



Summary of the Discussion

(November 05, 2019 – November 19, 2019)

Topic of the Discussion:

Is the work of livelihood promoting non-profits relevant to keep the rural youths in the villages and meet their aspirations in today's context?

by Diva Rashmi, Nityananda Dhal and Sahana Mishra

Posted by PRADAN: A consolidation of views and insights shared on the discussion held at Sampark.Net – The Rural Connect

PRADAN has started an on-line knowledge platform called Sampark.net. The platform provides an 'interactive, informative and creative online space' where the members can debate and discuss on specific development issues.

The Discussion Process

The Discussion was posted on the on-line platform Sampark.net on November 05, continued for two weeks and was finally closed on November 19, 2019. For seamless discussion, the discussion was moderated by Diva Rashmi, Nityananda Dhal and Sahana Mishra. At the end of the discussions, the moderators also consolidated the views and insights shared by the respondents.

Summary of Responses

The entire discussion revolved around the necessity to involve with the rural youths of today. It either focused on the strategies to make the work of livelihood promoting non-profits relevant or examples of experiences from the field of engagements.

The concern of the group was that the youths of today's world will definitely migrate. Lack of educational institutions as well as skill building initiatives are the major factors which is responsible for not building the future generation of the rural areas. The youths of today are readily influenced by the globalized world and have been exposed to the technologies of the world. The need to maintain a particular status is so strong that in spite of being unskilled and facing harsh working conditions, the youths still migrate. Rural to urban migration provides a low capital investment based opportunity. This is the option to earn fast money and a salary/ wage greater than what they would earn by being a

farmer or working in rural areas. They aspire for a job in urban centres because it is directly linked to the amount of dignity and respect they are bestowed upon when they visit their home place. Moreover these urban areas provide them a space where caste identities do not play a pivotal role. However this is applicable for males of the rural society. The aspirations of the females are bottled up and migration occurs when they get married. Traditional agricultural practices are considered to be labour intensive and do not cater to the market demands, this is not even seen as a lucrative vocation. Parents also aspire for their children to work in urban area and in this process; the traditional art of cultivation is being lost.

It is not the aspiration of youth which drags them for out migration. But it is also about the basic minimum needs that force them for migration. Fragmentations of land and climate crisis are the other factors which have impacted agriculture sector and thereby round the year food sufficiency of the rural households.

In this scenario, what is important is to start connecting/engaging with the rural youth, discuss with them regarding the possibilities at the village level and start working on it to meet the expectations of the three categories of youth –

- a) the category who might be interested in providing service,
- b) the category who might be interested in enterprises, and
- c) the category who might be interested in jobs outside.

Making agriculture lucrative and drudgery free can attract the rural youth to engage in this sector. This is where role of livelihood promoting non-profits like PRADAN has been thought of. The promotion of APCs and AEs is a successful example of it. This has led to developing systems to do market led synchronized production in order to produce surplus from small land holdings, price realizations at farmer's end, mechanization of agriculture through the use of farm tools and implements, technology like poly-houses, trellis and drip irrigation, etc. Developing and motivating rural youths to be agriculture entrepreneurs in order to provide backward and forward linkages is making cultivation secure and profitable. High value farming and the use of drudgery reducing techniques are the current interventions in which PRADAN is engaged. Programme like Yuvashastra which is facilitated by PRADAN teams ensure jobs for the youths and help youths to realize their potential.

The youths comprise the majority of the population and yet are not the target group of livelihood promoting non-profits at a large scale. Keeping in mind that the need and aspirations of the youths can be multi-dimensional, various strategies have also been shared which can be adopted in future. For the

youths to even decide their career, counselling and guidance mechanism is needed that can also help non-profits to map their concerns, aspirations and opportunities. Depending upon the needs of the community, social entrepreneurs can also be promoted such as Pesusakhis, internet sakhis, grain age entrepreneurs, local transportations, etc. in order to create opportunities. Social entrepreneurs can provide a whole range of services around livelihood value chains, micro- finance, health, education, water and sanitation, transportation, consumer goods, information, entertainment, etc. The women led federations, producer institutions can also employ the youth in various services as well. They can also help to monitor the migrations, understand the working conditions, provide legal backup, and engage with the agents in the migratory channels and anything else to ensure smooth migration. We can also involve or reach out to the skill building and placement initiatives of the government so that the youths get jobs in urban areas without facing discrimination and exploitation. But for these to be realized, the grass-root level professionals should themselves be trained because youths are a part of the society who bears the societal pressure of being the future.

The other side of the story is, even though there is a lot of scope in agriculture to engage a number of youths, this is also true that the sector is getting saturated. The young people are going out but due to lack of education they are not able to get quality jobs. So the non-profits also need to focus on education and life skills of youth in order to make them capable to negotiate and better place.

Responses Received

Till the closing day, 85 comments were received with thanks, from following:

1. Nityanand Dhal
2. Manisha Pradhan
3. Naresh Kumar
4. Diva Rashmi
5. Faizan Jalil
6. Souparno Chatterjee
7. Shiv Sankalp
8. Sudarshan Thakur
9. Heerak Jyoti Mahanta
10. Sahana Mishra
11. Sushmita Dutta
12. Narendranath Damodaran
13. Rabindranath
14. Pawan Kumar
15. Prem Bhaskar
16. Saila Panda
17. Neeraj Joshi
18. Nishu Nishant
19. Fahad Khan
20. Manohar Singh Bhati
21. Sonu Bal
22. Mohini Saha
23. Subodh Verma
24. Deep Shikha
25. Soubhagya Ranjan Ratha

Reference

<https://idronline.org/are-livelihoods-nonprofits-losing-their-relevance/>

Disclaimer

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