# National Report

## CBO
## Journey

The Journey of Community-Based Organizations under PACS Support



PACS
Our rights • Our voice

# ABBREVIATIONS

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ASHA | Accredited Social Health Activist | | MGSA | Mahatma Gandhi Sewa Ashram |
| AWW | Anganwadi Worker | | NSKK | Nari-O-Sishu Kalyan Kendra |
| AWH | Anganwadi Helper | | NT | Nomadic Tribes |
| BVKP | Bihar Viklang Kalyan Parishad | | NSVK | Naya Sawera Vikas Kendra |
| CSOs | Civil Society Organisations | | OBC | Other Backward Classes |
| CINI | Child In Need Institute | | PACS | Poorest Area Civil Society |
| CASA | Church's Auxiliary for Social Action | | PWDs | Persons with Disabilities |
| CSN | Children with Special Needs | | PACE | Participatory Action for Community Empowerment |
| CHARM | Centre for Health & Resource Management | | PGSS | Purvanchal Gramin Seva Samiti |
| CADAM | Centre for Alternative Dalit Media | | RMSA | Rashtriya MadhyamikShiksha Abhiyan |
| CBOs | Community-Based Organisations | | RTE | Right to Education |
| DNT | De-notified Tribes | | RSBY | Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana |
| DPO | Disabled People's Organization | | SC | Scheduled Castes |
| DFID | Department for International Development | | ST | Scheduled Tribes |
| EHA | Emmanuel Hospital Association | | SIGs | Common Interest Groups |
| EFICOR | Evangelical Fellowship of India Commission on Relief | | SHGs | Self-Help Groups |
| FRA | Forest Rights Act | | SMCs | School Management Committee |
| GOI | Government of India | | SHARE | Society for Human Assistance and Rural Empowerment |
| GEAG | Gorakhpur Environmental Action Group | | SSEVS | Samagra Shiksha Evam Vikash Sansthan |
| ICDS | Integrated Child Development Services | | SMOKUS | Shripur Mahila-O-Khadi Unnayan Samity |
| JSY | Janani Suraksha Yojana | | SPREAD | Society for Promoting Rural Education and Development |
| JANS | Jan Adhikar Nagrik Sangh | | THREAD | Team for Human Resource Education and Action for Development |
| MGNREGS | Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme | | UPVM | Uttar Pradesh Viklang Manch |
| MGSA | Mahatma Gandhi Sewa Ashram | | | |
| NFSA | National Food Security Act | | | |
| NHM | National Health Mission | | | |
| MVM | Musahar Vikas Manch | | | |

# Acknowledgment

# Contents

# Executive Summary



Community Based Organisations (CBOs) are the organized form of the community members coming together for a purpose and with specific membership criteria. CBOs are organized at different levels with different degree of formalization- some are extremely informal and others are legally registered. The CBOs become a collective vehicle of change by protesting against the oppression, inequity, human rights violations etc. A large number of CBOs promote economic upliftment of the members by organizing easy access to credit, support in business and marketing of products. The PACS strategy rested on the premise that the poor and marginalized must be organized to access and control basic services and effectively exercise their rights and entitlements. New CBOs were formed on the basis of this premise and existing ones were strengthened. They were also networked at the cluster, block and district level to consolidate their collective voice and also secure their bargaining power.

This study documents the journey of the CBOs under the mentoring and facilitative support of the PACS partner CSOs. Each journey is unique, with the CBOs adopting approaches suited to their ground conditions to organize themselves into collectives with a distinct identity. The study looks at the strategies they devised to empower themselves socially and economically so they could acquire the required political traction to address the issue of exclusion from basic services while planning for their long-term livelihood security that would enable them to be fully integrated into society and live fulfilling lives.

A case study methodology was adopted to capture the outcomes of the CBO journey. A list of 29 information-rich CBOs from the different states was drawn up. Participatory meetings with the CBO leaders and other stake-holders were organised to share perspectives, experiences, successes and challenges. A second list of 14 CBOs was also compiled based on information provided by the CSOs. The final selection was made to maximize variation of experience and ensure proportional representation across the seven states, based on density of the CBO clusters.

In all, data of 23206 CBOs revealed that

about 43% CBOs were the SHGs and Common Interest Groups. There are about 19% Village Monitoring and Development CBOs. About three-foruth of all the CBOs are headed by a SC or ST person. Another 25% CBOs have leadership of the OBC or Muslims.

The case studies provide information on the genesis of the CBOs, their leadership style and their organisational purpose. Most of them came together because their members had been suffering for a long time under an oppressive environment. The mentoring support of the CSOs encouraged many of their natural leaders to take the initiative to organize the CBOs.

Most of the CBOs have a collective leadership that operates in a transparent manner in transacting business or taking joint responsibility during interventions or campaigns. The purpose of the CBOs is determined by the nature of their constituency as well as the theme of interventions. The CSOs supported the CBOs in nurturing their leadership, growth and sustainability in a needs based manner. Membership identity and regular meetings helped build self-confidence. This empowering process strengthened as they learnt to analyse their situation in light of the statutory provisions and their improved ability to monitor the functioning of official delivery system. The processes emerged based on the pressing needs, opportunities and collective consensus. The skill-sets the CBOs required included filling and filing applications (for seeking wage employment, forest rights and services/entitlements), putting together the required legal documents, following up cases in government offices, negotiating at higher levels of

officialdom and organizing mass-level campaigns. Exposure visits and participation at state-level conventions were found to be motivational and confidence-building.

Most of the CSOs demanded access and accountability from service providers – a PDS shop that remained shut, a PHC where the ANM was absent, a school where the mid-day meal was of poor quality or the teachers that didn't teach. The action was local at the village or panchayat level, or more broad-based at the block or district level, depending on the scope for resolving such issues.

The successes fortified the belief of the CBOs in their collective strength and bargaining power. Demands for work under the MGNREGS resulted in many significant changes. Disabled people got 100 days of employment and Dalit women became field supervisors (mate). Other demands saw tribals getting FRA pattas and title deeds to revenue land. The quality of MDM, PDS, hospitals etc. improved, overt discrimination against Dalits and the disabled was checked. Many policy decisions were also taken viz. re-advertisement of posts reserved for the disabled (Viklang Manch, Chaupal, CG) or the District Collector issuing an official order to improve the organization of Gram Sabha meetings (Ekta Jan Sangathan, CASA, MP).

Many of the CBOs now have a clear future plan of action. They have developed a deeper understanding of issues and possible avenues to resolve them.

Capacity building is critical in the empowerment process. Hand-holding support from CSOs is crucial in phases of struggle that require skill-sets the

CBOs are still in the process of developing. Education is a vital input in this process so a second generation of better-educated leaders is a pressing need. Many of these young potential leaders have joined the ranks of the CSOs as facilitators, many CSOs are now organically linked to the CBOs they mentored.

Key learnings emerging from the study include the following:

- Most Socially Excluded Groups (SEGs) need a supportive hand to make them aware of their exploitation so they can demand their rights.

- When organized in a collective, the oppressed class becomes a strong power.

- Organisation of collectives around similar identity and history of denial creates a strong bond within the groups.

- The organised voice of the SEGs help counter social discrimination.

- Internal organisation and success lead to a different set of challenges.

- The association of the local CBO with larger networks reinforces its power.

- Although the CBOs work on various themes, their struggle usually begins with one focal issue that collectively affects a majority.

- The CSOs committed to 'rights' and promoting CBOs used the PACS support effectively.

- Hands-on support builds sustainable capacities in the CBOs

The analysis of the case studies suggests where the next steps forward in empowering disposed communities lie. These steps are visualized in the following manner:

- Investing in CBO networks with stabilized structures

  Many of the CBOs have structured themselves into federated regional networks from the village to the district level. These networks reveal the potential to independently carry forward the struggles of dispossessed communities for rights and entitlements. The networks have developed their natural leaders into confident individuals capable of organizing and leading the CBOs in a democratic and collective manner. What needs addressing is improving the skill sets and education levels, consolidating the internal systems for streamlined functioning and widening the membership base to fortify the collective voice.

- Evolving the support mechanism for CBO leaders to sustain enthusiasm

  Some issues confronting the marginalized need campaigning at the state level and resolution through policy changes. The village-to-district level networks of CBOs still require a support system to mentor and back-up their collective leadership. This calls for a mechanism for these regional leaders to meet at least once or twice every year so they can share experiences, learn together and build up their collective bargaining power. The

need is to identify a national or state-level CSO that has a mandate of strengthening the capacity of CBOs to provide periodic support.

- Establishing the primacy of CBOs in large-scale social sector programmes

    The CBOs have built a strong network of village-level resource persons across the seven PACS states. They are well-known, popular and active at the panchayat and block levels and represent a human resource base that can be tapped by social outreach programmes like the NRLM, MGNREGS, MDM, Indira Awas Yojana, ICDS, etc.

- Building strategic linkages of CBO networks with existing campaigns

    The CBO networks promoted with PACS support are usually constituency or issue focused. Such networks need to be linked to larger existing networks, especially issue-specific networks which have national level presence or multi state presence on themes or specific constituencies.

- Promoting horizontal learning and support models

    Capacity building is a continuing, long-term need of the PACs-supported CBOs. Apart from capacity building of network leaders at the district and state level, sustained initiatives are also required at the block level to improve the skill-sets of local Panchayat leaders, especially where the density of CBOs is high.

# Overview



**P**oorest Area Civil Society (PACS) programme was a six year long support initiative of the UK government's Department for International Development (DFID) that began in 2009. Partnering with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), it sought to help socially excluded communities to claim their rights and entitlements more effectively. The core purpose of PACS was to intervene at the local, district and state level to promote inclusive policies, programmes and institutions. The focal areas were education, health, nutrition and livelihoods. The programme was implemented in 90 districts across seven states - Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Orissa and West Bengal.

Community based organisations (CBO) are known to lead to greater understanding of community context, and is characterized by community planning, community action and mobilization, the promotion of community change and, ultimately, influence within larger systems. Within CBOs, there are many variations in terms of size and organizational structure. Some are formally incorporated, with a written consti-tution and a board of directors (also known as a committee), while others are much smaller and are more informal. CBOs often incorporate the processes of community organisation, the action that usually comes from these organizations have power to address the issues that affect the individuals in the society and within their social institutions, as well as community develop-ment. The recent evolution of CBOs, especially in developing countries, has strengthened the view that these "bottom-up" organisations are more effective addressing local needs than larger organisations.

The PACS 'theory of change' is that civil society has a critical role to play in addressing social exclusion. It part-nered with 87 CSOs in these seven states, providing them funding support to build and strengthen CBOs of marginalized groups so they could address social exclusion at the grass-roots. The thesis was that the collective voice of federated networks of these CBOs would give them the bargaining power to realise their rights and achieve livelihood security in the long term.

More than 23,000 CBOs were formed,

*The PACS 'theory of change' is that civil society has a critical role to play in addressing social exclusion.*

*Promoting CBOs of these disadvantaged communities is central to the PACS strategy.*

nurtured and supported during the seven years. The CSOs extended hand-holding, mentoring support, building the capacity of CBO leaders to organize and mobilize their members in their struggle for rights and entitlements. Wider dissemination of the learnings emerging from the grassroots action is also important for improving strategies and affecting policy changes, hence this study.

This study was visualized to capture the journey of the CBOs that were formed and flourished. It adopted the case study research methodology and three learning documents were prepared. Two are thematic reports based on cases studies of select CBOs working to influence access to basic services, livelihoods and resources. The third report is a national report that analyses the 29 detailed and 14 short case studies contained in the first two reports and discusses their outcomes.

The study framework is driven by the theory of change prepared by PACS
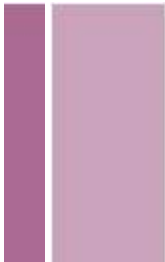
when the programme was launched. The theory details the possible reasons for the exclusion of social groups and communities.

It defines the consti-tuencies and charts the approach and strategy to change the current situation to ensure inclusion of deprived and disadvantaged communities. Promoting CBOs of these disadvantaged communities is central to the PACS strategy. It envisaged building and strengthening new CBOs or nurturing existing ones to address discrimination and denial of rights and entitlements.

It will be worthwhile to revisit the PACS theory of change since it provides the overall framework for the intervention programme. The study seeks to validate the congruence of CBOs in a federated network as envisaged in the theory of change.

# Theory of Social Change of PACS



PACS prepared a 'theory of change' document before the programme began. The paper defines the meaning of social exclusion, exclusionary practices and potential areas of intervention. The present study tests and reviews the processes and outcomes of the CBOs promoted by the CSOs to validate the congruence of their grassroots interventions proposed in the theory[1]. The key elements of the theory are detailed below.

The theory of change defines the concept of social exclusion from three perspectives. Firstly, exclusion affects certain social categories with cultural perceptions, values and norms that shape social interaction. Secondly, it is embedded in social relations, with these groups being wholly or partially excluded from participation in society by other social networks or the state. Thirdly, exclusion affects the rights and entitlements of people belonging to these groups, denying them the opportunities to fulfill their potential and maintain a universally acceptable standard of living. The excluded are not affected by a lack of resources like poor people in general are, but also face discriminating practices in accessing these resources.

The theory points out that social exclusion inhibits people from interacting freely and productively with others and blocks their full participation in the economic, social, and political life of the community. Incomplete citizenship and denial of civil, political and socio-economic rights are key factors contributing to impoverishment.

Social exclusion is of different degrees. It can mean denial of access to employment, land, and public services, such as education and health. It can also mean selective inclusion that sees excluded groups being treated differently, like, for example, being required to pay different prices for goods and services and fees for public institutions. Either the subsidized rate creates a mindset in service providers to provide low quality service and attention or there is a rent seeking experienced by the SEG.

The group identity of the excluded

*The excluded are not affected by a lack of resources like poor people in general are, but also face discriminating practices in accessing these resources.*

---

[1] Working with civil society to tackle social exclusion - a theory of change,PACS
http://www.pacsindia.org/assets/uploads/docs/resource_page/2015/Theory_of_change-1124B-forweb.pdf

institutionalizes discrimination. These identities include caste ethnicity, religion, gender and disability. The excluded groups score lower on social indicators such as occupational status or literacy status. Such groups include scheduled castes (SC), scheduled tribes (ST), nomadic tribes (NT), de-notified tribes (DNT), other backward classes (OBC), religious minorities such as Muslims, women and people with disabilities. SCs, STs and OBCs account for roughly half of India's population. If other minority groups such as Muslims are added, the figure rises to 64%.

Performance of the SEGs is far lower compared to the all-India situation, which builds a strong rationale for PACS to work with these groups:

| Status of the socially and economically disadvantaged population of India | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Indicators | ST | SC | Muslims, women and girls | OBCs | All-India average |
| Under-five mortality rate | 95.7 | 88.1 | 70.0 | 79.2 | 74.3 |
| Infant mortality rate | 62.1 | 66.4 | 52.4 | 57.7 | 57 |
| Percentage of malnourished children under five years of age | 54.5 | 47.9 | 41.8 | 43.1 | 42.5 |
| Poverty rate (rural) | 47.6 | 36.8 | 29.3 | N/A | 28.3 |
| Literacy rate | 47.1 | 54.7 | 59.1 | 68.8 | 64.8 |

Source: Working with civil society to tackle social exclusion- A theory of change, Poorest Area Civil Society Programme (PACS)

## Socially excluded groups

The theory of change traces how socio-cultural exclusion impacts the groups the PACS programme seeks to benefit in the following manner:

○ SCs : The practice of 'untouchability'- under which Dalit face discrimination on the basis of their caste status - has been banned since the time India gained independence in 1947. However, many of the associated behaviours, norms and values persist in practice. Hence, Dalits still often live apart from the rest of society, face discrimination when accessing services, receive poorer services, are barred from many occupations, receive lower pay, and encounter discrimination in the market place.

STs : Adivasis (STs), who make up 8% of India's population, face discrimination on the basis of their ethnicity. They often encounter additional development challenges because they live in remote areas and speak a different language. The areas tribal people inhabit tend to be forests rich in natural and mineral resources. In many cases, this has led to their displacement and exploitation. Negative stereotyping of tribals is also used to justify their exclusion from certain services and economic opportunities.

People with disabilities : Exclusion reduces opportunities for people with disabilities. They are discriminated against on the basis of cultural stereotypes and misguided assumptions about the limitations their disabilities impose. Services, government markets and places of employment are, by and large, not equipped to help them participate fully in daily socio-economic life and activities.

Muslims : They form 13% of India's population. Their social exclusion was recognised in policy circles only after the Sachar Committee reported on their plight in 2006. They score low on a broad range of socio-economic indicators because of discriminatory treatment and denied opportunities. However, discrimination against Muslims remains a controversial issue, with disagreement over both the extent of discrimination and the measures to be taken to address it.

*PACS' stated goal is "to reduce the gap in well-being status between the socially excluded population and the general population".*

Women : Girls and women in India face gender discrimination at all stages of their lives, beginning even before birth through sex-selective abortion. India ranks an abysmal 114 out of 134 countries in the international gender gap ranking. Gender discrimination is one of India's main development challenges. Women belonging to socially excluded categories face even more pronounced challenges because they have to deal with multiple forms of exclusion.

## Goals and objectives of PACS

PACS' stated goal is "to reduce the gap in well-being status between the socially excluded population and the general population". It sought to ensure discrimination-free services and livelihoods across 90 districts in seven states to improve the uptake of entitlements by socially excluded groups in its targeted area. It structured its strategy to achieve its purpose and goal on the basis of the following premises:

- Strong CSOs can priorities and raise issues affecting women and socially excluded communities.

- Civil society at the grassroots works better to make service providers more responsive and accountable to women and socially excluded communities.

- Better representation of women and socially excluded communities in village/ block/district level committees, government decision-making bodies and CSOs ensures their voices are heard.

## Operational Strategies

The PACS intervention is designed around two basic premises. The first is that the root cause of poverty in India is discrimination based on group identity, which leads to social exclusion. The second is that civil society has a critical role to play in addressing social exclusion. The socio-political analysis of exclusion narrowed the focus of the PACS intervention to two thematic areas that could be strategized to bring about tangible change: a) secure livelihoods and b) equitable access to basic services.

i.    Secure livelihoods

This thematic strand focused on improving non-discriminatory access to livelihood opportunities. Since the most widely available opportunity is employment under the MGNREGS, the thrust was to ensure equal access to employment, end discrimination in hiring decisions, and ensure regular and timely payment of fair wages and unemployment allowances.

The other thrust area was to build the capacity of ST and other traditional forest dwellers, especially women, to enable them to claim legal titles to the land they traditionally cultivated, common property rights,

and the right to access and manage their forest and grazing land. PACS emphasized the participation of women in forest committees and other decision-making bodies and the ability of forest-dwelling communities to manage and sustain natural resources.

In areas prone to natural disasters, the focus was on making communities resilient to droughts, floods and cyclones by promoting sustainable adaption and disaster risk-reduction models.

Land is an asset for livelihood security. The Indian government has policies to distribute public and private land to landless households. However, socially excluded groups face specific barriers to claiming ownership of such land, hence the PACS interventions were structured to face this challenge.

The PACS strategy was also to foster entrepreneurship through innovative and sustainable livelihood models, including public-private partnerships, and networking producers and traders to ensure better income generation.

ii.    Right to basic services

Once the discriminatory practices that curb access to basic education, health and nutrition services were identified, advocacy efforts focused on engaging with the state to bring an end to the discrimination.

In education, children from excluded communities face discriminatory behaviour from teachers, administrative staff and other pupils. This hinders their participation in class and school activities. In the long term, it affects students' emotional well-being and academic performance, leading to high drop-out rates.

*The Indian government has policies to distribute public and private land to landless households. However, socially excluded groups face specific barriers to claiming ownership of such land.*

The PACS intervention sought to end discriminatory practices in schools and ensure the affected students had full access to quality education, drinking water, midday meals, books and uniforms, government scholarships and in-school health services.

In the sphere of health and nutrition related services, the intervention focused on monitoring healthcare at the local level and advocating discrimination-free access to quality treatment for all patients and also nutritional support to women and children. The excluded groups worked actively with frontline workers, block and district level functionaries to plan and monitor inclusive delivery of health programmes such as the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojna (RSBY) and Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS).

In most cases, advocacy first involved ensuring that healthcare professionals were available at the facilities and then ensuring they did not indulge in discriminatory practices. Getting services regularized included medical check-ups and treatment, home visits, provision of nutritional supplements, etc, particularly to women, children and adolescent girls of these vulnerable communities. The thrust was also to ensure access to nutrition programmes, including food security schemes, run by the government and its agencies.

## Promoting CBOs as a vehicle of change

The core strategy rested on the premise that the poor and marginalised need to be organised to gain access to and control over resources and basic services. The CSOs were the facilitating agencies to promote and strengthen the CBOs in selected geographies with a high concentration of marginalised sections. Their field-level facilitators and programme managers were in direct touch with the marginalised communities and built new CBOs and strengthened existing ones around constituency-based issues, supporting them in building their networks at the cluster/panchayat, block and district level.

## Strategies to promote CBOs

The CSOs were from different backgrounds, each with their own history of work and mission objectives. Many of them have long experience of working with communities, so they adopted different strategies to support the CBOs in different areas. There are CSOs that believe that sustainable change happens only when the affected people learn to recognize and define their problem, find solutions and fight for their rights.

Such organisations found the PACS collaboration close to their organisational mission and strategy. Other CSOs work on rights issues of SC/ST/women or minorities etc. They saw promoting CBOs as part of the PACS design, as a positive step towards strengthening their rights-based work.

Both categories have both single CSOs working on individual projects as well as like-minded organisations coming together to form a partnership to create a network.

Many small organisations in these partnerships got the opportunity to work in geographies they were already active in, reaching out to the most marginalised communities with

*The CSOs were the facilitating agencies to promote and strengthen the CBOs in selected geographies with a high concentration of marginalised sections.*

capacity building and project management support from the lead partner.

Based on the work focus of the CSO and its commitment to its social constituency, different sets of CBOs emerged out of the process. There are CBOs of Dalits, STs, disabled persons, women and minorities. There are mixed groups as well as single constituency group's viz disabled people or single women.

# Methodology



The study was designed in consultation with the PACS national team within the defined terms of reference. It went through the following discrete steps:

## Objectives of the study

The study was envisaged with a larger purpose of developing a knowledge product out of the rich experience gained in promoting CBOs by partner CSOs in different states. Its objectives were:

- To document the processes and practices in CBO institution-building.

- To document the methodology of working on social exclusion issues.

- To document the successes, failures and challenges of CBOs working on different issues.

- To understand the challenges and complexity in designing, promoting, nurturing and managing CBOs and their leadership.

- To understand the dynamics of human relationships and conflict resolution while fostering ethical, democratic and collective principles.

- To understand the dynamics of networking and power relations, including interfacing with the power structures and administrative systems.

- To promote and document participatory and capacity building processes to empower CBOs for long-term sustenance through self-reflection.

- Distil the learnings on what has worked and what has not in the process of mobilizing and strengthening community institutions.

Given the large number of CBOs created (more than 23,000), the viable option was to design a qualitative study based on the case study methodology, taking an information-rich sample of CBOs. The basic criteria for selecting the CBOs was that the CBO should have demonstrated significant outcome(s) as a result of the struggle for inclusion and access to rights or would have emerged from an extremely adverse situation to fight denial and access rights and services. Such cases would provide rich material to understand and map the journey of

*The basic criteria for selecting the CBOs was that the CBO should have demonstrated significant outcome(s) as a result of the struggle for inclusion*

CBOs as effective tools for social transformation.

A sample of 30 case studies was taken for closer interactions and documentation. Since 30 was felt to be too small a number to reflect the vast diversity of CBOs, it was later decided to add another 15 CBOs, with profiles being developed for them out of the available documents. The objective of additional CBO profiles was to validate if any broad trends emerging from among these 30 cases were also applicable to them or not.

## The sampling

The selection of case studies required intimate knowledge of the overall PACS programme involving 87 CSOs and over 23,000 CBOs across seven states. In the interests of objectivity, the PACS state representatives first listed the best-performing CBOs, outlining the CBO characteristics and rationale for their selection of cases for in-depth data collection and profiling.

The first criterion for selection was that the CBO should be information-rich, with significant processes and outcomes that could inform others who are making efforts for grassroots change. Also, not more than one case was selected from each CSO, the states being proportionally represented, based on the number of partner CSOs.

Another criterion for selection was that the CSOs should, as far as possible, be providing mentoring support in the two main thematic areas chosen for the PACS intervention - a) access to basic services b) claiming resources and livelihoods. Some CBOs focus exclusively on one of the two themes while some others provide rich insights on both themes.

*Diversity was also ensured in terms of the CBO member-ship, nature of organisation-single or federated structure, those networked to state and national level campaigns and their thematic focus*

The national PACS team validated the state PACS list and the selection criteria and 30 cases were selected. Diversity was also ensured in terms of the CBO membership, nature of organisation-single or federated structure, those networked to state and national level campaigns and their thematic focus - nature of basic services improved or rights asserted. Visiting the CBOs and meeting its leaders and members these cases were documented. Participatory interactive methods were used in these meetings to understand their journey, processes and outcomes.

Another 15 CBOs were selected to make the study more comprehensive and representative. However, team was not expected to    visits and meet the CBO leaders to document these cases. A questionnaire was sent to the concerned CSO, which was    filled and submitted by the concerned CSO with all relevant supporting reports/data. The study team on the basis of the submitted data prepared a brief profile.

Based on the field visits, one of the cases was dropped due to insufficient evidence of processes and outcomes found on the ground. It was included as one of the 14 cases for short profiling. Only 29 cases were finally taken up for detailed case study documentation. One CSO selected for the short profiling did not submit the filled up study format, so the number of short profile cases also dropped to 14.

## The data collection

A list of questions considered relevant for tracking the CBO journey was developed (Annexure 1). It was shared with the PACS management team and improved on the basis of their feedback. A questionnaire was designed which was to be filled up by the concerned

CSO to provide basic information on the CBO selected (prior to the field visit) for short profiling (Annexure 2). The questionnaire was discussed with the Advisory Committee set up for the study (Annexure 3).

A sample case study was prepared by visiting the field area of the Mahatma Gandhi Sewa Ashram (MGSA) in Sheopur district of Madhya Pradesh. The case study was shared with the Advisory Committee and suggestions to improve it were incorporated. An outline for writing the case studies was also developed so that each case could be presented in a standard format (Annexure 4) without losing their richness.

A detailed plan of field visits was worked out in consultation with the state PACS team as well as the CSOs. The study team also met the represen-

tatives of the CSO team nurturing and promoting the CBO to gain its perspective, understand its organisational relationship and the strategy used for supporting/ mentoring the CBO. It visited the villages to interact with the CBO members both collectively and individually.

The CSOs were also asked to provide the project proposal, reports submitted to the PACS, studies conducted or any other reports that could be useful for understanding the CBO journey. The PACS national office also provided additional data on the CSOs from their database/MIS.

## Profile of case studies

The CBOs selected for detailed case studies and short profiling are classified in the following table:

| Case studies considered for documentation | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S No | State | No of CBOs | | Constituency focus | | Thematic area |
| | | In-depth | Short profile | In-depth | Short profile | Indepth/short profile |
| 1 | MP | 4 | 2 | Tribals | SC/OBC | NREGS/FRA/ Basic services |
| 2 | UP | 5 | 3 | SC/Muslim Minority | Disabled/SC | NREGS/MDM/ Health |
| 3 | Bihar | 4 | 3 | SC/Disabled | Muslims/SC | NREGS/MDM/ Health/Disability rights |
| 4 | Chhattisgarh | 4 | 2 | SC/ST/ Disabled | ST/SC | NREGS/Land rights/FRA/ Disability rights |
| 5 | Jharkhand | 5 | 2 | ST/Backward | ST | FRA/NREGS/ Anganwadi |
| 6 | Odisha | 4 | 2 | ST | ST | NREGS/FRA/ Education/MDM |
| 7 | West Bengal | 3 | | ST/Muslims | | NREGS/RTE |
| | Total | 29 | 14 | | | |

*Note : CBO specific details are provided in annexure 5 and 6.*

The CBO profiles reveal the diversity of the selected sample. There is a concentration of SC communities in Bihar and UP whereas ST communities are predominant in Jharkhand, MP and Chhattisgarh. There are Muslim minorities in West Bengal, UP and Bihar. Women as a constituency are found across the states. CBOs of persons with disability include Viklang Manch in Chattisgarh and BVKP in Bihar. Thematically, the cases are spread across states. In tribal states, the focus is more on forest rights and land rights. MGNREGS is an overarching programme accessed by the marginalized in all the states.

The short profiles cover 14 CBOs from six states. These CBOs also have a similar social background. One CBO selected in UP was of disabled people. In Bihar, a Muslim minority CBO was considered for documentation. In MP, there was a CBO from the slums of Jabalpur city. In Jharkhand, Odisha and Chattisgarh the CBOs were primarily of the tribal community.

## Limitations

The study team realised the limitations of the study while conducting it. One limitation was the timing of the study.

Most of the CSOs were busy completing their committed activities in the last six months of the project period. So getting suitable dates and time of the senior project members was difficult.

Secondly, since the CBOs were in remote areas it was difficult to plan a long stay for field interactions. Many team members had to travel long distances to attend the village-level meetings with the community. Some of these areas are affected by left-wing extremism, so discussions with the CBOs were limited to day-time only.

Thirdly, since the documentation was done during the withdrawal phase of the programme, many CSOs faced staff attrition. In several cases, CSO functionaries who had been instrumental in mobilizing the community and had worked closely with them had moved on - as a result institutional memory was lost in the process.

In spite of such limitations, the study provided rich insights and learnings due to strong motivation and openness of the CBO leaders and members to share their perspectives, emotions, successes, anxieties and future plans.

*Thematically, the cases are spread across states. In tribal states, the focus is more on forest rights and land rights.*

# Profile of CBOs
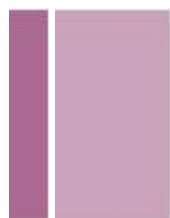
**T**he PACS information system has a large database of CBOs promoted or supported during the course of its programme. The information in this section has, however, been collated from regular reports of the CSO partners and covers 23206 CBOs. The data provides interesting patterns and trends.

## Formation of the CBOs

The maximum number of CBOs (10922) was formed in the third year of the programme (2012) while the following two years 9027 (2013) and 2306 (2014) were formed. The number reduced substantially in 2015 as the project reached its peak and the focus shifted to strengthening the CBOs so they could sustain themselves in the post-PACS years.
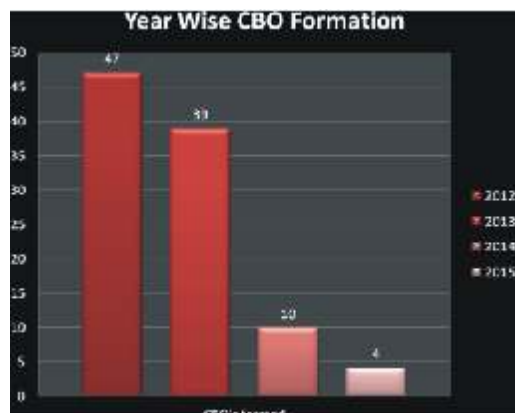
## State-wise spread

The maximum number of CBOs was formed in Jharkhand state (21%), followed by Uttar Pradesh (17%), while Chattisgarh had the least number (7%). The concentration of CBOs in certain states reflects the difference in approach of the partner CSOs, with the partners in Jharkhand and UP taking a central approach to extensively promote CBOs.



Fig-1

State-Wise Presence of CBOs
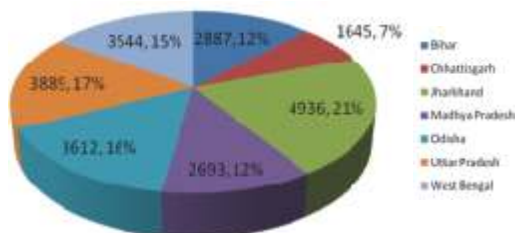


Fig-2

## Characteristics of CBOs

The distribution of 23206 CBOs reveals that 5548 (23.9%) are Self Help Groups followed by the the Village Monitoring/Development Groups 4459 (19.2%). There are 3488 (15%) Common Interest Groups. The SHGs and CIGs which are livelihoods promotion groups constitute almost half of the total CBOs. Constituency wise pattern reflects that 2384 (10.3%) are the women groups whereas 1.7% and 3% are the youth and children's groups respectively. There are 1325 (7%) labour unions primarility formed to influence right to work under the MGNREGS.

## Social categories of leaders

Almost three-quarter of the CBOs leaders belong to either ST (38%) or SC (36%) category. This is in proportion to the emphasis given to the SEG as most excluded communities. Approximately equal proportion of leaders of CBOs are from the OBC (13%) and Muslims (12%). There are the other priority communities for the PACS. Only 1% CBO leaders belong to other caste and religion. This demonstrates that most of the CBOs are fomed, controlled and led by the SEGs.

*Almost three-quarter of the CBOs leaders belong to either ST (38%) or SC ( 36%) category.*

Types of CBOs

Social Catregory of CBO Leader
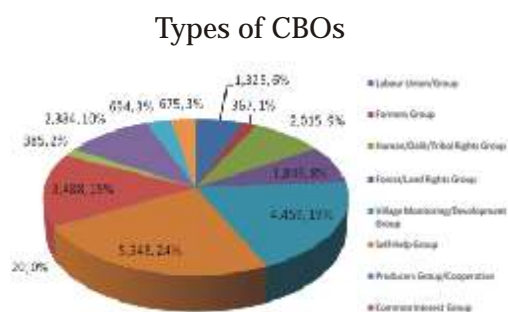
Fig-3
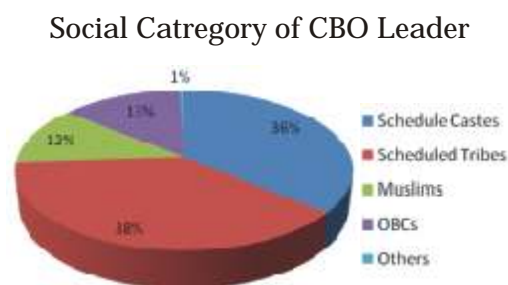
Fig-4

# Emerging patterns from case studies



**T**he profile of CBOs selected for in-depth case study documentation is given in Annexture 5 and 6. The table reveals the diversity of constituencies organised as CBOs. Women within the different social groups - SC/ST/minority - constitute the maximum number in the study sample. Most of the organizations' work on both thematic areas viz. livelihoods and basic services, although one theme usually becomes the focus, because of the CSO's core competency and organizational priority. The focal rights and entitlement-based programmes/acts include the MGNREGA, FRA, MDM, RTE/SSA, ICDS, NRHM, PDS etc.

## Constituency focus and operations

The clear focus of Kalp in Chattisgarh and CBOs constituted by CASA in MP is effective implementation of the MGNREGS, whereas the MGSA in MP and Jan Sahajya in Jharkhand work on land issues. CBOs of the BVKP in Bihar and Chaupal in Chattisgarh engage persons with disability in the MGNREGS, besides fighting for their pension entitlement and other benefits.

Women's groups engaging with the panchayat and district administration for work under the MGNREGS include Gramya in UP *(Dalit women)*, Shramjeevi Mahila Samiti (SMS) in Jharkhand and Tarun Chetna Manch (single women). GEAG in UP helps women farmers with scientific knowl-edge while the Reflect Circle in Bihar are women's collectives demanding basic services like MDM and quality education. *Dalit* collectives have taken up issues like discrimination against *Dalit* children in schools and *Dalit* patients in government hospitals. Some CBOs wove other pertinent issues into their focal thematic interventions. For instance, Muslim weavers in the SSK federation took up issues such as loan disbursement and implementation of weaver schemes along with the issue of constituency delimitation for Panchayat elections.

CBOs like *Jivika* Adhikar Sangthan promoted by Jan Sahajya, and Citizen Forums promoted by SSK, have well-defined boundaries and specific membership criteria. However, many others have very permeable boundaries such as *Jeevan Jeebika Adihikar Manch* promoted by AINA, which accepts all potential labourers as members. But by and large,

*Dalit collectives have taken up issues like discrimination against Dalit children in schools and Dalit patients*

homogeneity and issues of concern to the community decide membership, although heterogeneous communities also have well-demarcated CBOs.

Almost all the CBOs are of the marginalised community, their struggle focused on accessing better services from the state. Their empowerment during the process influenced caste equations in the community. This changing relationship with other communities is more evident in feudal contexts such as Varanasi, and less in homogenous tribal districts. However, there are rare instance of direct conflict with upper caste/class communities.

The CSOs adopted intensive nurturing or extensive netting of the target communities, depending on the issues. For instance, land rights are based on the extensive support approach that capitalised on existing/latent demand, while issues such as education and nutrition usually focus on intensive approaches, converting a passive demand into a struggle for entitlements.

The ideology and strategies of the CSOs are visible in the CBO interventions. For instance, most CBOs fighting for land rights organize public agitations, padyatras and demonstrations as pressure-building tactics, with some definite form of organization at the block and cluster level. CBOs demanding work or improved functioning of schools, health institutions and *Anganwadis* invariably engage with service providers/elected representatives to make them responsive and accountable.

The CBOs recognize the importance of political power and local governance institutions. Many members contested

*The CBOs recognize the importance of political power and local governance institutions. Many members contested panchayat elections, even though they knew they would lose.*

panchayat elections, even though they knew they would lose. This was a demonstration of changing power equations within the community. Significantly, many lost by very narrow margins, while some also won. Several members have also found representation in village level institutions and influence decision-making with regards to access to rights and services. Many CBO leaders are very clear about their political ambitions.

Most of the organisations have a presence in at least a couple of blocks in one district viz Gramya in UP, Kalp in Chhattisgarh, Smokus in West Bengal and EHA in Madhya Pradesh, etc. However, there are organisations like GEAG in UP, MVM in Bihar, SMS and Ekjut in Jharkhand and MGSA in MP, which promoted CBOs in different districts as part of their organisational policy and strategic focus. Most of the CBOs have linkages with the other CBOs promoted by the same organisation. There are also a few state or national level networks that have close links with their grassroots CBOs viz Pradeepan-NCDHR, ,Jan Sahjya, MGSA and NSVK-Ekta Parishad, BVKP-National Disability Network, Shikar Yuva Manch- National RTE Forum etc.

The CBOs are registered, and more formal wherever the CSOs have systematically sought to formalize them into a federation. There are large-sized unregistered CBOs like the Ekta Parishad as well as CBOs registered at the state/district/ block level. The Musahar Vikas Manch and *Dalit* Adhikar Manch are the state level federations of the CBOs in Bihar. The union of MGNREGS workers has been registered as Ekta Jan Sangathan in Betul district with the support of CASA.

## The emergence of CBOs - discriminatory environment

Inequity and unfavourable bias towards marginalized communities are the defining characteristics of the public service delivery system in the current socio-political environment. This systemic discrimination perpetuates poverty in these sections of society. The cycle leads to erosion of the social and resource capital of these groups. It is under such circumstances that the poor and socially deprived have seen the advantage of coming together in grassroots collectives, many of them long before the PACS-backed CSO interventions.

Excluded social groups face different challenges. The table no. 1 given at the end of the report shows that tribal community-based groups face economic discrimination because upper-caste farmers illegally occupy the land allotted to the SC/ST or because they have no legal records to claim ownership of land SC/ST farmers have been cultivating for generations. The process of getting FRA rights to land or title deeds to revenue land is cumbersome, expensive and demeaning because of procedural complexities and the apathy of forest and revenue department officials.

Discussions with the CBOs brought out the stereotyping of tribals by the upper castes and government officials - 'lazy, drunk, destroyer of forests'. So denial of rights is seen as the norm. Tribal children find the primary education system insensitive to tribal dialects and cultural wisdom. Schools, *Anganwadis* and PHCs are irregular, distant or absent in remote tribal areas. In schools, the quality of MDM food and the attendance of teachers (who live far away) are major challenges. Mandated services such as health monitoring (pre-natal check-ups, immunization, etc.) and nutritional food for under-5 children and pregnant and nursing women in Anganwadis and PHCs are either unavailable or not dispensed because of the absence of the health worker or discrimination.

The consequence of discrimination is low literacy levels of tribal women and much below average health indicators among tribals. Government officials and rich, upper caste landlords also victimize them. Their land is grabbed or the land records are manipulated, they are denied access to forests for the livelihood, and they work for low wages.

Their protests are controlled with violence as documented in the case of *Rampur ka Sehrana* in Sheopur, MP where Ram Singh was killed and his family beaten up for claiming their legitimate land rights. There are cases of multiple displacements of the tribals in Odisha and Chhattisgarh by large-scale national projects. Once displaced, they had to move again from their new homes after a couple of years to make way for new projects planned. Low nutrition levels lead to a high incidence of disability, low IQ and stunted growth of the younger generation, affecting their livelihood choices in adulthood.

UP and Bihar have a high concentration of *Dalits* so many of the CBOs formed in these states with PACS support have *Dalit*-membership. The social low status of Dalits in villages is seen in their social boycott in village functions like *Durga Puja*, community feasts, marriage and death ceremonies and so on. The *Dalits* sit separately and have separate plates. This affects their

*Inequity and unfavourable bias towards marginalized communities are the defining characteristics of the public service delivery system in the current socio-political environment.*

self-esteem so most *Dalit* families avoid public functions. They are mostly landless or own smallholdings. Most work as farm laborers to supplement their income but they are paid wages well below the prevalent market or government rates because of their caste status.

Economically vulnerable, the informal credit support they get from *Mahajans* /moneylenders during emergencies (medical, marriage, death, crop failure) comes with high interest rates, keeping them in perpetual debt, with the relationship of dependency forcing them into feudal bondage. They perform menial duties like sweeping courtyards and cleaning dung.

*The height of cash counters in banks makes it difficult for the orthopedically challenged disabled to conduct transactions.*

The CBO members keenly feel the institutional discrimination of Dalits and their children in schools, PHCs and Anganwadis. *Dalit* children are made to clean the school premises and toilets. They are made to sit apart from upper caste children. CBO members report that their children are served mid-day meals after the upper caste children finish eating. In hospitals, doctors and support staff misbehave with them or demand extra money to serve them during institutional delivery or as in-patients.

Persons with disability face social discrimination because of the perception that disability is a curse people have to bear in pain for transgressions in their previous life. So disabled persons are left to suffer and are not comforted. This social attitude builds

apathy towards persons with disability. Vulnerability and discrimination becomes even more severe if the disabled person is an SC/ST or a woman or an adolescent girl.

CBOs report institutional discrimination of persons with disability in public institutions like the panchayat, block office, schools and colleges, collectors' office and even commercial places like banks because none of these public places are designed to be disability friendly. Shankar Chaudhry, the founder of BVKP, Bihar had protested against the seating arrangement for a competitive exam during his student days, where the disabled had to climb to the third floor to write the exam. In Sarguja in Chhattisgarh, the registration for disability certification was done on the first floor and was shifted to ground floor on the initiative of Sumant, the president of the Chattisgarh Viklang Manch.

The height of cash counters in banks makes it difficult for the orthopedically challenged disabled to conduct transactions. There is no separate queue or preference to reduce their inconvenience in standing long hours in queues. People are apathetic to giving preferential treatment to the disabled in PDS shops or to helping them in carrying their ration home. Even the district collector's office is either on the first floor or so badly designed that a person on a wheelchair cannot enter

Manju is an illiterate *dalit* women who was elected president of the Mahila Manch. She is bold and confidently engages with government officials, sarpanch and service providers for gaining the rights of *dalit* women in her village.

Manju was initially apprehensive to organise the women against the powerful feudal forces in her village. Most *dalit* families work as labourers on the farms of rich, upper caste landowners or farm the land on a crop-sharing basis.

She felt empowered by the Gramya trainings on various Acts such as the NREGA, RTI, RTE, the SC/ST atrocity act and domestic violence, gaining a deep understanding of the rights of excluded communities and the power of collectives to protest and demand justice.

With the support of Gramya, she organised the women of her hamlet to form the Mahila Manch. The knowledge she gained helped her train other groups as well as engage with service providers at the village and block levels, focusing on their duties and responsibilities.

Her confrontation with the panchayat pradhan and secretary has opened the door to wider employment of women under the MGNREGS and distribution of other benefits. The PRI representatives, annoyed with her, are making all efforts to victimise her. For example, her name is high on the list of households entitled to a subsidy for a house, but they have found ways to defer her claim.

Manju remains unperturbed and is committed to continue her fight for justice and transparent functioning of the panchayat. The pradhan has even approached her to work out a compromise, holding out the carrot of benefits for her family.

Manju is the strength of the *'manch'*, with the *dalit* women standing with her and gaining confidence from her qualities as a leader who stands with them even in crisis and doesn't succumb to the lures of the establishment.

The case studies of CBOs with Muslims were mostly in the states of Bihar, UP and West Bengal, with most members being women. In South Dinajpur district in West Bengal, there are CBOs formed by Muslim women integrating with some *Dalit* women. In other states, Muslim women in many CBOs are well assimilated as members facing oppression and discrimination. Equal work opportunities outside the house is one of the major challenges poor Muslim women face. The practice of child marriage also restricts the right to education of girls and negatively impacts their health.

Women are discriminated against in a patriarchal society, being labelled the 'weaker' sex. There are religious and social discriminatory practices that deny women equal rights. Exclusion is compounded if the woman is a *Dalit*, tribal, Muslim or is disabled and hence they face exclusion at multiple levels owing to their gender as well as social position in the society. CBOs of single women report different kinds of gender discrimination due to their social and economic vulnerability. Males predominate in most service delivery institutions, even in *Panchayats*- mostly

upper caste. As a result, women have shared experiences of barriers created to deny them their rights viz. women demanding work under the MGNREGS were given a site far away from the village to discourage them from working (Gramya, Varanasi). There is evidence quoted by women CBO members of disrespectful treatment of women, their ailments and needs at PHCs and district hospitals. There is also an acute shortage of gynecologists and female doctors.

## Purpose of forming the CBOs

The discriminated communities joined into collectives because of their common socio-economic and political concerns. A major concern is the social identity or gender-based bias in delivering basic services and denying access to constitutional rights and entitlements, which reflects in the programme design itself.

**Box-2 : Ganga Ram, a bonded labourer became parishad president of Sheopur district**

Ganga Ram recalls his association with Ram Dutt Tomar, a committed Ekta Parishad worker, over 30 years ago when he was a bonded labourer in Sheopur. Tomar's assurance in their initial meeting that he would get him freed from bondage failed to generate any hope or confidence in him. However, the district collector at the time was supportive and got him released.

Ganga Ram, whose younger brother was murdered over a land dispute in Seopur tehsil, joined Tomar to understand the supportive role he played with the *Sahariya* tribals as a parishad member. Gradually, he learnt the parishad's strategies, becoming vocal and confident. He became an active member, organising dharnas and campaigns in the district and also at other locations.

Ganga Ram was elected *jila adhyaksha* (district president) in 1996 in an election held by representatives of various village-level *samitis* promoted by the *parishad*. His election was endorsed by the *Sahariya* district tribal panchayat. With his intensive drive as a *parishad* member and district president, he got land *Pattas* for 26 *Sahariyas*, who named their habitation 'Ektapura'. He was in direct contact with the District Collector to address bottlenecks in land allotment, land demarcation or possession of land by the tribals. He could draw on his power and position as district president to engage with the district administration on equal footing to fight for the rights of the *Sahariyas*.

Ganga Ram was the first person to inform the police when a violent incident took place in *Raja Ka Sehra* hamlet. He quickly reached the spot and mobilised the local parishad team to support the cause of the *Sahariyas*. Later, the *parishad* leaders played a leading role in converting the incident into a campaign issue for human rights and social justice.

Ganga Ram decided to fight the 2014 assembly elections on a *Samajwadi* Party ticket. He had to resign his post as district president. Fighting the election was a tribal panchayat decision to counter the politics of vote division and ensure there was no split in the tribal vote. Ganga Ram and other tribal leaders felt the non-*Sahariya* candidates were making false promises to win the *Sahariya* votes but would never take concrete action in favour of the *Sahariyas* if they won the election. He was aware he would lose the election but was able to secure around 3,000 votes nevertheless.

Ganga Ram continues to be an active parishad member although he no longer holds a leadership position. His big dream is to see the Sahariyas become economically self-reliant cultivators. Hi's hopes of Improving the quality of life of future Sahariya generations through good education, secure jobs and improved health is what keeps him alive and agile.



Table 2 outlines the purpose behind forming different types of CBOs by different communities. The tribal-identity based CBOs have a clear mission to reclaim legal rights over land and access to forests to secure sustainable livelihoods. They also seek to achieve equity in basic services for the development and mainstreaming of tribals in society, with due respect for

their rich cultural heritage.

The purpose of the CBOs formed by the *Dalit* is to secure dignity and respect in employment and in the delivery of basic services, with the service providers treating them no differently than other more socially accepted communities.

The women-majority CBOs are more articulate in their mission to attain equal opportunity in education, health and other basic services. Women also have to challenge men for equal treatment in the economic sphere, for getting equal rights to property and resources, and to be engaged in decision making within the family. They face discrimination at home, manifested in domestic violence and being denied their due role in key family decisions like the marriage of daughters and sons or participating in public life - like attending *Gram Sabha* meetings or contesting panchayat elections. So for women, their mission is to establish their value in socio-economic life and seek equal treatment as human beings, as breadwinners and caretakers of the family, and as equal citizens of a democratic India.

The CBOs of persons with disability articulate their need to be treated as individuals who do not require pity or the apathy of society but want to be seen as capable citizens who require greater understanding of their con-straints. They need social empathy, not sympathy. Only then can they hope to live a respectful and meaningful life, contributing to the best of their best abilities in socio-economic development.

## Capacity building support

The CSOs have facilitated the formation of CBOs under the PACS programme in predominantly SC/ST areas or in poverty pockets of their respective states. Table 3 summarises the types of support and structured capacity building inputs provided by them.

The CBO members, in particular their leaders, went through structured as well as informal orientations to help them understand the rights-based acts and programmes containing provisions for their social and economic benefit viz RTE, NFSA, PDS, NRHM, RSBY, FRA, MGNREGS etc. In most cases this understanding was constantly reinforced over a long period of time so that there was clarity among the CBO members on the schemes/ rights, their benefits and why accessing them was important for their well-being. The purpose was to build their capacity to collectively demand equitable and non-discriminatory access to basic services that could improve their lives.

*The CBO members, in particular their leaders, went through structured as well as informal orientations to help them understand the rights-based acts and programmes*

## Box-3 : Gopal Nayak- a national level trainer on Forest Rights Act

Gopal Nayak, a resident of small hamlet of Khajuri Padar of Ratnagiri Panchayat, got associated with SPREAD since the beginning of their visit in the village in 2005. Initially, her mother was an active member of the self-help group. Her mother Malti Naik gradually demonstrated leadership abilities and became President of the Sangathan of Panchayat Ratnagiri. She encouraged Gopal to work with SPREAD due to her commitment with the mission of the organisation. He was not even 10th pass at that time, however, he was closely watching the oppression of the tribals by the Forest Department and the local power structure. Currently, Gopal is the block co-ordinator of SPREAD for managing all the programme of Baipaiguda block.

He started working on the issues of land rights with the SPREAD team. He first understood the provisions of the forest act in structured as well as on-the-job trainings. He helped set up village forest committees in different villages, getting most of the PO members nominated by the *palli* sabha. He also helped the tribals in filling up forms for individual rights. Gopal learnt to measure the land, therefore actively helped during the verification process. This resulted in distribution of more than 2000 land titles under FRA.

Gopal is an active member of the Campaign for Survival and Dignity (CSD) which is led by Mr Suresh Prabhu, an eminent activist on Forest Rights Act. Gopal attended several national level meetings of the CSD and presented on the findings of his work on FRA. The CDD works in more than 30 districts of Odisha with various activist groups. Gopal is well networked with the activists who invite him to conduct trainings on FRA. With his solid knowledge on FRA, he is a national level trainer on FRA.

Gopal also completed his graduation from Indira Gandhi Open University

Subsequent monthly meetings of the CBOs followed up with discussions to improve their knowledge base and keep them informed about new developments in the programmes of their concern, so they could define the areas of action for their community and village. The peer interaction and learning also helped analyse the acts/programmes. The provisions of programmes and Acts were understood from 'inclusion' lens.

The Reflect Circle experiment introduced in 40 CBOs in a couple of districts of Bihar took the participating women through a self-awareness process. The facilitator empowers women members to take actions based on their situational analysis. Similarly, Jan Abhiyakti empowered tribal CBOs and the *Gram Sabhas* of jurisdiction to protect their cultivable land, the main source of livelihoods from mining companies. CBO leaders were nurtured to claim rightful compensation by demanding FRA *Pattas* if attempts to save their land fail. The CSO helped the village and *Panchayat* to understand the PESA and its powerful provisions. CBOs were oriented on the RTI, the role of the ombudsman in the MGNREGS, social audit and other forms of legal aid. With specific focus on livelihoods and resources, CBO

*Some of the leaders gained an understanding of integrated planning, land measurement, labour budgeting for the MGNREGS, the role of village forest committees, etc.*

members were familiarized with the provisions of the MGNREGS and FRA. There are examples where CBO members demanded work under MGNREGS, as well as individual and community forest rights under FRA. Some of the leaders gained an understanding of integrated planning, land measurement, labour budgeting for the MGNREGS, the role of village forest committees, etc. Similarly, very structured and formal Participatory Action and Learning Approach (PLA) was used by SHARE and EKJUT, the Child & Woman Friendly Community (CWFC) approach by CINI to improve the awareness and knowledge levels among the community.

The forum of citizen leaders promoted by the SSK showcases innovative practices for capacity building, such as mock drills at the block office, meetings with officials, and the practice of always making a written complaint and demanding a receipt. AINA tried quizzes structured around the MGNREGS, giving prizes such as soap, sugar etc. to ensure that CBO members understood and learned the provisions.

The CBOs that moved ahead and sought to formally register themselves went through trainings on developing bylaws for registration and improving the abilities of their elected or grassroots leaders. For instance, Aina has registered the block federation as a withdrawal strategy while CASA and SPREAD have registered unions of tribals fighting for MGNREGS/FRA rights and livelihoods.

The strongest support has been in counseling and guiding the CBOs how to exercise their rights and demand their entitlements. The key support has been in writing applications to improve basic services or demand work under

the MGNREGS. The CBOs learned how to monitor the *Anganwadis*, school and hospitals through regular visits, both as members of their committees or eligible users of the services. The CSO facilitators also took them to the block and district offices to meet senior officials to share their monitoring results or table their grievances and demand specific actions viz appointment of a *Dalit* cook for MDM, shifting the PDS shop to a *Dalit*-dominated hamlet, delineation of village as an independent Muslim-dominated *Panchayat*, etc.

The CBOs struggling for livelihoods and resources learnt to read MGNREGS muster rolls, e-payment system etc. The forest/land rights CBOs learnt to interpret revenue and forest land records, read maps, take GPS coordinates of the land claimed and planning campaigns at the block, district or state level. The disability-based CBOs learnt to file applications to get disability certification specifying the type and percentage of disability. They learnt to debate with the medical board if there were differences in determining the level of disability.

Learning also took place through the exposure visits and participation in joint meetings called by CBO networks/ federations to share experiences. For instance, Jan Sahajaya took its CBO to one of its earlier successful intervention sites in Kalahandi while SSK facilitated the exposure of its new CBO to the well-established and effectively functioning citizens' forum in Sitapur. There are other examples of CBOs visiting villages with strong collectives to build their confidence and learn action approaches. Members of Adarsh Mahila Samooh-EHA/ Spandana

learnt by doing, how public grievance-redress systems could be used to hold duty-bearers accountable by escalating non-performance, lack of accountability to higher administrative levels.

Campaign-based CBOs drew learnings and developed confidence by participating in state-level conventions, calls-for-action, campaigns etc. Such events are immensely useful in building their confidence to deal with the oppressive forces as well as exerting psychological pressure on feudal forces and the administrative machinery with their numerical strength. The events PACS organised at the state or national level were also good learning, sharing and confidence building opportunities for most participating CBOs.

The CSOs also provided follow-up support in many cases where state-level advocacy was required. The issues emerging from the CBO struggles were highlighted in the media and constructive policy changes were discussed with state-level officials. Support was also required in re-filing FRA cases that were rejected for technical reasons. In Bihar, the CBOs joined the state-led social audit campaign, participating in social audits to highlight gaps in the implementation of the MGNREGS, particularly with respect to the quantum of wages and delays in payment.

## Processes for strengthening

The CBOs were selected for the study on the basis of the successes they achieved because of their effective organisation and collective action. Three basic processes emerge in the CBO journeys in different contexts: a) creating awareness on issues of discrimination, b) organising CBOs and developing their capabilities, and c) initiating actions to change the situation. Table 5 details these processes that led to many successes and outcomes.

*The issues emerging from the CBO struggles were highlighted in the media and constructive policy changes were discussed with state-level officials.*

| Process matrix - key processes undertaken by the CBOs | | |
|---|---|---|
| Knowledge/awareness | Organization | Action |
| • Identifying marginalised and excluded persons as per the organisational focus.<br>• Finding out natural leaders of the target communities to initiate discussions.<br>• Identifying core/urgent issues of concern to initiate dialogue.<br>• Building awareness of the provisions of schemes/acts.<br>• Conducting regular meetings to build trust, share information and articulate issues.<br>• Interfacing regularly with the programme field staff - ICDS, schools, health, *Asha* worker.<br>• Establishing resource centres for regular support and information dissemination. | • Forming CBOs and defining their membership norms.<br>• Merging existing SHGs with the CBOs.<br>• Expanding the CBOs to other villages.<br>• Federating the CBOs at the block, district and state level.<br>• Forming support groups for key constituencies (*Bal Mitra*, children's clubs, friends of the disabled, *Kishori* Sangathan, etc.<br>• Training and providing handholding support on various issues.<br>• Holding interface meetings with programme officials and *Panchayat* representatives.<br>• Conducting field-based demonstrations - agriculture, forestry etc.<br>• Generating resources for the CBOs and their federations for their long-term sustenance. | Basic services<br>• Monitoring schools for MDM, Anganwadis for subsidised ration and cooked food<br>• Initiating action - locking the PHC and PDS shop to draw the attention of the administration and force it to act.<br>• Meeting state officials to initiate action to ensure delivery of services.<br>Land and livelihoods<br>• Filing FRA claims and pursuing them at the block/district level.<br>• Filing written applications to demand work under the MGNREGS<br>• Influencing *Gram Sabhas* to prevent resolutions in favour of mining companies, intervening in MGNREGS planning, conducting social audits etc.<br>• Organising rallies, dharnas and protests at the district collector's office, block office and during state-level conventions. |

The initial processes were facilitated by the CSOs by first identifying the excluded communities and families to initiate a dialogue. Potential leaders trusted by the community, who could understand the core purpose of the CSO, were identified. Many CBOs members were initially quite apprehensive about talking to the CSO facilitators because of they traditionally face exploitation and deceit from strangers. Hence, building trust was critical to the process, especially in areas where the CSO had no presence. The CSOs with previous experience in building CBOs could accelerate the pace of CBO formation in new villages and strengthening CBOs in existing areas. MGSA, MVM, CASA and others decided to choose new blocks/villages under PACS to expand CBO formation. The current CBO office bearers led the initial mobilization since they themselves belong to the excluded social groups and have a good rapport with the community, which trusts them. The CSO facilitators were also selected from the local area and, in many cases, were from the same deprived community background. The process of bringing the villagers together was to organize meetings in which Government programmes, basic services and their rights and entitlements were shared. These meetings provided a safe and comfortable environment for women and SC and ST members to express their concerns, build bonds and develop their collective strength.

Interactions also took place with the field staff of different government programmes to facilitate dialogue. The excluded often weren't availing the services due to ignorance. Many of them were treated badly when attempted to use the services. This accentuated conscious of the deprivation and denial operating implicitly in their daily lives. Regular interactions with the CSO facilitators helped boost their morale and confidence for realizing rights and entitlements. CSOs like GEAG established cluster-level resource centres while SSK set up a block-level resource centre to provide information and support to the CBOs.

Once the CBOs began acting collectively to address issues of concern, the process of formalizing organisational structure began. Membership in CBOs is mostly informal but usually homogeneous viz. all disabled persons, SC women, STs with land leases or possessing land without legal records, Musahar women, etc. In the case of CBOs like the MVM – Bihar, membership is tightly defined to only Musahars. Similarly, the Chattisgarh Viklang Manch has only PWDs as members and Shiksha Vikas Manch with only adivasi men and women. The Reflect Circle has only dailt women members and Rokiya CIG and Bondhu Savings Group only Muslim girls/ women. Jan Abhiyavakti has tribal families seeking FRA claims in mining-affected areas.

In the case of a CBO promoted by Kalp in Chhattisgarh, membership was initially open to all communities wishing to combat alcoholism in the village. So both SC and OBC women got together. But while Kalp decided to re-establish the *Dalit* identity of the CBO after the ban-alcohol initiative and the reluctance of OBC women to continue their membership, the MVM expanded its mandate to include other *Dalits* in its CBOs despite some internal resistance. And even the case of Jamuna Swayam Sahayata Samuh, which began working exclusively with single women but later expanded the

*Once the CBOs began acting collectively to address issues of concern, the process of formalizing organisational structure began.*

## Box-4 : Munni Devi - a masiha of musahar women

Munni Devi is a committed and long-time MVM worker. She supervises the CSO's PACS programme in 97 villages of three blocks in Muzaffarpur district. She has played a vital role in strengthening the *Musahar* CBOs in different villages.

Her organisational slogan is 'Ladenge to jeetenge' (We will win only if we fight). She shares information on government schemes and the provisions of different acts the *Dalits* and marginalised. MGNREGS is one of the important programmes for *musahar* women to seek employment with dignity in their own village.

When Munni Devi saw that wage payments under the MGNREGS were being delayed, she called on the women MGNREGS workers of the CBOs to camp at the district collector's official premises with their chulhas and cooking vessels. The women gathered in large numbers with their children, cooking food and staying put till the collector agreed to release the payments within a week and promised to open new work opportunities under the MGNREGS.

She was once threatened for exposing corruption in the MGNREGS. In one of the *Panchayats* where she facilitated a social audit, the village mukhiya who was the panchayat president physically scuffled with her to stall the audit process. She filed an FIR with the police and fearlessly continued with the audit. The mukhiya had to return the amount he had embezzled from the MGNREGS funds following pressure from the district administration.

She once sheltered with a *musahar* family when it was raining heavily. She found the pulse that was being cooked to be of very poor quality. She protested to the PDS shop owner and later locked the store with the help of CBO members. It remained locked for 21 days until the administration looked into the matter and supplied better quality rations thereafter.

In another incident, an influential upper caste person killed a young musahar boy. The police did not take up the matter under the influence of the offender's family. Munni Devi visited several villages and mobilised *musahar* leaders to protest the child's death. 'Treat the dead child as your own child' was her message. A large number of *dalit* men and women gathered in the village where the child had died. They stayed a couple of days under trying circumstances - mosquitos, inadequate food and unsafe water - to protest against police inaction. An FIR was finally registered and the culprit was sent to jail.

*Musahar* women mention her name with pride because of her courage and because she is an inspiration for the villagers. There are many Munni Devies emerging in different villages.

membership to include other women of vulnerable social groups. CBOs like the Viklang Manch and Hansdeo Arand Bachao Samite did not have to change their membership base/criteria.

The next process was to bring the CBOs in different villages together under a larger identity. Monthly cluster level meetings, block/district level protests and state-level conventions were the means to forge a common identity and network the individual CBOs in a federated structure from the cluster to the district/state level.

## Box-5 : Bal panchayat - building leadership at an early age

Ramauti Bai Netam is the *sarpanch* of Majoor Pahri village. Her husband was the *sarpanch* before her. She was associated with the SYM, CSO working in Bilaspur district of Chattisgarh, before she became *Sarpanch* and took a leading role in evolving a *Bal Panchayat* in the village. When we met her, she was busy supervising a road being constructed with panchayat resources.

Who can understand a child need better than a child? The SYM sought to create and support a child-based organization called the *'Bal Panchayat'* in selected schools of the villages in the blocks of its PACS intervention to encourage students to participate in the effort to ensure quality education in their schools. These *Bal Panchayats* are, in turn, organised into a block-level federation.

Student members of the *Bal Panchayat* look after the attendance and retention of enrolled children as well as sanitation and hygiene in their school. They collectively decide to resolve issues hampering or threatening to hamper their education. If they fail to resolve an issue, they bring it to the notice of headmaster, teachers and, sometimes, SMC members as well.

Bal panchayat members are collectively selected by the students and are generally from Class 6, 7 and 8, ranging in age from 12 to 20 years, depending upon the situation and need. It meets once a month or when a need arises. It has a designated president, vice president and secretary. Attendance at its meetings is registered and the minutes are recorded. New members are elected every year.

Some of the women groups promoted a support group of literate adolescents who help them record the proceedings of their meetings and fill out application forms for filing their cases (Gramya, UP). Similarly, the Shikhar Vikas Manch promoted *Bal Panchayats* to support the school management committees. Such support structures were developed as part of a process to nurture future CBO leaders who can take on a bigger role viz. training other groups, advocacy initiatives at the district level and joining national level campaigns.

CBOs set up by SPREAD and SSK are examples of collectives formalizing themselves by defining their bylaws and registering their federations, while CASA created systems to mobilise local resources. The process to influence basic services are mostly monitoring services like the ICDS, MDM, PDS etc.

by visiting the service center, organising *dharnas*, locking the center, etc. The process to secure livelihoods and resources includes filing applications under the FRA, demanding work under the MGNREGS, influencing *Gram Sabhas* to refuse permission for mining on village land, and protesting at the Collector's or block office for wage payments under the MGNREGS.

The collective strength of the CBO leadership is robust enough to confront the feudal forces, patriarchal social norms and other forms of discrimination. The CBO promoted by SSK in Varanasi is seen as the protector of the interests of vulnerable *Dalit* women. Santosh, a member of the *Garima Samooh* SHG in the Cholapur panchayat cites the example of her daughter who was stalked by a teenage boy. She informed Pavitri, the president and leader of her group, who took up

the matter with the teenager. Similarly, when the *anganwadi sahayak* brought irregularities in the *anganwadi* to Pavitri's notice, she took up the matter and ensured the system was improved. The president draws strength from the group, which backs and supports her, while the community draws from her strength. So the relationship between the leaders and the community is symbiotic.

## Significant Outcomes

The key outcomes of the processes the CBOs undertook are summarised in Table 4. It is evident the CBOs influenced access to basic services and livelihoods by bringing change at the local level as well as the institutional level. Efforts were made to include *Dalits* in the service providing agencies, like appointing *Musahar* women as cooks in schools or disabled persons and *Musahar* women as 'mates' in the MGNREGS. A large number of disadvantaged people could begin accessing services. Examples of outcomes include all disabled persons in a block in Muzaffarpur district obtaining disability certificates, many women getting 100 days employment under the MGNREGS, FRA permissions being granted and revenue land being allotted in many tribal areas in MP, CG, Jharkhand and Odisha.

There are also many examples of

*Efforts were made to include Dalits in the service providing agencies, like appointing Musahar women as cooks in schools or disabled persons and Musahar women as 'mates' in the MGNREGS.*

sensitizing service providers to improve the service delivery system. One extraordinary example is of a CBO promoted by Ekjut that arranged the first institutional delivery among the *Birhors*, a PVTG community or the case of *Maa Buru Beshauli Mahila Samiti* in Jharkhand where the economic success of CBO women members transformed their social relations in the society. Many cases of malnourished children of tribal families have been referred to the malnourishment treatment centers in Jharkhand, institutional deliveries and regular health check-up of pregnant women has become a practice. Many CBOs have also promoted RSBY health cards, helping the sick to access free treatment wherever the scheme is actively operational.

Most of the CBOs have sought to improve service delivery, especially the PDS shops. In one case, a shop was shifted in a Muslim minority area and kept open for more number of days in the month to improve access and quality and quantity of rationed foodgrain. CBOs like *Jan Adhikar Nagrik Sangh* and *Jamuna Swayam Sahayata Samuh* took up the management of Fair Price Shops to provide subsidized commodities in an inclusive manner. Similarly, the CBOs have looked into social security benefits such as widow pension, disability pension, and old age pension for the most vulnerable.

> **Box-6 : Shayada demonstrated organic farming in a flood-prone area**
>
> Shayada Khatoon's farm used to be inundated by flash floods. The land was also unproductive, its quality deteriorating from years of mono-cropping and heavy use of chemical inputs. Frustrated, her family stopped farming the one-acre plot because nothing would grow. It lay uncultivated for many years.
>
> Shayada is now an active women farmer. Building on her association with the CEAG, she learned mixed vegetable farming practices and how to prepare bio-manure and bi-pesticides, transforming her farm into a profitable enterprise.
>
> "The soil had deteriorated. We started applying organic manure to bring it back to life" says Shayada. Today, with the help of her father-in-law, she grows more than 30 varieties of vegetables, her persistence and hard work earning her a profit of Rs. 50,000 during 2012 - 2014.
>
> *Source: Inclusive Resilience; Stories of Small Marginal Women Farmers, published by GEAG, 2015*

There are examples where women became farmers to grow vegetables and vendors to sell vegetables. They run PDS and other kinds of shops. Single women engage in collective farming and operating a brick kiln. *Dalit* women have formed Reflect Circles, which empower them through a Paulo Freirean conscientization process[2] using animation techniques. Their new-found strength and awareness of the value of women stopped one of its members from aborting her third girl child, with the husband and in laws to change mind-set about girl children. The CBO also influenced the school to issue transfer certificates to *Dalit* children migrating temporarily with their parents. The women of *Balia Adibasi* SHG supported by SMOKUS in West Bengal fought against witch-hunting practices, protecting a victim and initiating legal action against the culprit.

A large number of poor tribal families got individual land *Pattas* under the FRA and Pattas were also given for community forest rights. Tribal women have taken the responsibility of protecting their forest by setting up a monitoring system and have promoted emotional bonding with forests by popularizing the practice of tying friendship bands (rakhies) around trees. The CBOs also protested against the forest mafia to the District Collector to prevent illegal felling of trees.

There are other outcomes related to larger institutional changes emanating out of CBO action. CBO leaders achieved an independent *Panchayat* for a Muslim-dominated village to facilitate the flow of basic services directly to the village. The case was pursued with the State Election Commission by sending fax messages, personal meetings and submitting the required documents. Similarly, in Chhattisgarh, the tribal assembly *(sabhas)* of several *Panchayats* united to prevent their *Gram Sabhas* from passing resolutions to grant mining leases to multinationals, which would have resulted in poor tribals losing

*CBO leaders achieved an independent Panchayat for a Muslim-dominated village to facilitate the flow of basic services directly to the village.*

[2] Paulo Freire's 'Pedagogy of the oppressed' has been the source for designing reflect circles.
http://www.pedagogyoftheoppressed.com/author/

their land or selling it at far below market rates.

Women of a CBO in Betul district in MP demonstrated their collective strength in the *gram sabha* by using the quorum requirement (of women) to conduct meetings. They also demonstrated ways to make the *gram sabha* meetings more effective by changing the seating arrangements, deciding the agenda and facilitating discussions in a participatory manner. Based on their experiences, they drew up a charter of demands, which they presented to the district collector. Many of the demands were accepted and a letter was issued to all the *Panchayats* of the district. In another case, after repeated ignorance by the elected representatives the CBO members moved a formal resolution in the *gram sabha* and got the non-performing ASHA worker removed (*Maa Buru Beshauli Mahila Samiti,* Jharkhand)



### Box-7: Collective leadership of landless families acquired land

The leadership of the Lok Sangharsh Samiti comes from within the community in several villages of West Champaran district of Bihar. Take the case of Sohan Ram. He is today the assistant coordinator of West Champaran district and was earlier the coordinator of Bagaha block in CSO-Lok Sangharsh Samiti. Ram is a fourth generation resident of Salaha village. "I was born here and now I work with my people for our land entitlements," he says. Ram's family has been residing in the dalit quarter for almost a hundred years, his forefathers tilling the land of Amriteshwar Singh, the local landlord *(zamindar)* but getting very little in return all these years. They don't even have the title deeds to their homestead in their hamlet.

Ram leads the villagers in their struggle, organising sit-in demonstrations at the district magistrate's office, appearing in court in numerous legal cases for land rights and fronting the non-violent struggle against the *zamindar*.

The CBO's multi-pronged struggle has so far managed to get land *Pattas* for 25 of the 72 applications filed by the residents of Salaha Bariarwa gram panchayat. The big fight is against the powerful *zamindar* who exercises his right over 300 acres of land, although 167 landless families have already been granted one-acre plots out of this holding. But not one of these families has been able to lay foot on their land despite having the legal title deeds.

The samiti organised a *bhoomi satyagraha* on June 25, 2015 in the Gandhian tradition, with the land allottees and their leaders sowing paddy on 30 acres of the disputed land. On November 3, 2015, they came with sickles to harvest the paddy. They had harvested about 100 quintals when policemen reached the spot and forcibly removed them from the field. The charge was stealing the crop belonging to the *zamindar*. The court ordered a halt to harvesting in the entire 167-acre land parcel till the case was resolved. About 200 quintals of paddy remain unharvest.

While the community had sown 30 acres of paddy, the *zamindar* had sugarcane planted in the remaining acreage. The only satisfaction the community draws from all this is that the *zamindar*, too, cannot harvest the sugarcane crop following the court order. The money earned from selling the 100 quintals of paddy is being channelled into the legal battle, with 12 cases levelled against the farmers, including attempted murder. They are fighting the cases under the samiti banner, strictly abiding by court orders.

The CBOs also influenced schools, PHCs and *Anganwadis* to create a discrimination-free environment for *Dalit* and ST children. It required meetings with district-level officials to get the required letters issued. CBO members also made the effort to join the different programme committees viz School Management Committee, Health Committee, Village Forest Committee Mother's Committee under ICDS, MDM Quality Monitoring Committees, etc. The objective is to influence resource allocation in the programmes by becoming part of the service delivery mechanism either in a monitoring or implementation role. Many CBO leaders have become *Panchayat mukhiya/sarpanch* or members.

The collectives of disabled persons managed to get the medical board for disability certification to meet at the panchayat level. Medical board meetings were also shifted from the first floor for the convenience of the disabled. In Chhattisgarh, the pressure of the CBO federation led to the cancellation of an advertisement that failed to mention clearly the 3% reservation for disabled people. Many disabled persons got government jobs as a result. In UP, around 1,900 PWDs were linked to the government's skill development programme for promoting livelihoods.

The MGNREGS implementation was influenced in different states by engaging with the block-level staff and protesting at the district level to improve the efficiency of implementation. The state level federations also put up implementation issues with the policy makers. In addition, the CBOs were involved in collaborative IPP and social audit efforts.

*The collectives of disabled persons managed to get the medical board for disability certification to meet at the panchayat level.*

| Box-8: Milestones in the Rampur ka Saharana incident |
|---|
| • Violence erupted in Rampur ka Saharana on February 20, 2011 when the Sahariyas living in the hamlet struggled to save their land from being illegally occupied by the local land mafia. |
| • The violent attack led to the death of Ram Singh, with two being seriously injured and many other suffering minor injuries. |
| • The Ekta Parishad joined hands with the Sahariyas as soon as it received information about the violent attack to demand human rights and justice. |
| • The government gave Rs1.5 lakh as compensation to Ram Singh's family and Rs50,000 to each of the seriously injured. |
| • The community collected donations and built a memorial platform to Ram Singh on his farm as a symbol of their struggle. |
| • The parishad strengthened the village samiti, leading to the emergence of an organized struggle to secure physical possession of land. |
| • A case under clause 304/305/307 was filed against the miscreants and some of the culprits were arrested and sent to jail. |
| • The community got physical possession of 85 bighas of land for 33 tribal families for which cases had been pending for the last 10 years. |
| • The administration sanctioned licensees for six fire-arms to safeguard Sahariya families. |
| • The parishad mobilized free fertilizers and seed from the government scheme targeting the Sahariyas. |

## Opportunities and challenges

The CBOs are capitalizing on the opportunities provided by the provisions of various Government acts. The affirmative actions they propose target services that seek to lift the marginalized communities out of poverty and include them in the national development story. One of the key acts in the area of education is the Right to Education (RTE). The CBO members use the opportunity of being part of the school management committees to monitor and ensure regular attendance of teachers and students, discrimination free school environment, access of eligible students to entitlements like scholarships, uniforms and textbooks, regular provisioning of mid-day meal in schools. The Disability Act, National Food Security Act and Right to Information Act and other grievance redress mechanisms of the state also provided opportunities for CBOs to demand better implementation of their provisions.

The skills they have acquired during the PACS period have equipped many CBOs with the ability to influence the service delivery systems. CBO networks now pursue issues at the policy level, an example being the campaign of Dalits in Bihar for homestead land. Used as a bargaining tool during the state elections, the *Dalit Adhikar Manch* got all political parties to accept, in principle, the D. Bandopadhaya Committee recommendations to provide 1 acre of farm land and 60 decimals of homestead land to all *Dalit* families in Bihar.

The CBO members also have the opportunity to become field functionaries of various development programmes - anganwadi workers, ASHA workers - or get elected as *sarpanch* or *panch* of the village *Panchayats,* which is a position to influence the implementation of these programmes. Given the current CBO strength, there is a strong possibility of many members availing of these opportunities.

The Right to Employment Act, with the MGNREGS as its support programme, is a great opportunity for SCs, STs, women, the disabled and women from the minority community to secure their livelihoods. The MGNREGS enables them to work with dignity in the village itself. There are examples in Bihar where persons with disability got 100 days of employment in less strenuous MGNREGS work.

Many state governments proclaim their socialist leanings with a special focus on SCs and minorities viz. Bihar and UP. Similarly, the governments of states like Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand are focusing on their ST population in the socio-economic and political arena. Odisha and Madhya Pradesh are also striving to be transparent and well-governed states. The current political environment thus favours efficient delivery of services under development programmes. These states present good opportunities to promote strong federations of the CBOs that seek the rights of SCs, STs, women, the disabled and minorities.

The key constraints the CBOs face spring from the chronic poverty, low awareness and illiteracy of the marginalised groups. Their illiteracy limits their access to information and understanding of the procedural requirements for accessing schemes / entitlement and claiming rights. Some CBOs have built support groups of educated

*The skills they have acquired during the PACS period have equipped many CBOs with the ability to influence the service delivery systems.*

adolescent boys and girls. However, many depend on the CSO field staff to support them in accessing and using information about their rights and entitlements. If these CSOs continue to be present in their field areas, this support is likely to be forthcoming in an informal manner in future as well, given that many of the CSO field facilitators are drawn from the same social groups. Also, wherever the CBO federations have taken root and become strong, the local CBOs will continue to have strong back-up support.

Moreover, many CSOs that depended solely on the PACS funding may find it difficult to sustain themselves in their field areas in the post-PACS period. So there could be some fallout on the CBO journey to maturity and self-reliance. It is fortunate that the number of such CSOs is not very large.

There are other structural challenges that will affect the performance of the CBOs. The feudal nature of society and the control of resources by the rich, upper castes will continue to leave poor SCs and STs vulnerable to exploitation. Poverty compounds their vulnerability. Drought, a poor harvest, health emergencies and diminished employment opportunities could easily see them slide into indebtedness and bondage.

In a policy environment of growing privatization, the cost of basic services like education, water and health is rising. The poor and SEG will then depend even more on the government for their health, education and well-being. The possibility of public health and education systems deteriorating or even withering away in the face of privatization is very real.

Many of the PACS areas are remote

and highly underdeveloped. So economic opportunities for the empowered CBOs are limited. The administration also finds it difficult to work in these areas, which are exposed to left wing extremism. This weakens the reach and quality of government programmes, making them ineffective in many areas. ( Table 5 provides summary of opportunities and challenges)

## Sustainability and future plans

The sustainability of many CBOs is evident from the fact that their leaders have become confident, knowledgeable and familiar with the government's programme delivery system. Women leaders can now visit the block and meet officials to address programme implementation issues.. Some have become *Panchayat* representatives and can legitimately influence the design and implementation of these programmes. But many are candid in accepting they may still not be able to take their fight to the district level and some confess their inability even at the block level, mainly because of their limited mobility and high dependence on CSO field workers. Those who don't occupy any influential position have now developed the confidence to ask questions, inquire and demand accountability. This is a significant transformation from the pre-intervention situation where communities were either accessing sub-optimal services without questioning the quality, not accessing (or not being able to access) the legitimate rights due to discrimination.

The CSO approach has been to select their local field level workers from the same constituency as the CBOs,

*Drought, a poor harvest, health emergencies and diminished employment opportunities could easily see them slide into indebtedness and bondage.*

wherever possible. The staff have been strongly oriented into the PACS inclusion philosophy and their rapport with the CBO leaders ensures they have a deep understanding of the struggle for rights and entitlements. Since many of these workers will continue with their CSOs, they will remain available to offer post-project support. The CBO leaders keep seeking their advice as and when required, staying constantly in touch with them over the phone.

Many CBOs are now part of the larger networks promoted by the CSOs even before the PACS intervention viz *Laghu and Seemant Krishak Morcha* (GEAG), *Swadikar Manch* (NCDHR), *Ekta Parishad* (MGSA and NSVK) and National Right to Education Campaign (Shikar Yuva Manch). Many have formed unions and networks during the PACS period viz MGNREGS workers labour union (CASA and THREAD). Such networks, especially the formally structured ones, will continue to support the village or *Panchayat* level CBOs. The local CBOs, in turn, mobilise at the grassroots to support block and district level campaigns for policy changes in the rights regime. This mutually reinforcing strength is a visible force in the eyes of the administration and the upper class elites of the local power structure.

The CBOs mostly plan to continue their struggle, begun in their villages, in future. For example, the CBOs that work on MGNREGS issues showed commitment to deepen their engagement with *Panchayats* to increase the quantum of available work and to access resources to improve their land and strengthen their livelihoods. The CBOs promoted by BVKP realize that the disabled cannot depend on the MGNEGS as work under the scheme is likely to diminish after a point. So they are exploring other skill development and livelihood options. The collectives promoted by SPREAD feel their struggle against displacement should become more broad-based by addressing other issues like education and health. Similarly, the CBOs of the Ekta Parishad are exploring opportunities for promoting livelihoods for tribals viz. processing millets, honey, etc. Since a large number of CBOs have taken up collective economic activities while working on the agenda of social change, almost all successful CBOs shared their desire to continue using the income generation activity as the basis for sustaining the group in the long run.

*The staff have been strongly oriented into the PACS inclusion philosophy and their rapport with the CBO leaders ensures they have a deep understanding of the struggle for rights and entitlements.*

**Box-9: Systematic plan of CASA for sustainability of network of CBOs**

The CBO network promoted by CASA has a clear plan to become sustainable. Each member saves a handful of grain from what they consume every day. This grain is deposited with the network office bearers at the time of the six-monthly general body meeting. The collected grain is then sold to the members or in the open, the sales proceeds being deposited into the account of the district level network. This fund will be used, post-PACS, to meet the travel and other expenses of the CBOs for their meetings, campaigns and other activities.

The executive committee meets once every quarter, the office bearers - president, secretary and treasurer – working independently to build the membership base and perform their CBO functions. CASA currently makes its training centre available for CBO meetings. The members know they will face resource constraints in future and feel it will take some time for their CBO to become fully autonomous and functional. But their vision is clear.

However, there are very few examples of such strategic planning to continue the CBO journey.

# Emerging Findings and Lessons Learnt



There are several lessons emerging from the journey of the CBOs that was started with PACS support in different settings. Each experience is unique. However, some common patterns have emerged that are valuable, insightful and replicable for other CSOs looking to promote CBOs and their networks. The intervention strategies adopted by the CBOs are strongly congruent and are articulated in the PACS theory of change.

---

### Box-10: Perfect coordination and joint leadership of Radha and Gauri

Hailing from a background where women are restricted to the four walls of their home, the CBO president Radha and vice president Gauri come across as two dynamic, confident and articulate women who are the 'wheels' driving the *Dalit* Sewa Sangathan. Their fearless attitude has helped lead the movement to another level, inspiring others to join in. Their goal is to bring about a change for the better in their village.

Radha could not study beyond the 10th standard because she was married at an early age. Fortunately, her husband supports her, enabling her to devote time to the CBO and its work. Well educated with a Masters in two subjects, he decided to return to the village to farm his land instead of working in a city. The favourable domestic situation has seen Radha going out of her home and village to strengthen the CBO and the interests of its women members. Her children go to school irrespective of gender.

Gauri is the second wife of her husband. She has four children, two of whom are from her husband's previous marriage. Her elder step-son works in the coalfields and often sends money and gifts home for her and other family members. Everyone at home is proud of her as she has successfully built a position for herself in the community as a leader of the CBO.

The support of the men in the household is a prime reason why both Radha and Gauri are able to devote time for the SEG's activities. Both are financially well off compared to other women so they can also contribute money for the sangathan's work. Both stood for the village panch elections and won. Radha is also the only female mate of the MNREGS from the block. The two have fought to ensure there

is enough work for people under the scheme. They are confident women who do not fear interacting with anyone.

They are fast learners who are quick to act. When they learnt that the sarpanch handles the expenditure account and is legally bound to share the details with the villagers, they asked him for an account at the very next gram sabha meeting, their courage taking him by surprise.

The learnings are the following:

i.    The marginalised need a supportive hand

The cases documented in the study reveal that the disadvantaged communities of tribals and *Dalits* had developed a psyche of mistrust and pessimism in the service delivery system and its promise of equity and justice. They were inured to feudal exploitation and discrimination. They had to be awakened so they could realise they had the power to change their chronic condition. The CSOs and their field level workers have demonstrated their skills in building trust, communicating with respect and dignity, and believing in the capacity of CBO leaders to change their current social, economic and political situation. Thus to a large extent the CSO representatives were able to tap the latent energy of these communities to organize them and channelize their energies in a positive direction- to seek their rights and demand services.

The group formation process begins with identifying the natural leaders who are more resourceful, educated, and socially acceptable and economically better off. These local leaders mobilise their community for a larger cause. Given the social inequalities and the apathy of service providers, it doesn't take long for the CBO to emerge.

The CBOs learn the provisions of the various Government Acts and how to organize peaceful protests and write applications to demand their rights and entitlements. They learn how to use such as campaigning at the block and district level and monitoring delivery systems to press their demands.

ii.    Organizing the SEG to empower

The process of organising the SEG people in a village begins with regular meetings, initially weekly or fortnightly and later monthly. These are opportunities for them to discuss their concerns and build solidarity and fellowship, a group identity. Their growing knowledge and skills, facilitated by the mentoring CSO workers, empowers them to explore options to exercise their rights and entitlements. A combination of capacity building strategies were used by these CSOs which included formal and informal trainings, exposure visits to other CBOs/ SHGs/ villages and government offices, organisation of public forums and hearings for giving the CBO members an opportunity to share their opinions and experiences, raise their demands and protest discrimination. These also included filing applications to demand employment under the right to employment, monitoring the quality of the services like the MDM and the treatment of their children in schools, and using the gram sabha to hold the elected representatives and service providers accountable.

*The process of organising the SEG people in a village begins with regular meetings, initially weekly or fortnightly and later monthly.*

The democratic processes the group adopts and consolidates their collective strength. They include information sharing, discussing issues, collective decision-making, and supporting members in their protests for their rights. They become confident, optimistic and articulate. They learn to deal with programme officials, monitor the field functionaries, and confront the local power structure, in particular the village *Panchayats* and their office bearers.

iii. Organised voice to counter discrimination

The current societal environment is not overtly hostile to Dalits and tribals, barring the *Rampur ka sehrana* case in Sheopur (MP) where a tribal was killed in a land right dispute. The upper castes and feudal forces are aware of the SC/ST Atrocity Act so they are more covert in practicing discrimination. But the marginalized are still denied their rights to employment, education, social security pensions, PDS and land. Economic exploitation takes the form of paying low wages or getting unpaid labour. Discrimination is seen in separate seating and eating arrangements in community functions. Their growing knowledge and confidence has led the CBOs to question, boycott and change these feudal and caste practices, at least in the government-run programmes and village *Panchayats*.

---

**Box-11: Assessment of the Reflect Circle objectives and their attainment**

The objective of the Reflect Circle is to improve the quality of life of women so they can live with respect and dignity. The process to achieve this objective include the following:

1. To promote the unity, participation and dignity of *Dalits*.
2. To understand gender-based discrimination and take action for equality.
3. To empower women to fight gender and caste-based discrimination and violence.
4. To initiate positive actions for self and community development.

The RC women were asked to rate their performance against each objective. The self-ratings on a scale of 10, arrived at after considerable discussion, were as follows: Objectives 1, 2 and 3 – 10 (though there was some hesitation in grading objective 3 because many discriminatory practices have still to be addressed, though they demonstrate their understanding and concrete actions); objective 4 - 7 to 8 (but a lot still needs to be done to access entitlements and rights under various schemes);

Of the eight topics, the women said no action had been taken only on the issue of prevention of dowry. There was significant progress on all other issues. One women narrated one initiative: "We run a small savings and credit group. One member asked for a loan of Rs700 for a family function. She told the group her daughter's marriage had been fixed and the groom's family was coming to finalise the date. The group objected to the marriage since the girl was only 15 years old. It advised the family that the legal age of marriage was 18 years and early marriage could affect the girl's health. The group pressure was strong. As a result, the marriage proposal was respectfully refused. The girl is studying in class 10 now and plans to continue her studies. The mother is also happy and aspires for an educated groom for her daughter when she completes her education and is of a marriageable age.

The CBOs' collective strength lies in occupying positions in the power structure as representatives of village *Panchayats,* members of school management committees or forest protection committees etc. Such positions give them legitimate clout to influence planning, decision-making and implementation of rights-based programmes at the local level.

iv.  Success leads to a different set of challenges

The CBOs face new sets of challenges as they move forward in their journey to empowerment. As we saw earlier, the KALP-supported CBO initially included all SC and OBC women who got together to ban liquor in their village. They decided to work on other issues after their successful campaign. However, since the leadership was in the hands of *Dalit* women, the PACS focus on inclusion prompted them to establish a CBO with a *Dalit* identity rather than name it after the village. The Dalit women were also not happy with the discriminatory practices of the OBC community. The OBC women were also poor and oppressed but the group failed to inculcate a broader definition of *Dalit* to include all the SEG, causing the OBC women to drift away from the CBO. This effectively reduced its collective strength to address larger village and women's issues.

Similarly, Musahar (Maha *Dalit*) women were not willing to admit Paswans (Dalit) into their group and dilute the Musahar identity of the CBO formed by the MVM in Bihar, even though the MVM had a clear vision of integrating all *Dalits* into a collective force.

Again in Odisha, the CBO promoted by SPREAD faced disintegration when

OBC women could not get land rights under the FRA due to the clause demanding proof of land possession for three generations. Though the tribal women felt the OBC women were equally poor and deserving, the FRA restrictions on allotting land to OBCs left the OBC women disappointed about being part of the CBO.

A key lesson emerging from the CBO experiences is that the journey to empowerment sees moments when redefining membership norms could impact the CBO in many ways. Their intensity, drive and strength depend on how 'deprivation' is defined. A broader definition would include more social constituencies to strengthen their hand, but the downside is that it can also dilute a specific constituency focus. But the broad trend that emerges from these case studies is that a singular (homogeneous) identity, a shared past and a common journey of denial and discrimination bonds the members together and helps them develop a strong sense of purpose and motivation to steer the group ahead.

v.  Association with the larger network reinforces power

CBOs that have the support of their larger networks get more strength to address local issues. Their block and district level network identity gives strength to their village level actions. The tribals of the Ekta Parishad network point out that the district and block level officials listen because they are part of the parishad. The district and state level parishad leaders engage with officials at higher levels in cases of neglect. The Musahar Vikas Manch, Bihar, Viklang Manch, CG, Ekal Nari Sanghathan, JH and many others are examples of multi-district

*Their block and district level network identity gives strength to their village level actions.*

CBO network that draw strength from their wide membership base to organise macro level campaigns and negotiate effectively with the administration.

vi.  Struggle on single issue leads to work on multiple themes

The issue the CBOs take up for their initial community mobilization is usually the issue of focal concern of the mentoring CSO. The relationship is synergistic, based on common values, vision and mission that reinforces the agenda of action and intensifies the impacts. The issues diversify as the CBOs mature and gain a deeper understanding of poverty, deprivation and exclusion as well as the power of their collective strength. A large number of CBOs initiated their struggle with a focus on the implementation of the MGNREGS and later got involved in improving the quality of education, MDM and PDS. CBOs of the disabled (BVKP) focused on the right to employment began to explore other work options for the disabled within MGNREGS projects. The initial success of the CBOs also gave them the confidence to work on improving the governance and accountability in other areas as well.

vii.  CSOs committed to 'rights' promoted CBOs effectively

The CSOs saw PACS as a window of opportunity to expand and intensify their work. Campaign-mode organisations like the Ekta Parishad (MP and JH), MVM (Bihar), SPREAD (Odisha), and GEAG (UP) used the PACS resources to expand their CBO base into new geographical areas. Others like Reflect Circle (Bihar) and SSK (UP) intensified their rights-based work by promoting new CBOs in their opera-

*The initial success of the CBOs also gave them the confidence to work on improving the governance and accountability in other areas as well.*

tional areas. The CSOs experimented with new approaches to reach out to disadvantaged groups and developed their networks.

However, there were also CSOs that had a strong presence in some districts who chose PACS priority areas to access funding resources. SYM (CG) and Pradeepan (MP) are examples of CSOs that could not harness the full potential of the programme because their ability to expand the CBO base was compromised, as it would have meant entering a new geographical area. Maintaining their links with the new CBOs will not be easy in the post-PACS scenario, nor is the federating structure sufficiently developed to sustain the networks in future.

The lesson here is that the choice of CSOs and their core focus is critical for the larger success and sustenance of the programme in the long run.

viii.  Hands-on support builds sustainable capacities

The CBOs clearly saw the hands-on support and mentoring of the CSO facilitators as critical in building individual and institutional capacity. The support, whether informal or formal, was empowering since it provided a learning curve for the CBOs in mobilizing and organizing, petitioning for work or FRA *Pattas,* writing and preparing the documentation for these petitions, interacting with programme officials at all levels, monitoring the functioning of *Panchayats,* planning for village development and strategizing campaigns at the block and district level.

## Box-12 :Jagannathi: The rise of a woman leader

Jagannathi is an illiterate SC woman. Her family is landless and works on farms for its daily subsistence. Her husband drinks regularly. She didn't have money to pay for her children's education. She requested the sarpanch to give her work under the MGNREGS but she was never taken seriously. It was at this time that she got associated with the Vijay Nari Sangh, Pratapgarh, UP. She participated in the group's activities and was elected as its president. She learnt to write her name so she could sign documents. She took the help of Tarun Chetna volunteers to understand the MGNREGS and its rules and norms. She also understood the importance of the muster role and social audits.

Jagannathi consulted with other group members who were facing problems in getting work under the MGNREGS. She got the women together to demand work. The sarpanch couldn't deny her this time, seeing the collective approach. But he intentionally gave the women a huge work load. Undeterred, the women took up the challenge and completed the work. However, the sarpanch did not maintain a record of their work and did not acknowledge it. The women pressurised him to record their work in the muster role. He refused. They then approached the block development officer (BDO) under Jagannathi's leadership to register a formal complaint. The BDO ordered the sarpanch to provide receipt of the work done by the women. The husband of the sarpanch threatened the women and Jagannathi was told not to engage in such activism. She stood her ground, not being cowered by the threats and refusing to curb the women's struggle.

At the time of payment, many women didn't get their due wages because the muster roll had not been maintained. Jagannathi again went with the women to register a complaint in the block office. On this occasion, the sarpanch tried to manipulate Jagannnathi. She deposited money into her account for fake work done, asking her to keep half the money and give her half as a bribe. Jagannathi refused and continued fighting against the irregularities in the MGNREGS. The CBO members now keep their eyes on the implementation of the MGNREGS in their village to ensure no one is denied work and no fraudulent transactions are done by the sarpanch and other officials.

The support was also critical in facing the threats of the local power structures and in countering the pressure from the service providers.

The learning included skill development in different areas. The CBOs learned how to measure revenue land, read and interpret MGNREGS muster rolls, demand information under the RTI, and interpret the FRA and other Acts and their provisions. Exposure visits helped them learn from the experiences of successful CBOs. Participation in block/district level network meetings and state level PACS conclaves were also unique capacity building opportunities. Sharing experiences, fears, hopes and aspirations with their peers and leaders was both motiving and inspiring.

# The Way Forward



**T**his section looks at how the current investment of PACS in CBOs can be taken to the next level. The rich social capital generated by the project has paid high dividends in attaining the PACS goals. The way forward will emerge out of an analysis of the lessons learnt. Christian Aid, the management consultant of the PACS programme or any other donor would like to selectively sustain the CBO energy in block, district and state-level networks that can continue the struggle for inclusion and access to rights and entitlements. The well-established networks of CBOs nurtured by the CSOs over the past several years, some of which have also formalized their structure, will be the vehicle to take the CBO journey forward with revised support and resource strategies.

There are also many agencies, including the government's service delivery system, that can fruitfully use the strength and networking of the CBOs to attain programme objectives of reaching out to the most SEG sections of the society.

The components of a strategy for going forward are summarized below:

i. Invest in networks of CBOs with formalized structure

The resources of the PACS programme have helped strengthen the CBOs and their networks in 90 districts across seven states. It is quite unlikely that this level of funding can again be raised from international funding sources. Therefore, there is need to explore strategic ways of strengthening these CBOs.

Given the large number of CBOs that came into existence under the PACS thrust, extending further support would require a selection of CBOs that show the greatest potential for long-term growth and activism. These would include some of the strong, federated networks that have formalized their structure and have the ingredients to grow bigger in both membership and maturity. These networks have already gained momentum and established their leadership and systems, even generating part of their own resources to sustain themselves. Supporting them would get more mileage from

fewer resources. So it makes sense to put in more financial outlays, accompanied by strong technical support for the following actions:

- Expanding the membership base of socially excluded groups in the current districts/states or in new states

- Extending hand-holding support to select emerging village/block level CBOs that have the potential to mature and demonstrate greater impacts. The peer support approach needs to be promoted in these cases. The matured CBO leaders should support the less matured CBOs to grow.

- CBO have been organising campaigns around issues. The CBO networks would like to promote issue based campaigns. Ekta Parishad would like to take up issues of land, water and forest while BVKP of Bihar and Viklang Manch of CG would like to organise campaigns on disability issues. There is need to promote such district or state level campaigns depending on the strength of the CBO network. The operational planning and decision of most social sector programmes happens at the district level so any intervention will have the largest traction at this level.

Such campaigns are energisers and integrators that strengthen visibility of the CBO network as well as provide strength to the village level CBOs to exercise their rights and entitlements.

ii.   Evolve support mechanisms to sustain enthusiasm of CBO leaders

The CBO leaders struggling with feudal forces in their local environments or with the service delivery system need continuous support to feel part of a larger fraternity. State level conclaves every six months or annually will help them network, build their capacity, and strategise to lead their local actions with more impact, especially those who do not have the backing of a CBO network. A national or state level CSO with a mandate to strengthen CBOs can also be identified to play a meaningful role. It could organize 1-2 day regional/district level workshops on different themes to give the CBO leaders the opportunity to connect and learn from each other, gain programme updates and information useful for their local efforts and learn new skills.

iii.  Establish the primacy of CBOs in social sector programmes

The CBOs have built a strong network of village level resource persons in different blocks in the PACS states. Some CSOs have a district wide presence with a large number of resource persons from these CBOs. These resource persons from the excluded communities have sound knowledge of rights-based programmes. Many of them have high quality skills in social mobilisation, participatory planning and monitoring. They could become useful resource persons for programmes like the NRLM, MGNREGS, MDM, Indira Awas Yojana, ICDS etc. Mission-mode programmes like Swachh Bharat Mission can make the best use of the CBOs and their leaders to promote their mission goals in the left out segments of society. Mission directors can enter into a formal agreement with the CBO networks on specific deliverables under the programme. A large number

of these CBOs have also been closely monitoring the implementation of schemes/ programmes and could play a vital role in facilitating social audit and community monitoring of various government flagship programmes.

iii. Build strategic linkages of the CBO networks with existing campaigns

Most CBO networks promoted with PACS support are constituency or issue focused. They need to be linked to larger networks like the Ekta Parishad and NCDHR, which have a national presence with state and grassroots connections. There are also networks like the Musahar Vikas Manch, Ekal Mahila Sangh etc. that have a state level presence, which also need to be linked to larger existing networks like Wada Na Todo (WNT) that are active on MDG and now SDGs. WNT can accommodate many PACS-supported networks to reinforce its agenda to engage with the government on development goals. Similarly, many CBO networks can join and facilitate campaigns like the Pension Parishad, a national level campaign of the widowed women and pensioners to influence the programme design of social security schemes.

iv. Promote models of horizontal learning and support

Many experiments have successfully promoted horizontal learning among grassroots leaders. They include experiments with elected representatives of village *Panchayats* in India and Bangladesh's Union Parishad. Some blocks have a wide and intense coverage by CBOs and their leaders. Some experiments on this were done through PACS support in the form of State-level PACS Conclaves. CSO convened public dialogues at district and block level, inviting all the CBOs, for experience sharing and learning. Formal horizontal learning programmes can also be supported in these blocks. They can be designed in a manner that CBO leaders meet once in a quarter to share their innovations and concerns and evolve new strategies to influence the rights and entitlement regime. More articulate and better equipped leaders can visit and support relatively weaker CBO leaders as and when required. The innovative practices can be documented by any professional agency for larger sharing of learnings for other CBOs in different settings.

# Conclusion



**T**he journey of CBOs as collectives of the SEGs in different socio-economic and cultural context in PACS states has been rich with demonstrated success. There are high dividends in form of improving the access and quality of basic services for those who were deprived chronically due to feudal, class and systemic discrimination. The support of the CSO was critical in building and nurturing transformative leadership among the SC, ST, SEG women and disabled. The local level struggles are fought locally and success prepares CBOs to aim at greater successes by forming block and district level federations. Collective force of the SEGs as CBOs undoubtedly provides clue that mere positive policies and programs are necessary but not sufficient to attain the desired results. There is a need for a community action to influence the public services system.

Nurturing of CBOs demand skilled facilitation of the CSOs having strong understanding of social exclusion and commitment to transform power relationship of the SEGs with the feudal forces and caste and class biased service delivery system. It is also evident that the process of nurturing CBOs can never be short- cut because the decades long lost faith of the SEGs from the caste and class society and the State- in form of service delivery mechanism- can not be gained unless genuine and sincere efforts are put up by the CSOs, Government and the donors. The journey of CBOs is full of excitement, compassion, struggle and achievements- it is never complete as destination is far and few are running with them.

| Table 1: The CBO constituency and challenges faced | | |
|---|---|---|
| Constituency focus /CSO | Societal | Institutional |
| Tribal membership oriented CBOs: MGSS/ SPREAD/<br><br>YSM/EHA/NSVK/Ekjut / THREAD/Jan Abhivyakti/ Jan Sahajya/ CASA/ SMOKUS | • Upper caste possesses land either allotted to tribals or government land in collusion with officials (THREAD/ MGSS).<br><br>• Upper caste do not allow tribals to become cultivators - they won't lose cheap labour. Upper caste discrimination against PVTGs (Ekjut).<br><br>• Certain tribal groups are identified as thugs, and most are perceived as drunks and lazy (CASA/ THREAD).<br><br>• Violent attacks and killing by upper cases to grab land (MGSS).<br><br>• Lack of support from the panchayat leadership (EHA).<br><br>• Tribals with diminishing sources of livelihood demand access to jobs and wages in the MGNREGS where other resources are not available (CASA). | • Denial of access to government land records by the patwari and tehsildar to hide illegal transfer of their land to rich and upper caste (MGSS).<br><br>• Service providers, particularly teachers, discriminate against tribal children due to their eating habits or language (YSM).<br><br>• Anganwadi and ANM do not provide adequate attention and service to tribal women and children due to their ignorance and illiteracy (MGSS/YSM).<br><br>• Multiple displacement due to occupying forest land or for dam construction or mining (SPREAD).<br><br>• Sub-standard services/ discrimination in services to PVTG/tribal community in AWC/ school (Ekjut/ EHA)<br><br>• Tribals fighting against the might of the state which is corporate sector biased to protect their land or at least get suitable compensation (Jan Abhiyakti).<br><br>• Difficult to access FRA pattas and access land development through MGNREGS (Jan Sahajya).<br><br>• Insecure access to forest resources and harassment/ exploitation by the local bureaucracy (NSVK). Falsely implicated adivasis sent to jail (THREAD). |

| *Dalit*/other marginalised groups<br><br>M V M / P r a d e e p a n / Reflect Circle/Aina/ SSK/NSKK | • Landless *Dalits* are asked to work on low wages on farms and take care of cattle, clean dung w i t h o u t p a y m e n t (GEAG).<br><br>• *Dalits* are not allowed in p u b l i c r e l i g i o u s functions and marriages. They are asked to pick up their own used plates when others do not (Gramya).<br><br>• Violent attacks and killing by upper caste in minor conflicts (MVM).<br><br>• Feudal society has control over resources/ government schemes, leaving *Dalits* and minorities at the mercy of feudal landlords (SSK). | • PHC and other health providers treat them d i s r e s p e c t f u l l y a n d demand extra money for services (SSK).<br><br>• *Dalit* children are given MDM meal after the upper caste children finish eating (Prayas/MVM).<br><br>• Discrimination against *Dalit* children in school. All service delivery institutions and programmes primarily meant for the marginal- ised remain unaccountable and function poorly (SSK/ Gramya). |
|---|---|---|
| Women-<br><br>SMS/SHARE/Gramya/ Tarun Chetna | • Men beat and misbehave under the influence of a l c o h o l ( K A L P / Gramya). Women are deserted if they become disabled post marriage (BKLP).<br><br>• H a r a s s m e n t a n d discrimination of single women at all levels of society – relatives, family members, neighbours. (SMS/Tarun Chetna).<br><br>• Single women/widows ostracized as witches to grab property or shirk r e s p o n s i b i l i t y o f supporting them (SMS).<br><br>• Poorer status of women d u e t o e c o n o m i c dependence (SHARE).<br><br>• Dalit women work on the farms of feudal landlords at very low wages while the men migrate to bigger cities for their livelihood (Gramya). | • Disrespectful behaviour of panchayat officials when demanding work under the MGNREGS (KALP/MVM).<br><br>• Distant work sites to discourage women from working under the MGNREGS (Gramya).<br><br>• Discrimination in the provisioning of services to poor, single women and o t h e r w o m e n (SHARE/SMS). |

| Disabled – BVKP, Chaupal | • Disability is treated as God's curse, therefore indifferent attitude to the sufferings of disabled persons (BKLP).<br><br>• Insensitive social values and norms to give priority and support to the disabled in public places (BKLP, Choupal). | • Banks do not have disabled-friendly counters and government offices lack proper access (BKLP).<br><br>• PDS shops do not provide ration to the disabled on priority as disabled come with an assistant who volunteers to support (BKLP).<br><br>• Challenges in accessing benefits of government programmes by PWDs. |
|---|---|---|
| Muslims - NSKK/SSK | • Women are not allowed to work under the MGNREGS.<br><br>• Early marriage denies girls of their education and reproductive health rights. | • Service delivery institutions like Panchayats, hospitals and schools do not treat them equally with other groups. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Table 2: Organizational mission and values of the CBOs** | | |
| | **Constituency of the CBO** | **Key values articulated/promoted** |
| 1 | Tribals | • Ownership of land is imperative for sustainable livelihoods due to depleting forests and restricted access.<br><br>• Living with dignity and getting equal benefits from government schemes.<br><br>• Legally recognized rights over resources - forest and land – need to be claimed even if it involves a period of struggle.<br><br>• Association/affinity of the tribal community to their land and land rights needs to be brought back for a sustainable and dignified life.<br><br>• Service providers/frontline workers need to be sensitised to the principles of equity and inclusion and made accountable for it. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 2 | *Dalit* | • Right to employment is a means of demanding work with dignity.<br><br>• The service delivery institutions should behave with clients without being conditioned by the caste and class of the client.<br><br>• Demand fair access to programmes and control over the resources of the state. |
| 3 | Women | • Women should get equal opportunity in education and health and other services to improve their capacities and attain equality.<br><br>• Women should be treated respectfully in the family and also in society as equal humans contributing significantly to the family and society.<br><br>• Efforts for recognizing women as equal partners need to begin with their economic empowerment.<br><br>• Right to property and resources is as much for women as for other socially excluded categories.<br><br>• Since women from disadvantaged communities face double exclusion/discrimination, they need to be organised/targeted before other stakeholders.<br><br>• Creation of a separate identity for women and their issues important for their own empowerment and social transformation. |
| 4 | Disabled | • Equal status to the disabled will be possible if society supports responsibility to the disabled as not 'being kind'. Disabled demand 'empathy' rather than 'sympathy'.<br><br>• Government should be more proactive to mainstream disabled citizens, providing enabling conditions and more appropriate use of the available resources under various schemes. |
| 5 | Minorities | • Equal opportunity for work and equal payments for women. Girls should be given choice to marry at the appropriate age. |

| Table 3: Capacity building and hands-on support provided by the CSOs | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Thematic area | Structured trainings | Counselling/ guidance | Exposure visits/ events | Follow-up support |
| LIVELIHOODS/ RESOURCES | • Orientation on basic schemes and provisions of the RTE, ICDS, PDS, NRHM, RSBY.<br>• Formal training in improving health and nutritional awareness and preventive health using the participatory learning and action (PLA) approach.<br>• Regular information sharing in CBO monthly meetings.<br>• Informal training on discrimination in the context of gender-based violence, SC-ST atrocities act, legal aid and untouchability.<br>• Training on grievance redressal mechanisms like RTI, use of social audit and ombudsman.<br>• Leadership skills for CBO organization, developing bye-laws for the group/CBO, conflict resolution.<br>• Training on provisions of NREGA, FRA, land rights.<br>• Hands-on training in preparing labour budgets, village plans, IPPE planning, work measurement for NREGA and estimating labour payments, filling up applications of FRA.<br>• Training in land measurement and filing IFR/community claims.<br>• Practical training in community monitoring and conducting social audits. | • Support in writing applications in case of non-performance of the service provider.<br>• Designing monitoring visits in *Anganwadis,* schools and health centres.<br>• Supporting protests, campaigns and rallies on issues related to basic services.<br>• Periodic process of reflection to analyse status and challenges ahead.<br>• Ways to engage with elected leaders and government officials.<br>• Guidance to understand village development issues and develop a perspective on its development.<br>• Orientation on the functions of village-based committees like VHSNC, SMC, WG (ICDS) and related frontline workers - for taking up these roles in future.<br>• Practical demonstration by formally demanding work under the MGNREGS.<br>• Reading muster rolls, payment system and measurement methods.<br>• Helping in filling up applications under FRA and including the necessary documents with the claim forms.<br>• Understanding land measurement through various methods for filing claims under the FRA. | • Visit to other Panchayats/districts having similar CBOs.<br>• Experience sharing in CBO meetings held at the block or district level.<br>• Meeting the block, district officials to share their issues and understand their perspective as a confidence building exercise.<br>• Interaction with members of others CBOs for regular sharing/ exchange.<br>• Creation of village, panchayat, block, district-level forum for periodic sharing and exchange.<br>• Organisation of PACS-supported state-level conclaves for wider exposure, experience sharing.<br>• Participation in district and state level sharing workshops organised by PACS.<br>• Exposure visits while organising social audits or promoting participatory planning exercise under IPP. | • Providing support from behind to the CBOs by discussing with senior state and district level officials.<br>• Taking up outstanding issues at state level forums/ workshops<br>• Media advocacy at the state, district and local level for drawing public attention to issues.<br>• Support for re-filing FRA claims in case of rejection.<br>• Land measurement using GPS devices for filing claims or countering rejection of forest rights.<br>• Building pressure on decision makers through campaigns, demonstrations, rallies and media advocacy. |

| Table 4: Outcome matrix - key successes and achievements of the CBOs | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| S.No | Theme | Local | Larger changes |
| | Basic services | | |
| 1 | Health and nutrition | • Got a number of Musahar women appointed as cooks for MDM (MVM) and more Musahar children enrolled in schools (CADAM).<br><br>• Community realized intra-village disparities and exclusion in access to services and worked to eliminate such discrimination (Ekjut).<br><br>• Frontline workers were sensitized to deliver discrimination-free services - first institutional delivery in a Birhor PVTG hamlet (Ekjut, SSK, Pradeepan )<br><br>• A 'mamta vahan' was designated for remote villages to facilitate institutional deliveries (Ekjut, Prerna Bharti).<br><br>• Stronger monitoring of service delivery bodies led to their improved functioning (SSK, Pradeepan).<br><br>• Referrals of malnourished children to the malnourishment treatment centres were improved (SHARE).<br><br>• A large number of households enrolled for RSBY to gain access to quality treatment (SHARE, Gramya, CHARM, EHA, Prerna Bharti).<br><br>• Distribution in PDS shops was improved and shops were allocated to SCs (SSK).<br><br>• Immunization of Muslim community was improved with 100% village coverage (CHARM).<br><br>• Anganwadi worker creating awareness in the gram sabha, leading to 100% institutional deliveries (ASRA). | • A village *Panchayat* was delimited to create a Muslim-dominated village Panchayat through state level advocacy (SSK).<br><br>• Issues related to lack of access to quality basic services were raised in public hearings and a list of demands was handed over to the administration (Ekjut).<br><br>• No reported maternal and infant mortality in the village in the past two years (Ekjut).<br><br>• CBOs were economically empowered to create a strong foundation for social transformation (SHARE).<br><br>• Frontline workers were made accountable, with ASHA and RSBY mitra removed for non-performance (SHARE).<br><br>• Effective use made of the grievance redressal system to improve access to and quality of health and nutrition related services (EHA).<br><br>• 765 parents followed the special nutritional plan for children with disability (SPARC). |

| 2 | Education | • Monitoring by SMCs led to improved teacher attendance, better teaching and improved quality of MDMs (SSK).<br>• A teacher was appointed in the village school after a gap of six years, leading to better quality education (Ekjut, SSK).<br>• Paid sanitary workers appointed to clean the school toilets in place of Dalit students (SSK). | • Teachers became more regular and accountable. A discrimination-free environment was created in school (SHARE).<br>• The gram sabha provided 1.12 acres of disputed land to construct a high school in the village (ASRA). |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | Others services pensions, PDS, disability | • Almost all the disabled persons of the block got disability certificates (BVKP).<br>• The PDS shop was relocated in the Dalit and Muslim bastis (SSK).<br>• An enquiry in response to a complaint resulted in the PDS shop being opened regularly and more often against one day earlier. *Dalit* women now get equal treatment (Tarun Chetna, EHA).<br>• PVTG development schemes were brought to the village for first time (Ekjut).<br>• Got widow and old age pension approved for eight widows and elderly in the village (EHA).<br>• Fought for and got disability pension and tricycle for many disabled tribal and *Dalits* (EHA, BVKP, Viklang Manch).<br>• The registration window was sifted to the ground floor and a disability certification board was constituted in Surajpur district ( Viklang Manch).<br>• Around 300 household toilets were constructed in slums with the support of the Jabalpur Municipal Cooperation (Kshitij). | • Initiated the practice of disability certification at the *Panchayat* level by organizing camps with help from the local MLA and the district collector (BKVP).<br>• The CBO federation submitted a 22-point charter of demands to improve the functioning of the gram sabha. The district administration agreed to most of the demands and issued official order for all its officials (CASA).<br>• The office of the medical board and the collector's office was shifted from the first floor (BVKP, Chhattisgarh Viklang Manch).<br>• Revised advertisement was published with 3% seats reserved for the disabled in a Chhattisgarh recruitment drive, with many disabled getting jobs (Viklang Manch).<br>• A writ petition was filed in the High Court to appoint a PWD in Chhattisgarh's Nishakt Jan Ayog (Chhattisgarh Viklang Manch). |

| | Livelihoods and resources | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | MGNREGS | • Two disabled persons became 'mates' i.e. work supervisors and many disabled got 100 days of employment in a social forestry project (BKLP).<br>• 10 Musahar women are working as mates (MVM).<br>• Thirty *Dalit* families got more than 150 days of employment (KALP).<br>• *Dalit* women registered their demand for work online and put pressure to get differentiated higher wages for women (Gramya).<br>• Accessed the MGNREGS to get development and employment in the village two CC roads, gravel road, approach road to school, cattle-sheds, land development (THREAD, CASA, Jan Sahajya).<br>• Problems of delayed and lower payments to workers were resolved (THREAD, Jan Sahajya, CASA, Gramya, SSK, Aina).<br>• Women demonstrated and picketed against delayed payment and demand for bribe (SHARE). | • A protest was registered with the district and block officials to address the discrepancies in wage payments under the MGNREGS (MVM/ Kalp).<br>• Participated in the IPP planning process and social audits in many blocks to benefit many SC, ST families (MVM, Kalp and most CSOs working on MGNREGS).<br>• Compensation for crop damage was distributed fairly after protests/ rallies against the district administration (PGSS). |
| 2 | FRA | • Seven individual claims and FRA community claims for 5,100 hectares were settled despite strong resistance from the state (Janabhivyakti).<br>• Village CBO could get land ownership for 42 tribal families and settle 37 pending cases of land demarcation under charnoi land (MGSA).<br>• Twenty three claims for individual forest rights and eight claims for community forest rights were submitted (THREAD). | • A gram sabha resolution under PESA was passed to prevent mining on village land (Janabhivyakti)<br>• CBOs realized the need to conserve and self-manage their natural resources and commons (THREAD).<br>• Regulations to manage the forest were passed and applied in villages (SMS). |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | ● · CBOs developed confidence to engage with the forest bureaucracy and raise their voice against exploitation (NSVK, Jan Sahajya, Janabhiyakti).<br><br>● Community rights over 727 hectares of forest were realised; 90 claims for individual rights were filed and another 50 are in the process of being filed (NSVK),<br><br>● CBO members started regular monitoring and protection of their forest (SMS).<br><br>● CBO members symbolically tie rakhi to trees in their forest to strengthen the tribal-forest bond (SMS). | ● By-laws were developed to govern the extraction of forest resources (THREAD).<br><br>● Local forest mafia was stopped from felling trees and stealing bamboo (Disha). |
| 3 | Land rights/ agriculture | ● Small and marginal *Dalit* women farmers take land on lease to grow and sell organic vegetables and grain (GEAG).<br><br>● CBOs develop the confidence to engage with the land and revenue bureaucracy at the village and district level (MGSA). | ● A Bhumi Aayog was set up in response to an Ekta Parishad PIL. The MP High Court issued instructions to appoint members of commission within 15 days. (Ekta Parishad, MGSA). |
| 4 | Discriminatory practices | ● Women of the Reflect Circle persuade the husband of a group member not to get a third girl child aborted (BDRAKEVS).<br><br>● Realising the need to help other SEG as well, the CBOs helped PVTG families to secure disaster relief and a resettlement package (THREAD).<br><br>● Reflect Circle women stopped speed money demanded by the school teacher to issue transfer certificates to children of migrant families (BDRAKEVS). | ● Women create a strong collective identity, which gives them the strength to resist discrimination and exploitation by the state and others (THREAD).<br><br>● 110 community-based Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs) were formed which are led by disabled people (SPARC). |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Livelihoods | • CBO members successfully run businesses collectives growing and selling vegetables, running PDS shops and also individual shops selling bangles/grocery/stationery (SHARE).<br><br>• CBO of single women achieves economic independence running a PDS shop, doing collective farming and managing a brick kiln (SMS).<br><br>• Around 1,900 PWDs have been linked to skill development under the NRLM (SPARC). | • The women succeeded in making their village alcohol free through mass protests, monitoring and controlling household expenditure (Kalp)<br><br>• CBOs were converged with the NRLM for credit access, and with the agriculture department for subsidized seeds, fertilizers and equipment. |

| Table 5: External opportunities and constraints | | |
|---|---|---|
| CBO focus | Opportunities | Constraints |
| CBO focus | • *Musahar* and other *Dalit* communities have been demanding homestead land for better living conditions. The Bihar government agreed in principle to allocate homestead land.<br><br>• The PWD Act (1995) has better provisions for disabled persons.<br><br>• Large networks of CBOs at the state level are engaging with the government for policy changes in education, health and the PDS.<br><br>• The Right to Education Act created positive conditions for the SC/ST parents to influence the quality of education through SMCs.<br><br>• Some of the CBO members have been elected or nominated as heads or members of various committees viz. SMC or *Panchayat*. They will be able to influence the processes even after the withdrawal of PACS.<br><br>• Local committees for community monitoring of schools, mothers; health, village health, nutrition | • Many poor *Dalit* families have taken land on lease and loans to farm the land. Deficit rainfall will affect their ability to repay the loans.<br><br>• Many women within the CBO still do not have BPL cards, health insurance *(swasthya bima)* card etc.<br><br>• E-transfers of benefits in government schemes create difficulties for disabled persons as banks are too far and cash counters are not disabled friendly.<br><br>• Many CSOs do not have programmes other than the PACS, therefore, support to the CBOs and their networks will be significantly reduced in such cases.<br><br>• Private schools even in rural areas are creating a social divide as rich parents increasingly admit their children in them, leading to the progressive neglect of public schools.<br><br>• *Dalit* and many OBC families |

and sanitation provide the opportunity for SEGs to pinpoint oversights in services to make them inclusive and non-discriminatory.

- Simultaneous economic and social empowerment of women's groups develops self and collective confidence in women to engage with society and the state to demand their rights and entitlements.

- Decision-making in CBOs, which are largely homogenous with a common identity, is collective and the support available through the CBO federation will ensure continuity and ability to avail future opportunities.

- Since CBOs are now aware of health, nutrition and development issues, opportunities exist for their members to become frontline workers (ASHA, AWW, AWH) and provide better access to their community.

- Several CBOs have learnt to use established grievance redressal instruments like the RTI, right to services, local helpline and public hearings to great effect.

have equal economic status. However, due to exclusionary social practices, the SCs and OBCs do not unite on certain issues and in certain areas. This affects the united strength of the poor to address oppressive forces.

- The slow disbursal of FRA claims is made more sluggish by confusing orders and rumors that the time period for making claims is over.

- Though FRA claims of the tribals are settled, it is very difficult for *Dalit* and other traditional forest dwellers to access the same. The issue has also brought a rift in the community

- Fighting against the mining corporates is a losing battle, with all the might of the *Gram Sabhas* and public hearings having very little influence on the bureaucracy.

- Irregular fund flows in the MGNREGS makes it a constant battle to get timely wages.

- The poor development status of many regions and their remote location constrain large-scale development activities, which restricts the creation of new opportunities.

- Several groups with low levels of literacy still depend on others to manage their affairs like record-keeping, understanding government documents, communication etc.

- Decreasing employment opportunities in villages and increased out-migration threaten the existence of many CBOs.

| Livelihoods/resources | • The subsidised ration provided to poor SC/ST families has improved their bargaining power for agricultural wages, building skills, and investing in their land while reducing distress migration.<br><br>• Pogrammes like the MGNREGS and FRA have created possibilities for tribals to get land *Pattas* and improve their farming practices.<br><br>• Climate change is emerging as an international agenda for action. Many local level innovations to promote sustainable agriculture will gain importance in policy discourses.<br><br>• A better understanding of the development narrative by CBOs, and new capacities to undertake local development planning will ensure their struggle to demand and secure rights will continue even after the active support of CSOs stops.<br><br>• The engagement of the CBOs in protecting and conserving forest resources has led to improved forest stock and future opportunities for using surplus forest resources to establish forest-based enterprises. | • The MGNREGS cannot meet the livelihoods needs of the disabled beyond a point. There is need to link up with the NRLM for sustained livelihoods options.<br><br>• Reduced and delayed release of funds under the MGNREGS will affect the food and livelihood security of the poor who seek MGNREGS work.<br><br>• The new land acquisition bill at the national level and many state level laws has made conversion of agricultural land simpler.<br><br>• Many tribal-dominated areas are affected by left-wing extremism, which affects democratic processes and makes demanding rights difficult.<br><br>• Processes for securing and claiming rights to land and forest are very complicated and many CBOs have still not been able to create internal capacities to independently deal with them. This will create bottlenecks in realising their rights.<br><br>• The presence of a strong, credible local CBO poses a threat to other local power structures (dominant castes/LWE). They hinder their work and discourage development activities, especially under the MGNREGS, which improves the physical infrastructure. |

# Outline of the CBO case study

- Context/socio-cultural setting of the CBO collective

  What is the composition of SC/ST and other disadvantaged sections in the village/*Panchayat* and block/district?

  Are there interesting/striking community practices that influence the social and economic relationship of different caste and class groups?

- Nature and form of the CBO collective

  What is the vision and mission of the CBO? Is it well articulated, stated and shared among the members?

  Is it a formally registered organisation? What is the registration type? Why (rationale) did they decide to register or not register?

  What is the membership criteria? What is the current size and spread of the CBO?

  What is the organisational structure - executive committee/ elected positions/paid and unpaid staff?

- Creation and historical evolution of the collective

  Trace the evolution of the CBO. When was it (event/incident/context) that led the people to come together as a group?

  What has been the growth of the CBO?

  What are the key milestones its leaders consider significant in the evolution of the CBO?

  Are there significant stories/ incidents the leaders remember or articulate?

- Important processes and outcomes over the last four years

  What are the key processes of the approach and strategy adopted by the CBOs? (With reasons for chosing those approaches.)

  What were the outcomes of the processes promoted by the CBO?

- Key outcomes/impacts of the PACS intervention

  What were the key outcomes over the years and their inter-relationship with the impacts?

  What were the most significant impacts and related outcomes that resulted from this intervention?

  What could not happen as expected or what outcomes could not deliver impacts? Why?

- Major internal strengths and limitations - leadership, capacity, resources structure and systems

  What is the inter-organisational structure and what are its internal strengths?

  What kind of leadership is promoted by the CBO? Is it a collective leadership?

  What is the leadership style? Is it democratic and inclusive? Does the leadership belong to most marginalized and did it emerge out of consultative process or was it imposed or influenced?

  What is the organizational culture of the CBO? Are there certain articulated values that are practiced and lived?

  What is the decision-making

process in the general body and executive body?

What are the available resources to sustain activities? Is there any source of own income/resources that will sustain the actions and struggle?

- External opportunities and constraints - societal, operational and policy bottlenecks

What are the opportunities and threats in the external environment? (These could be in the social, political and economic environment at the local, district, or state level.)

- Key factors that led to success/failure in addressing social exclusion

- Role of the local CSO in strengthening the CBO

What support was provided by the CSO over the years? (Analysis of hand-holding support and structured capacity development initiatives.)

How is this value addition perceived by the CBO leaders?

What is the relationship between capacity building support and the scale of achievements?

What were the advocacy initiatives of the CSO along with the CBO?

- Future plans

# Format of the CBO study

(To be filled by the CSO head/PACS coordinator)

Year of partnership with PACS.............................. District/state.........................................

Name of the CSO ...............................Name of the CBO........................................................

Number of villages covered by the CBO................................................................................

Date of formation of the CBO................................................................................................

1.  Context/socio cultural setting of the CBO collective

1.1  Provide details of the socio-economic profile of the area where the CBO operates.

| Unit | Total population | SC | ST | Minority of working on the issue) | Disabled (if working on the issue) | Remarks |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| District | | | | | | |
| Block | | | | | | |
| *Panchayat/s* where the CBO operates | | | | | | |
| Village1 | | | | | | |
| Village2 | | | | | | |
| Village3 | | | | | | |

Note : Choose those villages or *Panchayats* where the CBO is operational. If it works at the block or district level, provide the district or block data.

1.2  Please write down some of the practices of the villages or society that discriminates against the target group (constituency of the CBO) in attaining its economic and socio-cultural rights.

1.  ..............................................................................................................................

..............................................................................................................................

2.  ..............................................................................................................................

..............................................................................................................................

2. Nature and form of the CBO/collective

    2.1 Registration type ( if any).....................2.2 Date of registration .....................

    2.3 Does the CBO has any written down vision- mission?  Yes/No

    2.4 Please state the written or understood mission/goal/purpose of the CBO – reasons for initiating the CBO?

        .................................................................................................................................

        .................................................................................................................................

    2.5 What is the membership criteria? Please explain how members are identified?-

        .................................................................................................................................

        .................................................................................................................................

    2.7 Membership growth profile of the CBO

| Year | Male | Female | Total | SC/ST/disabled* | Remarks |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Year 1 | | | | | |
| Year 2 | | | | | |
| Year 3 | | | | | |
| Year 4 | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

    * Mention whichever is the applicable/important constituency for the CBO

    2.8 Describe socio- cultural profile of the members (if any specific characteristics need to be highlighted) ..............................................................

    2.9 Organisational structure/executive committee/elected positions/paid and unpaid staff

| Position | Name of the Person | M/F | Social Category SC/ST/disabled | No of years in position |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

3. Creation and historical evolution of the CBO collective

    1.1 Trace the evolution of the CBO in different years before and during the PACS intervention. When was it felt to come together as a group? (Event/incident/context.)

    Year ( ) ......................................................................................................................

    ......................................................................................................................

    Year ( ) ......................................................................................................................

    3.2 What are the key milestones that the leaders consider significant in the evolution of the CBO from the beginning…? (add other important milestones)

    Milestone 1......................................................................................................................

    ......................................................................................................................

    Milestone 2......................................................................................................................

    ......................................................................................................................

    3.3 Mention significant stories/incidents the leaders remember or articulate.

    1......................................................................................................................

    ......................................................................................................................

    ......................................................................................................................

    2......................................................................................................................

    ......................................................................................................................

4. Identify important 'processes and outcomes' over the last four years (particularly related to addressing exclusion and discrimination)

| Sl No. | List the most significant results that the CBO attained | Key processes that led to such successes | What was expected/ | Remarsk |
|--------|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------|---------|
| 1 | | | | |
| 2 | | | | |
| 3 | | | | |
| 4 | | | | |
| | | | | |

5. Key impacts of the PACS intervention by the CBO (different from the above table)

    5.1 Programme-related ( NREGS/FRA/RTE etc) ............................................

    ......................................................................................................................

5.2 Exclusion/discrimination-related (special efforts for SC/ST/minorities/disabled) ...................................................................................................
...................................................................................................
...................................................................................................
...................................................................................................

6.  Limitations of the CBO in addressing social exclusion issues (some that could not be achieved)

| State what the CBO could not achieve | Explain why |
|---|---|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. | |
| 6. | |

7.  Major Internal strengths and limitations in terms of leadership, capacity, resource structure and systems

7.1  Identify strengths and limitations of the CBO

| | List the major strengths of the CBO | | List the major limitations of the CBO |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | | 1. | |
| 2. | | 2. | |
| 3. | | 3. | |
| 4. | | 4. | |
| 5. | | 5. | |
| 6. | | 6. | |

7.2  Recall any incidents when leadership was demonstrated by the CBO (collective and individuals) ...........................................................................
...................................................................................................
...................................................................................................

7.3  Are there any value driven rules that the CBO has decided over the members, describe ...........................................................................................
...................................................................................................
...................................................................................................

7.4 Powers of the general body and executive committee in decision-making. Provide details.

| | List the major strengths of the CBO | | List the major limitations of the CBO |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | | 1. | |
| 2. | | 2. | |
| 3. | | 3. | |
| 4. | | 4. | |
| 5. | | 5. | |
| 6. | | 6. | |

7.5 How often the general body and executive committee meets in a year? How the meetings are decided and how are the decisions taken? Can you mention some of the decisions of the last meeting ( with date and number of participants) ................................................................................................................................
................................................................................................................................................
................................................................................................................................................
................................................................................................................................................

7.6 Sources of funding/ resources of the CBO

| | Source of funding/collection | Purpose, if any specific | Amount (Rs.) | Remarks (annual/ one time etc.) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | | | | |
| 2. | | | | |
| 3. | | | | |
| 4. | | | | |
| 5. | | | | |
| 6. | | | | |

8. Type of networking of the CBO and its collective strength

8.1 What is the formal mechanism of networking of the CBO with the other similar CBOs in the neighbouring villages? ................................................................

8.2 How are the representatives elected/nominated at the village/block/ district/state level? ................................................................................................

8.3 What is the nature of the relationship, collaboration and partnership with the networks or coalitions working on similar issues at the district or

state level for larger solidarity and strength? .................................................................

8.4. Is the CBO connected to any national level network working on issues close its objectives or social exclusion? ....................................................... ........................

9 External opportunities and constraints - societal, operational and policy bottlenecks to address issues of social exclusion.

9.1 What are the opportunities and threats in the external environment level at the state, district and local level?

|  | Opportunities |  | Threats |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. |  | 1. |  |
| 2. |  | 2. |  |
| 3. |  | 3. |  |
| 4. |  | 4. |  |
| 5. |  | 5. |  |
| 6. |  | 6. |  |

10 The role of the local CSO in empowering the CBO

10.1 What are the key support inputs provided by the NGO/CSO for the CBO?

|  | Key support provided by the CSO (structured/informal) | Visible improved capacities of the CBOs and its demonstration | Remarks |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 |  |  |  |
| 2 |  |  |  |
| 3 |  |  |  |
| 4 |  |  |  |

10.2 How far has the CBO become autonomous from the CSO to manage its core function or fight against the oppressive power structure (socio-economic, administrative, political)?

.................................................................................................................................

.................................................................................................................................

.................................................................................................................................

.................................................................................................................................

10.3 What are the functions/activities the CBO will not be able to do without the support of the CSO? ...............................................................................................

.................................................................................................................................

11     Future plans of the CBO to address the issues of discrimination and development

1...............................................................................................................................

.................................................................................................................................

2. .............................................................................................................................

.................................................................................................................................

3. .............................................................................................................................

.................................................................................................................................

12     Any other details that you consider important which have not been covered in the format

.................................................................................................................................

.................................................................................................................................

.................................................................................................................................

# Annexure 3 :
# Study Advisory Group

1.  Dr. Amitabh Kundu, Former Professor , JNU, Delhi

2.  Ms. Annie Nirmala, Gender and CBO Expert, Delhi

3.  Mr. Binoy Achrya, executive director, Unnati

4.  Davinder Uppal, Former Professor of Mass Communication, Makhanlal Chaturvedi Journalism University, Bhopal

5.  Mr. Jagdananda, Member Secretary, CYSD, Bhubaneshwar and Ex-Commissioner, SIC

6.  Dr. Rajen Gupta,  MDI, Gurgaon, Expert on case study methods

7.  Dr. S.N. Cahudhary, Rajeev Gandhi Chair in Contemporary Studies

# Case study writing format

Case study ................. CBO name ................ CSO name .............

1.   Background

2.    CSO (name) and its association with community- based organisations

3.   History and genesis of the CBO

4.   Organsation of the collective

5.   Leadership and its style

6.   Organisational culture and values

7.   CBO's relationship with the CSO

8.   Important processes related to the CBO

9.   Key outcomes and impacts

10.  Capacity building efforts by the CSO

11.  Role of the CSO in the emergence of the CBO as a strong institution

12.  External opportunities and constraints

13.  Sustainability of the CBO

14.  Future plans of the CBO

## Annexure 5 :

# Profile of the CSOs selected for detailed case studies

| No | State | Name of CSO | Name of CBO | Thematic focus | Constituency focus under PACS | Scale of organisation | Governance Structure of CBO | Part of larger network |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | **Table 3: Details of the CSOs and their CBOs selected for the study** | | | | |
| 1 | MP | CASA | Ekta Jan Sangathan | MGNREGS | Tribal  Women | In different blocks | Formal,  well-defined | No |
| 2 | MP | Mahatma Gandhi Seva Ashram | Ekta Gram Samiti Rampura ka Sehrana | FRA and revenue land | Tribal  *Dalit* | In tribal districts of MP | Informal  Well defined | Part of National level Ekta Parishad |
| 3 | MP | Emmanuel Hospital Association/ Spandana CHDP | Adarsh Mahila Bachat Samooh | Health and nutrition | *Dalit* and adivasi women | In three tribal districts of MP and CG | Formal, professional board | National network/ umbrella organisation |
| 4 | MP | Pradeepan | Women Health Action Group | Health and nutrition | *Dalit* and OBC women | In a village of one of tribal district of M.P. | Informal but defined | No |
| 5 | CG | NSVK | Gram Ekai-Brahmna | Fra and MGNREGS | Tribal communities | In five tribal districts | Informal but well defined | Part of national level Ekta Parishad |
| 6 | CG | Choupal | Chhattisgarh Viklang Manch | Disability, MGNREGS | Persons with disability | Few tribal district of Chhattisgarh | formal and well defined | Part of state level network on PWD rights |
| 7 | CG | KALP | *Dalit* Sewa Sangathan | MGNREGS | *Dalit*  Women | In one district | Informal and  undefined | No |
| 8 | CG | Jan Abhivyakti | Hansdeo Arand Bachao Sangharsh Samiti | FRA | Tribal families losing land to mining | In mining affected region of three districts | Informal but defined | Networking with other groups |
| 9 | CG | Shikhar Yuva Manch | Shiksha Vikas Manjurpahri | Education | Tribal | In one district | Informal, undefined | Yes |
| 10 | JH | Ekjut | Gram Suraksha Samiti-Ramjha | Health and Nutrition | Tribal communities | In two tribal blocks of one district | Formal, well defined, professional board | No |
| 11 | UP | Tarun Chetna | Vijay Nari Sangh | MGNREGS health, education and nutrition | | In one district | | |

| 12 | UP | GEAG | Women farmers group | Livelihood | *Dalit* women | In serveral districts of Eastern UP | Formal, well defined, registered union | Part of state level sangh |
|----|----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 13 | UP | PDT | Rapti Visthapit Manch | Land rights | | In one district | Informal | No |
| 14 | UP | Gramya Sansthan | Mahila Manch | MGNREGS, health, nutrition, education | *Dalit* Women | In two districts of UP | Informal, defined | Yes - NCDHR |
| 15 | UP | Sahbhagi Shikshan Kendra | Jan Adhikar Nagrik Sangh | Health, education, nutrition, livelihood, social inclusion, and women's empowerment | *Dalit* | In 2-3 districts of UP | Informal, defined | No |
| 16 | Bihar | Samgr Siksha Evam Vikash Sansthan | Lok Sangharsh Samite | Land and MGNREGS | *Dalit* | In two districts | | |
| 17 | Bihar | PRAYAS | Reflect Circle | Livelihood, legal literacy, education, sanitation | *Dalit* women | In a few villages of 7-8 districts | Informal, defined | Dalit Adhikar Manch |
| 18 | Bihar | MDA | Musahar Vikash Manch | Discrimination, land, health, education, MGNREGS | *Dalit* women | 3-4 districts | Defined, Formal, written-bye-laws | yes- |
| 19 | Bihar | Bihar Viklang Kalyan Parishad | Viklang Adhikar Sangathan | PWD rights, MGNREGS | Disabled | 3 districts | Informal, defined | yes- |
| 20 | Odisha | Janasahajya | Jeevika Adhikar Sangathan, Kotagarh | MGNREGS, FRA, land rights, women issues, village development | STs and SCs | Village | Informal, defined | Informal link with block federation on community forests rights |
| 21 | Odisha | THREAD | Dhanbanipati Labour Club | MGNREGS, FRA | Women from socially excluded groups | In one district | Formal, well defined, SEGs represented on board | Part of state level federation of Nari Samaj |

| 22 | Odisha | Aaina | Jiban Jibika Shramika Sangha | MGNREGS, education, advocacy for PWDs, women, CWD issues, | SC mixed group- Christian converts | In one village | Formal | Forming block federation |
|----|--------|-------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|--------|--------------------------|
| 23 | Odisha | SPREAD | Mahila Mahasangha | MGNREGS, land rights (FRA), gender Mainstreaming | Tribal Women | In one district | Formal, defined, likely to be registered | |
| 24 | Odisha | SHARE | Maa Buru Beshauli Mahila Samiti | Health and Nutrition | Adivasi women, farmers | In one block- 25 gram Panchayats | Formal, executive committee | No |
| 25 | JK | SMOKUS | Balia Adibasi SHG | MGNREGS, health, nutrition | Tribal santhal women | In one block | Informal as SHGs | No |
| 26 | JK | Sharmajivi Mahila Samiti | Jamuna Swayam Sahayata Samuh | Land rights/ livelihood | Single women | In tribal districts of Jharkhand and Odisha | Formal, well defined | Part of state level ENSS federation |
| 27 | JK | EFICOR | Paktodi Pahar | MGNREGS and FRA | Tribals | No | Informal | No |
| 28 | WB | NSKK | Rokaiya CIG | Health, Education, MGNREGA | Muslim and SC women | About 3,200 SIGs in a district | Livelihood promotion | No |
| 29 | WB | CINI | Bandhu | Health, nutrition, education | Women/SC/ Muslim | 350 SHGs in 3 districts | Informal but defined | No |

# Profile of the CSOs selected for short case studies

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Table 3 : Details of the CSOs and their CBOs selected for the study** | | | | | | | |
| Name of the CSO | State | Name of the CBO | Thematic focus | Constituency focus under PACS | Scale of organisation | Governance Structure of CBO | Part of larger network/ Forums |
| Kshitij Society for Participatory Development & Research | MP | Mahila Arogya Samiti Bajnamath | Woen & children's health, nutrition & sanitation, rights & entitlements of slum dwellers | Slum dwellers | Slum at the ward level | Informal, well defined | Federation which has been formed at the city level |
| Pararth Samiti | MP | Patalkot Nari Shakti Mahila Sangathan | Health & nutrition | Tribal women | Village level | Informal, well defined | No |
| ASRA | JH | Bhonda Gram Sabha, West Singhbhum | PRI, Forest Rights Act, PESA, women empowerment | Tribal and non-tribal village community | Village level | Informal/ formal, well defined | Janpad panchayat |
| Prerana Bharati | JH | Pahadidih Mahila Sangathan | Education, health & nutrition | Women from SC, minority and other backward classes | Village level | Informal organised structure | No |
| PACE | UP | Jai Ma Chandrika Mahila Samooh | MGNREGS, health, nutrition & education | Women & children from backward communities | Village level | Informal organised structure | Block level CBO federation |
| SPARC | UP | DPO, Lucknow | Livelihood, health & nutrition, education | disabled | District level | Formal | State level - UPVM |
| PGSS | UP | Mahila Mandal Mahadeva Khurd | MGNREGS, health & nutrition, education, rights & entitlements | Women | Village level | Informal, organised structure | No |
| IZAD | Bihar | Maulik Adhikar lok Manch | Domestic violence, livelihoods and MGNREGS | Muslim/*Dalit* community | Village level | Informal, organised structure | No |
| CADAM | Bihar | All India MGNREGA Majdoor Union (AIMMU) | MGNREGS | Maha *Dalit* (Musahar) | Village level | Formal, Organised | They also operate at the block and district levels |
| THREAD | Odisha | Tejaswini Community Action Group | MGNREGS, FRA, RTI | SC/ST communities | Panchayat level | Well defined Organised | Odisha Nari Samaj at state level |

| ISS | Odisha | Tendra Gram Panchayat Level Land Rights Committee (Tendra GLRC) | FRA & revenue land | SC/ST/OBC/ minority forest dwellers | Panchayat level | Formal organised structure | Village level CBOs |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Carmdaksh | CG | Saraswati SHG | MGNREGS, FRA and women empowerment | Women | Village level | Organised | No |
| Disha Samaj Sevi Sanstha | CG | Jan Adhikar Manch | FRA, MGNREGS | ST/SC community | Village level | Informal organised | No |