



Strategic Initiatives

Pursuing POSSIBILITIES

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As we embark upon a much wider transformative engagement with rural and tribal communities, we strongly believe that bringing change in the human condition is a collective responsibility, one beyond the scope of just a singular entity. For more effective ways to evolve, different actors must join hands and bring in their respective competence to tackle multiple challenges. We continue to hold the idea of partnerships as valuable in this process.

We pursue partnerships at two levels: to roll out development tasks to effectively transform a large geography at the grassroots, and to create coalitions and associations with cross-sectoral organizations for knowledge and expertise. Towards this, we forged new partnerships and strengthened existing ones with civil society organizations (CSOs), thematic resource organizations, corporates and governments, both at the development cluster level, and as an organization.

COLLABORATIONS WITH CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

Our CSO partnerships are focused on building mutual capacities and strengths to increase effectiveness and efficiency of systems and processes

Our Civil Society Organization (CSO) partnerships are focused on building mutual capacities and strengths to increase effectiveness and efficiency of systems and processes (including human processes), tools and techniques, and institutional models for large-scale impact. Following are the collaborations underway at PRADAN's different development clusters.

Vikas Bazar.Net across 4 Development Clusters in Jharkhand

Vikas Bazar.Net (VB.Net), a network of 15 CSOs, was formed in November 2005 for joint and coordinated efforts in accelerating the participation of small and marginal producers in the market. It works across 4 of our development clusters (DC) namely the South Chhotanagpur DC, North Chhotanagpur DC, Santhal Pargana DC and Kolhan & North Odisha DC.

This year, the focus was to enable farmers to adopt improved farm and forest-based livelihood practices to ensure food security and increased cash incomes. The farmers, through the MGNREGS-NRLM-CFT programs, enhanced their understanding of Integrated Natural Resource Management (INRM) practices and participatory planning methodologies. Various training and capacity building exercises were conducted to strengthen livelihoods, monitoring and evaluation systems and market linkages.

VB.Net facilitated collaborations between partner agencies and the Department of Rural Development, Government of Jharkhand for village level planning exercises under IPPE-II, sponsored by the Government of India.

South Odisha Development Cluster (SODC), Odisha

Two partnership consortia were formed in Koraput and Kandhamal districts of SODC. The 'Koraput Consortium' comprising Chetna Organisation, Harsha Trust and PRADAN. And

the 'Kandhamal Consortium' comprising Kalpabrikshya, SWATI, ORRISSA, Harsha Trust and PRADAN.

While the Government of Odisha's Tribal Empowerment and Livelihood Project (OTELP Plus) formed the immediate context of these partnerships, the broader purpose of building these forums was to address large-scale poverty and influence development practices in south Odisha, one of the poorest regions of the country.

Through OTELP Plus, the consortium promoted more than 2,000 SHGs in the project areas. Apart from imparting training on participatory planning for MGNREGS, initiatives to expand livelihood coverage and build linkages with the Department of Agriculture were also undertaken. The linkage was to support farmers' access to improved varieties of seeds. An annual work plan budget (AWPB) was submitted to the Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) to leverage finance for livelihood activities.

We are also a member of another partnership forum, the 'South Odisha Development Initiative' (SODI). The forum comprises seven CSO partners in the south Odisha region. The collaboration aims to scale up work for pigeon pea cultivation in 6 districts of south Odisha.

Mahakaushal Development Cluster (MKDC), Madhya Pradesh

Since 2008, the partnership engagement in the Mahakaushal region has grown, with us playing the role of a 'Resource NGO', under the Tejaswini program. We have been successful in promoting our model of building women's collectives at a large scale with 6 CSO partners: 3 in Mandla district (Tejaswini Ekta Mahila Sangh, Tejaswini Sangwari Mahila Sangh and Sahara Manch), 2 in Dindori district (Bhopal Yuwa Paryavaran Shikshan & Samajik Sansthan-

BYPASS), All India Society for Electronics & Computer Technology-AISECT) and 1 in Balaghat district (Baihar Nari Utthan).

For the first time, as many as 6,000 SHGs, along with higher tier collectives, were formed and nurtured in this partnership. Apart from being involved in micro-finance and livelihood planning, several collectives promoted under the program have undertaken issues of gender parity and better governance. A project management unit (comprising Tejaswini District Project Manager, PRADAN professionals, and Sangh Mitra -Federation CEOs), monitors the

larger agenda of holistic village development (women's empowerment through strengthening community institutions, livelihood opportunities, gender-based development, etc. as per the state's guidelines) along with project activities and outputs.

Baghelkhand & Satpuda Development Cluster (BSDC), Madhya Pradesh

In this development cluster, our engagement with Pararth Samiti, a CSO, has been to build capacities of the field staff in livelihood planning interventions to demonstrate agriculture and mulberry cultivation in the area.



About 73% families who adopted SRI principles in their paddy fields have achieved almost double the traditional yield

Teams in Betul and Bhoura are exploring the setting up of primary education initiatives in partnership with Eklavya and Samavesh. Initial rounds of discussions and field visits have been made and work will start in the coming year.

North & South Chhattisgarh Development Cluster (NSCDC), Chhattisgarh

In collaboration with 13 NGO partners, the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) method of paddy cultivation was introduced through pilots across different poverty endemic regions of Chhattisgarh. This was to demonstrate and prepare for large scale replication.

This partnership has resulted in setting up a state level forum called the 'SRI Manch' to share learnings from SRI and other initiatives i.e., community mobilization, convergence, community forest rights, etc.

The SRI Manch has been influencing the state to promote SRI technology in paddy, pulses, millets & vegetables. Significant efforts are also being made to nurture SRI Manch as a leadership forum.

During the year the main focus of the partnership was to support *Kharif* paddy using SRI and DSR methods along with vegetable and millet cultivation in 752 villages with 35,872 households in 12 districts. About 73% families who adopted SRI principles in their paddy fields have achieved yields ≥ 4 mt/ha, which is almost double the traditional yield, the state average being 2.2 mt/ha.

North East Bihar Development Cluster (NEBDC), Bihar

We supported the establishment of a civil society organization called 'Preservation and Proliferation of Rural Resources and Nature (PRAN)' in 2010. PRAN promotes improved agriculture among small farmers to enhance farm productivity and income. It works in the districts of Gaya and Nalanda. In the partnership with PRAN, our efforts intensified farm-based livelihoods in central Bihar and made inroads into the north eastern districts of Kishanganj and Araria, where we have direct operations.

Members of both organizations have met regularly to share experiences. PRAN professionals visited communities in our areas of operation to help conceptualize farming models appropriate to their context. Jointly, several meetings were held with the Bihar Rural Livelihood Promotion Society (BRLPS) to familiarize officials about our methodologies of livelihood promotion.

OUTREACH THROUGH PARTNER CSOs			
No.	Development Cluster	NGO/Network	No. of Families Reached
1	NEBDC, Bihar	PRAN	26,149
2	SODC, Odisha	OTELP	14,600
3	KNODC, Jharkhand & Odisha*	SODI	5,200
4	SCDC, NCDC, SPDC & KNODC, Jharkhand, Bihar & Odisha**	Vikasbazar.net	20,364
5	NSCDC, Chhattisgarh	SRI Manch	35,872
6	Mahakaushal, MP	Tejaswini	14,200
7	BSDC, MP	Pararth Samiti	2,000
Total			113,788

* KNODC includes part of Jharkhand and part of Odisha state
** SPDC includes part of Jharkhand and part of Bihar state

COLLABORATIONS WITH THEMATIC RESOURCE ORGANIZATIONS

Continuing with efforts to support emerging development needs in our project areas, reputed resource organizations in governance, health and education were identified. This was done while strengthening associations with existing organizations whom we are already working with on issues of gender, water and sanitation, land rights and nutrition.

New partnerships have been formed with Prajayatnam, Vidya Bhawan, Eklavya and Vikramshila in the primary education domain while Chetna, Public Health Resource Society (PHRS), Child in Need Institute (CINI) and Ekjut have agreed to collaborate on rural healthcare issues.

Gender Dimensions:

Partnership with Jagori

To integrate gender dimensions in our work on rural transformation with women and rural communities, our partnership with Jagori has been greatly instrumental in bringing women to the forefront of change in their communities.

The partnership involves building perspectives, moving towards consensus building and conviction, evolving methodologies for facilitating change

Highlights of PRADAN - Jagori Partnership

- Perspective building on gender for 150 PRADAN professionals.
- A two-phased Training of Trainers (TOT) of 40 professionals.
- 16 leadership camps covering 600 women leaders and community resource persons for gender sensitization.
- Training members of 3,018 SHGs and 434 VOs on different aspects related to gender and discrimination.
- Documentation and compilation of easy-to-comprehend tools and kits for the professional in the field to engage communities around gender discussions.

Agri-nutrition Further Strengthened

- A baseline study was conducted with support from International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).
- Subsequently, 14 teams piloting the agri-nutrition program have developed plans for nutrition-sensitive interventions.
- Two teams (Chakradharpur and Kathikund) took initiatives in areas of 'Public Health' and 'Women & Child Development', developed linkages with the government system and facilitated interactions between government functionaries and SHG leaders.
- 7,610 women were made aware about planning for nutrition sensitive agriculture in the Kathikund block. Our efforts were acknowledged by the Jharkhand State Livelihood Promotion Society (JSLPS).

within communities and creating specific skills internally in the organization to steer the change process.

Health & Nutrition:

Partnership with PHRS

Our partnership with PHRS is to develop and implement a comprehensive strategy that interlinks health and nutrition with agriculture and other livelihood practices.

The pilot project underway in a few development clusters, is exploring contextual solutions in an attempt to develop a standard model for thematic integration of nutrition with the bigger development agenda. It aims to bring positive changes towards health and nutrition of women and children by linking it with agricultural practices and livelihood interventions.

PHRS' support is in the form of improving capacities of our professionals and sharpening their understanding of nutrition-sensitive engagements with communities. PHRS is helping us work with identified SHG members, develop processes to be implemented in the community and build leadership and expertise around nutrition in the various tiers of collectives such as VOs, Gram Panchayat level federations (GPLFs) and block level federations (BLFs).

State Swachh Bharat Mission (SSBM) in Jharkhand has expressed interest to work with SHG federations to reach remote areas

Water and Sanitation:

Partnership with Gram Vikas

To facilitate women's access to hygienic sanitation facilities and safe drinking water, and to unleash community-led processes to make villages open defecation free (ODF), we are partnering with Gram Vikas.

Interventions are on in 3 development clusters; SODC in Odisha and NCDC and SCDC in Jharkhand. A number of trainings in the ODF villages have been conducted to convince the elderly to use toilets and demonstrate their use. Construction of new toilets, levying fines on people who willfully defecate in the open, etc. are all significant achievements within the community to sustain the ODF status.

The program is also trying to influence and activate the Village Water and Sanitation Committees (VWSCs) and state governments at the macro level to make the ODF initiative successful.

Land Rights:

Partnership with Landesa

To ensure women are able to get their rightful land rights, with support from Landesa we deployed a two-pronged strategy that included:

- Building awareness about land rights and land security issues such as access, control and ownership over land; nuances of land issues affecting the poor and different knowledge and intervention frameworks to grapple with the problem, for members of women's federations and our team.
- Research: Macro and micro analyses of the situation related to land rights were conducted to help in joint advocacy with mainstream institutions; and to adopt and scale-up emerging solutions.

Using these two approaches, we began pilots in partnership with Landesa in select blocks at 3 development clusters in Bihar, Jharkhand and Odisha.

These pilots have resulted in a deeper orientation, better understanding and a focused study (macro and micro) of the land rights issues in Odisha, both for our professionals and for women's federation.

During the year, two macro studies in Kandhamal and Rayagada districts were conducted on issues of women's land security, inheritance and control, and implementation of the Forest Rights Act (FRA) in the state. The findings were further dealt with in micro-studies in 3 villages of Rayagada, Mayurbhanj and Kandhamal districts. It included 100-160 families from each village. The findings were shared with block level federations in Rayagada and Mayurbhanj and the Gram Panchayat level federations in Kandhamal district. Subsequently, an orientation program was organized for federation members on land issues.

The Water and Sanitation (WASH) Program

- 3,445 families identified in 45 villages for implementation of the project.
- Construction of toilets has been completed for 765 households in 14 villages. Another 1,301 families have begun construction.
- 7 villages were declared ODF by the district administration in Odisha.
- 1,379 families have been trained and motivated to start construction of toilets at their homes.
- ₹ 0.75 million has been mobilized from user households for toilet maintenance.
- Piped water supply systems were installed in 7 villages to cover 405 households. Additionally, in 6 villages, installation works are underway to cover 327 additional households.
- State Swachh Bharat Mission (SSBM) in Jharkhand has expressed interest to work with SHG federations to reach remote areas.

Additionally, a macro study in Bihar for analyzing the historical evolution of land governance processes in the state was carried out. The focus was to understand the socio-political structure; policy and legislative processes; and assess different types of land tenure arrangements. It also highlighted best practices focusing on agricultural tenancy (homestead and farm land), women's land rights, and current approaches in land governance with

emphasis on revenue infrastructure and administration. It proposed recommendations and designed a joint intervention plan to improve land tenure security for the poor and landless in the north east Bihar development cluster (NEBDC).



Efforts to Promote Land Rights In Odisha

- The block level federation in Rayagada was supported to participate in a program by the Government of Odisha to enumerate landless farmers and distribute land titles to identified homestead-less households.
- Federation members identified and prepared a list of 1,946 landless households (including 660 single women) from 70 villages and submitted it to the government for further action.
- The federation identified 46 women for land titles out of which 9 were single women.
- The federation is taking up the enumeration initiative in another 50 villages.
- In Mayurbhanj, the federation was supported under the Women Support Centre (WSC), a government program to assess land security of single women. The program involved livelihoods counseling/ assessment of single women identified under WSC.
- Thirty trained community service providers (CSPs) were involved in collecting information regarding the status of single women in the community, their livelihoods and available options.
- About 5,073 single women were identified through WSC in Karanjia, who will be covered by the CSPs in a phased manner for livelihood counseling.
- CSPs have completed counseling 2,600 single women. Their data will be analyzed and shared with the government departments to facilitate better livelihood options through convergence.



PARTNERSHIPS WITH CENTRAL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS

PRADAN's approach always has been to influence and work on different government programs with departments that are working in and for poverty regions. Accordingly, we have worked with the government at all levels—local bodies, district government, line departments as well as with the relevant ministries of the central government—across all our development clusters.

With Ministry of Rural Development / State Rural Livelihoods Missions as NSO

PRADAN is an NRLM Support Organization (NSO) to the Government of India on livelihoods. We are the only organization in the country to be designated an NSO.

As NSO we have been engaged with the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) since August 2013. Our role as a knowledge and capacity building partner has been instrumental in developing training modules and materials to groom community resource persons (CRPs) in agriculture, livestock and non-timber forest product (NTFP) themes. These modules are now used across the country by different State Rural Livelihoods Missions (SRLMs).

We developed a 'Handbook on Sustainable Agriculture' this year by studying and compiling practices and experiences of different NGOs and organic farmers across the country. A manual is under development to help district and block mission units to identify and implement appropriate pro-poor livelihood prototypes in their areas.

We intensified our work with SRLMs of Odisha, Bihar and Jharkhand to help these state missions to initiate livelihood pilots to draw lessons and incorporate them in their livelihoods strategy and national missions. Over the year, we have piloted large-scale livelihood programs (mostly around agriculture) in 6 blocks of Jharkhand, 4 blocks of Odisha and 8 blocks of Bihar, reaching about 12,000 farmers.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed with the Jharkhand State Livelihoods Promotion Society (JSLPS) in May 2015 and with Odisha Livelihoods Mission (OLM) in August 2015. The MoU with Bihar Rural Livelihoods Promotion Society (Jeevika) was signed in December 2014. The key engagement domains at the SRLM level were to:

- Concretize vision, approaches and strategies on livelihoods (through training programs) for key mission staff and develop systems for learning and knowledge management.
- Demonstrate comprehensive bottom-up livelihoods basket identification (drawing support from knowledge and experience of local community resource persons-CRPs) and its implementation by following a production cluster approach.
- Develop knowledge products that can be used across all states.

In Odisha, significant changes were brought about in the identification processes, grooming and engagement for CRPs. In Jharkhand, the model of grooming local experienced farmers from nearby areas as CRPs was established. This model can be replicated to upscale different livelihood activities in the future.

As the central government increased its focus on convergence, we, as NSO, were made a member of the working group on Integrated Participatory Planning Exercise (IPPE - II), and undertook the following activities.

- Brought an enhanced focus on livelihoods, and put mechanisms for convergence between NRLM, MGNREGS, National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP), Indira Awas Yojana (IAY) and Din Dayal Upadhyaya-State Skill Development Mission (DDU-JKY).
- We were also involved in developing training manuals, tool kits, a film on INRM-based planning process, and a ready reckoner

PRADAN is the only organization in the country to be designated an NRLM Support Organization (NSO) to the Government of India on livelihoods



> North East Bihar Development Cluster

To reach out to marginalized households, as NSO, we supported project facilitation teams of the Bihar government's Rural Livelihoods Promotion Society (also called Jeevika) program in the districts of Saharsa and Khagaria to build robust livelihood initiatives on existing community platforms. The aspiration of the women to embark on livelihood ventures was palpable in both the districts as they were now better organized and had access to mainstream credit.

We supported Jeevika in ideation, training their cadres from districts to villages and provided on-field support to enable them to engage with farmers to begin interventions in livelihoods. We also placed an experienced professional at Khagaria to support livelihood initiatives in both the districts.

Our engagement with the Jeevika staff centered specifically on a large number of training events to prepare them for improved practice around *Rabi* crops. Crops of mustard, potato, field peas, brinjal and chili were promoted.

We supported 6,031 families, and most farmers were able to earn in the range of ₹ 8,000 to 20,000 (income from one season only). In the summer season, a total of 2,226 families took part in the cultivation of cucurbits (bitter gourd, bottle gourd, sponge gourd, and ridge gourd), cow pea and okra. The crop is progressing steadily.

As per our MoU with Jeevika we began strengthening livelihood promotion efforts among marginalized households in Kishanganj and Araria districts. In the project areas, the Jeevika team has been supporting our efforts to introduce common formats for setting up and operationalizing SHGs and VOs; and supporting women's groups to access revolving funds under the NRLM and credit from banks on fairer terms.

to ensure participatory livelihoods focused plans in all the 2,532 backward blocks across the country.

- Played an instrumental role in mobilizing large-scale CSO partnerships in the process of developing participatory livelihoods focused plans.

We trained 300 national trainers and shared ready reckoners, training kits and tool kits for this trainers' pool to further train 6,300 block level trainers and about 145,000 planning team members, along with MoRD and NRLM officials.

The total budget approved for the whole process from the Center was ₹ 16.35 million for the financial year 2015-16, which was almost 10 times that of the previous year. As a result, significant shifts were observed in this IPPE-II process vis-à-vis IPPE-I.

This time, the plans incorporated natural resource-based livelihoods support activities besides ensuring a huge participation of women at all stages. In most states, both NRLM and MoRD machineries have worked together. A large number of CSOs were engaged, both in the training of planning team members as well as during the planning process in their respective operational areas.

In the Jeevika project areas, our teams worked directly with selected SHGs and VO's to undertake livelihood pilots to create strong demonstrations.

In these 2 districts, we worked with 535 farmers in the *Rabi* season growing wheat and maize (using improved practices), tomato, potato, chili and brinjal. Most farmers achieved over a 40% increase in wheat and maize productivity. Further, cash incomes from vegetables were in the range of ₹ 11,000 to 18,000 from around 12 decimals of plots.

> Kolhan & North Odisha Development Cluster

We are working with the Odisha Livelihoods Mission (OLM) to support implementation of programs under the NRLM. The focus has been on institution and capacity building, social development, micro-finance and livelihoods. Our association is to train OLM staff on livelihood planning, strengthening SHGs, improving agriculture and other livelihoods, facilitating exposure visits to locations, and capacity building of local CRPs. As part of the association, 565 women farmers are being supported in Angul district while 1,300 more are being supported in Mayurbhanj district.

Collaboration with Chhattisgarh Government: An Experience from North and South Chhattisgarh DC (NSCDC)

In Kanker, Dhamtari, Raigarh and Bastar districts of the NSCDC we played an active role as part of the facilitation team to orient a group of 137 government and CSO staff from 16 states on participatory planning and implementation processes. The group visited and interacted with the women's federation in the Nagri block of Dhamtari district. The women shared their process of planning with the help of a map and other documents. They also shared their learnings and experiences on the labor budget planning process and systems for orchestrating multiple stakeholders to impact life and livelihoods. Apart from this, the teams engaged with block level resource teams and Gram Panchayat level planning teams in their respective blocks and districts.

We engaged with collectives, PRI members and the MGNREGS cell for intensive participatory planning exercise. The purpose

of this exercise was to include the poorest of the poor under convergence of NRLM, DDU-JKY, IAY, Pradhanmantri Krishi Sinchai Yojna (PMKSY), 14th finance and the National Social Assistance Program (NSAP).

Altogether, we are facilitating blocks to prepare Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDP) for a more holistic development in all the 70 Gram Panchayats in our operational areas. This is being done after proper needs assessment exercises. We helped the Janpad (block level) Panchayats to form block resource teams (BRT). The BRTs helped the Gram Panchayat teams to prepare the GPDPs. This planning process is helping women's collectives identify the socially excluded and marginalized such as the poorest of the poor, the homeless, the destitute and single women in the village, and include them in the development landscape.

Most farmers achieved over a 40% increase in wheat and maize productivity, cash incomes from vegetables were in the range of ₹ 11,000 to 18,000 from around 12 decimals of plots

TRANSFORMING RURAL INDIA

Transforming Rural India (TRI), jointly conceptualized by PRADAN and the TATA TRUSTS, is an ambitious program to make villages places of equal opportunity where residents can meet their aspirations and lead a life of dignity.

This independent initiative will seek the partnership of state governments, corporates, civil society groups, thematic resource organizations and all actors interested in transforming rural India.

The initiative intends to build upon the agency of mobilized rural communities who will take ownership of their own development, thus, creating a higher chance of sustaining it.

The initiative aims to reach targets in all key spheres of life: income, education, and health. Success of the initiative lies in its ability to attract partners, mobilize

investments, knowledge, adoption of best practices, and in the creation of an ecosystem that supports village development.

The focus in the first year has been on foundational activities such as:

- Clarifying and articulating the value proposition, strategies and activities.
- Setting up the team, basic systems and communications.
- Building partnerships and engagement platforms.
- Mobilizing resources and commitment for block pilots.

The TRI core team, comprising 2 members from PRADAN and a senior member from TATA TRUSTS, has been stewarding the initiative and establishing multiple partnerships. Teams have been established for the central office in New Delhi, and in the focus states of Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh.

Transforming Rural India (TRI) is an ambitious program to make villages places of equal opportunity where residents can meet their aspirations and lead a life of dignity



PRADAN Global

PRADAN Global was set up to drive resources to our team in India to accelerate impact and share our vision, values and evidence base with partners.

In 2016, we built a small team of staff and advisors in the United States who are working to drive technical and financial resources to our teams in India in order to support innovation, scale programs and expand capacity in research, communications and advocacy.

PRADAN Global's focus is to:



Build Recognition of PRADAN's Work Outside of India

Develop platforms of influence that create an understanding of PRADAN's work and recognition of its leadership in social development outside India.



Strengthen PRADAN's Internal Systems

Invest in data, information and knowledge management systems to strengthen the quality and consistency of PRADAN's work, allow for more rigorous research, and enable further scale.



Drive Evidence-informed Policy and Advocacy in India

Share PRADAN's development models and outcomes as evidence to influence global development partners, donors and governments' perspectives on social development.



Develop Strategic Partnerships

Drive financial and technical resources to PRADAN to expand programs in India and advance PRADAN's vision within the development community.



Expand Capacity for Measurement, Evaluation and Research

Build evidence of PRADAN's efficacy, refine models and value proposition and strengthen institutional research partnerships to expand PRADAN's influence.