CHAPTER EIGHT

AN ‘OUTCOME ANALYSIS’:
Strengths and Limitations of Collective Processes

In this chapter we look at the strengths of collective organising as well as the hurdles that need to be overcome for it to be a success. Bailancho Saad, ideologically opposed to hierarchy and other such patriarchal, dominating power structures, as we saw in Chapters 6 and 7, works towards empowering women through a seemingly egalitarian processes and ‘participatory’ style of functioning.

Most organisation analyses and, as a result, the theories on organisation and organising, whether they refer to profit-oriented or human service organisations, tend to assume as a starting point of analysis that organisations are hierarchical in structure. This has been discussed in Chapters 2 and 3. In this chapter we look at the ingredients that go into the efficient and effective running of an organisation that is committed to functioning as a ‘collective’ and is ideologically opposed to formal structure. We have also pointed out in the earlier chapters that very little information is available on how organisational goals can be achieved through more egalitarian processes, where control and accountability are the powers and duties of every individual and not just the authority of a few. This exercise in evaluating the success of the organisation with an analysis of the outcomes, while highlighting some of the weaknesses, focuses on the strengths of this organisation method. In Chapter 2 we have seen that organisation literature makes several assumptions about the efficiency and efficacy, associating them exclusively with formal structures, even to the extent of overlooking the complexities of human behaviour. We also have discussed in earlier chapters how strict rules do not always result in efficiency, but could have a negative impact on employee involvement, satisfaction, motivation and overall performance. This worker dissatisfaction due to formal rules and procedures is particularly problematic when there is a diverse workforce, as there is a greater possibility that ‘individual needs’ are ignored.
To be able to make an analysis of ‘collective organising’ processes, it is important to adopt different yardsticks in evaluating the performance and its impact on the society within which it operates. The tools used to measure success and efficiency in profit-oriented organisations cannot be blindly used in the case of women’s organisations, as the aims and objectives differ, as also the expected outcomes or goals. Our measure of success of the organisation will be based on the ‘outcomes’ achieved by the organisation. Drawing from Suzanne Staggenborg (1995), we will look at the following categories of outcomes:

1. Political and policy outcomes,
2. Cultural outcomes,
3. Personal or self development outcomes and

It may be pertinent to mention here that, at times these outcomes may overlap as the women’s organisations aims are multiple and the impacts are often linked. One type of success may have a bearing on another type, and outcomes occurring at one point in time might also affect future outcomes. Using this case study of Bailancho Saad in Goa, which has existed since 1986 with participants from diverse sections of society, we will attempt an ‘outcome analysis’ of non-hierarchical or collectivist processes.

### 8.1. Political and Policy Outcomes

Political and policy outcomes include the success of the organisation in getting its demands on the political agenda of the state, getting new policies implemented and the success in transforming the political structures. In short, it means bringing about substantive changes that affect the whole society. We analyse the success of Bailancho Saad in this area with a few examples from issues that the organisation has been actively campaigning for.

#### 8.1.1. Regulation of the Use of Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Bill

In the mid 1980s, Bailancho Saad undertook a campaign against the misuse of Pre-Natal Diagnostic Tests to detect the sex of the unborn foetus and to eliminate thereafter the unwanted female foetus. At this time, in Goa, there were advertisements in
the newspapers and flyers circulated announcing centres where the sex of the foetus could be easily determined. One of the tests that was misused for sex pre-selection was the Amniocenteses and later the Ultra Sound Technique. Bailancho Saad’s campaign met with success when they managed to lobby for the Regulation of the Use of Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Bill to be introduced in the Goa Assembly in April 1989. This Bill was passed in the same Assembly (Ravindra 1991).

8.1.2. Against the Indecent Representation of Women

The indecent representation of women in advertisements and on the floats during the Carnival Parades was one of the earliest issues that was taken up by Bailancho Saad. Way back in 1987, Bailancho Saad had launched a mass protest against advertisements that were offensive towards women, those that used women in scanty clothing to advertise alcohol, cigarettes and even ‘tourism’ apart from other products.

These advertisements which blatantly portray semi-nude women in the name of tourism promotion make this act a farce (referring to the Indecent Representation of Women Prohibition Act 1986), Ms. Alva, you will undoubtedly agree that these advertisements portraying women as objects for sexual desire and part of a tour itinerary, downright degrade the image of Goan women (Open Letter to Union Minister of State for Women, 1987).

The organisation was successful in many of its campaigns in this regard. For example, it got the Government of India Tourism Department to not only withdraw its calendar that but also got an apology from it. In the case of MS Cigarettes, the campaign in 1993 enabled not only the withdrawal of the advertisements, but the organisations plea to the women of Goa to boycott the product ended with the company withdrawing the manufacture of that brand of cigarette. Regarding its protests against the portrayal of women on the Carnival floats, the Government of Goa has since formed a Committee to censor carnival floats for representation that might be offensive. Bailancho Saad was invited to be on this Committee, but it did not accept the invitation.

It can be said with a fair amount of certainty that Bailancho Saad has played the role of a watch dog in society with respect to the portrayal of women and it has resulted in a noticeable change in the ‘use’ of women in advertising messages, over the last two decades. Advertisements are more ‘gender sensitive’ than they were two decades ago.
Not only advertisements but media in general has become more cautious about the representation of women.

8.1.3. Extension of Dowry Prohibition Act to Goa

The organisation was successful in its campaign in getting the Dowry Prohibition Act of 1961 extended to Goa (Borges 2000: 448)

8.1.4. Sensitive and Speedy Handling of Rape Cases

On 13 August 1993, Bailancho Saad sent a petition to the Goa Bench of the Bombay High Court for the early disposal of rape cases. A reply to their petition was received on 20 April 1994 informing that the Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court had issued directions to the District and Sessions Judges of North and South Goa to dispose the remaining rape trials in their respective courts as expeditiously as possible. The organisation has been successful in ensuring that courts treat such cases on priority and expedite matters in that regard.

8.1.5. Against the Kaiga Nuclear Plant

In 1992, Bailancho Saad was involved in organising a Cycle Yatra across Goa to create awareness about the hazards of nuclear plants. A variety of other activities were organised around the issue which included seminars, street plays, meetings and signature campaigns. Finally, a resolution was submitted to the Chief Minister of Goa. In 1994, as part of its campaign against the Kaiga Atomic Power Plant, Bailancho Saad sought permission to conduct its own environmental impact assessment and was granted permission despite the plant being ‘out of bounds’ for the general public. A written commitment was received from the Chief Minister in which he said ‘the members of this women’s movement can rest assured that Kaiga Atomic Power Plant will not pose any health and safety problems to the people living in its vicinity’.

8.1.6. Against Bonded Labour

On the 8 October 1994, Bailancho Saad was successful in freeing 31 women from TamilNadu who were engaged as bonded labourers at a food processing unit. This
incident put an end to the illegal practice of bonded labour in several factories in Goa. It was the first time this practice was brought to light although it was the practice especially in seafood processing units.

8.1.7. Implementation of Right to Matrimonial Home

Bailancho Saad was seized with the problem of a large number of cases where women had been evicted from their marital homes by their husbands or in-laws. It got together a stakeholder meeting despite resistance from several sections of society and, after a six-month-long struggle, sought from the Director of Prosecution procedures to get a woman her right to the matrimonial home. Following the meeting on 20 June 2000, together with the Minister for Women and Child Welfare, Development Commissioner, Secretary of Women and Child Welfare, Chairperson and Members of Goa State Commission for Women, Director of Department of Women and Child Welfare, Superintendent of Police (North Goa), Chairperson and Counsellor of Family Counselling Centre and of course members of Bailancho Saad the culmination was a formal response from the Director of Prosecution which stated that

1. In case of refusal of family to allow the woman entry into matrimonial home or for re-entry in case she has left matrimonial home, she shall file a complaint/FIR before the police. The police will have to investigate the matter in accordance with the law and take action against the offenders. Section 341 of IPC, a cognizable offence shall be attracted. Police shall have no power to force the husband or his relatives to allow the woman to re-enter the home.

2. As an offence under Section 341 is a criminal offence, a civil case such as divorce, separation, maintenance etc cannot stop the filing of a criminal one.

Bailancho Saad saw this as a significant achievement in getting the right to matrimonial home implemented, but it did not feel that with this small achievement its work was done. It continued to see its role in ensuring that this was effectively implemented and monitored.
8.1.8. Policies for Women

Bailancho Saad is today very involved in policy making and has been nominated on several formal advisory bodies and policy drafting committees of the State. Bailancho Saad has also been part of the Coordinating team to manage the Special Cell to deal with crimes against women set up in 1993 by the State Government. In 1995, members of Bailancho Saad (Albertina Almeida and Sabina Martins), were appointed on the drafting committee for the Goa State Commission for Women Bill and subsequently in the year 2000, a member (Sabina Martins) was appointed as a member of the Goa State Commission for Women for two consecutive terms. The collective was also invited to be a member of the Advisory Committee formed by the Directorate of Social Welfare to tackle the issue of child abuse in Goa. Bailancho Saad has been on the Planning Committee for the formulation of the Children’s Act 2003 and it may be pertinent to mention here that Goa is the only Indian State with the Children’s Act. In November 2008, Bailancho Saad was asked to be on the Screening Committee for the *Stree Shakti Puruskar Award* of the Directorate of Women and Child Welfare, Government of Goa. In the last week of August 2009, a member of Bailancho Saad was requested by the Department of Planning, Government of Goa to be part of a team from Goa to visit Kerala on the issue of District Planning and a Committee has been set up to work out a module to boost decentralised planning.

8.1.9. Hurdles that have to be crossed for Political/Policy Outcomes

The impact that collective organising has on political and policy outcomes depends a great deal on the following:

1. The mass support for the organisation is crucial for the organisation to be taken seriously at any policy level. Therefore, either the group must have the resources to mobilise a large multi-sectoral support for its campaigns for its voices to be heard, which is not easy for new collectives. Therefore the collective needs time to build up this mass support which means that for collective action to make an impact on policy, it requires either adequate financial and other resources or will have to expect slow change.
2. The reputation the organisation has within the society is very important. It does not matter if the organisation takes a stand that is contradictory to the mainstream opinion, but it has to show other benefits that have accrued for the society through its intervention.

3. For issues where there is opposition from certain sections of the population, persistence is needed. With a fluctuating membership, in any collective, sometimes it is hard to sustain efforts over long period of time. As a result issues that seem urgent at one point of time, if they have not met with success, might get set aside due to difficulties in sustaining the campaign.

8.2. Cultural Outcomes

Cultural outcomes include changes in social norms, behaviours and ideas among a public that extend beyond the beneficiaries of the movement. That means reaching out not only to the women population, but society at large, which includes the male population as well. There may be an overlap between this set of outcomes and the political and policy outcomes in that they are both concerned about substantive changes that affect the whole society. However, the difference, though subtle, refers to an ‘attitudinal’ change. This outcome is important for women’s empowerment, as gender equality in any society cannot come about without a change in the mindset. Certain practices and traditions that discriminate on the grounds of gender, as we have discussed in Chapter 1, are so entrenched in a society that they have often been justified as being ‘tradition’. Anything that has earned the name ‘tradition’, therefore, becomes harder to change even if proved to be hampering women’s empowerment. Understanding the difficulties in bringing about change in this area, one can appreciate even more the success achieved by Bailancho Saad in this regard.

8.2.1. Society’s Response

In Goa, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, when Bailancho Saad was establishing itself, the ‘new’ ideology of gender equality was cause for some unrest in the Goan society. The larger community needed time to accept this new culture, where women were demanding equal opportunity and status. It was perceived as a threat not only to the
man’s role, but to the very structure of the family as well. Initially, society regarded the women’s collective as a man-hating group of unmarried, fairly unoccupied women, that would cause the destruction of harmonious relationships within families, as the members were all mostly students. The women’s collective was considered to be only a protest group that was at constant loggerheads with the government. We have already discussed some of these issues in Chapter 6 (Section 6.3: Other Aspects of Growth and Change within Bailancho Saad). Today, as we saw in Section 6.3.b: From Branded to a Brand name for Empowerment, Bailancho Saad has established a name for itself in society and the initial negative response that it got from society has changed.

This change in societal response is due to several reasons, not least among them being (a) the fact that the organisation has stood the test of time and proved to be of assistance to a large number of women from different sections of the Goan populace, and (b) the current membership of the collective no more includes only unmarried students but also lawyers, teachers, journalists, women in business, academicians and women who are ‘grandmothers’. The fact that there is now a more positive response from the society to the work of Bailancho Saad has also impacted the collective’s membership positively. When the group received much opposition and negative propaganda in the press members were limited to a few. Now that the collective has been received with less resistance, the group is larger. This is evident in the attendance at the Women’s Day programmes every year. In fact, earlier invitations were sent out way in advance so people would make plans to attend. Now, even if no invitations are received, masses of people attend the International Women’s Day function that for the last decade has been held on the 8 March (even if it is a Sunday) and in a fixed venue, namely, Azad Maidan. The organisation still prints invitations but more people attend than the invitations printed (see Photos 8.7 – 8.10 of Women’s Day functions).

8.2.2. Relationship with the Goa Police

In the first decade of Bailancho Saad’s existence it was almost at constant loggerheads with the police. An article was written in 1989 on ‘Our Tryst with the Police’. Several members recalled the hardships they faced in getting the police to even register cases of domestic violence. The attitude of the police was that domestic violence was a
‘private affair’ and needed to be sorted out within the home. Further, the organisation’s experience with the police handling of other crimes against women, including rape, was treated most insensitively. Very often, the registering of an FIR for the victim was a harrowing experience for the victim and this led Bailancho Saad to demand for a special cell to deal with crimes against women where staff would be trained specifically for the purpose. From the Photos 8.1 – 8.5 we also notice the change in the attitude of the police towards the organisation. In Photo 8.1 the organisation is protesting against the harassment of villagers by the police, in Photo 8.2, the police are protecting the casino Caravela office from the Bailancho Saad protestors, and in Photo 8.4 Bailancho Saad is being felicitated by the police before the Gender Sensitization Programme that the police department has invited Bailancho Saad to conduct for the police personnel. Photo 8.5 is one of the sessions of the programme. Bailancho Saad, in a letter that was received in November 2008, was invited by the Police Department to be on its Committee for the Prevention of Sexual Harassment of Women at the Workplace.

Photo 8.1

Supporting Cacra village in the protest against police harassment

![Supporting Cacra village in the protest against police harassment](image-url)
Photo 8.2
Police protecting Caravela casino from Bailancho Saad protesters

Photo 8.3
Police women posted on duty to check Bailancho Saad’s protest
Photo 8.4
Police felicitating Bailancho Saad before gender sensitisation workshop

Photo 8.5
Police listening to a lecture by Albertina Almeida
8.2.3. Giving Relief/Support to Individual Women

Before 1986, that is, before Bailancho Saad was established, there were no support groups for women victims of crime apart from religious bodies. As a result, most cases of violence and crime remained unreported. However, ever since 1986, Bailancho Saad has been approached by numerous individual women victims. It is only recently that documentation of cases has begun. However, as the number is large, not all cases that contact the organisation are actually recorded in a systematic way. During the period between August and December 2008, the researcher observed that the number of individual cases was 27, but they were not recorded in the minutes. Therefore, the total number of individual cases undertaken by Bailancho Saad is not available. Although Bailancho Saad is a non-registered group, several cases are referred to it by Government Departments.

8.2.4. Male Members Join Bailancho Saad

A significant cultural change that Bailancho Saad has effected, which not only tells of the change in response of the society to women’s activism but also that there has been a change in the attitude of the male community towards Bailancho Saad is symbolised by the fact that today there are two men on the paid staff of Bailancho Saad, who are indeed proud to say that they are working for Bailancho Saad and women’s empowerment in particular. The earlier negative image created about women’s activism for equality which labelled such work as ‘anti-male’, ‘western’, ‘breaking the family’, etc., as we have seen already in Chapter 1, was a block in the way of Bailancho Saad’s achievement of its goal to raise the level of awareness among women and to provide support and improve the status of women in society. Because of this, the group was protective about its image, and its identity is a concern of the past. Today, the organisation speaks from a position of strength and confidence about the credibility it already had within the society that it does not feel the need to worry about ‘image’. Reflecting on the organisation, one of the founder members said

Earlier we were very worried about how cases were handled and we used to strictly follow the practice of reporting all details back to the group. This worry was because of the organisations image had to be protected. Today we have established a reputation for
ourselves and as an organisation we can be more relaxed about giving new members a chance to handle cases. The older members try to pre-empt mistakes and warn newer members of lessons we have learnt from experience in handling cases but older members do give newer members a chance to learn from their own experience (Sabina Martins, 30 August 2008).

Cultural outcomes are closely linked to personal outcomes, which we will focus on in more detail.

8.2.5. Support to Village Communities Have Extended Outreach

Bailancho Saad, unlike several other NGOs and women’s groups, is not seen as a city based group and this has resulted in part from the organisation’s support to village based women’s issues. Here two landmark examples are the support it has extended to the women from Zuarwada, Tivrem in the early 1990s and the support to the women of Pilgao, Bicholim both over the issue of bar licences in the village, as the women feared the adverse impact of alcohol consumption on their children. In Tivrem, although some women were engaged in brewing the local alcohol, there was no bar in the village; with the setting up of a bar in the area the women feared that it would become a meeting place for the youth who otherwise met under trees. With the support of Bailancho Saad, a representation was made to the Chief Minister (at that time Shri Wilfred D’Souza) in this regard. The bar licence of the existing bar was revoked and the group was given an assurance that as long was the women objected to it no new licence would be given to set up a bar in that village (SAAD Vol. 2, No. 5). Till 2009, there has been no bar in the village of Zuarwada, Tivrem and the women of Zuarwada continue to be in touch with Bailancho Saad and attend the Women’s Day programmes. In the case of Pilgao, Bicholim, the women were supported by Bailancho Saad and the campaign was successful in monitoring the timings of the existing bars. Till today (2009) one of the women from the Pilgao women’s group – Afroze Sheikh – has remained an active member of Bailancho Saad (see Section 8.3 on personal cases for more information on Afroze Sheikh).

Bailancho Saad has become a watchdog to protect the society from all forms of gender discrimination and violation of gender rights and from the first two sets of
outcomes, namely, political/policy outcomes and cultural outcomes, we have seen that it is the organisation’s work that has resulted in a major change in perspective in society to several issues concerning women in Goa. This role that has been played by Bailancho Saad is further strengthened by the next outcome, namely, the mobilisation outcome.

8.2.6. Hurdles that have to be crossed for Cultural Outcomes

The success of collective processes on cultural outcomes depends greatly on the composition of the group and the ability of the group to uphold the participatory method. Very often, especially when programmes have to be organised and a particular work target has been set, spending time within the group on discussions, debating a different point of view, etc., gets to be viewed less important. However, this aspect of collective organising is crucial for any change in attitude. This is also the case during awareness programmes. Sufficient time has to be given to discuss the opposing point of view as well.

One of the lessons from Bailancho Saad’s experience is that open membership policy facilitates a debate between extreme points of view. The varied composition of the group facilitates sharing of ideas cross culturally. The cultural change that is sought here is not merely a change in social customs and traditions which are discriminatory to women, but also attitudes and ideologies that perpetuate women’s subordination and oppression. It is not only important to work with different groups and organisations on a variety of issues, but also to organise programmes for a variety of audiences and encourage participants from different sections of the society. Sometimes a women’s organisation need to include men, too!

8. 3. Mobilization Outcomes

By ‘mobilization outcomes’ we refer to the success in the ‘activation of a pool of people who can be drawn into subsequent movements’ (Staggenborg, 1995); in other words, the success of the organisation in creating a ‘collective consciousness’ which can create resources for future mobilization. It also refers to the extent of the organisation’s outreach and the geographical spread of the organisation’s goals and ideals. This also speaks of the continuity of the work of the organisation whether it is under the banner of
that organisation itself or due to the inspiration it has given to other groups or movements even if the issues taken up by these groups/movements are not directly related to the agenda of Bailancho Saad.

Despite the changes that Bailancho Saad has gone through over the last almost two decades of its existence, it has stood the test of time and continues till this day. Further it has become an organisation synonymous with women’s rights and empowerment. Its reputation as an organisation doing credible work for the betterment of women in Goa is so widely known that most organisations, not only women’s groups, seek to collaborate with Bailancho Saad on a wide range of issues: AAAG (Aam Aadmi Aurat Against Gambling) against casinos in Goa, CICH (Citizens Initiative for Communal Harmony), Goa State Commission for Women, Goa Bachao Andolan, Goa Mahila Shakti Abhiyan, to name just a few. The Photo Nos. 8.6 – 8.10, are documentary record of the mobilization ability of Bailancho Saad for the 8 March programme to commemorate ‘International Women’s Day’ every year.

Photo 8.6

Women’s Day 1994
Photo 8.7
Women’s Day 2001

Photo 8.8
Women’s Day 2005
Photo 8.9
Women’s Day 2006

Photo 8.10
Women’s Day 2009
8.3.1. Collaborations with other Women’s Groups

Photo 8.11
Collaborating with other women’s groups in Goa on common issues

Photo 8.12
Collaborating with other women’s groups in Goa on common issues
Collaborating on issues of common interest with women’s groups across the State, as well as those around the country and international organisations, has helped Bailancho Saad build a wide and strong network and a more forceful campaign on those issues.

8.3.2. Reaching out to a wider community across the State of Goa

While in the first few years of Bailancho Saad’s existence it was known to be a city based group of urban, educated, and mostly unmarried women. This composition, as we saw in Chapter 6, has changed to a more varied group of women across religious and social groups, with varied levels of literacy and education, from both rural and urban areas from North and South Goa Districts. This varied profile of the members has been a result of both deliberate strategies of the organisation to reach out to people in villages and as a natural outcome of the reputation the organisation has earned within the society for its work for the welfare and empowerment of women. The attendance at the weekly Saturday meetings at the office of Bailancho Saad is not an indicator of the growth of the organisation. The organisation has always worked from a small space with a small core group meeting regularly while other members keep in touch by participating in campaigns, meetings and other programmes and contacting the group on Saturdays when in need of assistance or support for a personal issue or when referring another case. The real proof of the outreach of the organisation is the spread of the organisations values and ideology across Goa, the growing radius from where people around Goa have come to contact the organisation, the number of people who attend the March 8 and other programmes as seen in the Photo Nos. 8. 6 – 8.10.

As already mentioned, this growth of the organisation has been both an incidental outcome of the organisation processes and due to deliberate efforts of the organisation. While there has been a growth in terms of those who consider themselves members as already mentioned in Chapter 6, there has been greater growth in terms of its outreach and in the nature of its activities and programmes. Several of its older members have branched off from their experience with Bailancho Saad to employment in different NGOs, setting up their own NGO, undertaking separate initiatives for other issues though not disconnected with Bailancho Saad’s agenda such as communalism, anti-tourism,
children’s rights, etc. and, thereby spreading the vibrations into other movements some examples which are listed below. However, not all the involvements of the members listed below have been included; this is just a selection of some members, particularly the old members, as the growth is more apparent over time.

1. Albertina Almeida, a founder member of Bailancho Saad, is a trained lawyer and was involved with drafting the Children’s Act 2003 and was actively involved in GBA (Goa Bachao Abhiyan). Albertina played a key role in the formation of CICH (Citizen’s Initiative for Communal Harmony) after the Gujarat riots of 2002 and Saad Aangaan in 2005. Albertina Almeida is the official Coordinator of the work of Goa State Commission for Women for the implementation of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005.

2. Afroze Sheikh contacted the organisation around 1989 together with Alka from Pilgao Village in Bicholim where the issue in the village was problems related to water. Being supported by Bailancho Saad in local issues they continued their involvement with the group. Afroze continues till this day (2009) to be an active member of the core group of Bailancho Saad, despite having only Madrasa education till Standard IV. She today is on the paid staff of Saad Alashiro and is one of the signatories to manage the Bailancho Saad Bank Account. Alka, however, is a Panch member in the village Pilgao, Bicholim.

3. Bernie D’souza along with her husband Greg have started their own organisation called Jan Ugahi in January 1995. This organisation based in Margao, South Goa assists slum dwellers through: supplementary classes for street children, handling cases of abuse, adult literacy classes, workshops, self-help groups for vocational training such as tailoring, batik, etc., (Swadhini) and a savings and credit facility (Sahayog). They also run a shelter home.

4. Madhuri Rao, who is now a grandmother, is still an active member of Bailancho Saad, but was a Counsellor with the Family Counselling Centre coordinated by the All India Women’s Conference with funding from the Goa State Social Welfare Advisory Board. Madhuri has assisted the Goa State Commission for Women in several of its programmes and in handling cases. Her expertise developed from experience with Bailancho Saad whom she contacted as a victim of abuse.
5. Sabina Martins is a Chemistry teacher in a school in Panaji. She remains as one of the most active members of the core group of Bailancho Saad. She was selected to represent the NGOs from Goa during the Fourth World Conference on Women – Action for Equality Development and Peace – held in Beijing in September 1995. She was later appointed by the Chief Minister of Goa on the Goa State Commission for Women where she was a Member of the Goa State Commission for Women for two three-year terms (1997 to 2000 and 2000 to 2003). Apart from her involvement in children’s rights issues, she was Co-convenor of the *Goa Bachao Abhiyan* and a pivot to the *AAAG* movement (Aam Aadmi Aurat Against Gambling).

6. Ulka Lotlikar joined the organisation as a victim of domestic violence sometime in 1994 as she had walked out of a violent 11-day marriage. From 2003, however, she stopped being regular at the Saturday meetings, but continues to attend Bailancho Saad programmes. She is more active now with Saad Aangan. She is a trained accountant and is responsible for the accounts of several NGOs in Goa.

7. Caroline Collasso started a wing of Bailancho Saad in Mapusa in 1992 and then, in 1993, started a separate women’s group called *Bailancho Manch*. This organisation worked closely with the Jagrut Goenkaranchi Fauz (Vigilant Goans Army) that led the Anti-Tourism Movement in Goa. Caroline later went on to do a law degree and is today a practising lawyer. She works closely with the Goa State Commission for Women.

8. Anita Haladi is a teacher of Economics. She helped set up Goa’s first NGO for children called *UMED* which had a short life. She also played a key role in the drafting of the Children’s Act 2003 and then in the formation of *Children’s Rights Goa*.

Apart from the mobilization strength of individual members, the group has extended its outreach through the programmes organised all over the state focussing on rural Goa.
Photo 8.13
Tivrem Women participating in Women’s Day programme 1994

Photo 8.14
Awareness Programme in St Cruz Village
Photo 8.15
Awareness Programme in Khandola in 2000

Photo 8.16
Gender Awareness Programme for Male Youth
Chapter Eight                                                    Outcome Analysis: Strengths & Limitations

Photo 8.17
Taking Awareness programme to the Audience

Photo 8.18
Carnival-like Parade of Social Issues organised by Bailancho Saad with other organisations in 2002, taking the message far
8.3.3. Hurdles that have to be crossed for Mobilisation Outcomes

We have already discussed that much of the success of collective organising is owing to the mass support for the organisation and the organisation’s ability to mobilise a large multi-sectoral support for its campaigns. The success at mobilisation depends on several factors. It is associated with a certain familiarity of the person/s with the population that is being mobilised, it is associated with expertise on the issue that people are being mobilised for, the charisma the person/s possesses, the language and communication skills possessed and the reputation of the organisation that is trying to mobilise people. The ability to mobilise people is a special skill that not all members are gifted with and it is difficult for one individual to have all these facets. It is, therefore, important for the group as a whole to identify the individual/s with the necessary skills for this aspect of the organisation’s work.

It is important that the organisation is aware of its own mobilisation strengths, as very often collaborations are sought on issues by new groups so that they can lean on the existing support base that the older, more established group has. Sometimes collaborations are sought from groups that do not share the same ideology, but the ideal position for mobilisation is when these organisations maintain a level of transparency and the reasons for the collaboration and benefits thereof are clear and known.

8.4. Personal or Self Development Outcomes

Personal or self-development outcomes refer to the success of the organisation in enhancing the lives of members. In other words, it refers to the empowering impact that the participatory method or ‘collective organising’ without a hierarchy has on the members and then the impact of this on the success of the organisation. Empowering individual lives of women is important for change, as it reciprocally impacts the success of the collective in meeting its goal of establishing a force that can bring about a more gender-just society. It is only when women are empowered with the freedom to participate in decisions and when they are empowered with knowledge of rights that they begin to make changes in their own lives and subsequently spread the ideology of gender justice to others.
In Chapter 6 the functioning of the collective has been outlined and the strategies to promote democratic and participatory functioning as well as the incorporation of women friendly practices to make the organisation less intimidating to women have been mentioned. Absence of demand for regular attendance, encouraging participation in discussions, explaining concerns of the group in a language best understood by the majority etc., contribute to making new members feel an immediate sense of belonging and acceptance which encourages their participation.

We will now look more closely at various processes and strategies of collective organising and its impact on the individual as well as the reciprocal impact the individual has on the collective. The logic followed here is that, if individual participation and involvement is encouraged, it also means that there is greater involvement of individual members in decisions of the organisation. Involvement in decision making, in turn, impacts individual responsibility for that decision which collectively becomes the group decision. It also then strengthens the feeling of group solidarity and commitment. All this then contributes to the organisations empowerment project.

8.4.1. Processes to Increase Individual Participation

8.4.1.a. Dissemination of Information: The Power of Knowledge

At the weekly meetings the new participants are made aware of matters and issues that are being discussed by explaining them in a language that is most easily understood. This not only encourages participation and involvement of even the new members, but also strengthens the feeling of group solidarity through generating caring attitudes even towards persons who are new, who may not be as motivated as the older ones or have any knowledge of the issues taken up. Several new members have expressed their appreciation of the ‘Bailancho Saad meetings’, but are unable to articulate the difference between other meetings they have attended. They only say that the Bailancho Saad meetings are ‘different’, that they ‘like being part of the group’, that they feel comfortable and ‘strong’. This building of group solidarity strengthens the group commitment to the ‘cause’, perpetuating an encouraging environment for all members to contribute to the discussions. The feeling of belonging to the group then results in shared responsibilities for the decisions taken collectively. Because of the democratic process of
the organisation, information and knowledge get disseminated through discussions, and knowledge itself empowers.

8.4.1.b. A Space for Everyone

The success of the organisation in sustaining itself through collective organising since 1986 has resulted from the fact that the members share basic values of equality and co-operation, on which the organisation had been founded. This is despite the varied backgrounds they come from, the different levels of education they have had, the different reasons for which they are associated with the group, etc. There have been members who have left Bailancho Saad for varied reasons: being transferred out of the state (these members sometimes continue to stay in touch with the organisation), getting involved with other organisations, personal differences with the group or with individual members, their purpose for being involved has been met (especially in the instances of women seeking assistance from the group, information for projects etc.), etc.. There have been an equal number that have joined the organisation as well. It was observed that the level of commitment of newer members has been different from the deeper commitment of older members, but this can only be truly tested with time.

Sustaining this commitment to group solidarity is also not always easy. Over the years, the collective has had the experience of members who did not share these values or the interest in promoting or encouraging others. There are times when individuals personalities have been such that they have wanted to dominate. However, this has to be constantly negotiated with and the open discussion policy allows for this matter also to be discussed within the group. Over the years Bailancho Saad has gone through experiences when some members wanted to formalise the functioning, draw up a constitution, etc., but with ‘non-hierarchy’ as the only written rule which is upheld, this has not been accepted by the group. New members who have tried to dominate the group consensus process have not met with success and have either stopped being regular members or have left the group, having become aware of the difference in values and having met with no success with any attempts to assume ‘leadership’. An MLA, in the earlier years of her political career, assumed the title ‘President of Bailancho Saad’ but did not manage to either run the organisation or have any control over its activities. Right wing persons
have also come into Bailancho Saad, but have left because the culture within the organisation was not conducive for the promotion of their political agenda. Bailancho Saad, however, is open to persons with all shades and hues of political ideologies to join in discussions. This demonstrates the strength of the collective group’s commitment to equality that outdoes individual desires to dominate.

8.4.1.c. ‘Equality’ despite Individual Differences

The idea of a ‘collective’ suggests acceptance of each other as equals. However, even in the most egalitarian of organisations there could be some inequalities, for example, in skills or capabilities or differences in opinion. Within Bailancho Saad, variations in individual capabilities have not affected the pursuit of equality.

Case Example: Afroze Sheikh

Afroze, hailing from an orthodox Muslim family, now in her mid thirties, was educated in a Madrasa till the IVth Standard and did not continue thereafter with her education. Bailancho Saad had given a talk in her village (Pilgoa, Bicholim) some time in 1989. As the village faced serious water problems, Afroze moved by the dynamism of the group of women was drawn to the group. Even after the village issue was sorted to some extent, Afroze continued her involvement with activities of Bailancho Saad. She was able for a while to use the group as an outlet for selling bamboo hairclips that she made in the self-help group in the village. Despite her lack of formal education, Afroze has been very adept at handling individual cases, extending support to victims of abuse, ensuring that the police register the victim’s complaint, etc. She has formed self-help groups in her village and has taught self-defence to women’s groups and has organised people from across religious and social sections of society. She today is also one of those responsible in the organisation for operating the Bailancho Saad bank account. Afroze continues till this day (2009) to be an active member of the core group of Bailancho Saad and was awarded the Goa Sudharop Award 2003 (an award announced annually by a Goan Non-Profit Organisation based in the United States of America) for her service to women in Goa.
Afroze does think her success is owed to Bailancho Saad. She is now on the paid staff of Saad Alashiro. She has been instrumental in changing the way people think about Muslims and women. This has been possible because of the acceptance of individual differences in skills and capabilities and the belief that everyone has something to offer. In the collective, there is also a conscious attempt to reduce these inequalities or neutralise these differences, to the extent possible, through the dissemination of information, sharing of tasks, learning of new skills, etc. Differences in opinion have been tackled by discussions, viewing an issue from all possible angles.

Although the collective lays no demand on individual members to contribute, there is an underlying belief that everyone can learn new skills and at the same time acknowledges that there are certain jobs that some persons just cannot do. The legal handling of cases, for example, was solely looked after by one of the members who is a trained lawyer. Today, the trained counsellor plays the lead role in cases that require counselling. However, there are some members who might help out with other aspects of
the case, like in home visits, support, protection, etc. There are yet others who do not feel fit to get involved with cases but may be great moral support to the person concerned. Everyone, however, has some role to play and something to offer, which is defined by her own capabilities.

8.4.1.d. Team Building and Personality Development

Bailancho Saad has organised formal team building programmes to bridge the differences that might exist between individuals, to build group solidarity and for the development and introspection of individual self-development. A picnic was organised in the mid-1990s to Candolim Beach, which is one of the most tourist populated beaches. This was also at a time when the anti-tourism fervour in the State was at its peak. All the members went into the water and those that were terrified of water having not been into the sea before were assisted by members who knew swimming. Members remember this picnic fondly and it was one of the few moments when the group has not been involved in battling problems. There have been other group dynamics and personality building sessions organised such as the ones documented in the Photo Nos. 20 – 23.

Photo 8.20

Team Building 1
Chapter Eight                                                   Outcome Analysis: Strengths & Limitations

Photo 8.21
Team Building 2

Photo 8.22
Theatre Workshop 1999
8.4.1.e. Decisions by Consensus

Decisions within the organisation are made through a process of consensus, which is seen as a conscious step toward equality and therefore an integral part of the organisation’s functioning. Participants present at meetings are informed about important issues. The opposing views on those issues are also placed before the group. Only after detailed discussions, a consensus is attempted to be arrived at. Decisions taken by consensus does in no way imply ‘compromise’ or ‘voting’. It means that all members present when the decision is taken have had the opportunity to discuss the issues concerned, until a decision that is acceptable to everyone is arrived at. This process does not discourage dissent. If no consensus is reached, the organisation does not take a stand on that particular issue. Bennis et al. (1965) describe a ‘mature group’ as one in which there is consensus decision making which encourages dissent and also the acceptance of individual difference. There have been instances when the organisation has stayed out of a larger campaign because there was no consensus within the group like in the instance of the Miss India Beauty Pageant that was to be held in Goa in 1994. This is a serious concern for the organisation for, as it grows, the member’s backgrounds and orientation
get more diverse and sometimes arriving at a consensus is difficult. The organisation has lost members because of this difference of opinion. Suggestions for tackling this aspect will be dealt with in detail in the concluding chapter.

8.4.1.f. Need for Urgent Decisions: Modifying Consensus and Specialists

Consensus often also resulted in delayed decisions which affected certain organisation activities more than others. Handling of cases, for example, often needed urgent decisions to be taken. The practice of decisions by consensus at the weekly meetings posed a serious problem. So, a solution was worked out and it was decided that, for case handling, the individual or group of individuals handling each case would take decisions independent of the larger group as they would be entrusted with that responsibility. Earlier this responsibility was only given to the more experienced members, but today even the newer members assist in case handling while older members guide them through discussions. Individual cases handled are discussed regularly at the weekly meetings where everyone is informed about the progress of that case. This practice was the initiation of temporary specialists for particular activities and ‘modified consensus’, where ‘critical decisions are reserved for the entire membership, while routine decisions are delegated horizontally’ (Iannello 1992: 95). ‘Modified consensus’ is a term used by Iannello (1992) to mean a method of decision making and a form of organisation. The specialist is selected based on the specialised skills that the person(s) possesses, which are seen to be a requirement for that task. This position is temporary, volunteered and acknowledged by the group. This volunteered responsibility, resulting from a sense of commitment leads to personal accountability for the task undertaken.

8.4.1.g. More about Temporary Specialists

Leadership within Bailancho Saad does not mean a hierarchical domination, rather it is motivated by a need to initiate, influence and empower. Dissemination of information, sharing of tasks and encouraging the development of new skills are processes upheld by the organisation to empower members with the belief in empowerment through individual autonomy.
SAAD Vol. 1 No. 1 carried an account of a member who was a ‘housewife’, who attended a National Women’s Conference in 1994 as a representative of Bailancho Saad, where she not only got the exposure to women’s groups from all over India but got to attend discussions on issues of national concern. She said, ‘imagine the freedom to be out of station sans family after 14 years of marital bondage of unpaid and unrecognised housework’. She discussed how she then got the opportunity to learn of several issues she had not been exposed to earlier such as health and population, communalism and politics of identity, the new economic policy, violence, etc.

For most programmes and activities, ‘temporary specialists’ are identified by the group during the meetings or are positions that are volunteered for. In 1995, for example, the organisation was asked to represent the NGO forum from Goa at the World Conference for Women in Beijing. Sabina Martins who had been a student activist and one of the founder members of Bailancho Saad, a Chemistry teacher in a school was chosen to represent the organisation and be part of the NGO delegation to Beijing.

8.4.1.h. Learning New Skills by Sharing Tasks

Given the numerous and various tasks undertaken by the group, such as case work and counselling, printing of the newsletter and other publications, etc., and given the limited number of members, work obviously gets done through a shared effort. Through this sharing of tasks, members learn new skills. For example, contributions to the newsletter of the organisation are often made by women who have had no previous experience of writing for a public audience. Then, at training programmes organised by the collective, members who have never before spoken in public are encouraged to give talks or to share their experiences.

The organisation is committed to minimising differences through this system of empowerment. It at the same acknowledges and accepts individual limitations, as we have seen earlier. The collective’s conscious opposition to hierarchy and all symbols of patriarchy enables the minimisation of power within the collective. Power in the form of authority, decision making, skills, knowledge, etc., get reduced through discussions, training, shared responsibilities and tasks as well as collective decision making through ‘modified consensus’.
This method of empowerment of members within the collective has wider implications, as it also affects the women’s individual status in the larger society and the collective’s political power. The skills and the support individual members receive from their association with the collective, has in many cases, enabled women to be self-supporting, take personal risks like walking out of a marriage where they have been a victim of violence and oppose oppressive traditions and customs that are felt to be discriminatory to women. The collective too has progressed from being a discussion group in 1986 to an organised group for social action and change.

8.4.1.i. Varied Members enrich Activities and Responses

The organisation’s open membership enables the involvement of women from a cross section of society. This makes the organisation richer in terms of the variety of knowledge, skills and talents within the group. Members of the collective are agricultural labourers, lawyers, artists, social workers, teachers, journalists, housewives, etc. Due to this varied membership, and the democratic and participatory structure of the collective, creative responses to issues and innovation are made possible. The organisation is, therefore, fluid and open to change. The only aspects that the collective is rigid and inflexible about are the value for equality, the non-hierarchical process, decisions by consensus and the goal to better the status of women.

Leadership and direction in the form of temporary specialists constantly change hands, resulting in multiple, diverse, as well as adaptive responses to the same issues. For example, the collective, from almost the time of its inception has been involved with the issue of violence against women and has handled this issue in a variety of ways. It has been active in its demand for a special cell to deal with crimes against women, had demonstrations in this regard as well as peaceful representations to concerned persons in authority in the government, poster exhibitions, workshops on violence, training in gender sensitivity, street plays and tiatrs (local theatre in Konkani) have been held around the city. The issue has been discussed in the organisation’s newsletter as well. Due to the different skills, information and resources available within the group, a variety of tasks, a range of activities and programmes become possible to be undertaken.
The organisation is not static and has changed with the times. From the oral account of the history of the organisation that was obtained from interviews with some of the members and from information gathered from the press and the organisations publications, it was observed that the organisation has evolved from a small discussion group to what it is today, a large all Goa women’s organisation. It is very involved politically with issues related to women’s rights, not only in the state of Goa, but also at national and international levels too. It is open to different views and to change even in terms of the organisation’s perspectives on important issues. An example is made evident through the language of the organisation’s critique of tourism. In some of the earlier press releases, that is around 1986 or 1987, the organisation was opposed to the celebration of the Carnival supported and part sponsored by the government on grounds that it was ‘carried out in the most indecent and immoral manner, bringing down the dignity of women’. The group protested against the promotion of tourism, which, it said, was ‘at the cost of the dignity of women, the local culture and the social health of the territory’. It said in the same press release that ‘the Carnival parades, use women as sex objects in advertising the products of sponsors…’. It described the festival of the Carnival as a ‘commercialised silly colonial tamasha’. Differences can be seen in the language of its later ‘Critique of the Commercialisation the Carnival in Goa’ titled *Culture Vultures*, brought out as a priced publication in 1993, in which it enumerated its objections to the commercialisation of the carnival and it also gave explanations for the objections:

Our objections began initially as a reaction to the harassment we ourselves were facing from tourists who assume that women in Goa are available for the asking, mainly because of the images conveyed through the commercial Carnival parades and the advertisements about them. As we probed deeper, we realised how commercialisation of carnival robs us as a people of our spontaneity and distorts our culture. The link between the commercialisation of carnival and promotion of modern tourism also became a lot clearer (Bailancho Saad 1993a: 1).

The publication consisted of a list of questions and answers, rationalising the collective’s views. This is a marked change from the earlier, emotion filled protest and request to women to boycott the festival.
Photo Nos. 8.24 – 8.29 illustrate the varied programmes undertaken by the organisation which were made possible by the varied skills, talents and backgrounds of its members.

**Photo 8.24**

*Posters in different languages and different styles*

**Photo 8.25**

*Celebrating Women’s Day with a Solidarity Swim across Mandovi*
Chapter Eight

Outcome Analysis: Strengths & Limitations

Photo 8.26
A Mock Court organised on Women’s Day (1998)

Photo 8.27
Skits
Photo 8.28

Song and Dance

Photo 8.29

Meetings, Seminars and Conferences
8.4.1.j. Negotiating Limitations

The process of consensus through discussions has some disadvantages too. It slows down the process of decision making, and often prevents the collective from being involved in important issues that may be related to the organisation’s larger objectives. An example is the case of the 1994 Miss India Pageant that was being organised and subsequently held in Goa. There was opposition raised by some of the women’s groups in Goa. Bailancho Saad, however, was divided in its views about the pageant and the implications for women. Therefore, the organisation stayed out of the debate and did not oppose the pageant in the state. Similar was the experience at the time of the state debate over the Konkan Railway. No consensus was reached and the organisation opted out of the then controversial issue. There is, therefore, a constant negotiation between egalitarian values and social action, and there is a recurring need to bring about equilibrium between the internal organisational processes of the group and task accomplishment.

Shared values of equality, a genuine commitment to the common cause of enhancing the status of women in society and involvement in the decision-making process and planning have positively impacted on the extent of voluntary efforts, participation, the shouldering of responsibility within the organisation and individual commitment to group decisions. There are, no doubt limitations to commitment which have to be recognised and collectively managed so that appropriate participation is maintained and the organisation’s activities do not get hampered. Individual members volunteer to take on responsibilities, but since most of the members worked full-time on other jobs, had domestic duties to tend to, etc., often the scarcity of time made it difficult to keep to commitments. Recognising the limits of volunteerism, the collective introduced paid full-time members. The collective had in the early 1990s considered this, but anticipated problems such as divide within the organisation between the paid and the voluntary staff, resulting in a sort of hierarchy. The organisation also anticipated that money might become the motivation factor for women joining the organisation and that that would have a negative impact on commitment and organisation pulse.

Today, the varying levels of commitment is a reality that the collective has to grapple with. Some members, particularly the older members, believe in working towards
social action and change and have been consistent with their commitment to the cause. Some members have approached and joined the organisation for support, as they might be victims of oppression and violence, or in need of some kind of help and might discontinue being part of the collective as soon as they have managed to solve their problem. Some who have come to the organisation for help might continue assisting the organisation. For example, the women from Zuarvada, Tivrem, a village in North Goa, in early 1992, had approached the group for help as they were opposed to the setting up of a bar in their village.

The collective is aware of the different levels of commitment. Although, as a rule, the collective does not discriminate on grounds of commitment, the level of commitment determines the involvement of the member in execution of work and to some extent determines the agenda of the organisation.

The collective lays no demand on individual members for their contribution. There is, however, an underlying belief that everyone can learn new skills and at the same time it is acknowledged that there are certain jobs that some persons just cannot do. For example, the legal-handling of cases was solely looked after by one of the members who was a trained lawyer. However, there are some members who might help out with other aspects of the case, like in home visits, support, protection, etc. There are yet others who do not feel fit to get involved with cases but may be great moral support to the person concerned. Everyone, however, has some role to play and something to offer, which is defined by her own capabilities.

The ideal of a collective or an organisation that is ideologically opposed to hierarchy as a symbol of patriarchy is based on a respect for the capabilities of individuals within that collective. There are numerous instances of members trying to achieve short-term goals, aspiring towards longer term goals while upholding the value of equality. There have been several instances within the autonomous women’s movement where members motivated by a dream for an egalitarian society have employed strategies so as not to place one group of people above the other and have through their processes aimed to enhance collective ownership of the goals and outcomes of the project.

Just supporting the value for equality within the collective does not imply that equality always exists and that all members participating will also value equality. It is a
lot dependant on the participant’s ability to negotiate differences between the participating individuals. Differences in skills and knowledge, for example, will always exist and is often more difficult to deal with than are differences in socio-economic status, as that attribute may not necessarily have any bearing on the actual working of the group. Sharing of skills and the rotation of tasks are often strategies used to counter the differences in skills, but this is easier said than done. In sensitive case handling, for example, a person who lacks basic communication skills can do great harm to the case. In the earlier years of Bailancho Saad this was more of a concern than it is today and that was because the reputation of the organisation was tied up with the way work was discharged. Cases that were not handled well could harm the already vulnerable organisation that was being publicly criticized. Today, however, the organisation’s reputation is not vulnerable, it has earned a standing in society for the work it has been doing and is able to run the risk of new members handling cases. These new members then report back to the group and mistakes are discussed in the group so that they are not repeated.

Since consensus forms the basis of the organisation’s decision-making, much is dependant on the individual’s verbal skills and confidence to articulate opinions. This is a major limitation to equal participation. However, the strategies that have been adopted over the years have been confidence building by entrusting responsibilities, such as public sharing of experiences, to enable the member to voice her opinion even if she lacks the fluency of language. Another strategy is to speak in the language of the majority and provide translations. The more articulate members have to learn to curb wanting to voice their opinion all the time and efforts are to me made to make sense of the opinions of the less-articulate members. This is made possible with the cherished value that everyone has something to offer. This equal respect of the ‘other’ is one of the strengths of collective organising.

The enabling responsibility of persons in so-called ‘advantageous positions’ to not only recognize the difference but also act as equalizers is an unspoken given. The extent to which this enabling role is carried out will depend on how committed that individual is to the value of equality. In this, older members become automatic leaders as their familiarity with the values of the organisation is greater. Therefore, one can say that the
learning of new tasks in the collective is not only for those who lack skills and knowledge in terms of formal training. Even those who are the ‘enablers’, as referred to above, have to learn how to handle the process appropriately for example, without being too critical, etc. Thus, one can say that the process of minimizing differences in skills places demands on all the participants. However, as Helen Brown (1992: 19) has warned this might lead to ‘levelling down’ rather than a ‘levelling up’ resulting in an overall deficiency of skills.

Within the collective, it is claimed that all members have the right to identify problems and to suggest solutions. However, the reality is a lot more complicated as ensuring equality in influence in decision making is a complex issue. According to Rothschild-Whit (1982), individual differences in influence inevitably limit what can be achieved in the pursuit of equality:

Inequalities of influence persist in the most egalitarian of organisations …Such individual differences may constrain the organisation’s ability to realize its egalitarian ideals. The task of any collectivist –democratic workplace…is to eliminate all bases of individual power and authority save those that individuals carry in their person (ibid.: 44 and 45).

J. Mansbridge (1973: 361), on the other hand, says that ‘each group must…understand and find ways to deal with inequalities that cannot be reduced’.

While discussing the possibilities of formulating strategies to equalize ‘influence’, it may be pertinent to note the views of some extremist positions such as that of J. Freeman (1984) who talks of the ‘tyranny of structurelessness’ in organisations such as those within the autonomous women’s movement. According to Freeman structurelessness is a myth and that it only conceals the informal structure within which elite members or ‘stars’ are able to wield unchallenged and unchallengeable power within the organisation. Even if it be a myth or utopia, Bailancho Saad stubbornly believes that it is worth striving for!