



Celebrating 50 Years of Research and Academic Endeavour

About the Speaker:

Shri Rajendra Joshi a social entrepreneur, has been doing development work the urban and rural poor in India through Saath, the NGO he founded in 1989, and now with various social enterprises focusing on vocational training and employment in the BOP segment and affordable housing in Gujarat and Rajasthan.

His experience in development and social entrepreneurship has made a great impact in the low income and slums of Gujarat, and other Indian states. Working in cooperation with several different government, academic and non-governmental organisation and institutions, he has made several interventions to improve the life of those in the Bottom of the Pyramid (BoP). By using market-based strategies to create inclusive societies in both poor urban and rural communities, he has facilitated substantial interventions in public health and education, livelihoods, infrastructure and basic services, microcredit, natural resource management, institution building, organisation development, public policy and conflict resolution and disaster management.

In the affordable housing sector, Shri Rajendra Joshi was a Director of DBS Communities which is building about 5,000 affordable houses in Ahmedabad and Surat. He is a consultant to the 'Housing For All' Initiatives in India of the Ashoka Foundation and has helped establish Griha Pravesh, an affordable housing facilitator in Ahmedabad. He has also promoted Aashray, a techno-social incubator which has created an eco-system for supporting start-ups.

Shri Rajendra Joshi has several papers and publications in various areas of development, including “Recycling of Construction Material in Ahmedabad City”, 1996, “Integrated Slum Development in the slums of Pravinagar-Guptanagar, Ahmedabad”, 2002, “Pro Poor Accountability in WATSAN at Ahmedabad, India”, 2006 and “The Role of the NGO sector in Slum Rehabilitation, 2008” in “Rehabilitation of Slums in Urban Areas – Challenges and Experiences the role of the NGO sector in Slum Rehabilitation”. These publications, along with his work implemented through Saath have been recognised through several different awards and appointments. He has recently written and published a book titled “SMART CITIES - Breaking the Poverty Barrier.

He has been recipient of the title ‘Social Entrepreneur of the Year 2009’ by the Schwab Foundation, UNDP and CII and was included in the list of 50 “Social Entrepreneurs” by Business Outlook magazine in its September 5th 2009 issue. He was also recipient of the Karmaveer Puraskar by ICONGO in the category ‘Real Wealth Creators for the Communities’ in November 2008, and was included in the list of 50 ‘Pioneers of Change’ by India Today magazine in its July 8th issue, He is also an Ahsoka Fellow (inducted in September 2008).

Shri Rajendra Joshi strongly believes that the quality of life of the urban poor will improve when they are approached as a significant market.

Official Positions

Founder Trustee – Saath Charitable Trust

Director – Saath Livelihood Services

Managing Director – Aashray Promotion of Social Enterprises Foundation

Chairperson – YUVA, Mumbai