



UTTHAN

A Journey towards development with Justice

September 7, 2011

K Nelson Royal
Arghyam

Dear Mr. K Nelson Royal

We are very happy to inform you about the release of our book 'Rising Utthan', written by Shri Ashoke Chatterji and produced by Business Standard, on 17th September, 2011, at 4.30 **pm to 6.30pm**. The event will be held **at Ahimsa Shodh Bhavan Hall, Ashram Road, Gujarat Vidyapith, Ashram Road Ahmedabad.**

'Rising Utthan' is about the evolution and learning of Utthan over a period of last three decades. It describes Utthan's journey beginning from Bhal, an area where nature is less kind with marshy and saline land, prone to drought, affected by barriers of caste, class and patriarchy as well as due to political neglect.

Four young women fresh out of college ventured into this area to try and understand what options and hopes the communities living in that area had for development and change. Experience soon revealed that the key survival issue was drinking water, and that the burden of survival fell primarily on women, suppressed by a strong patriarchal, castiest and feudal society. Then began a major experiment in organisation building with drinking water as the building block and eventually resulted into emergence of several types of institutions.

Utthan's efforts commenced with identifying and working with local women and youth with potential for leadership and with stamina to face physical, social and environmental hardships.

The book describes in depth the struggle of women and others from all socially, politically and economically vulnerable sections Utthan worked with in Dahod, Panchmahals, Bhavnagar and Amreli districts, striving for a dignified life. Written off more than once as "hopeless" the mass movements, either for exercising their rights over natural resources for livelihood security, water and land continued. Women and people's efforts led to substantial achievements towards water security, land protection and against gender, communal and caste based violence, through various technical and social breakthroughs. Over the years, the struggle has transformed into campaigns for greater gender equity, family health, livelihoods and above all, for human rights.

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Utthan has faced major challenges of the 2001 earthquake and the 2002 pogrom against Muslim minorities in Gujarat. The Book describes the challenges

and strategies to work towards integrating perspectives of diversity, peace and justice through conflict transformation and equity.

Utthan's experiences and Learnings could be useful to all those who are in Quest for equity, justice and a dignified life for the most vulnerable.

We would greatly value your presence at the book launch ceremony. Kindly confirm your participation.

Thanking you with warm regards,

Kaushik Raval
Chief Program Coordinator

Nafisa Barot
Executive Director