

## **Evaluation of Family Strengthening Programme in Bhubaneswar and Cochin of SOS Children's Villages of India in 2008 and in Rourkela in 2010**

This study was commissioned by SOS Children's Villages of India (SOS-India) as a part of a global initiative to strengthen this community based programme worldwide. On each of the five continents of its global presence each continent was asked to conduct four studies each and India was one of the study-focus countries in Asia. Four X 4 conducted this study in association with Human Development Society of Delhi. Out of about 22 locations where the Family Strengthening Programme (FSP) was operational Bhubaneswar and Cochin were selected because the programme had already run for a period close to five years – which was one of the conditions of selecting the locations. These two locations also represented two distinct regions of India, i.e. South and the East.

The evaluation study followed a joint approach combining the methodologies of classical and participatory approaches and was conducted with the support of beneficiaries and programme staff at both the locations as well as the beneficiaries and other stakeholders. The evaluation study looked at issues such as efficiency of the programme in providing basic services like health, education and nutrition; empowerment of participating families including skill building for strengthening their income generation capacity; empowerment of participating communities; relevance of the programme keeping in view the characteristics of the programme locations; programme effectiveness; and extent of its sustainability injected by programme interventions and enhancing participation of key stakeholders through continuous exchange mutually reinforcing activities and processes.

The report received wide appreciation within the SOS Children's Village programme think-tank for its well organized structure and articulated findings.

In 2010 SOS Children's Villages of India again entrusted Four X 4 to evaluate the Family Strengthening Programme of Rourkela project. The evaluation looked at the overall programme strategy, staff capacity, partnerships and collaborations evolved by the programme, livelihood opportunities generated for the vulnerable families. The evaluation approach followed the survey approach as well as the participatory approach. All stakeholders were consulted along with scanning with available project records and evidences. Accordingly, the findings were articulated which included creating clear-cut baseline, adopting livelihood strategies that are market focused, augmenting staff capacity to engage effectively with the communities and partners, etc. Following the sharing of findings, Four X4 has been asked by senior management of FourX4 to handhold the Rourkela project and demonstrate sound as well as result oriented project management practices.