

# **NAYA SAWERA VIKAS KENDRA**



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# Meetings

## Jan Utsav

Inside the gates of Kartic Orsoan College in Gumla, from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> of January, more than two thousand people coming from all over Jharkhand and from various backgrounds (leaders of tribal Communities, Political leaders, social workers, etc.) gathered for **Jan Utsav**, an event organized by PACS (Poorest areas civil society) team.



After Mr Shri Shiv Shankar Oraon, member of the legislative assembly of Jharkhand had symbolically lighted on the candle, the event could start. The State Manager of PACS, Mr Johnson Topno introduced the conference by an inaugural speech during which he explained the purpose of PACS project. *“It is a right based project through which we are trying to **raise awareness** of rural people regarding their rights and to bolster their access to government schemes so that they can be integrated inside*

*Indian society and stop struggling every day for their **food security**”*. Then, when professional musicians and dancers came for a tribal show, he also raised the issue of **identity** highlighting that there is a huge risk for Tribal people to lose their own culture. As a matter of fact, he regretted that the instruments used by the group mentioned above were not traditional ones.

### Different paths of development

Quite obviously, this gathering was above all a pretext for adivasis, social workers but also government's representatives to share their point of view on the following question: **which path should Jharkhand take on its road to development?**

Whereas NGOs working in Jharkhand are following a **grassroots decision-making process**, some might contest this bottom-up approach.

In China, the version of autocratic modernization ordered by Elites belonging to Chinese Communist Party has nothing to do with a grassroots approach but claims to be better at long term planning. The poor in China have surged forward much more quickly than their counterparts in democratic India. Of course, Mr Shri Shiv Shankar Oraon, Member of Legislative Assembly, did not promote such kind of system, he besides took note of government inefficiency to secure the access of government schemes to its citizens blaming the lack of commitment of “bureaucrats”. However, to break the current deadlock, he announced the imminent coming of representatives of Gujarat in Jharkhand, one of the richest states of India, and promised that they will prepare plans for the development of the tribal state. This kind of commitment has obviously nothing to do with a grassroots approach. These experts will indeed work on the arguable assumption that Jharkhand's and Gujarat's background and needs are similar.



Quite surprisingly for the MP, the next speaker in the person of Birendra Kumar, secretary and founding father of Naya Sawera Vikas Kendra, through his lyric and charismatic style, and pointing out his long experience among the people of Jharkhand strongly contradicted this vision of development explaining that people, cultures, needs, territories of Jharkhand are different, and that trying to import another model of development here in Jharkhand would be a huge mistake, warning that *“We will not let you sit on your promises. We will still claim for the application of people’s rights so that you will have no choice but to fulfill your promises.”* He then addressed the public composed of CBO, *“You are the leaders of your communities, without your involvement, no change will take place.”*



Birendra Kumar and the MLA

## Between Right-Advocacy and Support to entrepreneurship activities

Once the first day speeches over, one could talk with members of the eight NGOs and representatives from the Labor Department who were running their booth in the big conference room. For years, all these organizations have been working for the enhancement of a particular field concerning tribal populations of Jharkhand: **Health** (Ejkut), **Education** (Center for catalyzing change), **Livelihood**, **Gender equality** (Shramjivi Mahila Samiti), **the promotion of entrepreneurship** (Udyogini, National Rural Livelihoods Mission). Such kind of gathering enabled members of NSVK to share with their peers on how to improve their modes of action. One NGO especially deserves a small commentary at this point as despite the use of different processes, its concerns are similar to those defended by NSVK. If different views confront on whether Jharkhand should be developed through a grassroots level decision making or through policies implemented from the top, **inside the grassroots level approach, processes also differ.**

Such as NSVK, the National Rural Livelihoods Mission aims at enhancing the livelihood of the poorest and most vulnerable groups of Jharkhand. This organization is convinced that securing them the access of loans and financial means is a prerequisite for sustainable development. If in the framework of Caritas project, NSVK is

providing from time to time loans and financial support to promote entrepreneurship above all among SHGs, however, under PACS, Oxfam and IGSSS projects, NSVK/EP rolls back poverty only through a right based approach. Contrary to NSVK, National Rural Livelihoods Mission **has left behind the right based approach** to focus on the linkage with Financial Institutions in order to facilitate the access of the rural poor to these services. Indeed, based on NSSO data, the Rangarajan Committee on Financial Inclusion revealed that only about 51% of the total households in the country had an access to credit either from institutional or non-institutional sources. Further, the committee reported that only 27% of the farm households were found borrowing from the formal sources. Thus, there is a huge need to dismantle this vicious dynamic. And NRLM is working for it through several ways:

- By assessing the **institutional and financial discipline of the SHGs** but also the prudent utilization of funds through training programs so that they can be able to reimburse their creditors.
- By providing them a **financial support** in order that they can borrow larger amounts.

Through this way of action, NRLM believes it is impacting the livelihood in its covered areas in a much more



extensive way than through a right based approach.

**Jan Dhan Yojana**, the new plan launched by the Prime Minister of India on the 28<sup>th</sup> of August 2014, also wishes to extend the access of people to finance by securing a free of cost account for every family without any requirement to have a minimal balance in the account. More than never, assuring a linkage between banks and SHGs will be necessary and NRLM is already working for it.

Secondly, Ekjut another NGO financed by PACS project is much more similar to NSVK. It focuses on a right-based approach to achieve its goal, improving the nutrition and health among the Tribes. By providing trainings, it aims at raising awareness concerning health and nutrition issues and wishes to fill the gap between the enactment of Rights and their implementation on the field. At both local and global level, it got pretty good results: Throughout its covered areas (three districts among two states: Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh), it managed to reduce maternal and post maternal death rate by 65%. Focusing on people's rights rather than directly funding them for hiring doctors or buying medicine proved itself efficient in this case.

## **How can we improve the implementation of government schemes at the grassroots level?**

Issues discussed during the second day were **less controversial**. Every speaker took note of the complications encountered during the implementation of both FRA and MNREGA at bloc and district level.

Speakers reached to a consensus on how to improve this government schemes. In order that villagers' claims can be heard, NGOs and government officers agreed on the necessity to continue their strengthening of Gram Sabha, the village assembly through which people are recognized to claim for their lands, for their right to a job. Once approved by Gram Sabha, only then, demands can be considered at the higher level. Thus, initiatives



have to come from the community and from their leaders. Then only, unemployment, alcoholism, emigration, Naxalite problems will disappear.

Two visions of how the change has to intervene have been expressed. As far as NSVK/EP is concerned, the choice between the two has already been made for a long time. However, the results of the project may have not reached initial expectations. Indeed, it remains nowadays unclear whether or not the British DFID (Department for International Development) will extend the PACS project beyond next September. Is the grassroots approach really working? Another question arises: if the DFID decides not to provide funds anymore, what is next? What will happen after the end of the program? Is the work in Jharkhand finished? *“This is just the beginning”* replied Mr Topno. *“Inside the DFID, political situation is currently changing, we are not sure that PACS project will be extended. Nevertheless, we will continue our struggle, and if DFID chose not to support us, we will find other funders.”*

Anyway, **Jan Utsav** has been fruitful in sense that “it helped tribal CBOs to feel part of a common group struggling for same goals.” But, as far as the communities are concerned, it feels that lots of work still has to be done. So far, the 39<sup>th</sup> article of the Indian Constitution declaring that *“The State shall, in particular, direct its policy towards securing that the citizens, men and women equally, have the right to an adequate means of livelihood”* has not been implemented.



# National Consultation on Small Farmers and Family Farming



On the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> January of 2015, inside the newly developed city of Bhubaneswar, India Global Society Social Services (IGSSS) organized an event gathering small farmers mostly coming from east parts of India. Similarly to the PACS meeting few days before in Gumla, the idea was to create a platform in order that NGOs and small farmers can share their concerns and potential ways of improvement of rural people's livelihood. From fifteen to twenty NGOs established their booths to explain their main activities undertaken on the field. Small farmers were accompanying them

to bring their precious testimony regarding their agricultural practices and the support they have received from NGOs.

These farmers have been trying to overcome hardships for years, compelled by the economic and education background of their underdeveloped state. Living in remote areas, the level of development of infrastructures hit the rock bottom and as a consequence, their access to basic education and health's needs as well as a sustainable water access is jeopardized. In the end, farmers' small holdings are not viable and cannot be competitive both at national and international levels. According to a UN-FAO report of 2001, Indian's small-holder farmers (owning less than 2.0 hectares of farmland) comprise 78% of Indian's farmers and produce only 41% of the country's food grain. Their productivity is not sufficient to enable them to comfortably make ends meet.

## **Development of Agriculture through local policies**

Mr Devinder Sharma, a former economist columnist at Times Of India was the first one to take the floor. Considering that situations of every state of India are different, he raised the relative inefficiency of national policies regarding the improvement of local agriculture productivity. It's true that between all Indian States, needs are very different. In Jharkhand for example, the territory is lacking plain lands, and water supply is not secured as the access of the farmers to irrigation facilities is very low. In Bihar on the contrary, canals are crossing the state leading to huge floods, in 2008 and 2013 for the two last ones.

Inspired by Brazil's way of production, Mr Devinder Sharma called for an agriculture mixing both traditional techniques with new technological practices.

For his part, Dr Karunakar Pattnaik (IAS) regretted the lack of concrete national plans for the development of agriculture. *"Almost 70 years after the independence, we are still experimenting policies, using pilots"*.



## Between Rural Emigration and Preservation of Identity

Mr the professor Manoranjan Kar, vice chancellor of IGSSS reminded the very weak access of small farmers to universities. However, and here is the first objection, are these wishes accessible if these people continue to live in remote areas? This issue is not that simple actually. The access to universities, to technologies, the cooperation between research and farmers are difficult to achieve in the very deep campaign of Orissa and Jharkhand. And according John Peter Nelson, the executive director of IGSSS, agriculture is part of Indian culture and *“in times of consumer driven economy, we shall not give up our small farmers, otherwise, we would depend more and more on the market to prepare our meals and buy our food.”* Second paradox, it seems that reserving people's identity while at the same time, uplifting education and awareness is a very acrobatic task. Indeed, if farmers manage to get money to send their kids to school and receive high level education, they may not be willing to come back to their village to be a farmer.



### Urbanization and Food security challenge

All the speakers are nevertheless right regarding one particular issue. Indian Population reached 1.252 billion inhabitants in 2013 with a high fertility rate (2.5 children per women) and if all these new Indians are heading for urban areas, we can wonder **who is going to provide them food.** To make sure Indians won't lose their

self sufficiency in food production, Indian states will have to find out solutions to improve the productivity of their crops:

First, farmers will need to receive a technological support to bolster the mechanization of their exploitation. Then, the high number of small exploitations prevents the attainment of economies of scale. The average size Agricultural holdings measure 1.5 hectares of land whereas in France they reach 50 hectares (30 times more) and in the USA, 200 ha (130 times more). Historically, after the independence of India, the agrarian reform undertaken in 1947 aimed at distributing lands to poor farmers while limiting the size of land ownership.

The fragmentation of fields and the low mechanization explain the low productivity of Indian's farmers. Moreover, moving towards big cities is one thing but receiving a proper education and getting a good job there are another. Most probably, they will grow the number of people living in slums.

### Some very good initiatives coming from NGOs

To enhance the productivity and the sustainability of the small farmers' crops, some NGOs had very good ideas. Gobbar Gas for example has imagined a very ingenious process to secure the access of a clean unpolluted source of energy in rural areas. The bio gas is produced with cattle dung inside the Gobbar Gas plant. The purposes are various:

- To provide fuel for cooking purposes and organic manure to rural households through family type Bio Gas Plants.

- To mitigate domestic drudgery of rural women
- To use organic manure and wastage as an alternative livelihood opportunity.

Another NGO, Jhara has developed a new technique for the crab breeding. However, it has to be said that all these implemented process are still very far from modern practices.

The meeting was interesting, however some points raised the attention.

First, the platform was not appropriate for everybody. People coming from Nord Est didn't speak Hindi or Oria. A translation in English would have thus been welcomed. Then, several speakers, comfortably sat on their chairs usually expressed similar issues, tried to speak very loudly to create some kind lyric and charismatic dimension in their speeches. But their behavior, their speeches were arguably coherent with their appearance and their way of living. Seeing these old and well fed orators coming from cities, giving lessons of development to very thin and uneducated farmers was actually quite paradoxical. And unbearable also.



# **Ekta Parishad National Meeting in Tilda**

From the 22<sup>nd</sup> to the 24<sup>th</sup> January, the Ekta Parishad National Meeting took place in Tilda. On the occasion of the 25<sup>th</sup> birthday of the struggle for the recognition of Tribals' rights, about 1000 tribal farmers, social workers, foreign supporters gathered. First and foremost, the purpose of this crowded meeting was to make an assessment of the living conditions of Indian tribal populations while scrutinizing the achieved results of our fight. At the outset, it seemed that Ekta Parishad's struggle was nowhere near ending. Secondly, it was also a pretext to update the central committee team of Ekta Parishad. At last, Rajagopal, our leader explained what were going to be our next moves in the five following years.



## **Back to the grassroots**

Faithful to its deeply rooted non violent and democratic principles, Ekta Parishad introduced an original concept. During an open session, everybody - small farmers in particular - was able to take the micro and to debate with others.

At first, a lot of them raised issues they had encountered in their hamlet such as displacements, religious segregation, women violence, alcoholism, financial weakness, pointing out that they were all related to poverty. Some speakers promoted then the organic farming highlighting the better sustainability of this natural process compared to the one using hybrid seeds. At last, everyone reached a common belief that an improved linkage between farmers and government officials would remedy to many of current inappropriate policies disconnected from the needs of Tribal populations.

## **Epictetus and Gandhi**

It was then Ekta Parishad members' turn to raise their points. Some of them expressed ideas similar to stoic's values that is to say related to the philosophy aiming at controlling desires. *"When we go to the market and when we are purchasing some stuffs, we should ask ourselves, do we actually need it? Is it necessary?"* reminding the words of Epictetus the slave philosopher who once tried to reach peace of mind. Afterwards, quite logically, several speakers praised Ekta Parishad's non violent struggle.





## Towards an increased pressure on political leaders

Recognizing that equality and freedom of Tribals were only effective at political level rather than at de-facto one, many appealed to establish a strong link between Ekta Parishad and MPs at the Lok Sabha. The representation of tribal communities in media and among the political agenda, almost inexistent today, should be strengthened. As the vote of the poorest is quite random, it quite obvious that few candidates gamble on the poorest. They

prefer to focus on the middle class, which Modi has done pretty well indeed to be elected last May.

It has to change. Ekta Parishad leaders should meet representatives sitting at Lok Sabha to increase their awareness regarding tribal issues and to uplift the pressure on their shoulders.

## Beyond boundaries

Then, members of Ekta Europe and of the international network took the floor explaining that Ekta Parishad's fight and principles cannot be restricted to Indian boundaries. Its values are universal, hence its ability to bring together. Besides, Rajagopal informed that Ekta Parishad had created very recently an office in the Middle East. All around the globe, organizations and people fight for their rights, for their own vision of development.





## What's next?

And now what's next? Rajagopal announced that Ekta Parishad will **focus on Youth Education**. It's even Ekta Parishad's first priority. Indeed, he is aware that his team and his partners are getting older and older. Strengthening the Youth is necessary to ensure the sustainability of the fight. In this mindset, EP organized last summer a youth camp gathering 50 to 60 youth from all over the world.

Then, some women had also asked for a change inside Ekta Parishad. Rajagopal took note of the requests and now, the new central Committee is now composed of 10 women and 9 men.

At last, Rajagopal unveiled the agenda for the next 5 years.

On the 30<sup>th</sup> January, in 100 villages, people will protest against the recent amendment on Land Acquisition Act considering by Modi's government to attract foreign investments. We will explain this amendment in the newsletter of February.

Then, on the 20<sup>th</sup> February, Ekta Parishad will organize a foot march from Agra to Delhi.

In 2016, an international women camp organized by Ekta Parishad will take place.

In 2017, it will be the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of Gandhi's march to Shamparon during which he saved the farmers. Ekta Parishad will celebrate the event.

2018 will be the year against discrimination. At the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> birthday of Martin Luther King's assassination, Ekta Parishad will attend to a Convention on Non-violence Economy with people coming from Colombia, Brazil and Thailand.

In 2019, it will be the beginning of the foot march from Delhi to Geneva. The purpose is to mobilize actors such as IMF and the WB.



# Tribal Sub Plan

In 1949, taking into account the huge deprivation amongst its rural population and especially the Tribes, the government of India decided to carry on Five Year plans to tackle the issue of poverty. These plans should enable those left behind to integrate themselves into Indian's mainstream. However, in 1972, as progress regarding land alienations, literacy rate, health problems, malnutrition remained more than unsatisfying, the Task Force on Development of Tribal Areas, established a report on the shortcomings of the system. The main one was obviously the lack of flexibility imposed by these plans, whereas problems encountered by the Tribes were much different from state to state.

In 1974, at the forthcoming of the fifth Five Year plan, the Government decided to increase the participation of the Tribes in the budget making process. Moreover, from now on, their elaboration will be discussed directly at the State level. Quite logically therefore, they called this innovative initiative: **Tribal Sub plan**. However, more than forty years after, the process still has to be improved.

But to do that, social workers need their ideas to be clarified as far as TSP is concerned. And that is the purpose of the Oxfam meeting in Raipur from the 28<sup>th</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup> of January 2015. To reach a large number of social workers, the organizers invited various kinds of organizations working in the development field, not only for the implementation of FRA, but also in the field of education and health.

Upcoming challenges various. First, the percentage of funds allocated every year has been increasing since the creation of these Five Year plans. According to the Centre for Advocacy Studies, TSP funds reached 18466.23 crore rupees in 2011-2012 and 24598.39 crore in 2012-2013. However the efficiency of these funds is questioned as the results didn't follow proportionally this increase. Why such discrepancy is taking place? What kinds of actions CSOs can implement to remedy to this issue, to tackle the problem of misused money?

Secondly, large amounts of money allocated to the States for the implementation of TSP have been returning to central government's hands. After this three days meeting, the idea is that everybody should have clearer ideas to bring our contribution to the administrative officers to use funds more efficiently.

Moreover, utilizing TSP funds in a better way would secure the independence of the central government from foreign financial support such as the World Bank.

The meeting will also be a platform to propose constructive solutions following the idea that even if shortcomings are happening as far as the implementation of government schemes are concerned, civil servants cannot be systematically blamed. NGOs should then work hand by hand with them.

## A supposed grassroots initiative...

### A. Objectives of TSP

Behind the implementation the TSP, the intended goal is to achieve a substantial reduction in poverty and unemployment among the Tribals. Earlier, the GDP was the privileged tool to analyze the level of development of a country. Now, Human Development Index is preferred. Now, to ensure a sustainable development, TSP focuses on the creation of productive assets in favor of the ST such as adequate educational health services.

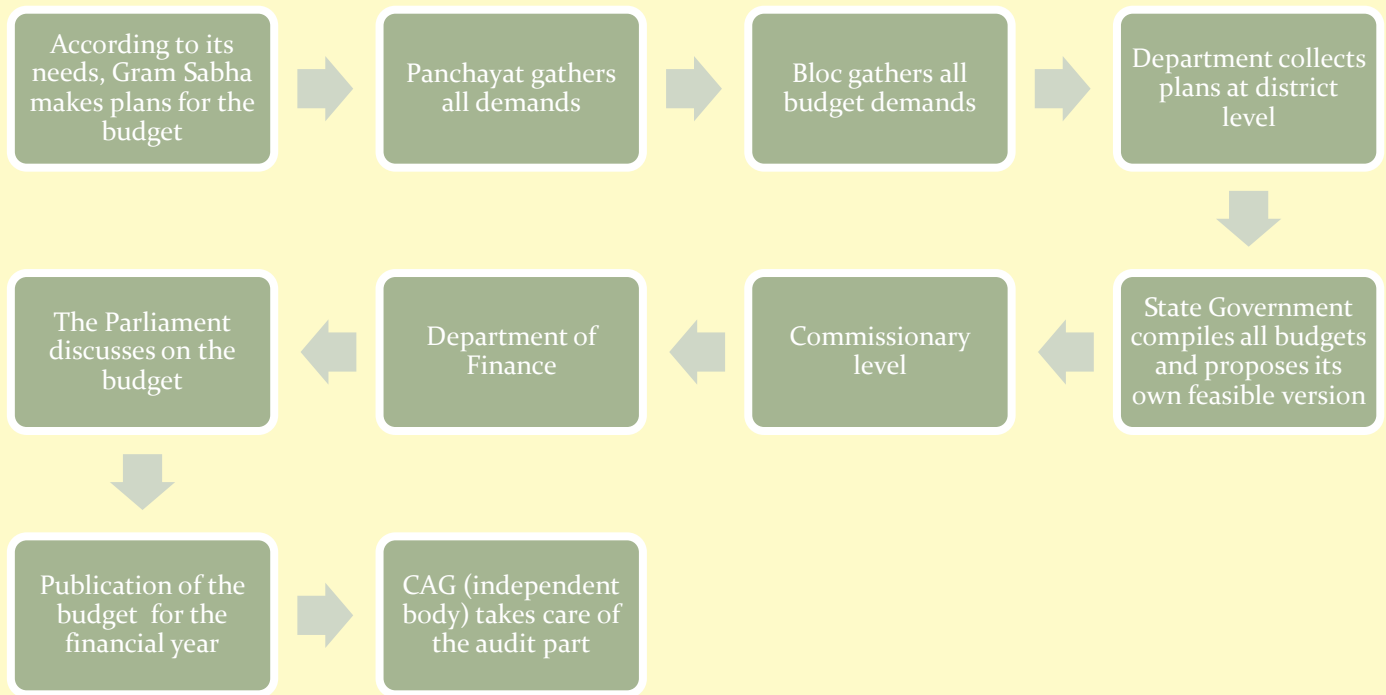
### B. Terms of TSP

Within the ambit of a State or a UT, annual and Five year Plans should take into account natural resources, skills, aptitudes and needs of the STs. First and foremost, funds provided under TSP have to be **equal in proportion** to the ST population of each State. Then, under these plans, STs should get **direct benefits** in addition to what percolates from the overall Plan of a State/UT.

Through TSP, **priority** should be given for providing basic services like primary education, health, drinking water, nutrition, electrification, housing, rural link roads. TSP should not include wage components but focuses on agricultural development and activities such as livestock farming.



Theoretically, the process is conducted according to this framework:



### C. Financing TSP

TSP is financed through two major schemes:

First, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs provides funds through the **Article 275 of the Constitution**. Under this scheme, 30% of the projects financed should target women, up to 10% of the allocation can be used for the maintenance of the infrastructure. Secondly, under the **Special Central Assistance (SCA)**, no more than 30% of the total outlay should go for creation of infrastructure.

### D. Monitoring

**Standing committees** composed by MLA can check the implementation of the budget.

After one year, at state and national level, **CAG** composed by auditors, independent of any pressure coming from department officer evaluates every budget of every department/ministry.

## But full of loopholes in the implementation

### A. Inadequate fund allocation Funds diverted

Most of the States have not allocated funds **proportionate** to the ST population during the plan periods. And sometimes, even the allocated TSP outlays have also not been utilized fully in the states. 8% of the population of India belongs to the ST. However, expenditures under TSP for the financial year 2011 have barely reached 3%, 5% for the financial year 2012.

An **inadequate allocation** has thus been noticed but not only, even provided funds have been found **unspent**. According to the Mid Term Appraisal of the 10<sup>th</sup> Plan, out of Rs.5754 crores allocated for TSP by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, only 47% of the expenditure was incurred during the first three years (2002-2005) of the 10<sup>th</sup> plan. The expenditure falling short of the total outlay under the TSP has been corroborated by various studies. According to a research made by NABARD (2004-2005) and "Impact Assessment of Special Component Plan (SCP)", the State government could **not fully utilize the budget** for the TSP in the Ninth Plan in the State.

Another phenomenon can explain this situation. During the **last quarter** of the financial year, State Governments when they realize that a lot of money has still to be spent, in order to avoid this money to come back to the higher level, they invest it in a hurry increasing thus the risk of wasting money. But unfortunately, it is impossible to achieve in four months what should have been done in a basis of 12 months. To build physical assets such as school, and roads, it can still be compensated more or less, however, it's not possible to catch up for the education. A teacher cannot teach in 4 months what should have taught during the 8 previous ones.

The beneficiaries' data indicates that the STs are **not aware about the schemes** and all the schemes have not been availed by them. Majority of the schemes being accessed by the ST are welfare programs (Old Age, widow, disabled pension, nutrition, marriage subsidy, housing scheme, scholarships, hostels and rural development, poverty alleviation programs). Agriculture, irrigation and Income generating schemes have been availed by a very small proportion of the ST beneficiaries.

TSP funds have to be allocated and utilized in such a way that **it benefits to the STs only**. A large part of the TSP funds has been **diverted** for universal projects and schemes which were not meant exclusively for Tribals. Some of them had even nothing to do with the STs (Regulation and Development of Mines, Supply of Drugs and Contraceptives, etc. Whenever there is a shortage of money, government officials are likely to use TSP funds.

## **B. Reasons behind the failure of TSP**

It has to be recognized that TSP failed to bridge the gap between the economic conditions and the level of development of Tribals and the Non Tribals.

Several reasons could be identified to explain this breakdown. First, the **participation of tribal populations** in the budget and decision making processes was really **lacking**. Then, the Large Sized multipurpose Cooperative Societies (LAMPS) were to play an important role in coordinating institutional finance, credit marketing facilities for tribals. However, the institution did not become successful in many of the State.

In Chhattisgarh, another loophole resides in the fact even if all districts do not contain same number of tribal population the state government provides the same amount of money to every district.

To sum-up, **more flexibility** is more than never needed to increase the involvement of tribal populations in these plans. The task is not an easy one as literacy is very low developed among these people and as some schedule casts' voice, armed with a better education, is louder than common people's one and as a consequence, they can manage to make plans for development in their own area.

## **C. The Case of Jharkhand**

28% of the population of Jharkhand is tribal. Therefore, according to the guidelines of TSP, the amount reserved for Tribals in the total budget should be no less than 28%. For the 10<sup>th</sup> FYP, the budget actually did put aside 29% for the TSP, however, percentage of funds provided for Tribes under Agriculture and rural Development budgets only reached respectively 16,5% and 10% whereas the share of Tribal allocation in General Economic Services and Transportation and Transport rose to 92% and 50,5%. There was **no uniformity** in this allocation. **During eleventh FYP, vast improvement** has been observed with global TSP outlays representing 50% of the total expenditures.

Then, in most years, **utilization** reached almost 100%.

TSP money has mainly been used for tribal residential schools, hostels, health centers, minor irrigation projects, roads, bridges. However, a large part of the funds has been diverted for projects which do not provide direct benefits to the ST such as official buildings, urban infrastructure. A tribal MLA of the state, Mr Bandhu Turkey in a news paper alleged that about 50% of the TSP allocation has been spent on projects which are not been remotely related with tribal development.



## Leading a constructive advocacy

During the meeting, speakers highlighted the need of a constructive advocacy, that is to say, beyond basic complains. What does it mean exactly?

First, NGOs and social workers have to understand the roots of budget making process, and then to understand why shortcomings are taking place. Every year, in March, the budget is voted for the next financial year. At that time, NGOs have the duty to make CBOs' claims heard to ensure that the budget will be appropriate.

However, NGOs have to be cautious. They need to advocate at the good level, in front of MLAs, MPs when the discussion takes place in the Assembly/Parliament or when the budget is under audit, not in villages in front of small powerless officers.

**A strong linkage has to be established between CBOs requests and deciders**, otherwise, budgets will usually be inappropriate.

Once the budget voted, CSOs should study it on the internet and check at district level, whether or not funds are allocated.

Recognizing the enormous disadvantage and development deficit between the ST and the rest of the population, the Government of India initiated the concept of Tribal Sub Plan. However, experiences of last three decades, as discussed in details in the preceding chapters, show that the implementation of TSP has been gravely deficient both in the States and at the Centre. Instead of genuinely planning for STs in a manner that critical gaps may be filled, TSP has been reduced to a mere accounting exercise, whereby several Central Ministries/State Departments simply allocate a proportion of their expenditure under TSP head.

As seen before, perhaps, one of the biggest obstacles in the realization of the objectives was the lack of involvement of the Tribals. State departments should also come up with a carefully planned process including an assessment of current status of STs. Ongoing programs need to be critically evaluated. Then, funds allocated under TSP should be utilized judiciously and only benefit to the Tribals.

# Success Stories

## Ram Sit Urao, Small Farmer of Lohra, Gumla District (PACS Project)

Aged of 45 years old approximately, member of Gram Ekai inside the livelihood committee, Ram Sit Urao is a small farmer living in Lohra, a village composed of 470 inhabitants divided in 75 households.

He is cultivating vegetables, rice which he sells to the market when surpluses come out. He is earning about Rs 5000 per year which he deposits on his Bank of India Account.



As far as Lohra is concerned, all its villagers earn their living through agriculture. Most of them are totally dependent on agricultural results for their livelihood. The richest of the village have other income generating activities such as goat farming, and piggery. The primary school provides an education only until the 5<sup>th</sup> class. Children have to cross five kilometers if they are willing to pursue beyond. Needless to precise that such long distance is not easy to handle for villagers and most of the time, children stay at home. Concerning health facilities, no hospital and doctors can be found within four or five mile of this place.

Around Lohra, the landscape is constituted of jungle, hills, forests on which by the way, they are dependent for their livelihood. Villagers are indeed using fruit plans for medical and food purposes. Lohra also suffers from a very low connectivity with the rest of the world as far as roads, electricity are concerned.

Before the intervention of NSVK, there was no Gram Ekai, that is to say not any kind of political organization, no grassroots body to make global plans for the village, to give directions for future.

Awareness regarding APL and BPL were inexistent, therefore, nobody had access to ration cards. Now, half of the village is currently receiving a monthly ration supply. Moreover, knowledge concerning government schemes enabled to build a new road between the village and the primary school. Still through MGNREGA, it has also been possible to create wells. Nowadays, as water supply is secured, they don't have any irrigation problems remaining.

A lot of work has still to be made, however, on the field of awareness, indicator chosen by PACS project, nothing more could be done in Lohra. The Gram Ekai is strong and people know their rights.



## Balku Singh, dweller of Kurum, Gumla District (Caritas Project)



Balku Singh, son of Keswar Singh, 35 years old, is living in the village of Kurum, surrounded by mountains, rocks, dense forest and rivers.

In the village, numerous special and cultural norms used to generate cast conflicts. Indeed, Balku Singh who belongs to Raitiya community (OBC) is not allowed to run pig farming.

Being a marginalized farmer, he was unable to generate enough income for his household and all his family thus faced food insecurity.

Considering that fact, he really wished to develop another income-generating activity to escape from turmoil. He then attended a NSVK/CARITAS's training delivering information on alternative means of livelihood. He increased his knowledge regarding pig farming. Afterwards, while still uplifting his skills regarding pig breeding by attending other meetings in Ranchi in the Agriculture Training Center, he decided to start his own business.

He started to keep the pigs in his house and even to vaccinate himself and the animals on his own. One year after, he has been earning around 20000/- Rs per year. Due to his belonging to a low caste, Balku Singh used to be left behind, away from the development process. He is now an example for this community.

Earlier, he was deprived, segregated and without any financial means but NSVK/CARITAS's support brought a change in his life by giving him two piglets to start his business. Soon after, he was able to begin his entrepreneurship activity, make ends meet and provide to all his family's needs.

He believes that SCIAF is a blessing in disguise for him. Through NSVK's and Caritas' support he now has a different life. He is thankful to SCIAF, Caritas India, NSVK Gumla.



## Rubni Devi, Tetertoli, Gumla District (Caritas Project)

Rubni Devi is single women aged of 53 years and living in Tetertoli, a hamlet of Palkot Block, inside Gumla District. Her husband left her so many years back because she is gynecological unable. Alone and helpless in her single headed household, it was even hard for her to get food. Her life was pathetic and she used to work in others' fields, hotel and house to survive.



In 2012, Naya Sawera Vikas Kendra in cooperation with Caritas India contacted her and supported her with an allowance of Rs 3000 (which was the corresponding amount for single headed women in APP project). After getting the money, she started selling morning breakfast on roadside of Tetertoli. After a while, once her business became profitable, she gave the money back to the SHGs. With the amount saved, she has constructed

a kacch hotel near the school of tetertoli. NSVK gave a new morning in her life, a life with respect and dignity. She is currently earning Rs150-200 every day which enabled her to deposit Rs 8000 in her bank account.



She doesn't struggle anymore for her livelihood. Finally, she has expectations for the future.

She is very much thankful to SCIAF for giving her a chance to change her life.



## Chaitu Lohara, Small farmer of Kurum, Gumla District (Caritas Project)

Chaitu Lohara, 48 years old, is a small farmer living with his family constituted by his old mother, his wife and his two children in Kurum, a small village in Palkot block, located in Gumla district of Jharkhand. The village, surrounded by hills and mountains, as many others in the region doesn't have a proper road access. He has been going to school until 10<sup>th</sup> classes. He then migrated towards cities such as Ranchi, looking for a job, either government one or private one. He struggled a lot because regarding his low background and education, it was very difficult for him to find a good employ. Previously, in his quest for employment and money, he even worked for daily jobs in Ranchi (very short term and unstable job).



He didn't know that he had a hidden asset. Indeed, he owned a small piece of land in the village which he was cultivating only during rainy season.

Naya Sawera Vilkas Kendra in cooperation with Caritas India, targeted the village of Kurum for its activities. It started contacting people like Chaitu Lohara and provided them farmer training - on vermin compost especially - providing a better understanding for farming. After attending the training, Chaitu Lohara decided to cultivate his land all the year continuously. To support him in his initiative, NSVK also provided then a vermin pit nearby his land.



As a consequence, Chaitu Lohara is now cultivating all kind of vegetables throughout all the year and earns good money for his family. He also got new house thanks to the support of NSVK. According to him, he is now earning around Rs 40000-50000/-annually and his bank balance raises to Rs-10000/- With these funds, he bought a new pumping set for irrigation to increase the productivity of his soil.



Earlier he was struggling in his life to make ends meet. Now he has reached financial freedom and can provide more than enough for his family.

He gives thanks directly from the core of his heart to the SCIAF/ supporters in Scotland for bringing changes in his life.



## Illegal Mining in Giridih



Next to the village of Tiseri located in Giridih district (Jharkhand), rural communities are very poor. To tackle this problem, unemployed and uneducated dwellers haven't found better than illegal mining.

Indeed, the region is very dry and almost exclusively composed of mountains, any cultivation activity is thus compromised. As a consequence, around 200 people, every day of the week are working in the hills to extract mica. At a rate of 10 Rupees per Kg, people earn between 100 and 120 rupees per day. If they were working under MGNREGA jobs, they would get 168 rupees per day. However, either they are not aware of this government scheme, or they simply do not want to work under it.

Why? MGNREGA is a scheme known for its delays of payment. This drawback is mostly due to the fact that workers do not provide all papers requested (bank account, job card number, etc.). As a result, it is quite usual to meet some people here in Tiseri whose wages haven't been paid for 3 years. Naturally, this kind of situation doesn't create happiness.

Above, we meet a mediator who is going to buy to mica to the workers. His situation is not really enviable either. Indeed, he will sell for 12 to 14 rupees (2 more rupees per Kg than the extractors) the mica to contractors coming from Kolkata who, taking advantage of this very cheap raw material extraction will make enormous profits.



Apart from its precarious aspect, this mining activity which is using explosives, is also very dangerous for health and decreases the fertility of the short area available here to cultivate. Considering the way we are greeted in the next village, people of Tiseri have lost faith regarding potential external support and we cannot blame them for that. People there are so poor and deprived...

# Bonus

## Story of French man lost with STs in a Indian Train

Once the meeting in Tilda finished, CBOs and social workers living in Jharkhand had to reach the train station on Saturday afternoon. Indeed, on Sunday, Naxalite movements were forecast and might have troubled train traffic. After saying goodbye to everybody, I went with Birendra and Ramswarup in Tilda's train station.

After sitting twenty to thirty minutes on the platform, it became obvious that we were not going to buy any ticket. I was a little bit worried as this kind of processes doesn't exist in France, but moreover, my white face was not going to help me avoiding the payment of the fine. Waiting for the train on the platform, Birendra started to distribute the dinner for everybody. I felt like part of a big family in holidays, even if I was totally unable to communicate with my fellows. At that time, I deeply regretted my laziness to learn Hindi. But on the other hand, as I have never received any kind of Hindi language courses, I cannot be blamed for that. My journeys in Mumbai, Goa and Bhubaneswar probably didn't help to uplift my motivation. Indeed, in these places, people were speaking various kinds of languages (English, Oriya, Marathi) but no word of Hindi. This is how I have quitted.

Anyway, let's go back to the interesting part of the story. The train finally came out and everybody rushed into it, as usual in India... Birendra managed to arrange an available seat for me and I didn't refuse. However, I felt sorry for the young guy we were compelling to stay awake. Indeed, as we had no ticket, we had chosen a random bed which was already booked of course. But obviously here, we didn't have to care. It was not a big deal in Birendra's mind. Well I would have been that guy, I'm sure I would have created an issue (Locha as they say here)! Unknown people without ticket coming and disturbing me on my own seat, I would not have accepted it. This young guy neither by the way, but I was not brave enough to protest. And Birendra didn't let him choose anyway. It was not an easy task for him to move 6 people from his bed. Birendra tried to buy his sympathy by proposing him some Puri but he declined, bitter.

The supervisor was about to arrive. I asked to Birendra once again if everything was alright, "*Don't worry my friend!*" and then he showed me his Ekta Parishad calendar, winked at me and said: "*this is my ticket*". Following his sense of humor, I replied "*and if this ticket is not conformed?*", to what he said "*Struggle!! This is democracy!*" I laughed a lot, confronted to the manipulation of the word and also convinced that it was not going to work. However, I was not very worried. Usually, controllers are not very educated guys, they don't speak English. I will just have to pretend I don't understand a word of what he will try to say and everything should be alright. The "TT" came (they call him TT, I don't know why), I faked being asleep.

And guess what, two minutes after, it was settled. I had not understood the exchange between the guy and Birendra, so I questioned him to find out what had happened. The TT wanted us to go to the General Class coach (we were indeed in sleeper class). "*But we are going to stay here*" Birendra told me.

He was right. What could do this poor TT against 100 deprived tribal people? These people have no money, and you cannot throw them out like dogs. If these people just say "*No, we will stay here*". What can you do? They don't have a bank account or anything like that. At that point, I realized the power of people gathered in large groups. In Tilda, a guy coming from Nepal said "Crowd is Power". He was definitely right.

Birendra found a bed for me, once again I didn't refuse. I was exhausted after two or three very short nights with Tribals. They have a totally different idea of respect and for them, it's not rude at all to wake up everybody very soon in the morning if they want to start singing or to scream over the phone. So it took the bed, slept 4 hours and then we reached Raurkela in Orissa, where we were going to take another train to Ranchi. We sat about 6 hours on the platform waiting for our four hours late train (this is India)... every STs was helping me



checking all the time whether or not I needed support. It was very nice of them however a little bit oppressive sometimes. These people sometimes looked at me as if I was an alien or something. I was a totally new thing for these innocent people. I am the first white man they met, they surrounded me all the time to observe my deeds and behavior.

In the next train, same game, same gamble: no train ticket! That time, I was not with Birendra unfortunately. I didn't matter. Sunnil was going to arrange all things. When the TT came, he fixed the problem, after which he was very proud. After travelling a few kilometers, the train stopped for 2 minutes in the middle of nowhere, I thought it was once again one of these unscheduled stop we are experiencing all the time here in India. That time was different! A lot of women got in the train with big white bags full of agricultural produces. The train was already crowded, so we tried to reason with these women to find another coach. But nothing seemed to make any difference. They shoved their goods inside and got in the train afterwards. We literally had to climb on their bags, it was surrealist! The TT came again, asked for money, and took ten rupees per woman for himself (he put the money in his pocket). What a disgusting behavior...

When the train arrived in Ranchi, I noticed that I will never get used to the rudeness of east Indians in the train. In the middle of the train corridor, a woman was struggling to carry her bags. She was taking a little time to arrange all stuffs on her back. It was not a big deal as Ranchi is a big station and consequently, the train stops about ten minutes. But instead of helping her or waiting in silence, people pressured her a lot! "Chalié, Chalié!" I wanted to reply, "Shut up! Shut up!". It was horrible. She was drowned, flooded under the rude human wave.

And after, when at last everybody went out, I saw the same criminals who had pressured her sitting peacefully on the platform speaking on the phone. There was thus absolutely no need to hurry!

It was a unique experience, but not to be repeated too often I guess.