

**PACS**

report  
of the  
peer learning  
workshop



6-8 March 2005  
Patna, Bihar

Coordinating Agency  
**Integrated Development Foundation (IDF)**  
Supported by  
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*Management Consultants*  
Development Alternatives-Pricewaterhouse Coopers (P)Ltd.



## Introductory

The three-day long Fourth Peer Learning Workshop (PLW) under the PACS programme was held at Hotel Maurya, Patna on March 6-8, 2005. Initiating the proceedings, Mr. Manoj Verma of Integrated Development Foundation (IDF) welcomed the participants on behalf of the Coordination Committee. Mr. Rakesh Jha, State Anchor for Bihar, greeted the delegates on behalf of the Management Consultants, Development Alternatives (DA) and PricewaterhouseCooper (P) Ltd (PwC) and conveyed the best wishes of Mrs. Kiran Sharma, Programme Manager, who could not participate due to some unavoidable personal reasons. The Chief Guest was Mr. Vijay Prakash, Secretary, Cabinet Coordination & Secretary, Primary and Adult Education, Government of Bihar.

Mr. Rakesh Jha informed that once every three months new partners were added up to the PACS family. The recently added eight or nine partners had also been invited to the workshop. He also informed that the Management Consultants had added two more agencies, namely, Disha, the Delhi-based communication agency and VANI, the networking agency, to make the PACS programme and its processes more effective. Mr. Jha affirmed that eradication of poverty – the millenium development goals of the United Nations – was the basic philosophy and objective of PACS programme. Around 107 projects involving 350 partners were operating in 108 districts of India spread over six states, namely, Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh and Maharashtra.

## DAY 1

### PACS in Bihar

Mr. Rakesh Jha summed up PACS in Bihar as follows:

- ❖ Now nine individual projects and nine network projects with 32 network partners are operating in Bihar under the PACS programme. In total, there are 50 CSOs now under the Bihar PACS programme. This is expected to grow within the coming months.
- ❖ Various partners are raising various issues depending on their intensity at the local level. However, the two main issues that could clearly be identified out of these various issues are: empowerment of women and local self-governance.
- ❖ The Project Selection Committee has already approved projects of eight new CSO partners. However, these projects are not yet operational as these are awaiting approval of the Department of Economic Research.
- ❖ The total approved budget for PACS programme in Bihar is Rs.13 crores and would cover 1610 revenue villages spread in 68 blocks of 17 districts.
- ❖ So far, 211 Social Development Cadres have been created. Though PACS in Bihar is spread across 17 districts, it is lamentable that it is mostly visible in the districts of Madhubani, Nawada and Nalanda only.
- ❖ One of the major focus areas of PACS programme in the State has been strengthening local self-governance, namely, women's participation in Gram Sabha and Gram Panchayat, sensitizing Panchayati Raj members on their rights and responsibilities and creating social/community assets. The second is enabling access of marginalized and excluded people for their entitlements through institutional linkages. Community based services i.e., promoting thrift and credit, reproductive child health (RCH), education, etc. and policy advocacy for change in existing policies on disaster mitigation, land rights, etc. are the other main focus areas of the programme in Bihar.



- ❖ The progress achieved so far includes developing a Social Development Cadre and leadership, setting up Panchayat Information Centres and initiation of efforts in the direction of convergence with government policies and programmes. Issue-based advocacy is also being taken up along with promotion of Income Generation Collectives and health and life insurance of the poor and the unorganized.
- ❖ Economic and social empowerment issues are taken up by the Self-Help Groups (SHGs). Capacity of the CSOs to address social and economic development issues is being strengthened. Efforts are also on to strengthen people's capacity to take up issues like poverty and marginalization.
- ❖ The main challenges include expansion of the programme in other uncovered geographical areas covering more and more poverty districts of Bihar, building issue-based strong and sustainable regional networks and upscaling MEAL as an integral part of good governance among CSOs.

### Address by Chief Guest

Mr. Vijay Prakash, Secretary, Cabinet Coordination & Secretary, Primary and Adult Education, Government of Bihar, and Chief Guest of the Workshop pointed out that a number of programmes, both at the government and non-government levels, have been undertaken to eradicate poverty in the country. But the effort of the PACS programme to converge the interrelated issues and aspects of poverty eradication on a single platform is commendable. *(See Annexure for a gist of Mr. Prakash's inaugural address and the subsequent discussion.)*

### Objectives, Expectations and Design

Presenting the objectives, expectations and the basic design of the workshop, the SSRO Team Leader for Bihar, said that the primary purpose of the workshop was learning and sharing experiments, success stories and best practices amongst the peer groups. One of the objectives of the PACS programme is cross learning and in furtherance of this, three case studies of the CSO partners would be presented and the challenges, innovations and success points would be discussed. The other objective of the PACS programme has been to strengthen civil societies to address the needs of the poor and to eradicate poverty.

Policy advocacy on land rights, agricultural produce, strengthening of civil societies, capacity building, organizational development and eradication of poverty were some of the many issues to be reviewed. Of these, only three or four issues – raised by CSO partners themselves – were to be taken up for group work.

Group work and detailed discussion on the strategy of the management consultants were scheduled for day one of the workshop. Network building for promotion of civil society action by VANI was next on the agenda followed by discussion.

The second day would be for discussion on prioritized issues coming out of the first day's group work. Keeping in mind the resources of CSOs and PACS partners, action plans on prioritized issues were also scheduled. Dr. B. D. Sharma was scheduled to speak on public advocacy and land rights in the afternoon session. Following this, Mr. Sadhu Saran Singh would share his experiences and case study on how to strengthen Panchayati Raj Institutions.

The third day would be a "management day" during which action plans on selected emerging issues



would be further dealt with. The strategy and the concerns of the management consultants including discussion on advocacy and accountability issues would be taken up on this day. So also the strategies for MEAL implementation and the challenges therein would be discussed.

## Presentation of Cross-Visit Reports

Reports on cross visits by three groups were presented. Each group was allotted 15 minutes for the presentation.

### *Presentation by Group 1*

There were three members in this group – Mrs. Archana Tiwary, NIDAN, Mr. Gaurav Ranjan, IDF and Mr. Hamid Raja, SSEVK-Action Aid. The group had visited Ghoghardiha Prakhand Swaraj Vikas Sangh (GPSVS), Madhubani to learn from its best practices. The leader of the group was Mr. Hamid Raja, and Mr. Gaurav Ranjan made the presentation.

The highlights of the methodology that the group adopted were as under:

- ❖ Interactive session with the affected community
- ❖ Personal interview with the groups and/ or individuals
- ❖ Visit to the sites of the case study/ best practice
- ❖ Close interaction with the CSO staff members.

Some of the main points of the best practice were illustrated as under:

- ✓ Practice of DOPANG method in the flood affected areas
- ✓ The motivating factors were low cost, less time consuming, easy to process, suitable to the geographical condition, and part of the disaster mitigation process.
- ✓ The process adopted included collection of seeds, germination of seeds, BED preparation on plastic sheet and finally, planting.
- ✓ The key components of success include good knowledge of agriculture, risk taking attitude, good exposure of the CSO staff members and acceptance by the community in general.

The impact of this best practice was visible from the fact that seeds were readily available even during flood days. It resulted in proper utilization of land and time. The process was being replicated among partner CSOs of GPSVS.

The topic of the case study was “Constructing alternative toilets for women during floods.” The motivating factors as noted were:

- ❖ Regular meetings with the community on flood preparedness
- ❖ Formation of Apada Sahjivan Samiti
- ❖ Long experience of the CSO on flood-related projects (since 1983)
- ❖ Lack of alternative toilet facilities for women.

The process included identification of safe place, collection of resources for alternative toilets (*e.g.*, wood rope, plastic sheets, etc.), and construction of women-centric toilets. There were distinct possibilities of the continuity this success story in terms of regular and best use of such toilets during floods with modified models. The concerned CSOs were taking active part in promotion of this model at



their working places through regular meetings. The replication value of the success story was evident from the fact that during floods around 15 such toilets were constructed by the communities on their own. As part of the future plan, the CSO wanted to promote this concept in all the project and non-project areas with suitable modifications.

How does one see this case study in the absence of floods? Although no first hand information was available, the accounts of the people underlines its utility.

Dopang technology was also taken up for discussion. It was felt that the technology was not all that new in the region. However, there was a need to disseminate information on Dopang technology, especially its processes through booklets. But it was too early to judge if Dopang had been successful in effecting productivity or not.

### *Presentation by Group 2*

The four members in this group were Mr. Umesh Kumar, PZGVS, Mr. Girish Chandra Bosh, NBSKPK, Mr. Kamal Kishore Vindu, Mahila Vikas Samiti (MVS) and Mr. Arvind Kumar, GNM. The group had visited Abhiyan, Jehanabad to learn from its best practices. The leader of the group was Mr. Umesh Kumar.

The methodology adopted by the group were:

- ❖ Visit to the site of the case study/ best practice
- ❖ Group discussions
- ❖ Discussions with SHGs, VEC, Kisan Vikas Samiti, target groups, key functionaries and project staff members and panchayat members.
- ❖ Field observation and data collection

The team visited Nonhi village of Kako Block of Jehanabad District, which is a terrorist affected area. It noted the following practices being regularly adopted by Abhiyan in the project area:

- ✓ Formation of village committees
- ✓ Formation of VECs
- ✓ Formation of SHGs and their bank linkages
- ✓ Organization of regular awareness generation programmes with a view to open up income generation options
- ✓ Organization of rallies, dharna, etc.
- ✓ Vocational training programmes

One of the success stories concerned the exemplary courage shown by three SHGs formed under the PACS programme. These SHGs took up the cause of bringing three intoxicated villagers to book for their abusive behaviour and misconduct. The wrongdoers were ultimately forced to publicly apologize. While the main motivating force behind this success story had been frequent group meetings and door-to-door campaigns, its essential components were:

- ❖ People were aware of the courage shown by the women folks of Nonhi village.
- ❖ The concerned SHGs could take up challenges and solve their problems on their own.
- ❖ Drinking habits in and around the village had shown a declining tendency.



- ❖ Now women were in a better position to force their male counterparts to take up constructive activities.
- ❖ The last election held in the village witnessed increased participation of women.

Abhiyan was adopting the following processes/ efforts for networking and advocacy:

- ✓ Distribution of pamphlets, posters, etc.
- ✓ Establishment of Information Centres.
- ✓ Formation of Rural Awareness Committees and SHGs.
- ✓ Regular meetings of women and villagers/ community members.
- ✓ Organization of regular training programmes.
- ✓ Exposure visits, and
- ✓ Organization of rallies and dharna, etc.

The visible impact in project area had been as under:

- ✓ Women were being rewarded for their courage and grit
- ✓ People had started to get their rights
- ✓ Women had started to raise their problems in the PRI meetings
- ✓ Rallies, dharnas, etc for their rights were regularly being organized, and
- ✓ More and more women had started to search for income generation options

The other success story/case study that the group tried to look into and learn from Abhiyan was regarding the pressure tactics adopted by SHGs on bank authorities. The objective was to force them to consider their case on a priority basis. This was achieved by resolving to agitate and hold dharnas.

The group observed that Abhiyan adopted the following plans to further strengthen their activities and best practices:

- ✓ Increased women participation in Panchayati Raj Institutions
- ✓ Creating more and more income generation options through development of SHGs, and
- ✓ Establishing a Federation of SHGs for coordination of their activities.

Why SHG Federation? During discussions, the relevance and the proposed shape of the SHG Federation came in for scrutiny. It was explained that since the financial support to the SHGs would be stopped after four years or so under the PACS programme, it would be better if SHGs emerged stronger. The formation of an SHG Federation was therefore seen as a idea worth pursuing.

Doubts were also raised as to the relevance of the case studies in a State like Bihar. It came out that Nonhi had suffered a lot because of the extremist threat prevalent in the region. During the past few years, around 30 persons were been killed in the area. Nevertheless, whatever little has been achieved in terms of social harmony and peace in the region was not short of a success story.

### *Presentation by Group 3*

This group comprised five members – Ms Surabh Suman, Bihar Seva Sansathan, Mr. Sujit Kumar, Vikas Vihar, Mr. Om Prakash, Gram Vikas Parishad, Ms. Poonam Mishra, Abhiyyan and Mr. Kumar Rajan, Mukti



Niketan. They visited Parivar Vikas, Jamui, to learn from its best practices. The leader of the group was Ms Saurabh Suman who also presented their findings.

The main activities of the team had been:

- ❖ Discussion with staff members of Parivar Vikas.
- ❖ Visit to Chinveriya Panchayat and meeting with local community members, including Mukhiya and two of the ward members.
- ❖ Meeting with Shakti Self Help Group members, and
- ❖ Interaction with Mrs. Poonam Devi, the motivator working at Chinveriya panchayat.

The following observations came to the fore:

- ✓ Community members were unanimous that the PACS programme was strengthening SHGs, empowering PRI representatives and motivating government machinery to deliver.
- ✓ Parivar Vikas has been instrumental in generating awareness about the PRI system and bringing the community closer to PRI functionaries including Mukhiya.
- ✓ SHGs formed under the programme have been successful in gradual empowerment of the community, especially the women folk.
- ✓ The community was becoming sensitized towards their problems concerning education, health, employment opportunities, situation of women and infrastructure facilities in the area.
- ✓ The education centres of Parivar Vikas being funded by Christian Children Fund (CCF) were running successfully and tremendously benefiting the children.

The learnings of the cross-visit may be summed up as follows:

- ❖ Detailed and clear-cut understanding of the programmes and main objectives of Parivar Vikas
- ❖ With a view to good governance Panchayat Development Committee has been formed so that they can monitor the PRI representatives' actions. Efforts are on to strengthen this committee.
- ❖ With the successful functioning of SHGs, money-lending (*mahajani*) system was gradually coming to an end and the community had started to think in terms of development of the village.

### Lessons from Case studies

The SSRO Team Leader in Bihar informed that about 12 or 13 case studies/success stories were received. A publication comprising these case studies was contemplated. However, due to time constraint and also because of the non-receipt of success stories and the need for strengthening the quality of the majority of the case studies, the publication had to be delayed. The CSOs were, therefore, requested to follow some of the guidelines shared for effective writing of case studies or success stories. (*A brief analysis of the success stories/ case studies received is given in volume two of this report: Case studies, presentations and other literature.*)

Most of the CSOs had contributed case studies. It was wonderful experience of getting to know small achievements or good examples of partner-CSOs. The major themes covered included insurance of unorganized, SHGs and women's empowerment, strengthening PRIs, coping with floods among other issues such as snakebites, holistic development, and so on.



Some of the basic expectations from the case studies were:

- ❖ Clear themes/issues or incidents of success.
- ❖ How did the CSO start to address the issues/themes?
- ❖ What were the processes adopted/evolved while attending to the issues or themes?
- ❖ Who were the major change-makers, – women’s groups, mukhiya, Gram Sabha leaders, youth groups?
- ❖ How did change-makers succeed in addressing the issue/theme?
- ❖ What change was finally achieved, in terms of its relevance in the present context (local area), novelty of achievement/success, its adaptability and replicability, relevant anecdotes, quotes, opinions of beneficiaries and photographs of beneficiaries and change makers?

During the question-answer session, it was suggested that since most of the CSOs did not have the expertise to document their success stories the way they should be, efforts were required to provide them with help in this direction. The suggestion was recorded for action.

### Group Work for the Day

From the long list of issues raised during the last three peer learning workshops, around 35 to 40 issues could be identified for discussion. But working with so many issues at the same time did not seem plausible, and hence it was suggested that 3 to 4 advocacy-related issues could be pursued. PRAXIS, the PDRO for Bihar facilitated the discussion on priority issues, group work and summing up.

The participants were divided into eight groups to identify the main issues on which they wanted to work on, classify the issues into three categories, namely, state level issues, regional issues and local issues, and prioritize them in order of significance, i.e., top priority issues, second priority issues, and third priority issues.

The list of issues that emerged during the brainstorming sessions in the groups were as under:

#### TOP PRIORITY ISSUES

State Level Issues	Regional Issues	Local Issues
Law and Order	Militancy	Disability rights
Migration	Irrigation Resources	Local Convergence
Disaster Mitigation	Malnutrition	Market Based Skill Dev.
Livelihood	Flood/ Draught	Migration
Illiteracy	Land Rights	Livelihood
Panchayati Raj	Child Labour	Local Self Governance
Land Reforms	Migration	Credit Facility
Child Labour	Water-logging	Unemployment
Home Street Land	Girl Child Education	PRI Strengthening
BPL Card	Agriculture Development	Dalit Rights
Easy Access to Govt. Schemes	Child Trafficking	Women Empowerment
Local Self-governance	Local Self Governance	Child Labour
Agriculture development	Livelihood	Land Rights



Gender inequality	Cast Conflicts	Social Security
Women Empowerment	Communal Tension	Girl Child Education
Employment		

## SECOND PRIORITY ISSUES

State Level Issues	Regional Issues	Local Issues
Social Security	Declining cattle Resources	Lack of Health Services
Political Instability	Superstition	Marketing Facilities
Health, Sanitation	Lack of Awareness	Home Street Land
Illiteracy	Corruption in Government Schemes	PRI strengthening
Child Labour	Dalit Rights	Musahar empowerment
Unemployment	Health	Child Marriage
Politicization of Criminals	Environmental Problems	Right to information
Lack of Health Services		Disability Rights
Women Empowerment		
Trafficking		
Flood		
Migration		
Local Self Governance		

## THIRD PRIORITY ISSUES

State Level Issues	Regional Issues	Local Issues
Environment Protection	Child Labour	Roads/ Infrastructure
Women Empowerment	Role of Middlemen	PRI Empowerment
Social Evils	Alcoholism	Lack of Schools
Right to Information	Population Growth	Destability
Migration	Militancy/ Extremism	Collaboration with Like-minded CSOs
Unemployment	Vocational Education	Alcoholism
Social Marketing		Experiment of Gram Sabha
Protecting & Increasing Cattle Resources		Money Lending System
Foeticide/ Aborting Girl Child		

The next task was to select issues listed under different categories and prioritize them. In view of the time constraint, however, it was decided that only the most important issues from all the categories



(based on the ranking provided by the CSO partners) would be taken-up for deeper group work, discussions and developing forward plan.

## Building Networks: VANI

Mr. Krishna Mohan of VANI made a presentation on building networks of voluntary organizations for promotion of civil society actions in selective poor states of India. VANI is a network of 244 organizations, 22 network federations and 22 individuals and with a base of around 2,200 organizations in 23 states of India and acts as a platform for national level advocacy coordination and action to support and promote voluntarism.

VANI would help PACS partners in organizing dialogue with Government developmental agencies and international agencies for effective collaboration with voluntary organizations. This could be in the form dialogue with policy makers, filing of PILs to engage the judiciary for meaningful interpretation of laws, organizing campaigns, public hearings and so on.

State level outcomes were projected as building pressure on the state governments to formulate policy on voluntary sector in line with the national policy, addressing critical issues in each state by building campaigns and effective advocacy and ensuring that the donor programmes and policies were pro-poor.

### Some Concerns

Many of the PACS partners with previous experience of working with VANI were not convinced that VANI would be helpful in meeting their networking requirements. It was brought to the notice of the participants that VANI had been thoroughly unsuccessful in its previous three networking efforts in Bihar. One participant was visibly angry when he queried where was VANI in the struggle for Panchayati Raj in Bihar and why it did not support its partners at that critical juncture. Some participants felt that VANI wanted to dictate terms to its partner organizations and did not want them to enjoy autonomy of any kind.

Mr. Krishna Mohan responded to these concerns by saying that mistakes are committed by those only who try to do something and assured that VANI would never try to dictate terms or to impose issues on partner organizations. Issues would be taken up only in due consultations with the partners, he added. Intervening in the discussion, Mr. Rakesh Jha said that there has been perceptible improvement in the functioning of VANI of late in the light of the restructuring it had gone through. It was hoped that VANI would prove successful in its networking efforts in Bihar this time round.

### Back to Group Work: Synthesizing Issues

In the last session of the day, an attempt was made to analyze what came out from the group work. It was basically an attempt to synthesize the issues that came up for discussion and to set priority for the next stage.

The description of the prioritized issues under the three categories, i.e., state level, regional level and local level issues emerged as under:

#### *What We Found: Our Priority & Our Issues*

ISSUE (priority one)	STATE	REGIONAL	LOCAL
Law & Order	✓	✓	
Migration	✓	✓	✓



Flood	✓✓✓✓	✓	✓
Drought	✓	✓	✓
Livelihood: Agriculture	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓
Illiteracy	✓		
Self Governance	✓✓	✓	✓
Land Rights	✓✓	✓	✓
Child Labour/ Trafficking	✓	✓	✓
Government Schemes/Convergence	✓		✓✓✓
Water Logging			✓
Women Empowerment		✓✓	✓
Girl Child Education		✓	✓
Disability		✓	✓
Dalit Adhikar		✓	✓

These issues were classified into the following four broad groups:

- ❖ Disaster Mitigation & Management: Flood, Drought, Water Logging, Migration
- ❖ Livelihood: Disaster, Agriculture, Land Rights, Migration, Child Labour
- ❖ Self-Governance: Convergence, BPL Cards, Empowerment, Women Empowerment
- ❖ Adhikar/Rights: Child rights, Disability Rights, Women rights, Dalit Exclusion

It was decided that based on the activities of the PACS partners, participants would be divided in four broad groups as above. These four groups would then carry forward the group work the next day.

## DAY 2

Day two of the workshop started with a prayer song by Mr. Sudhir and introduction of Dr. B.D. Sharma, the renowned social activist, advocacy expert and the resource person for the day to the participants. Thereafter, Mr. Bhogendra Mishra of Jan- Akancha presented a recap of the proceedings of day one. This was followed by a feedback analysis of the proceedings of day one.

### Feedback Analysis: Day One

The analysis revealed that the feedback of the participants on first day's proceedings and sessions was by and large very positive. The proceedings of the day one were rated as excellent by 50% and both excellent and very good combined together was around 80 per centage. The feedback received from the participants was mainly in favour of more group work, and maximum use of Hindi in discussions and deliberations. Based on this feedback, the formats, presentations as far as possible were translated into Hindi. *(For a detailed analysis of each session, Volume II of this report.)*

### Group Work: Day Two

Based on the synthesization of the prioritized issues of day one, and the field or the areas in which the partner organizations wanted to work on, participants were divided in four broad groups as under:



Group 1: Disaster Mitigation & Management (17 participants)

Issues: Flood, Drought, Waterlogging, Migration

Note: After discussion amongst the group members, it was decided that there would be two sub-groups under this group. One will be discussing and devising strategies on flood control and the other will be concentrating on drought mitigation.

Group 2: Livelihood (23 participants)

Issues: Disaster, Agriculture, Land Rights, Migration, Child Labour

Group 3: Self-Governance (12 participants)

Issues: Convergence, BPL Cards, Empowerment, Women's Empowerment

Group 4: Adhikar/Rights

Issues: Child rights, Disability Rights, Women rights, Dalit Exclusion

In view of the time constraint and limited resources, the groups were asked to identify only those issues which could effectively be taken up during the next one and half year period. They were also advised to choose only those issues on which work could be done.

The main guidelines were to:

- ❖ Identif the most important issue.
- ❖ Make a clear-cut and sound strategy to address the issue, and
- ❖ Chalk out a plan of action for the upcoming year.

#### Presentation – Group 1 (a)

The first presentation was made by the Disaster Group on Drought. Its main points were:

##### *a. Goal*

Making drought and the associated problems a political issue and constructing *ahar-pans*, ponds and check-dams to stop the rain water receding from the drought-prone districts.

##### *b. Strategy*

- ◆ Formation of a Joint Drought Committee – members to include government officials, politicians, representatives of voluntary organizations, panchayats and specialist resource persons.
- ◆ Documentation to be taken up on a priority basis.
- ◆ Renovation of existing *ahar-pans*, check-dams and ponds in the drought prone regions.
- ◆ Construction of new *ahar-pans*, check-dams and ponds in the drought prone areas.
- ◆ Forestation/ tree planting to be vigorously taken up.
- ◆ Regular supply of power to be ensured.
- ◆ Development funds (such as MLA Fund, MP Fund, and block & panchayat level funds) to be used to solve drought-related problems.
- ◆ Awareness-building at the Gram-Sabha level.
- ◆ Ensuring availability of potable water



## *c. Role*

Mobilization, participation, sensitization, and inspiration.

## *d. Plan of Action*

- ◆ Promotion district and state level movements.
- ◆ Formation of a committee comprising CSO representative, social workers, journalists, representatives of PRIs and like-minded organizations.
- ◆ Participation of workers and farmers.
- ◆ Dissemination of information through posters, pamphlets, wall-writings, etc.
- ◆ Meetings, rallies, dharnas, etc.
- ◆ Documentation.

## Presentation – Group 1 (b)

The second presentation was by the Disaster Group on Flood and Water-logging. The highlights of the presentation are given below:

### *a. Strategy*

- ◆ Contacts and discussion with community members.
- ◆ Forming a Federation of people's organizations.
- ◆ Exerting sustained pressure on the government machinery.
- ◆ Coordinating all concerned partners.

### *b. Activities*

Meetings, seminars, rallies, dharnas, street plays, songs etc. – at all levels.

### *c. Area of Activities*

- ◆ Proper development and management of the flood prone and water logged regions.
- ◆ Relief code to be standardized.
- ◆ Planning to cope with flood.
- ◆ Flood-friendly development structures.
- ◆ Development of flood-friendly agriculture.
- ◆ Redefining flood prone areas (inclusion of Koshi Command Area).

## Comments and suggestions following above presentations

The presentations by Groups 1a and 1b triggered off many comments and suggestions. The strategy for drought mitigation and preparedness was thought to be too extensive to be taken up within a short span of one year. and that the issues involved were of a long-term nature. The strategies and the action plans could have been more detailed. Non-PACS partners, bilateral agencies and the Government should also be involved to facilitate the smooth functioning of the programmes. There was no mention of capacity building in the programme strategies.

It was felt that both draught and flood were people-based issues. The basic issues were how to ensure



people's participation and how to make best use of people's power in tackling such problems. there was no need for 'awareness generation' on drought and flood as people were already facing them head on. What is required is extensive planning at the local level.

## Presentation – Group 2

The group on Self-Governance presented their discussions and findings as under:

### *a. Main Issues*

- ◆ Reservation of women (for single-posts at panchayat level)
- ◆ Issuing of BPL cards.
- ◆ Organizing Gram Sabha.
- ◆ Developing leadership qualities in women.
- ◆ Women's rights and information
- ◆ Involvement/ participation of women at all levels.

### *b. Strategies*

- ◆ Establishing women's organizations.
- ◆ Forming SHG Federation (to act as pressure group).
- ◆ Incorporating issue-based training.
- ◆ Exposure visits (for women).
- ◆ Pressuring government machinery to ensure proper functioning and monitoring of schemes.
- ◆ Forming Federations at the district level to ensure legal status to the proposed pressure group.

### *b.1: Main issues for the pressure group*

- ◆ Identifying red-card (BPL card) holders.
- ◆ Identifying women with fighting qualities.
- ◆ Collecting and disseminating information.
- ◆ Forming B.R.C.
- ◆ Developing a network of organizations.

### *c. Action Plan*

- ◆ Developing contacts at regional level.
- ◆ Providing training to strong-willed and dynamic women at block level.
- ◆ Identifying and training of strong and dynamic women at panchayat level.
- ◆ Holding conferences at the district and state levels.
- ◆ Quarterly meetings of the network.
- ◆ Monthly meetings of the pressure group.
- ◆ Block and district level task-force meetings.



- ♦ Organizing rallies (along with subject, date and name of the district).
- ♦ Conducting issue-based theme camps.

## Comments and suggestions following presentation

There was a query whether the group discussion was about self-governance or women's empowerment. Some participants opined that the strategies and plan of action did not have any reference to issue-based policy advocacy. The group contended that reservation of women for single-posts at gram panchayat level was basically a self-governance issue, and that without women's empowerment self-governance was meaningless. Fighting for women's reservation for 'gram panchayat single posts' was certainly an issue for policy advocacy, they maintained.

Since reservation for single posts was already being applied in most of the states of India, taking up this issue in Bihar would be a welcome development. It was suggested that Gram-Sabha should have the upper hand in our system of self-governance, and not the Panchayat. From the viewpoint of policy advocacy in Bihar, this was an equally important issue to be taken up. The main issue was the neglect and mistrust of the 'common man'. Unless advocacy efforts are directed towards addressing this issue, self-governance cannot be realized.

## Presentation – Group 3

The group (Livelihood Group) working on the issue of lease of agricultural land presented their report. The following are the salient points of their presentation:

### a. Main issue

Lease of agricultural land

### b. Strategy

- w Drafting a Position Paper on the issue to take stock of the actual situation.
- ♦ Engaging in dialogue with government and other stakeholders.
- ♦ Mobilizing beneficiary communities.
- ♦ Involving media for dissemination of information to people.
- ♦ Forming pressure groups so that policy advocacy could be taken up from block to state level.
- ♦ Advocacy with political parties to remove misinformation, misunderstanding, if any.
- ♦ Preparing a draft Lease Policy.
- ♦ Crop insurance – linkage with farmers

## Comments and suggestions following presentation

Questions were raised as to the relevance and efficacy of drafting a policy on lease of agricultural land in Bihar. How could one incorporate thousands of acres of land that was under litigation in Bihar, asked an agitated participant. Where was the livelihood issue related to lease of agricultural land and what would be the number of beneficiaries under the programme, were the other questions. The presenters contended that CSOs had the capacity to exert pressure on the government as well as on the judiciary. The Position Paper on lease of agricultural land would certainly provide the government with an alternative draft to revisit the issue with renewed vigour. The livelihood issue was well incorporated in the programme since it would have tremendous impact on the lives of the beneficiaries, they believed.



Attention of the participants were drawn to the New Agricultural Policy of the Government of India (2000) which had principally agreed for 'leasing in' of agricultural land. The principal beneficiaries of this new policy were those who had money power. It was a policy, which was made purely for the benefit of the multinational companies operating in the country. Under the situation, therefore, the basic question was: Who should have the land ownership – the State or the society, leaseholder or the farmer? This issue, it was suggested, must be taken up for policy advocacy.

## Presentation – Group 4

The last presentation was by the Group on Rights. The salient features of the presentation were:

### a. Main Issue

“Right to work “

### b. Meaning

- ◆ Persons willing to, and in search of, work in order to live with dignity must be provided work by the government. The policy and procedures of fixing wages must be the same both in the organized and unorganized sectors.

### c. Strategy

- ◆ Identifying people who are ready to work but cannot find one.
- ◆ Reviewing government plans and local resources.
- ◆ Preparing a work plan involving the administration, PRI representatives and the common people, as per the review of resources.
- ◆ Ensuring work to selected persons, forming pressure groups and taking up policy advocacy, as per the availability of resources.
- ◆ Creating new resources to ensure work to the rest coupled with efforts to bring in government plans and schemes to the area under consideration.
- ◆ Forming federations, committees, etc. to organize the unorganized workers which would act as a mass pressure group for their rights.

## Comments and suggestions following the presentation

There was a query as to why the strategy did not talk of minimum wages, which was principally the basic minimum to settle for. The group contended that “fixing of wages” included the rationale of minimum wages. At present there are two standards existing for fixing wages – one for the organized sector and the other for unorganized sector. The underlying assumption for fixing wages in the organized sector was that only one member of the family needed to work. On the other hand, in the unorganized sector at least two family members were supposed to work to feed the entire family. Hence by logic, organized sector wage rates were higher than those prevailing in the unorganized sector. The need to fight this injustice and skewed logic was highlighted.

The issue of right to work was deemed to be of utmost importance. It is a pity that with the advent of machines, job opportunities in general had receded throughout the world. And to add to this, the intelligentsia considers machines as development indicators. So long as the right to work could not be ensured, use of machines must be vigorously resisted. It is an important issue for policy advocacy, contended one participant.



## Experience Sharing Session on Local Level Policy Change by Mr. Sanjay of OSERD

The first experience sharing session was by Mr. Sanjay of OSERD. In his brief talk on policy change that OSERD could bring about in Gaya under the Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojan (SGSY) programme, he highlighted how – through proper planning and partnership with DRDA – issues such as women’s empowerment and strengthening of SHGs could successfully be taken up in a poor region. According him, OSERD made DRDA authorities understand the need for an alternative plan of action for the success of the programme, without resorting to dharnas and protest rallies. OSERD came up with a plan to reform the ‘nurturing cost’ for establishing SHGs which could prove instrumental in ensuring the healthy growth of SHGs in the region. OSERD had so far formed around 70 SHGs apart from strengthening the existing ones.

### Talk on Public Advocacy: Dr. B. D. Sharma

Dr. B.D. Sharma began with the emphatic statement that the best example of public advocacy would be to make ‘common man’ aware of basis issues. Unfortunately, a vicious campaign against the ordinary people was in vogue in our country. Apprehensions about their abilities and understanding always arise but the irony of the situation was that they always emerged successful in coping with highly adverse conditions all around. How could anyone be more intelligent than the common man, he asked.

According to Dr. Sharma, public advocacy required raising and thrashing out fundamental issues of democracy. As long as the society remained subjugated and subservient, problems would remain and self-governance will only be a dream. *(A longer version of his talk is found in the section of appendices.)*

During the interactive session that followed, one of the participants commented that the panchayat level programmes and policies in Bihar were being fixed from the top. PRI representatives including the Mukhiya and ward members were merely acting as beneficiary selectors in their respective panchayats. What can be done to address this issue? Dr. Sharma suggested that this kind of problem had already been solved through PRI Acts in Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh, Orissa, Jharkhand and Maharshttra. There was no reason why the same could not be achieved in Bihar. The matter should be taken up seriously.

### Experience Sharing on Village Development and PRIs : Mr. Sadhu Saran Singh

Mr. Sahdu Saran Singh’s experience sharing on village development and Panchayati Raj institutions began with the narration of his first experience during the infamous 1966 famine in Bihar. Mr. Singh, a young man then, worked vigorously for proper distribution of BPL cards and weekly disbursement of deliverables to the target groups in his village. Within a week the PDS was put in place giving much-needed relief to the poor. He went on to narrate how he, coming from a minority caste in his village with just 150 votes, could get elected as the Mukhiya, in 1971 first, in the caste-ridden society of Bihar.

He said it was unfortunate that most of the programmes for the poor were not reaching the target groups and that the Mukhiya, the MLA, the MP and their people’s representatives were getting distanced from the masses once they were elected. The followers of Vinobha Bhawe and Jai Prakash Narayan were also mostly interested in deceiving people. In his experience, only three agencies were actually delivering at the grass root level – the Self-Help Groups (SHGs), the Gram Panchayats and the Co-operatives. Unfortunately, however, there was no coordination among these three agencies. Efforts were made to bring these three into a coordinating mode to help the cause of the poor and the needy in nearly 25 villages. As an experiment, the 10 acres unutilized land belonging to a Gram Sabha was



dug up to make it useful for the villagers. The active participation of the villagers was evident from the way they helped in developing roads and planting nearly 10,000 trees (8000 still surviving) around the pond.

The income resulting from the activation of the said pond (from aquaculture and maturing of trees around the pond) is to be deposited into the account of the Gram Sabha. As a result, dependence on development funds such as the MLA's fund or the MP's fund would automatically be reduced.

The Panchayat was being run as a model. Regular meetings of the Gram Sabha, transparency in financial dealings and action plans, frequent social visits to the families of dalits and the poor, providing minimum wages, etc. are some of the salient features of this model Panchayat.

Intrusion of criminals in PRI functioning – how to deal with?

On the question of intrusion of criminals in day-to-day functioning of PRIs, Mr. Sadhu Saran Singh responded that we must have the courage and resolve to fight criminal elements including the contractors. One way is to have a committed cadre to take on them and this is possible only if Panchayat is performing the way it should be and people are convinced as to what is good or bad for them. If the Mukhiya of the Panchayat is honest and hard working, half the problems are solved.

### [PACS Communication Strategy](#)

Ms Nalini Paul, Communication Executive, PACS, in her brief presentation on PACS communication strategy informed the participants that:

- ◆ The documentation system of most of the CSOs lack quality.
- ◆ Many of the good practices and success stories which need exposure get lost in view of poor documentation.
- ◆ A proper communication system is therefore necessary to highlight the good work of PACS partners.
- ◆ Disha (with headquarters in Gaya) would be working as the regional communication agency for PACS programme Bihar

She requested the participants to fill in a questionnaire which would be helpful in identifying needs for their capacity building in the field of communication.

### [Talk on Loaning & Rate of Interest: Dr. B.D. Sharma](#)

On special request of the participants, Dr. B.D. Sharma shared his views on loaning in the agriculture sector at the end of day two of the Workshop. Dr. Sharma contended that over the years the terms and conditions for loans and credits in the agricultural sector have gone from bad to worse. According to him, the dynamics of agricultural sector was different from that of the industrial sector. As against the industrial sector there was a limit beyond which agriculture could not earn profit on a sustained and regular basis. In principle, therefore, agriculture sector and the farmers should be dispensed with compound rates of interest on agricultural loans, he argued. Citing references to the 1893 (pre-Independence) rules on agricultural loans in India in general, and Bihar in particular, and the subsequent changes in rules and regulations at one time or the other, he called upon the participants to fight against the injustice being done to the farmer community. What kind of democracy was it where banks were free to impose compound rates of interest against agricultural loans but moneylenders were being targeted and punished for the same, he wondered.



## Action Plan Guidelines for Day Three

Based on the group work done on Day One and Day Two, four members from each group were asked to formulate an Action Plan to be presented on Day Three. Each group was asked to clearly answer the following five queries:

- ❖ What to do?
- ❖ When to do?
- ❖ How to do?
- ❖ Where to do?
- ❖ Who will do?

### DAY 3

For the Feedback Analysis of Day Two, please see Appendix.

#### Group Work: Action Plans

All five groups prepared their action plans, as per guidelines agreed on the previous day. In order to make them meaningful, each group made efforts to incorporate details concerning: what to do, when to do, how to do, where to do and who will do.

#### 1. Action Plan: Flood & Water-Logging

The salient features of the action plan were:

**What to do?** – Organizing conferences, seminars, dharnas, rallies, street shows, plays/ street songs and meetings

**How to do?**

- a. In the first stage, contact and discussion would be held with all government and non-government stakeholders (associated with flood) and with the local leadership of flood affected people. This would involve:
  - ❖ Documentation of local problems
  - ❖ Identification of local (trendy) solution
  - ❖ Identification of local efforts and their documentation
- b. District level workshops in all the 22 flood prone districts involving participants as mentioned above.

**Who will do?** – GPSVS, GS, SVS, 21<sup>st</sup> CRDI, SCK, BSS, SSVK, PLVS, NJ, SSEVK, GPV, AAI, Gram Bharti, MSVS

**How long?** – One year

**Where to do?** – In all the 22 flood-prone districts of north India.

**Why?**

- ❖ Awareness generation to cope with flood
- ❖ To exert pressure on the government for flood/water management through local solutions
- ❖ To build a network to address the issue head on





- ❖ Monitoring, evaluation and documentation

## How to go ahead?

- ❖ Surveys
- ❖ Contact programmes
- ❖ Meetings, seminars and workshops
- ❖ Exposure visits to fields.
- ❖ Contacting government agencies/ officials
- ❖ Organizing people for the cause

## Where to do?

- ❖ Village level
- ❖ Panchayat, block, district and state level

## Who will do?

- ❖ Activists and motivators
- ❖ Selected groups
- ❖ Pressure groups (organized groups)
- ❖ Organizations

## When?

- ❖ Identification of persons – three months.
- ❖ Advocacy – up to one year.
- ❖ Coordination between plans and resources and formation of pressure groups – ongoing process

## Why?

- ❖ Everyone should have work
- ❖ Realization of rights
- ❖ To ensure appropriate wage rates
- ❖ For availability of work
- ❖ To lead a dignified life

## Comments and suggestions

The presentation lacked clarity and participants hardly came up with any suggestion or comments. Nevertheless, the facilitator pointed out that the span of advocacy should not be limited to the first year only. It could also be a continuous process.

## Action Plan: Self-Governance Group

The salient features of the action plan by this group were:



## Issue/ What to do?

- ❖ Reservation of women for single-posts under PRI.
- ❖ Awareness-generation among Gram Sabha members through regular Gram Sabha meetings

## How to do?

- ❖ Developing contacts with the people
- ❖ Forming a strong network
- ❖ Selecting workers/ activists and forming an organization which could work on these issues.
- ❖ Organization of awareness generation camps.
- ❖ Rallies and dharnas.
- ❖ Awareness generation through pamphlets, posters, films, street plays, puppet shows, dance, etc.
- ❖ Organizing conferences.
- ❖ Exposure visits.

## When? – April 2005 – March 2006

Activities	Quarter (starting in -)
Developing contacts with people	1 <sup>st</sup> quarter – on going process
Training	2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter
District level conference	2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter
State level conference	3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter
Network meeting	All the quarters
Pressure group meeting	All the quarters
Block level task force meeting	All the quarters
District level task force meeting	All the quarters
Rallies & dharnas	2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarters
Theme camps	2 <sup>nd</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> quarters
Network forming	1 <sup>st</sup> quarter

Note: Programmes and activities to be evaluated every three (3) months

## Impact

- ❖ Regular meetings of Gram Sabha
- ❖ Involvement of the pressure group
- ❖ Participation of Gram Sabha members to improve
- ❖ Increased coordination among people’s representatives



- ❖ Beginning of women's reservation in PRI single-posts
- ❖ Better coordination with the administration
- ❖ Development of leadership abilities
- ❖ Improvement in self-confidence of the pressure group
- ❖ Women's participation in Gram Sabha would ensure women empowerment

Who will do? – SSEGVK, MSS, BSS, Jan Vikas, IDF, SAPIT, NJL, Parivar Vikas, GENVP, LSS, NVSKPK

Note: The network will have offices at the district and state levels.

### Comments and suggestions

The participants seemed exhausted by the long list of action plans of the various groups. The presentation therefore could not attract comments or suggestions from them.

Note: The Livelihood Group could not present its action plan, as it was not ready. Mr. Rakesh Jha, MC took strong exception to this laxity on the part of the Group members.

### Group Work: Summing Up

Based on the suggestions and comments of the participants in the backdrop of the outputs of group work during the workshop it was decided that:

- ❖ Four members from each group would be selected to discuss further course of action on the outputs of their group work during the workshop.
- ❖ A state-level advocacy coordination committee could be formed. Its members would include the selected four members from each group. Efforts would be made to ensure regional representation in this committee.
- ❖ Based on the output of the group work and action plans, discussions could be held as to the possibility of revisiting project implementation plan (PIP), if needed.
- ❖ The advocacy network that was being planned under the PACS programme would work hand in hand with other similar networking organizations as well.

The details of members from each group are as under:

### Flood and Water Logging Group

1. Shri Devnath Devan, Gramin Seva, Madhubani
2. Shri Amarji, SSEVK, East Champaran
3. Shri Ramesh Kumar, GPSVS, Madhubani
4. Shri Jitendra Kumar, Nav Jagriti, Saran

### Drought Group

1. Shri Ramchandra Chaudhry, Gram Nirman Mandal, Nawada
2. Shri Chandrabhushan, Abhiyan, Jahanabad
3. Shri Sachchidanand Singh, Lok Swarajya Sangh, Nalanda
4. Shri Sudhir Kumar, Baunsi, Banka



## Self-Governance Group

1. Shri Vashisth Kumar Singh, SAPIT
2. Ms. Saurabh Suman, Bihar Seva Sansathan Seva Nagar, Nalanda
3. Shri Hamid Raza, SSEVK, Motihari, East Champaran

## Rights Group

1. Shri Bhogendra Mishra, Jan AkanchaS, Madhubani
2. Ms. Leela Kumari, Mahila Vikas Samiti, Nawada
3. Ms. Archana, Nidan, Patna
4. Shri Radheshyam. Prayas, Gaya

## Livelihood Group

1. Dr. Anil Kumar Singh, BGVASS
2. Md. Mukhtarul Haque, Raviskalp, Nalanda
3. Shri Arvind Singh, Nidan, Patna
4. Kumar Ranjan, Mukti Nilkatan, Katoriya

## Accountability and Transparency of CSO: Credibility Alliance (CA)

Briefing participants on Credibility Alliance, Mr. Ranjan Rao informed that it was a consortium of non-profit voluntary organisations in India which evolved with the objective of enhancing good governance in the voluntary sector and furthering its 'credibility' in the eyes of the public. CA would provide mechanisms for furthering accountability and transparency through self-disclosure to enhance the credibility of the voluntary sector in the eyes of the public. *(Detailed notes of his presentation are appended.)*

## PACS Strategy and Thrust Areas: MC

Ms. Poonam Mehta, State Anchor for Maharashtra, Development Alternatives in her presentation tried to briefly explain the main focus areas to be targeted under the PACS programme during next three years.

The key programme strategies included programme governance, communication, networking and liaison, programme management, capacity building and monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEAL) system. The strategic thrust (2004-08) being optimization and enhancement of impacts of programme interventions and outcomes, the focus components for the period 2004-08 involved:

- a. intensification of interventions in clusters
- b. operationalizing impact multiplication systems initiated, and
- c. develop and establish sustenance mechanisms for interventions and impacts.

Rushing through the presentation, Ms. Poonam said that the key thrust areas of PACS programme would be to:

- ✓ Encourage partnerships within civil society organisation
- ✓ Support CSOs in effective implementation of their programme for sustainable impact



- ✓ Facilitate networks at different levels and strengthening grass root level advocacy work
- ✓ Facilitate constructive dialogue with Govt. at different level
- ✓ Undertake periodic research and studies at different levels to support grass root work and advocacy efforts
- ✓ Contribute effectively to national level discourses on poverty and development

She also briefly dwelt upon impact multiplication (of advocacy platforms, community systems and MEAL systems), sustenance mechanism (involving private sector, government and financial institutions at partnership, institutional and project levels) and key initiatives such as first phase of MEAL implementation, communication strategy and networking and liaisoning efforts under the PACS programme.

### **Network Experience Sharing: Nidan & GPSVS**

The [first presentation](#) on “network experience” was based experience of Nidan, Patna. During its nine years of existence Nidan was associated with a number of network organizations and was instrumental in building several of them, such as National Association of Street Traders of India (1998), Bihar Forces (2002), Chakachak Patna Abhiyan (2001), PACS Programme (2003), Atithi Series (1996), Street Net (2003), Home Net (2005), and so on at the national, international and state levels. The main objectives were to reinforce the impact of the programme, larger dialogue, exchange of views and effective work on prioritized issues. The resultant gains from networking were – broadened reach (from policy makers to target groups and wide geographical spread), better results, mobilization of resources, strategy learning and intensification of programmes/ activities/ movement.

In their experience, respect for member-organizations and transparent, democratic and membership-based setup contributes to successful networking experience. However, the main issues concerning networking challenges are leadership, development and stability of the organization, financial autonomy, quest for continued success and increasing expectations.

The [second presentation](#) on networking experience was made by Ghoghardiha Prakhanda Swaraj Vikas Sangh (GPSVS), Madhubani. Explaining the experience from the viewpoint of partner organizations, one of the three presentation team members said that the entire process was highly friendly, transparent and full of useful learning. Being a veteran organization that *Netri* had been, networking with it proved highly beneficial in terms of experience learning, developing contacts, capacity building and understanding the issues in the right perspective.

Sharing the networking experience from the view point of Netri, the second presenter said that being the first networking experiment, the progression was ‘heartening’ to say the least. No doubt, the capacities of partner organizations had shown improvement. But human resources of the associated CSOs required orientation and training, while the strength of women staff members was poor in general. Nevertheless, with proper leadership and support partner-organizations could definitely be motivated and prepared to take up and understand issues in the larger perspective. The main gains from networking were broadened reach of the issues, better results due to competition among the partner organizations, opportunities to learn from their experiences, development of leadership qualities and strengthening of mutual trust.

### **Institutional Mechanism of MEAL: MC**

Beginning his presentation, Mr. Mukhtar said that the objective of MEAL was self-monitoring at all levels



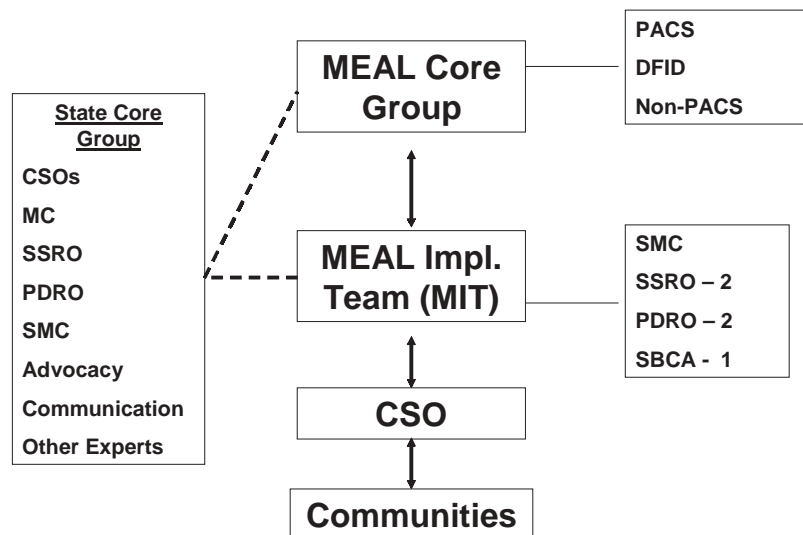
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especially at CSO level, measuring/describing progress toward achievement of projects and programme as a whole, catalysing the “Learning & Sharing Process” for improved project and program management and generating a body of knowledge and experiences for sharing. He then introduced the main components of MEAL as monitoring (inputs, activities, processes and outputs), evaluation (programme achievements, organisational capacity and programme principles) and learning (research, innovation – PACS and beyond, analysis, and communication).

Mr. Mukhtar hurried through the description of the main deliverables under MEAL components as under:

- ❖ **Inputs:** what were the resources planned and used during the year – human, material or money? Whether they were as planned, adequate, timely and of good quality?
- ❖ **Activities:** what were the activities planned and taken-up during the year for delivering various outputs? Whether they were done as planned, in time, of adequate quantity?
- ❖ **Processes:** what were the critical processes during the year that led to reaching important milestones for the year? How well did we do those – as per best practices of our organization?
- ❖ **Outputs – Project:** What do we think (from the project) is the progress towards our outputs? Where are positive trends...where stagnant?
- ❖ **Organizational Development:** As an organization how well did we perform during the year? Which were the areas we performed well, and fared not so well?
- ❖ **Environment:** How was the environment during the year – village & project level? Whether they were as planned, adequate, timely and of good quality?
- ❖ **Community Signs:** how did the community view the changes? What is the degree of alignment between changes that project expected and identifies?
- ❖ **Research & Innovation:** What were the major learnings from the research that we conducted during the year? How did we use them in the project?

Moving on, Mukhtar presented the institutional mechanism for MEAL operationalisation with the following diagram:



## Fourth P L W Report



The key roles of MEAL Implementation Team (MIT), according to Mukhtar were:

- ❖ Feedback and Communication to all relevant stakeholders
- ❖ Tracking state level initiatives
- ❖ Catalysing Research and Innovation pilots in the state
- ❖ Analytical report on CSO Institutional Capacity based on OD Self-Assessments
- ❖ Report on state and national level initiatives

On the other hand, roles of the State Core Group (SCG) were explained as:

- ❖ Periodic assessment of the state PACS program for strategies, approaches and outputs achieved based on experiences of members and analysis produced by MIT.
- ❖ Providing necessary strategic directions based on discussions on the above key issues.
- ❖ Approving State level reports produced by MIT for submission to MC.
- ❖ Approving new techniques and tools (e.g. State program evaluation design, analysis framework), and
- ❖ Innovation and research

### **Experience of MEAL Upscaling in Bihar: SMC**

Running short of time, Mr. Priyamvad Mandal, State MEAL Coordinator hurried through his presentation on progress of MEAL upscaling in Bihar. Lamenting that MEAL implementation process (Phase-I) in Bihar was interrupted for one reason or the other, he said that till date phase one had been taken up for implementation in 3+3 CSOs.

The main points concerning process and objectives, challenges and the requirements for MEAL upscaling in Bihar, according to Mr. Mandal were:

#### **Process and Objectives**

- ❖ Understanding the project with its time line and major sifting.
- ❖ Refinement of project activities and outputs - *if required*
- ❖ The system of MEAL is also to provide an uniformity in reporting PACS project progresses.
- ❖ Concretization of action plan, documentation practice – *if required*

#### **Challenges**

- ❖ Matching the actual and immediate need of the community
- ❖ Change in to address the same Community group to SHG or SHG to Community group
- ❖ Change in dates

#### **Requirements**

- ❖ Baseline information, collected at the beginning of the project
- ❖ Final Project proposal
- ❖ QPRs sent to MC



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- ❖ Logistic arrangements for five long-days process.
- ❖ Full PACS team & some select community representatives to be involved in the process

The presentation was followed by a request by Mr. Rajeshwar, PDRO Team Leader to the office bearers of NIDAN and IDF to consider change in the pre-determined MEAL Calendar. He informed the participants that in view of the advancing of Project Selection Committee (PSC) Meeting for the quarter (from April 12-13, 2005 to April 1-2, 2005), PDRO was facing acute time constraint in meeting with the deadline to present and defend as many as seven new proposals from Bihar. In view of this logistical problem it would be appreciated if NIDAN and IDF (which had earlier consented for MEAL implementation from 11-15 March 2005 and 18-22 March 2005, respectively) could please agree to a new schedule (19-23 April 2005), he said. Both NIDAN and IDF agreed to abide by the new schedule.

## Rounding Up and Vote of Thanks

Next on the agenda was to decide the venue and date of the Fifth Peer Learning Workshop. After some noisy moments of setting parameters, some kind of a consensus emerged that the next PLW should be held either in Muzaffarpur or Darbhanga district and the date would be somewhere in the first half of June 2005. It was decided that a final decision on the venue and date would be made later by the MEAL Implementation Team (MIT) based on good logistics.

Mr. Rakesh Jha proposed the vote of thanks on behalf of the Management Consultants. He expressed his deep gratitude and appreciation to all participants, CSOs, resource organizations and all who directly or indirectly helped in making the workshop a success. Special thanks were conveyed to Mr. Manoj Verma, Director, IDF and his entire team for making a wholehearted coordinating effort and providing with excellent logistical support.

**The full text of the presentations made during the workshop and details of other background work done have been compiled as Volume: II.**

## Fourth P L W Report

