

# Adaptive Skilling through Action Research (ASAR) First Confluence



असर  
एक सफर खुशहाल ज़िन्दगी के ओर

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## ● FOREWORD



For any development worker, concerned about the problems facing the planet and the society today, the Adivasi's (used interchangeably with the word indigenous people or tribal) are an inspiration, an ideal. It is of course nobody's case that the Adivasi's are living an ideal life today. I personally would not like to be in an Adivasi shoe right now; yet I idealise the idea of that life. Yes, that is the living paradox we are. Howsoever we refuse to practise; the tribal way of life is what we want to profess. Surrender to nature; consume less, conserve more; co-exist, not compete; respect indigenous knowledge; so on and so forth. The notion of the tribal life world offers the proverbial light at the end of the dark tunnel in which we seem to be in today. Yet for the Adivasi herself, the Adivasi way of life is fantasy. Those who ruled the forests once are outcastes today; those who scaled the vast expanses seem to be out of their depth now. Indigenous experiences, expertise, accomplishments are so not-wanted now. The wave, nay the tsunami, of modern technology, markets, aspirations, and ways of life has drowned out any alternative imaginations of how life can be lived. This analogy is a little cruel because a very

large number of forests and tribal habitations and have actually drowned in the wake of the construction of large dams, hailed as the temples of modern India. It will be no exaggeration to say that the tribal people as a group have paid the maximum price for the building of modern India. About 8% of India's population, they constitute more than 40% of the people displaced by development projects since independence. This has dealt a huge blow to any efforts they could have made to preserve their life style, given that they have no roots. Yet the most devastating upset to the tribal community, I think, came from the setting up of the forest department which in one stroke of pen made these people intruders in their own homes.

That in spite of the organised apathy of the State, the onslaught of the market, and the forces of Sanskritisation, a semblance of the tribal way of life, their languages, culture, festivals, dance forms, indigenous wisdom, traditional skills etc., are still alive, albeit not much kicking, goes to demonstrate the resilience and resoluteness of these people. All is not lost. Thus I think the Adaptive Skilling through Action Research (ASAR) initiative of PRADAN and

APU is quite a timely effort at ensuring that actually all is not lost. In this action research project PRADAN colleagues along with APU faculty work closely with the communities in few tribal villages, in order to see what remains in these villages as behaviours, practices and even memories of the rich past. What all can be redeemed, and rejuvenated? All that was old may not need to be brought back to life, but there could be some valuable pieces, which went out of sight, that could be revived.

This booklet gives us a glimpse of the first year of the action research as consolidated during a two-day event, which was held in Kesla on 12 and 13 of April this year. Interestingly the organisers chose to call the event a confluence as in the confluence of rivers or minds, rather than calling it a workshop or just, meeting. The name suggested a certain sense of fluidity in the process of inquiry. There are only questions and tentativeness of steps ahead. The ASAR is about an imagination of what we think is an ideal way of life, which could be even termed surreal, because the real world around is not anywhere near of what is being imagined. Thus the tentativeness seems to be in tune.

The one and a half days were creatively woven around a set of seemingly random mix of activities songs, dances, presentations, exhibitions, walk-about-s, reflections and panel discussions. The ASAR theme song, so expertly worded and appropriately composed by the organising group was quite an energiser. The *didis* and *dadas* spoke eloquently about their forests, lives in their villages, what they love, what they remember, what they miss. There is regret at things forgotten; there is pride in what remains; there is excitement at the prospects of rebuilding what seems to be slipping away. There is involvement by everyone in the villages including school children who are busy creating herbariums of the hundreds of plant species in the forests surrounding the villages and documenting local medicinal practices. The tribal women and men seem to feel quite amused that these outsiders find their traditional way of life of community living, closeness to nature, eating from the trees, worshipping trees and mountains and the sun, singing the hymns of flowers sensible.

For the professionals involved, I think this is a journey of discoveries; a new learning at every

bend. It was indeed a pleasure to listen to presentations on tribal art and culture, farming practices, traditional knowledge, community life, social customs and so on; in short the Adivasi life-world. Yet it is a struggle ahead. What lies ahead? What will emerge from this engagement? How much of the new development order do we embrace and how much of the old do we let go? One major instance that was noted was that the old order in the villages is strongly guided by the construct of patriarchy. Are we okay with the rule of patriarchy? Questions of this kind are plenty. It is also a journey for us in self-exploration. How much do we believe in what we say are all the advice in shunning modernisation processes, for the adivasis? What are our efforts in changing our own lives? Thus I found this project, not as something that has definite contours but something that is ever-evolving, where small discoveries lead to larger confusions.

Temba Oraon, a researcher from Jana Village, said, “Parishram ka phal kewal meetha hi nahi, khatta bhi hota hai, aur khatta bhi hume achha lagta hai” (the fruits of labour do not only taste sweet, these are sour also, and we like sour too). His comments summarise the spirit of the Action Research.

Wishing the project, the villagers, the women and men and all the PRADAN and APU colleagues all the best.

- **D. Narendranath,**  
Executive Director, PRADAN



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\* Articles in this booklet were written based on the experience of the first year of the ongoing Action Research. Hence these are work in progress.

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## ● RESEARCH TEAM

The action research is being conducted in three villages viz. Chataniha (Singrauli district) and Ghughri (Dindori district), Madhya Pradesh; Jana (Gumla district), Jharkhand. The villagers from these three villages are actively engaged in the research.

Apart from the research team, ASAR is guided by a pool of resource persons from Azim Premji University and PRADAN.

### **Research team:**

Villagers of Chataniha and Ghughri (Madhya Pradesh); Jana (Jharkhand)

Seema Purushothaman, Sheetal Patil, Sujit Sinha from Azim Premji University

Bibhubanta Barad, Dibyendu Chaudhuri, Jostine A., Jyotsana Jaiswal, Parijat Ghosh, Prashant Sharma, Satish Patnaik, Saurabh Singh, Suhasini Bali from Pradan

### **Guidance from:**

Ashok Sircar from Azim Premji University

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## ● GLIMPSES FROM THE CONFLUENCE

### Day 1:



The confluence was inaugurated by Shyamkali Bai, Seema Purushothaman and Manas Satpathy on April 12, 2019. Three of them shared their respective views on the importance of this Confluence. Shyamkali shared why the confluence was important for

them. Seema shared the importance of development and sustainability going hand-in-hand and why the meaning of development was needed to be different for different context. Manas spoke about the relevance of ASAR in PRADAN. He shared how market driven agriculture was



bringing more knowledge and technologies to the farmers but it was also taking them away from their traditional



knowledge, skills and control over input.

The researchers of Jana Village presented their traditional song. This song is about their tribal life which is interwoven with their relation with the ecosystem. They also shared that the tune for each song changes with season and further added that these songs are their means to communicate with each other and nature too.



The next presentation was from PRADAN, by Dibyendu and Parijat. They focused on the basic premises of Adaptive Skilling through Action Research (ASAR) which comprises of the following questions -

- Can there be balance between modern practices (including technology) and ecological sustainability?
- Is it possible to have individual progress without compromising collective well-being?
- Can we blend modern education and inter generational traditional knowledge for better living?

This presentation was further substantiated by Seema and Satish. They shared the evolution of the ASAR and the processes followed in the first year. They shared how the research team had arrived at the research questions. The main challenge was to measure the impact and extent of deskilling. The farmers have gradually forgotten their age-old knowledge of farm-forest ecosystem and started following the package of practice prescribed by the extension workers and seed-fertiliser-pesticide companies and input traders. This phenomenon of losing the evaluative social process in agriculture is known as deskilling. Deskilling is considered as one

of the major contributor for younger generation not being interested in farming. Retrieving some effective elements from it and blending it with adaptive skilling means people will examine everything that comes to them, new or their traditional practices, and adapt the relevant ones according to their present context.

For the next phase, they emphasised that, it would be important to understand the meaning of 'Khushaal Zindagi' from the lens of the villagers. This will enable the villagers to question all the interventions taking place in their life in the name of development. And also be critical about their own practices and even their aspirations which at times may be self contradictory .

Next it was Prashant who shared his understanding about Tribal Life World through Gondi Art and Culture depicting various dimensions such as:



- Sustainable uses of resources
- Everlasting relationship with jungle/forest
- Collective ethos
- Relationship with various flora and fauna
- Religious beliefs

He found that the rich narration of these paintings, stories and the messages were rapidly disappearing from the villages. The younger generations would never get the opportunity to learn from them and live life in harmony with their agro-ecology. But the dichotomy was that though the Gondi art and culture were losing its importance in tribal day to day life but they are in high demand in elite society and therefore heavily commercialised. Afterwards Satish and Parijat shared that the journey towards a Khushaal Zindagi, as defined by

the indigenous people was rather different from the standardised definitions of well being. It is essential to have a collective approach towards adaptive skilling. It would not only encourage the best practices but also question the unquestionable taboos, the superstitions. They also mentioned that adaptive skilling must be goal centric with the focus lying in the villagers' idea of good life. According to them, it must be futuristic and it should reinforce the collective ethos which may involve striving for individual excellence as well as evade certain needless luxuries for the betterment of community and environment. The main spirit is to strengthen the collective ethos though the process somewhere may involve certain personal betterment or achievement.

### Walk through Chataniha village

People from Jharna-Ghugri sang a song they had composed about what all things they are losing from their life and the impact of that.



Suhasini explained the extent of de-skilling that has happened to these tribal communities over time. Market led development had wiped out various traditional skills that has been acquired by these communities through various experimentation in their natural world. She added that this de-skilling has happened in areas of knowledge and wisdom, collectivism, and also regarding skills in traditional agriculture, especially the practices of seeds and fertilizers.





Sheetal and Saheb presented the baseline data from three villages. The methodologies were household interviews and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). Data and information were collected on dimensions such as social infrastructure, food sufficiency, natural resources and different livelihood activities. Based on the feedback received from the village researchers and other participants they also shared the gaps and areas to improve the baseline data.

### **Celebrating traditional food and culture:**

All the meals, beverages and snacks served in the confluence were inspired by the traditional cuisine of the three areas. As this research was also about 'skilling', villagers taught others to make own plates and bowls from Siyali (*Phanera vahlii*) leaves. All the participants also enjoyed the songs and dance stemming out of the traditional village life-world.

### **Day 2:**

Dibyendu started the day by summarising first day's insights.

Next Sujit and Seema took this discussion further and talked about the hopes with ASAR.

Sujit showed his concern about the future

generation, the children and the youth.

The present education system is rooted in a system and syllabus that is uniform everywhere. This does not provide scope for any uniqueness of location or ethnicity to contextualize the learning and therefore, children do not have any knowledge about their village, tradition, history and, above all, skills required to live there. Thus, they don't feel connected to their place even. Their quest for good life is very much influenced by the standards of western countries and becomes a meaningless imitation of it. The Rural world is trying to

become mini urban centres which has been proved fatal and useless. Thus education has to stem from life, with all its uniqueness. Gandhi's new education had always talked of such kind of grounded education. Children and youth of these villages should know about their agro-ecology, language, resources and art.

Seema said that real farmers would introspect, practice and question their techniques and become 'scientists'/resources that will help transform the dream of Khushal Zindagi into reality.

Jostine presented the journey from Individual Enterprise to Collective Enterprise.

### **Theme: Evolving areas for deeper explorations**

Bibhu shared how the traditional governance systems in Jana village gradually collapsed with the rise of nation state and modernity. Bibhu's findings also revealed how the destruction of the traditional ways of governance had led to the rise of individualistic mind-sets.

Jyotsna Jaiswal, shared how working with tribal communities in remote rural areas had helped PRADAN people to introspect what was the real purpose of their engagement.

## 'Ways ahead'

Next was a panel discussion that was facilitated by Sujit for getting feedback from those who were not



part of ASAR journey on a regular basis. The panel members comprised of Mohan Bhai from Mendha Lekha, Naren, Manas and Rajeev from PRADAN, Imran from Ambedkar University Delhi and Manu Mathai from Azim Premji University. Mohan Bhai reinforced that the power of deciding the right and wrong for the villagers should rest with them. In his words, "Money cannot buy everything. Self-reliance, self-respect and liberty are bigger than money". He suggested that the ASAR team should strive for moving towards self-sustaining village governance system.

Naren hinted at the challenge in maintaining the right balance between 'struggle' and 'creation' as well as 'traditional' and 'modern' / 'contemporary'. He said that the soul of the community could be composite, but the leadership for the desired transformation should come from women. Talking about the future of this research and its findings he mentioned, "It will take substantial time to bring these changes in the society. He emphasised that this research would need more financial support to continue with same energy and

consistent output." He also noted that this research required proper documentation at every stage so that it could be shared among the larger public.

Manu told that the donor community should be further groomed to support the right kind of development process, even if that meant disturbing the existing socio-political status quo. He also cautioned about the onus or control over the research and emphasized that it should remain with the community and not with PRADAN and APU.

Rajeev mentioned that the co-learning opportunity by means of exposure to other villages was always helpful for communities. He said that keeping focus on collective interest would be most crucial. For him, ASAR was an eye opening experience. He shared that this new level of engagement with the community must be replicated in other teams of PRADAN as well.

According to Manas, development of a rural area certainly depends on how inclusive their systems are, how much they are listening to their own wisdom and how much they care for their most vulnerable?.

Imran mentioned that it was needed to evolve a common vocabulary/knowledge to share these alternate models of development like ASAR. He told that the community should learn to question before adapting anything and this should be a continuous process.

The Confluence ended with everyone together singing the ASAR song.



# Introduction to ASAR

Ashok Sircar, Dibyendu Chaudhuri, Parijat Ghosh

Ever since modernisation became the hallmark of human progress, societies across the world have undergone massive transformations in the nature of their economies, social organisations, education and skills, values and politics. While these transformations have tried to liberate human beings and communities from many bondages, deprivations and inequalities the transformations generated their own inequalities and exclusions in terms of income, assets, access, freedom, choice and opportunities. Further, power, knowledge and authority remained concentrated in fewer and fewer hands, and the vast majority of people started turning into labourers devoid of agency, compelled to sell their labour power in a compromising way. But, unfortunately, modernisation and its associated transformations have impacted the entire gamut of this world and human civilization, also in a very negative way. Modernisation, in due course, has resulted in soil degradation, desertification, and rise in ocean temperature, ocean acidification, pollution, sweet water depletion, land change and others. These in turn, have severely affected bio-diversity, indigenous population, cultural diversity, wild life, and people at the margins. Humanity/civilization has reached a point where modernisation is today facing deep theoretical as well as experiential crises. The theoretical crisis lies in the imagination of the nature of human being and communities. In one hand the free individual maximises her/his freedom and choice in any which way, and on other hand the community essentially works for private freedom. In other terms it is the conflict between human beings and communities, that strive to strike a balance between private freedom and larger collective well-being compatible with what the earth system can tolerate and bear. The experiential crises manifest

itself in many ways; system of production and exchange, location of knowledge, power and authorities, nature of technologies. Currently, the familiar systems are highly dehumanising,



exclusionary, ecologically incompatible, and exploitative.

Social development interventions for long years have tried to address many inequalities with an attempt to maximising individual income, productivity, opportunities, and access. All these have followed the philosophy of modernisation. While many of the aims of modernisation have been achieved, and more will be achieved in due course, most of the social development interventions do not address the crises which modernisation is facing at a global or local level.

ASAR (Adaptive Skilling through Action Research) is conceived in this context. It searches for an alternate paradigm in which human agency, knowledge and competencies are nurtured towards a way of life that values individual dignity and freedom but locate them in the larger collective



well-being of a community, compatible with the given earth system. ASAR is an action research project which attempts to intervene in areas of economic, social, cultural and ecological works individuals and communities do, in such a way so as to build a sense of larger well-being while respecting individual dignity and difference. The actual interventions serve two purposes; one to change the ways things are done, but more importantly change the ways individual and collective human mind works about their individual being, aspirations, and collective good.

ASAR is constructed on the principle of co-creating knowledge for collective social action. It has Faculty from Azim Premji University, PRADAN's development practitioners and members of the local Adivasi communities as co-researchers. And here research is about creating a process of collective imagination, alternate action, gaining and synthesizing the knowledge obtained through action, and codifying the knowledge for the larger community. ASAR is being implemented in Adivasi communities of Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh. Why Adivasi communities? There are multiple critical reasons for this choice. Since this is a purposive action research project, it was decided to do it where some of the ground conditions are conducive on which further actions can be built. For example, Adivasis are a relatively homogenous community with much stronger social bonds among them than many other rural communities. Economic and social inequalities and social exclusions are generally much less among the Adivasis. Much of their collective and individual way of life, despite many changes, are still founded on sound ecological principles. Adivasis in these

areas still use a good amount of their traditional knowledge in organising their way of life; their knowledge system and their ways of life are intricately connected. At the same time, Adivasis can adopt modern technologies of production, communication, housing, and healthcare, etc. quite fast, but are losing their skills, knowledge, ways of organising collective life, and specifically their socio-ecological beliefs and practices. This presents a scenario, where it's possible to still reverse the trend and rebuild their collective life.

ASAR has completed a little more than a year. During this time, the works have unfolded at two levels; one in which the researchers

facilitated multiple social processes of collective reflection and action on what constitutes good life or Khushhaal Zindagi. At the second level, the researchers have undergone a journey of how to search for meanings in the elements of Khushhaal Zindagi, in the life of the individuals, families, women collectives, and the village as a greater collective, and what to make of these meanings in building an alternative narrative. Do these new meanings make a credible alternative narrative, can these individuals and collectives articulate these alternatives for their peers in similar other villages? Also the researchers are labouring on codifying the process of change and the outcomes for larger dissemination. They are facing a challenge in vocabulary; the vocabulary, in which the Adivasis search and make meanings of their social processes and thinking are inherently different from the elite vocabulary of well-being, freedom, liberty and equality. The process continues and will expectedly unfold to contribute to the growing literature and experience of searching new ways of organising human societies, and what we can learn from them.



# Tribal Society

## Collective Way of Co-existence

Jostine A.



With advent of industrial mode of development driven by market and welfare state this marginalisation has attained a new form triggering individualisation in the tribal societies which in turn weakened their values on collective-existence. The exploitative and extractive ways of such development in turn hinder the fraternity and ecology of fragile socio-ecological systems.

The impact of such processes can be seen in crumbling village societies marred with coerced migration and de-skilled tribal farmers.

Hunting and gathering were humanity's first successful adaptations. Soon these hunter-gatherers adapted to do this in a collective way and started living in communities. During the neo-lithic age when the hunter-gatherers started settling down as first farmers and pastoralists this pattern of settling as communities gained momentum. They made laws, languages and their culture evolved around their adaptations and practices which helped these people to adapt, thrive and survive.

Some of the important features of the traditional societies are their social structures, value systems and their emphasis on commons. The village society was given more importance than the individual. Their collective co-existence was a mode of survival. They needed each other for survival in the dense forests and to protect themselves from other belligerent communities. So by staying in a collective often provided an individual a sense of security.

What can be the way out from this scenario?. Within an omnipresent aggressive market based economy, can there be a system of reciprocation within a community?

In this article, I am trying to elicit such attempts made by tribal communities from three villages in Central-India (in Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand states). This article is a part of the Adaptive Skilling through Action Research (ASAR), which is a joint research initiative of PRADAN, Azim Premji University and the villagers from the three villages; Jana, Chataniha and Ghughri.

Collective ethos existing in the tradition of Gond and Oraon communities in Jana, Ghughri and Chataniha:

Gond and Oraon are the major tribes in these three villages. Like most of the tribal societies in India and elsewhere, these tribes also believed in collective co-existence. It helped the Gonds to survive in the harsh hills of the Deccan plateau and Oraons to settle down in the Chhotanagpur region along with the Mundas and Santhals.

Jana is a village in Gumla district in Jharkhand. The majority of the population in Jana belongs to Oraon tribe. Many aspects of Oraon culture are still retained by the community. The community is pretty homogenous. Ghughri is in the Amarpur block of Dindori district in Madhya Pradesh. Majority of the population in this village belongs to Gond tribe. Similar to Jana, lot of aspects of Gond culture can still be traced here. The third village Chataniha is situated in Deosar Block of Singrauli district in Madhya Pradesh. Unlike the other two villages, the community in Chataniha is heterogeneous with people from more than ten castes. However, the major chunk of the population belongs to Gond tribe. The Gond people in Chataniha have few reminiscences of their culture left with them. Just like Bourdieu puts it, culture is changing in all three villages but in different ways as the condition and the conditioning have been different in all these three locations.

Now let's take a glimpse of some of the collective ways of co-existence that used to be there in these villages. There exists a traditional gramsabha in Jana, similar to most of the Oraon villages in the Chhotanagpur region. This gramsabha is more like a 'Jati panchayat' and is different from the gramsabhas constituted under the PESA Act. The traditional gramsabha mainly constitutes the village elders and is headed by a 'Bhagat'. It is a platform where village elders came together to discuss and mitigate various issues concerning their village. People also used this as a platform for conflict resolutions. This also is a symbol of tribal collectiveness; where in which the community came together to find solutions for their problems and to impart their traditional knowledge to the coming generations. This gramsabha helped the younger generation to learn more about the diverse ecosystem and the wisdom that their elders have acquired through

their active experimentation.

The first school in Jana was constructed through the intervention of this gramsabha. The kaccha building was built through the 'shramdaan' of the villagers. Everybody contributed to its construction and its smooth running. This gramsabha also motivated people to come together to build wells and other water harvesting structures in their village. They banned consumption of liquor in their village, and those who broke this rule needed to submit a fine to the gramsabha. The villagers even had a grain bank initiated through this gramsabhato combat unseen emergencies. This is a proof of the collective ethos that exists among the Oraons and how it had helped them coexist together. They also used to come together to do some part of agriculture collectively. From the time of seed sowing to harvesting everyone in the village came together. After the day's labour they used to feast together. The Gonds in Ghughri also have similar stories of collective ethos to narrate. Just like the traditional gramsabha in Jana, Ghughri also had a platform in which the village elders used to come together to find constructive solutions and resolve conflicts. In the Gond villages of the Mahakausal region of Madhya Pradesh (of which Ghughri is a part) it's the 'Mukaddam' who acts as the head of the village gramsabha. In Ghughri, the villagers came together to build a road to the temple shrine of the village through shramdaan. They also used to do collective harvesting like Jana.

The history of Gond in Chataniha (and Deosar region) is, probably, very different from that of Oraons at Jana and Gonds at Ghughri (even though they belong to the same tribe). Most of the people in Chataniha came in search of land and resources as they had been displaced after the construction of the Rihand dam. The main aim of the community in Chataniha, was to own a piece of land for themselves. So they settled down in the hillocks far away from each other and started cultivating the land they could chisel out from the forest. So, there are no such traditional village collectives existing in Chataniha. Among the Gonds, they have a Mukhiya but his power is very limited. Although

he is the mukhiya of all the Gonds in the village, mostly the people from his own gotra give him importance. But he used to be approached for conflict resolutions. There are a few wells in Chataniha that was made by the collective efforts of the community. Earlier even to build houses, especially the roof, the villagers used to come together. During the festival of Ekadashi, traditional Shaila and Karma used to be performed and the entire village used to participate. Ekadashi is now taken over by Diwali celebrations.

These are some of the ways with which these tribes celebrated their collective ethos. There were social institutions, value systems and cultural practices engrained in these societies keeping the village society in focus. But this was not to remain forever. As time passed, the elements of development reached the inner most pockets of tribal India exposing these communities to market and individualisation. Various developmental agencies as well as the welfare state with its policies also made these communities dependent on them.

### **Collectivisation to Individualisation reasons and impact**

One of the important reasons for this shift from collectivisation to individualisation can be attributed to colonial modernity and the exposure to market. Market focuses on individual wage and profit rather than the collective well-being. Similarly modernisation approach focuses on economic specialization that revolves around individual property rights and wealth making. Individualisation in tribal society is essential for global capital to flourish. It will be easy for displacing the tribes for minerals and so on if they are not collectivised. It becomes easy to make them part of cheap labour force which is essential for the global capital. This has led to more privatisation (individualisation) - especially by distributing the property rights to the individuals by dividing the commons. (Platteau, 2000). In other words modernisation focuses on individual more while traditional society's emphasis is on collectiveness. If we take a look at the journey of Jana, Ghughria and Chataniha we can see

evidences of how these theories have played out in ground. Once the tribals in the central Indian Plateau started practicing agriculture, it was considered as a collective enterprise of the community. From there, the focus shifted to families and all the family members would do their traditional farming together - sharing the harvest, but as they started getting separated, agriculture activities became more of an individual entity. This trend is increasing especially in case of Ghughria and Chataniha. The intervention of the State in these communities can also be considered as a factor hampering their collective ethos. The State started providing an alternate measure to whatever the traditional societies were offering. The state has its own laws and policies and systems to maintain law and order. Slowly these started occupying the traditional spaces and started to provide order and security to these communities. The introduction of State imposed governance systems like PESA and Panchayat slowly wiped out the traditional social systems. The State run schools occupied the traditional schooling systems these communities had. The 'citizenship- approach' of the State brought the individual to focus. From PDS to Ujjwala yojana, most of the government policies focus mainly on the individual than the village society. The various state policies also emphasise on individual property rights of the beneficiaries. E.g. the Agriculture department in Madhya Pradesh distributes seeds and other fertilisers only to patta holders. The social institutions of the tribal societies that upheld the collective ethos in them was seriously affected by the introduction of PESA and Panchayati Raj systems. Although PESA emphasises to give recognition and value to the traditional gramsabhas, it is seldom implemented on the ground. One example is the traditional gramsabha of Jana which has been weakened after the introduction of PESA gramsabha. The government usually provides funds and recognition to PESA and PRI gramsabhas which reduces the importance of these traditional gramsabhas. Moreover when the traditional gramsabhas focussed on the self-sustenance of the village society, the government institutions and policies focus more in making these communities government dependent through

various welfare schemes. In the earlier days, the people in Chataniha used to come together to construct wells and ponds in their draught prone landscape. Now-a-days, they wait for the government to create structures like wells and bunds.

Various external agencies and so-called development practitioners' engagement with these communities, make them aspire for substantial improvements in their standards of living, which in turn deepened their engagement in market-oriented activities. Earlier farming was mainly subsistence and now it has turned into a profit making activity. This has also acted as a catalyst to boost up individualisation. Although many of these organisations promote collectives like self-help groups and federations, it is more of an exclusive collectivisation, in which people from certain class or gender come together. It's not inclusive enough to extend support towards the most vulnerables of the society. Most of these collectives also focus more on the individual well-being than the collective well-being.

Once the existing social institutions got weakened, the value systems and wisdom these institutions once up-held, were also weakened. Turning more individualistic, they became more extractive and exploitative towards the resources they once protected. In Chataniha, landlessness and quest for land-ownership is forcing many tribals to cut down forests and move deeper into the jungles. In Ghughri, once their traditional institutions got weakened, they could not apply their collective wisdom of sustainable harvest of forest but became labour of forest department and followed their instructions of felling trees. This indiscriminate felling led to loss of biodiversity which they could not fathom initially. Market driven agriculture frequently introduces new technologies and inputs. Though it increases production and reduces drudgery, it also robs farmers of their adaptive skills, agro-ecological knowledge and resources. In all three villages, there is an influx of hybrid seeds and fertilisers, slowly wiping out their indigenous seeds which were best suited for the land. Once the state started

promoting this to farmers as beneficiaries, they are getting deskilled into mere unskilled alms-seekers. The impact of these processes can be seen in crumbling village societies marred with coerced migration and de-skilled tribal farmers across India. While tribal societies are the most vulnerable communities in this mess created by modernisation, they alone can lead a way out of this multifaceted crisis, being the last fortress of agro-ecological knowledge and related institutions.

### **ASAR and Collectivisation**

Collective mode of co-existence was an essential and integral part of traditional societies. Adaptive Skilling Action Research (ASAR) is an inclusive co-inquiry into the developmental challenges, in order to bring about ideas and prototypes for sustainably integrating life and livelihoods among the tribal societies. The process requires critical thinking, collective wisdom and collective decision making. Without a collective both of this won't be possible. This makes collectivisation a pre-requisite for an adaptive skilling action research like ASAR. Through the ASAR research few attempts have been made to reverse this process of individualisation in the three study villages. This led to many collective efforts e.g. in successfully de-silting ponds, self-mobilization for community forest rights, tree planting in degraded commons, sharing land, labour and inputs; making an ethno medicinal herbarium etc.

In Chataniha, when the ASAR interactions started we discussed around 'KhushalZindagi'. In which most of their aspirations was about making their village a better place to live. On further deliberations it became clear that in order to achieve their aspirations they have to come together as a collective. But the present generations couldn't recall anything that they have done collectively as a village and chalked out various activities that will help them strengthen their collective ethos.

ASAR interactions made villagers think towards overcoming their issues like water scarcity, problems of cultivation in undulating terrain and high labour

cost by collective action. The villagers in Birchiwa hamlet decided to desilt a pond to address the grave water scarcity of the village in summers. In the beginning, only 8 women turned up and as days passed more villagers joined and their number went up to 28. The desilted sand was used to make nursery beds for vegetable cultivation. In three hamlets, 10-12 families each came together to work towards raising combined vegetable nursery. They identified an appropriate piece of land for the purpose belonging to one of them and pooled seeds and labour for land preparation and watering. Seedlings sharing happened without any conflicts. Around 30 people in Birchiwa and Nagora hamlets shared the labour for harvesting paddy in their lands, last Kharif. In Nagora hamlet, around 10 landless people planted potato together in the land belonging to one of their neighbours, sharing seeds, inputs, water and labour. Now they have started a grain bank hamlet wise. SHGs for men and youth were formed for the first time, for planning and executing collective actions.

In Jana, villagers decided to dig an open well for community's drinking requirements. The community members came together and completed the well. Jana villagers also recognized the importance of making an ethno medicinal herbarium. There were only few people left in the village with traditional ethno medicinal knowledge and the villagers realised the importance of collating it since the younger generations are unaware of it. The making of ethno-medicinal herbarium helped in preserving the collective wisdom of the traditional societies. After the exposure to Mendha Lekha, the community started discussing about applying for community forest rights. They revived their traditional gram sabha with new vigour to hasten the process. The new gram sabha saw the participation of men, women and the youth of the village. The villagers even started a 'gram-kosh' to mobilise resources needed in this process. The CFR application of Jana village was submitted in Gumla district in February, 2019.

In Ghughri, the collective actions started with desilting of small ponds. In this activity also, men, women and children came forward to rejuvenate their water resources. The community also took up activities such as collective plantations of bamboo and drum sticks in private as well as common lands. Another activity taken up by the people in Ghughri is to prepare a bio diversity register. This activity was done collectively by the villagers along with children.

All these collective actions in these three villages, along with participation of young, old as well as men and women gave an impression of a movement towards thinking collectively while acting individually and collectively.

Processes of resistive actions (joint journey)  
These actions made them realise that their destinies are intertwined; they need each other to move forward; and these needed to bring back to the focus. The villagers already knew this but once we started deliberating regarding 'Khushaal Zindagi' it came up more profoundly. The villagers from all three villages agreed that until and unless they were striving together it would be impossible to strive for good life.

The next process was to identify the problems they were facing and how those could be solved together. They identified the areas like solving water crisis, protecting the forest, reviving the traditional gram sabha etc. A small visioning exercise was conducted and as a group, small activities were planned. The main objective of these activities was to bring back a sense of collectiveness to the community. Various activities like pond de-silting, collective farming, community forest rights etc. were planned. Existing skill-sets to solve the identified problems was discussed. An exposure to Mendha Lekha was conducted to bring in new possibilities and ideas. Various activities like pond de-silting didn't require much external help as the community already had the skill. But certain activities like the claim for community forest rights required external help and guidance.



loss since they were deprived of their wages which they would have otherwise earned. Collective way of doing agriculture was successful in another hamlet where in the landless people decided to do farming collectively in a common piece of land. Simply romanticising the idea of collectivisation didn't work out in the initial phase. People came together as a collective for initiatives which they believed required lot of time and energy and which is not possible to do by themselves. For example, for pond-desilting everybody came forward since they knew it won't be possible otherwise. The idea of collective potato farming was rejected by the landed Gonds. They had land and access to water and doing it collectively would mean putting in extra effort for some of them. We initiated this idea of collective Mahua nursery- which was also rejected by the Gonds stating that they already have the required skills and can do it by themselves.

#### Conclusion:

Similar to the earlier times collectivisation provides security for the tribal societies even today. Earlier it may be against another warring tribe or the dense forest itself but now this way of living can empower them to adapt and cope up in this transition towards modernity. It can provide them with the required critical thinking and the wisdom to make the right decisions best suitable for them. Another key reason to bring back collectivisation and community actions is because the common resources available to the people are limited and it needs to be shared among them. Most of the tribal societies in central Indian plateau have settled down as small marginal farmers with limited resources. Lack of resources and the meagre income from agriculture has coerced these communities to migrate out to the cities doing petty jobs. Proper management of the existing resources can be one way out from this dilemma which is best possible through collectivisation and community actions. Through ASAR, the communities in these three villages are exploring to integrate and adapt their tribal life and livelihoods.

What worked and what didn't?

For collective actions to work out the individual should be able to articulate some profit out of the actions they are doing. In Chataniha, people came together for pond-desilting since everybody was benefitting from that pond. There are other ponds in the village which could have also been desilted. The community didn't show much interest in desilting those since very few people would have benefitted from that process. Similarly for CFR, there is an assurance to the people of Jana that once they acquire the right to their forest, everybody will be benefitted in one way or the other.

Another aspect that became clear through these attempts was that there should be some amount of homogeneity within the community. The collective harvesting that was initiated in Chataniha didn't become a success as there was lot of landless women in the community. For the landless women being a part of the harvesting process was actually a

# Exploring The Idea Of Good Life In Practice

**Parijat Ghosh, Satish Patnaik**

Every society has notions of good life and it differs from person to person. The notion of good life needs to be understood at the personal level and then at the collective level which starts from families then to communities, and to larger societies. Further, the notions are contingent upon social, political, economic and ecological contexts; Individuals and collectivities in a largely foraging society, an agrarian society, and an industrial society widely differ in their imaginations of the constituents of good life. Further, the imaginations differ widely among men and women, Hindus and Muslims and Buddhists, Dalits and Adivasis, a child and an old person. Culture, religion, ethnicity, gender, age are important determinants of the imaginations!

The idea of goodness also differs at another level. Irrespective of any context, there will always be some components named as 'material' and some as 'non material'. While it is relatively easy to understand material aspects, non-material aspects of the goodness can be of multiple types--- 'social', 'moral', 'emotional', 'spiritual', etc. Irrespective of contexts or other variants such as culture, gender, age and religion individuals and collectives are always found to have some sense of the moral good, although it may differ from person to person, communities to communities. Same is true for the social, emotional and spiritual goodness.

Is it therefore futile to ask the simple question, what a good life is then? Can good life be conceptualised in a given social cultural economic and ecological context? Well there are multiple possible ways to approach the question.

One is to simply ask people individually and collectively in a social ecological context what, they think, good life is for them, and try to arrive at commonalities, and thereby build a consensus. This approach has certain benefits; for example it facilitates people's active participation in the

process, it brings out diversity of thoughts and matters where consensus building would have to be tried. In transitional societies where social practices and beliefs of the past continuously interact with very contemporary social practices and beliefs, the process brings out lively tensions among generations, women and men, and the like. The approach eventually helps to develop deep shared understanding, etc. However, it has shortcomings too. The process may mask many of the practices that the community would not want to discuss in public; often such practices are exploitative to some members of the community. Further, in any such community processes, asymmetry of power always shows up, the voice of the powerful may get more attention.

Another way would be to fix a set of qualities, attributes and characteristics and evaluate a community or a society in those terms to decide what the current state is and how far the journey has to be made towards achieving a good life. Many of these attributes are known through research and experience all over the world, and also some of these attributes are universally accepted; for example, carbon emission of a community, or gender equality. Carbon emission is scientific information whose dangers are well known and scientifically established. Gender equality is a human value that is desirable to be accepted universally. SDGs or MDGs take the above approach. Through a lot of consultations at many levels, a consensus is globally built and then each country, state, district and even smaller collectivities can be evaluated to determine where they stand, and ask them to take the journey.

This method too has certain advantages and disadvantages. The advantages are that there is larger shared understanding in what constitutes goodness, and then everyone can be compared and shown where they belong. The method also makes it very transparent and larger push can be made

where the need is the most. This approach can overcome local inertia-resistance against what is otherwise constituted as good. However, these larger processes are often victims of the same asymmetry of power. The universal agreements reached could be based on certain wider political machinations which can be questioned. For example, SDGs still consider GDP per capita and paid work as two pivotal attributes; both can be questioned for their moral basis.

Irrespective of the two approaches, a few important first principles must be kept in mind. Firstly, any discussion of good life can't be devoid of thinking about future. What may look good today must be evaluated as to what could happen in future, if it continues. E.g. Per capita consumption of water could be one. While today, many 'material' components of what is good in individual and collective life may be based on high consumption of sweet water per person. These material aspects need to be evaluated in its future aspect. Secondly, it's important to recognise that certain beliefs in individual and collective life can be outright derogatory. For example, female foeticide, a belief under which individuals and communities make sure that girl child is not born. Irrespective of the social or any other context, this is unacceptable. Thirdly, by large scale human experience, and scientific research, many social, economic practices, products, and others are clearly identified as harmful for humanity. For example, the use of thin plastics. It's now known from research and human experience that micro-plastics are produced mostly from thin plastics, and micro-plastics are harmful in a number of ways.

While these first principles help to frame the search for good life, and the examples given are fairly straightforward, it may be mentioned that debates may arise when such first principles are applied in practice to specific cases. This is because it may not always be possible to clearly see the future, clearly come to a consensus what is derogatory, or clearly know if something is harmful. This is why a fundamental openness and ability to adapt new knowledge, new perspectives, new skills are key in the search for a good life. One can't start from the proposition that what is good life is already known, all we have to do is the practice it!

Is it possible to chart out a path which attempts to mix both the approaches and also decide certain first principles where consensus can be easily built? What would that entail? Firstly it would entail entering an intense community process in which everyone actively participates, able to express their ideas and opinions about the material, social, moral, and spiritual aspects of good life, at the level of individuals and collectives. Secondly it would entail a process of consensus building among various ideas and opinions. On the other hand, it is important to enter into the discussions on already known attributes, so as to decide how much of those are applicable and acceptable in the given context, and where there is a need to have alternative attributes. SDGs could be a good starting point. Various other indices too can provide relevant start. It is important to discuss these publicly and widely to arrive at an adapted version, which is contextual and on which consensus can be built. And thirdly, discussions must happen to apply the three kinds of first principles to see what all can be identified for rejection or reversal.

### **Adaptive Skilling through Action Research (ASAR)**

ASAR is a collaborative action research between communities at three villages in MP and Jharkhand, PRADAN and Azim Premji University. This starts with an attempt to develop a shared vision of the 'Khushhaal Zindagi' among the villagers in their respective social, cultural, economic, political and ecological context. There are four strands, (a) One has to do with applying the first principles to identify what are clearly to be rejected and where a process of reversal may be necessary; (b) to embed a truly democratic and reflective community process through planned actions by the researchers; (c) to take specific actions towards good life on which general consensus can be reached; (d) to capture the knowledge generated through processes of reflection and action for wider dissemination.

Since the work is ongoing, what is presented here is as things have evolved. Some aspects of the four strands have evolved more than some others, and the second approach is yet to be taken up. Therefore, the presentation may look a bit fragmented and loose, and we are aware of it.

Unfolding of the community processes of collective reflection and action

While discussing about 'Khushhaal Zindagi' the first and foremost was their desire to have solidarity in the village and within the family. They wished that there were more options for livelihoods in the village itself to stop forced migration. They wanted to revive their inter generational knowledge and skills for a non-exploitative relationship with nature; celebrate festivals, traditional art, culture and other forms of knowledge together. They echoed time and again that without strong, participatory and responsible local governance systems this is not possible and for this all three villages initiated monthly village level and hamlet level Gram Sabha, where all adults of the village would participate, discuss and act on moving towards a healthier and happier life together. Though not regular but these meetings have opened up a space for discussion on important matters and after some initial inhibitions attendance and meeting regularity are also increasing.

Going deeper into the discussions about 'Khushhaal Zindagi' in those village level forums, we found multiple narrations under every aspect. For example, they could not visualize their life without agriculture: diverse crop, good harvest and basic irrigation facilities for good agriculture. But women were more concerned about health of the soil, growing healthy food; whereas men spoke about more income from agriculture. In another example they wanted basic infrastructure such as road, electricity, school, primary health center, drinking water; but motorised locomotives, mobiles phones and televisions were demand of younger men; and young women wanted toilet and water facilities at home. Hence the villages who visualise themselves to be an unified force against external influences and internal diversions need to be cognizant of the innate tensions and diversities among these narrations and initiate processes of critical understanding of the reasons for these and pave constructive way outs.

To identify what is to be stopped and what needs reversal:

For the above it is important that all villagers are aware about the inherent contradictions emerged from different narrations. This is still a continuous process but the elixir of the discussions can be seen under the following categories, which ASAR may aim to address.

### **1. Control over choice making:**

The scope of making a choice based on critical introspection for sustainable outcomes for coming generations needs collective processes and emphasises on limits to consumption and greed. However, this may not entirely depend on these internal processes as the decisions are influenced by dominant market and development discourses. For example, people had hardly any control over introduction of mobiles, hybrid seeds, chemical fertilizers-pesticides, private schools and these became an integral part of their life without any critical introspection. ASAR may aim for introducing a process of dynamic engagement around defining, adhering and allowing questions on choices considering both macro and micro understanding of political processes and wisdom of tribal lifeworld. Realising an ability to make choices in a collective manner of 'new' ideas, materials, technologies, conveniences in alignment with their visualization of 'Khushhaal Zindagi' may be the desired outcome of such facilitation.

### **2. Collective existence vs. individual existence**

A village life is based upon interdependency among each other and with nature. The balances of everybody's wellbeing is gradually becoming lopsided with focus on individual gain based upon consumerism and state sponsored programmes. An aspired collective existence as narrated by villagers must be beyond caste, class, gender discriminations and may also emphasise on collective wellbeing. ASAR may pave ways for

- Shifting the focus from individual, family to the tola or village. A shift towards considering most natural resources , other assets, and even children as belonging to the whole “new family”. People are ready to help each other in the time of need.
- All kinds of domination and discrimination based on gender, caste, religion, age, ability getting minimized. Needs of people from all sex, age group, physical capacity are given equal priority. During interaction in the villages, the younger generations are more inclined to individual asset creation without considering the tradeoffs and the older generations though are still inclined to keep their collective ethos intact but are not sure how to stop the process of individualization. Many of them are

enjoying the short term benefits of better house; other facilities like PDS and that's why they are silent and do not object to individualisation. But all of them also raised concern that due to increasing heterogeneity in class, caste, gender, education, access and control of resources, they are now not sure how to instill these values in the future denizens of the village. In this flux ASAR may help in engaging with this dilemma for a while for some tangible principles of improving the socio-ecological systems. Though the monthly gramsabha meetings have started but they have not yet asked the hard questions of boundaries that would recognize individual freedom as well as collective ethos and social security.

### **3. Reaching consensus and taking actions towards good life.**

In the last one year, broadly three sets of actions were facilitated which tested the notion of consensus and collective action for good life. First set of action was collective action for commons. Under collective action, small groups were formed which worked on their common interest and predominantly worked on rejuvenation of commons (excavating farm pond, plantation, etc.). The second sets of actions were collective action for individual benefit (farming together, learning agriculture together) and the third one was about legal initiatives for collective ownership (mostly around forest rights and better control, access and management of forest).

Though these actions were initiated with the whole

village but its adoptions had some innate issues. First, all the villagers though took the decision together but did not participate as the objectives were not clear and many of the actions were not suitable for their individual interests like landless families did not show interest in agriculture, due to some earlier conflict people did not come together for excavation of pond.

Second, many villagers who also participated could not connect with the rationale of such action. There were tangible outcomes like collective nursery, excavated ponds with water, completed CFR documents but people could not reflect and draw lessons from such actions and hence its replication in other aspects of life remained amiss.

Third, with lack of proper discussion on idea of good life and its connection with the actions undertaken, the researchers and villagers (all were taking this uncharted path for the first time) remained tentative and could not do much course correction in between.

#### **What is being learnt**

The idea of good life is not static and goes through constant change. Hence, all the researchers with their multiple narrations can only move towards adaptive skilling after delineating principles of good life, which is sustainable and based upon critical and constructive perspectives. It is of utmost importance that the locus of idea of good life must stem from the village space. This will be a transformational journey for all the researchers.



**"The quest for good life has remained limited to imitation of western countries. And rural have tried to become mini urban centres. The process have led to destruction of our own environment and brought imbalance in ecology"**

***Sujit Sinha, APU***

# Deskilling in Indian villages

Suhasini Bali, Dibyendu Chaudhuri

*The concept of indigenous knowledge has gone through a sort of development cycle which was originally conceived as radical conceptual breakthrough, but all of which seemed to succumb over time to appropriation by the interests they initially opposed.*

- Michael Dove

With the progressive ruralisation in India, there is an increase in landless agricultural labourers and migration of people from villages. This same period has also witnessed gradual elimination of traditional knowledge and skills from the rural landscape which hasn't gotten adequate attention. With accelerated development, there is introduction of new technologies and associated knowledge and skills in the field of agriculture. Technology in agriculture has helped the farmers in addressing agricultural related issues. But, adaptation of technology has both its positive and negative effects. Agriculture sector will keep on developing, technology will be changed, what is working today might not work tomorrow or vice versa. Small farmers had adopted the technology in farming and changed their farming methods to improve the production. Hence focus has been given on how to have innovations in the field of technology. This resulted in the decline of the traditional skill set and knowledge. This calls for a grounded exploration in terms of action research for sustainably increasing production, which not only enhances farmer's adaptive skilling capacity addressing their livelihood needs but also makes the socio-ecological system more resilient. This article examines the issue of deskilling. The study is situated in three villages of three blocks of two central states of India - Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand. The three villages belong to different agro-ecological regions of the state where PRADAN works with a mission to enable the most marginalized people, especially rural women, to earn a decent living and take charge of their own lives. PRADAN has been working in these areas for

long with varied interventions and experiences. The present article will explore the skills that are getting lost and extent of it along with the process and struggles the villagers have faced. Implications of the deskilling on the lives of rural people will also be talked about.

Decline of knowledge and skills is happening in three spheres. There are certain skills which are already been lost and people only talk about it. Secondly there are certain practices which people are gradually abandoning and hence, in near future, those skills and knowledge will be no more available in the village. Thirdly, there are some which are only in the memory of a few people in the village and thus at the verge of getting lost. The article examines this spectrum of deskilling in the three villages.

Ghughri is a forest village of Amarpur block of Dindori district of Madhya Pradesh. Majority of the population belong to Gond tribe. Agriculture is one of their main sources of livelihood. But the village had undergone certain changes during last few years. These changes had impacted on the agrarian landscape of the place. People from the village, especially the younger generations, started disengaging in agriculture and tended towards migrating to other cities for work.

Agrarian deskilling is happening in the following ways. The first is at the input level, for example, the change in choice of seed and land; and then at the practice level where knowledge and skills are changing. Deskilling can be seen in post-harvest practices as well. And all of these had impacted the food platter and eating practices also.

This area is in low rainfall zone and agriculture is mainly rain-fed with Kodo and Kutki being the main staple food grown and consumed. These millets are suitable to the land and water condition of the area. The elders in the village shared how consumption of



these millets used to keep them healthy. However, now, area under Kodo and Kutki cultivation is gradually decreasing. Now there is nutritional inadequacy in many of the villagers affecting their health.

Changes in cropping pattern have drastically reduced the area and production of this staple food crop - Kodo and Kutki. The area under Kodo and Kutki cultivation is decreasing where as cultivation of paddy is increasing. Increase in paddy cultivation may be attributed to the various government and non-government engagements. Along with this, Kodo and Kutki are seen as “poor food” by the people.

Land plough is one of the main tools for land preparation, but now the farmers are using tractor. The plough is animal drawn tool. The use of plough for land preparation in paddy cultivation had been proved useful in maintaining the depth and quality

of the topsoil of the paddy field. Ploughing improves the water retaining capacity of the soil. It helps the soil with other nutrients from lower strata to come upward to enrich the top soil. It helps in loosening the soil too as a result of which roots can penetrate deeper into the soil. Ploughing also helps in proper mixing of manure in the soil.

Tractor is used presently for ploughing by many farmers in the village. It has reduced the toil and made it possible to increase the scale of production too. But it is a disadvantage too because it increases most of the problems attributed to agriculture on a small scale to a larger scale. The topsoil quality deteriorates and the fertility of soil gets reduced. The problem gets further complicated by the use of pesticides and fertilizers. These substances contain many synthetic compounds, which cause harm to plants and animals when they enter surrounding environments. Besides, the plough was easy to handle as compared to the tractor.

Villagers, on one hand, are gradually forgetting the skill such as using of plough. On the other hand, they are becoming dependent on external sources for all their needs. For better yield, they have started buying seeds from markets and many of their traditional seeds are gradually disappearing.

Similar issues came out while interacting with villagers of Chataniha village of Deosar. Deosar is located in Madhya Pradesh, towards border of Uttar Pradesh. Due to the high influx of *Pandits* (Brahmins) from UP, the tribal culture of Deosar is almost lost and the villagers forgot their traditional knowledge and skills. Traditionally they used to do things collectively, be it working for any community resource or doing any personal work. It was human knowledge and resources which would build each other and their village. Now they have become completely dependent on government through various welfare schemes.

Major impact of these government



schemes and development agencies is on their major occupation which is agriculture. They used to grow different varieties of paddy and maize with their traditional seeds. Now these indigenous seeds are quickly disappearing. Like Ghughri village, in Chataniha also millet production is decreasing. This has affected their food platter which was earlier diverse with various forest products and millet. The situation seems complicated to the community as now they have lost their self governing mechanisms and forums to reflect and discuss about their culture and lives. Without reflection and without having a critical analysis of all these processes of

deskilling, a vast area of knowledge and skill will be completely lost.



There is also number of people belonging to Basroor caste residing in Chataniha. Their major livelihood is to make different products from bamboo such as basket etc. But young people do not know this art. They are either migrating or engaging in other different activities. Similarly, people from Prajapati caste used to make earthen pots and utensils. They are also

engaging themselves in other activities. One probable reason is that they are not getting market for it and also market price seems too low to meet their daily needs.

A similar millet production pattern was observed in Jana village of Gumla district. Finger millet called Madua was a predominant crop people used to grow and consume. It is a cereal with high calcium which most farmers in village used to grow in the field and consume it regularly before 2005. But, at present, there are only 4-5 farmers who are producing it for self-consumption. It is losing its significance now. The reasons for it, as mentioned by them, are abundant availability of rice. Earlier, rice was not cultivated in large areas and now



they get it even from PDS.

Other reason was the low price of Madua. So, due to lower demand and low-price people have abandoned its cultivation. People also mentioned a few skills that they used to practice in agriculture. For example, farmers used to bring the Kan leaves from the forest and spread in field to protect crops from any type of pest. They don't use it now as they consider it to be old fashioned and think that it will not work even. They are relying on the market based products.

Earlier people also used a kind of wooden plant as pesticide to repel the pest. The name of that plant is Saliya. Now, no one uses it citing the reason that it doesn't work as effectively as it worked earlier. Another reason people shared was that they found it easy to use chemical pesticides as they considered those more effective and easy to procure. This knowledge of using Saliya plant as pest repellent is



missing among most of the people and only a few elderly could talk about that.

In Jana, the younger generation can't speak in Kurukh (a Dravidian language spoken by the Oraon tribe). The use of this language might be lost from this village within a few decades. It was also reported that the knowledge about the local occasions and festivals is also being disappearing. Instead people have started celebrating other festivals from other regions. Sometimes, language and festivals, in the form of songs or folk tales, are the medium of transferring knowledge and skills to the next generations. Unfortunately there remains apprehension that with the diminishing use of local indigenous language and festivals other knowledge and skills also will be lost.

All these brings our attention about the deskilling

happening in the area of agriculture and livelihood of Adivasi people. Their identity as Adivasi farmers is fading away along with their relationship with the natural resources and forest. In all the three villages, people shared that cultural governance has always played an important role. Unfortunately now the influence from outside is so much that the people are moving towards it more.

But, there is still hope; there are people who are questioning all these wrong doings. However, it has to become a question of the mass. People en masse should critically reflect and choose a way which may take them towards a just society. This again calls for reflection of the community to recognize how deskilling play a role in their life and development. Through this Action Research, villagers are collectivizing to raise all related questions and move towards *Khushhaal Zindagi*.



# Forest Village Ghughri

## Constraints and Opportunities

Saurabh Singh, Dibyendu Chaudhuri

Throughout the colonial period in India we have seen massive exploitation by British colonisers. In order to make big ships and railway tracks huge amount of trees from the forests in India have been felled by the colonisers and for that they required labour to work for them. They made temporary settlements for labourers in the forests and later on those settlements were termed as forest villages. Nevertheless, the inhabitants of forest villages didn't have any role in governance of the forest

village; it was the prerogative of the forest department' established in 1862, to regulate everything in the forest village. Section 2(t) of the Forest Rights Act, 2006 defines 'forest villages' as "settlements which have been established inside the forests by the forest department of any State Government for forestry operations or which were converted into forest villages through the forest reservation process and includes forest settlement villages, fixed demand holdings, all types of taungya settlements, by whatever name called, for such villages and includes lands for cultivation and other uses, permitted by the Government" (source: [tribal.nic.in](http://tribal.nic.in)). There were number of laws made to include them in the decision making processes and ultimately, to undo this historical injustice, forest rights act was enacted in 2006. This act recognizes forest villagers' rights over the forest resources. It also directs to convert these villages into revenue villages in which community will be in charge of the forest through Community Forest Rights (CFR). However, till now, in India, only 3% of these CFR claims are recognized in the last 12 years. (Source: [www.fra.org.in](http://www.fra.org.in))



One such forest village is Ghughri, situated at a distance of 9 kms from the block headquarter Amarpur of district Dindori in Madhya Pradesh. More than 84% of its population belongs to Scheduled Tribe. The major tribe residing in the village is Gond. Apart from them other caste groups in the village are Yadav, Panika and Vishwakarma (Blacksmith). The village is divided into two halves called Jharna and Ghughri. These two settlements comprise of eight hamlets. People are dependent mostly on agriculture, wage labour and NTFP. These villagers still practise, by and large, non-chemical agriculture, use indigenous seed varieties, broadcast paddy seeds. The topography is majorly undulating. Agriculture is rain-fed.

Villagers in the forest villages face many issues which the villagers from revenue villages do not encounter. This article elicits struggles of the people of the forest village Ghughri. People here are facing lot of atrocities from forest department since the British period. At that time they were considered as bonded labourers. British forest officers used to make the male folks of the village to work for them

and engaged them in works such as road construction, cutting of trees and for that they were paid nothing. Moreover, they had to carry their own food for 15-20 days to survive. When somebody refused to go he was beaten up by the officers brutally and threatened that his house would be burnt. After independence, Indian forest officers came and the villagers started getting meagre wages two rupees for 15 days work for the forest department. Nevertheless, the exploitation continued as the villagers were still doing unpaid work in the officer's service quarters, growing crops in their homestead, repairing their houses, cutting trees in the forest etc. Brutal beating also happened when someone refused to work for them. Each household had to give a small share of their harvest to the forest officer's house. People realized that the forest in which they were living was not theirs; it belonged to the forest department. Each household had to pay tax to the department for every cattle failing which their cattle got confiscated by the department.

According to the villagers, such fierce atrocities got reduced with time but still they are living amidst restricted permission and sanctions. For a long time there was no pukka road in the village and they had to face a lot of problems because of that, particularly in rainy season. This is because the forest department didn't allow the contractor to excavate soil from the village to build the road and they were asked to take it from the nearby revenue village. In the same manner Gram panchayat also faces lot of problems to carry out development works in the village as the whole process of permission takes lot of time.

While discussing in the hamlet level meeting it was found that the members of the Village Forest Protection Committee (VFPC) were not aware about the net income which was getting deposited in their account. The only thing that they could recall was that some time back they received pressure cookers, shoes, sandals, water bottles, blankets and bicycles from the forest department and for that too they had to pay bribe. The clerk in the Range office of Amarapur told that the revenue collected from the selling of logs and other produces of the forest after deducting the actual cost incurred in transportation is directly deposited in the account of VFPC of that area from where the forest produce is collected. He

also told that 50 percent of this money was deposited in the individual accounts of all the households of the village, 30 percent was used for developmental activities in the village and the rest 20 percent was used for planting trees in the forest. When we inquired about the balances of these VFPCs accounts, he refused to give this data and asked to consult the Ranger for this information.

VFPC members are unaware about the amount. All the information is with forest department which they are reluctant to provide.

In this village PRADAN is working for last 10 years and involved in organizing women of the village in the self-help groups and helping them to enhance their income through intervening in livelihoods activities. PRADAN also helps women realizing that as an equal citizen they may participate in the village governance.

ASAR (Adaptive Skilling through Action Research) started in this village in March 2018. As a part of this action research villagers went to Mendha Lekha for action review. This is a village in Gadchiroli District of Maharashtra. The objective was to understand the processes of local self-governance, collective action, and, above all, how the villagers of Mendha Lekha got Community Forest Rights and registered their village under Gramdaan Act. In this visit people interacted with village leaders like Devaji Tofa, Mohan Bhai and other people of the village and listened to their journey. How the villagers started their journey from rejuvenating Ghotul for the youth of their village. How they fought for their rights for the forest in a non-violent law abiding manner and became the first village in the country to get CFR (Community Forest Right) under Forest Rights Act, 2006. They saw their forest and bamboo cultivation in the forest. They also saw the ponds dug by them from their own contribution, crafts made by them from bamboo and the processing unit for extracting oil from Chironjee. They got to know about their participative, consensual decision making processes, communication processes, Abhyas-ghats for building sound understanding on any subject. They also came to know about Gramdaan Act and why the villagers of Mendha Lekha had given all their land to Gramsabha so that no private contractors and industries could buy any land in their village and start extracting resources from the village. The

villagers of Ghughri were very much impressed by the fact that people of Mendha protected their forest by distributing responsibilities among themselves. They also very keenly understood the concept of Village fund, Grain bank, its systems and significance for the people of the village.

After returning from Mendha they discussed their learning with other villagers and decided to plant Bamboo saplings provided by forest department on the boundary of cricket field in the village. They planted around 500 saplings, which were dumped in one corner of the village earlier. In the meantime monthly meetings were going on with the co-researchers and gradually people started discussing on their self-governance. They also discussed that indiscriminate felling of trees in the forest by the forest department with the help of village forest protection committee and also by the poacher from adjoining 11 villages are affecting rainfall and hence agriculture. They are also losing their forest produces, fuel wood and medicinal herbs which they used to collect from the forest. Biodiversity of the forest is also reducing.

But, by cutting trees villagers get wage from the forest department. One part of the villagers, who realised that they would lose their forest in no time, wanted to protect it while the other part was of the opinion that they would continue to work for cutting

trees as otherwise they would lose their wages. After series of discussion, people decided to talk to the villagers of 11 adjoining villages who come to their forest to cut the trees. On 1st January 2019, people from two adjoining villages came to Ghughri and they, together, took oath to protect their forest. In continuation of this meeting two hamlet level meetings were called in which discussion was held on protecting the forest. They distributed the responsibility hamlet-wise and started going in the forests, in its different compartments, to stop illegal felling. They also got involved into small skirmishes with the people who were coming in their forest to cut trees and also confiscated their axes, bundles of logs etc. According to them, people from these 11 adjoining villages have got the message that they are now standing against illegal felling. The news of this initiative has spread in the nearby villages. According to the villagers of Ghughri, they will continue this campaign to protect their forest and they are thinking to take it further to get the management rights of their forest which is spread over 800 hectares. For that, they want to continue the hamlet level meetings that they have started and also will involve more and more people and engage them in such initiatives wherein they collectively decide to deal with the issue that is impacting their lives.

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"Upper caste people who came from other states & settled in remote villages of Madhya Pradesh have confiscated fertile lands from tribal communities. These acts have been legalised with help of administration later on. Even irrigation facilities are being taken away."

*Arjun Singh, Chataniha, MP*



# Reinventing Village Governance

## - A Reflective Action

**Bibhubanta Barad, Satish Patnaik**

### **Introduction**

*“Ab kahan hum milke apne gaon ko aage leke jayenge, woh purane log aur din ab kahan”,  
-Temba Oraon*

While waiting for the meeting to be held under the tamarind tree, Temba was nostalgic about how his village used to be self-governed and each meeting was important for the villagers. The few of the villagers present there emphasized that the meetings were never coercing events; they were integral part of their life. Jana is like any other village of South Chotanagpur plateau, rich in bio-diversity inhabited by tribals and aided by different Government and private agencies for mainstream development. Jana becomes significant not only for its adherence to living in harmony with nature but also its traditional governance system.

Before PESA was introduced in Jharkhand, villagers of Jana, like other tribals had their own system for resolving issues, drawing mutual support, and initiating collective action for their unanimously decided aspired state. This relatively independent way of governance shaped their agro-ecology as well as their identity.

But like other villages, here also the traditional governance system perished and the state promoted systems took over in last few decades as the village space also altered rapidly. The needs, aspirations and capabilities of villagers got shaped by modernization. This new context based upon individual greed is oblivious of the trade-offs with agro-ecology and spiritual connections among villagers. The traditional governance system was also not flawless. It was oppressive as well as patriarchal. This rapid change in individual aspirations as well as governance system constrained the space for any collective reflection. This led to poor assimilation of best of the both the new as well as old system or any adaptive innovations in village governance systems for critical

and constructive change. Needless to say this homogenization of governance system by state, though fulfilled certain individual aspirations, linked people to macro governance structures but took away stewardship of people over their village and natural resources. This process rather than making people denizens converted them in to beneficiaries of different programs. The onus of village development is now in the domain of state. The erstwhile capable village society became helpless and largely conceived as incapable to bring desired changes in their life world. Based upon their earlier experience and the current context of village governance the villagers of Jana initiated processes to redesign their governance system to be inclusive, consensus based and sustainable.

### **Reflection on traditional Governance system in Jana**

SAAdaptive Skilling through Action research (ASAR) is a joint initiative of Azim Premji University (APU) and PRADAN. Villagers of Jana are co-researchers in this Endeavour. The research aims at adaptive skilling of people in their socio-ecological systems. Agrarian livelihoods are predominantly individual enterprises based on common resources. Therefore in traditional governance system, where people believed in sustainable use of commons, most of the decisions were taken by the villagers in their gram sabha. Whereas in the modern system the focus is on individual economic gain based upon irreversible extraction of commons using technology. Hence the focus on unanimous decision making processes are diminishing and collective forums are used as forums for individual gain. As per the older generation of Jana, this individual centric decision making for personal benefit is like addiction and hence the focus on collective well being and ecosystem cannot be brought back until the importance of village governance is reinstalled among the villagers for resilient socio-ecological systems.

As Sukanti Oraon aptly said, 'the destinies of all the villagers are intertwined and we cannot beat each other in any race of life.' The environment and its components are a part of a larger complex system and any disturbance in this fragile system will hamper all of us. The only way of life is to march ahead together."

These discussions led to tracing of the key features of erstwhile governance system and compared it with existing system. The findings are summarized below:

In their traditional governance system, the gram sabha was the sole decision maker of all matters related to the social, religious cultural and economic aspects. At present also they resolve the legal matters through this system excepting a case that went to the court as that could not be solved after repeated meetings of the governance body. In this system the governance body was headed by Mukhiya, who was a male member from Pahan family. In his absence other members could also take decisions in the weekly meetings. Generally, at least one male member from each family participated in the meeting discussing matters over consensus. The agenda and proceedings of the meetings were led by the local governance body, villagers also could suggest agenda. Punishment with fine system, in cash, was a prevalent way to minimize conflicts and keeping some regulations. Interestingly, there was no proof on paper about any decision being made. All of the villagers took the onus to follow the decisions. Even for financial matters, there were no records. For that, they gave responsibility to one person to keep the amount for the particular work and also for every new decision a new person was made in-charge. Meetings were scheduled as per the convenience of the villagers. The beating of drums used to announce the meeting following which villagers used to assemble under the Tamarind tree. But currently number of such meetings where people discuss



and decide about village and villager's wellbeing are decreasing and participation in such meetings are decreasing at an alarming rate indicating the lack of importance of such forums in villagers' mind. However, the previous governance system did not allow women to take part in the meetings. The Pahan family was always the power center. In the new system all, including women, can participate in the gram sabha meetings. The agenda and proceedings are much more formal and driven externally. Two meetings on 2nd October and 26th January each year are mandatory for the new gramsabha. Any meeting apart from these two needs to go through a proper process of approval from Mukhiya. Now many record books are maintained that are duly signed by elected representatives and Government employees; whereas the onus of adhering those seems amiss. Most of the gram sabhas are now held around beneficiary selection of different Govt. schemes. Such meetings are driven by PRI members and the agenda are set by the external officials leading to increased dependency and decreased autonomy of villagers in village related matters.

Mahadev Oraon lamented that the sound of mobile and TV are so high that the ears of people cannot listen to the drum-beating for the development of village.

The women of Jana listed out reasons on why most of the good practices are no longer practiced

in the village. Though they raised these in different formal and informal meetings but were not able to reinvent the systems as due to the change in livelihood practices, the youth generally remains out of the village so these meetings have become rarer not taking place in the regular pattern. The consensual decision making has become time consuming for the villagers as it is difficult for villagers to take time out from their existing engagements to follow the existing decision making process and norms.

The old system was full of bitter-sweet memories. People felt connected with each other due to regular meetings and could take many initiatives for their villages regarding socio-economic matters. They had a grain bank which is no longer there but their gram sabha still follows two of the earlier decisions till date and that is of protecting the village forest and joint planning for agriculture as well as supporting each other in agriculture fields. The older generation fondly recollected their sense of unity in socio-cultural occasions. Another important reason of gram sabha losing its significance was due to introduction of PESA. Though PESA intended to encourage traditional governance systems and give them greater autonomy, the way it was introduced was tangential to its objectives.

#### **Implementation of PESA, PRI System and its impact:**

The Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 or PESA is enacted by the Government of India for ensuring self-governance through traditional Gram Sabhas for people living in Scheduled areas identified by the 5th Schedule of the constitutions of India. Under this act traditional gram sabhas are allowed or owned to deal issues like customary resources, minor forest produce, minor minerals, minor water bodies, selection of beneficiaries, sanction of projects and control over local institutions. Hence, it seems that the act has been commenced for the betterment of tribal's and their culture. Gumla district is fully covered under PESA act 1996.

What went wrong in implementation of PESA and PRI System:

A mukhia was selected for the entire panchayat, and

she/he was recognized as the sole decision maker. Due to this process an outsider of the village became a decision maker of the internal affairs of the village. It was difficult for the outsider to understand or support the existing systems of the village and for the villagers it was difficult to accept him/her in their gram sabha. This resulted in deterioration of village solidarity as the villagers avoided the meetings and did not obey the Mukhia.

They started to compete for the position of Mukhia and other PRI members, which created division in the village. Now, there are two different groups in the village, where one group supports the new system of having an external as Mukhia whereas the other group still fights to have somebody from the village as Mukhia.

Though many community institutions are promoted in the village in the last few decades in the village many are not functional for similar reasons. As an example in the jungle suraksha samiti officials of forest department are in decision making positions. They are hurt that their idea of sustainable harvest and stewardship of forest were rejected by the officials of the department out rightly. They are now reluctant to join the samiti.

#### **An initiative for rejuvenation**

Looking at the situation, it seems now the tribes are at loss not only by losing their governance system but also reluctantly becoming a part of a systems, which they could not accept wholeheartedly. This eventually brings instability in their current life world and also raises questions of survival of their fragile agro-ecology. As the youths are not participating and living in oblivion of the governance systems, the future of collective way of existence looks very bleak. Weighing the advantages and disadvantages of both the systems villagers aspire to follow a governance system which will give them autonomy, nurture their interconnectedness with nature and strengthen their unity. They simultaneously also want to improve the wellbeing of all the villagers by accessing the provisions entitled through PESA. Unanimously most of them share that the new village governance system must not include outsiders in decision making, they may take help of outsiders as advisory members. With the initiation of ASAR, villagers of Jana decided to take baby steps towards actualizing desired

governance system with involvement of all section of the society particularly youth and women. Though the villagers struggled with poor participation of youth, vulnerable households and drop out of members from gram sabha committees, they initiated processes of monthly village level meeting, submitted application for community forest rights based upon consensus decision making and reinforced collective ways of agriculture through women SHGs. They all prepared pesticides based upon locally available materials but did not use them in their fields and are yet to take decision on this aberration.

Villagers decided to revisit the governance structures of the existing projects and reconfigure them as per their aspired state. For this they implemented solar electrification of houses and

provided drinking water supply to all the households collectively.

They have distributed different works of the village by forming subcommittees. The following four committees are currently formed and functioning in the village; jungle surksha samiti, Forest right committee, Solar samiti, water and sanitation samiti with fair participation of youth and women. There are many decisions to be taken and the new system needs to grasp both the macro and micro realities to equip it for future challenges.

As Temba rightly says “parishram ka phal hamesha mitha nahi hota hai, Kadwa bhi hota hai. Kuch Accha karne ke liye yeh kadwa bhi hame swikar hai.”



**“Traditional tribal life had predominance of male control over every aspect of society. This need to change and women must come forward to play an active role to transform society”**  
*D. Narendranath, PRADAN*

# Bio Diversity Register

## An Intergenerational Exchange of Local Wisdom

Dibyendu Chaudhuri, Parijat Ghosh, Saurabh Singh, Suhasini Bali

### Introduction

It was 30th January this year, a bright sunny morning in the winter, Khilawan, a 10 year old boy along with a group of around twenty five other people comprising of children, young adults and elderly were roaming around the forest adjacent to their village Ghughri. The excitement and the interest were visible on the young faces. Elderly faces were also beaming with joy and satisfaction. They were together discovering the richness, diversity and mystery of the jungle. On that day, they walked almost 7 km across the forest in order to get familiar with the varieties of plants and animals existing in the forest, understand the various qualities of the forest products and their dependence on it. During this walk they collected leaves, barks, flowers and plants; developed understanding about occurrence of particular plants in particular segment of the jungle; got to know about the various parts of different plants that are used for various purposes by the villagers. They found plants such as Sal, Teak, Tinsa, Dhawaa which are used for making houses and agricultural implements, plants such as Bel, Harra, Bahera, Amla, Kumbhi, Paadhan, Satavar, Surteli, Jamrashi Banda, Batua which have medicinal use and can cure diseases like abdominal pain, snake bite, rabies, indigestion, respiratory and heart diseases. There are trees whose leaves and barks are used to catch fishes while there are trees whose leaves are consumed as food. Some trees such as Tendu, Chaar, Kusum are of economic importance. It was really amazing for children like Khilawan to discover that such vast number of species were still present in the village even after so much of deforestation. They also found many animals or their traces in the forest. They realized that the number of various plants and animals were decreasing at a rapid pace and the local knowledge about these species would go away with elderly people who are at the age of their grandfathers. So it was of utmost importance to

pass this wisdom from the elderly people to the younger generation and document it in such a way that it remains easily understandable. Khilawan and his friends in the primary school made a bio-diversity register with dried leaves, flowers and barks which were collected by them. They wrote the local names of the plants, its usage and occurrence in the register. Khilawan said that this register would be kept in their school. And more plant species would be added in it which could be found in other parts of their forest. Hiralal, their school teacher, assured them that he would help them in updating the register with newer species. The villagers now know that this register will help them in finding out the species which are disappearing fast from their forest so that they can take actions to reinvigorate it, and this way their bond with their forest will be strengthened more and more.

### Adaptive Skilling through Action Research

It all started with the Adaptive skilling through Action Research or ASAR which is a joint action research of Azim Premji University and PRADAN. The objective of ASAR is to find ways to reverse this process of deskilling through the path of adaptive skilling. One of the three villages selected for this AR is Ghughri, which is a forest village situated at a distance of 9 km from the block headquarter Amarpur of district Dindori in Madhya Pradesh.

More than 84% of its population belongs to Gond, a group which comes under Schedule Tribe category in the state of Madhya Pradesh.

### Deskilling of *Adivasi* farmers and loss of forest biodiversity

Forest with its huge diversity of flora and fauna has been an integral part of the lives and livelihoods of the Adivasis in central Indian



Plateau. Forest, for them, on one hand, is the source of food, fodder, fuel, medicine and timber (for tools, housing and furniture) and on the other hand, manure to the lands in the lower catchment in the form of decomposed leaves and branches. Adivasi farmer's knowledge and skill of farming are based on this intricate know-how of interdependence of forest and farming system shaped by other natural phenomenon such as rainfall, sunlight, water, air, etc.

After setting up of forest department, the floral diversity started decreasing gradually as the forest department started planting/nurturing only the timber species replacing other plants. At the same time, with advent of modern agriculture seed, fertilizer and pesticide companies insisted farmers for using high yielding or high-breed seeds along with chemical fertilizers and pesticides giving assurance of higher yield. The farmers started following a package of practice which was prescribed by the company and this made them gradually dependent on the seeds, fertilizers or pesticides supplied by seed companies and the package of practice prescribed by those companies which do not need the intricate knowledge about the forest-farm production system. As a result the farmers started forgetting their generation old knowledge and skills phenomenon called deskilling. As the deskilled Advasi community has less attachment and knowledge about forest they remained passive observer of the process of decline of both the quality and quantity of their forest. In general, in the forest fringe Adivasi villages, the elderly people bothered about forest whilst the younger

generation and the school going children neither had the knowledge about the plants in the forest nor they were bothered about gradual destruction of the forest.

During the Action research, when discussion was going on regarding this lost knowledge the elderly people raised their concern related to the gradual thinning of the forest. The villagers shared that, on one hand, the forest department was only interested in planting Sagwan (Teak, a timber species) and as a result other plant species were getting replaced by it, and, on the other

hand, legal or illegal felling of trees was making the forest thinner every day. They further added that gradual loss of knowledge among the younger generation about floral diversity and its use in Adivasi's life had been the reason for low interest among the younger generation about protection of the forest. The forest at Jharna-Ghughri is spread across 800 Hectares of land. They shared that the consequences of thinning have affected the last two generations in the form of less fodder availability, less fuel wood, scarcity of water, loss of medicinal herbs and shrubs. Also, when they were discussing about a desired life most of the villagers shared that they want to live in a village where forest is dense with diverse flora and fauna, and their farm lands are fertile.

The researchers and villagers pondered over it in several meeting and came up with a two-pronged plan.

### Forest defenders

Villagers from 11 adjacent villages are dependent on Jharna-Ghughri forest. In fact, some of the illegal felling of trees were done by villagers of those villages. The villagers of Ghughri invited the villagers including the village-heads from all the adjacent villages in a meeting to discuss the issue of forest. On 1st January 2019, on the day of Jangal Mahotsav, an event organized to celebrate forest life; people from two adjacent villages came to Ghughri and together took oath to protect their forest. After several round of discussions villagers from all the adjacent villages agreed to act to protect the forest. Each of the villages took

responsibility to protect some part of the forest. They started guarding different parts of the forest to stop illegal felling, and, in this process, they also got involved into small skirmishes with the people who were coming in their forest to cut trees. They confiscated their axes and logs. Ramki Bai from Jharna-Ghughri village claimed with pride that people from all the adjacent villages got the message that villagers of Ghughri had stood against illegal felling. Hiralal, the primary school teacher, said that this campaign to protect their forest would continue and they were also planning to get the management rights of their forest under Community Forest Right act.

### **Bio-diversity register**

People like Gangaram, who are elderly persons in the village, used to raise the issue that the young generation of villagers did not have knowledge about their forest. According to them, that is the reason they do not take interest in protecting the forest and floral diversity. So they decided to engage with the young men, women and kids in the village to educate them about the forest the numerous species and its uses, what species were disappearing fast from their forest, how they can rejuvenate the forest. On 30th January elderly people like Ramki Bai and Ganagaram organized a walk around their village and across the forest with the young people and kids in order to expose them to the unknown

mystery of jungle. They also involved the primary school teacher, Hiralal, who had significant knowledge about their forest.

### **Conclusion**

The idea that forest can be protected if knowledge of the villagers about different species in the forest and its use gets enhanced is somewhat unique. But, the pedagogy used for transferring this knowledge to the younger generation was more unique. The elderly people, through a walk in the forest with the children, transferred the knowledge to them and a bio-diversity register got created. At the same time the villagers started guarding the forest. This two-pronged strategy, one for immediately stopping the illegal felling of trees and the other for a continued process of forest rejuvenation through knowledge enhancement and interest creation, will provide an answer to the question of forest protection. Villagers will protect the forest if they know that forest is part of their everyday life. Villagers of Ghughri are also planning to take this process to the nearby villages involving other schools so that a movement can be created to pass on the knowledge through generations and that's how forests will be rejuvenated and people of Ghughri will have life that they desire for.



**"Our younger generation is getting distracted with adoption of modern life & gadgets like mobile phones and flashy western lifestyle. These do not match with our traditional way of lives and believes. We will have to stop this negative aspect."**

*Sukanti Oraon, Jana, Jharkhand*

# My dilemmas about Development and ASAR

Jyotsana Jaiswal

“Acchi amdani se hum apne bachcho ko achche school bhejenge” this was the reply of a woman in Jharkhand when she was asked what she would do with her enhanced income that she earned by participating in a PRADAN promoted activity. “Achcha” was further explained by her as private school. The answer was very simple but it awe-struck me when I explored more on this topic. I got to know that with better income people have started sending their children to private schools. The remaining in these government schools are the unfortunate lot who do not have financial capacity to send their children to private schools. The educational standard in most of the government schools is not good enough and when the powerful section within the village starts sending their children to private schools, the condition of the government schools tend to become worse. There remains hardly any hope of reviving the standard of the Govt. schools as the people who could have raised their voices for improving the condition of the Govt. schools have shifted to private schools. Now, the Govt. schools have become insignificant and their condition is further deteriorating. Due to this vicious cycle, in the last 2 years, in one block 8-10 government schools have closed down as the number of children was insufficient to run those schools. This closure has affected the poverty-

stricken population in the villages as because they cannot send their children to any of those private schools. Another woman said, “Hum nahi chahte hamre jaise hamre bacche bhi yahi jangle aur gao me hi rah jaye” and that further astonished me and I questioned myself - would I admit my children in a government school? On one hand, I thought that this trend was going to ruin the general education system and therefore this would further marginalize the next generation of those who are already marginalized. On the contrary, I was clueless about what to say if they are aspiring to live like us, the people from so-called civilized urban society.

As one of our developmental goals is to enhance the income of small and marginal farmers, we promote high yielding crops suitable for market demand to help farming families earn a livelihood. For example, in our team, we introduced creepers in summer to ensure productive return. We played a major role in introducing high yielding rice replacing their older seeds. However, all these efforts have reduced the diversity of crops that were originally grown in this area. After getting transferred to Deosar, from Jharkhand, I visited one of my colleague's village where we saw Ramkali didi's field which was fenced with cactus and branches of ber tree. As she opened its door slowly we entered the field and found that

she had grown more than 40 kinds of plants including vegetables, fruits, herbs and grains. We were amazed to see this garden which gave her family either nutritious food or medicine throughout the year. We got to know that there are many families in this village who have similar gardens that were full of diverse types of food plants and hence it can provide different kinds of vitamins and minerals needed for people residing in a hilly area. On the contrary, we offer kits containing seeds of some vegetables with fertilizers and pesticides which, if grown, will meet household necessity for 3-4 months; but their traditional farming is different. They not only



grow varieties of vegetables, but also fruits, herbs (for medicine) and cereals without using chemical fertilizers and pesticides having negative effects on soil and human health. That day I realized how important it was to be observant and receptive about the knowledge and skills that already existed in the village. I compared this scenario with the tribal lifestyle of Oraons of Jharkhand who had similar huge varieties of nutritious food that they obtained from the forest. We offered them our package of cash crops, high yielding paddy and nutrition garden but we failed to work on their traditional nutritional basket. I was wondering whether they also needed cash? If I can't adjust without cash, they should be supported to get more cash as well. This was another set of dilemma I was living with.

From ages, the communities we work with have their own decision making and dispute solving systems which were part of tribal life. There was hardly any conflict which didn't get addressed in the village forum. Government and our intervention to strengthen gram sabha and panchayati raj institutions have weakened these traditional forums. But, Gram Sabhas and panchayats are yet to become part of tribal life; those have become more like a bureaucratic system. However, it's also true that there were many inequalities in the traditional village forums women were not allowed to participate, elders from particular families used to be the village head and the structure was not democratic. So, in the traditional governance there were issues of gender based discrimination and lack of democracy and in the PRI based governance system there is lack of ownership and hence less

participation of the villagers. I was wondering what an ideal system of governance should look like. My team at Deosar is a part of the Adaptive Skilling through Action Research (ASAR) that deals with all the above questions I had in my mind and will explore alternative path of development where traditional knowledge may be re-learned in the present context. ASAR will also look at present technology from the aspect of ecological sustainability and needs of the village. It would search for options which are more sustainable, non-extractive and suitable for the life of the people. Above all, ASAR has created a space for discussion in our team about issues that were the source of my dilemma for a long time. We, as development professionals need to rethink about our engagement. Somewhere we are focusing our interventions in one direction, mainly to link people with market and help them get more income, thinking that this can eradicate poverty. We have to think critically before proceeding in this direction. ASAR is an opportunity to re-examine our approach to development.

However, discussion about sustainable lifestyle has led to further disturbances that are not only at professional level but also at personal level. Is this the kind of lifestyle that is hampering the ecological sustainability? One of the best things that PRADAN has taught us is to connect with our feeling. This feeling of disturbance and confusion is affecting our personal and professional life as it reminds us about the privileges of utilising resources.

Are we ready to compromise with the privileges that we are enjoying now?



**"Money cannot buy everything, self-reliance, self-respect and liberty is bigger than money. Would you need comfort of slavery or the struggle of freedom?"**  
*Mohan Bhai, Mendha Lekha*

# ASAR's baseline data

## Insights from Basic Analysis

Sheetal S Patil, Saheb Bhattacharyya, Amit Kumar



*“a participatory, democratic process concerned with developing practical knowing in the pursuit of worthwhile human purposes, grounded in a participatory worldview which we believe is emerging at this historical moment. It seeks to bring together action and reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others, in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern to people, and more generally the flourishing of individual persons and their communities.”*

Thus, Action Research remains work in progress throughout its duration. It draws significantly from the situation that prevails at present. It focuses on generation of knowledge that is valid and vital to both individuals and communities and bring about democratic social changes. ASAR's primary focus lies largely on adaptive skilling in agricultural domain. However, since agriculture encompasses both community and its interactions with nature, the core elements of the both i.e. jal, jungle, jameen, jan and janwar remain crucial to be considered while designing any action. This is more so in the case of

communities that are in close proximity to forests or other natural landscapes. In the past couple of decades, the market-driven forces and solutions have been so successful in routing the tribal agricultural practices into a direction that is generally considered as unsustainable in the context of both social and ecological perspectives. The actions or interventions to be designed during the course of ASAR are essentially to be focused on bringing back the appropriate traditional knowledge and practices. In the contemporary parlance it is supposed to be close to the tenets of sustainable farming practices.

With an objective of understanding the current status of these core elements of life of tribal community, a baseline data collection exercise was designed. The baseline data is not only supposed to give the team the direction in which the actions need to be designed, but also to help to monitor the changes in various key indicators of adaptive skilling and sustainable intensification in agriculture. This will in turn help us gauge the changes brought about due to building adaptive



capabilities of communities through actions executed. Baseline data collection consisted of 5 major themes viz. – socio-economic, land resources, agricultural practices, cropping pattern (along with production) and other natural resources (including forest, livestock, water, etc.). Table 1 gives details of indicators chosen for baseline evaluation and future

monitoring in different time intervals.

Semi-structured questionnaire used for data collection was designed and tested before actual survey in three villages. Data collection was exercised simultaneously in the three villages – Jana (in Jharkhand), Chattaniha and Ghugri (in Madhya Pradesh). In Jana, data for all the 84 households in the

village was collected. Whereas in Chattaniha a sample of 151 households and in Ghugri there were 100 households sampled. While Ghugri is a forest village, Jana and Chattaniha are revenue villages.

This write-up includes a result from a preliminary analysis of the data pertaining to the selected themes from the three villages. It is worth noting here that the results from the three villages are not to be viewed in a comparative manner, as these are located in very different agroecological and cultural set-up. The analysis and results are meant for drawing an understanding of core elements of the project before the project implemented any actions in the direction of sustainable intensification of agriculture within tribal communities.

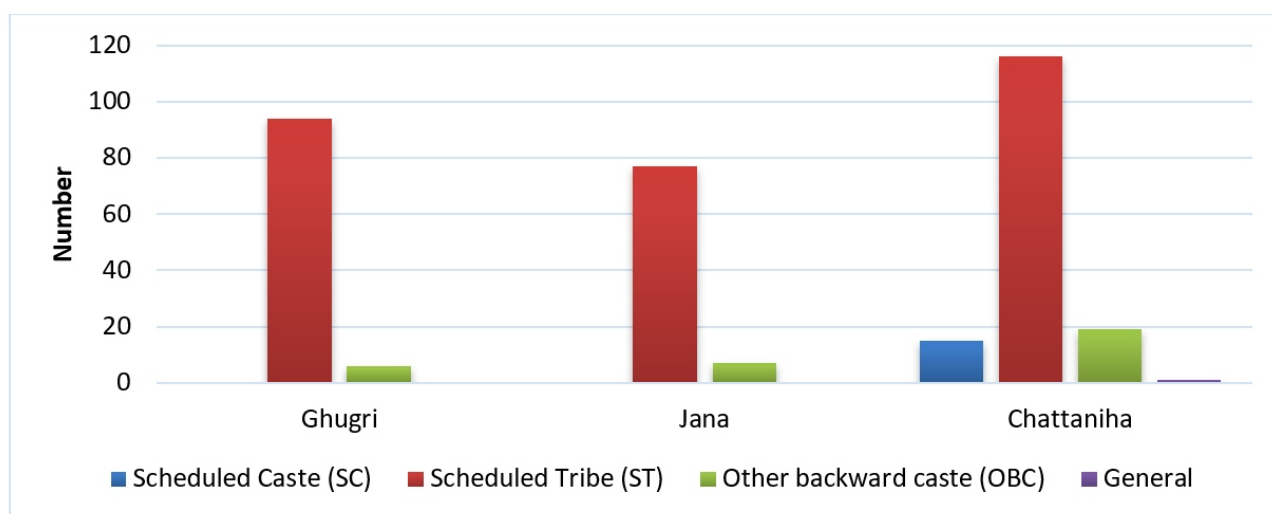
#### 1. Socio-economic status –

Among the selected villages, Ghugri and Chattaniha host Gond tribe while Jana has Oraon tribe. The village Chattaniha is diverse in terms of caste, followed by Jana and then Ghugri. Ghugri is mostly a homogenous village with majority of families belonging to Gond tribe. The composition of sample households with respect to their caste category is depicted in the Figure 1 –

Table 1 List of indicators

Time scale	Variable	Quantitative	Qualitative
Short term (to be collected in Winter 2019 (/ after Kharif) and repeat in Summer 2020 (/ after Rabi))	1. Farm diversity (crops, animals, birds, etc.)	✓	✓
	2. In-situ inputs (preparation and use)	✓	✓
	3. Seed and labour sharing	✓	✓
	4. Plan for watching forest	✓	✓
	5. Collective experiments		✓
	6. Loan (amount, purpose and source)	✓	
	7. Gross output / acre	✓	
	8. Gross cost / acre	✓	
Medium term (to be collected in Summer 2020)	1. Soil health	✓	✓
	2. Water availability - depth, quality etc.	✓	✓
	3. Dependence on forest produce	✓	✓
	4. Biomass available in and around village	✓	✓
	5. SI in livestock / poultry	✓	✓
	6. Availability of food from farm (no. of months)	✓	✓
	7. Portion of nutritious food from farm	✓	✓
	8. Expense on food	✓	
	9. Women in decision making		✓
	10. Value addition skills	✓	✓
	11. Market access	✓	✓
	12. Cost of healthcare	✓	
	13. Other non-farm occupation/s	✓	✓
	14. Individual or family migration	✓	✓
	15. Harvest/other festivals		✓
	16. Interest in farming		✓
	17. Interest in rural life		✓
Long term (to be after 2 years of ASAR)	1. Income stability	✓	✓
	2. Portion of non-farm income	✓	✓
	3. Change in crops	✓	✓
	4. Change in farming practice	✓	✓
	5. Protection of commons – land and water		✓
	6. Community forest rights		✓
	7. Quality of Forests	✓	✓

Figure 1 Social category of sample households



Source: Primary survey.

Other than Gond tribe, in Chattaniha there are households with about 16 other castes falling in the four broad caste categories. Thus, Chattaniha is

diverse in terms of caste and caste category. Whereas, Jana is diverse in terms of occupations that the households are engaged in (Table 2).

Table 2 Primary occupation of sample households

Occupation	Ghugri		Jana		Chattaniha			
	ST	OBC	ST	OBC	SC	ST	OBC	General
Agricultural labour	5		16			4		
Non-agricultural labour	8	6	17	4	1	3	1	
Government job			2			1		
Private job			1					
Pensioner	1		1	1				
Livestock			1					
Agricultural enterprise						1		
Non-agricultural enterprise			2					
Cultivation	80		37	2	14	107	18	1

Source: Primary survey

It is interesting to observe that the Scheduled Tribe households are engaged in variety of occupations. About 75% of households in all engage in cultivation, followed by non-agricultural labour. Although most of the households have their own house, more than 90% of them are kachcha houses. Most of the houses in Jana and about 75% of houses in Ghugri had functional toilets. But, in Chattaniha, only 35% of houses had toilet. Households in Ghugri mostly draw drinking water from common handpumps in the village, where in Jana it is the common well that they get water for household consumption. In Chattaniha, it is both these sources that the households rely on for water for drinking and other domestic use. Irrespective of caste category, all households access any available water source. About third of the households in all have electricity connection at their homes.

Almost all households in Ghugri have ration card,

but about 15-20% of households, especially ST, in Jana and Chattaniha do not possess ration card. About 75%, 60% and 45% of households of Ghugri, Jana and Chattaniha respectively had enough food stock from their own farm that lasted for more than 6 months and upto 1 year. Rest of the households for remaining period relied on public distribution system (PDS). However, in Chattaniha it was half and half from PDS and other shops. Almost all households of Ghugri and 90% households of Chattaniha have MGNREGA job cards. But, in Jana there were only 75% of households with the job card. Possession of agricultural implements and machinery was not common among the households of the three villages. Only 3rd of the households had farm pond in their agricultural field. In Chattaniha and Ghugri, about half of the households had land of an average 2.3 acres with individual patta.

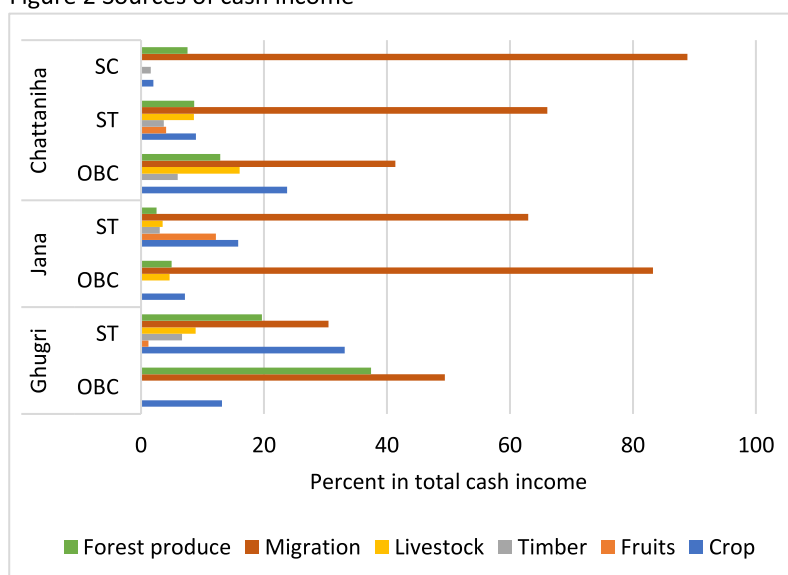
Average family size ranged between 4 and 6

per household sampled in the three villages. Households of Ghugri reported higher number of sick days on an average, than other two villages. However, expenditure-wise households in Ghugri spent 5th (Rs 2,000) of what households in Jana and Chattaniha spent (Rs. 10,000) on healthcare in a year.

In terms of cash income, apart from crop sale, households earned by selling fruits, timber, forest produce and livestock produce. The largest portion

of cash income came from migration. Households in Jana and Chattaniha earned 70% of cash income from migration, whereas in Ghugri it was around 40%. However, compared to households of other castes, ST households earned less share of cash income from migration. Households in Ghugri also had substantial amount (30%) of cash coming from selling of forest produce. Graph in the Figure 2 below shows the percent of cash income from different sources.

Figure 2 Sources of cash income



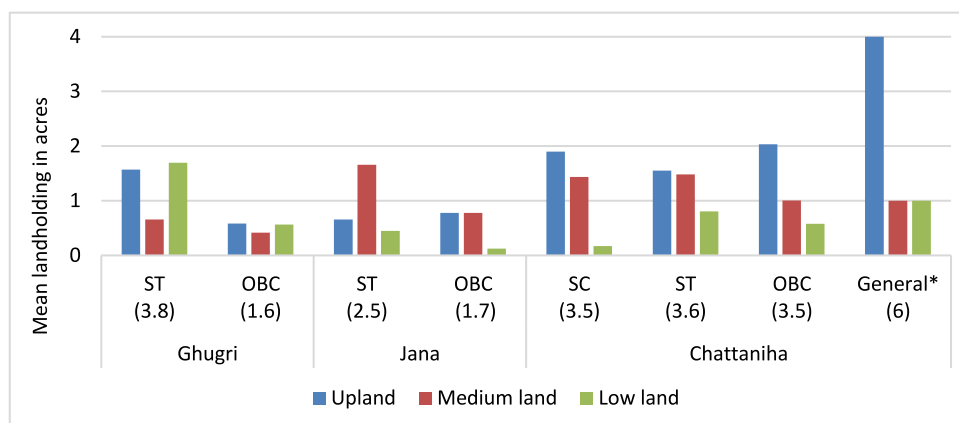
Source: Primary survey

With large number of households being self-sufficient in terms of food requirement, cash income was used for expenses like education, weddings, house construction and healthcare. About 50%, 69% and 57% of households from Ghugri, Jana and Chattaniha migrated out for non-farm work. Unlike in Chattaniha and Ghugri where migration period ranged from 2 to 6 months, in Jana, migration of family member was for long period of time - almost 12 months.

## 2. Land, animals and trees on farm -

Agricultural land belonging to households in the study villages was classified into three categories – upland, medium land and low land. This classification was purely based on the level of altitude the land is located. It was most likely that many households having land in all three categories of the land type. There was no clear pattern of landholding by households of different social category in the three villages. Figure 3 gives details about the landholding pattern.

Figure 3 Landholding pattern in three villages



\*There was only one household in General category in Chattaniha

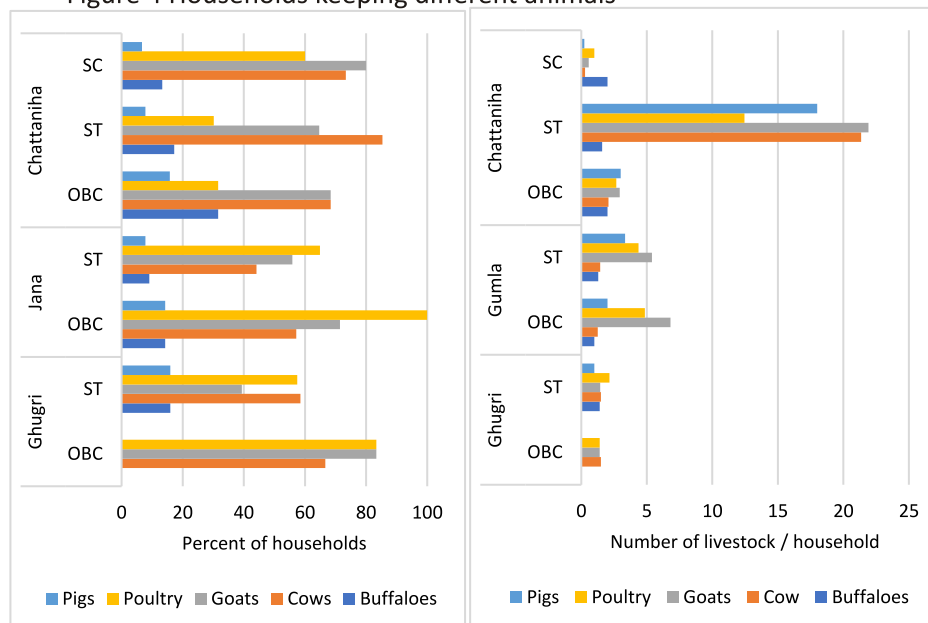
Source: Primary survey. Number in parenthesis indicates mean total holding size

Although there was no clear landholding pattern, the average upland and medium landholding size was larger in Chattaniha, whereas Ghugri had larger lowlands. Irrigation in these tough terrains was minimal and largely through open wells or farm ponds and rarely there was access to water from river or stream. Irrigation was common in Chattaniha in the lowlands from sources such as river, pond, tank or river stream. In Jana only half of the households had access to irrigation for a very small portion of their land. In Ghugri, irrigation was comparatively less common with only 4% of respondent households irrigating their land. In

terms of coverage, the extent of irrigated land ranged from 4% of operated land in Ghugri to 21% in Chattaniha. In Jana, on an average, 7% of operated land was irrigated.

Along with cultivation animal keeping was also common in the three villages. Cows, goats and poultry were the most common animal species that the households kept. In Jana most of the households kept goats, whereas in Chattaniha and Ghugri more households kept cows. Figure 4 depicts percent of households having livestock and number of animals per household.

Figure 4 Households keeping different animals



Source: Primary survey

The ST households in Chanttaniha were most diverse in terms of livestock species. They also had large herd size of each of the species. Buffaloes and cows were kept mostly for ploughing and other farm work. Goats and poultry were kept to supplement households income.

In addition to animals, households in study villages were also rich in plant biodiversity. The trees were

either in the backyard or on the farm land. There were almost 12 varieties of fruit trees, 12 varieties of timber trees and 4 varieties of medicinal plants. Most common fruit trees were mango, guava, custard apple, jack fruit and ber, etc. Households in Chattaniha had large varieties of trees, compared to other two villages. Table 3 gives details of households and fruit trees

Table 3 Number of fruit trees in each household

Fruit trees	Ghugri		Jana		Chattaniha		
	OBC	ST	OBC	ST	OBC	SC	ST
Custard apple	3 (17)	2 (12)	1 (43)	3 (35)	4 (16)	6 (20)	3 (15)
Pomegranate	1 (17)	1 (4)	1 (29)	1 (30)	2 (21)	2 (47)	2 (44)
Jackfruit	1 (17)	1 (14)	1 (14)	1 (23)	1 (32)	1 (73)	1 (52)
Mango	1 (50)	2 (36)	2 (14)	7 (47)	2 (68)	3 (80)	3 (77)
Jamun		1 (9)		2 (21)	2 (21)	1 (20)	1 (23)
Peach		1 (1)		1 (6)		1 (7)	1 (3)
Banana		2 (2)		4 (9)	1 (11)	1 (13)	1 (13)
Lemon	1 (33)	1 (6)		1 (10)	1 (21)	1 (40)	1 (14)
Ber	1 (17)	2 (17)		1 (17)	3 (21)	1 (47)	2 (45)
Papaya	2 (17)	2 (2)	2 (14)	2 (17)	2 (11)	2 (53)	2 (28)

Source: Primary survey. Number in parenthesis indicate percent of households having those trees.

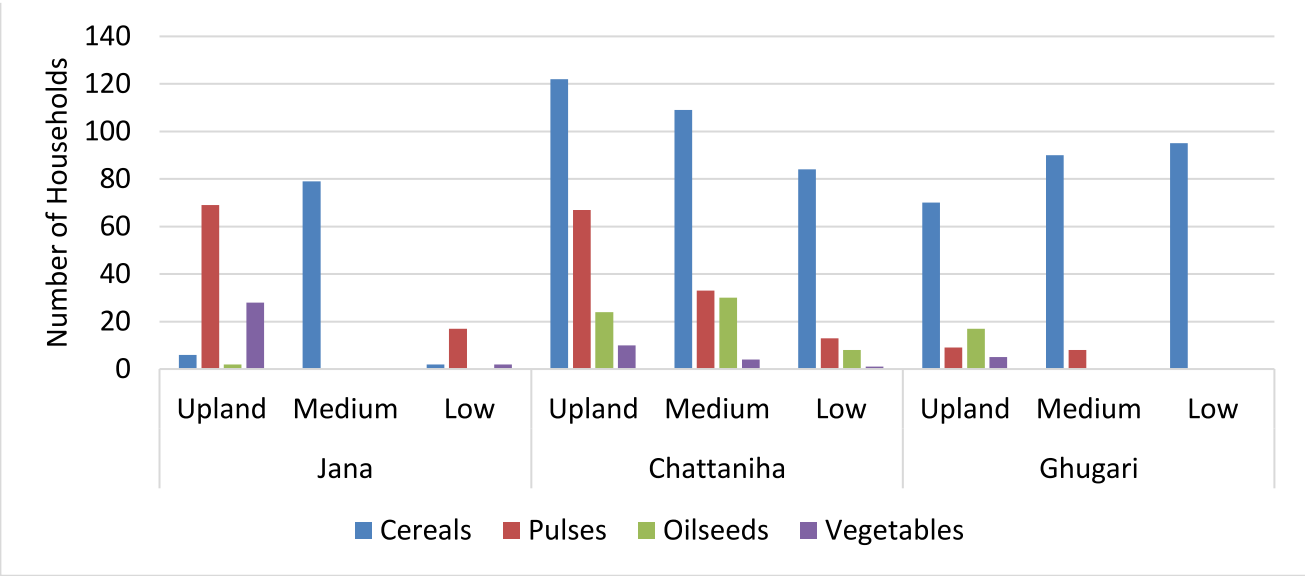
In general ST households had many varieties of trees than other castes. Households in Chattaniha were not only rich in terms of fruit tree diversity but also they had higher number of trees compared to other two villages.

With such diverse landholding and irrigation pattern, livestock and biomass around, the crops grown were also quite varied between the three villages.

3. Cropping pattern –  
Since households owned by different types of lands – upland, middle land and low land, - crops cultivated in these types were different in the three villages. Choice of crops was also dependent on season of cultivation.

In Jana, households mostly cultivated all three types of lands in kharif season only. Cereal crops dominated in all three sites in kharif season. Figure 5 shows number of households cultivating different crops in different land types.

Figure 5 Crops cultivated in kharif season

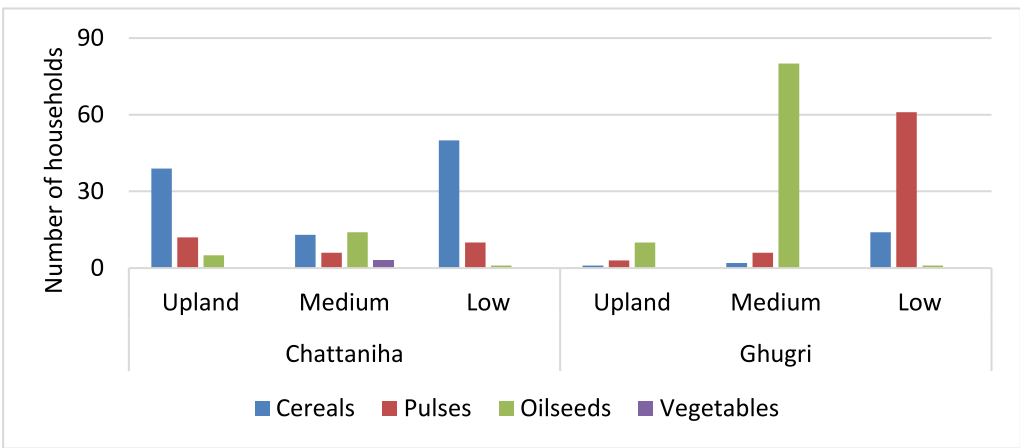


Source: Primary survey

Oilseeds and pulses in kharif season were cultivated either in upland or medium land in the three villages. Vegetables were cultivated mostly by households in Jana.

In Chattaniha, households cultivated cereals in rabi as well. While in Ghugri, main rabi crops were pulses and oilseeds (Figure 6).

Figure 6 Crops cultivated in rabi season



Source: Primary survey

Nutrient supplement for all the crops in the three villages was largely through farm yard manure or natural fertilisers. Use of chemical fertilizer was more in Ghugri compared to other two villages. For

managing pests households did not do anything, except for few households in Jana and Ghugri who used pesticides or insecticide.

#### 4. Forest produce collection -

Apart from their own land and animals, tribal communities heavily depend on produce collected from forest. They acknowledge the fact that the

services provided by forests are innumerable. Table 4 shows the dependence of families on forest for different produce.

Table 4 Households collecting forest produce (percent in total)

Forest produce collected	Ghugri		Jana		Chattaniha		
	OBC (6)	ST (94)	OBC (7)	ST (77)	OBC (19)	ST (116)	SC (15)
Firewood	100	98	100	87	74	84	40
Timber		11		4			
Fruits							7
Honey		2					
Bamboo			14	22			
Mushroom		52	14	3			
Tendu leaves	100	93			26	55	13
Chironji		6				5	7
Surteli		5					
Mahua	33	78		1		5	9

Source: Primary survey. Number in parenthesis against each caste category indicates the sample size

Collection of firewood from forest was almost universal in the study villages. Households in Ghugri collected more diverse forest produce than the other two villages. There wasn't much difference between communities in the three villages in terms of collection of forest produce. Most of the forest produce collected was sold either in market of nearby town or to the traders coming to the villages. Apart from forest produce, communities accessed common water resources in the study villages either for feeding and washing livestock or for domestic use. All the three villages had tank or pond that stored rainwater in monsoon. These water bodies provided water for the households for 6-9 months from July to December or March.

#### Summary

The baseline data collected from 335 households in three villages covered the selected indicators of sustainable intensification. Due to socio-structural,

administrative and bio-physical differences across the selected villages, the results varied to a large extent with regards to socio-economic status, cropping pattern and use of natural resources. While households in Jana are at the advanced stage with respect to adoption of modern farming practices including marketing; the other two villages - Chattaniha and Ghugri, were practicing traditional methods of cultivation, processing, marketing and consumption pattern.

Using baseline data and nuanced qualitative understanding of their farming practices, ASAR team hopes to draw action plan for the upcoming cultivation as well as management of forest and other common natural resource. The team plans to continue monitoring of the indicators in different time intervals – short, medium and long term and hopes to find the change in indicators in a sustainable direction.

**“If we want to progress then it's important to change our perception towards the external limitations or hindrances. Our energies are getting invested in fighting for materialistic problems which can be solved just by changing our view point towards them”**

**- Archana, PRADAN**



# Gond Art and Culture

## A Way of Living with Nature

Prashant Sharma

This article is written in Hindi. A summary of the article has been provided in English so that those who can't read Hindi can also get the essence of Prashant's article.

### Summary:

*"Iss mitti ke bhi aaj maalik hain. Iss mitti ko apna nahi bol sakta ab"* said an old man, holding a handful of soil, belonging to the *Baiga* tribe in Dindori district in Madhya Pradesh. This statement vents out his despair and helplessness. His way of living and being have changed tremendously. And as we all proclaim 'change is inevitable and constant', the changes the tribe has gone through is not a shocker. The nomadic have now settled in one place as every piece of land has found its owner, the relationship with the 'tree of life' is slowly dying, the means of livelihood is crisscrossing its way from sustenance to sustainable, the way of living is being westernized (or homogenized). This stands true for all humankind irrespective of place they belong to. However, even amidst this pressure for change in order to keep up with the pace of the non-tribal world, the tribal have still kept the bits of their culture in their day to day life, such as, celebrating *Hariyali* - a festival to celebrate the culmination of their agricultural engagements.

This paper is an attempt to highlight such cultural practices which are still engraved in the day-to-day life world of the tribal, which they have still held on to. It tries to capture the need to remain connected with the past. In other words, if at all there is a need within the community to hold on to their culture then why it is so and how they balance between the so-called 'modern' or urbanised lifestyle and their cultural practices. This paper is an attempt to pause and think and reflect upon the actions or initiatives that could be done to keep at least one candle burning before all blows out amidst this wind of change.

One such initiative that has been thought upon around it is to first understand the Gond idea of being sustainable and their relationship with the nature through the means of various art forms. There are various other initiatives as well which this paper would highlight. The site mentioned in this paper is in Dindori district in Madhya Pradesh. Dindori is a tribal dominated area with Gond as major tribe and comes under PESA. So, our co-researchers are predominantly from Gond tribe based in Amarpur, who have helped to weave this paper together.

**बिषय:** आदिवासी कला एवं संस्कृति का आदिवासी समुदाय के जीवन में महत्व एवं इसका प्रभाव और यह मानव जीवन को संवहनीय होने की तरफ कैसे लेकर जाता है ।

**मूल विचार:** कला और संस्कृति का मानव/आदिवासी जीवन पर प्रभाव: यह जीवन को संवहनीय और गहनता की तरफ ले जाने में कैसे मदद करता है ? इसका संबंध व्यक्तिगत जीवन से है या सामूहिक जीवन से या दोनों से / लोगों को यह कैसे

जोड़ता है? यदि जीवन को संवहनीय और गहनता से जीने में इनसे मदद मिलती रही है तो आज भी ये अभ्यास में क्यों नहीं हैं? बस इन्हीं सब सवालों के जवाब हमें हमारे मूल शोध तक पहुंचाएंगे ।

सारांश: "इस मिट्टी के भी आज मालिक हैं, इस मिट्टी को अपना नहीं बोल सकता अब", मध्य प्रदेश के डिंडोरी जिले से बैगा समुदाय के एक वृद्ध व्यक्ति ने हाथ में मिट्टी उठाते हुए कहा । उसके ये शब्द विवशता एवं निराशा से भरे हुए थे । उसने कहा बीते वर्षों में उसके जीवन ने बहुत अधिक बदलाव देखे हैं जिन्हें भयंकर बदलाव भी कहा जा सकता है । जैसा की हम कहते हैं कि "बदलाव एक अपरिहार्य और निरंतर प्रक्रिया है", शायद इसलिए आदिवासी जीवन में बदलाव हमारे लिए कोई चौंका देने वाला दृश्य नहीं हैं । खानाबदोश और घुमंतू जीवन अब एक स्थान पर स्थाई रूप से रहने लगा है, जमीन के हर टुकड़े का मालिकाना हक किसी न किसी को प्राप्त है । जंगल जीवन से रिश्ता खत्म हो रहा है । आजीविका के साधन का, भरण-पोषण से लेकर इनके स्थायी होने तक का रास्ता तय कर चुके हैं या कर रहे हैं । लोगों का जीवन पार्श्वगत संस्कृति से प्रभावित हुआ है या सभी समुदाय समांगी रूप से रहने की तरफ बढ़ रहे हैं । आदिवासी जीवन की तुलना में, गैर आदिवासी जीवन में बदलाव की दौड़ ज्यादा है । आदिवासी समुदाय ने फिर भी अपनी संस्कृति की कुछ जड़ें बचा रखी हैं । जिसका एक अच्छा उदाहरण हैं, "हरियाली त्यौहार, ये त्यौहार कृषि से सम्बंधित अभ्यासों और मान्यताओं को समाहित करता है ।

यह दस्तावेजीकरण ऐसे ही अन्य सांस्कृतिक धरोहरों और उनके दैनिक जीवन में उपयोगी होने को प्रकाश में लाने की एक कोशिश है । दस्तावेजीकरण के समय, इसके पीछे एक सोच कार्य करती है कि "बीते समय से जुड़े रहना कितना जरूरी है" । अगर समुदाय को लगता है कि बीते समय और उनके पूर्वजों की सांस्कृतिक धरोहरों को सहेजना इतना जरूरी है तो यह समुदाय तथाकथित आधुनिक एवं शहरी जीवन और उनकी सांस्कृतिक परम्पराओं के बीच कैसे संतुलन रखेगा । यह दस्तावेज उन बदलावों के बारे में सोचने, विचार करने तथा उन कार्यों या पहलों को दर्शाने का प्रयास है जो कि "बदलाव की इस हवा के बीच सभी चिराग बूझें, तब एक चिंगारी को बचाए रख सकते हैं" ।

इस तरह की एक पहल के बारे में सोचा गया है कि सबसे पहले गोंड विचार के संवहनीय होने एवं इस संस्कृति के विभिन्न कला रूपों के माध्यम से प्रकृति के साथ उनके संबंधों को समझना होगा । ऐसी विभिन्न पहल भी हैं जो इस पत्र (दस्तावेज) के माध्यम से उजागर होंगी/प्रकाश में आएंगी । इस पत्र में उल्लेखित स्थल मध्यप्रदेश के डिंडोरी जिले में हैं । डिंडोरी एक आदिवासी बाहुल्य क्षेत्र है और पेसा (PESA) के अंतर्गत आता है । यह मुख्यतः गोंड जन-जाति द्वारा बसाया गया है इसलिए हमारे सह-शोधकर्ता मुख्य रूप से गोंड जन-जाति के लोग हैं । जिन्होंने इस पत्र को पूरा करने में मदद की है ।

#### परिचय:

हर सभ्यता या समाज अपनी धरोहर और संस्कृति को सहेजना, इनको पुनर्जीवन देना और सुदृढीकरण करना पसन्द करता है और इसमें सकारात्मक भूमिका निभाता है । आदिवासियों में गोंड समाज भी इससे अछूता नहीं हैं । इस समाज ने भी किसी न किसी रूप में अपनी सभ्यता, संस्कृति और रोजमर्रा की जिंदगी में अभ्यास किये जाने वाली कहावतों/ प्रकृति से

जुड़ाव के अभिन्न तरीकों से सम्बंधित विचारों को सहेजा है। यहाँ मुख्यतः कलात्मक और विचारात्मक तरीकों की झलक देखने को मिलेगी। आज के समय में ये कलाकृतियाँ, चित्र इत्यादि गाँव के जीवन से मिट रहे हैं। चूँकि आवास योजनाओं के तहत या खुद से बनाये हुए गाँव के हर एक परिवार के पक्के मकान की दौड़ ने देहाती कच्चे मकान के महत्व को नगण्य कर दिया है। और दीवारों पर बनने वाली मिट्टी की त्रिविमीय कलाकृतियों, ढिकने (जहाँ दीवार और जमीन मिलते हैं) पर व आँगन में बनने वाली रंगीन आकृतियाँ या चित्र प्रचलन से बाहर हो रहे हैं। जिससे सभी परिवारों और एक ही परिवार के सभी सदस्यों को इसमें भागीदारी या इसे सीखने-समझने का अवसर नहीं मिल पा रहा है। "ये चित्र कागज व कैनवास तक सिमट कर रह गये हैं तथा चित्रकारी कुछ ही कुशल कारीगरों तक। ये कलाकृतियाँ और कलाएं देहाती जीवन छोड़कर, बाज़ार की चौखट चूम रहीं हैं।" इसके अतिरिक्त इनकी धार्मिक मान्यताओं गीतों और नृत्यों में अन्य धर्म परम्पराओं का मिश्रण या उससे प्रभावित मालूम पड़ते हैं। हर अगली पीढ़ी पर इनकी संस्कृति और रीतियों के कुछ हिस्से खोते हुए साफ़ नज़र आ-जायेंगे। जैसे गोदना (गुदना) करने की परंपरा, देवी देवताओं की जानकारी एवं इनके पूजा करने के तरीके, गीत बनाने व गाने की परंपरा, पुराने व नए गीतों में प्रकृति से विसंबंधन साफ़ नज़र आएगा।

#### कार्यप्रणाली:

इस शोध कार्य के दौरान गोंड समुदाय के गावों में घूम-घूम कर, गोंड समाज के कई जानकार एवं समाज के आम जन से बातचीत में और गाँव के परिदृश्य से जो भी समझ पाये उन्हीं पर कार्य किया गया है। इस अध्ययन में व्यक्तिगत एवं सामूहिक चर्चा प्रक्रिया से प्राप्त जानकारी केवल डिंडोरी जिले के गावों से ही ली गई है। इसमें सभी उम्र के लोगों से संस्कृति और कला के विभिन्न पहलुओं पर चर्चा हुई है। इस कार्य को करने से पहले, प्रत्येक समय पर ग्रामीणों से इस पर सहमति ली गई है।

#### बोलती तस्वीरें:

ये तस्वीरें मात्र नहीं हैं, ये कैनवास पर उकेरे आदिवासी समाज के वो चिन्ह हैं जो बार-बार समाज और समाज में रहने वाले लोगों को उनके जीवन की उन अन्य जरूरतों को दिखाते हैं, जिन्हें हमने खुली आँखों से देखना बंद कर दिया है। ये चित्र हमारा जमीन से जुड़ाव दिखाते हैं। ये चित्र, प्रकृति और हमारे अस्तित्व का कारण रहे पंचभूतों का महत्व बताते हैं।

- संसाधनों का दीर्घकालिक उपयोग
- जंगलों की चिरस्थायी कटाई
- मिलकर रहना
- जल जंगल जमीन जानवर व जन का आपसी रिस्ता
- पेड़-पौधों व जानवरों की महत्ता
- चित्रविद्या/रंगसाजी - प्रकृति और जुड़ाव



### चुई चिड़िया

चुई चिड़िया बोलते समय घर चुई-घर चुई कहती है । यह चिड़िया मानसून शुरू होने पर, बारिश के माह आने से पहले बोलती है यह सामान्यतः सुबह (भोर काल में) के समय बोलती है । यह भी मान्यता है कि यह चिड़िया सभी पक्षियों, वन्य जीवों व किसानों को जागरूक होने, बारिश आने से पहले अपने आशियाने घर घोंसले ठीक करने को कहती है । यह चिड़िया मनुष्यों के सानिध्य में रहना पसंद करती है अर्थात इसका निवास गाँव के करीब ही होता है ।



### हिरनों का झुण्ड

हिरनों के झुण्ड बारिश आने से पहले एक विशेष आवाज करते हैं, यदि 4 के झुण्ड में से 3 हिरन को आवाज करते हुए देखा गया हो तो माना जाता है कि इस वर्ष 3 माह अच्छी बारिश होगी और 1 माह अच्छी बारिश नहीं होगी । इस चित्र में हिरनों के साथ एक चिड़िया भी दिखाई गयी है, यह चिड़िया घर चुई-घर चुई की आवाज से बारिश शुरू होने अर्थात मानसून आने की सूचना देती है । यह सभी संकेत किसानों व कृषि कार्य के लिए महत्वपूर्ण माने जाते हैं ।



### पाताल लोक के हंस

ऐसा माना जाता है कि इन हंसों को महाभारत काल में पाताल लोक से पकड़कर भीम लाये थे। भीम पांच पांडवों में से एक थे जो सभी भाईयों में सबसे शक्तिशाली थे। वह एक बार पाताल लोक घूमने गए तो वहां उन्हें एक रौशनी दिखाई दी। चूँकि पाताल लोक में अँधेरा था रौशनी का अनुशरण करते हुए वहां पहुँचने पर पता चला कि ये हिरण हैं, ये वही हिरण हैं जिसके सिर पर कुट्ट प्रकाशमान रहता है। पाताल लोकीय हंस अपना रूप भी बदल लेते थे ये वहां देवी के रूप में रहते थे, तथा शेष हंस उनकी सहेलियां हैं।

इस तरह जब भीम इन हंसों को पृथ्वी पर लाये तो, उनके रहने के लिए पृथ्वी पर अनुकूल स्थान नहीं था तो सभी हंस अपना स्वरूप बदल कर "टी-टी" चिड़िया के रूप में यहाँ रहने लगे। "टी-टी" डिंडोरी क्षेत्र की भाषा का शब्द है। यह चिड़िया सामान्यतः नदियों के किनारे पायी जाती है। इस चिड़िया को रात में उलटे पैर सोने की आदत है इसका कोई मनोवैज्ञानिक कारण है चूँकि यह पाताल लोक का जीव है जहाँ अँधेरा रहता है इस तरह वह अँधेरे से उजाला देखता है तो इसे रात में आभाश है ये चन्द्रमा, आकाश, तारे सब मेरे ऊपर गिर जायेंगे। यह पक्षी सामान्यतः चार अंडे देता है। यह पक्षी घोंसला नहीं बनाता यह खेतों में ही अंडे देता है। यदि गाँव में किसी एक किसान ने "टी-टी" के अंडे देख लिए तो वह इनकी गिनती करता है। तथा किसान लोग आपस में बात करते हैं कि मैंने टी-टी के तीन अंडे जुड़े हुए देखे तथा एक अलग, तो इसका मतलब होता है कि तीन माह अच्छी बारिश होगी तथा एक माह नहीं।



### बड़ा देव की पूजा

चित्र के मध्य में बड़ा देव को दिखाया गया है तथा बड़ा देव के ऊपर की तरफ कुछ पेड़-पौधे दिखाए गए हैं जो जंगल के अस्तित्व व आदिवासी समाज में जंगल के महत्त्व का प्रतीक हैं। बड़ा देव के दोनों तरफ दो लोग हैं वो पूजा कर रहे हैं तथा पूजा सामग्री में बाना (एक प्रकार का वाद्ययंत्र), महुआ तथा मडिया मुख्या माने जाते हैं।



### अभिषेक शेर

एक पंडित, जो गाँव-गाँव भिक्षा मांगता है। एक बार जब वो जंगल से गुजरता है तो जंगल में एक गुफा मिलती है जिसमें शेर रहता है। शेर पंडित को घेर लेता है, पंडित के समझाने पर जब वो नहीं मानता है तो पंडित शाप दे देता है जिससे शेर का शरीर मछली का हो जाता है और चेहरा शेर का ही रहता है। इस कहानी के माध्यम से पूर्व गोंड समाज में शाप की मान्यता बताई गई है।



### अहिरावण और बड़ा देव

इस चित्र में मछली की आकृति धारण किये हुए बड़ा देव को दिखाया गया है, बड़ा देव देवता हैं वो किसी भी रूप में रह सकते हैं। आकृति में जो पेड़-पौधे पक्षी दिखाए गए हैं ये आदिवासी समाज का जंगल से रिश्ता बताते हैं। बैठा हुआ व्यक्ति अहिरावण हैं अर्थात यह चित्र पाताल लोक का है। यहाँ अहिरावण जो बड़ा देव की पूजा कर रहा है। तथा यह हिरण पाताल लोक का हिरण हैं जिसके सिर पर कुछ प्रकाशमान रहता है जिससे रौशनी होती है। यह हिरण अहिरावण की सवारी माना जाता है।



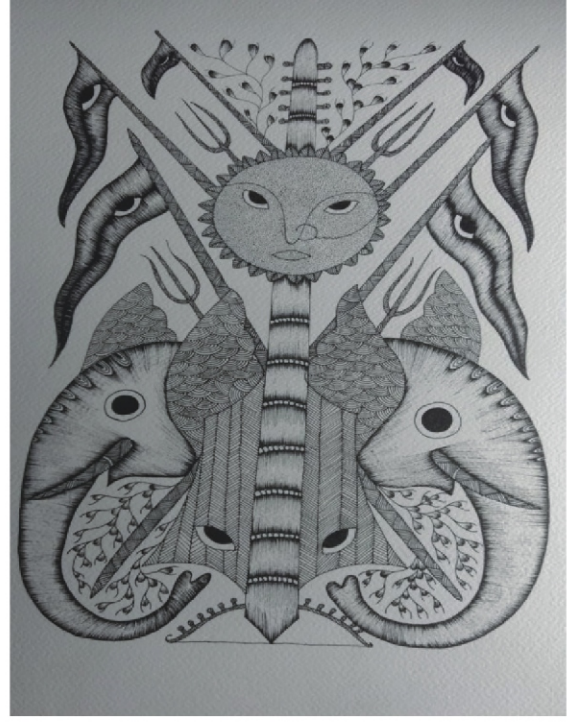
### खूटा-बाघ

इस चित्र में एक महिला दिखाई गई है, जो कि किसी के खेत से साग-भाजी चोरी कर रही है, तो उसी समय उस महिला को चोरी करने के कारन खूटा-बाघ ने पकड़ लिया। गोंड समाज में मान्यता है कि खेत के किनारे किसी पेड़ को काटने के बाद (जड़ से न काटकर) उसके तने का थोड़ा भाग यदि वहीं छोड़ देते हैं तो वह उस खेत की रखवाली करता है। उसी को खूटा- बाघ कहते हैं।



### महादेव-शिवा

ऐसा माना जाता है जब भगवान विष्णु इस सृष्टि की रचना कर रहे थे तो शिवजी अपनी ध्यान मुद्रा में रहे और जब महादेव ने कीट, सर्प, बिच्छू, बाघ एवं अन्य जंगली विषैले जीवों की रचना की तो उससे पहले महादेव ने गोंड जनजाति की रचना की । ये कहा जा सकता है कि गोंड जनजाति महादेव की पहली रचना हैं ।



### धर्म, मान्यताएं और प्रकृति

गोंड जनजाति के सबसे छोटे भाई प्रधान ट्राइब, जिनको बताया कि तुम सभी गोंड आदिवासियों के यहाँ जाकर पूजा-पाठ करना एवं बाना बजाना । अर्थात् प्रधान ट्राइब गोंड आदिवासियों के पंडित कहे जाते हैं । आज के समय में यह प्रथा समाप्त होती जा रही है । बघेल व कुशराम समाज के लोग सूरज निकलने से पहले, विशेष तौर पर दिवाली त्यौहार में हाथी के दर्शन करते थे, लोगों का मानना था कि हाथी बल-शक्ति का प्रतीक है इससे उनको ताकत/बल मिलता है । इसी प्रकार से इस समाज में बाघ पूजा का प्रचालन भी रहा है ।



### आदिवासी जीवन व प्राकृतिक मान्यताएं

इस चित्र में विभिन्न जानवरों और कीटों के चित्रों से गणेश जैसी एक आकृति उभरती है। यह मान्यता है कि गणेश चतुर्थी के दिन गोंड समाज की लड़कियां साल पेड़ की पूजा करती हैं, ताकि उन्हें अच्छे वर की प्राप्ति होती है। ये चित्र बताता है कि गोंड समाज में प्रकृति द्वारा दिए जाने वाले संकेतों को किस तरह मानव जीवन व सामाजिक मान्यताओं से जोड़ा गया है । चित्र में दिखने वाला चूहाको किसान मित्र कहा जाता है । अगर सर्प किसी के स्वप्न में आता है तो भविष्य में उसे धन की प्राप्ति होती है। तथा नेवले अगर रास्ते में जाते समय नेवला रास्ता काट जाता है तो इसे शुभ माना जाता है ।

चित्रकारी व इसमें प्राकृतिक व कृत्रिम चीजों का इस्तेमाल :

इन चित्रों को बनाने में जो भी रंग उपयोग में लाये जाते थे वो सभी प्राकृतिक चीजों से बनाये जाते थे या फिर सीधे ही प्राकृतिक चीजें रंग के रूप में उपयोग लाई जाती थीं ।

रंग (Colour)	स्रोत (Natural Source)
भूरा (Grey)	मूडमिझनी मिट्टी
काला (Black)	कोयला
पीला (Yellow)	रामराज मिट्टी
हरा (Green)	सेमी का बेल, हरी पत्तियां
लाल (Red)	लाल मिट्टी
सफ़ेद (off White)	चुई मिट्टी
कुछ पीला एवं गाढ़ा भूरा रंग	गोबर

इन स्रोतों के अतिरिक्त रंगों के लिए पेड़ों (जैसे साझा का पेड़) की छालों व फूलों का उपयोग भी किया जाता रहा है । रंगने के लिए कुचिया के रूप में दातून उपयोग में ली जाती थी जो सामान्यतः बरमसिया, बबूल, गंजी (करंज) एवं निगोडी की लकड़ी होती थी ।

आज के समय में, चूंकि पेंटिंग्स का बाजारीकरण होने से तथा ज्यादा मात्रा में इसकी खरीद होने से, इनको गाँव में घरों की दीवार पर बनाने तथा प्राकृतिक रंगों एवं अन्य सामग्रियों के उपयोग की प्रथा मिटती जा रही है ।

वास्तुकला और चित्रकारी :

चित्रकारी (दीवारों व जमीन पर) व भीतीचित्र ( दीवारों पर द्विविमीय व त्रिविमीय चित्र) का प्रचलन गोंड सभ्यता में हमेशा से ही रहा है । इसकी झलक गोंड संस्कृति की धरोहर हो चुकी इमारतों में देखी जा सकती है । कुछ गावों में आज भी ऐसे घर हैं जो मिट्टी से बनाए गए थे और उनकी दीवारों व आँगन में चित्रकारी व भीतिचित्र मौजूद हैं । इनमें से लगभग सभी चित्र जन जीवन की रोज मर्रा के जीवन के कार्यों व प्रकृति (जल-जंगल-जमीन-जानवर-जन) से उनके सम्बन्ध व महत्व को दर्शाते हैं ।

अगर डिंडोरी जिले की बात करें तो यहाँ लोग घर की दीवारों, आँगन व लकड़ी के दरवाजों पर मुख्यतः चित्रकारी करते थे । आवास योजना आने के साथ-साथ भीतिचित्र व ढिकना समाप्त होते गये । दरवाजे अधिकतर लोग बाजार से बने हुए या गाँव में ही किसी विशेष कारीगर से बनवाकर लाते हैं जिन पर अब उतनी बारीकी से चित्र नहीं गढ़े जाते हैं । और आँगन के चित्रों की बात करें तो अभी के मकानों से आँगन ही गायब होते दिख रहे हैं ।

बहुत कम गाँवों में मिट्टी के कच्चे घर व उनमें से बहुत कम घरों में ये चित्र बाकी हैं । गाँवों में घूमने पर कुछ चित्र देखने को मिले हैं:



चित्र: मिट्टी से बने कच्चे घरों की दीवारों पर चित्र



चित्र: मिट्टी से बने कच्चे घरों की दीवारों पर ढिकना



चित्र: मिट्टी से बने कच्चे घर के आंगन की चित्रकारी की तस्वीर



चित्र: दरवाजों व इनकी चौखट पर गढ़े चित्र

**हर नयी पीढ़ी तक चित्रविद्या का स्थानांतरण :**

सम्पूर्ण जिले में मात्र एक गाँव (पाटनगढ़) ऐसा है जहाँ चित्रकारी की कला को गाँव स्तर पर लोग महत्व देते हैं आज इस गाँव में चित्रकारी एवं इसका व्यवसाय भी कई परिवारों के लिए आजीविका का साधन हैं । जिले के अन्य कुछ गाँव में भी दो-चार गोंड चित्रकार हैं जिनमें से अधिकतर यहीं से सीखे हैं । सरकारी दस्तावेजों में स्थान तथा वैश्विक स्तर पर ये गाँव ख्याति पा गया है । 90 के दशक में यहाँ के भजू श्याम जी ने अपने आजीविका चलने के लिए उनके चाचा जी के कहने पर भारत भवन भोपाल में चित्रों में रंग भरना सीखा और फिर चित्रकारी में लगन लगती गयी । आज वह एक प्रसिद्ध चित्रकार बन गए हैं, उन्हें सन 2018 में भारत सरकार ने पद्मश्री से नवाजा । इससे पहले वे कई देशों में भ्रमण कर चुके थे और कई प्रसिद्ध स्थानों पर इन्होंने चित्रकारी की है । कई किताबों में भी इन्होंने अपने चित्र व कहानियां दी हैं । आज इस गाँव में लोग एक कार्यशाला में बैठकर चित्र बनाते हैं तथा इनका व्यवसाय करते हैं । परन्तु यह देखने को मिला नयी पीढ़ी की चित्रकारी में कहानियां खो रही हैं । यहाँ की पीढ़ी उसी कार्य-शाला में गाँव के बड़ों द्वारा तथा प्रशिक्षण कार्यक्रमों के दौरान बाहरी प्रशिक्षक द्वारा सीखते हैं । अर्थात् कहा जा सकता है कि बाहरी प्रशिक्षक और धन्धागीर व्यक्तियों के कारण भी चित्रों से यहाँ के जीवन की कहानियां खो रहीं हैं और बाजार की मांग के हिसाब से चित्र बनाये जा रहे हैं ।



**चित्रकारी व गोंड कला का आधुनिक रूप/सोच व स्थिति :**

ऐसा कहा जा सकता है कि गोंड चित्रकारी गोंड समाज का आईना/प्रतिचित्रण हैं । ये चित्रकारी गोंड समाज के जनजीवन, दिनचर्या एवं सामाजिक व धार्मिक मान्यताओं तथा जंगल जल जमीन व अन्य प्राणियों से गोंड आदिवासी जीवन का संबंध और जुड़ाव को दर्शाती है । जैसे-जैसे विश्व भर में बदलाव हुए उसका प्रभाव जंगलों में बसे गोंड समाज

पर भी पड़ा। जैसे सरकार की योजनायें, जिनकी कोशिश रही कि सभी समाज के लोगो को सामान सुविधाएँ मिलें और सामाजिक व मानसिक सभी एक धारा में बहें। इसकी दौड़ में व आसानी से प्राप्त होने वाले (परन्तु संवहनीय नहीं) आजीविका के साधनों को जुटाने में आदिवासी समुदाय अपने पुराने तौर-तरीकों से दूर होता गया। एक विशेष कारण हैं कि गोंड समाज की बात मजबूती से रखने के लिए शायद प्रतिनिधि नहीं बचा था और न ही सरकारों ने शिक्षा पद्धति में इस समाज की लिपि, भाषा, बोली, कला इत्यादि को इतना महत्व दिया। जिससे संस्कृति, कला और परंपरा को मुख्य धारा कहे जाने वाले समुदाय के साथ बहते हुए भी गोंड समाज जिन्दा रख पाता और अपनी अगली पीढ़ी को सौंपते रहने की प्रथा सामुदायिक तौर पर चलती रहती।

लगभग साठ व सत्तर के दशक के बाद यहाँ के गाँवों में गोंड समाज के लोग जब गाँव व जंगलों की देहलीज लांघ, शहरों में व जंगल के बाहर दुनियाँ की यात्रा करने लगे तो देश दुनियाँ की मुख्य धारा कहे जाने वाले जन-जीवन ने उन्हें आकर्षित किया। और यहाँ के गाँव बदलने लगे मकानों में ईंट सीमेंट लगने लगा, दीवारों से मिट्टी वाले चित्र गायब होने लगे और दीवार के किनारों से ढिकना। अब के घरों में आँगन नहीं दिखते जिससे उनमें रंगोली या चित्रकारी का सवाल ही नहीं है। नई पीढ़ी उन स्थानों (विद्यालयों) पर शिक्षा पाने लगी जहाँ गोंड समाज की कला एवं संस्कृति से सम्बंधित कोई चर्चा या कोई अध्ययन नहीं कराया जाता। अर्थात् हर अगली पीढ़ी अपने समाज की पहचान संस्कृति, कला, भाषा, बोली, लिपि से दूर जाने लगी। लगभग 90 के दशक में दुनियाँ के बाजार ने जब कैनवास व कागजों पर बनी पेंटिंग को कीमत देनी शुरू की तो इस क्षेत्र की चित्रकारी कुछ जिन्दा होने लगी। कला जिन्दा तो हुयी पर चित्र और कला घर के दीवारों व गोंड समाज के स्वयं के सामाजिक चित्रण, कहानियों व मान्यताओं से उतर कर कागजों पर बस एक खूबसूरत तस्वीर बनते जा रहे हैं। "तात्पर्य ये है कि एक तरफ चित्रकारी को वैश्विक स्तर पर पहचान मिली है और दूसरी तरफ यह कला संकुचित होती जा रही है या कुछ ही कलाकारों तक सिमटती जा रही है। जो काम घर-परिवार के सभी सदस्यों को करना आता था आज वह गाँव-जिले के कुछ ही कलाकारों तक सिमट कर रह गया है।"

आज के समय में अधिकतर पेंटिंग्स कागज की सीट या कैनवास पर बनायीं जाती हैं। चित्रों के और अधिक बाजारीकरण करने के लिए इन गोंड पेंटिंग्स को विभिन्न प्रकार के वस्तुओं पर सजाया जाने लगा है। जैसे टिफिन, चाय की केटली, लैंप, पहेली खेलने वाले ब्लॉक के टुकड़ों पर इत्यादि।





चित्र: लैप एबम चाय की केतली पर चित्रकारी

### गोदना:

गोंड समाज में गोदना केवल महिलायें ही पहनती हैं, इसकी मान्यता है (एक पहलू) कि यह गोंड आदिवासी समाज की पहचान हैं एवं मृत्यु होने पर केवल गोदना ही साथ जाता है। शरीर के अलग अलग हिस्सों पर गोदना कराने का अलग-अलग अर्थ होता है जैसे सीने पर गोदना कराने का अर्थ है कि मृत्यु पश्चात् देवी-माँ से भेंट (दर्शन) होती है। लोगों का मानना है कि रिश्ते में आने वाले लोग जैसे भाई, बेटा या बहन का लड़का या पिता की तरफ से भेंट के रूप में भी ये गोदना पहने जाते हैं इसमें होने वाला खर्च भेंटकर्ता के द्वारा वहन किया जाता है। गोंड आदिवासियों में यह गोदना शरीर के कुछ हिस्सों में ही पहना जाता है, जबकि बैगा आदिवासियों में यह गोदना शरीर के लगभग सभी हिस्सों में करते हैं।

गाँव के लोगों का मानना यह भी है कि (दूसरा पहलू) इस समाज के लोग त्वचा को जलाकर (गरम धातु के स्पर्श से) या गोदना करा कर शरीर के जोड़ों व मासपेशियों में दर्द से निजात पाते हैं।

गोंड समाज के बाहर की दुनिया के लोग यह भी मानते हैं कि (तीसरा पहलू) अंग्रेजों द्वारा सुंदर स्त्रियों को घरों से उठाकर ले जाने, हिंसा और ज्यादाती करने के कारण इस समाज के पुरुषों व बुजुर्ग महिलाओं द्वारा युवा स्त्रियों के शरीर पर गोदना करने की प्रथा शुरू की गई जिससे स्त्रियाँ कुरूप दिख सकें और अंग्रेज शाशकों की नजर से दूर हो सकें। परन्तु गावों में चर्चा के दौरान इस समाज के लोगों द्वारा इस बात का जिक्र नहीं किया गया।

हमारे शोध के दौरान पाया गया कि 90 के दशक या उसके बाद में पैदा हुई पीढ़ी की महिलाएं/लड़कियां गोदना करवाना पसंद नहीं करती और इसे कराने में दर्द भी होता है। कुछ महिलाओं को बस हाथों की कलाईयों पर और पैरों में एड़ी के ऊपर पहनना पसंद होता है। इस पीढ़ी के पुरुष (शौकीन लोग) भी हाथों में गोदना कराते हैं।

## गीत-संगीत और वाद्ययंत्र:

गोंड आदिवासियों में 18 प्रकार के वाद्ययंत्र होते हैं | जिसमें मांदरी ढोल (इसे डिंडोरी जिले की क्षेत्रीय भाषा के लोग मांदर कहते हैं ) एक विशेष/मुख्य यन्त्र है | इसके अतिरिक्त निशान ढोल, गोंगा ढोल, ढोल परांग, तुर्की ढोल, धुविर ढोल, तोतली, चितगुल इत्यादि |<sup>[1]</sup>

परन्तु शोध के दौरान डिंडोरी क्षेत्र के गाँव, विशेषकर झरना घुघरी में यहाँ के आदिवासी समुदाय द्वारा जिन वाद्य यंत्रों का जिक्र किया वो हैं वांसुरी, झांझ, मंजीर (मंजीरे), गुदुम्ब, टिमकी, ढोलक, मृदंग, नगाड़े, तुरही व मादर (मादरी ढोल) - इसका बेलनाकार हिस्सा मिट्टी से बनाकर आग में पकाया जाता है तथा दोनों पलड़े बकरी की खाल से बनाये जाते हैं।

मादरी ढोल के साथ किया जाने वाला नृत्य, “गोंड आदिवासी लोक नृत्य” कहलाता है। सैला-रीना भी इनमें से एक हैं | ये नृत्य व इनमें पहने जाने वाले आभूषणों की प्रथा पीढ़ी दर पीढ़ी कम होती जा रही है | इस क्षेत्र में 90 के दशक के बाद की पीढ़ी के कुछ ही लोग इस नृत्य को कर पाते हैं व इसके बारे में जानते हैं | और उसके बाद की पीढ़ी के लोग तो इस बारे में जानने वाले कुछ ही बच्चे हैं | 21वीं सदी की पीढ़ी के कुछ ही लोगों के पास मोबाइल फ़ोन में ये गीत शेष रह गये हैं परन्तु अभ्यास में ना के बराबर हैं |

सैला-रीना, ददरिया और करमा गीत जो कि पेटिंग्स की तरह ही समाज के जीने के तरीकों, प्रथाओं और मान्यताओं का शाब्दिक चित्रण हैं इनको जानने, बनाने व गाने का उत्साह और शौक आज के युवाओं व स्कूली बच्चों में नहीं रहा है |

## गोंडी-लोकगीत

- रीना

“री रीना री....शुआ हो

बा भाजी तोरें नई पायों कि शुअना हो, आय गए हैं ससुरे लिवायं

ससुरे के साथ में मैं रास्ता कैसे रेंगू कि बेरी- बेरी घुंघटा लिवाय

शुअना....कि बेरी- बेरी घुंघटा लिवाय

दुसरे लिबौआ देवर जी आये, रीना री...

बा भाजी छौंके नई पायों कि शुअना हो, आय गए हैं ससुरे लिवायं री री रीना री

देवर के साथ में रास्ता कैसे रेंगू की बेरी बेरी खेलें गुलाल

शुअना बेरी बेरी खेलें गुलाल....”

- कुछ अन्य प्रकार के गोंडी लोकगीत: सैला, ददरिया, करमा

## अन्य गीत

यहाँ के समाज के लोगों का मानना है कि ये गीत भी गोंड समाज के लोक गीत हैं परन्तु इस बारे में और जानने पर तथा अन्य स्थानों के बारे में पता करने पर समझ आया कि वो सभी गीत या तो बुंदेलखंड के हैं या वहाँ से प्रेरित हैं जो संपूर्ण रूप से हिन्दू देवी देवताओं की पूजा-आराधना या अन्य रीति-रिवाजों के समय गाए जाते हैं ।

फागः (होली पर गाये जाने वाले गीत)

“दहिया में झुमकिया मोरी गिरी,  
मोरी गिरी-मोरी गिरी. . .  
तालों में गिरी तलैया में गिरी  
धोबिन बिचारी को चोरी लगी  
दहिया में झुमकिया मोरी गिरी ।”  
- - -

जसः (नवरात्रि में गाये जाने वाले देवी गीत)

“जय काली कल्याणी हैं हो माय,  
जय काली कल्याणी हैं हो माय,  
मैया के लिए मैंने बेंदी मंगाई  
बेंदी मंगाई मैंने हाथों से पहनाई  
मैया को लग गयी नजरिया रे ।”  
- - -

सोहर गीतः (बच्चों के जन्म के समय गाये जाने वाले गीत )

“जेल खाने में यशोदा का लाला हुआ,  
कंशों से बचाना राजब होगया ।”  
- - -

ब्याह गीतः (शादी-विवाह के समय गाये जाने वाले गीत)

“बरनी चलो रे हमारे देश,  
नौरंगिया लेहुं रस की भरी ।”

गारी गीतः (शादी के समय दूसरे पक्ष को गीतों में गाली दी जाती है)

### धार्मिक मान्यताएं और बदलाव :

यहाँ के कुछ गाँव में लोग आज भी में लोग राम-राम भी नहीं बोलते वो अभिवादन में जय सेवा बोलते हैं गाँव के लोगों का मानना है कि उनके देव बड़ा देव , ठाकुर देव इत्यादि हैं, और रावण-अहिरावण को अपना पूर्वज मानते हैं ऐसा कुछ पेंटिंग्स में भी देखने को मिलेगा । वहीं गोंड समाज का एक तबका जो बड़ा देव से शिवजी तक पहुँच गया है और उससे आगे भी जो लोग रामायण की पूजा करने लगे हैं तथा अभिवादन में राम-राम या सीताराम कहने लगे हैं और गोंड मान्यताओं के साथ में सभी हिन्दू रीति-रिवाजों व देवी-देवताओं की पूजा तक पहुँच गए हैं । वहीं कुछ लोग रावण को मानते हैं और यहाँ की एक घटना है जिसमें रामायण पुस्तक को जलाया भी गया है । शोध की आगामी यात्रा में आपको इसके आगे लेकर चलेंगे ।

सन्दर्भ (References) : मैं भी भारत (यू-ट्यूब चैनल)



"We (Gonds) speak our own dialect, Farsi, among ourselves. But our younger generations speak Hindi only - they are exposed to a whole range of films and a culture that we cannot relate with. I feel sad that we are losing a part of our tradition like this and I am unable to motivate my own grandchildren to speak our traditional language"- Gangaram, Jharna Ghugri village of Dindori in Madhya

# Reflection on ASAR workshop

Imran Amin



Reflecting on my participation as an external observer in the ASAR workshop, I must first acknowledge the diversity of informational representation of the journey so far. Across the song, music, art, food, life stories of communities and individuals, and exhibitions on the reflection of ASAR's journey and data pattern of baseline survey. I was engrossed by knowledge of and in practice. Having said so, I turn my attention to the project and what I understood about its journey so far, and questions and clarifications vis-a-vis concepts, theories, and methodologies of ASAR. Therefore, in this reflective piece, I first offer a brief section on my understanding of the genesis of the project, its contextual location in forest peripheries, the arrival at research questions, and the course of action taken so far. I must admit that these reflections are based on what I listened to and experienced during the workshop and some notes on the same, discussion with various team members of ASAR from APU, PRADAN, and nominated village members and the text circulated of the journey so far.

Having laid out my understanding, I critically reflected on the concept of 'skilling' and KHUSHHAAL ZINDAGI as well as the correlation between them. Interrogation of skilling is done through engagement with original source of the concept from Stone work and its application in context of forest peripheries. KHUSHHAAL ZINDAGI

is interrogated on the basis of my participation during the workshop. Finally, I raise some queries regarding the methodological approach of Action Research, the Lewinian approach of the project and divergence of the process summarised in the paper circulated as well as narration of the journey so far. In doing so I hope to be reflection board for the ASAR team to fine tune the journey ahead.

## ASAR project

The genesis of the ASAR projects emerges from experiences of grassroots development actor PRADAN, and academic development researchers of APU. While the former was puzzled by "elusive welfare outcome of their action" and struggles in pursuit of "donor driven agendas", the latter were "tired of infinite gestation period of translating knowledge into action" and were under constant "pressure to publish." With such experience, PRADAN and APU participated in a dialogue in December 2017 for an inclusive co-enquiry into developmental challenges in the context of tribal population living in forest peripheries to elicit ideas and prototype for sustainable integration of life and livelihood. As state and civil society actors have failed to engage with the development contradiction emerging in the tribal world by simplistic intervention with short term focus.

Communities on the forest peripheries depend on farmland and forest alike and are more close knit communities than non-tribal villages. However, they have been increasingly mainstreamed in terms of agricultural practices by a herd mentality in following crop variety and/or forced into didactic learning through contact with agro-biz actors. This has led to an increasing dependence on market for input and output of agriculture to become successful farmers.

Small farm size and limited capital act as barrier to successful agricultural intensification by



conventional 'green revolution' means. And in the process, there is loss of ancestral, intergenerational wisdom, indigenous agricultural practices as bookish knowledge replaces traditional skills, and community feeling is lost in individual pursuit of material well being and rights.

In this context, the ASAR project explores how to adapt skills to balance individual interest with community well being, productivity with sustainability, bookish knowledge and education with traditional skills and dependence on market with collective autonomy? How to articulate essentiality of understanding agriculture as an individual enterprise based on common communal resources? How do we address the prevalent tribal farmer's dilemma of relatively intact communal socio-ecological fabric amidst individualistic material aspirations? Ironically, what is being lost in this trade-off is not even a question amongst the community. Thus, ASAR aims at generating knowledge on contextual development model and translating it into action on the ground.

Of the three field site- Jharna, Ghugri and Jana are part of the fifth scheduled areas and have more the 60% of tribal population. Chattaniya has the lowest percentage of tribal population. Jharna, Ghugri and Chattaniya are inhabited by Gonds and Jana is inhabited by the Oraon community. Presentation on Gondi art and discussion on Oraon music revealed the cohabitation of these communities with nature. However, homogenized and universalized development is attempting to make small farmers out of communities on forest peripheries. Subsistence farming is being replaced by market based intensive farming and non-farm produces for urban consumer to enhance income. This has led to individualization and intensification of peasantry among the tribal community.

In terms of agricultural practices, Ghughri receives the highest rainfall while Jana has the highest net sown area and fertilizer consumption. PRADAN has been working in all three sites and has initiated micro credit groups, established broiler unit, and introduced commercial farming with external input. However the community is losing interest in these initiatives. Farming is not yet fully commercial but is increasingly moving towards it. So in Ghughri, millet cultivation is getting replaced by rice cultivation, and in Chataniha hybrid seeds of rice and wheat replace all other indigenous crops but such indigenous farming is not completely lost. In Jana, crops cultivated for self consumption are still using indigenous seeds and practices but those for market involve hybrid seeds and green revolution practices. Also mango trees are being planted for commercial purposes but other fruit bearing trees grow naturally and thus are reducing in numbers.

Against this background, the ASAR attempts at sustainable intensification with socio-ecological systems approach to overcome 'tribal farmer's dilemma.' Sustainable intensification attempts to balance environmental, economic and social objectives in agriculture to produce more output per unit of land, input and time with less environmental impact. With socio-ecological systems, the need is to build complex adaptive systems at the tri-junction of people-ecology-development that skills the farmer to address livelihood needs while adding to the resilience of the socio-ecological system. Thus ASAR seeks suitable strategies to adapt traditional skills to facilitate necessary adaptations to outside world and it's material aspirations while maintaining the distinct socio-ecological strengths. Oscillating between Samuh (collective) and Samaj (community), the project emphasis is on collective co-existence, value system and wisdom amidst market driven, monetized individual agriculture that is deskilling them as mere beneficiary rather than participants. Thus, the project aims to revive local collective norms and institutions for collective deliberations in decision making and over evaluation for adaptive skilling.

### **Conceptual, Theoretical, and Methodological reflection on ASAR**

Adaptive skilling lies at the core of ASAR purpose. The text circulated during the workshop and in my discussions with the team, Stone's work has been

cited (2004; 2016) and suggested as the source of the concept of skilling, seen as “use of information for adaptive management of practice”. Further, its application in the agricultural context highlights that conventionally extensive agriculture has worked with scales of production dependent on experimentation and innovation, while intensive non industrial agriculture requires management skill. However, green revolution technology based agricultural intensification led to reliance of external inputs. However, Stone himself borrows concept of de-skilling from the industrial sector involving replacement of skilled Labour by machines. So he acknowledges the limits of the concept when applied to agriculture specifically bio technology of genetic modification of seeds and limits of environmental learning in terms of observation, social learning's biases and didactic learning external interest in case of agriculture. This suggests that there is a further need to adapt the concept to the context of 'forest peripheries' and its livelihood embedded in agro-forestry that baseline data suggest.

This requires the need to distinguish between skill and know-how (Dhar and Chakrabarty, 2019). While skills can exist primarily to practice and can be designed into training module that was once participated it can be acquired (example- the skill training module of DDUGKY). However, know-how exists in practice and can only be realized in the experience of practice. It is here that ASAR could conceptually adapt skills to the context of forest peripheries and know-how of livelihood that lies in the tribal life world with its relational rather than rational logic embedded culturally across Jal-Jangal-Jameen-Jan-Janwar (5J).

Liking Adaptive Skill to Khushhaal Zindagi is not conceptually or theoretically explained in the discussion and text of the workshop. The idea of balancing sustainability with materiality does seem to be rooted in the idea of green revolution, but with their emphasis in traditional knowledge and community runs counter to the idea of bio-technology that greening green revolution is based in. Further, Khushhaal Zindagi is used as a word rather than a concept with a presumed component of it. Etymologically, in Hindustani or urdu, *khush* mean good rather than happy. *Haal* denotes a state or condition of being. Thus *khushhaal* is being in good condition, which for ASAR is in terms of the socio-ecological systems.

The ASAR song speaks of balancing between farm and forest; traditional and modern, scientific and customary knowledge, and migration and loss that lies therein, and between collective belonging and individual freedom. This involves a complex web of knowing-doing-relating-being-experiencing life wherein *Khushhaal zindagi* is as much a journey as destination, aptly put as “*parishram ka phal khatta-meetha hota hai*”(fruits of labour are sweet and sour). The argument that adaptive skills will lead to *Khushhaal Zindagi* is presumed without elaborating the basis of such presumption as baseline data suggest inter-generational diversity of aspiration and meaning of *Khushhaal Zindagi*, i.e. material-individual of the younger generation and non-material, collective of the older generation.

Methodologically, ASAR takes an instrumental view of action research drawing on the lewinian model that test theory in practice. Thus taking sustainable intensification within a socio-ecological system through in situ development of modular approach is believed to be the journey towards *khushaal zindagi*. The question that lingers is can *khushaal zindagi* be a function of kausal and needs further elaboration rather the presumption that exist. This emanates from an under-theorized co-relation between information (about role of agro-ecology) and meaning (of *khushaal zindagi*) which is rooted in the colonialism of philosophy and methodology of social sciences. And yet, ASAR aims to, in my understanding, bring about a cognitive revolution that would take in-situ wisdom, rather than mere knowledge based in experiment, rooted in a relational understanding based on experience.

In its methodological plan, ASAR builds on socio-ecological systematic approach to sustainable agricultural intensification carried over by four overlapping stages: identifying geographies and co-



researchers; verifying and documenting collected information about socio-ecological change; building in situ prototype of socio-ecological sustainability; intervention for institutionalizing sustainable agricultural intensification. These stages reflect the lewinian action research cycles of fact-finding leading to plan leading to action and back to fact finding about result of action. The baseline data of the three villages were collected on issues of landholding pattern, cropping pattern, trees on farm, livestock, food sufficiency, and indebtedness. The designing of the methodological tools were designed by the PRADAN APU meeting in Jabalpur. Thus transect walk, induction process, focus group discussion about meaning of khushaal zindagi and role of agriculture in it for individuals and the community where method of the first phase of this project. The usual village meeting place (of SHGs) within homogenous caste-class in tribal world about what is the purpose of the project (as per meeting of Dec 2017), of the research question finalized at Jabalpur meeting, and of visioning plan in Bangalore.

This hierarchy of meetings between PRADAN-APU, PRADAN team meetings, meetings between ASAR project team and nominated village members, and between villagers with the methodological design at the top followed at the bottom does not speak of its adaptation in the context. It is also the possible reason for limits of mobilization of male member of the community especially beyond the pre-existing SHGs structure developed by PRADAN's

intervention. It also has to speak of the didactic role played by PRADAN and its initiatives before the project in shaping the kind mobilization engendered by the project. Such a methodological approach to action research falls short of the cognitive and philosophical transformation envisaged by the ASAR project. Such exploration of a journey towards socio-ecologically embedded meaning of khushaal zindagi needs a systematic approach to action research developed particularly in pedagogy and curriculum research in education. This would argue that khushaal zindagi and its meaning can only be realized in its living and not merely in practice.

On a concluding note, having reflected on how the project is represented in the workshop along with my academic reflections on concept, theories and methodologies of ASAR project, I would like to repose my faith in the potential of the initiatives, knowledge and wisdom generated so far in the project journey. The complex ecological and cultural life world of the Gond and Oraon communities of these sites brought to light by the workshop makes me excited as a student of action research about the knowledge insights and wisdoms of living the project is going to generate in the coming years of its proposed plan. It is with such excitement that I wait for the next ASAR workshop and hopefully my participation in it. I sincerely hope these reflections help us discuss and learn how to understand, know and represent such action research in the large, policy- oriented developmental research.

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**“The donor community should be further groomed to support the right kind of development process, even if that means disturbance of the existing socio-political status quo”**  
*Manu Mathai, Azim Premji University*



# आदिवासी अंचलों में

आदिवासी अंचलों में, चटनियाँ घुघरी जना ।  
देख रहे सपना, खुशहाल जिंदगी हो अपना ॥

नर - नारी, युवा गाँव के, सब ने है जाना,  
जल-जंगल-जमीन जानवर, जन को है सब माना;  
खेत हरे होंगे, और जंगल हरा भरा,  
होंगे डबरा-डबरी और पानी के बंधना ॥

आदिवासी अंचलों में...

चर्चा की सबने, सचेत होना है  
नहीं तो निगलेगा, आधुनिकता का प्रेत;  
होगा राज मशीनों का, यूरिया केमिकल का  
तब कैसे खायेंगे, खाना स्वाद बिना ॥

आदिवासी अंचलों में...

बच्चे खूब पढ़ें लिखें, रक्खें अपना ध्यान,  
नहीं भूलें इस दौड़ में, पुरखों का ज्ञान;  
न हो पलायन यहां से, जीना साथ है,  
यहीं कमायें इसी जमीं से, कहीं जाएँ ना ॥

आदिवासी अंचलों में...

खोइ रहे देखो, सैला-रीना और ददरिया,  
कहाँ गयी देखो, मांदि-करमा और टिमकिया ।  
तिनसा खोया-नागर लकड़ी, क्या-क्या खोया रे,  
अब बढना चाहें कुछ भी खोये बिना ॥

आदिवासी अंचलों में...

टूट-टूट के हम नहीं चलेंगे,  
हाथ छोड़ के हम और नहीं जिएंगे;  
अपना-तेरा करके सब खो नहीं देना  
अब सीखेंगे, सब मिलकर साथ में जीना ॥

आदिवासी अंचलों में...

Note: This is the theme song of ASAR. Based on the imagination of 'Khushahaal zindagi' by all villagers, this song was written by Prashant Sharma and Saurabh Singh, and composed by Dibyendu Chaudhuri.

# कर्मा गीत (कोदो-कुटकी)

ओह्हों हाय किसानी धंधा मे यार ।

है जाबो धनवान किसानी धंधा में यार ॥

पहले खावें कोदो- कुटकी, जीवें सौ के ऊपर ।

खुशहाली जिन्दगी जीवें, रोग न होवें उनपर ॥

किसानी धंधा में यार.....

साह फाग में खुरा करबो, जेठ बैसाख बखरबो ।

खुरा बखरी न करबो, अषाढ़ में धोखा खाबो ॥

किसानी धंधा में यार.....

ना चाही तोर गाडी मोटर, न चाही तोर हाथी ।

हमला चाही बैल जुआड़ी, और खेत के माटी ॥

किसानी धंधा में यार.....

खाद रसायन खाके दीदी-भैया , जीवन है हैरानी ।

रोग न छोड़े काया में, और काहे की जिंदगानी ॥

किसानी धंधा में यार.....

मेहनत करना छोड़ के भैया, ट्रैक्टर से बोवें धान ।

ज्यादा भात खाए के भैया, शीत में पड़ गयी जान ॥

किसानी धंधा में यार.....

खुरी भरा खुरा करके, कोदो खूब कमाबो ।

कुट्टे कुटकी भोजन करके, निरोगी काया पाबो ॥

किसानी धंधा में यार.....

भात खाबो, खीर खाबो और पीबो पेज ।

दर कूटके साथ में बेचबो, भाव भी पाबो तेज ॥

किसानी धंधा में यार.....

सुन लो दीदी , सुन लो भैया , लैका, लैकी सयान ।

कोदो कुटकी मढिया कंगनी,से है हम सबकी पहचान॥

किसानी धंधा में यार.....

Note: This form of the song is called Karma. In the confluence it was written and composed by Gangaram Singh, Hiralal Markam and other villagers of Ghughri.

# चलो माता पिता

चलो माता पिता चलो चलो भैया बहन अपना जंगल बचाने |  
अपना जंगल नहीं बचाने पर अपना खाना पीने में दरवाजा बंद हो जाएगा |  
दरवाजा बंद देख कर सोचते सोचते मेरा दिल जल रहा है |  
पहाड़ के ऊपर जड़ी बूटी खाने पीने या कन्द मूल का सामान है , इसलिए जंगल को बचाना है |  
अपना जंगल को बचाने से हमेशा जिंदगी सुखी संपन्न रहेगा |  
चलो माता पिता, चलो भैया बहन अपना जंगल को दवा करेंगे |  
ऐन्दर पूपन में अरकिन पेलो भाग जुगनी लेखे लवकर ते बरा लागी -----2  
कौन फुल को सवारी लड़की जो टिमटिमाती हुई आ रही है |-----2  
सरइ पूपन में अरकिन पेलो भाग जुगनी लेखे लवकर ते बरा लागी-----2  
साल फुल को सवारे बहन तारे जैसे टिमटिमाते आ रही है |-----2  
रिम रिम न बीड़ा लागी मदगी खातेरा लागी -----2  
चिल चिलाती धुप में महुआ गिर रही है |-----2  
खतर दी होले खतरय मदगी मला होल एड्पा कालोन -----2  
गिरती है तो गिरो महुआ नहीं तो मैं घर जा रहा हु |-----2  
सेन्द्रा कादया भैया सेनदरा कादय करेगा करेगा कादय -----2  
शिकारी करने जाते है तो जंगल के तराई तराई में जाते है |-----2  
कुती अल्ला रियो रियो बादय अलार माझी माझी भैया अमाके मानगे -----2  
कुती बहन को आव आव बोलते है कि आदमी के बीच बीच में नहीं होना -----2

Note: This song is about different seasons. The form is called Sahrul. It has been written and composed by researchers of Jana

## ● ABBREVIATIONS:

APU	-	Azim Premji University
AR	-	Action Research
ASAR	-	Adaptive Skilling through Action Research
CFR	-	Community Forest Rights
FRA	-	Forest Rights Act
PDS	-	Public Distribution System
PESA	-	Panchayats (Extension for Scheduled Area) Act, 1996
PRADAN	-	Professional Assistance for Development Action
PRI	-	Panchayati Raj Institution
SDG	-	Sustainable Development Goal
TV	-	Television



**Azim Premji  
University**

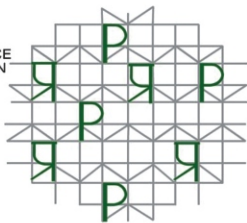
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