ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This is the very last but crucial piece remaining before this thesis is bound. This moment for me, is an emotionally packed one, as I have spent many, many years on this project. I have had two children in between the initial plan to do a doctorate and the final execution of the idea. I have had the usual tensions and demands of work at the Centre for Women’s Studies, Goa University, and the added responsibilities being appointed as a Member of the Goa State Commission for Women, right at the time when I was to complete my pre-doctoral work and begin work on this thesis. This project is, therefore, a sign that all hurdles can be overcome with determination and lots of help from one’s friends. The list of these ‘friends’ is long, but I would be doing them grave injustice if I did not at least try to list some of them. Sincere apologies to those who I might miss out; I have not intended to take anyone for granted. I am deeply indebted to all those who have been there for me through this PhD programme.

My husband and sounding-board, Pranab Mukhopadhyay has been solely responsible for goading me on every step of this long and arduous academic journey. When I was nearly giving up this study due to preoccupations with domestic duties, it was only my husband’s insistence, support and encouragement that convinced me to pursue the degree. My children, Taran and Ananya have been tremendously understanding of the long hours that I was not there for them. I am sure all women reading this know how fortunate I am to have such a supportive family.

I was doubly fortunate to have Prof. N. Jayaram as my mentor and guide. Prof. Jayaram accepted to supervise my work despite his long list of commitments and has never failed to give me his time even when in the midst of re-locating to Bangalore as Director, Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC) and then back again to the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai as Dean, School of Social Sciences. Prof. Jayaram has been the ‘model’ supervisor. His logical mind, lucid guidance, patient reading, detailed comments, together with his kind-hearted generosity makes me feel extremely privileged. He gave form to what would otherwise have been mere meandering
ideas, however passionate and innovative, and has unknowingly been a feminist through his unfailing support and encouragement extended to me throughout the whole research process. Many thanks for making this study possible despite the logistic and other hurdles.

I would like to acknowledge the contributions of several other persons, institutions and organisations that have made this doctoral thesis possible. I deeply indebted to the Tata Institute of Social Sciences for permitting me to spend so many years working to produce this thesis. I would like to mention in particular few persons from the Institute who have contributed to making this thesis a reality: Dr. Rajshree Mathani, Dr. Nandini Manjrekar, Dr. Laxmi Lingam, and Prof. D.P Singh. Mr. P. Balakrishnan, Manju from the Meetings Section were extremely cooperative. Dilip Poyara, Poornima Pagare and Manjunath from the Secretariat, School of Social Sciences made it easy to work in the stressful final stages of the thesis writing. Many thanks also to all those who attended my pre-doctoral presentations and generously gave me your comments and suggestions. I am particularly grateful to Vandana and Manjari, fellow research scholars.

The long stays at the Institute would have been impossible if it were not for Rekha Mammen George and her ever-expandable generosity, creating for me a home away from home. Prof. Anjali Monteiro, my guide for my MA dissertation has remained a dear friend all these years. Together with Prof. K. P. Jayshankar, they have made this journey towards a PhD, special.

A big ‘thank you’ is owing to all at Bailancho Saad, Forum and Saheli because of whose contribution to the cause of empowerment of women, I was able to investigate a novel and more equitable strategy of organising. Special thanks are owing to Sabina Martins, Albertina Almeida, Nandita Gandhi, Laxmi Murthy, Ulka Lotlikar, Angela D’Souza, Victor, Pushpa, Surarna and Madhuri.

Many thanks to Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute for the Women and Development Award that enabled me to access the libraries of Concordia University (Montreal, Canada) and the Simone de Beauvoir Institute in particular, McGill University and the University of Montreal. It made possible also the special encounter with Prof. Peta Tancred, McGill University, Canada, the guru of non-hierarchical organising. I am indeed indebted also to the following libraries: The Sir Dorabji Tata Memorial Library at
Tata Institute of Social Sciences, and the libraries at Goa University, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi and Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC), Bangalore.

I must mention here that the seeds of the idea of such a study were sown in my mind thanks to Prof. A. Sreekumar, Department of Management Studies, Goa University who may not have realised the extent to which I would take that idea.

I am grateful to all those who have commented on the papers submitted at conferences, seminars and the presentations. I am particularly grateful to the examiners of my pre-doctoral thesis, Prof. Gurpreet Bal and Dr Meena Gopal for their valuable comments.

I am grateful to all the sources of data that I cannot individually acknowledge here. Last but not least I wish to thank authorities and colleagues at Goa University for granting me permission and leave to attend to work on this doctoral thesis.