

Annual report as presented in the Board meeting:

A brief review of activities for the fiscal year 2004-05 is presented below.

More than a third of the districts PRADAN works in are among the 100 poorest in the country. The proportion of households below the official poverty line in most of our operational districts exceeds 40% and is as high as 70% in some blocks. Scheduled Tribes (ST) and Scheduled Castes (SC) constitute a significant proportion of the population and are a majority (67%) of the people PRADAN works with. Most of the families we work with are food insecure. PRADAN's operational area is characterized by under-developed production systems, weak public services and poorly developed markets and other economic services. Rain-fed agriculture, livestock rearing and gathering forest produce are the main livelihood sources for the people we work with, supplemented by wage income from seasonal migration. Even where links to markets and public systems are stronger and production systems better developed, poor people have few productive assets and little access to financial services, markets, and technology.

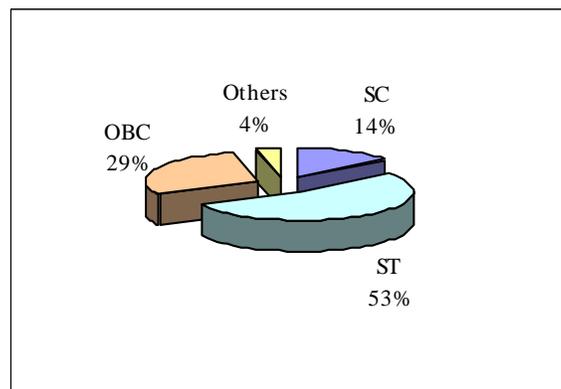
Women play a key role in the household's subsistence and livelihood activities, including agriculture, livestock management, and gathering from forests. They bear the burden of coping with illness and hunger at home when men migrate in search of work, and are most likely to receive less or go without food in times of shortages. Yet, they have least benefited from contemporary social and economic changes.

It is in this context that PRADAN begins work with women in poor families, to enhance their participation in socio-economic development, build their capabilities, help them increase the family's economic security and create a supportive social environment. We organise women into small Self Help Groups (SHGs) around savings and credit. The engagement soon extends to the family and eventually PRADAN works with both men and women to help them increase their incomes through suitable sectoral programmes. The focus of the sectoral programmes is to create and improve productive assets and build people's capability to manage those assets effectively and sustainably and to access complementary services from public and private institutions. The livelihood programmes taken up by PRADAN include:

1. Intensification and diversification of agriculture,
2. Developing land and water resources,
3. Dairy and other livestock based activities
4. Enhancement of forest based activities, and
5. Introduction of Micro enterprises.

The key development tasks carried out by PRADAN executives are:

- o identify potential livelihood activities in the local area,
- o take up pilot/demonstration projects in case of new activities/technologies,
- o expose participating families to established activities/ technologies,
- o train the participating families,
- o provide technical support and set up systems for its continuance,
- o build and nurture input-output linkages,
- o leverage development finances, and



- o set up and nurture people's organisations, such as cooperatives to provide services to the members and manage external linkages, such as marketing.

PRADAN has 21 teams working with over 90,000 families in 2,620 villages (including 236 new villages) spread across 80 blocks of 27 districts in 7 States. We set up a new team in the Dindori district in M. P. towards the end of the year.

As programmes stabilise, it has become possible to handover some of the developmental tasks to local people chosen by the SHGs and trained and guided by PRADAN executives. Designated as "service providers", the number of such people has steadily increased over the past few years and during the year PRADAN worked with over 1,400 such persons. They are resource persons for new technologies, assist in various housekeeping functions in people's organisations or provide inputs or services for various livelihood activities.

We developed and piloted a three-phase training programme on livelihood promotion for the executives engaged in grassroot action. The computerized MIS to plan and monitor operations was piloted in a few locations. We commenced a process of dialogue and consultations internally and with key external stakeholders on the future structure of PRADAN.

The highlights of operations are presented in the following.

Savings and Credit Groups

In most villages PRADAN begins work by promoting poor women's SHGs, informal associations of 15 to 20 women who volunteer to work together as a group. Apart from providing micro-saving and micro-credit service to members, SHGs are a platform for us to interact with poor women. Over time, we use this forum to help women:

- articulate a vision for a better future,
- map out and implement an actionable livelihood plan and
- develop required linkages.

PRADAN executives help each SHG evolve as a cohesive group with specific norms, values and systems. About 15 mature SHGs in a 4-5 km neighbourhood are organized into a Cluster Association. The Association is a forum for learning, inter-group problem solving, performance bench marking and solidarity. It is also a cost-effective mechanism for interaction with external agencies such as banks, government agencies and PRADAN itself.

Promotion of new SHGs was not a priority this year; the focus instead was expansion of sectoral income generation programmes, as over two-thirds of the SHG members were outside the reach of such programmes. New groups were promoted only to saturate outreach in certain clusters. The sectoral programmes this year were extended to almost half of the SHG members. This apart, concerted effort was made to mobilise loans from banks for livelihood promotion. The cumulative credit mobilised from banks by SHGs promoted by PRADAN doubled during the year.

The progress during the year is summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Overall SHG Statistics

Particulars	March 2004	March 2005
Number of SHGs	5,324	5,927
Number of members (all women)	76,742	86,240
Cluster associations	385	456
Net owned funds (Rs m)	73	103
Internal credit disbursed (Rs m, cumulative)	166	250.5
Number of bank linkages	2,873	4,603
Bank credit mobilised (Rs m, cumulative)	83	171
Livelihood programme outreach (% members)	34%	47%

Table 1 b: Achievement against Annual Plans

Particulars	Achievement	Plan
New SHGs	871	751
New members	9,498	13,000
New cluster associations	128	103
Addition to net owned funds (Rs m)	30.0	38.8
Internal credit disbursed (Rs m)	84.5	90.9
Number of bank linkages	1,730	1,762
Bank credit mobilised (Rs m)	87.97	71.8
Livelihood programme outreach (% members)	47%	54%

Computerisation of SHG accounts through the Computer *Munshi* system continued during the year. The first of the *Munshis* launched in Purulia about two years ago is now earning a regular income after repaying for all running cost including the monthly instalment towards cost of hardware. Availability of electricity, breakdown in computer hardware and turnover of Computer *Munshis* have affected coverage in some of the locations. Progress of the computerisation programme is presented in **Table 2**.

Table 2: Status of automation of SHG accounts, March 2005

% SHGs with accounts computerized	80
% SHGs with system for inflow of weekly data	97
% SHGs with system for data feedback	15
% SHGs with quality group accountants	85
Computer <i>Munshis</i> in place	48

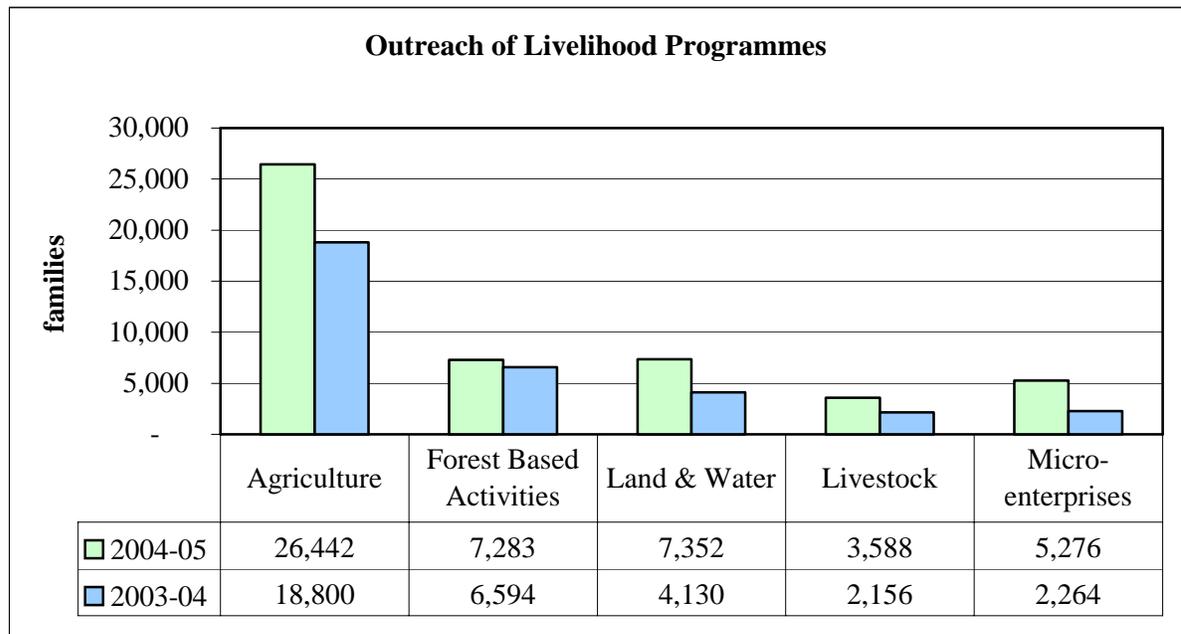
Design of internal learning systems using pictorial diaries was completed and was launched in selected clusters by all teams, altogether in about 475 SHGs. The Raigarh team has introduced this system most extensively and has reported that SHG members as well as PRADAN executives found it very useful. The diaries used for group promotion (pictorially depicting the utility of a group, etc.) and group development (need for norms, rules, etc.) seem easiest to use and most effective. Diaries dealing with women's status and progress made by women, though very useful, are more complex and take time to use. Currently 900 SHG members are regularly using the individual diaries.

Livelihood Programmes

Agriculture, forestry, livestock, micro-enterprises, small-scale irrigation and watershed development are the arenas of our livelihood promotion programmes. The key programme elements are:

- Identifying, developing and introducing locally suitable sectoral activities to expand or improve livelihood opportunities for poor households,
- Mobilising finances from government schemes and banks to create/improve productive assets and infrastructure for poor households,
- Building poor people's capabilities to improve productivity of existing livelihoods and to adopt new livelihood options,
- Setting up systems/mechanisms to sustain the livelihood activity in the local area, and
- Building suitable producer organisations for long-term sustainability of these activities in the local context.

During the year PRADAN projects worked with almost 50,000 families, mostly of SHG members. Overall progress is reported in **Table 3** and pictorially presented in the chart below.



**Note: Families overlap across programmes.*

Plan and achievement for 2004-05

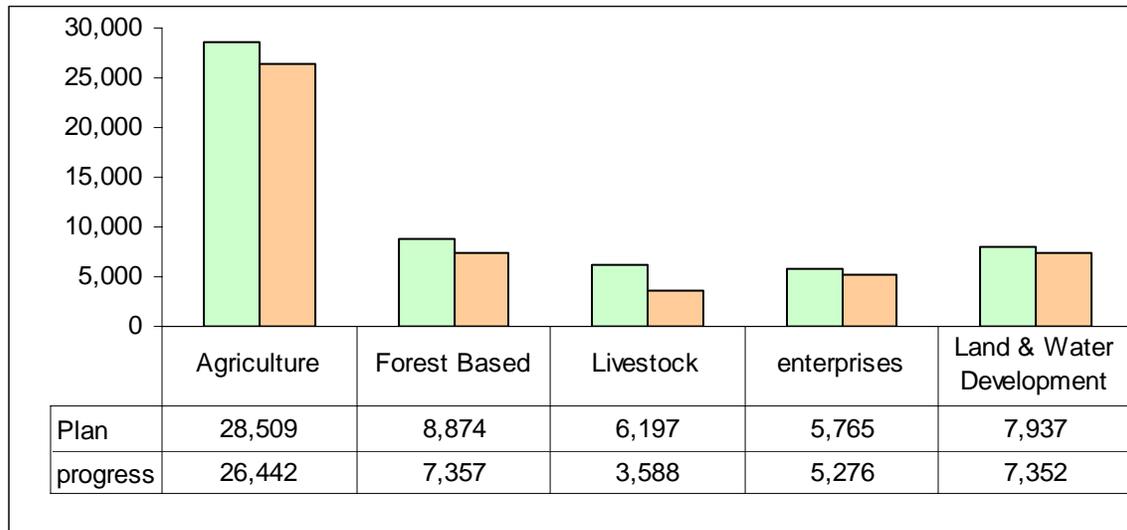


Table 3: Outreach of Livelihood Programmes

Programme	2003-04	2004-05
Agriculture Based	18,800	26,442
Forest Based	6,594	7,283
Land & Water Development	4,130	7,352
Livestock Based	2,156	3,588
Micro-enterprises	2,264	5,276
Total	33,944	49,941

**Note: Families overlap across programmes.*

Agriculture: PRADAN's agriculture programme focuses on enhancement and stabilisation of productivity and diversification of farm based activities. Broadly, the specific activities undertaken during the year were:

- increasing the productivity of the main cereal crops and reducing chances of failure,
- diversification into cash crops such as pulses and oil seeds,
- promotion of vegetable cultivation on homesteads and near wells, and
- promotion of horticulture on land not suitable for agriculture.

PRADAN teams worked with 26,442 families, covering over 6,200 ha, recording a 40% increase in the number of families participating and 50% increase in the area covered over the previous year. Work on the System for Rice Intensification¹ (SRI)ⁱ was expanded, though it still remains at the level of a pilot. We plan to expand coverage significantly in the coming *kharif*. PRADAN trained and worked through over 700 agriculture service providers identified by SHG members to enhance outreach efficiency and ensure sustainability.

An indifferent monsoon hampered progress during the *kharif*, especially in Jharkhand. There was a long dry spell following early rains, seriously hampering transplanting operations. **Table 4** provides details of progress during the year.

¹ See end note

Table 4: Status of the Agriculture Programme, March 2005

Activity	Families	Area (Ha)	Teams involved
Horticulture	461	96	Keonjhar, Gumla, Purulia
<i>Kharif</i> crops (paddy, soybean, maize, etc.)	12,312	4,018	All teams except Dindori, Siddhi & Dausa.
Maize & Pigeon Pea (mixed crop)	4,125	638	East Singhbhum, Dumka, Godda, Barhi, Gumla, Khunti, Lohardaga, Purulia, Petarbar, West Singhbhum.
<i>Kharif</i> vegetables	4,869	522	Balliguda, East Singhbhum, Gumla, Keonjhar, Koderma, Lohardaga, Petarbar, Raigarh, Vidisha, West Singhbhum.
<i>Rabi</i> crops (wheat, gram, vegetables, etc.)	4,675	930	All teams except Dindori, Siddhi & Dausa.
Total	26,442	6,204	

These interventions together produced additional output valued at Rs 72.3 million and addition income of Rs 43.8 million for poor families. Improving paddy productivity under rain-fed conditions in eastern India was the activity with widest outreach. The increase in yield recorded in sample plots is 1.9 ton/ha over the prevailing yields of 1 to 2 ton/ha, thereby almost doubling the output for most families. Over 11,500 families participated in the programme, covering over 3,600 ha in 14 projects in the east. Almost 6,800 tons of additional paddy was produced by food deficit families, increasing food security for themselves by about 100 days on an average. The average additional income earned by participating families from vegetable cultivation as a subsidiary activity, the other major programme, is approximately Rs 2,500.

Irrigation & Watershed Development: Given the undulating and hilly terrain, mostly sub-humid climate and the composition of rural livelihoods, developing and harnessing land and water resources is the only way to remove mass poverty in our operational area. Depending on the context, a combination of small-scale irrigation facilities, land development (through bunding, levelling and terracing), and a wide array of rainwater harvesting systems are the possible intervention. Taken up judiciously, with a household livelihood focus, such interventions can transform the livelihood potential of an area and open up possibilities for decentralised growth in these stagnant regions. Within the constraints of prevailing government policies, PRADAN has been chipping away along this line of thinking and action.

During the year project teams took up these activities with over 7,300 families. These were primarily financed through various government programmes, such as the National Watershed Development Programme (in Jharkhand), the District Poverty Initiatives Project (in MP and Rajasthan) and the IFAD-aided Integrated Tribal Development Programme (in Jharkhand). NABARD provided support for watershed development projects in Purulia and Peterbar. Small-scale irrigation projects are also being taken up in various districts under the Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana (RSVY). The Indo-Canadian Environment Facility is supporting an integrated natural resource based livelihoods programme in Keonjhar.

Table 4 a: Progress in Irrigation and Watershed Development

Particulars	Families	Area (ha)	Teams involved
Irrigation	3,990	714 (net)	Gumla, Lohardaga, Kesla, Raigarh, West Singhbhum, East Singhbhum
Watershed Development	3,362	224 (treated)	Peterbar, Barhi, Dholpur, Dausa, Deoghar, Purulia, West Singhbhum, Khunti
Total	7,352		

Forest based livelihoods: This was the second year of expansion of the tasar sericulture programme under the SGSY special projects in Jharkhand and Bihar in collaboration with the Central Silk Board (CSB). During the year, we promoted 259 tasar grainages, worked with almost 5,800 rearers, and raised plantations of *arjuna* and *asana* on 1,591 ha of wasteland owned by SHG members. Delayed monsoons adversely affected the plantation activity. The Purulia team took up tasar rearing on a small scale in plantations raised under a watershed development project. The lac programme was expanded to three new locations, in collaboration with Government of Jharkhand and ILRI. BASIX provided credit cum insurance to some families in Khunti. Project teams trained and worked with 174 service providers during this period. Programme coverage is reported in **Table 5**.

Table 5: Forest-based Activities

Activity	Families	Teams involved
Tasar plantations and rearing	5,798	Deoghar, Dumka, Godda, West Singhbhum, Keonjhar
Lac cultivation	1,247	Khunti, West Singhbhum, Peterbar, Godda
Farm forestry	215	Purulia
Leaf-plate making	23	Balliguda
Total	7,283	

The tasar rearing activity suffered a setback due to problems in the supply of basic seed by the Basic Seed Multiplication and Training Centers (BSMTC) of CSB. There was a large-scale outbreak of the *pebrine* disease and hatching rates of silkworm eggs were also low. As a result, production of seed cocoons was far below requirement. As a result, disease free eggs could be supplied to only a few rearers and commercial cocoon output was a third of the target. The matter has been taken up with CSB at the highest level and the following steps are being taken to obviate such problems in future:

- Quality parameters for “Basic Seed” to be supplied by BSMTs to the grainage entrepreneur have been sharply defined,
- Grainage entrepreneurs promoted by PRADAN would be have access to the BSMTC to check the quality of the basic seed before taking delivery of the same,
- PRADAN would run one BSMTC on a pilot basis, with CSB reimbursing PRADAN for costs incurred in running it, and
- Based on the experience of this pilot, steps would be taken to hand over other BSMTs in PRADAN’s operational area in a phased manner.

Table 5b: Progress of tasar plantation and rearing

Activity	2004-05	2003-04
Arjuna plantation raised (ha)	1,591	671
Grainages operational	259	215
Seed cocoons produced ('000)	2,590	4,384
DFLs produced ('000)	229	606
Commercial cocoons produced (million)	10.65	19.70

Livestock rearing: Productivity enhancement and diversification in agriculture opens up huge opportunities for subsidiary activities, especially livestock rearing. Activities like livestock rearing not only enhance family incomes significantly, but also provide greater stability to the income. Dairy and goat rearing are particularly promising sectors, as livestock rearing by poor families and in poor regions is characterized by scrub breeds with low levels of productivity and poor husbandry practices.

Six PRADAN projects this year implemented a dairy programme. The key interventions include:

- quality cattle induction,
- training and capacity building of the woman in the participating family,
- veterinary care, both preventive and curative,
- ensuring balanced feed to the animals and
- marketing support.

The outreach at the end of the year was over 2,100 families. Most of the families inducted new cattle during the year. Marketing arrangements have been worked out with milk unions. Preliminary discussions have been held with the National Dairy Development Board to provide technical and marketing support. The activity has been well grounded and is poised for expansion, with outreach slated to be double next year.

Coverage under the goat rearing activity expanded in Rajasthan, MP and the sole project in Western Orissa. The intervention essentially comprises of introducing better housing facilities, immunisation (especially against PPR) and improved feeding practices.

The Purulia team again supported fish rearing in seepage tanks constructed under a watershed development project earlier on an experimental basis.

Project teams trained and engaged 128 service providers, including AI technicians trained by BAIF, suppliers of feed and providers of other production support.

Table 6 gives details of the livestock-based livelihood programme.

Table 6: Livestock based activities

Activity	Families	Output	Teams involved
Dairy	2,104	2,114 kilo litres milk	Lohardaga, Barhi, Alwar Dholpur, Dausa, Deoghar.
Goat rearing	1,334	32 tons live weight	Dholpur, Dausa, Balliguda, Kesla, Vidisha.
Fisheries in farm ponds	150		Purulia
Total	3,588		

Micro-enterprises: Agriculture has traditionally been the major source of and focus of livelihoods for poor people in PRADAN's operating area. Apart from the inherent limits as a livelihood for landless people and marginal farmers, it is a highly uncertain source of livelihoods in agro-ecologically marginal or vulnerable regions. Declining farm sizes due to population growth further limit the viability of agriculture as the sole or principal source of livelihoods. The challenge therefore is to develop livelihood opportunities based on rural micro-enterprises to supplement agricultural income and to some extent offset the uncertainty of rainfed agriculture.

Such activities can be taken especially in rural growth sectors that cater to growing urban demand. It is with this perspective that PRADAN promotes enterprise based livelihoods.

During the year we continued to expand poultry rearing and tasar yarn production as home-based micro-enterprises as supplementary sources of cash income. Developed initially at Kesla and Godda, respectively, these have now been taken up by several teams.

Outreach was expanded significantly this year in poultry rearing and tasar yarn production as home-based micro-enterprises. The number of families increased by 133% in case of poultry and 45% in case of tasar yarn production. The number of families is projected to grow next year by another 75% in poultry and 100% in case of tasar yarn production.

Table 7: Status of micro-enterprise based livelihood programme

Activity	Families	Output	Teams
Poultry	1,579	2,145 ton live birds	Kesla, Sidhi, Khunti, Lohardaga, East Singhbhum, Gumla and Raigarh.
Oyster mushroom	165	2.42 ton dry mushroom	Kesla
Tasar Yarn	898	6.16 ton tasar yarn	Godda, Deoghar, Raigarh, Dumka, Barhi and Peterbar.
Eri silk	343	477 kg raw silk	Deoghar, Dumka and Godda.
Mulberry silk	119	8.22 ton of raw silk	Kesla
Trading	862	Turnover Rs 28 lakh	Godda
Vermi-compost	1,310	243.34 ton compost	Alwar, Dumka, Gumla, Lohardga, Deoghar and Godda
Total	5,276		

The *Kesla model* of small, decentralised poultry units served by a cooperative was first replicated in Sidhi (under DPIP) and subsequently in four locations in Jharkhand and in Raigarh. Producers' cooperatives have been registered in all the locations except Raigarh. Most teams have a veterinarian as an employee of the cooperative. The cooperatives own vehicles for transporting birds and feed and are gradually integrating backwards into feed and DOC production. These co-operatives:

- procure inputs in bulk for their members.
- jointly market the produce and
- provide veterinary support by employing qualified veterinarians.

Training and capacity building relating to rearing the birds is provided to the SHG members by the PRADAN team before launching the enterprise and linking them to the co-operative. Trained producers earn incomes in the range of Rs 1,000 to 1,500 per batch, which translates to about Rs 7,000 to 10,000 per annum to supplement incomes from other livelihood sources.

The poultry cooperatives have formed a State-level federation in Jharkhand and are gradually integrating backwards into feed and DOC production. The Jharkhand government is supporting this programme extensively. Significantly, this activity can be integrated with cultivation of maize and soybean promoted under our agriculture programme as these are major components of poultry feed. The current installed capacity for poultry production requires about 2,000 ton maize grains and 500 ton soybean cake. The installed capacity will more than double in a year.

All the poultry co-operatives have recovered most of the losses suffered during the bird flu scare last year.

Table 7a: Status of the poultry programme

	2004-05	2003-04
Families	1,579	673
Cooperatives	9	6
Installed capacity (ton livebirds/year)	2,400	1,319
Output (ton livebirds)	2,145	1,126
Sales turnover (Rs million)	78.55	35.44

Tasar yarn production was expanded under the special SGSY project in Jharkhand and Bihar, and with the assistance of the sericulture department and NABARD in Raigarh. The current production capacity of reeled yarn is 8.08 ton and spun yarn is 1.2 ton a year. The yarn produced by groups is partly converted into fabric and partly sold directly to fabric manufacturers. Women earn Rs 7,000 to Rs 8,000 from this activity from about 250 days' work (excluding the fanning season).

Despite impressive growth of families engaged in this activity, the year's targets were not reached. The major factors were delay in release of funds for the activity and delay in supply of reeling machines. Further, defective machines were supplied and those had to be replaced or repaired. The matter has been flagged with the CSB, which certifies machines produced by accredited fabricators. During the year we have taken an initiative to improve the technical design of the tasar spinning and reeling machines with help of IIT, Kharagpur. The prototype is ready and pilot testing is being done. We expect to have a functioning model for fabrication and use in a year.

A Tasar Marketing Unit in PRADAN presently markets yarn as well as fabric. We plan to set up a Producers' Company under the Companies Act to be owned by Mutually Benefiting Trusts (MBT) at the producer group level to manage the tasar processing enterprise, including marketing. Business plans and by-laws for both the entities have been developed and incorporation would be done next year.

Women process tasar cocoons into yarn in a central production facility, located in the neighbourhood of a cluster of hamlets where the women live. Centralised, rather than home based, production is necessary as there is no electric supply in the project villages and electricity to operate the machines has to be generated locally. Also, quality considerations require that cocoons are boiled together and are used within a day after boiling. It is also easier to provide assistance in machine maintenance in a central facility. As most women engaged in this activity are young and have small children, the production facilities designed by PRADAN and constructed under the Special SGSY project have been provided with space for a crèche and a playroom for the children. Arrangements have been worked out with Mobile Crèche to train women locally to run the crèche.

Trials in rearing of Eri silk in Jharkhand under the SGSY special project were successful and have generated widespread interest among poor women. Castor plantations were raised this year on 54 ha and 870 kg raw silk was produced during the trial phase. Cocoons are bought back by CSB. The model being proposed is one of small backyard castor plantations to feed three to five rearing cycles a year.

The mulberry sericulture pilot taken up by the Kesla team a year ago has also successfully demonstrated the viability of this activity in this "non-mulberry" region. The State Sericulture

Department is supporting the activity and buys back cocoons. Rearers earned on an average Rs 10,000 from mulberry sericulture.

Several teams this year took up vermi-composting this year. Many farmers used the compost in paddy and vegetable cultivation and have reported outstanding results, including improvements in keeping quality of vegetables grown organically using vermi-compost. In many cases the early adopters on their own promoted the activity by training others to create a market for the excess worms from their farm.

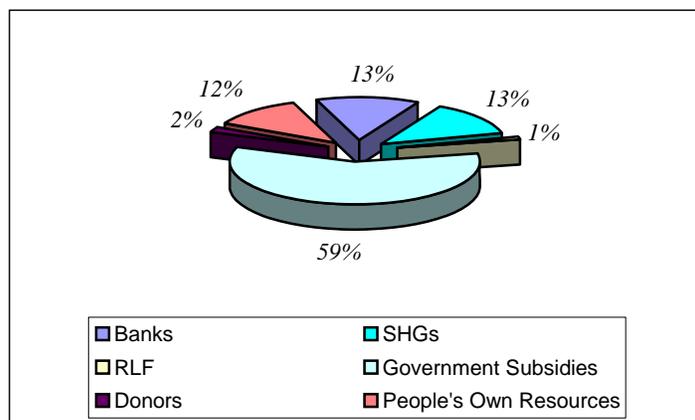
Project teams promoted 120 service providers across all micro-enterprises.

Resource Mobilisation

We continued with the policy of leveraging development finances locally as far as possible. Credit from own savings in SHGs itself is now a significant resource and it is used for investments in livelihood activities and assets as well as to meet contingencies. Loans leveraged by SHGs from commercial banks are another significant source of development finance, as is people’s contribution by way of unpaid labour for asset creation. Government contribution for livelihood investments, either through PRADAN or received by people’s group’s directly is the largest source of development finance. These together amounted to approximately Rs 340 million this year. Besides, PRADAN mobilised approximately Rs 5 million towards training of service providers and SHG members and about Rs 35 million towards providing development support to the communities we work with.

Of the resources leveraged this year, about Rs 227 million was towards investments in various livelihood programmes promoted by PRADAN teams, excluding funds used for organizing and training the people. Details are presented in **Table 9**. Almost 60% of the programme funds were raised from various government programmes.

Major sources of development finance from government were various Central schemes, such as SGSY, RSVY, ITDA, NWDP, Special Central Assistance for Tribal Development; State schemes like the Antvasai Scheme in Chattisgarh; donor aided State programmes such as DPIP (MP and Rajasthan) and JTDA (Jharkhand); specific projects from the Central (special SGSY) and State Governments (poultry, agriculture, lac and dairy in Jharkhand). Resource mobilisation was hampered to an extent due to the General Elections followed by the elections in Jharkhand where PRADAN has a large presence.



We have been more successful (compared to a year ago) in mobilising credit from banks –competition from ICICI, policy pressure and the visible results of PRADAN’s livelihood projects have contributed to varying degrees. Overall, bank credit still is unsatisfactory.

The agreement with ICICI to channelise credit to SHGs became operational in April this year. Though only Rs 7.2 million was disbursed, this facility has in many cases spurred local bank branches to extend credit. Repayment so far has been 100 percent.

Table 9: Summary of funds mobilised for livelihood investments, Rs lakh

Programme	Total	Funds Mobilised, Source-wise						2003-04
		Bank Credit	SHG Credit	Revolving Funds	From Government	From Donors	People's Contribution	
Agriculture	221	39.15	65.25	3.32	22.82	4.40	86.53	242
Forest-based	374	11.55	3.99	1.00	322.16	0.71	34.61	242
Livestock	688	176.97	120.33	0.81	324.63	0.72	64.99	235
Micro enterprises	542	72.55	106.80	16.99	301.82	7.51	35.89	296
Land & Water	446	0.63	0.26	4.33	362.68	30.76	46.89	231
Total	2,271	301	297	26	1,334	44	269	1,246

PRADAN's yearly budget to meet development support, programme management, HRD, research and development and administration is now of the order of Rs 80 million and grants at that level tend to be highly structured, with complex reporting requirements. Consequently, funding to meet these costs is becoming increasingly complex.

Human Resource Development

Expanding the intake of young professional remains the main challenge in HRD. Even allowing for 10 to 15 percent turnover, we need about 25 new people every year for replacements. Almost all teams are presently stretched to their limits. Our present plans call for induction of 60-75 persons per year to meet the requirement of staff for replacements and to allow for 20 to 25 percent expansion. **Table 10** gives a summary of human resources in PRADAN at the end of the year.

Table 10: Human Resources in PRADAN

Particulars	As on March 31, 2004			As on Mach 31, 2005		
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
Executives	132	100	32	158	120	38
Assistants	61	56	5	61	55	6
Apprentices	63	49	14	42	33	9
Total	256	205	51	261	208	53

A three-phase programme on livelihood promotion for experienced professional staff was developed and piloted this year. The initial feedback has been positive and we plan to extend it to all executives with three years' experience. **Table 11** summaries the learning events conducted centrally by the HRD Unit this year.

A formal system for performance review was introduced this year. We have reviewed the experience and plan to modify it.

The Apprenticeship programme in its current form completed 10 years this year. During these 10 years, 701 professionals joined the programme, of which 268 graduated as executives. An external review of the programme has been commissioned and would be completed early next year. The review would critique the assumptions, structure and content of the programme and would aid future developments.

Table 11: Central learning events

For Apprentices		For Executives	
Training Programme	Participants	Training Programmes	Participants
PAS - I	73	Writeshop to develop activity Handbooks	35
PAS - II	52		
PAS - III	66		
Orientation & Village Study	56	Gender & Sustainable Development	28
SHG Thematic Training	56	Livelihoods Promotion Ph I	24
Village Study & PRA Workshop	35	Livelihoods Promotion Ph II	22

Research, documentation and communication

The purpose of the Research and Resource Centre is to support project teams by documenting experience, conducting research to unravel hurdles to effective practice, developing methodologies, setting systems for expansion of matured projects and programmes, and effectively communicating with stakeholders.

The first round of study on Living Standards Measurement by Dr Rohini Somanathan (ISI, Delhi and the University of Michigan) and Dr Jean Marie Balland (the University of Namur, Belgium) has been completed and data entry is in progress. This longitudinal study will be taken up every year for another four years.

The Data and Research Unit at the Head Office has been set up.

A Write Shop was conducted this year to develop handbooks on various livelihood activities being promoted by PRADAN. The Write Shop helped individuals anchoring the various programmes to capture the experience, delineate best practices and prepare handbooks for practitioners. Handbooks on tasar, irrigated agriculture, agriculture extension and poultry are ready and will be published in the next year.

During this period, NewsReach continued to be produced. Attempts have been made to make it self-financing by raising subscriptions.

Internal Systems

The Internal Audit procedure initiated a year ago is now fully operational. The IA team visits all the teams twice a year to conduct detailed audit. The Windows based computerized accounting package commissioned last year has been functioning well and is of great help in dealing with the varied and complex reporting requirements of various funded projects. The task of distributing the software to other NGOs and training the NGO staff has now been completed as per the contract with the donor.

The computerised system to plan and monitor operations has been developed and was piloted in two locations during the year. Some difficulties were experienced on account of the data structure and are being dealt with. We expect the system to be fully operational next year.

Governance

The Governing Board met twice this year and the General Body had one meeting. Mr. Vijay Mahajan was co-opted on the Board for a three year term upon completing his first term of three years.

We initiated a process to review the way PRADAN is organised. Consultations were carried out internally with all staff and with representatives of key external constituents. The process was facilitated by two experienced organisation development experts and managed by a team of PRADAN staff. The task of analysis and consolidation of data is yet to be completed. The first part of the process looking at spelling out the vision and development task would be completed early next year, after which a task group would design alternative ways of organising to realise those.

ⁱ The “**System of Rice Intensification**”(SRI) was developed in Madagascar by Fr. Henri de Laulanie, SJ. It is being promoted by Association Tefy Saina, a Malagasy NGO with which the Cornell International Institute for Food and Agriculture Development (CIIFAD),USA has been working since 1994. CIIFAD has been instrumental in spreading this idea. The first trials outside Madagascar were in 1999 in China and Indonesia, and now over two dozen countries are involved in experimenting with this methodology. PRADAN too learnt of the technology from CIIFAD.

SRI is a methodology, a set of techniques that increase rice yields dramatically without requiring change in variety of seeds used, or introduction of chemical fertilizers or other inputs. The principles underlying the methodology are that

- While rice survives under flooding conditions, it does not thrive
- Seedlings lose growth potential when transplanted beyond 2 weeks of age
- Trauma to roots of the seedlings needs to be avoided for optimal growth
- Wider spacing helps greater root growth and tillering
- Soil aeration and organic matter create beneficial conditions for plant root growth

The techniques involves

- Transplantation of young seedlings, at the two leaf stage
- Alternate drying and wetting of the field
- Lifting single seedlings while transplanting without damaging the root system
- No flooded irrigation through the vegetative stage
- 1 cm irrigation through the reproductive stage
- Frequent weeding at 7 day intervals for better root development

These practices have the potential to increase rice yield is 18-20 tons per hectare, about 200-300% of existing yields.