

## Genesis of Grassroots India Trust

Poverty, hunger, marginalization, exclusion and disempowerment have been commonplace coupled with improper use of livelihood resources and community assets. Entailing the ideas of empowering the poor and excluded, a group of committed social workers founded Grassroots India Trust and got it registered as charity.

## Mandate of Grassroots India Trust

GIT aims to strengthen the capacities of grassroots communities and organizations for self-reliance, human rights, peace and sustainable development so that hunger-free and just society can be achieved.

## Objectives of Grassroots India Trust

- To strive to achieve economic, social, human and overall development of human beings.
- To support and strengthen initiatives of grassroots pertaining to development, communication, policy change, environmental conservation and social transformation.
- To execute projects of research, evaluation, studies, information, field-based action focusing poverty alleviation and improvement of natural resources, education, health, women and children.
- To act for reducing exploitation and discrimination in society through action, research, media and policy advocacy by promoting civil society organizations and people's groups.
- To organize training, educational and capacity building programs for achieving sustainable development, social change, and just and equitable society.
- To raise resources by various methods for undertaking above mentioned objectives.

## Action Strategy of Grassroots India Trust

The Grassroots India Trust works mostly in partnership of grassroots NGOs and action groups. The organization works *intensively* only in Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand. However, many activities are *openly* undertaken all over the country. Few initiatives have been pursued *independently*. Grassroots India Trust principally builds the capacities of people by providing information, technical know-how, and on-field training and orientation, which is a sustainable way of empowering the communities and partners.

## Current Programs of Grassroots India Trust

To achieve its objectives the Grassroots India Trust has been intervening at micro and macro level through grassroots action, policy advocacy and networking.

### Livelihoods, Food Security & Agriculture

- \* Rights livelihood approaches of development consisting of policy analysis and advocacy
- \* Promotion of millets and staple crops for food & nutritional security
- \* Micro-credit and microfinance, and entrepreneurship development among poor and dalit women
- \* Promotion of organic farming & organic foods
- \* Promotion of agro-biodiversity
- \* Documentation and advocacy of Indigenous water harvesting systems & practices

### Education for Poverty Reduction

- \* Livelihood education of artisans' children
- \* Legal literacy on land/human right of tribes

### Public & Environmental Health

- \* Studies on public health status & issues
- \* Information & communication support in health counseling of adolescents and gender issues

### Networking & Information Dissemination

- \* Networking with national & international NGOs, academia, media and action groups

## Special Initiatives of Grassroots India Trust

- \* **Food and Democracy Campaign:** To address the hunger and food deficit in tribal areas of Chhattisgarh, Shri Gandhi Seva Ashram (SGSA) and GIT have been executing this Campaign that strives to advocate to hold the governance structures accountable to people. This is operational in a pilot district.
- \* **Dalit Human Rights Program:** Dalits particularly in mountains of North India do face violation of human rights without any assertion or resistance. GIT has initiated organizing dalit women youths in several pockets of Himachal Pradesh. Strengthening the economic conditions of dalit women and altering the social domains so as to reduce exploitation and exclusion. Dalits have also to be empowered to let them participate local self-governance.
- \* **Tribal Lands Recovery Project:** Operational in Santal Parganas of Jharkhand in partnership of in Santal Education Trust and addressing the alienation of tribal lands, the project has been using 'litigation' as prime tool to rescue the lands of the poor tribes. Over 250 acres of tribal lands are recovered in a short period by litigating against the alienators. Litigation for about 11000 acres of tribal lands is under planning.
- \* **International Desk for Policy Debates & Action:** Executed through one of the largest e-group in the world, GRASSROOTS-in-action, an e-magazine GRASSROOTSSPEAK *south asia*, documentation & research, web research, workshops, e-xchange and e-publications, the Desk works on:
  - Agriculture, Environment & Globalization
  - Globalization and Gender
  - Human Rights and Peace

## Grassroots Partners of Grassroots India Trust

Partners of GIT are the backbone of grassroots work helping GIT realize the mandate. These partners are as under:

### *Chhattisgarh*

Shri Gandhi Seva Ashram, Sarguja  
Saathi Samajsevi Sanstha, Bastar  
Sankalp, Raipur

### *Himachal Pradesh*

People's Awareness for Rural Action, Mandi  
S.H.A.R.A., Kullu

### *Jharkhand*

Santal Education Trust, Jamtara

### *Madhya Pradesh*

Samvedna, Panna

## Offshoot Organizations of Grassroots India Trust

GRASSROOTS INSTITUTE [GI]

[www.grassrootsglobal.net/gi](http://www.grassrootsglobal.net/gi)

GRASSROOTS MEDIA INITIATIVE [GMI]

[www.grassrootsglobal.net/gmi](http://www.grassrootsglobal.net/gmi)

## Trustees of Grassroots India Trust

Dr. Basudev Besra is eminent scholar, tribal leader and activist. He practices law in Jharkhand. He specializes in tribal studies, legal issues of lands, linguistics, culture.

Prof. Kamal Dixit retired as Head of Deptt. of Journalism, M.C. National University of Journalism, Bhopal.

Dr. Aslam Ansari is Associate Professor of Strategic Communications at Deptt. of Agricultural Communication, G.B. Pant University of Agri. & Tech., Pantnagar, Uttaranchal.

Hasrat Arjjumend is development activist and researcher specializes in range of themes of development studies, management and communication. He is managing trustee of the organization.

Onkar Singh specializes in rural management, governance and peace & conflict studies. He is International Fellow of Ford Foundation.

Ashendra Singh is development journalist and radio communicator.

Ms. Sabiha Haleem is a social worker and is engaged in coordination of organizational activities.

Grassroots India Trust solicits collaboration, partnership and support of donors, development agencies, philanthropic organizations and academic centers in India and abroad.

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