

Public Service Delivery through Panchayatiraj Institution and Community based Organisation partnership approach during Covid19 in Odisha, India.

¹Baburam patra

PRADAN, Bhubaneswar

Abstract: This paper intends to find out the Women’s participation in the governance of their village so that they can contribute more effectively for their own wellbeing and the society they live in. Gram panchayat level federation(GPLF) promoted by Odisha livelihood mission(OLM) under National rural livelihood Mission (NRLM) by Government of India and Professional Assistance for Development action(PRADAN), a national level non-profit organisation take on the responsibility of unleashing the immense power of people at grassroots for development action during Covid19.This study majorly focuses on partnership role played by Panchayati raj institutions(PRI) and Women self help group (WSHG) collectives. For effective public service delivery during Covid19 under Covid Rural Livelihood response welfare project supported by Ajim Premji Foundation, India

Keywords: Partnership,Governance,Panchayatiraj,Institution,Community,Organisation

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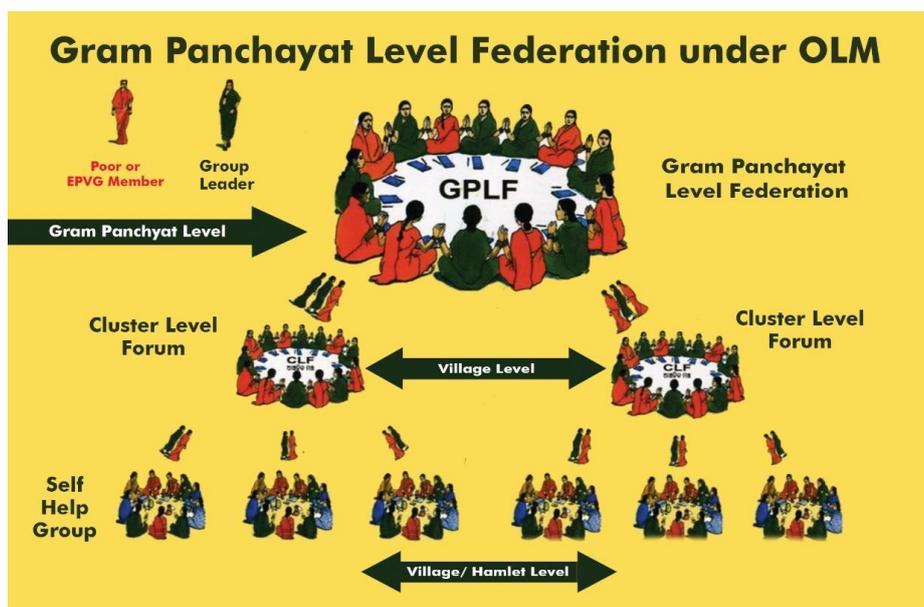


Figure1(Executive committee structure of GPLF promoted by OLM)

1. Introduction:

To address issue of poverty in Odisha, various programmes or schemes of Government of India(GoI)and Government of Odisha (GoO) are implemented by various departments of GoO. This becomes even more important not to addressing various challenges in rural areas leading to poor access to entitlements under various programmes and schemes and less participation in local governance.

During Covid19, accessing entitlements under various schemes was more challenging due to influx of return migrants to villages. In this backdrop, PRADAN started Covid Rural Livelihood Response (CRLR) welfare project with local administration with the support from Ajim Premji Foundation(APF), India in 13 PRADAN's operational block of 6 districts of Odisha through Panchayatiraj institutions(PRI)and women self-group (WSHG) collectives' partnership approach to address the challenges at origin i.e. at village level governed by Gram panchayat(GP).

Providing employment under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and various entitlements under other schemes, WSHG collectives created demand for work under (MGNREGA) at GP level. They also involved in providing necessary support for documentation to poor and vulnerable households for entitlement under various schemes and at village level with the help of social mobiliser (SM) under CRLR project. In project villages.

2. Gram Panchayat Level Federation (GPLF) promoted by OLM-A community based Organisation(CBO).

GPLF is a federated body all WSGs at Gram panchayat level. The executive committee of GPLF consists of three representatives from each Cluster Level Forum (CLF) of a particular gram panchayat. (See **Figure.1**). Out of three representative, atleast one need to represent the the extremely poor and vulnerable group(EPVG) PRADAN started working with GPLF promoted by Odisha Livelihoods Mission (OLM)[2] since its formation for their wellbeing and society they live in all its operational areas by strengthening women self-groups and its associate tiers like CLF at village level and GPLF at gram panchayat level. In visioning process, GPLF members realized the need to participate in the governance of the village so that they could contribute more effectively to the well-being of women as well as society. they found GPLF is the right forum where they could interact at the gram panchayat members and CLF and WSHGs are the right forum where they can interact villagers and Pallisabha. They realised to participate the governance of the village for their wellbeing and the society they live in.

3. Brief about PRADAN

PRADAN is one of the premier Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) working on poverty alleviation in India. Young professionals from reputed institutions join PRADAN to engage with economically deprived communities at the grassroots by strengthening community institutions, building social capital and supporting local leadership to take charge of their own development. Basis our programs and pilots impacting ~9,34,732 rural households', more than half of which are tribal, prototypes have been developed for wide-scale replication. [3]

4. PRADAN's Intervention under CRLR Welfare: Delivering Social Protection through WSHG Collectives.

This project was conceived in the context of Covid-19 pandemic impact on households depend upon daily wages, remittances and programme initiative or scheme announcement by government to mitigate ensuring deprivation. Since marginalised and vulnerable rural communities typically face numerous hurdles in accessing benefits under various schemes or programmes. Therefore, more supportive and bottom-up local governance were felt necessary to extend reach of the new and existing programs at the local level and wider uptake by eligible beneficiaries. in project locations (see **(table.1)** through partnership approach between women SHG collectives and gram panchayat. The major programme interventions implemented and role played by different actors are as follows.

1. **Awareness on Social Security Schemes** were carried out in all villages. IEC materials on various schemes, its eligibility and process of application are also displayed on a village wall known as *Suchana kantha (Information wall)*. The awareness drive included institutions like WSHGs, CLF and GPLF
2. **Capacitating WSHG Collectives** – through a process of re-aligning the organizational vision of SHG Federations, engagement with and training of the Federation level and supporting them in orientation and training of CLFs. The major role played by WSGs were ; creating awareness about various schemes , identification of eligible beneficiaries from membered households, supporting in application with required documentation to identified beneficiaries with the help of social mobilisers(SM).The major role played by CLFs were facilitating the annual plan preparation , facilitating pallisabha/gram Sabha¹ [1]to approve such plan, collating the applications under various social security schemes and helping beneficiaries in applying online through Jana seva kendra² or forwarding those to concerned officials through gram panchayat or directly to concerned officials at block level.
3. **Orienting GPs towards Collaboration with SHG Collectives** – about the functioning of SHG collectives and the importance of collaboration with SHG collectives, facilitative role of GPLF and GP in bridging the gap and breaking the barriers in proposed Gram Panchayat in improving access to entitlements under various scheme and reach to marginalised.
4. **Establishing GPLF** by bringing GPs and the CLFs together into the collaborative arrangement and working with relevant departments for the enabling processes. In this process monthly coordination meeting between GPLF and GP along with GP level officials has played a crucial role for consolidation of various scheme application, review, and improve their plan of action.
5. **Observing Rozgar diwas(Employment day)** by gram panchayats for MGNREGA [4] in fortnightly at gram panchayat level(in alternative Wednesday a month).eventually, this platform has been used for not only demand for work under MGNREGA but also collection of applications of applications from eligible beneficiaries under various schemes and grievance redressal at gram panchayat level. In this day gram panchayat members and gram panchayat official along with some selected members of GPLF and social mobiliser were also present in the meeting.
6. **Mentoring and professional support** by 13 experienced PRADAN professionals, 13 block coordinators and 148 social mobilisers in supporting, mentors, designing and developing training, planning and monitoring of entire activity under the project

5. Methodology

This section covers the methodology to assess the effectiveness of public service delivery through PRI-CBO partnership under CRLR welfare project. The intervention coverage includes about two (2) lakh household that is spread across, 13 blocks six (6) districts (see Table 1), 148 Gram Panchayats (GP),

Assuming coverage of the maximum number of intervention blocks, and a crucial objective being the quantitative effect on access entitlements under various schemes/programmes, the cluster random sampling has been made with person-level outcomes. The assumption being, within an project block the beneficiaries have received the same treatment/intervention.

399 random sampling with 5% as margin of error has made in the 13 project block where the project has been implemented.

In the same fashion 319 random sampling in 10 control blocks where the project has not implemented to compare the effectiveness.

¹ As per Odisha gram panchayat act 1964.

² Jan seva Kendra is a electronically run common facility centre promoted by Government of Odisha for online application under various Govt schemes or programmes.

Table:1 (List of project blocks)

Sl. No.	District	Blocks
1	Kalahandi	Lanjigarh
2	Kandhamal	Knuagaon, Phulbani, Baliguda, Daringbadi
3	Koraput	Lamtaput, Nandpur
4	Rayagada	Kolnara
5	Kendujhar	Banspal, Patna
6	Mayurbhanj	Jashipur, KaranjiaThakurmunda

For selection of random fifteen households in randomly selected project village and control village We used MGNREGA job card list and random function (=RAND) in excel sheet for random selection of households.

Primary data:

Primary data in this assessment was pertaining household level through designed questionnaire. Focused group discussion at community level (village level) and institutional level (GPLF level)

Secondary data:

The secondary data pertaining to crucial indicators at household level, village and gram panchayat level was collected from MGNREGA mis [7] and PRADAN's project mis at location level

6. Findings:

The study findings are based on 399 responses in project village and 319 responses in control village (see (Table.2). The mean age of respondent is about 42 years and 43 years for project village and control village respectively. The head of household age is about 48 and 47 in project village and control village. The highest respondent is from scheduled tribe (ST) category (71.72 percent) followed by other backward class (OBC) category (17.05 percent) followed by scheduled caste (SC category 10.28 percent) and general category (0.93 percent). The percent of household from below poverty line (BPL) is 89 and 80 in project GP and control GP respectively.

Table 2: The sample description of the survey respondent (n=399 for project Gram Panchayat * and n=319 for Control Gram Panchayat **

Items	Details(Project GP	Details(Control GP
Age	Mean age of respondent=42(n=399, Mean age of household head=48(n=399)	Mean age of respondent=43, mean age of household head=47(n=319)
Respondent(%)	Male:61.44, female:58.56	Male:62.69, Female:37.31(n=319)
Head of household(%)	Male:78.27, Female:21.73(n=399)	Male:75.55, Female:24.45
Caste category(%)	ST:71.72, OBC:17.05, SC:10.28, General:0.93(n=399)	ST:57.05, OBC:30.09, SC:7.5, General:5.3 (n=319)
Education(%)	Illiterate:51.52, Primary:28.8, secondary/higher secondary:17.56, Graduate/Post graduate:2.1 (n=398)	Illiterate:36.3, Primary:40.12, Secondary/Higher secondary:20.38, Graduate/Post graduate:3.18(n=314)
Primary occupation (%)	unskilled worker:37.08, housewife:3.75, househusband:0.93, agriculture worker:39.43, not working:0.23, others:7.98 petty business:1.4, Office job:0.46, skilled worker:8.92 (n=398)	unskilled worker:32.91, House wife:1.25, housewife:1.25 house husband=1.25, Agricultural worker:47.33, Skilled worker:4.7, Other:9.71, not working:1.25, Petty business/self-employed:1.56 (n=319)

*Project GP: The gram panchayats where the project has been implemented

**Control GP: These are the gram panchayats where the said project project has not implemented.

The value of “n” may vary due to data cleaning from kobo toolbox platform for different indicators which was used for data collection and analysis

6.1.Comparison of MGNREGA and Asset creation with control GPs

To understand primary implication of MGNREGA, we compared employment creation and so income generation (see figure.2 for household participation under MGNREGA. It was found that around 96.26 percent household have job card out of which 58.6 percent household worked under MGNREGA in project GPs against 58.65 percent household have job card out of which 30.26 percent job card holders worked in control GPs. It showed that due to systematic design and focused approach 28.39 percent more household got employment in comparison to Control areas.

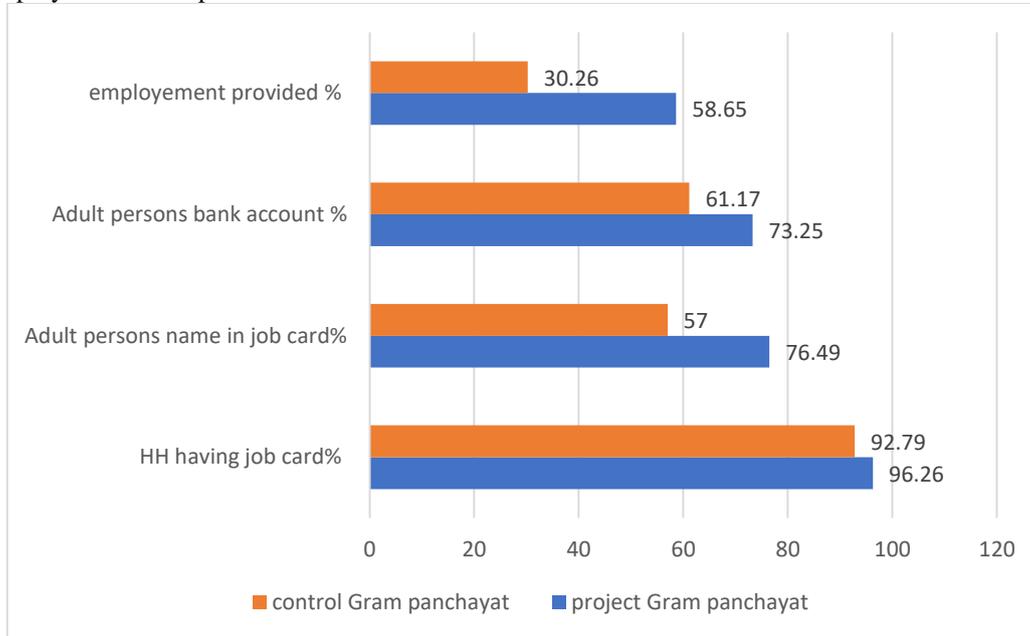


Figure:2(percentage of household participated in MGNREGA)

It was also found that average person days per household has more in project GPs (70.22) in comparison with control GPs (57.7) in the year 2021-22. The growth in average person days has increased between the financial year 2019-20 and 2021-22 in project GPs (around 19days) in comparison with control GPs (around 2 days) due to active participation of WSHG and its associate tiers as well as Govt.’s focus to provide employment during Covid19 (. see figure:3)

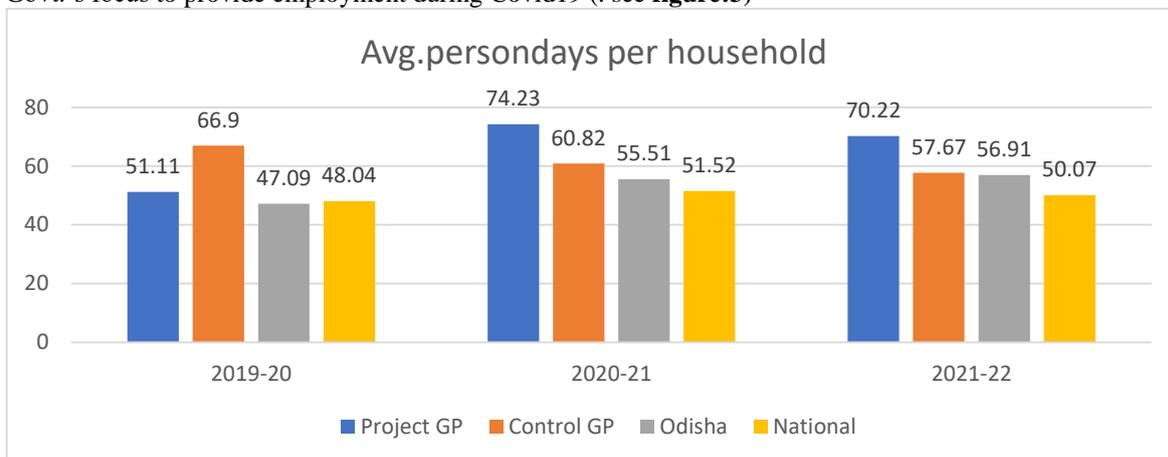


Figure:3(Average person days generated per household under MGNREGA)

Further we also found that there was increase Natural Resource Management (NRM) expenditure both in project and control GP the average expenditure on natural resource management(NRM) was 27.29 lakhs more per GP in project GPs in the year 2021-22(see figure:3) due to PRADAN’ systematic involvement and active participation of PRI and CBOs in planning and project formulation of NRM structures. Average NRM expenditure is 98.65 lakhs in Project GPs where as in Control GPs is 71.36 lakhs in the year 2021-22(See figure4) which leads to income enhancement of households. Project areas (32% household expressed in comparison with control areas (11%households. Asset maintenance and its utilisation has direct relationship with income enhancement of households (see (figure:5)

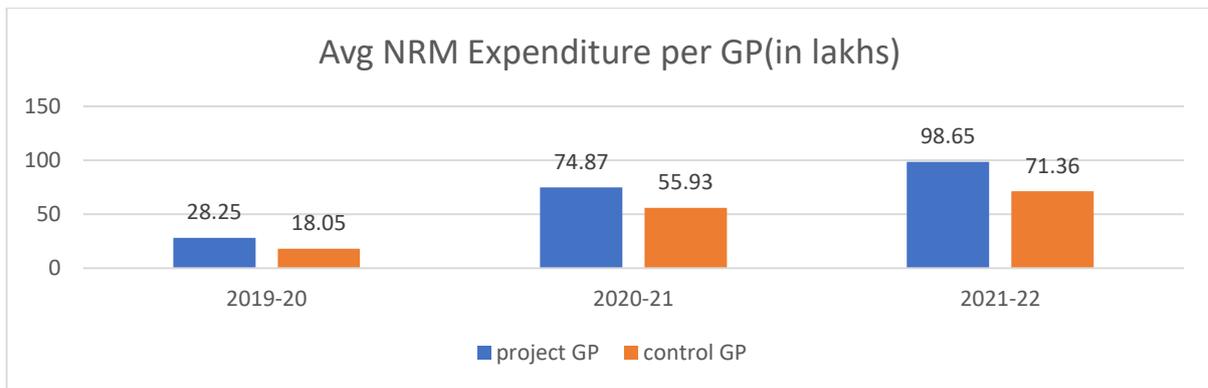


Figure:4 (Average NRM expenditure per GP (Rs.in lakhs).)

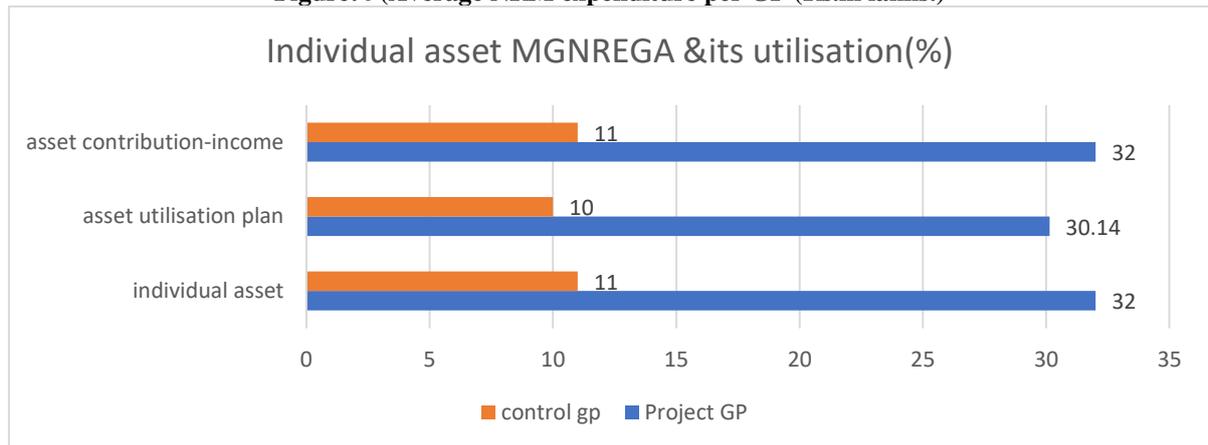


Figure:5 (Individual asset under MGNREGA and its utilisation (% of respondent expressed))

6.2 Participation in local governance

Due to involvement of WSHG and its associate tiers like CLF and GPLF and facilitative role played by PRADAN community participation in village level annual plan preparation as well as in pallisabha is around 20 percent more in project village in compared to control villages (see figure.6).

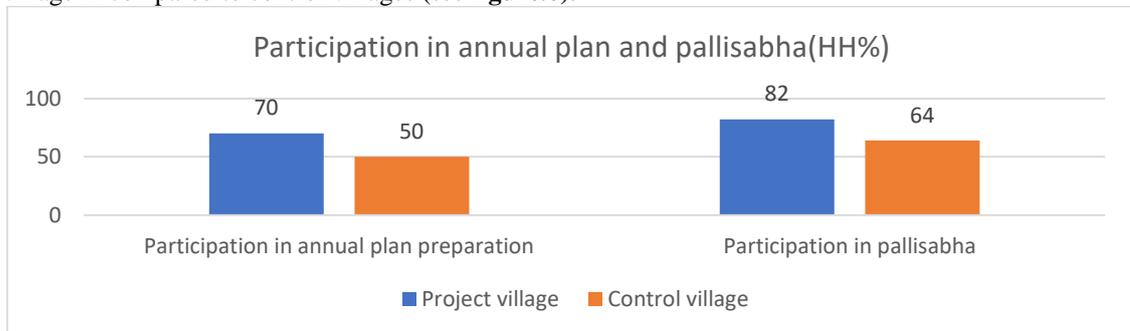


Figure.6(Percentage of household participation in Annual plan and pallisabha)

The major reasons for participating in local governance in project villages are notice from GP(47.89% response followed by discussions in WSHG and CLF(26.89% response) due to sharing of information by gram panchayat to WSHG through their GPLF and CLF.(see figure.7)

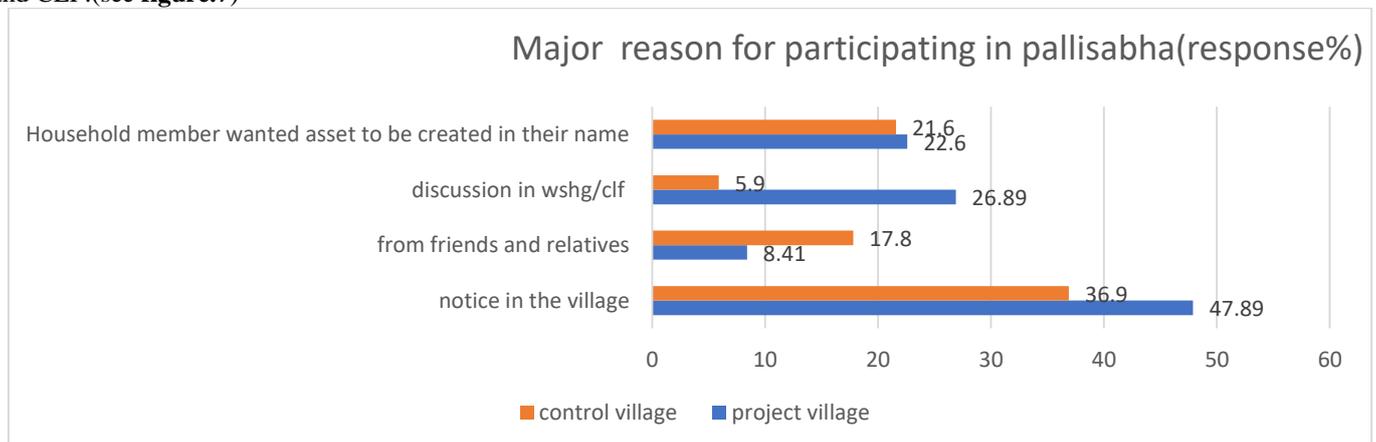


Figure.7 (Major reasons for participating in pallisabha(response%))

6.3. Labour card benefits under construction worker welfare scheme of GoO

Due to focused effort of PRADAN and support from block administration and office of district labour officer around 86% eligible worker under MGNREGA were able to apply for labour card.(see **figure 8.**)”Recently application for labour card become easier due to online application and administration is always supportive” one of the Block Development Officer said.

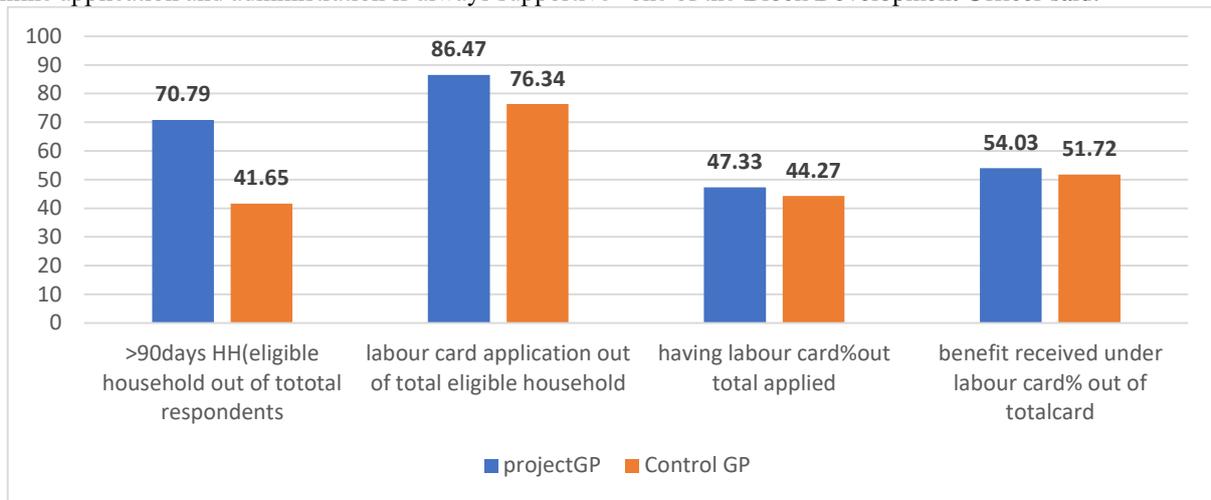


Figure:8(Labour card application and its benefit received household (%))

6.4. Pension scheme benefits under GoI and GoO schemes

Due to constant effort of WSHG collective, and block administrations support, around 36% schemes (see **figure:9**)left out eligible household able to submitted their application under NSAP or Madhubabu pension yojana of GoO.(see **figure:10**)and getting their pension (around 74% pension card holder are getting their pension by cash. The representatives of WSHG collective and SMs played a major role to maintain covid appropriate behaviour for pension distribution especially for hard-to-reach areas.

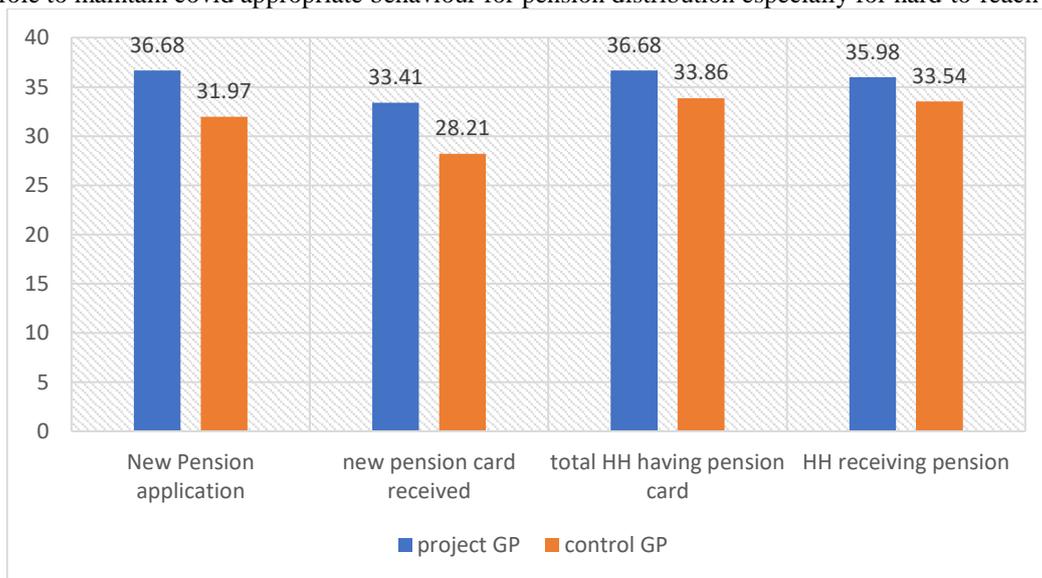


Figure:9(Pension card application benefit received (% of respondent household))

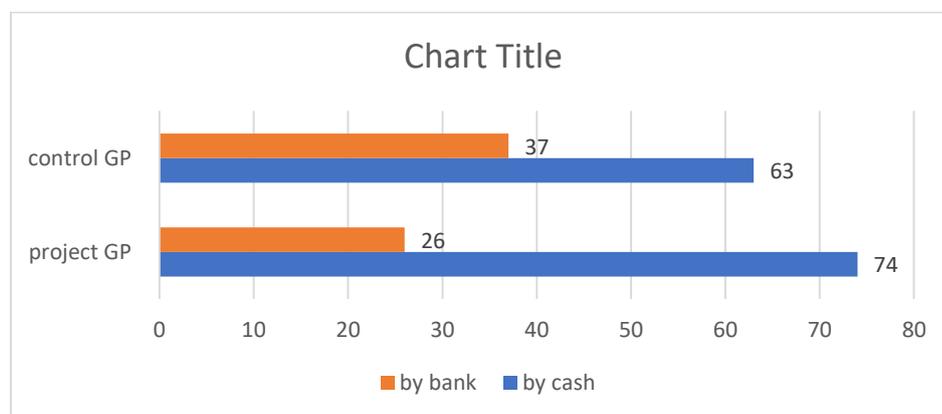


Figure :10 (Mode of Pension payment)

We also found that highest number of pension card holders are under Madhu babu pension Yojana by GoO[5] than Indira Gandhi national social Assistance Programme[6] by GoI(see **figure 10**).The old age pension(60-80 years) of age is the highest (56% followed by widow pension (30% followed by Person with Disability (PwD) pension(11%)

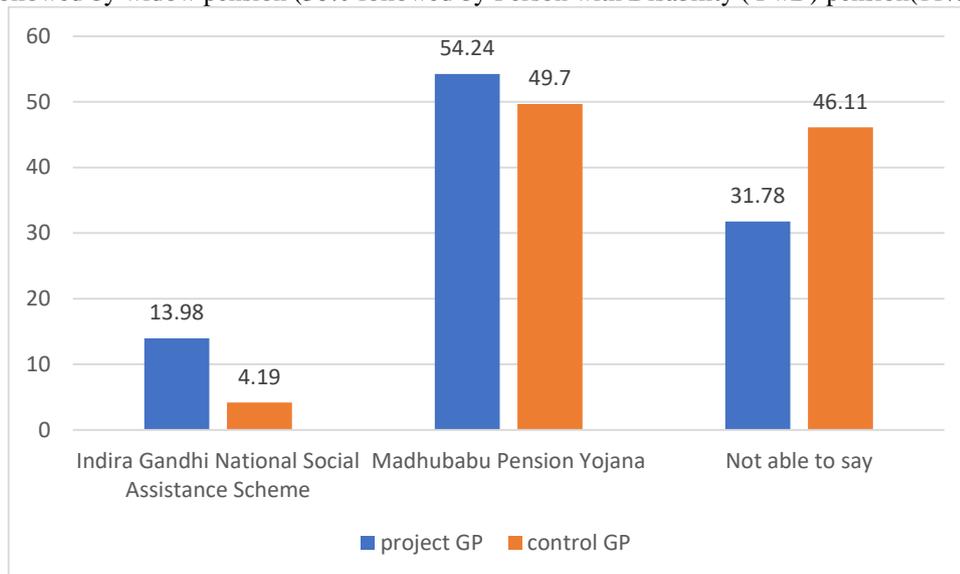


Figure:10(Scheme wise pension distribution (%))

6.5. Benefits received under National Food Security Act(NFSA)/State food security scheme.

Due to systematic engagement of PRADAN, local administration support and GP-WSHG collective partnership like identification of left out eligible beneficiaries, adhar linking and other documentation support, around 20more eligible household in Project areas compared with control areas able to apply for ration card and getting ration. % (see **figure 11**)

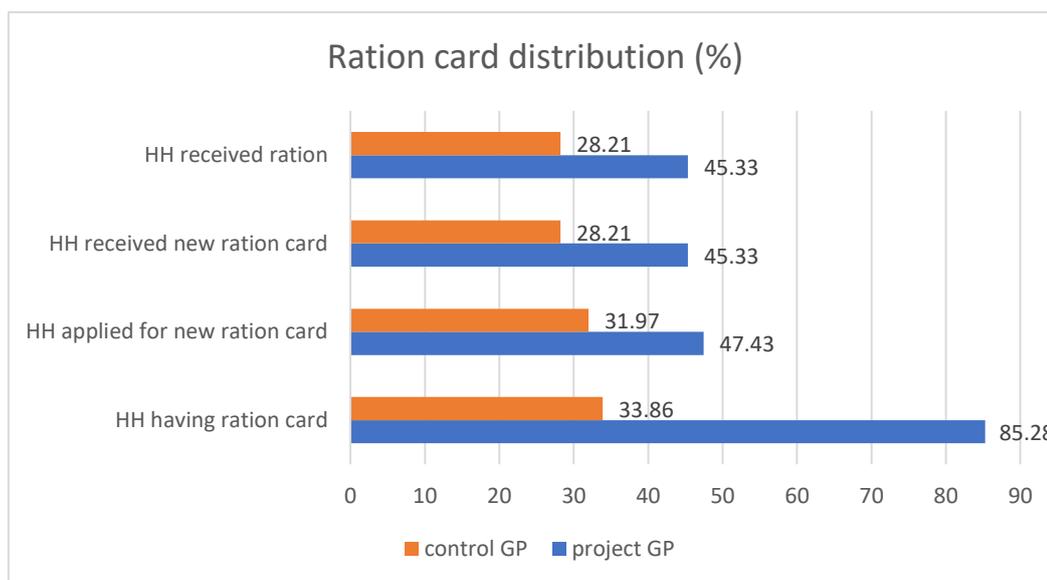


Fig.11 (Ration card distribution (%))

7. Challenges faced:

Two decades have elapsed since the enactment of 73rd amendment of the Constitution of India and the enactment of provisions of (Panchayat Extensions to Scheduled Areas Act, 1996) the state Govt. were supposed to provide functions, finances, functionaries pertaining to 29 subjects listed in the eleventh schedule of the Constitution of India [8] to the gram panchayat. But the real situation in ground in a state like Odisha, subjects like agriculture, horticulture, fishery, livestock, etc., are with the line dept. of the state government, wherein the gram panchayats have no role to play. Those working in the above subject areas are not accountable to the gram panchayats. There is, therefore, deficiency of skilled staff in the gram panchayats.

8. Conclusion

The beauty and strength of democracy at the grass roots is evident in the intensive planning around land and livelihoods, which cannot be thought of without the participation of people. The proactiveness of the administration and the involvement of CBOs like WSHG and its associate tiers helped the gram panchayats and the block to make plans of such a magnitude especially delivery of various entitlements under various schemes of GoI and GoO implemented by GoO. Besides, the support system for CBOs and the community to claim its entitlement and lodge grievances allowed the community to experience the power of the citizen. This is just the beginning and is a bright example to follow. India is a

country of villages, and we need to experiment and innovate ways to involve the rural community in planning and implementation. Only then can India be a self-sufficient republic in a true sense.

9. References

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