

# ANNUAL REPORT

2010-2011



## RUCHI

### Rural Centre for Human Interests

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# From the Executive Director's desk

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It gives me immense pleasure to present the annual report of Rural Centre for Human Interests (RUCHI) for the financial year 2010-2011.

My long time deep involvement with the community development work has both enriched and enlightened me to acknowledge the plight of rural people and in the process strengthening my belief that in spite of low on education they can work exceptionally well under given opportunities and proper guidance.

Our endeavor is to constantly help communities in maximizing their standard of living by emphasizing absolute participation in the different programs taken up for their development. Without communities participation no program can be a success. The pace of development leading to sustainability picks up once they accept it as their own program and accordingly take decisions in implementing it.

Lastly, I would like to assure you of our commitment to provide unprecedented service to local rural communities and cater to their information, views and service needs. So far we have been consistent in maintaining high standards of performance and I assure all that we shall continue to maintain the same in the times to come. Needless to say, irrespective of the hardships and multifold challenges, our achievements today is not because of our one person, but the whole team of RUCHI which have sailed together in all seasons.

I am more than confident that your trust and faith in us will help us serve you better in the times to come.

With regards,

Dharamvir Singh  
Executive Director

Dated: 24<sup>th</sup> May, 2011

# 1. About the Organization

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## 1. Background

The Rural Centre for Human Interests (popularly known as RUCHI) has incessantly worked towards uplifting the living conditions of the underprivileged section in selected regions of Himachal Pradesh, India. RUCHI through active grassroots participation and empowerment of the communities in all aspects of their development strives to minimize their dependence on external agencies. RUCHI's focus on promoting **sustainable anthropocentric development through environmentally, socially and economically integrated activities** ensures the improvement and sustainability of rural communities and their environment.

RUCHI began as a non-profit, voluntary organization in October 1980, set up in the Himalayan foothills of the state of Himachal Pradesh. It was registered as a Society on 16 February 1983 under the Societies Registration Act, 1860.

The head office was shifted to the small village of Bandh in Dharampur Block of Solan District when the new Technology Resource Centre was founded in 1994. This was achieved through the Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology (CAPART), under the aegis of the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India. RUCHI is currently working in the southeast part of Himachal Pradesh in the districts of Solan and Sirmour, in the Dharampur and Rajgarh development blocks respectively.



From the onset, RUCHI realized the importance of providing assistance and technical support to facilitate and aid the process of development by encouraging individual and community participation in the process. Accepting and overcoming the various challenges is the key to RUCHI's successful progress which today looks back on its past achievements with pride and at the one ahead with hope.

Thirty one years on, the organization is continuing with its commitment to instill an ambience of improved quality of life, a new scenario of social and economic progress and minimal dependence on others on the part of the communities. RUCHI has remained successful in achieving this only through an integrated, multi-disciplinary and participatory sustainable development.

## **1.1. Mission Statement**

***RUCHI's Mission Statement: Integrated rural development through people-centered, environmentally sustainable action.***

With this in mind (and a view towards social and economic independence), RUCHI introduces technologies deemed appropriate to the conditions, and uses health and resource management education to socially empower and uplift rural communities.

## **1.2. Belief System**

- People have an inherent capacity to achieve - even in the face of adverse conditions - provided they are given with help and guidance.
- Resources, goods, information and technology should be shared amongst and between communities.
- People should be empowered to demand services by virtue of being human and as a basic human right.
- Women play an important catalytic role in development.
- Both development and management should be participatory.
- Social change can occur through economic stability and independence.
- Economic stability and independence can be achieved through optimal and *sustainable* use of local resources.

## **1.3 Strategic Objectives**

1. Promote and protect the environment and natural resources, through adoption of appropriate resource management techniques, generally focused at the micro-level of watersheds.
2. Promote education and awareness as a tool to improve the plight of the underprivileged rural poor.
3. Ensure that a participatory approach is used in the conservation and promotion of natural resources.
4. Catalyze the transfer of low-cost agricultural and construction technologies which will aid in environmental protection and community development.
5. Empower women and eradicate gender inequality, namely through micro-credit and self-help groups.
6. Extend our services to the vulnerable section of elderly, and promote independence amongst this section.



7. Develop areas of mutual cooperation amongst Government agencies and NGOs.
8. Improve the community health standard, mainly through preventative measures.
9. Foster an understanding of, and focus on, integrated rural development in the young rural workforce, promoted through non-formal education.

## 2. Management and Administration

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### 2.1. Structure

RUCHI's daily activities are administered by an executive director. Over and above this, the management of RUCHI rests with the Governing Body, comprised of six members, each of whom is elected for a two-year term.

RUCHI lays great emphasis on 'people's power'. The consequence can be noticed in the environment of team spirit, collective experience, hard work and commitment in which and on the basis of which the whole organization runs. Very essentially this is manifested through the 17 full-time staff who proficiently strives to achieve the objectives mentioned above. Now, more than ever before, RUCHI has long- and short-term volunteers participating in the project activities injecting fresh ideas and knowledge into the strong RUCHI team.

### 2.2. Finance and Accounts

In the current financial year RUCHI received Rs. 39,16,416.00 as grants-in-aid from various sources for the projects and spent Rs. 58,09,708.00 towards project expenditure. The details are outlined in Annexure 1 of the audited statement of accounts.

**Besides project based funding in terms of grants-in-aid, RUCHI generates income from the following sources:**

- Consultation fees.
- Infrastructure usage charges.
- Agricultural activities.

**At present, RUCHI is receiving funds from the following international funding bodies:**

- MISEREOR, Germany.
- RNZWCS-NZAID New Zealand
- Rotary Clubs of New Zealand.
- Charities Aid Foundation, UK.

**RUCHI's Indian sources of funding include:**

- Ministry of Science, Technology & Environment, GOI.
- Ministry of Women & Child Development
- ORGI (Office of the Registrar General of India)

## 3. Projects 2010-2011

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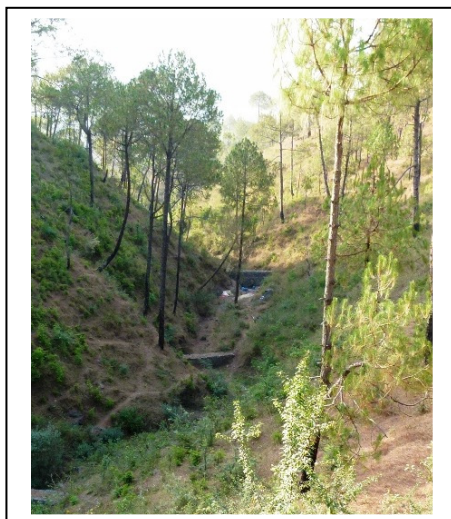
### 3.1 : PROJECT : Augmenting water conservation in “Model” Rainwater Harvesting Shyamaghat Village.

#### Project Brief

Beneficiaries : Residents of Shyamaghat village  
Sponsor : RNZWCS and NZAID, New Zealand  
Time frame : 01.03.2011 to 31.08.2011

#### OBJECTIVES:

1. *To intercept rainwater runoff occurring during monsoon season to recharge the groundwater and increase the flow of the spring, providing a secure source of water for the villagers of Shyamaghat.*
2. *Increase farm production through extension education and empowering groups.*



The project was undertaken in March 2011 to augment water supply in the Shyamaghat village which has already been developed and recognized as a successful and replicable model of rainwater harvesting in the area. It was observed that in summer the people still feel hardship owing to water shortage. Potentials were explored and it was found that there is a good catchment which could be developed to further stock more rainwater. In the coming months, 2 check dams will be developed on the close by stream and at the top of stream an earthen pond will be constructed to allow water to percolate down to earth. 500 trees will be planted in the forthcoming monsoon and trenches dug below the trees for soil moisture retention.

The impact of the previous project can be seen in terms of a clean look of village, high levels of personal hygiene, improved

health standards and rise in income levels of people from agriculture.

RUCHI's staff involvement with villages has created a sense of ownership for projects leading to capacity building for both parties involved .

### 3.2 PROJECT: *To improve the health and earning capacities of the residents of Bhogpur and Dora Villages through integrated management of resources.*

#### Project Brief

Beneficiaries: Residents of Bhogpur-Dora village  
Sponsor: RNZWCS and NZAID, New Zealand  
Time frame : 01.11.2009 to 31.08.2011

**Objectives:**

1. *To improve the health and earning capacities of the residents of Bhogpur and Dora Villages through integrated management of resources.*
2. *Ensure better quality of life through irrigation of 40% of cultivated land and livelihood activities:*
3. *Improve the environmental sanitation of the village by the construction of latrines, wash rooms, compost bins and incinerators.*

The project was enhanced because of some extra funds made available. Under the extended period, one more irrigation tank will be constructed and catchment area developed in Dora village, access to village will be upgraded through a retention wall and cemented path. The project was started in March 2011 only.

The 23 Ferro cement tanks and equal number of Toilets, Vermi compost bins and cattle feeding units, provided to individual households, not only improved the health and sanitation in the village but also leading to food security with enhanced capacities of people to earn for a living. The three earthen recharge tanks and two concrete irrigation tanks have to a great extent resolved the extreme water crisis for irrigation.

Presently the local health educator and the project advisory committee are performing well and gradually taking over the management of the project in their hands. It will take about 3 to 4 years before the real impact of the project is seen.



### **3.3. PROJECT: Sustainable Water Harvest for Food Security and Poverty Alleviation**

**Project Brief**

<i>Beneficiaries:</i>	23 Villages Jadla Panchayat, Solan District, Himachal Pradesh.
<i>Sponsor:</i>	Supported by MISEREOR, Germany.
<i>Time Frame:</i>	Exit project of earlier Three-Year Project initiated in November, 2005.

**Project Objective**

- To improve the quality of life of the rural target group through the protection,
- conservation, regeneration and rational use of natural resources.

The project was designed to empower villagers and give them a sense of ownership for their community's development through:

- Teaching them technical, managerial and decision-making skills.
- Motivating them to participate in activities.
- Improving their knowledge of natural resource management system.



A 3-year project was successfully concluded in November 2008. As a result of the work undertaken by RUCHI in this project area, approximately 15% of cultivated land has been brought under irrigation. In addition, around 9% of additional non-farm land has been developed and is now under cultivation. The impact of this assured irrigation is noticeable in the introduction of new diversified crops (e.g. fishery and floriculture) and an increase in cash cropping (e.g. garlic, ginger, sweet pepper and onion) by farmers. The resulting benefits of crop diversification are apparent in the villagers' increase in income, greater food and income security, and an overall improved quality of life for farmers and their families. Overall, the project showed people the way towards sustainable development through their own initiatives and ownership of community assets.



As an exit strategy the project was renewed for a period of another 3 years where the entire focus is on capacity building of local community so that they can take over the project management and continue with the process through efficient use of assets created under the project for sustainability and long lasting impact.

### **3.4. PROJECT: Improved Community Health Through Education and Primary Health Care In Baddi Sandholi Village.**

#### **Project Brief**

**Beneficiaries:** About 400 families of Sandoli village and about 40 school going children.

**Sponsor:** Cadbury India's Corporate Social Responsibility fund.

**Timeframe:** 18 month project initiated in December 2008 and further extended on 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2010 for 12 months.

#### **Objectives:**

- *To increase the Standard of education of migrant and poor children, and facilitate their access to formal education.*
- *To increase the Community's over all awareness and skill levels in order to reduce the poverty that currently impedes health improvements in the long run.*
- *To strengthen Village committees and encourage them to play a proactive role & act as a pressure group in the community.*

This project was taken up on behest of Cadbury India Pvt. Ltd as a CSR activity. On completion of the first term of the project in June 2010, the project was revived and extended for another term of 12 months from 15<sup>th</sup> September 2010.

This project was executed in Sandholi village and the adjoining slums to address some of the pressing problems of inadequate sanitation facilities, lack of proper awareness of rights, appalling health conditions, water shortage, lack of educational facilities for the children of slum dwellers, etc.

A Non-formal Learning Centre enrolling 40 slum children to provide them functional education was the focus of the project. Over the time it gained popularity and encouraged more than 70 children in enrolling to Government Schools for formal education. Health and nutrition aspects of children were specially taken care of through Mid-day Meals and health check up by a qualified doctor. The mothers of these children were also covered under the ambit of the project through awareness camps and OPD facilities.



Out of 9 SHGs formed last year only seven were functional in the current year. These SHG's were formed for their social and economic empowerment and have also remained central point for community development.

We acknowledge the contribution of Cadbury staff volunteers who spared time to spend on the project and assist RUCHI in executing the project.

### 3.5. PROJECT: Soil & Water Conservation in Thod Muth Catchment in Rajgarh area of Himachal Pradesh as a Model Watershed'

#### Project Brief

*Beneficiaries:* 2 villages, Rajgarh Block, District Sirmour, Himachal Pradesh  
*Sponsor:* Department of Science & Technology, Ministry of Science, Technology & Environment, GOI  
*Timeframe:* August 2006 – March 2010

#### Project Objectives:

1. To improve on the environment and ecology of the area leading to a better quality of life for the rural people.
2. To regenerate, conserve and protect natural resources and promote their rational use.

Officially, the project had ended in the previous financial year but efforts are being made to raise some extra funds to make up for some gaps and enhance the project with additional activities.

The results of the project have been encouraging in the following terms:

- 82 families have benefited and about 30 lakh liter of water has been stocked by various measures.

- 60% of the soil erosion has been decreased through measures like trenching, gully plugging, plantation, water ponds etc.
- Bamboo plantation is proving to be very effective in checking soil erosion & in soil binding.
- Vegetative barriers to the length of 4 kms. protected the crops from landslides.
- Most of the waste land area has come under cultivation and irrigation facilities have extended further
- Three cash crops have been reportedly produced by the farmers.
- Flowers like chrysanthemum, Gerbera & Gladiolus have further added to the income of the farmers.
- The increase in income has gone up by 20 – 30% annually.
- The farmer were trained, mobilized, organized and empowered through information dissemination and exposure to physical demonstration with a strategy to encourage them to take over the project in due course for self sustainability



### **3.6: PROJECT: Census India 2011**

The second phase of the project started from September 2010. The 3 MTFs (Master Trainer Facilitator) and the National Trainer were further involved in training the MTs (Master Trainers) in various districts of the state along with their counterparts from the Office of the DCO, Himachal Pradesh.

In the first phase house listing, schedules and national population register was successfully completed and now in the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase after the training of MTF's enumeration of household population from 9<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> Feb. 2011 was undertaken with great success. This was a living example of government and NGO collaboration and the partnership was so effective and fruitful that the outcome in the state was appreciated by all concerned including the Government of India and UNICEF.

### **3.7. PROJECT: Village Resource Centre (VRC)**

Two Village Resource Centres were set up at the offices of RUCHI, one each at village Bandh and Rajgarh, through the Department of Space, Govt. of India during 2009. The teething problems regarding operation of VRCs were taken care of during the year and all VRCs in the state became functional.

HPVHA, based in Shimla, is the coordinating agency for VRCs established in Himachal Pradesh. A few programmes related to Health, Accounts and Watershed were started 3 times a week and dialogues between a few interested TRCs were introduced.

The interactive sessions were interesting and helpful to NGOs and the rural communities. More such programmes are planned to be introduced in future.

### **3.8. PROJECT: Gender Disparity and Development Issues- A Micro Study in Upper Himachal Pradesh.**

Poverty, ignorance and ill-health along with work at home and outside are some of the factors causing hardship to women in the remote far flung mountain areas. Child-marriage, dowry system, superstition and low social status etc. also contribute to the plight of women.

Keeping in view the disadvantages the women face and disabilities they suffer from, RUCHI, has undertaken a study (1) to assess the magnitude of the growing socio-economic disparities in hills of Himachal Pradesh and also (2) to study impact of development programmes in sustaining the lives of deprived/disadvantaged groups of women. We plan to recommend Interventions and measures required to ameliorate their overall backwardness.

## **4. Volunteers**

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### **4.1. International Voluntary Services (IVS)**

International volunteers visit the organization for a short or a long term basis to learn, exchange ideas & perspectives between RUCHI's staff and other participants and the communities they work with. It is also a means of generating a little income to cover its administrative expenses and become independent of agency funding. Depending on funds generated small projects are also taken up with this fund.



RUCHI has been supporting both national and international students for internships as this promotes sharing available information and resources. RUCHI has already joined hands with international networks like CCIVS, NVDA and European alliance and their sub-networks. The volunteers placed through the network members help initiate inter cultural exchange, exposures/experience in community development at grass root level besides academic pursuits. 102 volunteers visited RUCHI this year.

### **4.2. Engineers Without Borders (EWB), UK**

This year 4 volunteers from EWB, UK visited RUCHI and extended their assistance/expertise in executing a project in Baddi-Sandholi village and slum area and also extended their technical assistance in executing a model rain water harvesting project in Bhogpur- Dora villages. They were instrumental in using multiple household roofs as water catchment for irrigation tanks as an innovation. These huge tanks were made with ferro-cement techniques for the first time in the area. The volunteers stayed in the project for 6 months.



### 4.3. Student Placements

RUCHI had been encouraging Indian students to join its projects during their vacations or internships in order for giving them an insight in the practical problems of the rural communities. This broadens their horizons and develops a positive attitude for initiating more innovative humanitarian projects for communities' sustainable development.

During the year, 32 students & teachers from Aditi Mahavidyalaya, Delhi; 1 from Symbiosis Institute of Management, Pune; 1 student from Jamia Milia University, Delhi and 2 students from IRMA (Institute of Rural Management) visited RUCHI and participated in various RUCHI projects.

## 5. Seminars/Conferences

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A. One of the staff dealing with IVS attended the **Asian Summit for PR Coordinators of International Voluntary Service NGOs 2010 (Asian PR Summit 2010)** held in Tokyo, Japan from October 29 to 4<sup>th</sup> November 2010. The summit helped learn new and upgrade PR skills for better execution of the IVS programme.

B. As a part of capacity building, 3 of RUCHI technicians participated in 3-day Skill Upgradation Training in innovative housing in New Delhi organized by HUDCO.

## 6. Media and Documentation

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RUCHI endeavors to update itself with latest information on programme and policies related to community development. This year also RUCHI reviewed its programmes and approaches and also conducted Participatory Impact Assessment Study for two of its projects involving various stakeholders. These reports are available on its website [www.ruchin.org](http://www.ruchin.org)



**RURAL CENTRE FOR HUMAN INTERESTS (RUCHI), BANDH (H.P.)**

**BALANCE SHEET AS AT MARCH 31, 2011**

Prev. year 2009-10	Liabilities		Rs.	Prev. year 2009-10	Assets		Rs.
3,912,337	<b>CAPITAL FUND</b> As per last account Additions to fixed assets Depreciaton of fixed assets	3,912,337 147,595 (536,153)	<b>3,523,779</b>	3,902,837	<b>FIXED ASSETS</b> As per schedule attached		<b>3,514,279</b>
860,897	<b>CORPUS FUND</b> As per last account		<b>860,897</b>	5,564,028	<b>INVESTMENTS</b> Fixed deposits		<b>4,358,434</b>
544,968	<b>RESERVES &amp; SURPLUS</b> As per last account Surplus for the year	544,968 516,362	<b>1,061,330</b>	554,549	<b>GRANTS RECEIVABLE</b> As per statement attached		<b>440,535</b>
3,538,795	<b>GRANTS UNUTILISED</b> As per statement attached		<b>1,438,857</b>	31,266 906,106	<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b> Cash in hand Cash at bank	22,910 646,289	<b>669,199</b>
2,077,648	<b>REVOLVING FUND</b> As per detail attached.		<b>2,077,648</b>	24,850	<b>LOANS &amp; ADVANCES</b> TDS recoverable		<b>32,983</b>
48,991	<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b> Road tax payable Advance/imprest	45,666 7,253	<b>52,919</b>				
10,983,636			<b>9,015,430</b>	10,983,636			<b>9,015,430</b>

**AUDITORS' REPORT**

As per our report of even date attached.

For R. Ahuja & Associates  
Chartered Accountants

Rajiv Ahuja, Proprietor.

Parwanoo, June 28, 2011

For RUCHI

Director



**RURAL CENTRE FOR HUMAN INTERESTS (RUCHI), BANDH (H.P.)**

**RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2011**

Receipts	Rs.	Rs.	Payments	Rs.	Rs.
<b>OPENING BALANCE</b>			Expenditure met from grants		5,902,340
Cash in hand	31,266		Expenditure met from other sources		8,713
Cash at bank	906,106	937,372	Legal expenses		20,000
Grant in aid received		3,916,416	Bank charges		814
Interest income		469,226	Insurance		17,698
Publications		12,400	Miscellaneous expense		773
Co-ordination		4,500	Purchase of fixed assets		57,088
Consultancy/ fee		301,000	Totem project expenses (net)		140,872
Public contribution		4,000	Vehicle running & maintenance		24,227
Road tax payable		3,928	Photostat		4,579
Fixed deposits		1,205,594	Tax deducted at source		8,133
			<b>CLOSING BALANCE</b>		
			Cash in hand	22,910	
			Cash at bank	646,289	669,199
		<b>6,854,436</b>			<b>6,854,436</b>

**AUDITORS' REPORT**

As per our report of even date attached.

For RUCHI

Director



For R. Ahuja & Associates  
Chartered Accountants

Rajiv Ahuja, Proprietor.

Parwanoo, June 28, 2011

