

**Innovation, Sustainability, Development: A New Manifesto**  
***Marathmoli Roundtable Report Marathmoli 2 - Chiplun, Konkan***

**Roundtable Details**

Convenor Name: Marathmoli

Contact Email: asmitamj@yahoo.com

Participants (name and any organisational affiliation)

Shramik Sahayog

Vasanti Jathar, Coordinator, Women's Programs

Rohini Gajmal, Savitri Nikam, Aruna Bhuvad, Pradnya Gajmal, Lakshmi Gajmal, Rajshree Gajmal, Ratnaprabha Gajmal, Sangeeta Gurav, Vandana Gajmal, Lakshmi Gajmal, Vasanti Gajmal, Rukmini Gajmal and Shweta Sutar- Self help group members

Venue Name:

Marathi School No 1

Village- Gaane

Taluka -Chiplun

District-Ratnagiri

State- Maharashtra

Date: 9<sup>th</sup> April 2010

Duration of meeting: 3 hours

What is the focus (e.g. sector/geographical area) of your discussion (if applicable)?

Women and Science and Technology

Sector

Water

Health

Energy

Region: South Asia

Country: India

– **Local and global sustainability and development objectives and associated favoured “directions” for innovation/development (Note: this does not need to be an exhaustive list, rather you might choose to focus on just a few)**

- Policy for access, use and management of drinking water resources to save time and energy of women
- Policy for promotion of renewable energy
- Documentation of women's traditional health knowledge for perpetuity
- Knowledge transfer and skill development for productising this knowledge to prepare herbal medicines for the market

## **2. Forms of innovation or initiatives those are relevant to meeting these particular sustainability objectives**

Rainwater harvesting and storage of water

Promotion of solar energy and other alternative energy sources to respond to women's daily needs

## **3. How these do or do not reflect the emerging 3D agenda and other aspects of the New Manifesto draft**

These are reflected in the emerging 3D agenda.

In terms of directionality it must be underlined that this Roundtable was conducted with members of Self- help-Groups who have had little formal education, limited opportunities for knowledge exchange and have had absolutely no prior exposure to the issues of science and technology in their programs.

Yet, women have assertively presented their agenda for a directionality that responds to their needs to reduce the drudgery and severity of their labour, and freeing up time for engaging in more productive activities that will improve their income.

Participants were very proactive in demanding science and technology innovation policies to generate alternative and diverse energy sources and energy use practices to promote sustainability.

### **– Principal constraints to these and/or related sustainable innovations**

In the context of distribution, participants were emphatic that they have been unable to benefit from science and technology innovation due to patriarchal ideology that drove cultural norms and traditions.

## **5. Alternative policies, institutions or governance arrangements that could promote innovation in more sustainable directions or better support existing practices/knowledge that help meet sustainability objectives**

- Community based governance for use and management of water for drinking purposes and agricultural use
- Local governance through leadership of women's collectives
- Promotion of organic agriculture
- Forestation and campaign against illegal deforestation

## **6. Evidence (if any) for the effectiveness of these alternatives and remaining research needs for better understanding their effectiveness**

Most participants had addressed the issues discussed for the first time. Although they were very hesitant and sceptical at the beginning of the meeting the knowledge sharing

exercises gave them the confidence to demand skill building to develop and use the innovations shared.

## **Feedback**

**Please share your feedback on the Roundtable process and content.**

The Roundtable process, including the capacity building workshops, have been a very energising and enriching experience for us at Marathmoli. It has helped us lay the ground work for our future field based programming by introducing us to organisations working on issues of science and technology innovation in the field.

It was very satisfying to feel the energy and the passion of the activists in wanting to take this conversation on women's experiential knowledge, science and technology innovation and knowledge politics to the community women.

In both the events, participants shared that the engagement with this project had led to a change in their perception of women's experiential knowledge and science and technology innovation, added value to their work and made them look at their work in new light. It opened up their minds to the realities of women's routine lives and its interconnectedness to science and technology. The awareness of the participants on issues which shape science and its direction was the most important aspect of this discussion. They also expressed a desire to take this engagement ahead through field level programs.

We strongly feel the need for a systematic program to build capacity of the participants to reflect, articulate, conceptualise and implement the awareness and understanding of knowledge politics, especially in the context of women from marginalised communities, through practice in partnership with the community.