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This report attempts to furnish a concise synopsis of the humble initiatives undertaken by Pragati team for the cause of the poor and marginalized through different interventions. We have crossed yet another milestone. Here is the time to share all about the experiences we gathered, hurdles we encountered and lessons we learnt. The process that we set in motion in 1992 in the remote Panchayat of Golluru has consistently grown in its outreach and spectrum of activities towards achieving our vision of dignified means of livelihood and greater socio-economic justice for poor and marginalized. However, this is the beginning towards a positive change. There are miles to go to concretize the gains of the process and keep up the momentum.

The year has witnessed some remarkable events like enactment of National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, Right to Information Act and Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers, (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, which have a direct bearing on the socio-economic context of our action areas. These Acts would bring opportunities for livelihood security and ensure democratic rights of poor and marginalized. Thus, there is the necessity to generate awareness among communities and further fortify the community-based institutions.

The Panchayati Raj election has brought some alteration in roles of civil society actors to political artistes. Political apathy has given place to active political role-play with good number of Civil Society Organization leaders entering the arena of local self-governance. There is sanguinity of convergence between the Panchayati Raj representatives and civil society actors which would bring the fruits of grass root governance within the reach of communities.

On the other hand, some parts of our action areas experienced tremors of landslides in August 2006 that wrecked livelihood resource of small and marginal farmers. When people are learning to utilize and manage natural resources, it has set rearward their pace of livelihood. However, we have taken up some emergency interventions for relief and rehabilitation of landslide-affected families, though these are interim solutions only. We would like to express gratitude to Trocaire Emergency Unit and SMT, New Delhi for their response at this critical juncture.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to all the supporting agencies for their critical reviews and positive feedbacks that add to our quality and vigor of work. I gratefully acknowledge the support and guidance extended by the members of the General Body. I would also like to thank my entire group for their committed work and team spirit.

We look forward to suggestions and constructive criticisms that would help us for concerted actions towards realizing our vision, mission and values.

Prabhakar Adhikari
Secretary
About Us:

Pragati Koraput was set up on 26th January 1992, with a humble mission to work for the cause of socio-economic development of the poor and marginalized communities inhabiting remote pockets of Koraput district in Orissa. It is registered under Societies Registration Act 1860 and Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act 1976.

We are present in 128 villages of 12 Gram Panchayats namely Badel, Balda, Bheja, Bilaput, Chatwa, Hatibari, Kulabir, Kularsing, Padwa, Panthulung, Raising and Thuba in Nandapur block and 40 villages in 4 Gram Panchayats namely Kendar, Manabar, Mahadeiput and Mastiput of Koraput block in Koraput district of Orissa reaching out to 6979 beneficiary families. Two third of the stakeholders belong to Scheduled tribes and Scheduled castes with 80% of them being small and marginal farmers. Besides, we have promoted a district level network of forest protecting communities covering 742 villages of Koraput District.

Our thrust areas

- Formation and Strengthening of CSOs
- Natural Resource Management
- Sustainable Agriculture
- Livelihood promotion
- Disaster preparedness and Rehabilitation

Our Vision, Mission & Values

VISION

We will build such a self-reliant society, free from hunger and exploitation, where everyone irrespective of caste, creed, sex and language have right to dignified means of livelihood and through collective action ensure socio-economic justice and ecological balance.

MISSION

We will facilitate and strengthen vibrant people’s organizations at different levels of society that will protect, utilize, control and manage local resources and through collective action, ensure dynamic socio-economic change for sustainable development by advocating for pro-poor governance and bring women, children, tribals and downtrodden, to the mainstream of the society.

VALUES

- Transparency in all aspects.
- Commitment to render selfless service to the poor.
- Accountability to the Society.
- Work with team spirit.
- Punctuality.
- Participatory approach in all aspects.
- Sensitive towards women.
OUR ACTIVITIES

❖ Strengthening of CSOs:
Communities as a collective unit have the wisdom for better governance and establish processes for equitable allocation of resources. Evaporation of traditional village level institutions that started with British imperialism and continued even in post independence era splintered the values and potency of community life and laid open the concourse to degradation of natural resources especially those under the collective custody of community. Facilitation, nurturing and strengthening of civil society organizations has been one of our thrust areas to enable communities propel towards collective management and governance of natural resources and at the same time boost their bargaining power to access the safety nets enshrined in the apparatus of a welfare state.

One of our primary tasks has been to understand community dynamics and levels of social cohesion to build up democratic civil society organizations and capacitate them towards realizing collective visions. Besides, the 73rd amendment of the constitution and the state government enactment of PESA (Panchayati Raj Extension into Scheduled Areas Act) in 1997 to devolve governance to the level of Panchayats enable civil society participation in governance, control and management over natural resources vital for tribal livelihood. The civil society development process is slowly gaining momentum as evident from their concerted actions for rights over common property resources and entitlements under different govt. schemes.

❖ Forest Dependent People’s Organization: Forests play a significant role in sustaining the livelihoods of the people of the area for their multifarious needs with almost all parts of their dwellings and substantial dietary requirements accessed from forests and potential cash income possible from the sale of forest produce. But the legislations, rules and regulations pertaining to forests and forest dwellers framed by the Govt. from time to time were not in conformity with the constitutional frame work. Thus the forest dependent communities have always lived in an ambiance of insecurity. In this backdrop Pragati started formation of Village Forest Committees in 1994 in one Panchayat which has increased to 148 VFCs in 16 GP. These initiatives have gathered momentum budding into a District Forest Federation called “Koraput Jilla Banabasi Sangh”, in collaboration with 18 local NGOs that covers 742 villages in 110 Panchayats of 14 blocks actively engaged in forest protection and advocacy for rights over common property resources.
Community Based Organizations

In strengthening the civil society processes, we have facilitated village level institutions with their own rules and regulations, working pronouncedly at creating spaces for the poorest of poor and women to enable access to and ensure their participation in community decision making. So far, we have facilitated 118 Village Development Committees and capacitated them, as we prepare the ground for more direct and active involvement of communities in the development process. Representatives of the VDCs meet to discuss issues of common concern and determine the arc of their domain over natural resources and acting as pressure groups on constitutionally backed local self-governance and Govt. line departments.

The VDCs are federated at Panchayat level known as CBO and at Block level as Regional People’s Federations to coagulate institutionalized arrangement for socio-economic empowerment and better livelihood of communities. There are 8 Panchayat Federations and 2 Regional People’s Federations liasioning with PRIs and line department officials and presenting their issues in Gram Sabha. The CBOs have succeeded in mobilization of work under NREGA, drinking water facilities in 6 villages and rescued 5 migrant women laborers from Andhra Pradesh.

Farmers Associations

Agriculture is presently passing through a critical period and the farming community especially the small and marginal farmers are at present disheveled in a predicament of insecure livelihood. On the other hand enticement of institutional credit for commercial plantations without any market linkages is sneakily dragging the farmers into the debt trap. The tribal farming community lack the muscle to bargain for favourable agricultural policies as it is still one of the largest unorganized sectors in the District.

The small and marginal farmers are thrown into the agricultural dilemma due to compound factors like unpredictable weather conditions, natural disasters, lack of irrigation facilities and dependency on costly inputs. Hence we have facilitated two Farmers Associations namely “Luhaguli Chasi Sangha” & “Budhima Krushak Sangha” covering 126 farmers of 15 villages from our Koraput block action areas with an objective to enhance their collective bargaining power, spread the message of organic practices and promote collective marketing of organic produces. Members of the associations hold regular monthly meetings where they discuss about their problems and concerns. They have mobilized agriculture and horticulture departments for establishment of two seed sale centres and orchard plantations respectively.
Women SHGs and Self Help Cooperative

In addition to agricultural sector women in rural areas are engaged in food gathering, collection of minor forest produces and also work as wage labourers to supplement family income. Ironically enough, they are the deprived lot when it comes to distribution of opportunities and enforcing decisions either at home or at community /Panchayat level. Neither the concept of inheritance of property has any allocation for women. Formation and capacity building of women self help groups has been one of our strategies for their socio-economic empowerment through concerted action and mutual help. We have facilitated 106 women SHGs in 8 GPs covering 1303 women and a Cooperative with 201 women. The groups make small loans out of group savings and also offer access to formal credit facilities as well as pursue group enterprises. 34 SHGs are engaged in value addition and marketing of NTFPs & 31 groups have mobilized bank linkage of Rs 7,2 4,000/- for small business, vegetable and spices cultivation. The initiatives of SHGs have posed a big challenge to the local traders and middlemen who used to capitalize on their poverty. Besides, the SHGs are also involved in other social activities like sending children to schools, cleaning of village, access Anganwadi services, pre-natal and post natal care.15 SHGs have mobilized Govt. programmes like PDS, Plantation, Midday Meal and construction work.

NGOs Networking

As one of our strategies is to build cohesion and also be a part of the solidarity process, we have promoted networking with local NGOs and also joined alliances at state and national level. In our bid to reach out to larger groups and produce multiplier effects of our interventions, we have forged alliances with 18 local NGOs having analogous ideologies and commitment towards communities, collaboratively working for facilitation of institutionalized community forest protection and management in the district. We are members of national networks like Credibility Alliance to reiterate our commitments towards transparency and good governance in social sector and Women Power Connect, supporting our cause for gender equity and justice towards women. We also express solidarity for common cause of
vulnerable communities as a member of State level NGO forums like SANHATI, SANJOJANA, ODMM, KBK NGO Forum and Orissa Jungle Mancha.

**Natural Resource Management:**
Poor communities are particularly vulnerable since they rely more on natural resources for subsistence and income and are less likely to share in property rights that give them legal control over these resources. We aim to promote management of natural resources to strengthen the livelihood systems of marginalized communities as we search for ways to bring about sustainable improvement in their living conditions. In this context, we educate and demonstrate conservation and sustainable management of natural resources, forests, land and water in particular, through capacity building of communities on resource utilization and management models.

- **Community Forest Protection and Management**
Forests constitute the life breath of tribals and the traditional forest dwellers in Koraput district, catering to their diverse needs social, economic and cultural. However, the state policy has gradually robbed the indigenous communities of their rights over the resource of nature and has on the other hand passed in to the state exchequer. The crux of our efforts lie in locating forest resources within the prevailing economic, social and ecological demands at the level of villages and village conglomerates and in intertwine principles of conservation and local self-governance to safeguard the natural ecosystem and improve the living conditions of the people. We are promoting community initiative for forest protection and conservation in the entire district covering 2,78,513 (Male -144570, Female -133943) forest dependant people of 742 villages protecting 31,228 ha of village forests. People have become organized to protect and conserve forests, take up afforestation in degraded forestlands, marketing of NTFPs and advocacy for rights over common property resources.

- **Plantation**
Now the trend is changing towards a diversified agriculture with horticulture occupying a central place. Most of the lands are uplands without any irrigation facilities where people grow paddy, Ragi and a few minor millets during monsoon months. Productivity has diminished due to erosion of top soil and occasional flash floods cause damage to the crops. We have been encouraging communities to raise fruit bearing species in degraded lands and develop orchards in uplands since the geo-climatic zone is apposite for fruit crops.
We have supported communities to raise mango and cashew in 159 ha of lands in 29 villages of our operational areas with plant survival rate of 75 to 80%. People are very keen to protect their orchards and also adopting mixed cropping. In some areas the communities have started raising their own
orchards without any financial support and also mobilized Horticulture Mission that would ensure optimum and sustainable use of land with the potential of cash income in near future.

> **Micro Watershed**

We are implementing a Micro-watershed Project known as Paknajholla Watershed in Daleiput village of Mahadeiput GP in Koraput block with catchments area of 500 ha covering 68 beneficiary families under different interventions for soil and water conservation, development of livestock and human resource that would help increase soil and moisture condition, recharge ground water and build the ecosystem to maximize present and future well being of the people who depend on these resources.

Soil erosion checked and moisture retention capacity of lands increased in 47 ha lands developed through land bundings, gully plugging and plantations leading to cropping intensity and improved returns by 25% to 30% as against previous yield. The water harvesting structures (wells, canal, diversion weir and MP Tank) created under the project has helped in recharge of surface water, increased in area irrigated and crop intensity. Farmers are learning to adopt new crop production technologies and organic practices. 53 Farmers are linked with Horticulture department to raise orchards and ginger cultivation.

The grain bank established at Vikash Kutir has started catering to the needy families during lean agricultural period. Four landless families supported under Goatary are expected to increase their family income by 4000/- each year. 46 women of 3 SHGs are engaged in different income generation programmes and enhanced their per capita income reducing dependency on money lenders.

Development of human resources has increased the confidence of the community and they have mobilized line departments for construction of road and a school. All the activities under the project are implemented by the Watershed User’s Society which also helps monitoring the infrastructures created at village level. For the maintenance and sustainability of these structures the villagers have contributed 15 to 20% of the wage amount to the Maintenance fund popularly known as community contribution.
Soil conservation

Land is one of the primary factors of production in an agrarian economy. In most part of our action areas a sizable portion of the agricultural field is located along the lower part of hillocks. Undulating topography, heavy and torrential rains and loss of vegetative cover are the factors that has caused erosion of top soil depleting the productive substrate since a major portion of essential plant nutrients are present there. These areas cannot gather water as it is drained over slopes. This has affected soil fertility and ultimately lowered productivity.

In order to make the community aware of land management practices we have demonstrated soil conservation measures in 97 ha land of 170 farmers in 10 villages through earth and stone bundings, gully plugging and 5% model. This has helped in soil conservation and increase in moisture retention capacity of soil. During heavy rainfall velocity of water reduced due to leveled fields. When water started flowing slowly along the fields the infiltration augmented ground water level. The bunds helped prevent erosion of top soil and retain rainwater in the farms for cultivation. People have started cultivating the fallow lands and crop yield has increased by 15 to 20 %. These demonstrations have produced stimulant effects as the communities have started putting forth their demands in Gram Sabha for implementation of land development activities under NREGA.

Water management

Agriculture in our action areas is solely rain fed though the district records an average rainfall of 1452 mm. The vagaries of monsoon like late onset, early withdrawal, prolonged dry spells and failure of monsoon with little showers have created vulnerability of agriculture to water shortages. Most of the perennial water sources have started drying up due to deforestation and downturn of ground water table. Hence farmers generally adopt Monocropping. Lands are left fallow and most of the farming communities migrate out in search of wage labor.

With a view to enable the farmers take up a second crop and promote optimum utilization of land we have supported for construction of 3 water harvesting structures and installation of 28 lift irrigations through pump sets in 28 villages which bear a direct impact on the development of agriculture activities in these rain fed areas. These infrastructures have enabled 479 small and marginal farmers tap the water resources to raise vegetable crops in 196 ha lands during summer and winter. Thus the fallow lands are used for agriculture activities with additional income for small farmers and simultaneously checked seasonal migration.
Livelihood Promotion

One of our critical thrust areas is to enhance livelihood security of the poorest of poor and the vulnerable families through off farm interventions. These people are dependent on forestlands and in some areas practice firewood and charcoal trade as they have no alternate means of livelihood. Some such landless families work as bonded laborers and some of them migrate to different places in search of wage employment. The women headed households are the worst sufferers. Of late there have been reports of exploitation at work sites and a few migration deaths. In order to ensure equity in our interventions, check the flow of distress migration and bring these people to the development mainstream we have adopted certain off farm activities and income generation programmes.

Value addition and market promotion:

The people in our action areas depend on Forest Produces for nearly 4 to 6 months, but the NTFP market scenario is highly exploitative wherein the primary collectors get negligible returns as compared to the amount of labour they put in. To enhance the income level of primary producers and create better market opportunities we have introduced value addition of certain produces like Amla, Pipla, tamarind, hill brooms, char seeds and turmeric and also provided necessary trainings on preparation of business plan, quality management and trade linkage. As a result of which 1175 primary producers are now able to augment their income through value addition and marketing of different NTFPs. We have also facilitated skill up gradation and financial support to 28 women SHGs and 4 GP level federations which are actively engaged in processing and marketing of NTFPs.

The information centres established in 6 GPs disseminate information on potential markets and market prices of agriculture and forest produces and also channelise revolving funds for marketing support to groups and individuals. The block level federation of forest dependent communities (AJSP) is playing a significant role in information dissemination and establishing trader contacts that add to the bargaining power of primary producers.
Support to landless and Women headed families

There are 1605 landless families in different parts of our action areas eking out their livelihood from wage labour and cultivation in govt. lands. The case of women headed families is quite precarious as wage labour is scarce in the locality and they are unable to migrate. Though it is not possible for us to support all the families within our limited resources, we have covered 308 landless and 96 women headed households (widows & deserted women) of 61 villages to enable them take up different income generation activities like livestock rearing, small business, processing and marketing of NTFPs and seasonal produces, small shops and Mushroom. The impacts are quite visible as the families have started earning regular income and a few have made capital of their own. Most of the families have stopped migrating.

Shakti Sahaya:

“Shakti Sahaya Scheme” is a programme component of the Community Development Project being implemented in three GPs of Nandapur block. ‘Shakti’ means strength and ‘Sahaya’ implies support which means that it is a scheme to support for strength. The scheme has twin purpose i.e. to enhance the livelihood of people in lowest echelon of society deprived of any other privileges and bolster the VDCs & CBOs by involving them in the entire process from fixing criteria for selection of beneficiaries to purchase of bullocks and setting up indicators to measure the impact on the living standard of beneficiaries.

The objective of the programme is to elevate the socio-economic status of the poorest of poor through asset support of a pair of bullocks. The VDCs & CBOs under supervision and guidance of Pragati staff have extended support to 45 beneficiary families under the Scheme which include 16 landless and five women headed families. The support has boosted up the confidence of vulnerable families, thwart migration, added to income and flagged off the process for selection of beneficiaries in a fair manner. People have started immunization of livestock as evident from vaccination of 1244 cattle heads in 13 villages. Communities have created village funds in 26 villages and all the 45 beneficiaries have started savings which is a positive atmosphere of self dependence.
**Sustainable Agriculture**

Survival of agrarian economy depends on sustainable agriculture. But the temptation of higher yields is driving the farmers in our action areas towards adopting hybrid seeds and chemical farming that overlooks the geo climatic conditions and sustainable soil fertility management. The change in trends has further added to the ever increasing cost for agricultural inputs. There is also the lure of institutional credit and cash crops that drives the poor farmers away from food crops into the inescapable debt trap. The small and marginal farmers are easy prey to these changing trends. Based on our field experiences and action research we started introducing Sustainable Agricultural practices in 30 villages of Koraput block areas since 2003 subsequently assimilating other project areas.

**Skill development of farmers**

Though the farmers have a lot of potential to learn and adopt new technologies they seldom get the opportunity to enhance their skills. As a part of our programme component to promote Sustainable Agriculture, we have imparted skill development trainings to 188 farmers from different parts of our action areas on preparation and application of organic manures and pesticides, land and water management, crop plan, off season crops and innovative crop production technologies like SRI.

375 farmers from 28 villages have successfully prepared and applied farm yard manure, green composting, vermin wash, vermin compost, Handi khata, magic tonic, fish amino acid etc. in their own agriculture fields. All these farmers have earned on an average of 3000 to 7500/- through lesser investment as compared to use of chemical fertilizers. The farmers are also adopting off season vegetable cultivation, mixed cropping and SRI and also disseminating their knowledge to other farmers in their locality.

**Demonstration of organic practices**

Agriculture now calls for hybrid seeds, chemical fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides for increase in crop production. Even the small and marginal farmers in remote areas are increasingly adopting chemical farming without a second thought about the harmful effects on land, environment and health. Visualizing the need of the farmers we are promoting demonstration of low cost organic practices like vermin wash, vermin compost, magic tonic and organic pesticides etc. so that the farmers are convinced and observe the differences for themselves. Financial support has been extended to 97 farmers of 55 villages to establish vermin wash and vermin compost units.125 farmers have used nearly 250 quintals of vermin compost in their vegetable crops and paddy fields. A few farmers have also earned extra income from sale of manure and vermin. More and more farmers are getting interested to adopt organic practices and liaisoning with horticulture department to avail the scheme for vermin compost.
Agriculture input for Small farmers

Eighty percent of our target groups belong to the category of small and marginal farmers depending on rain fed agriculture. Though some times the quantum of rainfall can sustain two crops and there are perennial water resources, farmers don’t have the requisite capital to invest for inputs and irrigation to raise a second crop. Thus lands are left fallow after harvesting of monsoon crops and large sections of farming families migrate in search of wage labour and a few practice wood and charcoal trade to supplement their livelihood.

In order to promote better livelihood opportunities for the small and marginal farmers, we have provided revolving funds for seed, fertilisers and irrigation support for 485 farmers. This has enabled the farmers to raise multiple crops in an area of nearly 400 acres of land. Some landless families are also using these irrigation facilities and started share cropping. The farmers are now able to earn regular income through out the year and stopped migrating. 67 farmers have utilized the revolving funds to develop 59.6 ha land through stone and earth bundings to prevent soil erosion.

Establishment of Seed Banks

Farmers generally store a part of harvest as seed for the next cropping season. However, temptation of maximizing yield has increased the market of hybrid seeds that are both expensive and incompatible to the geo-climatic conditions of the region. Hence, the indigenous varieties of seeds are gradually disappearing which affects both crop diversity and seasonal food security. In the aftermath of natural disasters it is also very difficult on the part of poor farmers to procure seeds for next cropping season. There are also spells of food insecurity when the farmers use up whatever they have saved for seeds. As a result, they have to fall back on external agencies for seeds and most often do not get the seeds they require in time.

In order to cater to the needs of the farmers and promote collection and preservation of indigenous seed varieties, we have facilitated two seed banks in our Koraput block areas. Seed support is extended to the needy farmers with the condition to return the seed money after harvest, thus the seed money is being revolved at the end of each cropping season. During last Kharif and Rabi season 405 farmers have availed seed support from the seed bank. The seed banks are managed by Farmers Associations and they have started collection of indigenous seeds from local farmers.
Promotion of SRI

SRI (System of Rice Intensification), an innovative system of growing paddy with less water and inputs. It is indeed a whole paradigm shift in the way paddy cultivation is understood and practiced which challenges the age-old myth that paddy is an aquatic plant. Disease and pest incidence is minimized due to the fact that rice field is not flooded with water rendering hostile environmental condition for them to thrive and destroy crops. It is characterized by a number of benefits over traditional methods like increase in yield with less seeds and organic inputs.

In 2006 Kharif, Pragati experimented with the demonstration of SRI for the first time in Koraput block areas. We imparted field based training to 25 farmers as SRI requires certain practice changes like treatment of seed, raising of seed bed, early transplantation (as early as 8 to 12 days), planting single seedlings, wider spacing of plants (25cm*25cm. or more than that), weed management (using Weeder), drainage and water management etc. 11 farmers ventured to experiment in small patches of land and all of them harvested almost double to four times from the same land with less seeds and organic inputs in comparison to traditional method.

Pragati has shared the learnings from this experiment at different forums like “PARAB” 2006, State Dialogue on SRI, different workshops and orientations of farmers. During the Rabi we have also successfully experimented with 7 small and marginal farmers in Nandapur Block along with 4 farmers of Koraput block. These experiments confirm that SRI offers higher productivity out of water, land and labour and can address food security of small and marginal farmers in our action areas.

Dibakar’s Experience:

“This is the story of Dibakar Jani, a marginal farmer who has successfully experimented with a new technology. He is a resident of Dayanidhiguda village, 8 km. away from the district headquarters at Koraput. He lives with his wife Bhagyabati, two sons and two daughters. Dibakar has no land of his own.
He grows paddy in a piece of Govt land (half acre) i.e. only during rainy season. If the nature is merciful and there is no disaster, the yield he gets, support the food requirement of his family for only two months. For the rest period of the year, he has to depend on wage labour since he has no alternate means of livelihood.

In June 2006, Dibakar got an opportunity to attend training cum demonstration programme on SRI paddy cultivation organised by Pragati. Back home, he decided to experiment with the new technology in half acre of land, which is mortgaged with him by Sri Mugudi Santa of his village. Dibakar has paid a sum of Rs 2000/- for a period of three years.

He sowed 2 kg. of Umuria chudi varieties of seeds and planted the seedlings one by one according to the spacing made before where as in the traditional practice there is no specific distance between either two rows or seedlings and a number of seedlings are planted together. Since he was doing it for the first time, he could not maintain the required distance of 25 cm. between two plants and also rows. It was a little bit closer, so he could not use the Weeder and had to engage wage labour.

The difference was quite visible and it was a new experience for Dibakar. There was minimum 50 and maximum plants had 100 to 120 tillers and the panicles were also quite healthy. He has applied only organic inputs like green manure and vermin compost. In last week of September, he harvested 4 quintals of paddy. As compared to traditional method of cultivation Mugudi Santa (real owner of the land) sowed 45kg of seeds and harvested 80 kg of paddy from the same land and also had to invest in chemical fertilizers. The extra yield could ensure food security for his family for a period of another 4 months. He did not have to worry much for wage labour and had invested in summer vegetable crop which fetched him an income of 20000/-

This experiment has brought significant changes in the livelihood of a marginalized family. The success of Dibakar has inspired other farmers in the locality and 28 farmers are practicing the technology in this Kharif.”
Disaster Preparedness and rehabilitation:

Since the topography in our action area is composed of undulated hilly terrains and valleys, the past climatic devastations are mostly due to heavy rains and flash floods. The monsoon starts from June 2nd week and continues till September end with an average annual rainfall of 1445.72-mm. At times there is incessant rainfall with an intensity of 150 to 250 mm per hour that cause heavy run off resulting in sheet rill and gully erosion. However, frequent drought occurs due to irregular and erratic rainfall pattern with short-term dry spells in between, which coincides with flowering or other critical crop growth stages causing crop failure. In all these situations the small and marginal farmers are the worst sufferers. They lose their crops, seed and fruits of labour. This situation leads to exploitation, lowering of economic empowerment that finally brings food insecurity and numbers of marginal poor farmers increase every year.

We have facilitated the communities to identify their problems and the major disasters through micro plans and contingency plans and accordingly incorporated certain programme components for preparing communities to withstand disasters. In case a disaster strikes, we also implement some rehabilitation measures within our budgetary provisions.

Establishment of Grain Banks

Most of the families in our action areas face long periods of food insecurity during the lean agricultural season and especially during periods of natural disasters when they have the only option to approach the village money lender (Sahukar). The rate of interest is quite lofty, either crops are pledged before harvest or household items mortgaged. This is the critical time of the year when people cannot leave their villages. However, the community has a comparative advantage during harvesting season with surplus production from agriculture. But this surplus used to go to the granary of moneylenders in lieu of the debt incurred during the lean agricultural season. So we have promoted community grain banks in 132 villages of our action areas mobilizing community contributions and in some villages provided matching grants. These grain banks with a total stock of 412.24 quintals of food grains are catering to food security of needy families during the lean periods. During this year, 2320 families could avail loans from these grain banks, out of which 30% families were affected by landslides. The grain banks are managed by the community through written records of loans, recovery and interests.
Relief and rehabilitation

The landslides and flashfloods that followed the incessant rainfall during the first week of August 2006 battered the livelihood of the poor and marginalized communities in several parts of our action areas of Nandapur block. By the time, people had already invested their resource for agriculture activities, but their outlay for the whole year proved to be futile as vast patches of arable lands along with standing crops were submerged under rubble of landslides. The small and marginal farmers have neither time nor resource to reclaim their lands for cultivation. Besides, the landless people working as agricultural labourers lost their immediate source of income and became unemployed.

According to a post landslide survey carried out by People’s Organizations along with our staff almost 1567 households in 75 villages of 10 Gram Panchayats of our action areas had been affected. Immediately after the disaster, we have taken up interventions for immediate relief and rehabilitation of the landslide-affected families and address food scarcity though only for a transitory period.

**OUR PARTNERS:**
FINANCIAL REPORT:

M/S SRB & Associates, Chartered Accountant, Bhubaneswar are our statutory auditor. They have audited our accounts for financial year 2006-07. We have forwarded copy of respective audit report to concerned Funding agency and submitted our income tax return to the Dy Commissioner of Income Tax, Jeypore and our FC-3 return to Ministry of Home affairs, Govt. of India, New Delhi. A copy of our consolidated audit report has also been submitted to the Addl. Register of Society, Koraput for favour of information.