

11 November 2008, New Delhi



*Smt. Prabhawati Devi, Farmer*

Honouring outstanding  
personalities



*Shri Vijay Jardhari, Beej Bachao Andolan*



*Dr. Devinder Sharma, Visionary and Policy Analyst*

# LEISA Enthusiasts Meet, New Delhi, 11.11.08

## Meeting of Minds - Exchange of Experiences

### Note prepared for the meet

#### Purpose of the meet

We know that you are a LEISA enthusiast, practicing and promoting the concept of Low External Input Sustainable Agriculture. As we all agree, LEISA approach based on agro ecological principles and participatory processes is a more sustainable way for agriculture development.

To strengthen the LEISA movement in the country, we are trying to forge "LEISA Alliances". As a step towards that, we are exploring the idea of LEISA enthusiasts meeting 'face to face'- sharing anecdotes of their LEISA experiences. These could be experiences related to field application, teaching or training. We focus on 'practice' and then move towards philosophy. The invitees include select readers and advocates of low external input agriculture approaches to farming. These include readers and contributors of LEISA India and Vasundhara magazines. We believe that LEISA India, and Vasundhara as magazines, are playing 'a

role' in popularizing LEISA both as an alternative, which is practical and less risky.

#### Process

We are visualizing that this meet enables us to share our experiences in a time bound way so that every body in this room shares their excitement. As we all know, sharing and hearing are both exciting !!! We are aware that we represent a miniscule sample from North India in this room. However, assumption is, 'face to face' exchange of experiences may be more exciting!

#### Expected Outcome

The expected outcomes are not 'predrawn'. We shall explore them together. We look forward to active sharing and knowing from each other about LEISA practice. We repeat, we are just making a beginning to move together as enthusiasts towards possible alliances, if we desire so.

## Products and Processes

#### LEISA India

LEISA India is a quarterly magazine aimed towards promoting awareness on ecological agriculture through sharing information and experiences on LEISA Practice. Presently published collaboratively by AME Foundation, Bangalore, India and ILEIA, The Netherlands, the magazine is being received by more than 11000 subscribers all over India and around 250 in neighbouring South Asian countries. AME and ILEIA have been involved in promoting LEISA for the last 25 years. While AMEF has been focusing on operationalising and promoting LEISA approaches in the field with small and marginal farming communities caught in fragile eco-systems like drylands, ILEIA has been playing a pioneering role in enhancing information exchange on LEISA at global, regional and local levels.

#### Vasundhara

Vasundhara is a tri-monthly newsletter promoting sustainable agriculture in the Hindi-speaking areas by taking the present situation into consideration. The magazine, published by Gorakhpur Environmental Action Group is presently reaching 2500 subscribers in India. GEAG, as a voluntary organization of high repute in Northern India, has been primarily focusing on promoting LEISA in Northern India, particularly focusing on Uttar Pradesh for the last 25 years

**LEISA India Consortium:** Also, LEISA India and GEAG have been working together as a consortium along with few other likeminded agencies. LEISA India has been organizing several capacity building programmes on documentation, communication and recently, Knowledge Management in civil societies in consultation with the consortium.

11.00hrs  
**Welcome**



**Dr. Shiraz Wazih** welcomed the gathering. He said that LEISA India and Vasundhara are two magazines promoting ecological agriculture. He further added that though LEISA India is produced in the south, it has a wider reach across the country, while Vasundhara is restricted to hindi speaking areas. Today, an attempt is being made to bring together readers, enthusiasts and authors of these two magazines. Its necessary that we look at how we go along in promoting low external input agriculture.

Prasad said that 'we wish to hear more rather than talk more'. He asked the participants to read the one page note on the programme. (page 2). Participants read it. He said that there was a need to follow some principle of letting everyone speak, therefore fix time of 5 minutes for each. One of the participants was asked to volunteer to 'keep the time'. Dr. Srivastava agreed and did it very well. Every participant could share their views and experiences. (List of participants, page 10).

11.05hrs  
**Inauguration**

Smt. Prabhawati, farmer, was invited to light the lamp marking the inauguration of the programme. Dr. Agarwal, Shri Vijay Jardhari, Dr. Devinder Sharma and Dr. Neena Singh, coming from diverse backgrounds joined her in lighting the lamp.

Introducing Dr. Devinder Sharma, Prasad said the following – "We have in our midst a profound thinker, with great commitment who is also an excellent communicator. He is constantly relating to rural poor while exhorting us and reminding us of our roots. His message is '*don't forget your roots*'."

With a professional background which gives him the necessary understanding and with his passion, he has contributed hundreds of articles to media, received national and international awards and is on the boards of both mainstream and civil society institutions. He

requested Dr. Sharma to share his views on LEISA as a way out in the present agricultural scenario.

11.15hrs-11.45hrs  
**Opening Remarks**  
**Dr. Devinder Sharma**

Chair, Forum for Biotechnology and Food Security (FBFS),  
New Delhi

I don't know how to address a group that has been harbinger of a change. Anyway, wherever I go, I come across a resigned feeling that I am a small fry, I am an individual, what can I alone do. But you people have shown that each one is capable of bringing about a subtle change. Together, it turns into a movement.

I am reminded of an incident from history. Jimmy Carter, when he thought of standing for President, went to his mother and told her that he thinks he should be the President. She said President of what? He replied that he wanted to be President of America. His mother looked at him, kept quiet for a moment, and then said: "Yes, you will.....I can see the nerve in your neck that is throbbing, which speaks of your determination and I am sure you are determined and so you will."

This kind of determination I can see in all of you. This is the attitude that helps you to bring about a change. Even when Mahatma Gandhi started his Salt Satyagraha, there were not many people with him. Only a handful of people accompanied him at the beginning. Even his political colleagues did not agree with him and therefore stayed away. But the Mahatma was determined. And look what happened. As he walked along covering the distance to the sea, the nation joined him. And when he picked up a fistful of salt the very foundation of the British Raj was shaken.

We may be a few people here today. But that should not discourage us. You will see the nation joining us as we go along. Your mission is to promote Low External Input Sustainable Agriculture (LEISA) and you have shown that path, clearly demonstrated it. Your effort appears small but can still change the world. And it will, believe me, it will one day.

Agriculture has undergone a tremendous change. It is now moving to the next phase of destruction. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Green Revolution or the agri-business model that is being steamrollered will push the world to its edge. It doesn't mean that we should be afraid of this monster, feel lost in front of this bulldozer. On the contrary you can be the light in this global darkness, the light at the end of the tunnel, the light that will eventually enlighten the world. I just share with you how sometimes I find my small article shaking up the powers that be. It has happened time and again. A small article with a strong and good message can move people who matter.

The destruction of the natural resource base is being justified in the name of producing food. We are relentlessly being told that we need to produce more food to feed the burgeoning population. But do we produce less food now? Is the world faced with a shortfall? The answer is a big 'No'. There are 6 billion plus people on Earth, and we produce food good enough for 12 billion. So where is the shortage? The problem is not of production but of distribution. One part of the world is eating more, and the other part goes hungry. Take the case of India. We have 320 million people who go to bed hungry every night, one third of the world's 852 million hungry live in India.

At the beginning of this century, India had a record grain surplus, 65 million tonnes of rice and wheat stocked. If you had stacked this food keeping one bag of grain over another, you could have actually walked up to moon and come back. There would have been no need of a Chandrayaan to take India to moon, we could have simply walked. But what did we do as a nation? Did we feed that to the poor? No, we exported half of the quantity at below the poverty line prices and released the remaining quantity in the open market. The poor and hungry kept on staring at the massive surplus that dried up in front of their eyes. What a shame for a country which prides by calling itself world's biggest democracy.

It was almost at the same time that India allowed Monsanto along with another American company called Rice X to set up a plant somewhere in Karnataka to produce what was called as a 'human nutritious food'. Rice X had developed a patented technology to convert rice bran into nutritious food and which better place to market that, than India, which has the dubious distinction of having the largest population of malnourished in the world. And look at this wonderful model of development – producing nutritious food from rice bran which is traditionally a source of animal feed, and exporting the human nutritious food – rice and wheat surplus that was stocked in the country – to the western countries, which use it for cattle feed.

Converting cattle feed for human consumption, and exporting human food for the cattle of the western countries. What a remarkable model of development, what a wonderful way to address food security.

We as a nation are ashamed of everything that we are endowed with, whether it is our plants, our animals, our biodiversity. When it comes to agriculture, we are ashamed at our traditional agriculture, the natural farming systems that this country has perfected over the centuries, the time-tested technologies that our forefathers had been following. We feel ashamed of the monsoon-dependent agriculture that India has. We are told, and we genuinely believe in, thanks to our western borrowed model of education, that Indian agriculture is

sub-standard, backward and inefficient. If we have to make progress in agriculture, we are repeatedly told that we must follow the western farming systems. .

It is time we reverse this process, follow what we have been doing traditionally, and there is a beautiful and sustainable world out there. I know that all of us here believe in that and want to take it forward, to revive the dying wisdom, and bring happiness all around, not only for the farmers, consumers but also let the nature glow with happiness. It pains me to see that there are over 200 districts in this country which are afflicted with naxalism. Of the 600-odd districts that we have, some 360 are faced with one kind of strife or the other. This the result of violent economics, inclusive of the destructive farming practices.

This is because of the kind of development that we are bringing in. The western model of growth, what is generally termed as growth economics – is flawed, is based upon exploitation of natural resources, is eventually destructive for the mankind. Growth is seen in terms of Gross Domestic Product. The GDP is growing at the cost of environment – cutting trees, polluting rivers, setting industries, increasing pollution, increasing health costs – and believe me the GDP goes up.

We can reverse this process. You have already sown the seeds of change. People like you, may be appearing like droplets, can convert this into an ocean provided you all come together, share your knowledge and wisdom, learn from each other, and you will swell this world with profound happiness. LEISA is an approach than can bring together such good and innovative people. It is an initiative that is the need of the hour. It is an initiative whose time has come, nothing can come in its way.

India has been traditionally following the LEISA approach. You all have rewritten the story of agriculture by bringing back the LEISA forms. Do not think that you are a small group. The only challenge is to see how to build synergies with people present here and outside. See how you could move forward together. You have to forge closer alliances with like-minded for the needed multiplier effect.

Let us not compartmentalise our thinking. Let us not look from narrow perspectives. The biggest block is the way we compartmentalise our thinking, our approach.

Not only the academics, but also among NGOs, there is compartmentalised thinking. We need to go beyond this and look at over all people's development. We cannot talk of boosting trade and at the same time remaining quiet on its environmental fallout. We cannot talk of reducing global warming and at the same time talk of improving trade. Both are contradictory, the result of our compartmentalised thinking.

Similarly, I find the concept of zero tillage is now being promoted. The proponents are promoting this to save soil erosion, and conserve agriculture. I wonder how this will be good for a country like India, which has naturally been endowed with earthworms. These earthworms have been the soil tillers. Each earthworm in its lifespan turns around 6 tons of soil. How can we be adopting zero tillage then? Who does this technology benefit? Is this the technology for the tropical country? If not, then why are we importing another faulty technology from the temperate countries? These are the questions that we need to ask.

Let us not be driven by the donor agencies, tailor our thinking and our programmes as per the donor agenda.

Have confidence and pride in what we do. Let's start small and do it together. Let us question the development programmes, and question the donor driven agenda. But the tragedy is that we have lost our ability to question. The biggest tragedy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is that we have lost our anger, by anger I mean the ability to question. Anger does not mean planting a bomb or breaking public property, anger personifies the inherent passion that we must carry. It is anger which brings about revolution.

Prasad asked every participant whether we could follow what Dr. Sharma has stressed - go together – it was a universal YES. Prasad thanked people for their support.

11.45hrs

### Honouring outstanding personalities

Prasad said there are some outstanding personalities among us who are torch bearers. We feel honouring them is not just a symbolism but honouring the movement itself. One by one three participants were invited.

#### **Smt. Prabhawati Devi, Farmer**

First, Smt. Prabhawati Devi was invited. Mr. Vijay Pandey introduced her. Smt. Prabhawati Devi is a farmer, associated with ecological farming from 1991 itself. She has undergone a lot of trainings. She has 1.5 acres land and the soil has been maintained fertile by organic ways. An integrated approach is followed. No inputs are used from external sources. She is also the President of a SHG. She also shares and is a resource person in many trainings.

*Ms. Neena Singh did the honours to Smt. Prabhawati Devi.*

Smt. Prabhawati spoke a few words about her farming. With a meagre 1.5 acres, a family of 12 is surviving, just on agriculture.

#### **Shri Vijay Jardhari, Beej Bachao Andolan**

Then Shri Vijay Jardhari was invited. Mr. Vijay Pandey introduced him. Shri. Jardhari is the person who started the Beej Bachao Andolan. Three hundred varieties are maintained by him which fetch very good yields. He cultivates about 80 varieties. He maintains a seed bank, nurtures a lot of biodiversity. This has been video documented by DDS. He has done padayatra with his fellowmen bringing about awareness on seed and biodiversity.

*Dr. K. P. Agarwal, renowned scientist did the honours to Shri. Jardhari.*

Shri Vijay Jardhari spoke a few words. Farming is of different types with different names. But farming is farming. It has been a source of living and it is necessary that farming needs to be understood well. With green revolution, farmers knowledge was taken away. It was like a blast where many farmers committed suicides. Seed is the source of agriculture. If we have seed in our hands, there is nothing to fear about WTOs.

There is so much knowledge/content in LEISA India. I try to understand as I can read little English. But if this effort is made to reach farmers through their language it will be a great service. Though Vasundhara is doing this to some extent. Farmer should be given the status of a scientist as he also does a lot of experimentation. I can write but only in Hindi.

*Prasad shared that an effort is being made to translate selected articles of LEISA India into Hindi language and sought the support of all in this endeavour. Also requested people to write in Hindi and take the support of GEAG in translating and contributing to LEISA India in English.*

#### **Dr. Devinder Sharma, Visionary and Policy Analyst**

Lastly, Dr. Devinder Sharma was invited. *Aptly, he was honoured by Arun Kumar Singh, a progressive farmer.*

12:00hrs-13.45hrs

### Sharing by participants

#### **Dr. K. P. Agarwal, Former National Coordinator, NATP, New Delhi**

I was impressed by the magazine as it is highly field oriented. Agriculture has become very expensive due to more input use and mechanisation. I also contributed to the magazine on climate change theme. I felt that there can be no other better magazine which can carry this article. Content is very good. Suggestion is, LEISA India should be made a monthly magazine.

#### **Dr. S. K. Tomar, Agronomist, KVK, Gorakhpur**

In 1997 I saw Vasundhara first. The articles were about farmers experiences. There was a lot of information which was required for small farmers and a section on

ITKs is very useful. I also started contributing articles to Vasundhara from 2004-05 and as of now 3-4 articles are published.

**Mr. Amit Dwivedi, Journalist, Lucknow**

As a journalist, I have been writing on health issues. Two years back, I had an opportunity to get interested in agriculture issues. Wrote 40 articles in one year on agriculture. Vasundhara themes on women in agriculture brought out an awareness in me that women are farmers and need attention. Got a lot of information on women and agriculture from Vasundhara and wrote an article for newspaper. This was published on front page and I felt very elated. From that time onwards, Vasundhara has become a source of information. A suggestion for wider reach is that each article can be shared through agri-concern and google groups by using Unicode typing.

**Mr. Prabhjot Sodhi, National Coordinator, GEF UNDP Small Grants Programme, New Delhi**

I am happy to be invited. Referring about changing lifestyles which is adding to pollution, he said that 25 lakh cellophane sheets are used in Delhi alone per day for packing flowers. He further added that carbon foot prints are high by urban dwellers and we are responsible for creating the problem. From last 8 years, I am receiving LEISA India magazine and it is wonderful. Never miss it even while I change places.

**Mr. Rajan, NGO, Amar Ujala, Gorakhpur**

In all workshops we only listen. We are happy to speak here. There needs to be a chain. What is written in LEISA does not reach the north much and what is in Vasundhara may not reach the south. Hence, they need to link with each other for wider spread of information. Information on ITKs (in Vasundhara) is very useful to us. Suggestion to Vasundhara is to include farmers experiences written by farmers themselves.

**Dr. R.K.Pathak, Consultant, New Delhi**

There was a concern to decrease the chemical use in agriculture. Tree planting has to be encouraged. Bio dynamic farming is also low cost farming.

**Shri Shiv Bachan, Farmer, Gorakhpur**

Vasundhara includes only those experiences where farmers in the region do those activities. When we read some success stories, we have also followed such practices. Also shared with others who have followed. I have been following LEISA way of farming. We produce our own seeds of many crops – methi, palak, alu etc. Other enterprises like fishery, poultry, kitchen garden etc. are all being practiced.

**Dr. B.C. Srivastava, NGO, Shohratgarh Environmental Society (SES), Siddharthnagar**

We are associated from the time it is being produced. We have been following many LEISA practices –

composting, vermicomposting etc. We hope Vasundhara will grow along with LEISA India.

**Mr. Paras Nath Singh, NGO, Yuva Chetna Kendra, Deoria**

We have been reading LEISA from the time the global edition is being produced. But in LEISA India we are very happy that a lot of Indian articles are included. We are also readers of Vasundhara. RAAKS in LEISA India was very interesting and helped us very much in following the participatory method. From that time onwards we have been following LEISA India and Vasundhara quite closely. Suggestion for both magazines: a section on discussion on current issues.

**Ms. Neena Singh, GB Pant University, Ranichauri**

Thanks to LEISA team for inviting me. I have been reading LEISA India from 2002. I am teaching agriculture information to students, extension workers etc. We are not getting Vasundhara.

What I found most useful are section on sources, networking and books. I have procured a lot of information from this magazine. Also, LEISA India is helping us in the development of the database for our readers. We have included LEISA India in Selective Dissemination of Information service for our readers. Students have been using the content for projects. The magazine is being recommended for people who don't know about this magazine.

**Mr. Ram Bhuvan, NGO, Jan Kalyan Sansathan, Gorakhpur**

Left the job and requested father to give some land to farm. I started experimenting on the land with fathers and wife's help. Vasundhara's content has raised confidence in farming and was also instrumental to go for farming. I started doing well and also earning good amount. The magazine also helped me to adopt with the flood situation.- using traditional varieties, having other enterprises like poultry, small animals etc. I also write to Vasundhara. I have gained a lot from LEISA practices.

**Dr. Virender Singh Khatana, Consultant, Gurgaon**

I know LEISA from last 15 years. I played multiple roles in my association with LEISA movement. Though I don't do agriculture, I make all out efforts to put LEISA philosophy in the projects I do.

**Shri Ashok Kumar Singh, Farmer, Chandauli**

Traditionally, our agriculture was low input but with modern technology, we have been more dependant on outside inputs and technology. In our places we never had problem of debts nor were there any suicides. All these, including debt relief, is more in places like Punjab and Haryana where high input use is being followed. In LEISA India, very good themes are being touched. I suggest these discussion issues can be included.

**Mr. Sridhar Pandey, NGO, Gautam Buddha Jagriti Society, Siddharthnagar**

Vasundhara deals with a lot of practical solutions to farming problems. That way it is very useful.

**Dr. Arun Kumar Sharma, Central Arid Research Institute, Jodhpur**

From 1992, I have been receiving Vasundhara and LEISA newsletter. The tips which I get from this magazine I share with farmers. I wrote a book on Jaivik Kheti for which I took a lot of content from Vasundhara and LEISA India. Within the institute, we have succeeded in developing 2 acres of organic farm.

LEISA India is like a reference book, it is of high level English. In North India its use may be restricted. My suggestion is to bring out the abstracts in Hindi and for full paper it can be downloaded from web. The font of LEISA India could be a little big, while in Vasundhara, the font is readable. Center page of LEISA India can be used for describing a technology. This can be used as a poster in extension activities.

**Shri Shesh Mani, Farmer, Campierganj**

Talked about various organic practices and the Integrated Farming Systems approach is being successfully followed.

**Dr. Mazhar Rashidi, NGO, Pratinidhi Samiti, Chinhath (Indira Nagar)**

I started reading LEISA India and Vasundhara and felt that it could be applied to Uttar Pradesh conditions. The LEISA concept helped in breaking the mindset of farmers. The content is helpful in designing training content and also as a reference material. Lot of awareness is being created especially due to websites and networking sections.

**Mr. Pattabhiraman, Project Manager, European Union, New Delhi**

I have been using LEISA India from 2002. I have used the content for training farmers as a part of AME. I am using it for knowing updates like SRI and next, climate change. Specific theme help in getting more info. This magazine is something plain-practical. Very easy to understand and helps in taking it forward. The whole philosophy is to reach development practitioners and therefore it is still in English. One suggestion is to introduce payment. Even if it is given free for farmers, others would be able pay for it. Make it an e-newsletter if we have to scale it up.

**Ms Ellen Pedersen, Attache, European Union, New Delhi**

I am a Danish National and I have grown up in agriculture. Lived through the agricultural reforms in Europe. Europe also moved from subsidies to production and more sustainable policies and development. Looking at such a strong solidarity for LEISA, I don't think you need any motivation to move

forward especially from funding agencies. However, if you feel necessary, we are always there to support you.

13.45hrs-14.30hrs Lunch

14.30hrs-15.00hrs

**Dr. Yashawant Singh, NGO, Vikas Vigyan, Deoria**

I was focusing on low cost approaches while working with NGOs. Then, I was introduced to LEISA magazine and felt that I was following the same concept described in the magazine and myself experimenting the information provided by the magazine. Both LEISA India and Vasundhara, are promoting a concept under various themes – food security, health, cropping systems etc. These magazines have built our confidence to go ahead with such practices. Specifically, especially in the issue on soil health – role of microbes has motivated me and has provided me enough understanding.

**Mr. Vijay Pandey, NGO, GEAG, Gorakhpur**

Both magazines work on sustainable agriculture issues and I don't think there are other magazines like them. It has helped in changing our thinking. The magazine helps in improving networking. It has helped in inculcating enthusiasm creating a positive energy for people to follow. The editorial is the best. If there is no time, just read the editorial to capture the whole theme.

**Mr. Ashish Jain, Jain TV**

Saw LEISA India in agriculture trade fair. I have recommended to 20-25 people and they are reading LEISA India. We need to work together in future.

**Mr. Ajay Mahajan, NGO, Vividhara, New Delhi**

My first interest in ecological agriculture can be attributed to LEISA newsletter. Again after many years I am getting to know more about LEISA India. I do get Vasundhara. We are promoting non-chemical agriculture using traditional practices and using own seed. Presently, we are working on agro-forestry and water issues. Also, we are conducting fairs and conducting workshops in schools and colleges with students. We share this knowledge through exhibitions. Till now, we had reached approximately 30-40 lakh people.

15:00hrs-16:00hrs

**Strengthening Spread**

Prasad asked participants randomly to express if they have learnt anything new for the first time during this meeting itself!!!

Following were some of the responses received.

- The gene bank of Vijay Zardari is a great achievement
- How cropping can be done using every ray of the sun

- GM crop seeds getting mixed and being sold with normal seeds

## Brainstorming

### *Increasing outreach of LEISA concept/ Practice*

Prasad asked the participants how to increase the LEISA outreach as a concept/practice/philosophy. He said that it was not to focus on magazines like LEISA India and Vasundhara alone but beyond information products and platforms. Participants shared their thoughts in a typical brainstorming mode. Their ideas have been clustered below.

### Content

- Farmers can write that they have a technology/ practice – a freelance journalist can pursue and write.
- Success stories to gain entry into magazine
- Processing and value addition aspects to be included
- Local specific practices, technologies – region-specific information to be included
- Tips to farmers
- Include some seasonal input (as it is theme based)
- Full reference of the case described for future contact
- Information on counter technologies like GM
- Information on government policies
- Costs, returns – social, economic and environmental impacts to include
- Attention to the knowledge levels of farmers
- Some possible solutions to a problem – problem solving approach
- Include progressive farmers interviews; whats new in ag; Q&A

- Provide space for advocacy issues, not restricting to field application
- Time to move to advocacy as it is already proved on the field

### Outreach

- Publishing in local language
- Poster/picture on middle page. Can be used by Extension workers resulting in wider reach
- Blog on LEISA
- Involve media – newspapers, TV channels etc.
- Local sharing to be encouraged – we can promote in our fairs
- Field level training/ study tour

Some participants also suggested token membership.

Prasad appreciated the ideas and said that most of them were relevant and could be done in a time line. But what is that we can do together as a group was more important. He said that he was happy that LEISA is accepted in the north and we are all together. He said that LEISA India was planning to introduce token membership so that the readers own the initiative.

Prasad thanked the participants and requested them to write to the magazine. He also shared the plans to bring out an annual hindi edition with the coordination of GEAG.

1600hrs

### Vote of Thanks

Mr. K K Singh from GEAG proposed vote of thanks. He thanked all for the response and the spirited support they have provided in organising the event.



# LEISA Enthusiasts Meet

## Program schedule

<b>Date</b>	: 11 November 2008
<b>Time</b>	: 10 AM to 3 PM
<b>Venue</b>	: Vishwa Yuvak Kendra (International Youth Centre) Circular Road, Teen Murti Marg, Chanakyapuri New Delhi-110021, India. (Tel No. : 011-23013631)
<b>Organisers</b>	: <b>LEISA India, AME Foundation</b> <b>Vasundhara, GEAG</b>

Time	Schedule
09:30am-10:00 am	Registration
10:00am-10:30 am	Welcome & Inauguration -Lighting the lamp
10:30am-11:00 am	Introductory remarks by Dr. Devinder Sharma
11:00am-11:10 am	Honoring special guests
11:10am-11:30 am	LEISA India & Vasundhara: Brief introduction by Prasad & Shiraz
11.30am- 01:30 pm	*Sharing by participants - LEISA experiences/anecdotes
01:30pm- 02:15 pm	Lunch
02:15pm- 03:00 pm	Brainstorming session - Increasing outreach & strengthening LEISA movement

\*We expect you to share an anecdote (a short story) orally (approx. 5 minutes) in the language of your choice about the way you have used the content from LEISA India/Vasundhara practically in your field work/teaching/training/advocacy. As an author, you may also share how you got inspired to 'write' to LEISA India/Vasundhara.

## List of participants

S.No.	Participants	Designation	Address	Telephone
1	Dr. Agarwal K P	National Co-ordinator, NATP	C - 102, NASC Complex, DPS Marg, Near Todapu. New Delhi-110012	011-64652900 / 09312393677
2	Mr. Ajay Mahajan		Vividhara, D-805, New Friends Colony, New Delhi-110025 Email: ajaymahajan1@gmail.com	9891282118
3	Mr. Amit Dwivedi	Freelance Journalist	Lucknow	
4	Dr. Anita Singh	Project Coordinator	Gorakhpur Environmental Action Group, 224, Purdilpur, M.G. College Road, Post Box # 60, Gorakhpur- 273001 (U.P.)	551 2230004
5	Dr. Arun K. Sharma	Agriculture Scientist	Central Arid Research Institute, 20/14 Chopasani Housing Board. Jodhpur- 342008	9414172436
6	Mr. Ashish Jain		Jain Studios Limited Jain Studios Campus, Scindia Villa, New Delhi-110023	011 32596076
7	Mr. Ashok Kumar Singh	Progressive Farmer	Madhur Medical Hall, Sakaldi Pu. Rly. Station, CHANDAULI- 232 108, UTTAR PRADESH/INDIA	
8	Dr. Devinder Sharma	Chair, FBFS	Forum for Biotechnology and Food Security -- (FBFS) G-3/F, DDA Flats, Munirka New Delhi - 110 067	011-26176343 09811301857
9	Ms. Ellen PEDERSEN	Delegation of the EC to India, Bhutan and Nepal	Development Cooperation, European Union, No. 65, Golf Links, New Delhi - 110 003 Email: ellen.pedersen@ec.europa.eu	011-24629237/ 24629206
10	Dr. Mazhar A. Rashidi		Pratinidhi Samiti, Plot No. 34, Ghazi Nagar, Takrohi Bazar, Post- Chihat (Indira Nagar), Lucknow	9451913298
11	Mr. Naval Gupta		Oxfam	
12	Ms. Neena Singh	Assistant Librarian & I/C Library	GOVIND BALLABH PANT UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE AND TECHNOLOGY- (GBPUA&T), College of Forestry and Hill Agriculture Hill Campus, Tehri Garhwal District// RANICHAURI- 249 199 UTTARANCHAL/INDIA	
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Note: Available details included

## LEISA India – Genesis and Growth

LEISA magazine is recognized as the leading magazine for sharing field based experiences in **Low External Input** and **Sustainable Agriculture**. LEISA magazine published by ILEIA, the Netherlands, is being subscribed by around 45000 readers and expectedly reaching around 2.5 lakh people across the globe ([www.ileia.org](http://www.ileia.org)).

Together with ILEIA, AME nurtured interest in sustainable agriculture in South India. Since 1997, they have collaborated in participatory research and distribution of ILEIA newsletter in India. Subsequently, since the year 2000, AME started the production of LEISA India edition (<http://india.ileisa.info>). LEISA India is being published in English, with an Indian focus and an international perspective.

LEISA India's subscriber base has grown significantly. LEISA India magazine, which started as an Indian edition in 2000 with a readership of around 800, is presently being received by over 11000 readers including around 250 readers in the neighbouring South Asian countries. The annual average growth of readers has been in the range of 20-30%. The contributors and readers include academics, researchers, farmers, NGOs, government departments, banks etc.

### LEISA India Consortium

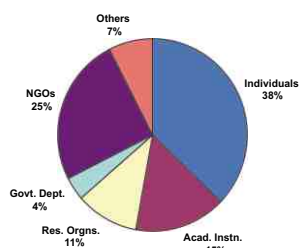
Besides, publishing the magazine, AME Foundation in collaboration with ILEIA, has forged a consortium of partners - **LEISA India Consortium**, to promote enhanced sharing of LEISA experiences. The consortium of willing partners involving large networks of NGOs like MYRADA, GEAG, and LEISA Network, have been involved in promoting LEISA concepts and approaches by bringing about changes at the field level through participatory processes. They also have been documenting and sharing their experiences through various mechanisms and modes. The partners have been involved in a focused two year documentation and communication programme (2003-06). The programme resulted in enhancing organizational capacities on documentation and sharing, both within the organisations, as well as in the public domain.

A new programme on Knowledge Management in Civil Societies (KMCS) has been initiated which integrates systems, processes and practices evolving from multiple disciplines.

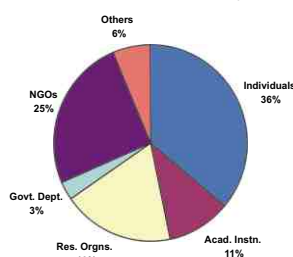
### Building LEISA Alliances

Given the proportion of farming population in India, the diverse languages and the number of institutions involved in agriculture development, there is a need for intensifying efforts for scaling up dissemination and use of LEISA knowledge. One of the efforts includes building **LEISA Alliances**, an unstructured group of LEISA enthusiasts, for enhanced adoption of LEISA approaches and intensified sharing of experiences.

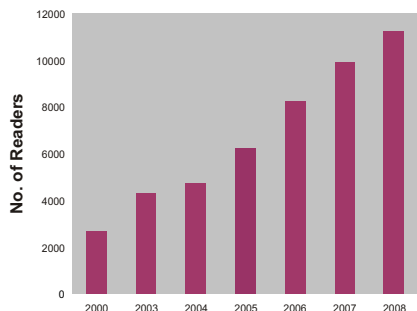
Distribution of subscribers by category



Distribution of contributors by category



Growth of LEISA India



LEISA INDIA SUBSCRIBERS  
State-wise distribution (as on Oct 2008)

STATE	Nos.
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	12
Andhra Pradesh	741
Arunachal Pradesh	23
Assam	174
Bihar	90
Chandigarh U.T.	3
Chhattisgarh	48
Goa	35
Gujarat	276
Haryana	102
Himachal Pradesh	128
Jammu & Kashmir	43
Jharkhand	98
Karnataka	2555
Kerala	963
Madhya Pradesh	202
Maharashtra	656
Manipur	27
Meghalaya	29
Mizoram	13
Nagaland	44
New Delhi	239
Orissa	846
Pondichery	103
Punjab	76
Rajasthan	279
Sikkim	17
Tamil Nadu	2175
Tripura	18
Uttar Pradesh	475
Uttaranchal	172
West Bengal	372
Sub total	11034
Other South Asian Countries	233
<b>Total</b>	<b>11267</b>

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