

Monthly Update

PACS Programme-Bihar

July-August 2006

The following monthly update has been made on the basis of discussions held at a meeting of the Programme Support Team (PST) on July 30, 2006, and a meeting of Resource Organisations (ROs) on August 15, 2006. Major issues have been highlighted.

Points for reference:

- State synthesis report
- State and regional Peer Learning Workshops (PLWs) plan finalisation
- Gender training workshop-sharing experience
- CBIA and ODSA timeframe and ROAP
- NREGS briefing and suggestions

State synthesis report

To prepare the state synthesis report, each RO prepared a comprehensive write-up on their respective clusters. The State-Based Communication Agency (SBCA) made out a report on developments related to communication and policy advocacy in Bihar during the last six months. Four x 4 (an RO) edited and compiled all the cluster-level reports. The ROs and SBCA met again on August 15, 2006, to give final shape to the first draft of the synthesis report.

State and regional PLWs

During the PST meeting, a tentative agenda for state-level PLWs was drafted. SHGs, micro-finance, livelihoods, PRIs, the NREGS and the draft National Rural Habitat Policy and related issues were identified as the main issues on the agenda. It was decided to reduce the number of resource persons to give space to CSOs for their clarifications and queries, and to make the workshop more interactive rather than lecture- and presentation-oriented.

The state PLW in Bihar is being conducted between August 26 and 28, 2006, at Rajgir.

Before the state PLW, regional PLWs are being conducted. The dates are as follows:

- Nawada cluster (RO: CPSL): August 20-21, 2006, at Banka
- Gaya cluster (RO: Four x 4): August 22-23, 2006, at Ara
- Muzaffarpur cluster (RO: TDS): August 11-12, 2006, at Hazipur/Muzaffarpur
- Madhubani cluster (RO: PROACT): August 22-23, 2006, at Madhubani

The thematic areas of regional PLWs will match those of the state PLW. Each RO will also brief the CSOs on the rural habitat exercise in two villages, during the cluster-level PLWs.

Gender training workshop

PROACT conducted a gender workshop at the Madhubani cluster in June this year. During the PST, PROACT team members shared their experiences. The workshop was held over five days; two days for the chief functionaries and three days for the project coordinators. They agreed to send the module and the workshop report to all the other resource organisations. The tentative dates on which the other three resource organisations have agreed to conduct this workshop in their respective clusters are:

- Muzaffarpur cluster -- September 18-22, 2006
- Nawada cluster -- October 9-13, 2006
- Gaya cluster – November 6-10, 2006

CBIA, ODSA timeframe and ROAP

At the meeting it was decided that help would be taken from the Jharkhand experience in implementing a Community-Based Impact Assessment (CBIA) and an Organisational Development Self-Assessment (ODSA). The ROs agreed that all CBIAs should be completed by October 6, 2006, in Bihar. Each RO would decide the number of days for the CBIA, depending on the size of the project; the number of days may vary from three to five days.

ROAP is a development-tracking tool. The following CSOs were selected for feedback from ROAP:

Nawada -- MVS
Gaya -- Abhiyan
Muzaffarpur -- Nidan
Madubani -- GPSVS

The second part of ROAP deals with the performance of ROs. MC was requested to supply the format to the ROs.

NREGA communication strategy

At the PST, the SBCA provided details on **PACS NREGS week**. It also supplied ground-level information that came up during NREGS week. The PST decided that the overall data on the Bihar-NREGA would be compiled by the SBCA and supplied to the ROs. Along with that, state guidelines would also be supplied to all ROs by the SBCA once they were released. One of the focus areas that came up during NREGS week was insufficient participation by villagers and panchayats in implementing the NREGS. It was decided that the CSOs would initially empower people and panchayats on all issues related to the NREGS, and also keep track of registrations, issuance of job cards, employment provided under NREGA guidelines, etc, and that the ROs and SBCA would take constant feedback from them.