

Empowerment and Development with Self-Help Groups (SHGs): Emerging Evidence and Approaches to Measurement

Event Date: February 10th 2015

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation had organized a Conference on Empowerment and Development with Self-Help Groups on February 10, 2015. The main focus of the workshop was to present how layering of social interventions such as health, on to SHG models can result in positive outcomes. The studies presented highlighted that by and large the evidences obtained after research show positive results for interventions driven through SHGs. Further, training, ongoing capacity building, well established credit linkages and external promoter support act as enabling factors for SHGs to be drivers of development. Several empirical studies were discussed along with their methodology and results. Practitioners also shared experiences from the field and discussed during the open session on how SHGs can be scaled up in a sustainable manner.

The conference was attended by more than a 100 participants from civil society organizations, private companies, international institutions such as the World Bank, UN Women, Aga Khan Foundation as well as government officials from Bihar, Andhra Pradesh and Ministry of Rural Development (MORD) GOI.

KPP's partner organization APMAS also presented the findings of the DFID-KPP supported study on *'Understanding SHG as Programme for Economic and Social Empowerment of Women in India and LIC'*. Mr. C S Reddy discussed the *'pathways to empowerment'* that has been a key finding of the study and enriched the ensuing discussion by asserting that while layering as a process has shown positive results, it has to be context specific and in the case of empowerment, various models such as Kudumbashree show that the layer of gender training is a part of the original set up.