



ASSEFA
ITALIAONG



ASSEFA 40 (1968-2008)

An Overview

The genesis of ASSEFA has its roots in the Bhoodan Movement of Acharya Vinoba Bhave, who collected 4.2 million acres of land through 'Land Gift Movement'. ASSEFA launched community farms – Sarva Seva Farms, in 1968 to bring the Bhoodan lands under cultivation, has been rightly described as the Second Phase of the Bhoodan Movement.

Sarva Seva Farms are based on the Gandhian principles of Trusteeship, participatory approach, mutual help for sharing of resources. These farms helped the large number of Bhoodan farmers to realize the benefits of the Bhoodan Movement through a process of collective action.

Prof. Giovanni Ermiglia of Sanremo, Italy with the blessings of Vinoba initiated to organize the community farms. Subsequently, with the support of Sarvodaya workers expanded the Sarva Seva Farms in different parts of India.

Under this process, the activities of land and irrigation development in Bhoodan lands, turned out to be a major source of socio-economic development of the down-trodden and facilitated to launch a variety of other development activities.

Subsequently ASSEFA moved from the land-based approach to an area development approach with a variety of social and economic activities. These were centered around rural livelihoods, women empowerment, holistic education, community health, social security and the cultural background of the people through a participatory approach.

With these whole range of activities aimed at the overall development of the rural community, ASSEFA will have 1 million families by 2010 across 8 states in India.

In designing its programs and strategies, ASSEFA has been cautious to remain steadfast in the core principles of the Gandhian philosophy of sharing, mutual help and people based participatory approaches.

The forty years of ASSEFA's growth and development has been possible mainly because of the large number of friends and well wishers and their support.

ASSEFA, in all humility can proudly claim that apart from the local development activities, it has constantly endeavored to spread the

message of Gandhian approach to other countries and thus enlarging the ASSEA family.

ASSEFA is organizing “ASSEFA 40” celebration this year to commemorate the forty years of its service and to inspire its stake-holders to rededicate them to carry forward the movement and its mission further.