

About Sankalpa Trust

Sankalpa Trust has signed an MOU with **Development Alternatives, New Delhi** to collaborate in the development of technologies and promotion of products, processes and services in programs relating to environmental management, shelter, agriculture, water, energy, recycling, small-scale industry and such other fields of common interest.

The activities of **Sankalpa** cover the following:

(a) Areas that define **sustainable development**¹ initiatives, including:

- Research, design, development and dissemination of appropriate technologies;
- Environmental/energy management systems, and
- Effective people-oriented institutions and policies.

(b) Socio-economic and environmental factors that empower rural communities, including the promotion of:

- **Sustainable livelihood**² programs;
- Computer-Mediated Communications (CMC) based primary education programs;
- Creativity and the pursuit of excellence in all avenues of the arts and sciences;
- The rediscovery of the rich heritage and potentials of India;
- Social awareness by engaging in social activism.

The principal office bearers of Sankalpa Trust are: *(details available on request)*

Shri Subhas Mukhopadhyay, President

Poet Laureate and a pillar of our society; he has numerous awards and citations from International and National bodies for his outstanding contributions to the betterment of humanity.

Dr. Subhrankar Mukherjee, Managing Trustee & Secretary

Dr. Mukherjee has more than 25 years of industrial, IT, academic and social work experience.

Mr. Subhankar Mukhopadhyay, Trustee

Mr. Mukhopadhyay has more than 30 years of industrial and social work experience.

¹ **Sustainable Development** as a concept became fashionable in intellectual circles following the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), and the subsequent emergence of *Agenda 21* and the *Rio Declaration*. The concept addresses the complex and inter-related issues concerning energy and the environment on the one hand, and the incompatibility of present development patterns on the other. Thus the need for a *sustainable method of development* to achieve the goal of a '*positive and lasting development of our planet's resources and population*'.

² **Sustainable Livelihood** is a job that gives a decent income, gives some status in society and some dignity and meaning in life. It also conserves and, if possible, regenerates the environment. It provides opportunities for people to work right in their own community instead of having to migrate to the slums of a big city. And the purchasing power and lifestyle provided by such a livelihood would be at least comparable to that of a factory worker in an urban area, where the wages have to be much higher than in the village to compensate workers for higher costs of living. - *Adapted from a lecture by Dr Ashok Khosla at the UN, New York, 30th April 2001.*

OBJECTIVES:

The **objectives** of Sankalpa are as follows:

- (a) To promote self-reliant, sustainable, scientific, effective and reusable development models and appropriate technologies that conserve natural resources for the betterment of the lives of the poor and disadvantaged people of India in general, and the rural people in particular, and their environment;
- (b) To facilitate the establishment of community organizations to access skills and resources to implement projects aimed at self-help, self-sufficiency, sustainability and improvement in the quality of lives of the underprivileged;
- (c) To promote primary education and distance education for the masses, especially the rural masses, by using, conducting research & development, designing, producing, distributing and disseminating conventional and electronic media, multimedia communications products and services, the Internet and computer-based teaching and training materials, products and services;
- (d) To transform Indian society from deprivation and oppression towards liberty, justice and equality among people irrespective of their origin;
- (e) To aid and sustain a vibrant non-government sector working constructively with the rest of the civil society, government, private sector and international communities for the benefit of humanity as a whole.
- (f) To carry out research, design, development and widespread dissemination and diffusion of appropriate technologies, products and services for use by the underprivileged through appropriate intervention strategies that make available these outputs as well as the tools they need to maintain them;
- (g) To undertake multidisciplinary study, investigations and research and develop economic and environmentally sound designs and management practices for development programs and activities.
- (h) To promote creativity and the pursuit of excellence in all branches of the arts and sciences.

ACTIVITIES:

Sankalpa is actively engaged in a number of socially relevant projects, including:

1 World Bank funded research project:

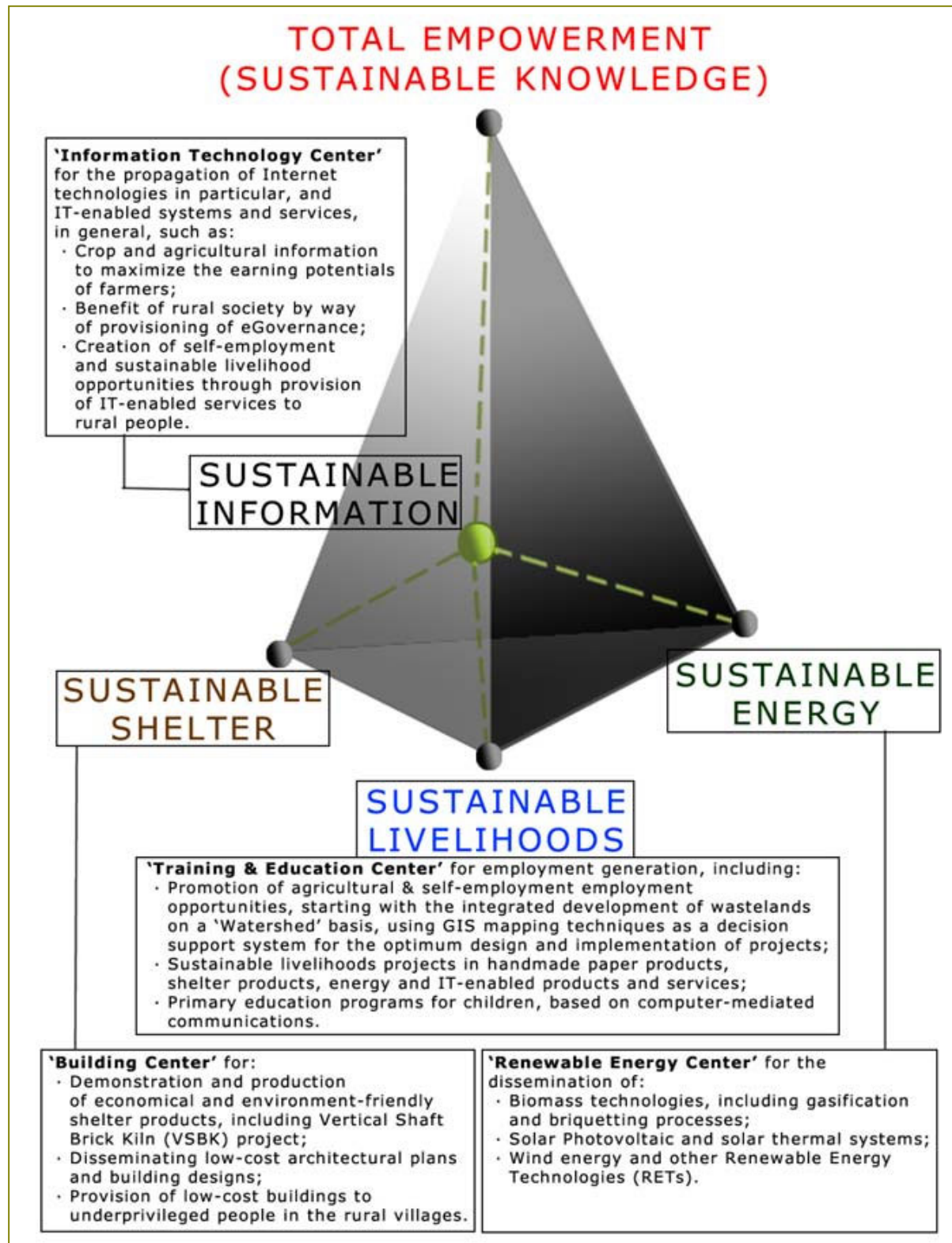
Sankalpa Trust has been awarded a prestigious **World Bank/MoEF (Govt. of India)** funded research project (for Rs. 1 million, spread over 16 months), sanctioned by the **Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research, Mumbai** entitled '*Study of the Economic and Environmental Impact of Biomass Gasification Based Power Plants*'. Research team members include:

- **Dr. Subhrankar Mukherjee**, Managing Trustee, Sankalpa Trust is the **Principal Investigator**;
- **Prof S. P. Mukherjee**, Centenary Professor of Statistics, Calcutta University is **Co-PI**;
- **Prof H. S. Mukunda**, Professor, Indian Inst. of Science, Bangalore & Chairman, Aerospace Engineering / Head, CGPL, is an **Advisor** for the project;
- **Dr. Snigdha Chakraborty**, Associate Professor, Economic Research Unit, Indian Statistical Institute, Calcutta is a **Consultant** for the project, &
- **Dr. S. K. Datta**, Reader in Economics, Burdwan University is a **Consultant** for the project.

The policy recommendations emerging from this project will be used as inputs by the **Government of India** to frame policy decisions at the national level for the dissemination of biomass-based strategies.

2 'Sustainable Development Center' at Santiniketan, West Bengal:

Sankalpa Trust has established a 'Sustainable Development Center' at **Santiniketan, District Birbhum, West Bengal**, working closely with the local people and also with the **Panchayat Samity** of Labpur. The objective of the SDC is to promote total empowerment of rural communities ('Sustainable Knowledge') through the dissemination of foundation-level developmental programs in 'Sustainable Shelter', 'Sustainable Livelihoods' and 'Sustainable Energy', with 'Sustainable Information' as the integrator, which can be best described by the following pyramidal model:



3 Multi-Stakeholder Assessment for RIO +10 (Earth Summit) Assessment

Sankalpa Trust was selected as a partner organization by **Development Alternatives, New Delhi** to conduct the consultations for the **Multi-Stakeholder Assessment for RIO+10 (Earth Summit) Assessment of local development in West Bengal**. The Sub-regional Forum was held on November 10th 2001 at the Meeting Hall of the Administrative Building, Office of SDO, Bashirhat, West Bengal – attended by local government officials and prominent NGO representatives (Report # SRC.A21.02 will be made available upon request) - the objectives being to:

- Exchange experiences and discuss common concerns and issues;
- Consolidate recommendations for action, and
- Explore opportunities for sub-regional cooperation to advance implementation with respect to mutual sustainable development concerns.

4 Other socially relevant projects

4.1 'Computer-Based Training Programs'

Sankalpa Trust is directly involved in the production of '**Computer-Based Training Programs**' for the large-scale dissemination of electronic and web-enabled information services in socially relevant topics including:

- Primary education programs for children in rural communities;
- Environment-friendly and socially beneficial rural energy projects;
- Poverty eradication and the creation of sustainable livelihoods;
- Women and gender-related issues.

4.2 'Orissa Cyclone Relief & Rehabilitation Fund'

Worked with the '**Orissa Cyclone Relief & Rehabilitation Fund**', in Kara Kanna Village, Orissa - which was virtually wiped off the ground during the last 'killer' cyclone in Orissa. **Sankalpa Trust** toured the cyclone-hit areas and provided technical support to a group of **Mahila Samities** (Women's Organization) in the construction of eco-friendly buildings, crèche development, income generation schemes, installation and provision of renewable energy products & services, amongst other socially relevant projects.

4.3 Divya Chaya Trust

Sankalpa Trust is working closely with **Divya Chaya Trust (DCT)** – a public charitable Trust founded in 1985 to provide care, education and skills to under-privileged women and children, and which is one of the most eminent of its kind in Calcutta. Sankalpa Trust is providing the technical and management leadership in the following projects:

- '**Multimedia Center for the Girl Child**', at *Karam Bhoomi*, Women's Rehabilitation Center at Rajarhat, West Bengal (a rural sub-urban area of North Calcutta). This multimedia facility will be targeted towards the children of the Rajarhat area in general, *and the girl child in particular*. The objective is to empower and promote self-confidence and assertiveness amongst a segment of society that is intrinsically one of the most disadvantaged.
- '**Eco-friendly Cooking Project**' involving biomass briquetting technology, for groups of up to 30 children who stay at the *Karam Bhoomi* complex for one week at a time to attend socially relevant activities such as seminars, workshops & cultural functions.

- **'Environment Development Project'** at their school center in Behala (a rural sub-urban area of South Calcutta), especially in pond regeneration, cleanup and control.

4.4 People First, New Delhi

Sankalpa Trust has signed an **MOU** with **People First, New Delhi**, a premier social activist group in this country committed to social upliftment. Sankalpa Trust is involved with activist programs and the formation of special interest groups to promote the cause of social awareness in the Calcutta region in particular, and the Eastern India region in general.

4.5 Sankalpa Publications

Sankalpa Publications, a member of Sankalpa Trust, is a platform for the publication and dissemination of socially relevant and educational materials, that may not find favor with commercial publication houses, who have to be more concerned with financial viability rather than service to society, which is the prime concern of Sankalpa Trust.

4.6 Minority community development at Budge Budge, West Bengal

Sankalpa Trust is working with a **minority community** at Budge Budge (a rural sub-urban area of South Calcutta), to raise funds for integrated community development, including:

- Introduction of the following environment friendly technologies:
 - Hand-made paper products making unit;
 - *Hydroform* Brick-making Technology from fly-ash, which is freely available from a nearby CESC Electric Power generating plant;
 - Microconcrete Tile Making Technology.
 - Building of a nursery school and crèche within the project area to empower the women of this community.
 - Internet technologies and IT-enabled services for the local community.
-