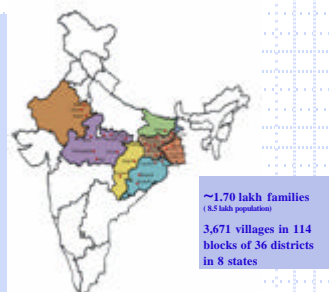


Beyond Wages to Sustainable Livelihoods: PRADAN's Experience in NREGP

November 21, 2008
Islamic Cultural Centre, Lodi Road

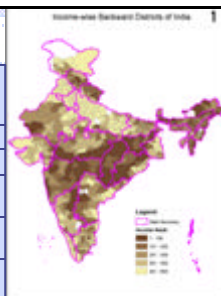
Organisational Overview

- Established in 1983, registered as a Society
- PRADAN works with rural poor
 - women, adivasis, scheduled castes, landless and marginal and small cultivators.
 - the poorest districts and states
- Focus on grassroots mobilisation, livelihoods and building human capabilities



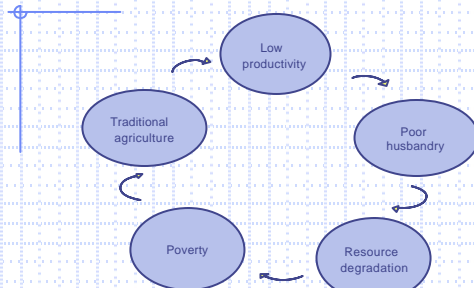
Central Indian Region : Poverty & Natural Resources

Parameter	Central Indian Districts	All India Average
Population Density	200.23	324
Percent of Rural Population	85.35	74.29
% of population below poverty line	42.67	26.00
Irrigated Area as % of Net Cultivated Area	11.00	34.00
Average value of crop output Rs./ha	2697	8578



- About 40 million poor farming families, 30% tribal, nearly 50% BPL
- Rain-fed paddy main livelihood, aided by forest gathering & wage earning
- Over 80% small and marginal farmers
- Irrigation coverage below 10% & sporadic
- 40% of cultivable area remains fallow, 85% monocropped
- Crop yields 1/3rd to half of national average
- Little investments in resource development

Cycle of poverty in these areas

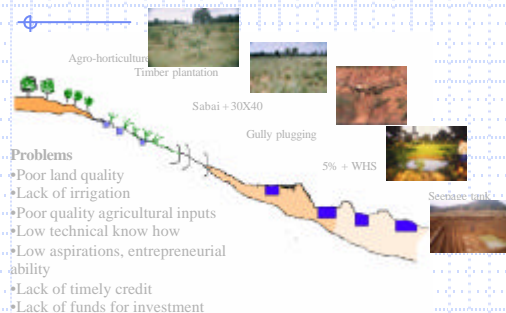


NREGS Potential for Sustainable Livelihoods : Investment in INRM

Elements of INRM Approach

- Resource augmentation as per resource capability and land use for livelihood;
- Any amendments in landscape need to build on resource-resource, resource-people and people-people relationships;
- Resource restoration and enhancement of carrying capacity is central to planning;
- Approach is family based but harmonized with area perspective.

PRADAN's INRM Approach



PRADAN's Engagement with NREGP – early days yet

- ❖ Working with PRIs in Bankura district in West Bengal
- ❖ Project Implementing Agency for Watershed in Madhya Pradesh
- ❖ Sensitizing & building capacities of community (users, PRIs) on demand generation and planning for INRM investments in 5 districts in Jharkhand, Orissa and Chhattisgarh
- ❖ Schematised programmes in MP
- ❖ One-off Efforts

Bankura Experience : Working with Panchayats

- ❖ **Outreach in 6 Panchayats of 2 blocks; 22VDPs have been prepared by the Panchayats**
 - 50 community resource persons identified by Panchayats have been trained.
- ❖ **Implementation Steps**
 - INRM orientation of Gram Panchayats (GPs) through exposure and trainings
 - Selection of Resource persons (RPs) by the GPs
 - Three phase training to RPs
 - RPs facilitate Hamlet committees to prepare the village development plan (VDP) based on INRM approach
 - RPs help SHGs / hamlet committees to implement the VDP
 - Promotion of women SHGs and hamlet level committees

Planning Process

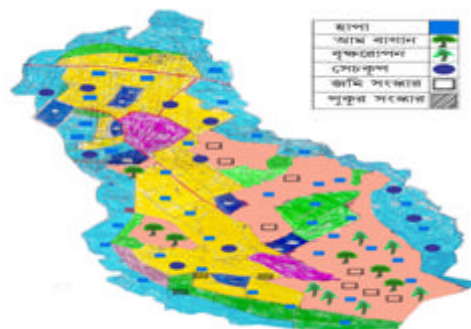
Women in SHGs discussing about village problems through PRA technique in Nekragoriya



LRPs discussing treatment plan with villagers in Nekragoriya



Village development plan of Nekragoriya village based on INRM



Local resource persons giving layout for 5 % model WHS



Construction of 5% model



Activities in Nekragoriya

Particulars	Quantity	Person days generated (Approx)	Sustainable Livelihood Impacts
No of small water bodies created	55	13,250	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 55 families did fish rearing ❖ Increased paddy production through SRI ❖ Vegetables on the bunds
Area under Plantations – mango, timber, arjuna (Ha)	57	26,250	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 255 families annual income of Rs.6000-9000 from 4th yr ❖ 55 families would be able to meet fuel plus Rs 60 lakh after ten years ❖ Rs 2.5 lakh per year to 47 families and fuel wood

Issues & Impact

Issues

- Wage payment procedures – timely payment difficult
- Availability of fund in Panchayat
- Unit cost for long gestation activities
- Criticality of local cadre

Impact

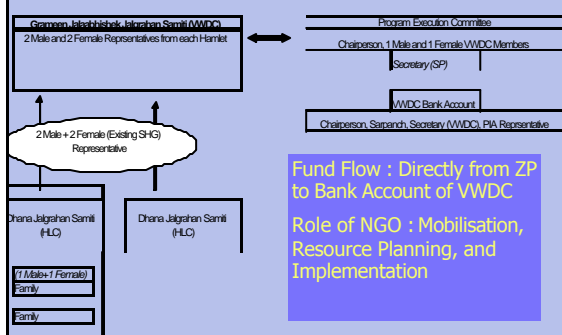
- Adjoining panchayats have sought support in INRM planning under NREGS
- Small and marginal farmers in the intervention areas demand creation of water bodies, orchards etc.
- District administration has asked PRADAN to initiate work based on this approach in neighbouring Ranibandh block also

MP Experience :

PIA in Watershed / MPRLP TFT

- State Govt used provision in the NREG Act to engage line departments / projects for area based watershed type treatment
- As provided in the Act, State Govt / Line departments designated CSOs identified through a process as PIAs
- PRADAN entered into agreement with MPRLP / District administration for implementing in 26 villages, 16,000 ha in 3 blocks of 2 districts over a 5-year period
- Unit Cost – Rs 8,000 per hectare; out of which 15% for capacity building and implementation costs (in MPRLP – dovetailed in existing programme)

Schematic of Village level Institutional Arrangement



Learnings

- Rs 6,800 per hectare not sufficient to treat the entire area
- The limit of 100 days per job card puts a severe limit to the work that can be carried out – in the context of implementing watershed over a 5-year period
- Balancing task based system of wages with the statutory provision of minimum wages
- Huge paperwork load

Pilot Project under NREGA with GoI-UNDP assistance

Sensitize and build capacities for mobilising investments for INRM activities from NREGA

Pilot done in 5 districts aimed to

- Enhance capacity of the NREGA implementation machinery in planning, executing and monitoring INRM activities under NREGA
- Demonstrate INRM based livelihood enhancement under NREGA to create sustainable livelihood assets for poor NREGA workers in selected villages

Activities carried out

- Orientation of personnel at district, block & panchayat levels;
- Awareness of Gramsabha members on
 - NREGS entitlements and
 - possibilities of INRM investments through NREGS
- Trained cadre of about 300 local resource persons to
 - help wage-earners access the benefits by application etc.
 - anchoring participatory planning process with users/PRIIs at hamlet; and
 - execution of plans
- Preparation of INRM based resource management plans by Gramsabha in 140 villages



Participatory Planning Process

Key Learning

- Hamlet level planning facilitates participation of poor
- Trained local cadre critical to help poor access wage (process of getting proper receipt of job application itself big task), and translation into workable plans and execution
- INRM planning created aspiration in communities for productive assets but uncertainty about execution again forced shift of focus to immediate gain in the form of wage employment
- Ready availability of funds at Panchayat along with labour budgeting and fitting in with wage earners' cashflow can ensure work on demand
- Vibrancy created needs to be sustained through more investment on execution of the existing plans

Schematised Programmes in MP

- Schematised programmes created by State Government for taking up various livelihood improvement activities
- Kapildhara in Dindori and Betul (for dugwell); Nandan Phalodyan in Dindori, Sidhi and Betul (fruit orchards); Resham in Dindori (Mulberry Sericulture)
- How It Has Helped
 - Addressed felt needs of the community
 - Could be adopted quickly by administration and PRIs
 - Facilitated community to claim their 'rights'
- Issues
 - Preparation of a balanced NRM Plan (extraction versus conservation)
 - Integration with other livelihood supports for proper utilisation / sectoral linkages

One-off Efforts

- Mainly on the basis of demonstration of earlier successful works carried out under other programmes
- Mango Orchards in Gumla
- Tasar Plantations in Dumka
- Insitu Water Conservation structures (Farm Ponds) in Mayurbhanj

Issues

- Depends upon a one-to-one relationship
- Limited replicability

What limits the investments on private livelihood assets

- Focus on creation of large public assets; where wage employment is focus; average value of works taken up in Rajasthan is Rs 2.28 lakhs
- Lack of skills for identification of successful livelihood activities
- Additional procedures for taking up works on private lands (eg land patta – where mutation not taken place)
- Difficult to supervise; problems of tracking
- Work on public lands need not build upon community aspirations; whereas the other will necessarily require it
- More stakeholders in private lands
- Inevitably gets linked to utilisation
- Non-eligibility of rural non-BPL families from NREGS

Ways Forward

- Experience of schematised sub-schemes in MP and Chhatisgarh has helped; however should not restrict other farmer articulated options
- PIA for watershed approach in MP opens up NREGS for large-scale creation of livelihood assets; could be dovetailed with other programs (RKVY, BRGF etc) for missing infrastructure and livelihood linkages
- With adequate caveats, people may be allowed to take an 'advance' on their wage entitlements when assets getting created on their private lands
- Upscaling CSO involvement – use of domain experts
- Pilots on INRM approach

Ways Forward Contd...

- ✦ Involvement of User Groups is critical – livelihood is about utilisation, not only creation; so user perspective very important
- ✦ Creation of local cadre different from the current Rozgar Sewak approach
 - Equipped to trigger plans, rather than only implementation of plans
 - Accountable – local cadre cannot be left accountable to a representative process, which is open to elite/leader capture
- ✦ Procedural issues
 - Simplifying process of job application – starting point
 - Strengthening social audit processes for better asset quality on common lands
 - Funds on demand to the GPs
 - Reducing procedural delays through use of ICT

Ways Forward Contd...

- ✦ Issue of non-eligibility of non-BPL families in watershed areas - need to take an area perspective, for optimal returns from INRM investments; a one-off farm pond will not give optimal benefits
in an irrigation project "public work" effectively serves the purpose of irrigating private land and no distinction is made between rich and poor!

Issues

- ✦ Job Card Related Issues
 - 'Advance' on job card
 - Allocation of xx wage days for particular work/programme
- ✦ GP-PIA Conflict
- ✦ Work in Forest Area/Forest Villages
- ✦ Support System for Livelihood Promotion
- ✦ Meeting Support Costs of PIAs
- ✦ Modification in SoRs

Issues...

- ✦ How to bring convergence between different departments? For example, watershed departments for the first two years may undertake only mobilization.
- ✦ Opportunities of Livelihoods Improvement with EGS
 - Continuous wage income:
 - Improving Common Assets
 - Improving Private Assets
 - Creating common assets/ natural resource access for poor for specific production systems
 - Labour subsidies in production
 - Using labour subsidies as a driver for equity / access to resource for poor / promotion of sustainable agriculture
 - Provision of critical services for improving the production systems

Issues...

- ✦ Work on private assets of non-BPL families in an INRM perspective?
- ✦ Upscaling CSO involvement? User Groups?
- ✦ Procedural Issues - simplification