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Promoting Efficient Buffalo Husbandry

Improving the traditional practice of rearing buffaloes in the plains of Dholpur in Rajasthan holds potential to improve livelihoods for the rural poor

Faizan Jaleel

Dholpur district (3,034 sq km) in Rajasthan comprises the 4 blocks of Bari, Baseri, Dholpur and Rajakhera, home to 9.83 lakh people (2001 census). Dholpur may be divided into 3 topographical zones: Aravali, Chambal and the plains.

Buffalo rearing is an old tradition in the agrarian plains. There are hardly any households in the plains region that do not rear a buffalo or two. There is no shortage of water and green fodder is available in plenty. Despite continuous droughts (less than average rainfall) and high temperatures the buffalo population has steadily risen at the rate of 1.27% every year (according to animal census data). Not surprisingly, the plains are known as the dairy belt of Dholpur.

The breed of buffaloes in this area is mostly indigenous with minimum traits of the Murrah breed. Although buffaloes are a status symbol amongst the rich and mighty, this activity is a source of supplementary income and nutrition for the rural poor. It is the women in these families who take care of the buffaloes and sell the milk to the local milkmen (*dudhiyas*).

The traditional practices of rearing and managing these animals leave a lot to be desired. They not only result in low quality (low fat) and quantity (low volume) of milk but also endanger the health and sometimes, life of the buffaloes. These shortcomings may be categorised into 2: gaps in rearing and in the marketing of the produce.

Gaps in Buffalo Rearing

The major gap in rearing is in prevalent feeding practices. Milking buffaloes are fed twice a day with a mixture of wheat, bajra and mustard cakes boiled in water. The quantity is meagre in terms of concentrates, sometimes less than one third of their milking capacity.

The animals are mostly fed dry fodder. There is no concept whatsoever of providing cattle feed or mineral supplements. Even common salt is not included in their diet. Not surprisingly, this leads to low milk yield.

Mineral deficiency is commonly evident in late conception, problems in repeat breeding and loss of texture (roughening) of the skin. The lack of calcium effects milking capacity and leads to extreme weakness after delivery of a calf, often causing the problem of ketoses.

There is also little awareness about the importance of green fodder in the diet. Buffaloes are mostly fed dry fodder, particularly when the milk dries up. Usually the female calves are reared with a certain amount of care since they are expected to be milking buffaloes when they grow up. In case of heifers, the feeding is very poor, constituting only of dry fodder. They are sometimes even left to die of starvation.

The health management of buffaloes is also full of gaps. People are casual about the water requirement of the animals, general hygiene, essential vaccinations, de-worm-

ing, etc., which invariably leads to bad health. When a buffalo falls sick, people first try home remedies failing which they take the animal to a quack. Animals are taken to a veterinary hospital only as a last resort, usually at a stage when it is too late and the animals by then usually die.

The incidence of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and Hemorrhagic Septicemia (HS) is common. Most of the time these diseases lead to loss of productivity and even death. There is little awareness amongst the people about the vaccines available for these diseases.

Cases of vaginal prolapse and mastitis are also common, which, if treated timely, can be cured without affecting the yielding capacity of the buffaloes. The presence of ticks and other ectoparasites is also a major factor in the depleting health of the animals. Calves are not fed with colostrums and are not de-wormed timely, leading to a very high rate of calf mortality (almost 80% recorded in the district).

Gaps in Milk Marketing

While selling milk, producers get low prices (Rs 7-8 per litre on an average), less than the rates offered by the dairy union of the Rajasthan Co-operative Dairy Federation (RCDF). A chain of middlemen (*dudhiyas*) dominates the business of buying milk.

The *dudhiyas* go about this in a systematic manner. They provide credit to small producers to buy buffaloes or feed on the condition that the entire milk produced by the animals will be then sold to them at a rupee less than the rate per litre of milk prevalent in the villages. Once a small producer gets caught in this web, it is very difficult to break free. The absence of a

dairy union in this district only reinforces the stranglehold of the *dudhiyas*.

The *dudhiyas* sell this milk at Rs 12 to Rs 14 to private chilling centres or in the local market. The producers barely recover the cost of feed and at times, not even that. That they continue to engage in this activity is mostly a result of the tradition of rearing and the ready access to credit from *dudhiyas*.

Need for Improvement

This exploitative system, combined with the inefficient traditional practices, has severely eroded the profit margins of small producers. This could be largely retained (and even improved) by employing improved and scientific techniques of rearing, timely vaccinations and network of support services in the form of paravets, feed depots and interaction with the dairy union.

Based on these findings our team in Dholpur conducted several field studies to determine the viability of buffalo dairying as a meaningful source of livelihood for the poor. Our team's objective was to build upon the existing tradition of buffalo rearing by encouraging better livestock management through training, providing links with the dairy union and establishing local support systems, in order to reap maximum benefits on the livelihoods front.

Our interest in this was also spurred by the fact that it is the women in poor households who engage in this activity. Any intervention in buffalo dairying would therefore lead towards financial and social empowerment of women in these communities. Since this activity has the potential of involving large numbers of the poor in

Dholpur and lead them towards economic empowerment, it is in sync with our primary motive of impacting livelihoods to enable and empower the rural poor.

Intervention Points

Based on our field studies in Dholpur we have decided to concentrate on the following intervention points:

- Forming associations and groups (based on the concept of all-women self-help groups) of women at the village level to support the marketing of milk;
- Forming a federation of milk producers at the block level and assisting it to carry out networking and liaisoning independently over a period of time;
- Evolving a cluster based approach to dairying;
- Marketing milk through the dairy union (RCDF);
- Improving the local breed through induction of quality milch animals and artificial insemination (AI);
- Promoting feed depots for the cattle and facilitating the other required inputs;
- Conducting trainings in livestock management and health practices;
- Training paravets at the village level and ensuring the availability of general medicines at feed depots and collection centres, and
- Promoting the use of organic manure through vermicomposting.

Tapping DPIP

These interventions call for major financial mobilisation in the form of programme funds. We therefore tapped into funds available with the District Poverty Initiatives Project (DPIP). DPIP is a World Bank funded programme being implemented in collaboration with the Government of Rajasthan. DPIP is also being implemented

in Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh.

DPIP focuses on promoting livelihoods through a group-based approach. Poor families in villages are organised into common interest groups (CIGs). These CIGs can take up an activity of its choice with techno-managerial assistance by the NGO implementing the programme in the area.

Although the project revolves around families enlisted in the government maintained BPL (below poverty line) list, there is provision to include 20% non-BPL members if the CIG comprises entirely of women intending to engage in an income generating activity. This may be done by following procedural guidelines that involve convening a ward *sabha* (council) meeting and filling up a form (P1) that certifies that the poverty status of the non-BPL family is the same as enlisted BPL families.

Good Potential

When our team started implementing programmes under DPIP, buffalo husbandry emerged as an intervention that had the potential of generating large number of livelihoods in the plains region of Dholpur. It was also a good way of systemising the dairy sector by taking it to the masses, making the activity financially viable, interfacing with the state dairy union and setting up related support systems.

We also took this opportunity to include subsidiary interventions such as inducting good quality buffaloes (Murrah breed), setting up milk collection centres at the village level and an added component of vermicomposting. Promoting this activity also included skill enhancement training in animal rearing, health management and milk collection centre management.

DPIP supports 80% of the cost of acquiring livestock and 90% of the cost of setting up related infrastructure. The remaining costs (20% and 10% respectively) are deposited in advance as 'beneficiary' contribution. The cost of training is entirely funded by DPIP. The processes involved ranges from conducting village level participatory rural appraisal exercises and forming CIGs of women to sanctioning funds, and ensuring proper execution and utilisation of funds (see box 1).

Progress So Far

Since initiating this intervention we have been able to form 116 CIGs interested in dairy, with financial assistance from DPIP. Forty-three such CIGs have already purchased quality Murrah buffaloes from Rohtak and Jind in Haryana. In all 504 Murrah buffaloes have already been purchased.

We have also been able to facilitate the setting up of 14 milk collection centres. These centres have been linked with RCDF and have started reaping the benefits of selling milk at a higher price than before. We have started discussions with RCDF to start new milk routes to cover all the dairy clusters we working with.

We have conducted residential training events in animal management to improve rearing skills of group members. The buffaloes are now vaccinated and de-wormed on time. We have ensured that individual members maintain proper vaccination and de-worming charts. We have also identified paravets who would eventually provide these services. They are now undergoing training. One paravet has successfully completed the training and is operating in one of the clusters.

Box 1: Processes involved in Dairy Promotion under DPIP

- Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) at village level (by NGO)
- CIG (Common Interest Group) formation and activity identification through PRA (by NGO)
- Submission of CIG in District Project Management Unit (DPMU) for sanctioning (by NGO)
- Formation of subproject with the CIG in the village and its documentation (by NGO)
- Submission of subproject proposal in the DPMU for sanction (by NGO)
- Administrative and financial sanction of subproject and CIG (by DPMU)
- Opening bank account, depositing beneficiary contribution and signing MoU between the DPMU and CIG (by NGO)
- Release of finances for the execution of subproject activity (by DPMU)
- Execution of the subproject activity according to the milestones mentioned in the MoU (by CIG and DPMU)
- Issuing utilisation certificates, maintenance of subproject accounts, completion certificates, etc. (by NGO)

We have also promoted a *Saheli Sangathan*, a federation of all dairy CIGs, which is taking the shape of an independent body that will take up these promotional activities in future. We have also identified a group of service providers (to be called *saheli sahyogis*) through a rigorous selection process and have locally developed a training module for the *sahyogis*.

The *sahyogis* will assist the CIGs in streamlining and maintaining accounts and work as helpers in the milk collection centres. We are also motivating them so that some could start feed depots at the cluster level. We are trying to develop a development model for these *sahyogis* in a way that the *Saheli Sangathan* governs them.

The process of liaisoning with the animal husbandry department and veterinary hospitals is also on our team's agenda. We have not yet been able to do much on this front. Group members have, on their own, developed a rapport with veterinarians who were trainers in the residential skill enhancement programmes we organised.

Although we have made some progress in promoting dairy activity, work has not been smooth, DPIP being a government-managed project. The main difficulty is the wide difference in the level of pro-poor orientation amongst government officials.

Stringent Conditions

The stringent conditions of DPIP at the district also pose considerable difficulties. Main among them is the condition that 'beneficiaries' must deposit 25% as contribution in advance. Since CIG members are poor, they are unable to put together the sum of Rs 4,000 per member, which is necessary before the first instalment of the DPIP grant is sanctioned.

As a result, members are forced to go to the local moneylender to arrange for the money, often at exploitatively high rates of interest. There have also been cases where members have had to mortgage jewellery or other assets in order to organise this money.

Frequent circulars from the State Project Management Unit and introduction of new rules, etc. have also slowed down the pace of work and eaten away a lot of time. Reorganising the process to comply with the new rules and guidelines has been a tedious task. We have also found a lack of clarity about the mission and objectives of the project at the district level.

There are also delays in the transfer of finances due to sometimes unnecessary documents required for the project. Our team has however developed a good rapport with the district and the state level staff of the DPIP. This has somewhat eased the flow of funds to the CIGs.

Ways Ahead

A lot remains in making the buffalo dairying a fruitful and sustainable activity with a mass reachout. We have been successful in identifying the areas requiring intervention and developing appropriate systems. These have started taking shape and need to be cemented together.

There has been success in the area of organising the activity but building on it is a tough task and needs concentrated effort. This is sometimes hampered due to the instability in the team, restrictive government policies and lack of funds.

We have had some success in mobilising funds for buffalo induction, milk collection centres and other infrastructure but there is a great need of funds for support activities like promoting and formalising the federation, a revolving fund for feed depots, introducing high quality fodder seeds, medicine kits, utility lab, training of paravets and AI technicians, setting up an information system from the villages to the

growth centres, etc. All these activities are essential to complement the activities of inducting quality buffaloes and setting up milk collection centres, and would make the activity complete and self-sustaining.

Our team is trying to tap various options for all these activities from various sources of financial support. It is just a matter of time that the results start showing. We strongly expect that in a few years we will have a self-sustaining income generation for buffalo husbandry in Dholpur.

Present a New Idea for Peer Review

Pradan has always been in the forefront in innovating on new ideas that could be implemented at the grassroots. *Concept Papers* in NewsReach are a way to share and air new untested ideas to solicit peer feedback. If you have a new idea you would like to test before implementing, send us a 2,000 word *Concept Paper*. If you have experience or views on any *Concept Paper* that would help the author, email us at newsreach@pradan.net.

Child Care for Working Rural Women

A study in 2 villages where Pradan is promoting tasar reeling activity revealed that there is a strong need for childcare facilities for working mothers

Neelam Maheshwari and Madhabananda Ray

Pradan has been promoting tasar silk cocoon processing amongst the rural poor. This processing, also called tasar reeling, involves unwinding of filaments from tasar cocoons and twisting of 6-8 such filaments together after de-gumming the cocoons. It involves de-gumming, unwinding and twisting before the making of hanks.

Tasar reeling has generated considerable interest among women in Jharkhand, Bihar and Chhattisgarh due to the increase in availability of good raw material (tasar cocoons), good work environment at reeling centres and organisational support and other linkages provided by Pradan.

Women Reelers

In 2003-04 the number of reelers promoted by Pradan (all women) increased from 186 to 452. The new producers (266) are undergoing training and will start commercial production within a few months. The activity is spread over 6 districts in 9 blocks and 19 villages across Bihar, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh on March 31, 2004.

Groups of women in a village spin and reel tasar yarn in a common facility centre (workshop). A workshop is a *pucca* (brick and mortar) building with 2 large rooms build to accommodate 25 reeling-cum-twisting machines and 5 spinning machines. There is also a small room with attached veranda to accommodate re-reeling devices that produce coarser and finer yarn.

There are also small separate rooms in each workshop set aside for a crèche, to keep the

yam stock and books of accounts, and for a power generator. The workshops are provided with a 10 KVA power-generating set to provide electrical power and illumination required for the activity. The generator is usually mounted on a *pucca* foundation.

The reelers and spinners are poor rural women, selected from Pradan-promoted self-help-groups (SHGs) that are already functioning in the village. The common facility centres are designed in such a manner that they can accommodate 30 women reelers. With the present production system promoted by Pradan, each reeler is expected to earn between Rs 25 to Rs 40 per day.

Spinning and reeling tasar cocoons require the women to work in the workshop continuously for 6-7 hours. This becomes difficult for women who do not have helping hands at home and women with small children. These women find it extremely difficult to continue without frequent interruptions from work, which hampers their productivity and thus, earnings.

Need for Crèches

While improving the design of the workshops we found that there was a perceived need among the women to keep aside some space to keep their infants. There are a number of young mothers who are members of the reeling groups. They are not able to put in effective time on the activity because they have to constantly attend to their little children, feed them and cater to their other needs.

This means long and frequent interruptions

since they have to go home once every hour or so. As a result, many of the mothers bring their infants to the centre. Since there is no separate space to keep the children, they are made to lie down on the floor on sacks.

This was not found to be an acceptable arrangement by our field teams because it is neither hygienic nor healthy for little children to be lying in the midst of whirring machines. We therefore mooted the idea of a crèche at the workshops. A separate space was kept aside in the new design of the workshops for crèches. A total of 30 such tasar reeling centres with attached crèche facility are going to be constructed under the PRADAN-SGSY-CSB Project.

Approaching Mobile Crèches

We also approached Mobile Crèches, a well-known NGO who are pioneers in setting up crèches for children in the most difficult and underprivileged areas in cities such as construction sites.

They agreed to help us design and establish crèche units in the reeling centres. We also conducted a small field study to find out about the present status of the young children and the need for a systematic childcare unit in tasar reeling centres. This study was conducted in Raksha village of Godda district in Jharkhand and Kurawa village in Banka district in Bihar.

There are 378 households living in 3 hamlets in Raksha. Each hamlet has more than 100 households. The population is by and large Hindu with a predominance of the Koeri and Ghatwar castes.

A mud road that is motorable for most part of the year connects Raksha to the tarred main

road. Drinking water is available through hand pumps scattered throughout the village. There is a primary school within 3 km from the village. Although there is a functioning *aaganwadi* (crèche) centre, there are no qualified doctors or nurses in the village.

A majority of the households are engaged in agriculture. Most of the males in the families migrate for about 3 months (April to June) in a year in search of wage labour. Some families also maintain livestock for additional sources of income. Pradan started working in Raksha 10 years ago. Women from 45 families are organised in SHGs out of which 35 women are involved in tasar reeling.

There are 38 households in Kurawa. Although it is also connected through a mud road, the village may be reached by motor vehicles throughout the year. Hand pumps provide adequate drinking water. Electricity is yet to reach the village. There is a primary school within 3 km from Kurawa. There is neither an *aaganwadi* centre in the village nor any doctor or nurses.

Most of the people in Kurawa are engaged in rain-fed agriculture. Most able-bodied men migrate between April to June in search of wage labour. Some families maintain livestock as an alternative source of income. Most men go out of the village on a regular basis to work except July and August, when they plough their own fields. Women are also dependent on wage labour but do not usually migrate. Pradan started working here 5 years ago and has promoted a few SHGs and a tasar reeling centre.

Status of Childcare

Visits to the villages revealed that the average age of marriage for women is 16-17 years. They soon bear their first child.

The average age of a young mother is 20 years. Most women have no knowledge about birth control and contraceptives.

The families are mostly very poor. It is necessary for the women to work in order to sustain their families. This includes young mothers. A number of working mothers have no choice but to take their children to the work (14 out of 58) or leave their children with family members (14 out of 58). The rest leave the children with elder siblings. The study found that young children spend 4-10 hours every day with persons other than their mothers.

Discussions with the women revealed that mothers who take their children to work face a number of problems. Among the stated problems the most prominent was the need to arrange for timely and quality food for the children. Usually, no special food is prepared for the children, who eat whatever is available to adults.

Boiled and flattened rice and seasonal vegetables form the staple diet of the people. Children are given milk if the family is able to afford it. Although food is available to children of workingwomen, there seems to be no *pucca* (fixed) arrangement.

Mothers are also constantly anxious about the safety of their children. They worry about a child falling into a well or otherwise hurting itself while they are at work. Women who leave their children with others are also not happy about the situation as they say the children cry continuously and refuse to eat properly.

Elder siblings, particularly girls, suffer the lack of proper childcare arrangements as they have to look after the younger chil-

dren. Children in the 6-10 age group not only have to attend school but also have to work 5-6 hours at home either taking care of younger siblings or collecting firewood. We also found that slightly older children help their parents in the field during the agricultural season.

As mentioned earlier, there is a complete lack of healthcare facilities in these 2 villages. There is therefore no question of children getting extra medical care. They are however regularly vaccinated through various government health programmes.

Scope for Intervention

All the women we met with seemed extremely unhappy with the difficulties they face while bringing up their children. Interestingly, when they were asked whether they would pay a nominal amount (if required) to sustain such an effort where they can keep their children under good care while they are working, most women agreed to pay despite their obvious poverty.

Crèches for Rural Workplaces

Working mothers of Raksha and Kurawa villages explored ways of setting up crèches at tasar reeling centres at a workshop

Amrita Jain

A Mobile Crèches team comprising Devika Singh, Indu Bhasin, Radha Pandey and I conducted a workshop in September 16-19, 2004 in Raksha village of Godda district in Jharkhand to explore way of setting up crèches in Pradan promoted tasar reeling centres. Fifty-four women and twenty-six children from Raksha and nearby Kurawa village in Banka district of Bihar attended the workshop. The full participation of the Pradan team comprising D Narendranath, Bala Ningthoujam, Dimbeshwar Pathak, Santanu Mukherjee, Neelam Maheshwari, Madhabananda Ray and Dhrubaa Mukhopadhyay was very useful and contributed to its positive outcomes.

Enthusiastic Women

The workshop started in a hall where electric light was made available by a noisy generator. The women slept at night in the hall and the rest of the village joined them to watch videos at night. Despite this, the women looked fresh and beautiful in bright saris, combed hair and freshly applied *bindis* and *sindhoor*.

The hall was not appropriate for subgroup work as it then became very noisy. Also, there was pouring rain on the first day and lighter showers on the second. When the rain let up we used the courtyards and verandas of nearby houses. This added to the variety of experience. We could not start the workshop till the afternoon of day one due to weather conditions but made up time by continuing late into the evening.

We found that the relationship of the Pradan team with the villagers was easy, affectionate

and one of respect and trust. An active member of the village, Bhola, made arrangements for lunch. Hot, fresh and simple fare was served with courtesy and grace in his home to almost 65 people without any confusion.

First Day

The proceedings were a little slow to start with. After introductions the first activity required recalling memories of childhood by the participant women. It took a lot of facilitation for the women to open up, and only a few were articulate. The key memories recalled reflected sadness and loss of parents; disappointment at discontinuing schooling; memories of being stopped from taking exams when father died; the unhappiness of being married early, and memories of difficult times as child brides. The situation of women and children was then evoked collectively from the larger group. Here again, more articulate women took the lead.

The next activity (Tree Exercise) required the women to envision a future for their children. It required dreaming about the future. The process was slow. Very few women could dream about the future and had to be prodded to think ahead.

They finally expressed some aspirations that included their children growing up to be engineers, doctors, MLA, good persons and good citizens. The facilitator drew their attention to reflect upon what was required in early childhood if they were to achieve these goals. Some of the more articulate women then expressed the need for health, nutrition, education, and love and care.

The media presentation of *Khilta Bachpan* (blossoming childhood) at the end of the day had more of an impact. The entire group was able to connect with it and it opened up the flow of participation and interest.

Second Day

The next morning the proceedings started with a discussion on the idea of the need to nourish roots in order to reap good fruits. The facilitators used the analogy of the seed and its growth. They used different visuals to support the analogy.

The various needs of children at different ages were then explored and discussed in depth with the women. We also drew adequate attention to the areas of neglect. The importance of the first 6 years of childhood was then re-emphasised with the help of help of charts.

We used role-plays to help the women recall and enact common experiences from their lives. One of the situations chosen was the incident of a mother taking her sick child who had malaria to sign up for the midday meal and then left him unattended at the reeling centre while she completed her work. By the time she was able to attend to the sick child and go to a doctor, the child was dead.

Other situations were also enacted: A child hurt her hand at the reeling machine; a child interrupting work constantly and the woman having to stop because of this; work efficiency being affected due to divided attention; lack of support from elders leading to the older girl child being held back from school to care for siblings, etc. Playing these roles brought immediacy to the issue of childcare and made women acutely aware of the needs of their infants.

A media presentation called *Aangan Aangan Kilkari* (smiling courtyards) was featured in the afternoon. It threw up the possibility of a childcare support service as a possible solution to their problem. This enjoyable media presentation laid the base for discussion on what the women would like to do about their own situation.

It helped the women to begin to come to grips with what they would need to do if they wanted to change their present situation. The women articulated a variety of needs and desires. Following the visualisation and discussions, we screened a film on crèche set up regarding what a crèche is and should be. The film was based on our (Mobile Crèches) understanding of care, systems and what is required.

Because of the process that had taken place on the day before, the film brought some clarity regarding what a crèche is and should be. The group discussions on the third day were therefore more concrete. Women were able to examine which component of the crèche were more important to them and focus on what it would cost and who would do it. This was an important process and led to realistic and practical thinking (see box 1 on page 12).

Salient Features

The training team felt satisfied that the design of the workshop had been effective in the development of understanding of the key needs of children (0-6), the importance of early childhood, reflection by the women on their own life situation and building motivation for change.

The concluding sessions involved practical investigation into what they wanted and could do regarding setting up of a crèche.

Box 1: Outcomes of Group Discussions

Issue	Need for crèche, good childcare	How can this be done? What will it cost?
Group I		
	We need space, toys, <i>jhulas</i> (swings), food, someone to cook, medicines, care, <i>malish</i> (massage), cleanliness, and teacher for our children	We can pay Rs 5 each per day towards the salary of the crèche worker. She will then earn Rs 150 per child per month. A hot meal is important for the children. We will need a person to cook. Can pay or give her grain instead. We will need medicines. These should be the ones needed for all children like vitamins, immunization, etc. Individual kids who are sick can be looked after by their own families and kept at home that day.
Group II		
	We should have a crèche. Our output will increase. Our children will be healthy. They will develop intelligence and knowledge	Money is a problem for salary of crèche worker. Those of us who don't have young children don't want contribute towards the crèche worker's salary. But those who needed it felt that they could spare Rs. 40 to Rs 50 per month per child towards her salary. For nutrition we can send food from home so that won't be expenditure. Regarding finances we will contribute but will also need some help. When we earn more, we will be able to contribute more. We have land (space) for a crèche but will need financial help for a building. All children of women in the reeling groups can be accommodated in the space of the reeling centre but for women who are not part of reeling groups, we will need 2/3 crèches in the village.
Group III		
	We should have a crèche. Children need good care (<i>seva</i>). They need to be kept clean and safe. If we have a crèche worker, she will be able to take better care. We need a crèche from 9 am to 2 pm and 3 pm to 5 pm. We want to start a crèche as soon as possible.	It is better if all children get food at the crèche rather than each child bringing something different. A crèche worker should be educated so that she can prepare a child for school. Just as we pay for the manager's salary from our earnings, the money for the crèche worker's salary can be deducted from our earnings.

Group IV		
	We need a crèche because we have not only work in the reeling centre but also in the home. We need a crèche to help us. We don't want an <i>aanganwadi</i> type of programme. We need care for the whole day.	We can contribute money but cannot say how much just yet. Only those who have small children should contribute finances. The crèche workers should be trained. We want someone from outside the village, people who are more knowledgeable and have seen the world outside their little village. We don't have faith in people from the village. We do not want <i>aanganwadi</i> type of food. We prefer to give our own. Kids need toys, things to play with. We can each contribute a toy.
Group V		
	We want shelter, security, a crèche worker, cleanliness and hygiene, nutritious food, toys and swings, beds and clean linen, education, separate spoons and plates (we can contribute).	Crèche worker should be motherly, literate, educated, intelligent, one who does not beat, young (20-35 years) and free from housework. We can select a woman from the village as crèche worker. She can be paid Rs 5 per day per child. Space in the reeling centre would be good. For Hygiene we need a dustbin (about Rs 20) and Savlon (about Rs 30). We can cook on a rotational basis so that the crèche worker can look after the children. We can also contribute rice and dal. Medicines should be those that all children need such as deworming, vitamins and immunisations. We need toys and bedding. Also soaps, etc. should cost about Rs 10 a month.

The assistance of the Pradan team in providing feedback on the processes and help in facilitating group discussions and role plays was invaluable and provided the support Mobile Crèches needed to tackle a large number of participants and a big group of children and organize the participatory activities, which are normally best done with smaller groups.

The two media presentations, *Aangan Aangan Kilkari* and *Khilta Bachpan* were very well received and provided the stimulation for discussion on the needs of children and on the importance of proper nurturing during early childhood.

The role-plays helped the women get in touch with their own life situations. It proved to be

a very effective tool. They were performed with a great deal of creativity and delight. From initial hesitation and slow response in participating in the games, discussions and activities, the entire group gradually became active and animated.

The large group of children ranging from a few months old to 8-9 year olds who had accompanied the women were managed through active care by the Pradan and Mobile Crèches teams. Mothers were quite happy to shed responsibility of their children while they geared up to participate. It is possible that seeing their children looked after by others also contributed to their understanding of the potential of a crèche.

Many of the activities of the workshops were such that children could watch with interest. On the third day, a 2-hour activity session for children was organised by the Mobile Crèches team, while the Pradan team got down to the practical discussion on what, how and where of the crèche. However, more adequate arrangements for the care of children can be planned for in future workshops and trainings.

Future Directions

The Mobile Crèches worked closely with the Pradan team. Three important discussion sessions were held between us. On the first evening, the design of the workshop was shared and some discussion took place regarding the profile of the village and participants based on the survey that had been conducted at Mobile Crèches' request. The Pradan team provided insights on many of the questions Mobile Crèches raised regarding situation of women and children in the area

After the first day of the workshop, we received

detailed feedback from the Pradan team on the appropriateness of certain elements of the design and methodology. The feedback was largely positive.

We also intensely discussed the elements of the methodology. For instance, we discussed whether role-plays on different situations confronting women to deepen exploration of their childcare needs would be useful. Mobile Crèches threw out some suggestions for choice of themes for role-plays like enacting accidents that took place with children, illness and the stress it generates for working women, etc.

We then agreed that role-plays would be useful and the choice of situation should be left to the women to decide. It was agreed that the Pradan team would facilitate the subgroups because of familiarity with the dialect.

We debated whether screening the Mobile Crèches' training film on the crèche would raise expectations and therefore could be counterproductive. It was decided that the decision could be taken during the following day, depending on how the women were responding and the degree to which motivation had progressed.

At the end of the third day, we discussed the implications for Pradan on venturing into the setting up of crèches by the *tasar* reel-ing centres. Some of the concerns included the expectations it would raise and whether it would result in more dependency on Pradan. We discussed the sustainability of such an enterprise. We felt there was an urgent need to think of a revenue model.

The Pradan team shared that they see great need for crèches but were concerned about

venturing into this area. They felt that we treat this workshop as an exploration since it is best to build a model from 'below'.

The Mobile Crèches team was equally concerned about the sustainability issue and stressed that all communication on the initiating of crèches must be kept exploratory in nature at this point in time. Further action should only be taken when women themselves realised the importance of care and nurture in early childhood, the implications of neglect and the necessity of doing something about their need.

Reviewing the process at the end of the second day, we held an important and critical discussion. Pradan expressed concern that all was fine up to the point of viewing of the Mobile Crèches film. But the film had not only raised expectations of the women but had also opened Pradan's eyes regarding the complexity of the task ahead, what good childcare care in a crèche meant, and the importance of trained workers and well-equipped crèches.

No Child's Play

It was a vision of childcare beyond what they had conceived till now and what the women had visualised. They now felt that the project was not simple and that it was no child's play. It was a task almost of the same dimensions as their current commitments.

While these fears were being articulated, Mobile Crèches made no bones about the difficulties of the task. The work setting up and maintaining crèches was labour intensive. However, there were many possibilities where ownership of the crèches could be devolved on the women and required capacities could be built. Pradan needed to explore these.

We shared our own experiences as well as that of other organisations and the different models that could be tried. It was possible right from the start to develop a concept of a crèche that could be viable and most importantly, the women should be involved in the process. Labour sharing can reduce costs. Contributions in kind like donations and contributions of grain, etc. can also reduce costs.

We discussed the activities for the last day when we planned to use small subgroups to discuss certain specific objectives. The women needed to be assisted to express what it was they wanted for their children and what they thought of good childcare (*accha dekhbhal*). A list of elements needed to be collectively developed by the women to this end.

We also needed to assist them to analyse the human and financial implications of each component they desired in terms of cost and manpower. They then needed to express what they felt was possible in order to establish the minimum requirements and discuss how this could be achieved.

We also decided that it was best that the Pradan team facilitate these small subgroup discussions based on the above framework because it was important for them to assess for themselves the degree to which the need for crèches had been internalised by the women, the degree of motivation to move forward, and the willingness to take the process forward. Based on this assessment, Pradan and the women would then be able to decide whether the next step towards establishment of a crèche should be taken or not.

We suggested that the facilitators raise questions about space (where, what), nutri-

tion (what and provided by whom), what kind of care, number of crèche workers, safety, equipment (what will be needed) and crèche worker (who, what kind of qualifications and attitudes, remuneration), etc.

We also suggested that the co-operative model of a crèche was the one to explore because it was the one where the concept of sharing costs and responsibilities was fundamental. Mutual support was an essential ingredient in this model and an appreciation of it could be built up. Long term, it was the most sustainable approach.

We decided that in the group discussions facilitators should explore the degree to which mothers feel the need for childcare support and therefore the need to share responsibility for the crèche. The attitudes towards the crèche worker were also to be discussed: whether perceived as a hired worker to be blamed for any lapse, or as one of them who was fulfilling a much-needed role.

Questions by facilitators could also explore various attitudes: that she needs to earn as much as she could earn at reeling but doing this job because she was suited to childcare; that the salary was an alternative source of income; that she can facilitate them to be more productive, earn more and help their children develop and therefore was fulfilling a need.

Mobile Crèches stressed that it was important during the discussions to build the idea of a partnership between the crèche worker and the mothers. Value for the crèche worker was the basis on which the crèche would be sustainable.

An entrepreneurial model of a crèche was also

discussed. Mobile Crèches have been experimenting with it. Women have been trained in Delhi to run small crèches in their own homes. They negotiate fees directly with those that needed the service. This is a possibility but it puts a lot of responsibility on the crèche entrepreneur and was financially much tougher to sustain.

Both the teams agreed to follow the above process and carry the discussion only to the extent of the mental preparedness of the women. It was further agreed that the role play on the role of crèche worker that was part of the original design of the workshop should be retained as it would be useful in helping women visualise what happens in a crèche, the demands on the crèche worker and the importance of how she deals with children and parents. It was hoped that the realisation of the need for training the crèche worker would emerge naturally.

Concluding Comments

The groups of women we worked with were on different levels. It was evident from the discussions that not all groups tackled all the issues equally. But the process was very useful and threw up very practical suggestions. Overall, the desire for a crèche is strong and willingness to share responsibilities was very clearly articulated. This is a most positive sign.

The elements of care that have been observed from the crèche film are interesting and focus on the most important components: care, cleanliness, safety and activities. The willingness to contribute financially runs across all groups who have young children. Nutrition, sharing of tasks, contributions of grain for nutrition, contribution of clothes, utensils, and toys take care of a big chunk of expenses.

On of the groups was willing to start straight away and the group leader was willing to take up the responsibility. Her farewell words are telling. She said, "We could not have dreamt that our children could have good care and we want this dream to come true."

We feel that at least one group can be facilitated to start while the enthusiasm is still fresh. It is important that the initial stages take place under the guidance of a Mobile Crèches team so that good practices are introduced right from the start. A very careful working out of costs, sharing of responsibilities, agreement on rules, management of finances needs to be worked out by the Pradan team and the women. Mobile Crèches would be happy to assist this process. The selection of the crèche worker and her involvement in the process mentioned above will facilitate good functioning later on.

Once the first crèche has got over its teething troubles, the women can assess the usefulness of the crèche and their ability to sustain it. Pradan may then like to consider a seed fund for the crèches, which can form a corpus and yield some interest revenue, which can help to make the project viable.

Childcare has been found to be expensive because of the human costs of the labour of the crèche workers and needs to be supported beyond the fees provided by families. If this support is absent, the tendency is to exploit the economic weakness of women and get them to work for less than fair wages. It would be good to avoid this. Also, setting up linkages with ICDS (Integrated Child Development Scheme) and PHCs (Primary Health Centres) will be an important component of sustainability.

The women are clearly hard pressed and the children very neglected. They were able to articulate the stark reality of their lives: heavy workload, lack of family support structures, absence of support services, economic pressure and the denial of educational opportunities in their own childhood through an exercise of recall of their own childhood and a reflection on the lives of their children. The need to address this situation could not be more urgent.

NewsReach Livelihoods Compendium

Are you a grassroots professional trying out new and innovative ideas in the field? Does your organisation work to promote livelihoods for the rural poor? Are you on the look out for tested and successful interventions for the poorest of the poor?

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Mining at the Cost of the People in Jharkhand

A Pradan commissioned study on mining in Jharkhand finds serious breaches of laws that protect rights of the indigenous poor and tribal people. The study was supported by the Ministry of Rural Development and the UNDP under the CBPPI (Community based Pro Poor Initiatives) project

Ajitha Susan George

The Union Ministry of Rural Development and the UNDP asked Pradan to organise a study on pro-poor laws and policies in Jharkhand. Pradan in turn contracted a team of researchers to undertake different aspects of this multidimensional study. The study was co-ordinated by Nandini Sundar from the Centre for the Study of Law and Governance at JNU and Nivedita Narain of Pradan. The researchers included Carol Upadhyaya (land), Sudha Vasan (forests), Videh Upadhyaya (water), Ramesh Sharan (land alienation), Nitya Rao (Santhal land rights), Ajitha Susan George (mining), and Nandini Sundar (PESA and overview), with Madhu Sarin as the overall advisor.

The researchers decided to focus on natural resource management and the functioning of PESA (Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas Act, 1996). The research involved:

- A study of all the different rules, laws, policies, regulations that govern particular sectors;
- An attempt to understand the manner in which they make it difficult for the poor to gain access to resources or control their own lives, and
- Suggestions on the ways in which people can assert their rights within the current framework or the point at which they need to mobilise against existing laws.

Mining

Jharkhand is a mineral rich state and consequently, mining and mineral based industries play a very important role in the economy of the state. The mining sector is going to get

added impetus in the coming years as it has been identified as a key sector for industrial development by the government of Jharkhand.

The Mineral Policy of the Central Government, announced in 1993, opened up the mining sector to private investment and exploitation. It also allowed Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), which has helped major transnational mining companies enter the mining scene in India. The government of Jharkhand, on its part, has been inviting companies, both domestic as well as multinational, to invest in mining in Jharkhand. In a bid to attract them, the government has promised all administrative and infrastructure support to these companies and even offered to make necessary changes in the law.

Therefore, it becomes important to examine what are the present laws and policies related to mining in Jharkhand and understand how far these laws and policies work in the interests of the poor people of Jharkhand.

Laws Related to Mining

There are no separate mining laws or rules for Jharkhand except for minor minerals. All the Central laws with regard to the mining of major minerals are applicable here. These laws are for the acquisition of land for mining and related purposes, the welfare of miners, the regulation of mines, labour and safety, the protection of environment etc., which have been listed exhaustively in the detailed report. Besides these, the regional tenancy acts, which regulate the transfer of land in

Jharkhand, are also significant in the context of mining. Similarly, the Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996, which gives villages greater control over natural resources, including minerals, is important in this context.

Methodology

I did a detailed bibliographical search to identify and understand the various laws, rules and regulations related to mining. I also collected primary data from 7 different mine areas, which are:

- Stone mines and stone crushers in Chandil block in East Singhbhum
- Asbestos mine at Roroburu, Chaibasa, West Singhbhum
- Iron and Manganese mines in Noamundi block, West Singhbhum
- Uranium mine at Jadugoda, East Singhbhum
- Coal mines in Giridih
- Coal mine at East Parej, Hazaribagh district
- Proposed coal mine at Pachwara, Amrapara block, Pakur district

The data was collected through interviews with villagers, village chiefs, local activists, government officers, lawyers, etc.

Acquisition of Land for Mining

The three laws that are put to use for acquiring land for mining are the Land Acquisition Act, 1894 (LAA) for acquiring land for public purpose; Coal Bearing Areas (Acquisition and Development) Act, 1957 (CBAA) for mining of coal, and Atomic Energy Act, 1962 (AEA) for mining of atomic minerals

The procedures for acquiring land under these 3 acts are more or less the same, with some small differences. LAA stipulates that notifications for acquisition of land should be published in 2 regional newspapers, at least one of which should be in the local language, and

also put up at a public place in the local area, besides being published in the official gazette. Under CBAA, it is sufficient if Notifications are published in the gazette. But in the case of AEA, individual notices should be given to all whose lands will be acquired.

However, in practice, it is seen that the information does not reach the villagers in time for them to raise objections within the specified time limit. The villagers do not read gazettes (even in the extreme case they are available), not even newspapers. Most of the time they get information of the displacement only after the legal procedure is over, sometimes, even years later.

Detailed information about the acquisition of land for any project should be available at specific offices, and available for the public. But experienced people say this never happens. No information about acquisition of land is easy to come by. The villagers and activists feel there is a concerted attempt to withhold this very important information from the affected people.

According to the LAA, possession of land can be taken only after the publication of the award. But under the CBAA, it is not mandatory to make the award before taking possession. Once the declaration has been made to the effect that it is necessary to acquire the land, the land and all rights on the land vest with the Central Government, who can direct the transfer of this land to any government company.

Protective Laws

Section 50 of the Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act makes possible the acquisition of land for mining in the Chota Nagpur region, though sections 46 and 47 clearly restrict the transfer of any land to a member of a caste or tribe

other than what the *raiya* (landholder) belongs to. There is some confusion about Section 53 in Santal Parganas Tenancy Act (SPTA), which is of similar nature. The Supreme Court had declared this section *ultra vires* in 1973. According to some informants, the SPTA has not been amended since then to make the necessary provisions. If that is the case, then there is no provision under SPTA to allow mining.

Mining has been the single largest cause for land alienation in Jharkhand in the past. 34.4% of all land that was acquired for development projects was for mining projects (Ekka and Asif 2000:67). So, with increased concentration on mining, it is probable that more land will be alienated from the hands of the poor and indigenous people.

The PESA stipulates that in scheduled areas, the *gram sabha* has to be consulted before land is acquired for any development project. In the case of minor minerals, the recommendation of the *gram sabha* is mandatory before granting lease or granting concession for the exploitation of minor minerals by auction.

But most of the revenue and mining officers do not seem to know about this law. Even in cases where their attention had been repeatedly drawn to the provisions of this Act, both in the case of minor and major minerals, either at the sand mines in Chaibasa or at the proposed coal mine in Pachwara, they have chosen not to act by these provisions. Instead, the administration tries to silence the voices of the people demanding their legal rights, by implicating them in false cases, as it happened in Pachwara.

The Jharkhand Panchayat Raj Act, 2000, which is supposed to be drawn up in line with the PESA, unfortunately keeps quiet

about devolving powers to the *gram sabhas* for the control over natural resources, including minerals.

The judgement of the Supreme Court of India in the Samatha case is of utmost importance to mining in Scheduled areas. More than half of Jharkhand state falls in Schedule V area. The Samatha judgement very categorically ruled that governments could not grant mining leases to non-tribals in scheduled areas.

Granting Mining Leases

According to earlier procedures, applications for prospecting license or mining lease had to be submitted to the state government, which would grant prospecting license or mining lease to the applicant only with the prior approval of the central government. The state government had to dispose of an application for prospecting license or mining lease within 9 months.

In 1994, in consonance with the New Mineral Policy of 1993, the Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act was changed to Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, shifting the emphasis from Regulation to Development. Thirteen minerals that were earlier reserved for the public sector were opened up for exploitation by the private sector. It also introduced FDIs.

A new concept of Reconnaissance Permit (RP), as a stage of operation distinct from and prior to prospecting, has been introduced. Accordingly, many multinational companies have been granted RPs. The RP holders get preferential right for grant of mining leases. Again, in the case of 16 minerals that have been deleted from the First Schedule, the state government does not have to take prior approval from the central government to grant mining leases.

The Jharkhand government is trying to simplify the procedure for getting approval from the Union Ministry of Environment and Forests and expedite the process of giving mineral grants. The government is promising investors that leases can be granted within 3 months.

Environmental Public Hearings

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 1994, under the Environmental Protection Act, has made it mandatory that all projects above the size of 5 hectare must have an environmental public hearing. This ceiling has been raised to 25 ha according to the latest amendments in August 2001. The project proponent has to prepare an executive summary consisting of project details and findings of EIA study and make it available to concerned parties on request. It sounds very good, but how much of this happens in reality?

My information from the field is that these public hearings are, most of the time, stage-managed and information about the public hearing does not reach the affected persons in time. Even if some of them manage to come, they would be prevented from speaking. Finally, even if they manage to speak, their objections will not be found place in the report. So, these public hearings are most of the time just a formality. Still they offer the only democratic space available for communities to voice their grievances.

Compensation

There is a well-defined procedure for determining the amount of compensation for land that is acquired under both LAA and CBAA, based on the market value of the land just before the acquisition proceedings started. It appears that the compensation package offered under LAA is slightly better than that under CBAA. The AEA says that the compensation should be mutually agreeable.

A major limitation of these Acts is that they only recognise the loss suffered by those who are directly displaced by the mines. They do not consider the loss of forest-dependent communities, landless labourers, traditional artisans, small peasants who live by rearing milch animals and women.

There are many complaints about the actual way in which compensation amounts are calculated. Villagers say they do not know how the computation is done. The details are not divulged to them even when they demand to know. Even when the law clearly states that they have the right to know. Raising disputes about the compensation amount involves a lengthy process, which the poor and illiterate villagers can ill afford. So, in reality, the displaced persons get a raw deal. They have to be satisfied with whatever amounts they get.

Rehabilitation

There is no law or national policy for rehabilitation. This becomes a serious commentary on the state of affairs in our country where at least 300 lakh people, of whom 40% are tribals, have been displaced by development projects after independence (Fernandes 1998:251&265).

Three states have rehabilitation laws and 2 have policies. Jharkhand has none, despite the fact that at least 6.88% of its people have been displaced by mega projects in the period 1951-1995 (Ekka and Asif 2000:95). Again, 41% of these are tribals and another 14% belong to the scheduled castes. A major segment of the rest of the people belong to other rural poor. This also explains why there has been no effort on the part of the lawmakers of our country to address this serious lacuna.

Coal India Ltd (CIL) and NTPC are the 2 public sector companies who have formulated

their own Resettlement & Rehabilitation (R&R) policies. Though CIL has introduced the concept of 'land for land' as the ideal proposal for rehabilitation, especially for indigenous peasants, they have not translated this into action.

In the World Bank supported Coal Sector Environment and Social Mitigation Project (CSESMP) at East Parej, they had used the term Project Affected Person (PAP) to include a wider population who are affected by mining like sharecroppers, landless labourers, land lessees, tenants and tribals dependent on forest produce.

The Inspection Panel of the World Bank found the Bank management guilty on 31 counts for violating their own policies prepared for the CSESMP. The report of the Environmental and Social Review Panel noted, "The major flaw in CIL's resettlement planning is that settled farmers go from being landowners with full land rights to land users, given only a patta, which gives them usufructory rights to the land, not ownership. Thus ownership is traded for a lease."

Labour

The Mines Act gives very specific provisions for good working conditions, safety and health of the workers. Although these provisions are seen to be complied with in many of the big mines, there is no compliance in the small mines, whether it is an iron ore mine or a stone quarry.

The working conditions are very bad, there is no insurance cover, no health facilities, no casual or maternity leave, long working hours, wages are even less than the minimum wages announced by the state government.

Sexual harassment of women workers has been reported to be common in the stone crushers, which abound in the Chandil area of East Singhbhum district. Here women also work in the night shifts.

Workers die in accidents or get serious injuries, but their families do not get any compensation. The question of occupational diseases does not arise at all. There is no recognition of this problem, even in the big mines, like the uranium mine at Jadugoda, which is run by UCIL, a public sector company, or in the asbestos mine at Roro, which was owned by Hyderabad Asbestos Company, which used to be a subsidiary of the Birlas.

Abandoned Mines

Chapter V in the Mines Concession Rules deals exclusively with the environment. It gives detailed instructions for the protection of environment, prevention of pollution, such as removal and utilisation of topsoil, safe storage of overburden, tailings, etc., and reclamation and rehabilitation of lands after mining.

Very few mines follow these instructions. Perhaps there may be one or 2 sites in the whole of Jharkhand where the big companies like Tata Steel and CIL can boast of having reclaimed land after mining is completed. But the same companies do not do it in all their mine sites.

The most common sight in closed or abandoned mine areas is either huge holes going deep into the earth or mountains of refuse next to massive craters. In majority of the mines, the land is not reclaimed and the topsoil is seldom kept aside. Underground mines are not packed with sand after mining.

There is no monitoring or control of what hap-

pens to the waste rock or tailings, which may even contain highly toxic or hazardous waste. The waste dumped on the hilltops at the abandoned asbestos mine site at Roroburu is a good example.

Issue of Livelihoods

Another very important question thrown up by closed mines is that of livelihood. Communities who were living in the area much before the mines came had their traditional sources of livelihood taken over by the mines. They slowly got into mining jobs but 30 or 40 years later, the mines closed. So they are left with nothing. They neither have lands nor jobs.

The harijan communities living in the rehabilitation sites of CCL near Giridih town are the living examples of this kind of development. Today, they manage to survive by going into the dark holes left behind by the CCL company and extracting what little coal is left inside, facing death at each turn. They are part of a very long chain of 'illegal' coal miners, carriers and vendors, spread out in the whole colliery belt of Jharkhand and West Bengal, servicing the energy needs of a large majority of poor and lower middle class people in the region.

Conclusion

It is clear from the findings that the laws are not sensitive to the cost that the indigenous communities have to pay for the development of mines, and therefore, they are insufficient to address the problems of communities caused by mining. Also, the implementation of the laws is very poor and the monitoring mechanism is virtually absent. Often, the law and order machinery is made use of by the state and the companies to stifle the voices of people, demanding their rights.

Suggestions

In the official discourse, mining has become synonymous with development in Jharkhand. I strongly suggest, in the light of my research, that this idea be reconsidered.

Mining should be done only with the full knowledge, consensus and participation of local communities. As articulated in the R&R Policy of Coal India, companies should look for alternate designs, which will minimise displacement and disturbance to local communities and cause minimum damage to environment. Wherever displacement and disturbance happens, it should be the policy to rehabilitate the people in the same kind of cultural, social, and economic milieu that they were previously in.

The laws should become more people-friendly and sensitive to their needs. The government should see that the laws are really enforced and the enforcing authorities have full knowledge and understanding of the law. The monitoring mechanisms should be put in place. Lastly, land after mining should be reclaimed and returned to the original owners.

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- The Department of Co-operation, Government of Jharkhand, awarded the Pradan-promoted Torpa Grameen Poultry Co-operative Society Ltd for excellence in taking up the poultry co-operative programme under the Didi Samridhi Yojna. The department was celebrating the International Year of Co-operation on December 21, 2004.

- Visioning PRADAN 2015 was launched at India International Centre, New Delhi on November 1-2 2004. Consultants Rolf Lynton and Deepankar Roy with Deep Joshi, Satyabrata Acharyya, D Narendranath, Anirban Ghose, Achintya Ghosh, Soumen Biswas, Manas Satpathy, Dinabandhu Karmakar, Nivedita Narain and Asif Zaidi attended the launch.

- A series of five internal consultations around Vision 2015 for Pradan were subsequently launched across Pradan in November and December 2004. Another two are yet to be initiated. Pradan teams got together to participate in 2-day meetings at different places. Dr. Ajit Kanitkar of Swiss Development Corporation (SDC) spent half a day at a visioning exercise held at New Delhi on December 13-14, 2004 that included the Rajasthan and Delhi teams.

- Pradan nominated Mala Roy, Arnab Chakraborty, Samir Bhattacharya and Ashok Kumar to participate in the EYE (Exchange Young Executive) exchange programme between the Netherlands and India during November 15-27, 2004. The exchange visit for Dutch participants was meant to deepen their understanding of the local context, gain business insights related to the cutting age of sus-

tainable livelihoods and micro- enterprises and mainstream economy improve their knowledge and skills in change management, coaching and leadership. For Pradan participants the aim was to showcase their work and get their feedback on current practical issues they are confronted with at the level of change management. Participants had visited each other's project in their respective countries. National Foundation of India in New Delhi hosted the final workshop. For more information write to info@eye-exchange.org or visit www.eye-exchange.org.

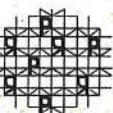
- The first phase of the livelihoods promotion-training programme was held at Kesla during November 30 to December 8, 2004. Sanjiv Phansalkar was the external resource person and Dinabandhu Karmakar and D Narendranath were the internal resource persons. Other resource persons included Dr Rajesh Saxena from IRMA and Deepankar Roy. Twenty Pradan professionals participated.

- D Narendranath attended Sa-Dhan's board meeting on December 10 in New Delhi.

- Twenty-four Development Apprentices of the 31st and 32nd batch attended the Process Awareness and Sensitivity Module (PAS-II) during November 29 to December 4 and during December 13-18, 2004. Deepankar Roy and Ramesh Galhoda were the resource persons for this programme.



PRADAN (Professional Assistance for Development Action) is a voluntary organisation registered under the Societies' Registration Act in Delhi. We work in selected villages in 7 states through small teams based in the field. The focus of our work is to promote and strengthen livelihoods for the rural poor. It involves organising them, enhancing their capabilities, introducing ways to improve their incomes and linking them to banks, markets and other economic services. PRADAN comprises professionally trained people motivated to use their knowledge and skills to remove poverty by working directly with the poor. Engrossed in action, we often feel the need to reach out to each other in PRADAN as well as those in the wider development fraternity. NewsReach is one of the ways we seek to address this need. It is our forum for sharing thoughts and a platform to build solidarity and unity of purpose.



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