



Call for Papers for Conference on

Economic Empowerment of Women in East India and the Role of Women's Collectives

Organizers: XISS, C3-Sakshamaa, IAWS | Date: March 17-18, 2023 | Venue: XISS, Ranchi

XISS-Sakshamaa-IAWS Conference: Context

According to Niti Ayog (2021), four out of the six poorest Indian states are located in the eastern part of India- Jharkhand, Bihar, Chhattisgarh and Orissa. These states had emerged as, what Andre Gunder Frank would call, the “satellites” of industrializing and urbanizing colonial Bengal and continue to be the prime labour-sending states of the country. The low-income states of eastern India are known for poor development and gender development indicators and very limited livelihood opportunities, especially for women. However, women's collectives have been playing a remarkable role in promoting livelihoods for women and leading numerous initiatives aimed at bridging the gender gap in the region. Overall, the policy environment in these states has been progressive and encouraging for gender equity. The state governments' pro-active initiatives for promoting women's collectives, especially under the flagship of National Rural Livelihood Mission and National Urban Livelihood Mission (NRLM), have facilitated in organizing and capacitating women in the region in varied ways.

Xavier Institute of Social Service (XISS)ⁱ, C3 - Sakshamaaⁱⁱ and Indian Association of Women's Studies (IAWS)ⁱⁱⁱ, three eminent institutions committed to work towards improving women's condition in India, have collaborated to organize a conference to initiate discussion on role of women's collectives in women's economic empowerment in low-income states of Eastern India.

Economic Empowerment of Women in East India and the Role of Women's Collectives

The XISS-Sakshamaa-IAWS Conference is an opportunity to share and learn from experiences of various women's collectives, actively working in the low-income states of Eastern India and reflect on available data and evidence that highlight gains and areas for policy prioritization. The Conference would also be a space to instigate a dialogue about ways of strengthening these collectives beyond the domain of livelihoods and address social norms, reflecting on approaches and frameworks for their strengthening and sustainability.

Recent research establishes that along with the caste-class-gender lines, COVID-19 pandemic has also deepened regional divides and states of eastern India have experienced the greatest brunt of the COVID crisis^{iv}. The states of the region could learn from each other's experience and also collaborate for addressing the specific challenges of the region. In sum, the XISS-C3-Sakshamaa-

IAWS Conference is envisioned as an opportunity to discuss, analyse, understand and contextualize what works for enhancing opportunities for women in eastern India, in state specific contexts and wider. Participants and speakers in the conference will be drawn from among academia, policy and development sector.

Conference Objectives

The conference is scheduled on March 17-18, 2023 and is being organised at the Xavier Institute of Social Service, Ranchi, India with the following objectives:

- Enabling a platform for sharing evidence and programmatic experiences of women's collectives working to facilitate and capacitate women in low-income states of Eastern India.

- Initiating dialogue among academic institutions, development partners and state governments on the role of women's collectives in women's economic empowerment in the region.

- Envisioning ways for strengthening women's collectives in the region to address social norms and deepening the agenda of gender equity.

Sessions' Themes and Call for Papers

The Editorial Committee of XISS-Sakshmaa-IAWS Conference invites prospective authors to share their papers for the conference on following session topics:

1. Women's Access to Livelihood and Market: Role of Women's Collectives, Microcredit and the Government
2. Agency, Empowerment and Women's Collectives
3. Digital and Financial Inclusion for Capacitation of Women and Their Collectives
4. Unpaid Care and Domestic Work and Time Poverty for Women: Prospects of Women's Collectives in Unburdening Women
5. Prospects for Feminist Networks, Women's Organizations and Women's Collectives in Twenty-first Century India
6. Women's Collectives in Urban Women's Economic Capacitation

Selected papers presented in the conference would be included in an edited volume titled "**Economic Empowerment of Women in East India and the Role of Women's Collectives**". The volume would be published by Routledge and IAWS.

Deadlines for Abstract and Paper Submission

Prospective authors are expected to submit their abstracts by **January 10, 2023**. Selected authors would be intimated by **January 30, 2023**, and they will be expected to share their final papers by **February 20, 2023**.

Submission & Decision

Abstract submission
Intimation regarding abstract selection
Submission of paper

Deadline

January 10, 2023
January 30, 2023
February 20, 2023

Please email your abstracts/papers at: conf_c3sakshamaa.xiss.iaws@xiss.ac.in

Please feel free to mail your queries or concerns regarding the conference on above-mentioned email. You may also contact the Conference Convenors.

Conference Convenors

Dr Anamika Priyadarshini (C3-Sakshamaa): apriyadarshini@c3india.org

Dr Anant Kumar (XISS): anantkumar@xiss.ac.in

Prof Asha Hans (IAWS): ashahans10@gmail.com

The Organizers

ⁱ **Xavier Institute of Social Service (XISS)**, Ranchi, has been a pioneer institution in the field of development and management study for the last 67 years. The Institute's focus has been on 'putting the last first' since its inception and it is committed to work with poor, marginalized, women and children. The Institute has a specific focus on gender mainstreaming, which is reflected in its academic, administrative as well as field-level development interventions. XISS also offers courses like "Women and Children" and "Gender and Development" and has undertaken various studies and projects aimed at bridging gender gap. As an eminent institute of social service, XISS has been working in collaboration with development partners and academic institutions to approach its goal of creating sustainable societies with peace, justice and reconciliation.

ⁱⁱ **Sakshamaa**, an initiative of **Centre for Catalyzing Change (C3)**, aims at bridging gender gap by generating robust evidence to inform policy implementation. Sakshamaa nurtures collaborations with Govt of Bihar, local universities and research institutions; driving advocacy through roundtables, conferences and media outreach; and serves as a facilitating platform of implementers-researchers to support policy and program implementation in Bihar. This Initiative has also been working in collaboration with national and global institutions/universities with an objective to promote the culture of learning by sharing and to analyse specific experiences in the larger context of low income states of Eastern India.

ⁱⁱⁱ **The Indian Association for Women's Studies (IAWS)** is a professional body, registered under the Societies Registration Act. It has a membership of more than 2000, drawn from a diverse community of academics, researchers, students, policy analysts, activists, social workers, media persons and others. IAWS also has institutional members. In 2022, IAWS shall complete 40 years of its existence. The Institution has played a critical role in establishing and strengthening Women's Studies centres in India and, more importantly, in the emergence of Women's Studies as a discipline. After the outbreak of COVID pandemic, IAWS has been concerned about socio-economic vulnerabilities of women in low income settings, including low income states of India.

^{iv} <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2455328X211051432>