran
21	Rukiyaben Sumar Jat	Sarpanch	Palivad	Nakhatran
22	Leelaben Mahanlal Vasani	Ex. Word Member	Sayra	Nakhatran
23	Bhagvatiben Tulsidas Garva	Warde Member	Katda (	Nakhatran
24	Purbai Harilal Maheshvary	Warde Member	Palivad	Nakhatran
25	Jaluben Hushen	Sarpanch	Dhanavada	Abadasa
26	Pratimaben Mahendragar Gusai	Ex. Word Member	Jakhau	Abadasa
27	Deviben Rama Rabari	Leder	Balachad	Abadasa
28	Ajbai Gavid Bhanushali	Leder	Ustiya	Abadasa
29	Kantaben Hansraj	Warde Member	Chadura	Abadasa
30	Meghuben Vachiya Rabari	Sarpanch	Balachad	Abadasa
31	Lakhiben Vanka Rabari	Leder	Balachad	Abadasa
32	Paliben Hira Rabari	Leder	Balachad	Abadasa
33	Maghuben Aasha Rabari	Leder	Balachad	Abadasa
34	Kantaben Mudji Chavda	Sarpanch	Sukhapar	Nakhatran
35	Ratnben Virji	Warde Member	Sukhapar	Nakhatran
36	Jayaben Ravji Shievi	Warde Member	Mangvana	Nakhatran
37	Bhartiben Ramesh Cham	Warde Member	Mangvana	Nakhatran
38	Bhagvatiben R Patel	Warde Member	Dalatpar	Lakhapat

39	Ramilaben B. Patel	Upsarpanch	Pandhro	Lakhapat
40	Mariyabai Hajijusab	Warde Member	Shinapar	Lakhapat
41	Sarabai Sumar	Ex. Word Member	Dayapar	Lakhapat
42	Rahimabai Mamad Sata	Sarpanch	Jumara	Lakhapat
43	Jenabai Ibrahim Natiyar	Warde Member	Jumara	Lakhapat

<b>Virani Panchayat Visit Date 12.5.2009</b>		
<b>No</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>
1	Pradyumanshih Mahipatshih	Sarpanch
2	Babhuben Jayantilal Nakrani	Word member
3	Manjulaben Jethalal Nakrani	Word member

<b>Meeting With SJS Date 12.5.2009</b>		
<b>No</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>
1	Nanduba Jadeja	Secretary
2	Khata Sameja	Programme Co-ordinator
3	Jasuba Jadeja	Trusty
4	Seetaben Rabari	Programme Co-ordinator
5	Bhimibhai	Accoutant
6	Iqbal Ghanchi	Taluka Co-ordinator

<b>Kara Ghogha Juth Panchayat Visit-Date 13.5.2009</b>			
<b>SrNo</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>	
1	Vanitaben Jadeja	Sarpanch	
2	Amrutben Maheswari	Ex. Sarpanch	
<b>Panchayat Mahiti Kendra Visit-Date 13.5.2009</b>			
<b>Sr.No</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Name</b>
1	Ranjanben Jadeja	Member	Mokha
2	Maliniben Gor	Sarpanch	Vanki
3	Jankba Jadeja	Member	Bhujpur
4	Amrutben Maheswari	Ex. Sarpanch	Karagoga
<b>Munch Mahila Meeting-Date 13.5.2009</b>			
<b>Sr.No</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Gram Panchayat Name</b>
1	Sajanba Jadeja	Member	Gundala
2	Janakba Jadeja	Member	Bhujpur
3	Seetaba Jadeia	Member	Patri
4	Kuverben Ahir	Member	Chhasara
5	Khimaibai Maheswari	Leader	Nana Kapaya
6	Rajbai Gadhvi	Leader	Borana
7	Aisaben	Leader	Sidiva

#### **Taluka Padadhikari Sanstha Visit-Date 13.5.2009**

<b>Sr.N</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>
1	Shree Virambhai	Taluka Panchayat -President
2	Shree Arvindbhai	Taluka Panchayat-Social Jutise Commitee Charman
3	Shree Arvindbhai	Rotri Club-Mundra-President

#### **Ujas Mahila Sangathan Visit-Date 13.5.2009**

<b>Sr.N</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>
1	Ranabai Gadhvi	Volienter
2	Javjiba Jadeja	Ujas Mahila Sangathan-Secretary
3	Shantaba Jadeja	Ujas Mahila Sangathan-President
4	Radhaben Garva	Ujas Mahila Sangathan-Wice President
5	Ramba Jadeja	Cluster Co-ordinator
6	Jankba Jadeja	Cluster Co-ordinator
7	Giraba Jadeja	Cluster Co-ordinator(Helth)
8	Malshree Gadhvi	Ujas Mahila Sangathan-Co-ordinator
9	Megiben Samriya	Ujas Mahila Sangathan-Trusty

#### **Vanki Gram Panchayat Visit-Date 13.5.2009**

<b>Sr.N</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>
1	Maliniben Gor	Sarpanch
2	Meenaben Gor	Panchayat Member
3	Mansiben Ahir	Gramsabha Member
4	MeQbai Khimji Patel	Gramsabha Member
5	Khetbai Cheda	Gramsabha Member
6	Lachuben Rbari	Gramsabha Member
7	Hemangi Ahir	Gramsabha Member

<b>Sushasini -Partner Ngo And Sangathan Members-</b>			
<b>Date 14.5.2009</b>			
<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Village</b>
1	Rathod Vaishli j.	Program Co-ordinator	Khambhra-Setu
2	Bhavsih Kher	Training Co-ordinator	Anjar-Setu
3	Aslam j. Sam a	P.H.W.	Dhrobana-Setu
4	Samjibhai Bhutty	P.H.W.	Andui-Setu
5	Khimjibhai	ProQram Co-ordinator	Kabrau-Setu
6	Node Safi	Worker	Athoi-Setu
7	Memon Meermamad Dan	Member	Athoi-Setu
8	Javjiba Jadeja	Secretary	mundra-Ums
9	Nanduba Jadeja	Secretary	Nakhtrana-Sjs
10	Meena Rajgor	Program Co-ordinator	Bhui-Sushasini
11	Sabhyasachidas	Ceo	Sahjeenan
12	Nandini Narula		Janvikas-Ahmedabad
13	Kantaben Hanir	Helth Worker	Morgar -Bhachau
14	Minaxi Patel	Program Assistant	Bhuj-Sushasini
15	Manisha J Parmar	Program Co-ordinator	Lakhpat-SSVYM
16	Bharti Khodiyar	ProQram Assistant	Bhuj-Sahjivan
17	Ramila K Parmar	Program Assistant	Abdasa-Sushasini
18	Nayna Patel	P.C	Khari
19	Sejal Dave	Co-ordinator	Ahmedabad
20	Dheeraben Gor	Project Co-ordinator	Mandvi-Sushasini
21	Chandubhai Parmar	Training Co-ordinator	Bhuj-Sushasini
22	Iqbal Ganchi	Co-ordinator	Nakhtrana-SjS

<b>Munch Meeting Mandvi Date-15.5.2009</b>			
<b>Sr.No</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Village</b>
1	Sardaben Chatrani	Sarpanch	Jankpur
2	Laxmiben Patel	Member	Jankpur
3	Anilaben Patel	Member	Rajpar
4	Champaben Patel	Member	Virani Nani
5	Varshaben Sangoi	Member	Nagalpar
6	Oheeraben Gor	Member	Bidada
7	Mithaben Sangar	Member	Vandh
8	Jetbai Gadhvi	Up Sarpanch	Mota
9	Valbai Sanjot	Sarpanch	Jamthada
10	Hasbai Sangar	Member	Vandh
11	Vimlaben	Sarpanch	Gundiyali
12	Romatbai Kasam	Member	Gadhsisa
13	Ajijabai Sati	Member	Gadhsisa
14	Kanchanben Ramani	Ta.Pan.Member	Bidada
15	Serbanu Sameja	Member	Bhada
16	Hawabai Ismail	Leader	Bhada
17	Ruxmaniben Gor	Member	Maska
18	Parvatiben Mota	Sarpanch	Baag

**Sukhper Roha Gram Panchayat Meeting Date 12.5.09**

<b>Sr.N</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>
1	Nakrani Kaushlyaben	Villager
2	Nakrani Damuben	Villager
3	Launcha Nanuben Kantilal	Villager
4	Layncha Ramilaben Devji	Villager
5	Chavda Nanuben Pchan	Villager
6	Chavda Dahiben Ramji	Villager
7	Chavda Geetaben	Villager
8	Chavda Vanitaben	Villager
9	Chavda Shilpaben	Villager
10	Chavda Rajiben	Villager
11	Chavda Mamtaben	Villager
12	Chavda Daxaben	Villager
13	Chavda Umaben	Villager
14	Chavda Chandrikaben	Villager
15	Chavda Kamlaben	Villager
16	Chavda Vanitaben	Villager
17	Chavda Ramilaben	Villager
18	Layncha Dahiben	Villager
19	Chavda Mohanbhai	Word Member
20	Dharda Karshanbhai	Word Member
21	Gadhvi Visrambhai	Villager
22	Charan Balubhai	Villager
23	Chavda Premila	Villager
24	Coli Rahimaben	Villager
25	Coli Hamaben	Villager
26	Chavda Laxmiben Jayantilal	Villager

**Annexure III**  
**Itenary**

Sno	Date	Time	Purpose	Venue	Contact Person
1	11/05/09	Whole day	Travel due to Flight Delays		
		Evening	Deshalpar Panchayat body meeting	Deslappar Gram Panchayat	10 to 15 Panchayat Body
2	12/05/09	Morning 9:30 to 10:30	Sukhpar Panchayat visit	Nakhatrana Block	Panchayat body
		11:00 to 1:00	Meeting with elected women representatives		30 members from 3 blocks
		1:00 to 1:30 PM	TDOs and other Government staff	Block Panchayat office	Nakhatrana Lakhpat Abdasa
		2:30 to 3:30	Veerani GP visit	Nakhatrana Block	Panchayat body
		4 to 6 PM	Saiyeere jo Sangathans (SJS)	SJS Office	
3	13/05/09	9:30 to 10:30	Panchayat visit	Mundra Block	Women elected representatives of Panchayat
		11 to 2:20 PM	Kara Dodha Juth Panchayat		Panchayat women block Panchayat Mundra
		12:30 to 01:00 PM	Government Officers		
		2:30 to 4:00	Ujjas Mahila Vikas Sanghatan team visit	UMS	Office team
		4:30 to 6 PM	Syrecha Gram Panchayat visit	Syrecha GP	Panchayat body
4	15/05/09	10 to 12 PM	Meeting and discussion with other NGOs	KMVS office	Members of other organization and Sarpanch

		12:30 to 01:00 PM	Meeting with District Panchayat and Resource persons (in house)		
		3:00 PM to 06:00 PM	Meeting with Sushasini staff and KMVS	KMVS Office	Senior team of KMVS
5	15/05/09	10 to 11 PM 11 to 1:00 PM	Meeting with Government officers Manch meeting	Mandavi block	Block Panchayat Office  Elected women representatives of Mandavi block
		3:30 to 4 PM	Going through materials  Discussion with Ms Alka		Suchana with Ms Sushma
6	16/05/09	10 to 1 PM	Meeting with senior team for feedback and sharing	KMVS office	Senior team and Sushma Bahen

## Annexure IV

<b>List of Documents Referred</b>
A Baseline Survey for Micro and Net Planning in the Power Patti Cluster of Nakhatrana Block of Kutch District
About SETU, a Booklet
Annual Report 2007, Sushasini
Annual Report 2007-8, CWS
Annual Report 2008, Kutch
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Improved Local Self Governance January 2010 to Dec 2013
KMVS Finance Report 01.07.08 to 31.12.08
Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan - Finance Report 1.1.09 to 30.3.09
Narrative Report of Abdasa Mahila Vikas Sangathan Aug 08 to Feb 09
Narrative report Pachamm Mahila Vikas Sangathan Aug 08 to Feb 09
Panchayat Knowledge Center, Annual Report, 2005-06
Panchayat Knowledge Centre - Audited Finance Report 1.1.07- 31.12-07
Panchayat Knowledge Centre - Finance Report Jan 07 to Dec 09
Panchayat Knowledge Centre, Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan, Decem 2006 - December 2009
Paul Hamlyn Foundation Strategic Plan 2006-2012, a booklet
<a href="http://www.phf.org.uk">www.phf.org.uk</a>
Presentation on Sushasini, Planning for next phase Jan 2010 to Dec 2013
Promoting and Strengthening Good Governance at Grassroots, Annual report 2006-07, CWS
Swabhoomi: women and Land Ownership in Gujarat, WGWLO, 2008, January
The Paul Hamlyn Foundation, April 2007
We are Land Owners too!, WGWLO, 2007 August
WLW Training Module
Working Group for Women and Land Ownership (WGWLO), Gujarat

Annexure V  
Lecture Series

Sno	Year	Month	Male	Female	Issues	Resource Persons/experts	Presence of Experts	Date
1	2006	January	66	20	RTI			
2	2006	February	100	35	2005 Corporate Farming GR and Agriculture and Industrial Land	Mr. Mahesh Pandya, Ms Heena Thakker, Mr. Shashikant Thakker	Y	17/1/06
3	2006	March	145	60	Status of Panchayat in Gujrat financial acts	Mr. Chuni Vaidya, Mr. Dinesh Sanghvi, Mr. Shasikant Thakker	Y	17/2/06
4	2006	April	160	40	Social Justice and Panchayat Raj	Mr. Rohin Desai, Mr. Shasikant Thakker	Y	24/3/06
5	2006	May	160	70	democracy and Panchayat Raj	Prof. Dinesh Sukal	Y	21/4/06
6	2006	June	130	70	watershed and Panchayat Raj	Mr. Ahuja and Mr. Chavda (WASMO)	Y	29/06/06
7	2006	July	100	85	Primary education and Panchayat	Mr. Haresh Dholakia, Mr. Chaya, Ms. Damayanti Thakker	Y	24/7/06
8	2006	August	100	90	Public distribution system and role of Panchayat	Prof. Hemant Saah	Y	30/08/06
9	2006	September	80	100	Primay health and Panchayat	Dr N Bhadarka and Dr. Dabhi	Y	27/09/06
10	2006	October	100	45	agriculture and Panchayat	Mr. Madubhai, Mr. Vaadwani, Mr. Shasikant Thakker	Y	27/10/06
11	2006	November	164	86	Gram Panchayat and election	Prof. Hemant Saah	Y	21/11/06
12	2006	December	175	175	roles and responsibilities of newly elected representatives	Mr Rajesh, Mr. Vinod Thank, Mr Shasikant Thakker	Y	26/12/06

13	2007	January	100	60	Planning of Panchayat Budget	Mr. Babubhai, Vinod Shah, Anandi	Y	25/1/07
14	2007	February	138	110	Social Justice body	Social Defense Officer, Kutch	Y	28/2/07
15	2007	March	75	55	Panchayat Samiti	Ms Meetha Sanger, Ms Lakshmi Takker	Y	28/3/07
16	2007	April	100	75	Land Revenue	Lakhubha Jadega, Ms Lata	Y	25/4/07
17	2007	May	100	143	Women, Violence and laws	Poonam Katuria, Shehnaj	Y	30/05/07
19	2007	July	12	180	Disaster management, role of Panchayat	Mr. Bhanu Misra, Mr. Shasikant Thakker	Y	25/6/07
20	2008	January	64	120	widow pension and Panchayat	Lakhubha Jadega, Ms Lata	Y	24/1/08
21		February	32	96	Chiranjeeve Yojana and Panchayat	Lalitha and Dabhi	Y	27/2/08
22		March	85	100	2005 Act	Jeevabhai Ahir, Sashikant	y	26/3/08
23		April	40	35	Criteria for the selection of ration card	Sashikant , Jeevabhai	y	30/4/08

<b>Glossary</b>	
BPL	Below Poverty Line
GOI	Government of India
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Scheme
KMVS	Kutch Mahila Vikas Sanghatan
NGO	Non Government Organization
NREGA	National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
NREGM	National Rural Employment Guarantee Mission
PDS	Public Distribution System
PICs	Panchayat Information Centers
PRI	Panchayat Raj Institution
SETU	Organization set up after the earthquake
SHG	Self Help Group
Taluk	Block
TOR	Terms of Reference
VDF	Village Development Fund
VO	Voluntary Organization
	Working Group fro Women and Land
WGWLO	Ownership