



Chintan

Reflective Thought With A Purpose

BEST WISHES FOR THE NEW YEAR 2015 !

The 'impossible' has indeed been achieved, we are working on the harder job of sustaining the very 'possible' with your help. We look upon 2015 as the 'year of stability' with sustained actions at the local & regional levels, part of a series of small steps reaching towards our eventual goals, relying on your continued support. To all our past, present & future supporters we say THANK YOU!

Wishing you Peace, Prosperity & enduring Joy

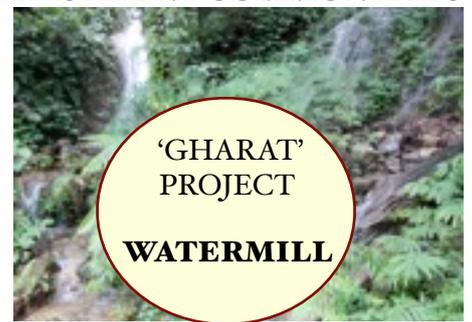
CHINTAN 'YEAR OF STABILITY' 2015

Chintan has reached out to well over 10,000 people!

Thank You!
all our supporters

Amravati in the Gehna forest, Chintan supports local women saving their forest from destruction

STRENGTHENING DISASTER RESILIENT COMMUNITIES



'GHARAT' PROJECT

WATERMILL

26th January 2015

Chintan: Year of Stability 2015

Chintan 'reflective thought with a purpose' has entered a new phase of stability.

Thanks to all our so many supporters over the years, who have helped us in so many ways. We celebrate You, yes YOU, the good human beings who have helped us to help. Chintan has reached out, in some way or the other, to well over 10,000 people!

It has been a long journey from 26th January 2007 full of ideas, thoughts & action. More recently, we have literally 'walked the talk' of many hundreds of kilometers through devastated paths in rain and darkness, through ice and snow. Many a roadblock has come on this journey, but onwards we have gone...always.

We did achieve the 'impossible' not once by chance, but thrice. Not so much by design as by just sheer persistence. We inspired a Himalayan community to clear a whole area of a mountain of non-biodegradable waste in 2010. We started a 'health service' with no resources apart from the passion of a few volunteer doctors and the goodwill of the community in 2011. In the wake of the Himalayan Disaster 2013, we entered where others were leaving, reaching isolated cutoff communities, helping directly in innovative ways, but perhaps Chintan's most important contribution has been in connecting communities with hope, thus inspiring people to work for themselves.

In 2014, the Deodar Himalayan Eco-Health Program has literally born healthy grain to the seeds sown carefully at the recently started Chintan Experimental farm. With this the ideas on health through nutrition from local healthy crops have to come to fruit. The first 'seed bank' has started, already taken up in our local area and spreading to the region. We are supporting inspired women taking this up along with land & forestry issues in their villages. Women's health continues to be supported with 'Health Camps' as before, but the focus is now on Education with 'Training the Trainers'. Environmental & Education activities have continued both in schools & in villages. 'RAHAT' our disaster relief program continued in phase 3, The 'Gharat' watermill surveys are over. Plans are now not in the 'pipeline' but final on paper. We are struggling with the increased (more than three times) costs of the now 1500m pipeline and trying to get some help from government agencies.

The ups and downs of our struggles, our interactions at the grassroots and participation of the local communities, have all added to a valuable human resource with direct experience as our main teacher. We have a small multi-use physical base of our own in Himalaya, an experienced leader and a small team of local wonderful (mostly) women workers. Our community participatory activities have grown from local to regional, with representation at national & international levels. Our support base in UK, India & USA grows with more & more people supporting our work. We have been able to and will continue to achieve, because of the support we are receiving.

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Evolution of Chintan: *thought into action*

The 'thought' had started long before the 'official' start in 2007, but in a very informal way. The earliest days were just full of earnest ideas that we intensely acted upon and fueled by our passion for the work. We did achieve much with little or none by way of resources.

Chintan is literally a thought, and we did start with thought, and nothing but thought... lots of it. These good thoughts came through many good people. It started with ideas on helping Health in Himalaya with a holistic approach. Education was to be the main medium for all our work. Prof Anu Cundy, plant biologist, added the various dimensions of Environment as integral to our approach. Dr Roger Worthinton, philosopher, added values imbibed in all our work, his words became the guiding 'Chintan thought' and inspired many of our volunteers.

Health

Many people gave their time and volunteered their skills to act on our then, 'strange' ideas of helping Himalayan health, focused principally on women's health. Our first Himalayan volunteers happened to be complete strangers, who stepped in to help at the very last moment. Dr Kusum Sood, retired from the Navy, helped by another lady doctor on maternity leave, led our first women's health camp. Dr Shagufta Yasmin was our first Gynaecologist volunteer along with Cardiologist husband Dr Sarkar Haider. Dr Mrinalini, another gynaecologist, led a team from Delhi and education was added. Dr Jennifer, general practitioner from UK was our first resident doctor and joined by Dr Sonia made our first long term resident volunteer team helping build local health services through a local NGO, CHIRAG. Dr Shyama Rathore led the first regional Health meeting. Dr Prachi, gynaecologist led our first health camps on our own, including small peripheral villages as well. Later, assisted by Dr Vandana & Dr Tanupriya, she led our most extensive women's health 'camps' including interactive talks on women's health issues. Dr Tanupriya then went on to start, initially from a garage, a primary health service, with outreach to surrounding villages in 2011. She was joined by Dr Daya Misra, who celebrated her 80th birthday volunteering for Chintan. She continued in our centre in 2012, helping a state run rural health clinic. Many local residents helped us to set up our first clinic from providing space to furniture. Anurag supported our sourcing medicines & equipment. Prof Chintamani & doctors in Delhi helped regularly. Dr Mrinalini continued her support to Chintan with health camps in 2013 & 2014 and continues to help as we devise a rural training program in women's health.

Education & Environment

Principal Mr Siddiqui started our interactions in local schools with a career guidance seminar, school performances led to our interactive talks on science, health, environment. With Principal Anuradha many activities for children followed from art to science through toys. School health Program with education, were supported by teachers of Mukteshwar & Sarghaket. Dr R K Singh, scientist encouraged the first forest survey, Dr Pandey continued the support for various science & environment related activities. The major push for Environmental action came from the many hundreds of children, which inspired the action of a massive clearance of non-biodegradable rubbish. Mantra for the three R's continued with enthusiasm in more schools including Mukteshwar, Gehna & our local primary. Anil Manral, police-officer, Lataji, Durgaji, from NGO's, Mukesh with his music, Bohraji & many shopkeepers, so many local residents, boys in the adventure industry helped our activities, many thousand people have joined our efforts so far.

Eco-health Approach

Chintan's thoughts on health were always of an integrated approach, working on all factors impacting health, particularly of the Himalayan women and inclusive of participation by the local community. Dr Reetu Sogani started us off by a Community Needs Assessment in 2009, continued with science & environmental activities, She is now our Hon Director and leads the way linking all the factors in eco-health. The work on health & nutrition through revival & strengthening of healthy traditional crops has reached a landmark with the start of Chintan Farm & Seedbank related activities in 2014. Chintan team supporting the work has been with Diwan (expert on government schemes), Kamal (local farmer), Asha (health & social), Harishji (organic farming expert) conduction various workshops. Our most inspiring local women of substance are Parvati (forestry) from Bheerapani, Kalawati (seeds) from Tola & our own Amravati from Gehna. Reetu has been working with them for many years & Chintan's eco-health effort is now coming together with the interactions and experiences of these women. Along with the scientific thoughts, we are able to advocate a locally relevant, culturally sensitive ecological approach to development. Many local farmers are helping us to promote biodiversity based ecological farming. Dr Attri, Bijubhai of Beej Bachao Andolan, Ajay Rastogi, Lok Chetna Manch, PANAP have helped our activities.

Disaster

As we rose to the challenge of helping remote cutoff areas in the Himalayan Disaster of 2013, we found new support locally, nationally & internationally. Our local DM, SSP Dr Datey were our first support, Renu from Arpan was our first direct contact in the Disaster area, as we got our team together, Chintan's friends in Delhi, Arun of SEDEM, Gulatiji and so many others helped with getting together resources. Girish Gupta, Navinji & the Haldwani Vyapar Mandal was our main donor with food supplies, Ms Jaswinder of Rah society & Uttarkhand Pharmaceutical Association helped with medical supplies, kindness of so many shop-owners, transporters including a rickshaw puller are well remembered. Mallika of Maati was our main support in the initial journeys from Munsiyari to the Disaster area. Brijesh, Bhupendraji, Retd Hav Moti Singh, Dan Singh, Misraji and so many local people, then unknown to us helped in our effort. Diwani Ram was our main anchor locally, DDO Mr Dobhal was a huge support for us in the administration, Tara Singh is our main contact locally, Harishji leads for Chintan in the 'Gharat' watermill project currently in action.

Structure

Every thought needs a structure to be effective, for us this has been a process, which is still evolving. Dr Shyama Rathore not only became our first founder member but also opened her home to Chintan in London. Our structure has been led by Mr Dinesh Khurana, IT professional, in organizing us as a formal registered Charity in UK. Mrs Lata Dodeja & Dr Anu Cundy were the earliest member supporters. Ms Coralie was a huge support in administration, Pawan Prasad, Rabindra Thakur, Sanjay Deswal, Vikas Dosi & others support us. In Delhi, Prof R B Singh, Col Manoj Rishi, Dr Swapna, Mrs Shashi Singh, Mr Harsh Kumar, Mr Satyendra Singh helped us setup. Prof Kapila, Antony, Anuj, Vinayak, Rehiji have supported. Prof M S Swaminathan, Late Dr M L Diwan were a constant source of encouragement. In Himalaya, late Mr Kanailal and Madhavan were the earliest people we met, leading to a partnership on health with CHIRAG. We were supported by Dr Sushil of AAROH & Dr Prasanna in our efforts for integrating regional efforts. Sharatji led our Mukteshwar Chapter, Dr Sujata, Ashaji, Naveenji helped with the initial set up our Himalayan centre.

Support

Many people have supported Chintan in London, Dr of Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan, Ms Monica Mohta of Nehru Centre, Mr Bharat Solanki & Mr Bharat Parmar of Care Education, Malkit G, Sujata of New Sound Radio, Darji Mitra Mandal, Lions Club of Chipping Barnett & Southgate and many thousands of people in various events.

In Staffordshire, Nasir Miah of Naz in Leek has been a constant support, Surgeon Mr Mark Deakin, Sanjeev's, BBC Radio Stoke, Sentinel & many hundreds who have supported Chintan events in Stoke, Keele & Leek. In Scotland, David & Carol of Braemar are our biggest supporters, Kirsten of Mountain Cafe, Colin of Mountain Sports, Institute of Rural Medicine, Highland Games, many people & organizations have supported us. In the US, Rob Kellogg of Colorado, Anu, Sunita, Sandeep, Marie, Vicky, Bobbie and others have been supporting us.

We have had many supporters over the years, thank you, but we still have a long way to go before this support translates into a system that supports our projects & activities on a regular basis. We have progressed over the years through the efforts of wonderful volunteers and now the time has come to stabilize, while we prepare for the next stage. We aim to give stability to our work through a regular team of local people whom we support with small honorariums.

A brief look back at 2014 activities & proposed plans for 2015-17 (details presented in Chintan Meetings Delhi & London)

Rahat Trip VII & VIII (Dec 2013 and Jan 2014)

In phase 2 of 'Rahat', we helped in the severe winter conditions with direct help by providing sleeping bags, blankets to villages in Bua and higher reaches of Madkot area through Monal organisation. Organised and conducted empowering training on MNREGA and Health. Meetings in Gharuri in presence of the then BDO and his team on MNREGA, Gram Pradhan and villagers from nearby villages and Gharudi, have led to a plan for improving access paths, water supply, irrigation and a watermill, for which we are working with the people and other agencies. Women's health discussions & trainings at Gharuri & Ghattabagad.

Discussion with Harish Tamta, a local inventor, on the ' Chintan Chulha' a new model smokeless device with reduced local fuel for cooking, room and water heating.

Discussions with Gharudi on possible community projects including watermill installation in the area to serve people from at least 7 villages in the vicinity.

Rahat Trip IX (Mar 2014)

Follow up trips by Team members

Discussion with community and preliminary survey of water source and water mill site

Continuous interaction with community in Harinagar (June 2013- Mar 2014) on traditional sustainable agriculture

Detailed Follow up of seed distribution in the area (Gehna)

Preparation of Draft Project proposal on WaterMill

Meetings with Chintan team in Delhi sharing the progress on Rahat trips in disaster affected area

ACTIVITY OUTLINE 2014 April - to present

AGRICULTURE

Seed collection from three districts in Uttarakhand , in collaboration with Lok Chetna Manch, Ranikhet. Parameters were decided and finalized with the farmers and scientists. Seed were then categorized, sampling, labeling, back up was done. Seed storage & display was organized.

Seed distribution amongst the farmers - millets, lentils, vegetables was done.

Follow up with the farmers and documentation of their experiences was done, analysis of data is to be done, a feature was seed collection from the local area by women's groups.

Chintan Farm

After discussion with the owner of the land, we worked out the modalities of Chintan farm land. We started the Chintan Farm on 12th May 2014, in 5 nalis of land near Kasiyalekh, about 5 kms from our centre.

Seed cultivation

25 paddy varieties were planted at the Chintan farm- for revival of paddy cultivation and varieties in the area. Different varieties of millets were sown in the Chintan farm for a revival of millet cultivation and varieties in the area.

- Regular follow up, documentation and look after farm
- Data collection from Chintan Farm as per the parameters
- Seed collection from the crops grown in Chintan farm
- Data collection of the stalks, seeds, etc of the crops grown on the farm
- Bio-pesticide Workshop – discussion on importance, impacts

Demonstration was done in Gehna and Harinagar, Women and men from other areas invited as local resource persons, Follow up and documentation of experience of villagers was done.

HEALTH

Women's Health camps with Dr Mrinalini & Dr Satyen were organized at Harinagar (1st ever) & at our Centre, benefitting over fifty patients, mainly women. The main focus was Health Education and Training by Dr Mrinalni, plans made for developing modules for 'Training the Trainers' approach. for future. Follow up of health camp by Asha our team member was done along with discussion on health issues with women in Gehna.

COMMUNITY EMPOWERING

Strengthening local community based organizations was our focus in Gehna and Harinagar villages. This involved interactions with community for rapport building, a baseline survey to understand the villages was carried out. A survey on the status of resources and local knowledge systems was done.

- Constitution of women's group in Gehna
- Monthly meetings and discussion on importance on women's groups by Parvati, local resource perso
- Discussions on issues relating to health, forestry, seeds & others in monthly meetings
- Survey of land records to know the status of single women especially widows as rightful owners of land

‘RAHAT’ phase 3 - Progress on ‘GHARAT’ watermill project

Following on from the work with Monal, based in Madkot which distributed woollens & sleeping bags collected by Chintan to the affected communities at higher altitudes, were discussions on making a program of life support & mountain rescue training.

- Follow up by our team members Diwan and Chandan in Gharudi village and concerned officials on MNREGA schemes
- Visit to the source of water and potential site of watermill by team member Diwan to assess the length of pipe line , material and other resources required
- Meeting in village Gharudi with community and representatives of nearby villages on watermill construction and related issues by Dr Satyen and Dr Reetu
- Visited the old site and the proposed site of watermill
- Discussions on the follow up plan with villagers at Gharudi
- Continuous meetings with Gharudi people and people from nearby villages by Harish ji
- Constitution of watermill/gharat committee comprising men and women. It has local representatives from the villages who are going to contribute to watermill/ Gharat construction through their skill, labour and knowledge and plan its management and regular look after
- Visit by Harish ji to the other villages affected by watermill, for meeting and discussion with the community on the installation and follow up
- Harish ji along with the committee worked out the expenses involved in laying down of pipelines and water mill construction
- Discussion on voluntary labour and people’s contribution also finalized
- Harish ji visited the area in Dec to meet the Pradhan (Panchayat head), BDO, Tehsildar, SDM, Patwari and Sr Engineer from Irrigation deptt for contributing funds allocated for disaster area towards laying down irrigation channels (guhls) , from the source of water to watermill construction site, in Gharudi area.

NETWORKING

- Reetu coordinated a 2 day workshop, with the support of an international network, PANAP from Malaysia for discussion on Women and her rights over resources, seed documentation and seed exchange. Women from Chintan area also participated and a follow up plan comprising seed documentation at Chintan farm was made.
- Recording for a 20 min film was done at Gehna by an Italian film maker along with an Italian researcher. Women from Gehna village along with women leaders like Amravati from Gehna, Parvati from Bheerapani and Kalawati from Tola area have been featured extensively in this film, discussing the interconnectivity of food, land, seeds, animals, forestry and health and women.
- This film on women, forestry, seeds, traditional agriculture and food would be shown at EXPO MILANO 2015, Italy, the ‘world’s biggest event on nutrition’ from 1st May to 31st October 2015.

Team Chintan

Regular meetings with team members, sharing the goals, objectives of Chintan & jointly developing monthly plans. We welcome new team member Asha Arya who has 20 years of work experience on the issue of health with grassroots women in Uttarakhand and beyond. Retd. Col Manoj Rishi long associated member, now takes over Chintan’s India CEO.

CHINTAN: DEODAR HIMALAYAN ECOHEALTH PROGRAM

BROAD AREAS & ACTIVITY OUTLINE 2015-17

In state of Uttarakhand, in Nainital, Almora & Pithoragarh district

- Developing **disaster** preparedness, mitigation and management model for coping with the disaster better, reducing the impact of the disaster ,address emergency needs in a sustainable manner – *workshops and training*
 - Strengthen local systems to address food, energy and health needs – *awareness generation, capacity and skill building.*
 - **Energy –**
 - a) Development of innovations in alternate renewable sources of energy- water power, solar energy, smokeless chulahs, biomass based energy generation and their implementation
 - b) installing and upgrading watermills (grain grinding, oil spillers, electricity generation)
 - **Biodiversity-**
 - a)Experimentation in agriculture, forestry to assess impact of Biodiversity based Ecological Farming on Human health, Animal health and Environmental health.
 - b)Participatory Documentation of diversity existing in agriculture, livestock, forestry and health practices
- Community based needs assessment** and Planning in the area of agriculture, energy, disaster and natural resource
- **Health - preventive & promotive** focus
 - through education programs, developing teams with ‘Training the Trainers’ modules in First Aid, Life Support, Women’s Health issues as focus.
 - **Environment** - awareness & action continue to feature

Details of all plans, methodology are given in the ‘Proposal for Activities 2015-17’

Thank You for your Support