

Annual Report 2023 - 2024



Table of Contents

CONTENTS

01.

From the CEO

05.

Stronger Governance

07.

Community Building

13.

Knowledge Exchange

14.

Landscape Studies

15.

Capacity Building

16.

List of Projects 2023-24

21.

Financials

25.

People of Praxis

29.

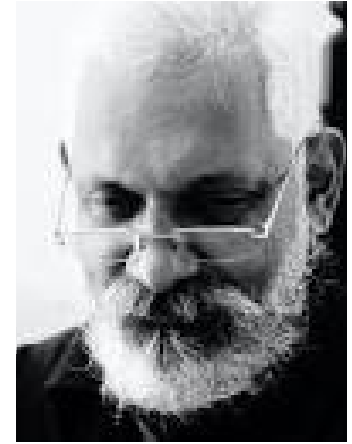
Partner Organisations

31.

List of Offices

RELEVANCE OF PARTICIPATION IN TODAY'S CHANGING TIMES

As we complete twenty-five editions of our flagship event, the International Commune on Participatory Development, a few reflections come to mind. Conversations around participation and inclusion have become buzzwords in today's world, and everyone acknowledges their importance. When we started more than a quarter of a century ago,



the appetite for participation was driven by a search for what bottom-up development processes could look like. Participation was recognised as a tool for democratisation, one that aimed to challenge the status quo by bringing people historically and traditionally excluded from development discussions back into the conversation.

Participation and inclusion went hand in hand because participation was never about getting more numbers but about facilitating critical thinking on issues of exclusion and the processes that actively marginalise sections of the population.

Has the process of scaling up participation diluted the original concepts it was meant to achieve? Can it still challenge the status quo, or is it fast becoming a tool to gain majority approval for maintaining it?

Participation is not just about making development outcomes accessible to all. It is about ensuring they are equitable and sustainable. This can only happen when the real causes of exclusion are identified, discussed, debated, and addressed. It requires the visibility and amplification of the invisible and unheard, so that truly bottom-up solutions can be discovered.

Over the past year, our work has sought to question knowledge hierarchies and encourage critical thought. In diverse contexts, ranging from communities impacted by climate change to those marginalized by their social identity or occupation, we have engaged with the concept of critical reflection, or 'Sindhanai*'.

Why do Irular and Bediya communities in Madhya Pradesh and Tamil Nadu face discrimination in accessing education, livelihoods, and healthcare? How can sanitation workers in Uttar Pradesh negotiate for their rights? What bargaining power do the people in the ecologically fragile Sundarbans have in the ongoing climate debate, even as climate change leads to school dropouts, trafficking, violence, economic losses, and frequent natural disasters? Can natural leaders in Jharkhand find local, community-led answers to child protection? How can resources be allocated appropriately to challenge practices such as caste-based occupations?

To answer these questions, it is crucial to engage critically with marginalised communities by placing them at the centre. Including the voices of excluded people deepens democratic processes and ensures that change is both equitable and inclusive.

As we embark on yet another year, we continue to grapple with what participation means in today's world. We reflect on our own contribution to retaining the politics of participation and our relevance in these changing times. As we do so, we invite you to join us on this introspective journey, so that together, we can make the world more equitable and inclusive.

- Tom Thomas

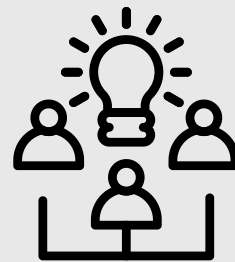
*Sindhanai, which means critical reflection in Tamil, gives its name to an initiative where Praxis has engaged with emerging evaluators from across the country to understand perspectives of current evaluation ecosystems and the systems and structures that shape them



PROJECTS



2023-24 A Snapshot



4096

people directly part of
research / trainings

10



organisations
partnered with



2758

people supported with
entitlements

INITIATIVE FOR CHILDREN IN BIHAR

In collaboration with UNICEF, Praxis carried out a comprehensive review of the State Plan of Action for Children (SPAC) for the Social Welfare Department of the Government of Bihar. As part of the assignment, Praxis engaged with officials of 14 departments and eight government agencies in Bihar, experts on child rights, gender and disability, as well as service providers on the ground to strengthen the SPAC. As part of the exercise, Praxis also evolved the District Plan of Action for Children for Purnea and Araria districts. This revision aimed at incorporating principles of equity, inclusivity for individuals with disabilities, preparedness for disasters, and adaptability to climate change impacts and provide the government a structured, monitorable action plan with targets and measurement. The plan looked at the four child rights principles of survival, development, protection and participation and located responsibilities across health, education, nutrition, WaSH, protection, adolescent empowerment and Panchayats Raj Institutions.



CHILD PROTECTION BY COMMUNITY

The inter-agency participatory action research initiative, aimed at establishing a community-led child protection mechanism, is being implemented in 20 locations across Khunti (12) and Topchanchi (8) blocks of Jharkhand. Its goal is to understand the value added by bottom-up, community-led child protection initiatives, working in collaboration with the formal child protection systems. Around 320 people in Topchanchi and 434 in Khunti, including adolescents and adults from diverse social groups such as SC, ST, PVTG, OBC, and Muslims are actively shaping this process. In 2023, the intervention primarily focused on developing a Panchayat Collaboration Model, for engagement between communities and panchayats (*see photo below*), which recognises the broader social, economic, and environmental factors influencing child well-being. It highlights the interconnected nature of child well-being and underscores the importance of creating child-friendly environments both within and beyond community boundaries.



EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES ENGAGED IN SANITATION WORK

COMMUNITY BUILDING

The APPI project undertaken during the reporting period of April 2023 to March 2024 focused on empowering communities involved in sanitation work in Tamil Nadu (Viruthunagar, Theni and Dindugal) and Uttar Pradesh (Jalaun). The key objectives included leadership development to amplify change, nurturing community awareness and action groups, facilitating access to entitlements, and encouraging alternative livelihoods. In Tamil Nadu, 128 fellows received participatory training, while 80 Community Awareness and Action Groups (CAAG) were formed across villages, actively discussing issues such as rights, entitlements, and the eradication of manual scavenging. Over 2300 applications for social schemes were submitted and received. The team also facilitated sanitation workers' access to social security schemes and created job alternatives through entrepreneurship. In Uttar Pradesh, 37 CAAGs were formed. They conducted training programs (*see photo below*). 329 applications for social schemes were submitted and received. The project consistently raises awareness, enhancing leadership among community members, and making significant progress toward the eradication of manual scavenging.



STRENGTHENING MONITORING OF INTER-STATE PROGRAMME

Praxis established a baseline for the new programme cycle of the Swallows South India programme which is spread across eight states. The process of establishing the programme baseline was done through participatory approaches and community engagement.

The work addresses three critical areas: Food Sovereignty, Women's Rights, and Environment and Climate. Across these domains, the network lead and their partners strive to promote equitable access to resources, sustainable farming practices, gender equality, and climate resilience. By empowering communities and advocating for systemic change, they aim to mitigate the adverse effects of climate change and environmental degradation while fostering a more just and sustainable future for all.

The overall goal of the project is to empower marginalised communities to claim their rights to gender equality, ecologically sensitive and sustainable livelihoods, food sovereignty and climate justice through solidarity and collective action for a socially just society. The baseline study was conducted along with three partner organisations i.e. Keystone, Evidence and Grameen Mahila Okkutta.



HAMLET-BASED PUBLIC HEALTH INTERVENTION

A baseline survey of 833 households was conducted in Morena in Madhya Pradesh and Krishnagiri in Tamil Nadu to identify needs and co-create relevant activities to address those needs. The focus of the programme is on health and education-related awareness, access to government schemes, and enhanced livelihoods. To steer the work, Community Health Workers underwent training focusing on facilitation skills and understanding vulnerability (*see photo below*). Additionally, a total of 129 individuals accessed various government schemes.



UNDERSTANDING GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL IN GARMENT WORK

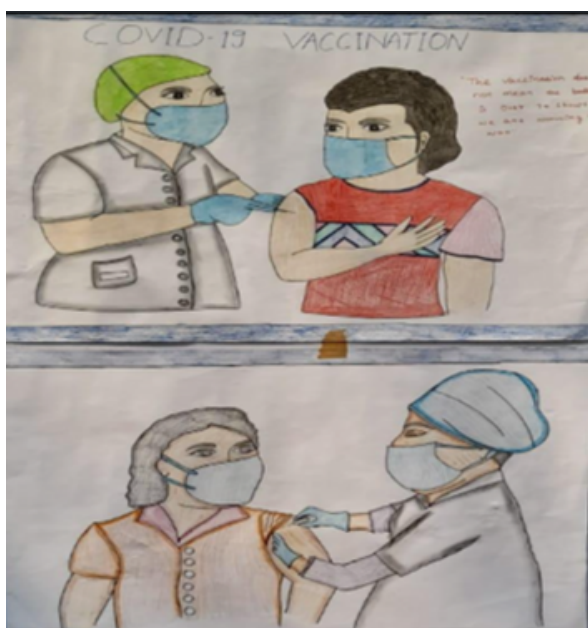
The project aims to engage with workers, experts and selected suppliers to develop an understanding of the grievance-related situation in the garment sector and seek their inputs for developing a framework for grievance redressal mechanism in the context of the Indian garment sector. As part of this Praxis is working to Identify key elements that contribute to the success and failures of grievance redressal mechanisms and finding potential and existing linkages between varied grievance redressal mechanisms that enable effective access to remedy for garment workers.

IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE OF MIGRANT WORKERS

The Action Reflection model for improving the quality of life of migrant labourers and urban poor is aimed at addressing the pressing challenges faced by this vulnerable population residing in the slums within the municipal area of Patna. To achieve this objective, the project focuses on collecting and compiling information from slums using participatory tools, interacting with women on the issues of health, hygiene and gender relations, strengthening urban livelihoods, and working with children through educational and cultural activities. By combining these strategies, the Action Reflection model aspired to create a positive impact on the lives of migrant labourers in Patna's slums. Ultimately, the project aims to bring about sustainable improvements in their living conditions, health, livelihoods, and overall well-being, contributing to a more inclusive and equitable urban environment.

BUILDING AWARENESS & UPTAKE OF GOVERNMENT SCHEMES

The Collect Risk Communication & Community Engagement (C-RCCE) initiative, supported by UNICEF India, operated in 11 states, across 70 districts and 560 hamlets, with marginalised communities. Launched in 2021-2022, it initially promoted COVID-19 safety and services, and later built an uptake for vaccination enhancing community engagement and service access. Activities included recruiting and orienting 560 fellows from marginalised communities, building their capacity to access vaccination and entitlements, and collecting and analysing gender-disaggregated data. The fellows used Gram Sabha meetings for engagement with stakeholders and creating a real-time online dashboard for feedback. (See *publicity images below*). In 2023-24, visibility events were organised in West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh to honour community influencers and leaders, faith leaders, PRI members, and SHG leaders who were involved in these activities over the past few years. These events celebrated their contributions in promoting broader community health participation, and strengthening government communication, reaching out to 1,396 participants.



PEOPLE-CENTRED DEVELOPMENT IN THE SUNDARBANS

COMMUNITY BUILDING

Praxis leads a consortium of seven organisations, working on a people-centred model of development in the ecologically vulnerable Sundarbans region of West Bengal. Through this initiative, partners formed more than 100 groups of adolescents, women farmers, marginal farmers and migrant workers in the Patharpratima block of South 24 Parganas, which has a population of 1 lakh persons. Over the last year, Praxis anchored a series of community feedback processes, where the group members reviewed their own journeys and identified goals for the future. Besides this, Praxis trained the consortium partners on documentation (*see photo below*) and participatory action research and supported partner activities. The consortium members engaged with the Panchayat, facilitated models of climate-adaptive livelihoods, engaged in the plantation of mangrove saplings and worked towards strengthening government services in several Panchayats. They also supported communities in engaging with stakeholders from the Agriculture Department, school department and ICDS services.



SPACES FOR KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE ON HEALTH

A landscaping and design initiative called 'Centres for Exchange' explores diverse approaches to knowledge exchange between communities and researchers in the context of public health, and to design more equitable, effective and meaningful roles for communities in the research ecosystem. In the landscaping phase of the project, 4 case studies were developed after in-depth interviews with key stakeholders from 4 organisations to understand their operational methodology for community engagement and knowledge exchange. Furthermore, a place-based design workshop (see photo below) was held with participants from various organisations to further explore the key insights from the analysis of the case studies and build a model for the Centres for Exchange.



UNPACKING ENVIRONMENT AND PARTICIPATION,

Praxis undertook a comprehensive study for the Environment Programme of a donor organisation aimed at delving into the intricate interplay of participation and equity within partner organisations dedicated to climate and environmental goals. The study's core focus lies in unravelling the nuanced dimensions of participation and equity within this dynamic landscape. Using the data drawn from website reviews and interviews, In 2023-24, Praxis finalised the report unpacking the element of participation within their work. The study looked at a range of organisations from grassroots organisations to regrating organisations, from advocacy specialists to climate innovators.

DEEPENING UNDERSTANDING OF EVALUATION ECOSYSTEM

A Southern-led research landscape research with the primary objective of deepening the understanding of the evaluation ecosystem in international development work. For this landscape study, the team interviewed more than 100 key stakeholders positioned in diverse points of the evaluation ecosystem including more than 15 global donors and regional evaluation platforms. The team co-facilitated South-South and South-North joint analysis sessions, connecting diverse actors usually disconnected, but strongly united by evaluation practices that often neglect innovation and indigenous narratives and knowledge. Through this study, the aim was to influence and foster collaboration to drive transformative change within the evaluation ecosystem on a global scale.

TRAINING ON PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT

The 25th edition of TheWorkshop2023 was held at Ecumenical Christian Centre (ECC) from October 9 - 13, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India. The event brought together 40 participants from various parts of India and countries including the USA, UK, Nepal, Bangladesh, Malaysia and Thailand.

TheWorkshop featured modules on

1. Participatory Methods and Approaches
2. Community - Led Child Protection

These modules were designed to delve into critical aspects of participation in various contexts, fostering insightful discussions, and promoting cross-cultural learning among participants.



Relief of the Poor

S.No	Project Title	Project Details
1	State and District Plans of Action for Children, Bihar	Praxis supported the development of the State Plan of Action for Children, Bihar (2023-2027) and, the District Action Plans for Children (2023-2027) for Purnea and Araria in consultation with UNICEF for the Social Welfare Department, Government of Bihar
2	Stich Access to Remedy Landscape Mapping Study	The project aims to engage with workers, experts and selected suppliers to develop an understanding of the grievance-related situation in the garment sector and seek their inputs for developing a framework for grievance redressal mechanism in the context of the Indian garment sector.
3	Community Led Child Protection - Jharkhand	An inter-agency initiative in 20 locations across Khunti and Topchanchi, Jharkhand, aimed to establish a community-led child protection mechanism in collaboration with formal systems. The program supported 754 participants from diverse social groups to develop a Panchayat Collaboration Model to address the social, economic, and environmental factors affecting child well-being.
4	Migrant workers in slums	The Action Reflection model aims to improve the quality of life for migrant laborers living in the slums of Patna. The project addresses challenges faced by vulnerable population by gathering data through participatory methods, focusing on health, hygiene, and gender issues among women, strengthening urban livelihoods, and engaging children in educational and cultural activities.

Relief of the Poor

S.No	Project Title	Project Details
5	Baseline Study Community Engagement	A baseline for a new programme cycle of an eight-state programme was established through participatory approaches and community engagement. The work addresses three critical areas: Food Sovereignty, Women's Rights, and Environment and Climate.
6	Community Development - South 24 Parganas	Praxis leads a consortium of seven organizations promoting people-centered development in the ecologically vulnerable regions of Sundarbans, West Bengal. The initiative formed over 100 groups of adolescents, women farmers, marginal farmers, and migrant workers in Patharpratima block of South 24 Parganas. Praxis facilitated several learning processes. Key aims of the project includes creating climate-adaptive livelihoods, planting mangroves, improving government services, and supporting community access to rights, entitlements, and subsidies.
7	Access to Education and Livelihood Program for Sanitation Work	The project aims to support sanitation workers in Tamil Nadu (Viruthunagar, Theni, Dindugal) and Uttar Pradesh (Jalaun) to build community awareness and develop leadership by supporting education and livelihood related entitlements

Education

S.No	Project Title	Project Details
1	Landscape research on evaluation ecosystem	A Southern-led research landscape research aimed to deepen the understanding of the evaluation ecosystem and influence and foster collaboration within it on a global scale.in international development work. The team interviewed more than 100 key stakeholders in diverse points of the evaluation ecosystem including more than 15 global donors and regional evaluation platforms.
2	International workshop on participatory development	The 25th edition of the Praxis International Commune on Participatory Development, TheWorkshop 2023 was held at ECC, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India from October 9 - 13, 2023. The workshop ran two modules and attracted 40 participants from around the globe.

Health

S.No	Project Title	Project Details
1	Knowledge Centre on Public Health Project	The project involved creating a Centre-for Exchange for researchers and communities working in the context of public health based on insights from four case studies.
2	COLLECT Risk Communication & Community Engagement	The second intervention phase of a health-focused project looked at behavioural shifts in three themes — vaccination for 11-17-year-olds, early initiation of breastfeeding, and sustained toilet use through in-person trainings for 70 district coordinators and 10 state-level events for partners.
3	A Public Health Community Health Worker-Delivered Intervention	The programme focused on improving access to health among vulnerable communities while also supporting their access to education, government entitlements and enhancing livelihoods. To steer the work, a baseline survey was conducted and Community Health Workers underwent a training. A total of 129 individuals accessed various government schemes.

Environment

S.No	Project Title	Project Details
1	Climate and participation study	Praxis carried out a landscape study mapping the participatory approaches practised by organisations working in climate change and environment space, fespecially those focused on



FINANCIALS

MATRIX SCORING

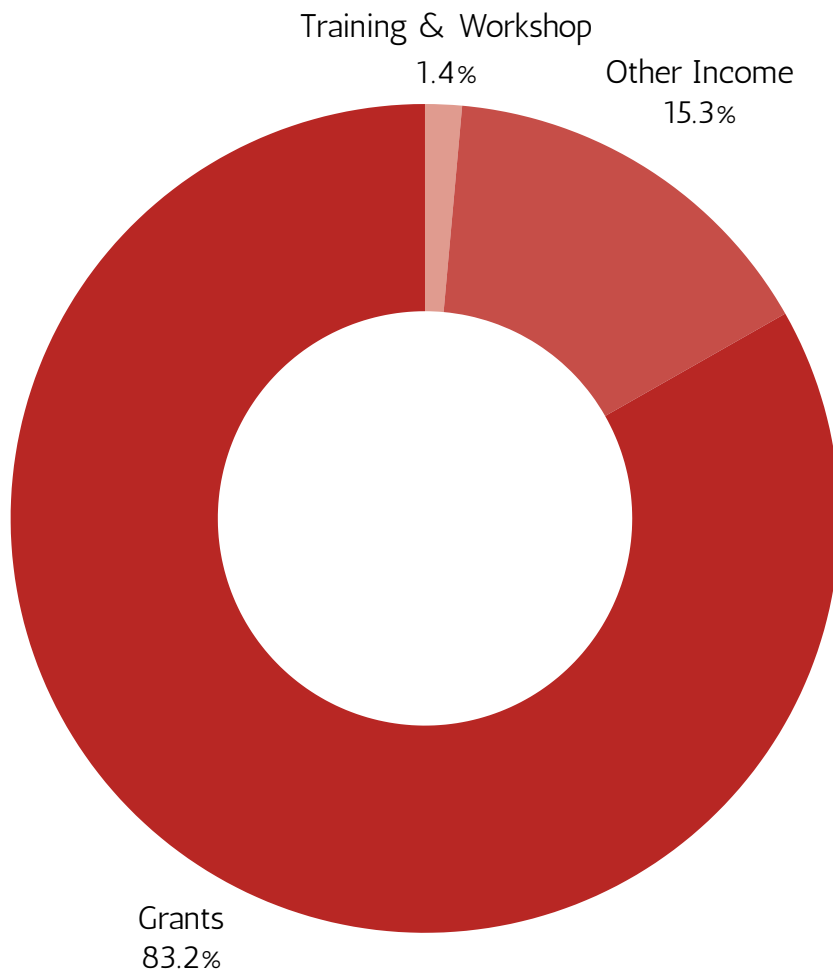
Criteria	Level of Education	Cost of Education	INCOME	LOCATION	TOTAL
FARMER	●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●	19
COMPUTER ENGINEER	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●	21
DRIVER	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●	16
MASON	●●	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●	13
TEACHER	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●	24



SOURCES OF FUNDING

(Figures in Rs. 000's)

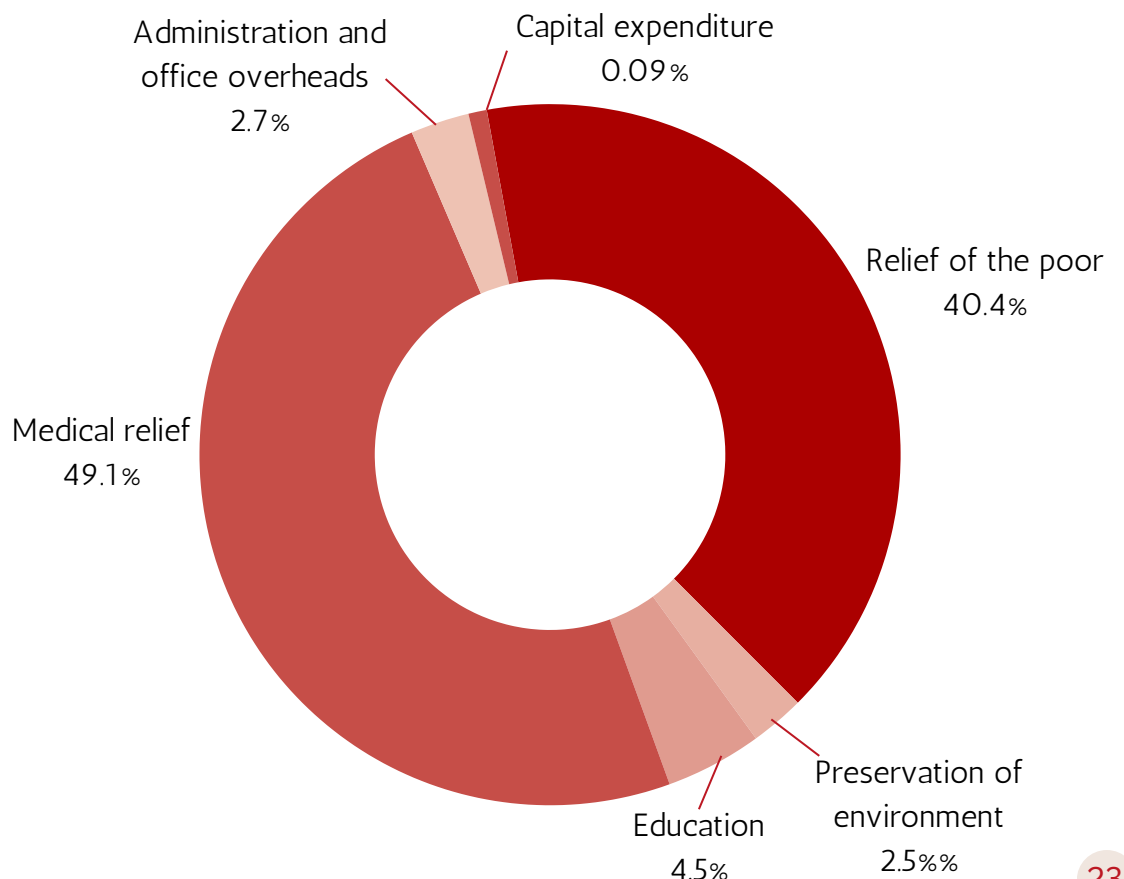
ACTIVITY	2023-24	%	2022-23	%
Grants	72212	83.22	51304	82.66
Other Income	13316	15.34	9769	15.74
Training and Workshop	1242	1.43	991	1.60
GRAND TOTAL	86770	100	62064	100



DISTRIBUTION OF EXPENDITURE

(Figures in Rs. 000's)

ACTIVITY	2023-24	%	2022-23	%
Medical Relief	34341	49.09	124	0.21
Relief of the Poor	28259	40.40	46772	77.47
Education	3110	4.45	9273	15.36
Preservation of Environment	1747	2.50	0	0.00
Institutional Development	0	0.00	425	0.70
Administration and Office Overheads	1897	2.71	3465	5.74
Capital Expenditure	597	0.85	319	0.53
GRAND TOTAL	69951	100	60378	100



COMPLIANCE

COMPLIANCE WITH SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF WOMEN AT THE WORKPLACE (PREVENTION, PROHIBITION AND REDRESSAL) ACT 2013

The mandatory Internal Complaints Committee is in place. The teams were oriented on the composition of the committee and complaint mechanisms and what constitutes sexual harassment followed by a discussion on the same.

No incidents of sexual harassment were reported in the financial year 2023-24.



PEOPLE OF PRAXIS



MANAGING COMMITTEE

Tomy Mathew (President)

Tomy Mathew heads Elements, a business endeavour committed to organic and fair trade. He is the founder promoter of Fair Trade Alliance Kerala, a small farmer collective of 5,000 farmers in the Western Ghats of India, engaged in environmentally sensitive stewardship of the soil and trade justice. Tomy was previously the Vice President, Corporate Communications, Alacrity Group of Companies, Chennai.

Tom Thomas (Secretary)

Tom has close to three decades of experience in the development sector. His association with Praxis began in 2000 when he took over as CEO. Prior to joining Praxis, he held senior positions with Action Aid in India, Bangladesh and the UK. He has led Praxis on several important assignments, both nationally and internationally. As the convener of Corporate Responsibility Watch, a coalition of organisations and individuals tracking responsible business in India, and as a member of several national and international civil society coalitions furthering the idea and Praxis of community participation, he has been an ardent advocate of business and human rights.

Maria Shobana (Treasurer)

Shobana worked in the Railway Audit Wing of the Indian Audit and Accounts Department for more than two decades. Her work included inspection of Railway offices and compilation of findings and submission of reports to Railway Officers. The final report for the entire Railways is laid on the table of Parliament. Her scope of work also included reviewing projects in the Integral Coach Factory and Workshops/Stores of Southern Railway and the complete working of all departments of the Southern Railway Headquarters and Divisions.

Her experience includes evaluating risk management, and governance systems and providing recommendations for improving the organisation's operations in terms of effectiveness and efficiency. Shobana has worked as a consultant on some of Praxis' projects and has been an internal auditor for Praxis.

Dr. T S Syamala (Member)

Syamala is a Professor and Head at the Population Research Centre, Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bangalore. Trained in Anthropology and Population Sciences, she has over two decades of experience in research and teaching.

Her broad research interests are population ageing, reproductive and child health and public health issues. She has worked on issues related to menopause in the Indian context, issues on infertility and also on the different dimensions on ageing in the Indian context. She has been involved with several large-scale studies such as National Family Health Survey, Building Knowledge Base on Ageing in India and Ageing and Well-being in the globalized world.

Christy Abraham (Member)

Christy Abraham has more than 30 years of experience, working on a range of development and human rights issues, such as disability, HIV/AIDS, and women's rights. She has significant grounded experience in mobilising communities, formation of networks, community-based organisations and building a perspective on rights, voice, civil society space, and access to justice. She has worked with a wide range of organisations ranging from ActionAid India, ActionAid International, The Association of People with Disability, and SPID Consulting Ltd. She is also on the Board of Leprosy Mission Trust, New Delhi, Treasurer, Ashraya, Bengaluru and Founder Trustee Ysmen International Trust, Bengaluru.

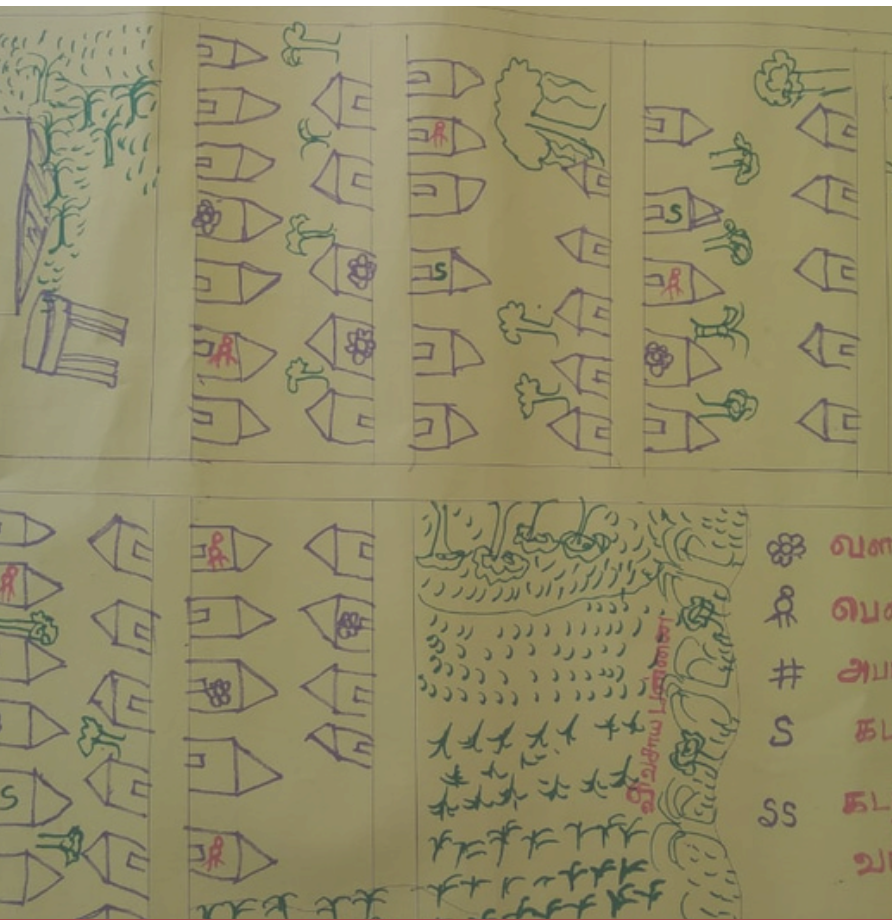
GENERAL BODY MEMBERS

Members of the Managing Committee are also on the General Body. In addition, the General Body has the following members:

- **Albertina Almeida**
- **Prof. Dr Arif Hassan**
- **Dr Robert Chambers**
- **Mr Shankar Venkateswaran**



PARTNER ORGANISATIONS



PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

Azim Premji Foundation
CCFD - Terre Solidaire
Child Resilience Alliance
Ethical Trading Initiative
Ford Foundation
New York University
Oak Foundation
Pivot Collective
The Swallows India
UNICEF

LIST OF OFFICES



PRAXIS

info@praxisindia.org | www.praxisindia.org