

Mr. Girish G. Sohani, who earlier served as Executive Vice President and Joint Managing Trustee of BAIF Development Research Foundation, has now taken over as the President and Managing Trustee of the organisation. Mr. Sohani is serving the organisation for more than 29 years and has played a very significant role in institution building, strengthening of management information systems, human resources development and promotion of the 'wadi' (orchard) model through the establishment of orchards on degraded lands, which has been identified as the most sustainable model for tribal development.

Dr. Narayan G. Hegde, served as the President and Managing Trustee of BAIF from the year 1993 to 2009, after the demise of its Founder, Late Dr. Manibhai Desai. Dr. Hegde has been working with BAIF for over 35 years and has contributed to the growth of the organisation through his expertise in natural resource management, community development, environmental education and conservation and organisational development. During his tenure as Head of the Organisation, BAIF's contribution to poverty alleviation was widely endorsed by policy makers, donor agencies and well wishers and BAIF was recognised as a professionally managed civil society organisation with credibility, stability, efficiency and good governance as its guiding principles. Dr. Hegde will now serve as Trustee and Principal Adviser and mentor the organisation through advocacy, strengthening of public relations and documentation.

The formal hand over took place at a special ceremony on June 6, 2009 at the BAIF Bhavan at Warje in Pune in the presence of Shri. B.G. Deshmukh, Chairman, Executive Committee of BAIF Trustees, Shri. Deepak Mehta, Trustee, BAIF and Prof. Indira Parikh, Trustee, BAIF, prominent citizens of Pune, voluntary organisations, well wishers and staff of BAIF. On this occasion, Dr. Narayan G. Hegde was felicitated by Shri. B.G. Deshmukh for his unique leadership and contribution to the growth of BAIF and Mr. Girish G. Sohani was welcomed as the new President and Managing Trustee by Shri. Deepak Mehta.