

Advancing Development

Building Alliances



Madurai Symposium

September 24-29, 2007

Madurai is a place of great historical and cultural importance. Well known as a seat of learning since the Sangam periods dating back to 4th century B.C, it is famous for its cultural and scholarly pursuits. The city had an academy consisting of critics, poets and savants highly esteemed both by kings and commoners. It was in Madurai that three successful conferences of Tamil scholars called sangams flourished.

In keeping with this tradition, Madurai Symposium is envisioned to be a development arena, where all stakeholders of development-Community Institutions, Civil Societies, Government, NGOs, Financial Institutions and Academia converge at Madurai for the convention, conferences and carnival. Initiated as part of fiftieth year celebration of Ford Foundation, DHAN Foundation hosted two successful bi-annual Symposiums in 2003 and 2005. From this year, Madurai Symposium will be a common platform for the development stakeholders to come together to share and learn from each others experience and practices.

A host of development themes are being implemented for addressing poverty across the country. These interventions are promoted, nurtured and built around specific themes of these water and microfinance emerged as flagships of development interventions. In fact, globally, no other theme has dazzled and excited the development world as did / is being done by microfinance and water. Significant changes have been brought about in the lives of the poor. The local initiatives of communities are much pronounced in the development interventions and their achievements have been astounding. In setting and shaping the future agenda, it is paramount to promote better understanding and harmony among the contemporary development issues and identifying priorities for future.

National Symposium on development interventions in the country, will provide unique opportunity to highlight the seminal contributions of interventions with microfinance,

water and other development themes besides significant achievements of women's organisations, NGOs working in various contexts, rural, tribal, urban, coastal and desert, etc. The key mainstream stakeholders – banking institutions and various wings of the Government would also showcase their achievements. A series of conventions, conferences, seminars and rallies would mark the symposium.

Development film festival, business fairs and cultural shows, involving the traditional and modern performing arts, poster sessions and exhibition of crafts from various locations / groups from India would also form important part of the symposium.

This brochure sets out the broad outline of the events to enable stakeholders to choose their areas of interest and participate in the symposium.

DAY 1: MONDAY - SEPTEMBER 24, 2007

Theme: Water, Agriculture and Environment

- Tanks and watershed development
- River basin management
- Safe drinking water
- Recycling of waste water
- Precision farming
- Rainfed farming systems
- Coastal zone management
- Organic farming

Convention on Water Movement

- Water movements and leaders
- Best practices of conservation and utilization
- Networking and shaping the future course
- Water governance

DAY 2: TUESDAY- SEPTEMBER 25, 2007

Theme: Microfinance and Poverty

- Microfinance and Social Security
- Microfinance and Livelihoods
- Microfinance and Remittances
- Microfinance and Micro leasing / Micro franchising
- Microfinance and Financial inclusion

Convention on Microfinance Movement

- Growth of SHG movement
- Microfinance and Gender
- Institution building
- Policy issues from demand stream
- Upscaling of microfinance programmes

DAY 3: WEDNESDAY- SEPTEMBER 26, 2007

Theme: Disaster Management

Panchayat development

- Disaster-Natural and manmade
 - Preparedness and Mitigation

Convention on Panchayats

- Local self-governance
- People's plan for panchayat
- Participatory panchayat
- Transparency and accountability
- Disclosures and best practices
- Leadership development

DAY 4: THURSDAY- SEPTEMBER 27, 2007

Theme: Development Innovations and Initiatives

(Livelihood, Health, Philanthropy and Rural Tourism)

- Rural enterprises and livelihoods
- Rural tourism
- JNNURM
- NREGA
- AIDS, Reproductive and Child Health, Traditional medicines
- Philanthropy and CSR

DAY 5: FRIDAY – SEPTEMBER 28, 2007

Theme: Development Education, Research and Communication

- Information technology for poor
- Gender and empowerment
- Community leadership
- Right based approach
- Policy research

DAY 6: SATURDAY – SEPTEMBER 29, 2007

Way forward

- Leads for development
- Launching new development initiatives
- Convergence of thematic / people movements
- People memorandum on development policy
- Madurai Declarations

Advancing Microfinance and Water Conservation Themes

Water and Microfinance have emerged as the vital hub of development interventions across the country. Many empirical evidences have clearly shown how water and microfinance have worked wonders with lives of the poor. The symposium will have simultaneous conventions and conferences on water and microfinance. The seminar on water will bring out the contemporary issues with regard to conservation and development of small scale water bodies. Climatic change with particular reference to Rainfed farming will be the central focus.

The symposium will focus on microfinance as an instrument of addressing causes of poverty and its impact affecting various development issues. Many impact studies clearly point to the effectiveness of microfinance in promoting health, agriculture, livestock development and so on. Further, the instrument of microfinance is building people institutions in the local context providing greater impetus to revitalizing and energizing the local economy and also enhances people's assertiveness in its interface with the panchayat and other local bodies. The interrelatedness of Microfinance with other social and livelihoods sectors, emerging ideas of remittance, micro leasing / micro franchising and financial inclusion in the field of microfinance would also be deliberated upon.

Peoples' Conventions

The increasing participation by the community in the water and microfinance movements in the country cannot be ignored. Many federations of women groups and farmers' associations have demonstrated that vibrant leadership and local management built through the enabling and empowering approach of the NGOs will have long-lasting impact in the local communities. Madurai symposium would provide a platform to the women's federations and farmers' federations to share their achievements, trials and tribulations, learnings in their engagement with development process.

Representatives from women and farmers' federations across the country would assemble and hold discussions. Large numbers of delegates are expected to participate from various parts of the country.

There would be several simultaneous sessions on various aspects of micro-finance interventions, women development, economic empowerment, banking, insurance, financial inclusion and the sessions would highlight the actual experiences from the field and expected actions from various actors in development. Similarly, seminars will be organised on Watershed development, river basin approach, rainfed farming, best practices in conservation and farming etc.

Disaster Mitigation and Management

Floods, Earthquakes, Landslides, Droughts and Cyclones are recurrent phenomena, impacting the lives and livelihoods of the vulnerable communities. The damage and destruction due to the absence of management and mitigation planning have clearly shown up in the recent disasters in the country including Tsunami. The most critical goal of disaster management activity is to reach out to the people promptly in both the urban & remotest areas and reduce vulnerability to disasters. Seminars on various aspects of Disasters would focus on strategies and mechanisms, best practices and learnings from the rehabilitation and restoration initiatives of International Agencies, Non Government Organisations, Community Based Organisations, and Institutions and efforts in preparedness and managing disasters. Stakeholders involved in mitigation and management of disasters will participate and exchange their expertise and experience.

Conference of NGOs on Development Themes

True to the country context, development interventions / strategies are quite diverse-each one unique and challenging. Of the multifaceted themes, rain-fed farming, coastal area

conservation and development call for greater attention. Fisheries development in the southern peninsula coastal area is another key driver for development and the various issues related to fisheries development will be shared and discussed.

What is more important for development with equity is the effective panchayatraj system and strong local governance. Applications of information and communication technology tools in addressing various social and development issues, professionalizing the NGO sector, development management education and research will be discussed. These areas would get more prominence in the deliberations and also the implications for NGOs' work would be debated.

Representatives from NGOs involved in development, research, advocacy, science and development, researchers and educationalists involved in rural development and women development and corporate business leaders would participate and contribute to the development debate.

Event for Public

Cultural evenings

The folk and traditional artists will perform variety of cultural programmes to exhibit their talents during the evenings of the symposium.

Exhibition

Exhibition on various development themes - microfinance, water conservation and management will be important feature

of the symposium. Posters, display of crafts / wares from various locations and groups, pavilions of women's federations, etc., would be the part of exhibitions and business fairs of SHGs would also be held.

Development films

The third Development Film Festival on 'Water and People' would be organized as part of the Madurai Symposium. This is an out reach event of the Second International Water and Film Event to be held in Istanbul in 2009 as part of the World Water Forum. Exciting images of development interventions on Water will be displayed through screening of development films in the evening of all the days. Best films will be recognised and suitably awarded.

For further details / information, please contact

Organising Committee

of

Madurai Symposium 2007

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