



Indo-Global
Social Service Society

Towards
a HUNGER FREE
and FOOD SECURE
India



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Towards A Hunger Free and Food Secure India

The global situation on food and nutritional security has gained attention across the world among governments, academics, practitioners, activists and community based organizations (CBOs). In the current landscape of global climate change, other environmental changes and declining resources, countries are facing challenges to provide a sustainable, secure supply of safe, nutritious and affordable high-quality food to their populations. In a country like India, where the rural agriculture system is subsistent and provides food security for a limited period of time in a year, factors like lack of irrigation facilities, recurring droughts and extreme weather conditions

60 million tons. Despite this huge surplus, India is home to 25 per cent of the world's hungry. Considering the challenging situation of addressing food and nutritional security and maintaining food sovereignty joint action by all sections of the society will require immediate attention.

In line with this, IGSSS and Caritas India organized a national consultation on food security on 29-30 November 2016, at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. A number of actors, including academics, practitioners, activists, sector experts and politician participated in the event. The aim of the consultation was to:



add vulnerabilities to the social and economic conditions of the people. Added to this is a lack of reforms in land distribution and other policies, lack of investments in extension services and agricultural research and an absence of strategic thinking on potential high value commodity supply chains and rural marketing infrastructure.

India was ranked 97 out of 118 countries on the International Food Policy Research Institute's (IFPRI) Global Hunger Index (GHI) in 2016. Approximately, 150 million tons of food grains are produced every year in India; of this 10 per cent is lost prior to distribution. For the last decade, India's grain surplus has been around

- **Delineate a theoretical context for the food security/sovereignty paradigm against which practical considerations from the community could be clearly located**
- **Identify the gaps and opportunities in existing policy frameworks related to food**
- **Identify community driven good practices and experiences aimed at securing the Right to Food**
- **Identify areas for joint action and engagement across key stakeholders**



Day one (29 November 2016) INAUGURAL SESSION



Ms Sreya Mozumdar, Head Programmes, IGSSS, welcomed all the participants and guests. Elaborating on the theme of the consultation – towards a hunger-free India – she hoped that practical insights/experiences from the field as well as theoretical frameworks would make the consultation a significant one. She formally welcomed Mr. Gaurav Gogoi, Member of Parliament (MP) from Assam and the Founder of Farm2Food Foundation and Mr. Harsh Mander, eminent social activist, who were also the keynote speakers at the consultation. She invited Fr. Fredrick, Executive Director, Caritas India and Mr. John Peter Nelson, Executive Director, IGSSS, for the welcome addresses.

While welcoming the participants **Fr. Fredrick, Director, Caritas India,** emphasized that the concept of food sovereignty had gone beyond food security and only the availability and affordability of food was not enough. Community rights over what its members wanted to grow and eat needed to be acknowledged and respected. This led



to rights of the community over resources, a precondition for food security and sovereignty. There are various laws and acts for ensuring food security which need to be implemented properly he said. Agriculture and forest land was being transferred for industrial and non-agricultural purposes which in turn resulted in communities losing their land and rights over food. Also, agriculture was becoming a non-profitable business for farmers and they were trapped in a cycle of debt also paving the way for increased number of farmer suicides. The number of farmer suicides in Vidharbha region was one such example.

There are several challenges such as seasonal migration of small farmers to cities, a hike in food prices, decrease in the nutritious value of food and nutritional emergencies. Besides, climate change was another challenge which needed to be dealt with strategically to ensure the food and nutritional security of the country.

With these concerns, the consultation became important to share learnings to refine the prospects and framework for food security, identifying the gaps and inter-sharing the available best practices to come up with specific recommendations. Fr. Frederick ended on a hopeful note that the ideas and experiences of the participants on food security across the states would be shared in the consultation which would lead to further developments in the field.

Mr. John Peter Nelson, Executive Director, IGSSS, set the context for the consultation. India is a growing economy but since 1990 with rapid economic growth the country is facing malnutrition issues. Challenges of the global economic environment aggravated by climate change and shrinking resources made ensuring food and nutritional security one of the huge challenges of nations, including India. The availability, production, access to quality food, right and choice to food



were more important than producing more food. Deliberations and more thinking were required to address the question of how food can be produced sustainably and the poor and marginalized people can have sovereignty over food. This aspect was important as India is a signatory to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) where food security and hunger have been centrally placed as key issues. Though the imperative of food security is widely acknowledged but the focus is more on increasing production and not so much on access and equity. For CSOs working on poverty alleviation in rural and urban contexts, there is a need to look at the different perspectives on food security and hunger and understanding more from the perspectives of marginalized communities on the ground.

Mr. Gaurav Gogoi, MP Assam, and founder of Farm2Food Foundation

In his inaugural speech **Mr. Gogoi** shared his experiences of the organic movement in Assam in which a number of villages were covered to highlight the positive aspects of organic agriculture. He highlighted the need of working in mission mode rather than through



project/programme based interventions to bring about necessary long term changes. Food security was providing dignity, giving people living in tough conditions access to food which they could buy at affordable rates and, more importantly, giving them the freedom to grow and consume the food that they want. In India, 50 per cent children in 0-5 years age group are malnourished and more vulnerable. While talking about availability, access and adequate food, what is left out is the ability to purchase food and incomes of those living at bottom of the pyramid. He suggested the following ways forward:

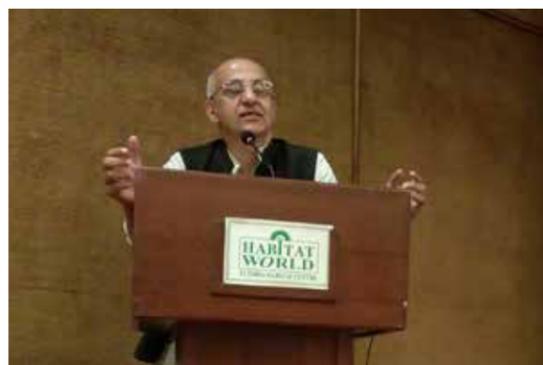
- Need to engage communities, politicians, media and CSOs to ensure sustainability in tackling food security interventions.
- NGO projects should concentrate on livelihood and income generating potential of communities sustainably. Citing the example of MGNREGA, through which communities' resilience had been built in rural areas in terms of jobs and incomes, Mr Gogoi reiterated that through this income locals could grow and purchase the food that they wanted to consume.
- There was lack of authenticated data on food security and malnourished people at local level/district levels. This raised concerns about how vulnerable communities/people could be identified, how targets could be set and how progress measured.
- Capacity building of extension workers such as anganwadi workers implementing ICDS in rural areas is important. The need of having common uniform best practices standards to reduce malnutrition was also stressed upon.
- State-wise templates for a standard for capacity building of extension workers, teachers and government functionaries would help in replicating successful cases. For example, in Dhemaji district in Assam, infant mortality is below the national average. Collection of data and tracking of every child born in hospital has been done. A

unique ID was given to each new born child and a corresponding anganwadi worker identified and involved in tracking the growth of the child in terms of measuring his/her weight and height. The data is fed into a software placed in the DC's office. In case of any indicators of malnourishment, instructions to the anganwadi workers to take necessary measures. This data tracking and follow up has been a success which can be replicated elsewhere.

- In Assam, school clubs have been identified as potential spaces to raise awareness about locally grown nutritional crops. Students and teachers have been taught about organic cultivation, local indigenous vegetables/crops and the process of cultivating such crops in school premises to be consumed in the mid-day meals. The surplus produce is sold in the local market and the clubs earn a certain income which goes into the account of each child. This is an important mechanism to build entrepreneurship among students.
- Climate change poses a real threat to the population, especially poor and deprived communities, who are affected due to extreme weather conditions such as recurrent floods and droughts. During these events, the diet is restricted to what the government supplies. In the context of climate change and disaster, there is a need of promoting drought/flood/pest resistant crops to ensure food security.

At the end of his deliberations Mr Gogoi requested everyone to work together on inspiring ownership in communities so that desired impacts and sustainability could be brought out. He further requested the participants to identify allies in state and central governments across sectors including sensitization of Member of Parliaments so that central government schemes and district level vigilance committees could be optimally utilized.

Mr. Harsh Mander, Social Activist



Addressing the forum, **Mr. Mander** raised concerns about India's falling ranking from 83 to 97 in the Global Hunger Index (GHI) even after high economic growth. He said that there was a need to understand this paradox. India, as a country, had more than enough food production, accompanied by a growing economy, high state capacities and a strong functioning democracy and yet the situation was deplorable with statistics showing that every third child in India was malnourished. Giving the national and international scenarios of hunger and food insecurity, Mr. Mander flagged three ways through which a household can get food - grow, buy and receive food.

- The food growers have been facing the agrarian crisis which is reflected in rising cases of farmer suicides. Besides, low public investment in agriculture is another issue faced by food producers. He requested that the causes of the crisis in relation to the large population should be looked at and action taken accordingly.
- Another challenge is whether the people have enough money to buy adequate food. Here the issue is of job creation and protection of labour rights. In a scenario when the government is proposing job creation through skill development and other measures, underlying issues of caste, gender and religion need to be looked at critically as well. In 2004 and 2010, 57 million people were added to those with jobs and 2.7 million new jobs were created, out of which most were in casual and

unprotected sectors. After 2010, the number of young people employed in jobs went up by one million and most of this work was in unprotected sectors. The problem of ordinary service workers/farm workers was further aggravated by caste, gender and religious aspects which are historically rooted in society.

- The third way of accessing food is receiving it from social protection frameworks. This is important for the people who cannot grow and buy food. Further, non-food elements are critical to the question of nutrition – unclean drinking water, unsanitary situation and lack of access to healthcare.

He concluded by posing a question as to what can be done for a person who comes last when inequalities of gender and caste/class, politics of religious identities and failure of the state to have a strong framework of social protection are taken into consideration.

BREAK-OUT SESSIONS

In the break-out sessions the participants were divided into three groups and inputs were provided by the resource persons:

Group 1: Land, water and natural resources and their relation to food security

Ms Neeta Hardikar, Founder Member, Anandi

Focusing on food security and access to resources for small and marginal farmers, Ms



Reflections from the forum:

- FRA implementation and land reforms should be priority to make India hunger free
- Un-cultivated food should be included in PDS. Currently, the supply system does not give priority to uncultivated food
- No priorities have been given to forest produce and other important crops such as millets and vegetables at the time of declaring drought. These have an important place in the diet of rural and tribal households
- Local and indigenous food should be given priority in anganwadi centres
- Nutritious food under PDS is not up to the mark, there are problems related to implementation

Hardikar said that most food growers were women but they did not have the access to existing benefits of related schemes. Women's experiences in agriculture were different from that of men. The Indian economy leans towards cash crops but the small food growers provide food to the nation. Nearly 55 per cent of the labour was involved in agriculture but the sector got only 4 per cent in investment. Agriculture programmes focus on hybrids and subsidies were given for chemical inputs. Only a few states were promoting organic farming policies. In this context food security at household level was important. The assessment of food insecure months using participatory food mapping tools would be important. She flagged the following facts and issues:

- States should ensure that every person gets food with dignity as per his/her choice
- SDGs talk about nutrition and sufficient food, malnutrition, double agriculture, sustainable food production systems and

resilient agriculture systems. The second goal talks about hunger and reducing malnutrition. This has a social context, that the land and inhabitants' rights are governed by social relations where the legal entitlements are difficult for women to access. Women's land rights are not only a family matter but are also influenced by social, market driven and political situations. Although women are primary food producers and processors, there is lack of support for them. The participation of women in policies related to food security or decision making is also lacking.

- There are no provisions of social protection benefits to women who do unpaid work not only in agriculture but also in various other sectors which ensures that our economy keeps running. There are budgetary provisions but there is no sensitivity towards unpaid care work in policy documents.
- The National Farmer Policy, 2007 defines farmers as those who are engaged in land and water based work ranging from agriculture, sharecropping, fisheries, bee keeping, pastoralist, horticulturists and floriculturists. This definition tries to give dignity to labour.
- She shared an example from Anandi where SHGs are provided loan products for needs related to land. A loan product was created to release the land which was mortgaged for years. Bank managers were influenced to give loans to women who wanted to release the land through collectives and when the land was released it was ensured to get the women's names in the property.
- Women have taken land on lease through various government programmes and are growing collectively which is an example of ensuring food and nutrition security. Growing local seeds collectively, the women demanded withdrawal of biotech regulations with Anandi's support.

- Under the Forest Right Act, 35 per cent cases have been cleared across the country but CFR has not been taken care of commensurately.

Reflections of the group:

- Women farmers have limited access to extension services; there is also lack of female extension workers.
- Drudgery reduction tools and technologies in post-harvest work are required to resolve water related issues faced by women. Women want to gain more knowledge about pests, seeds and on resolving the challenges that they face for which sensitization of agricultural universities and policymakers is required.

Group 2: Food Security legislations: Claims and Contestation

Mr. Biraj Patnaik, Principal Advisor to the Commissioner to the Supreme Court



Mr. Patnaik focused on the following issues in his session – provisions under the National Food Security Act (NFSA), future directions under the act and challenges which are undermining the food security situation in India. Different orders of the Supreme Court have been combined and converted into NFSA and a grievance redressal framework to deal with the orders has been set up. While elaborating on the four main elements/pillars

of NFSA, the following facts were shared by Mr. Patnaik:

- The Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) is for children below the age of six years. The legal entitlement for children below the age of three is provision of take-home rations.
- For children in the age group of 3-6 years, hot cooked meals are to be provided at anganwadis including rice, pulses, vegetables and other items.
- For every pregnant and nursing mother, there is a provision of take home rations and hot cooked meals.
- The take home rations (THR), though unsatisfactory, are being given out everywhere. The main issue is that, despite repeated Supreme Court orders, vested interest groups among private contractors have got this programme in a stranglehold. Many private actors are providing food, but as per the court orders SHGs at the village level should provide the food. At the village SHG level, nutritious food can be provided within the cost norms to meet the complimentary food as per World Health Organization's norms for young child and infants.
- There are several other programmes, such as the Action against Malnutrition Programme and Fulwari Programme which can be implemented by women SHGs. Also, these could be a source of livelihood for many SHGs.
- Mid-day meal, a hot cooked meal to be provided in primary and upper primary schools, is among the most successful programmes under NFSA. Through the programme, children are getting basic calories and proteins in their diet.
- Under NFSA, PDS has improved over the last 15 years. It guarantees rations to 67 per cent of the population (50 per cent urban and 75% rural), varying from state to state.

In most of the poorest states, the coverage is 80% of the population. The entitlement under PDS is 5kg/person/month- rice, millet and wheat. The introduction of millet in PDS is a welcome step but there are serious issues with millet production.

- In PDS, there is push towards technologies to cut down corruption; there is also resistance towards this on ideological grounds. The question on the preparedness for adopting the new technologies remains.
- Maternity entitlements: Cash transfer (Rs 6,000) to every pregnant woman is new in NFSA and needs to be activated immediately.
- NFSA can reduce hunger but more needs to be done to reduce malnutrition. Access to potable drinking water, sanitation, quality healthcare, women's empowerment and increase in the age of marriage are key determinants in achieving its goals.
- NFSA is not dealing with the Right to Food and Nutrition – access, availability and absorption. NFSA takes care of access and availability of food but not the absorption part. The other part of Right to Food and Nutrition is the ability to have a livelihood, which allows access to food for which access to other resources like land, forest and water are required. NFSA does not have any component related to farmers and for an agrarian crisis.
- There is a need to push for a stronger paradigm of food security, food sovereignty and agro-ecological production of food. In the climate change scenario, how we produce our food assumes more importance instead of how much we produce.
- Another challenge is under and over nutrition – obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases in India – are nowhere on the radar of policymakers.
- There are external threats – at the World Trade Organization, India has a very weak peace clause, which is protecting our public

procurement programmes, which may get reversed.

- Revisiting the role of NGOs/CSOs in which the principal responsibility is in getting communities to get programmes/schemes implemented well on the ground through building awareness, effective interfacing with relevant stakeholders and holding dutybearers accountable.

Reflections from CSOs on the ground:

- Poor quality rations, increase in the rate of rations and shops not open on a regular basis
- Homeless urban people do not have identity documents, a prerequisite for enrolment under Aadhar
- ICDS not according to the menu.
- THR- the food supplement is there but counselling is extremely poor
- MDM-budget allocation is poor and the consistency in food provided is poor
- The maternity benefit programme needs to be activated much more effectively
- NFSA- no traditional varieties of crops is focused on
- Small and marginal farmers' produce should be included in NFSA
- There should be diversification of PDS

Group 3: Food security and food sovereignty: Physical and economic access over culturally and economically appropriate food

Mr Deep Jyoti Brahma, Farm2Food Foundation, shared his experience of working on food security through farm based interventions with the youth in Assam and the North East region. Despite rich flora and fauna, a fertile



soil and unique agro-biodiversity, Assam has iron and nutrition deficiency and the highest mortality rate among children. Mr Brahma flagged the issue of changing food habits, poor academic performance and HDI indicators in the context of the Nyishi tribe which lives on the banks of rivers and practices fishing and agriculture. He elaborated on how varieties of flood tolerant paddy had been replaced by high yielding varieties (HYVs) over the last decade. The implications of dependency on HYVs can be seen at the time of recurrent floods in the region in the destruction of paddy crops and challenges of food and hunger faced by the community. The other highlights of the input session include:

- **Foodpreneur:** An initiative to help school students (Classes 6-8) to establish school nutrition gardens in the school premises. Life skill training, financial literacy curriculum and nutrition garden helped students in identifying locally available and indigenous nutritious food. Apart from fighting malnutrition, this provided a greater scope of activity based learning in science and mathematics. The vegetables grown in the garden are being supplied and used for the mid-day meal. In lieu of this, the school pays the price of vegetables and the amount is transferred to the bank accounts of the children.
- The children and parents have been facilitated to set up vegetable gardens and vermi-compost units at home. Similarly, mothers' groups are also being facilitated to set-up kitchen gardens to ensure the production of local seasonal vegetables round the year.

Day 2 (30 November 2016)

Mr Joachim Schwarz, Welthungerhilfe and Civil Society Academy



Mr Joachim initiated the sessions for the day with a powerful envisioning exercise. He asked the participants the following key questions, grouped according to the table they were seated on:

- **What would a typical Indian village look like 15 years from now?**

The responses ranged from pessimistic (lack of sanitation and health facilities, visible poverty, lack of education and mobility for girls and lack of awareness about government schemes and entitlements) to hopeful (noted levels of affluence within communities, permanent houses, clean and hygienic surroundings and healthy children playing together and going to school).

- **What would be the influencing factors of this future vision?**

What would be the role of the state in your vision?

What would be the inter-relation between the state, policy and communities?

The responses focussed firmly on the need for the state and government systems to be activated such that social welfare legislations could be more effectively implemented on the ground. There was also a reflection on the role of NGOs, not so much to involve them in implementation (as parallel service deliverers), but also to help in mobilizing communities

to access/demand the entitlements due to them. Strong policy could only be translated effectively thereafter.

Mr Joachim ended with a simple formula for creating a long term impact from our work with communities: $I = PXAXT$; **Impact = Population X Affluence (Consumption) X Technology**

He explained it thus: One of the earliest attempts to describe the role of multiple factors in determining environmental degradation was the IPAT equation. It describes the multiplicative contribution of population (P), affluence (A) and technology (T) to environmental impact (I). Environmental impact (I) may be expressed in terms of resource depletion or waste accumulation; population (P) refers to the size of the human population; affluence (A) refers to the level of consumption by that population; and technology (T) refers to the processes used to obtain resources and transforming them into useful goods and wastes. The formula was originally used to emphasize the contribution of a growing global population on the environment at a time when the world population was roughly half of what it is now. It continues to be used with reference to population policy.

Mr Pranab D. Choudhury presented the findings of a study commissioned by IGSSS. The study is an attempt at a 'Comprehensive Understandings of Farmer Suicides in Odisha', in response to the high number of suicides reported in 2015 under the broad canvas of an agrarian crisis. The study consists of 30 cases studies of farmer suicides and analyses possible



influencers (farming technology, land tenure, access to credit, extension and insurance, marketing and impacts of climate change) to suggest an inclusive and holistic roadmap to address the agrarian crisis in general and unfortunately fast increasing farmers' suicides in particular. The study addresses three broad questions:

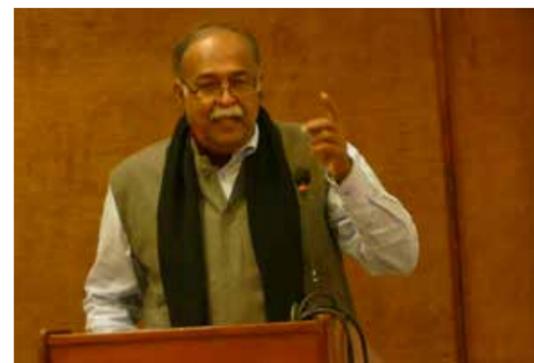
- Whether small and marginal farmers (SMFs) are located within the broader policy context and around mainstream agricultural development strategies and understanding/ showing their vulnerabilities in terms of losing control and limited access over credit/resources/pricing/market.
 - Whether 'Farmer-Quit' is a manifestation of a bigger agrarian crisis, which itself is a complex syndrome requiring a holistic appreciation?
- Whether there is an inherent causal link of agrarian crisis and farmers quitting with the 'Market' that is, whether the agrarian crisis is fuelled by a market-based and lead approach in agriculture and whether the 'farmer-quit' phenomenon is leading to the release of land and labour for the 'market' in the name of more profitable and economically-efficient use?
- Whether the agrarian, or more appropriately 'farming-crisis' requires a multi-disciplinary and holistic diagnosis and how a different management and governance of different disciplines and resources have fuelled the crisis?

The study adopts qualitative and quantitative tools to collect primary data for the identified 30 cases of farmers' suicides. Besides, it also has a secondary review of literature. The findings of the study include:

- Increasing costs of living and aspirational expenditure, increasing and repeated cash demand (and debt burden) due to health, education, marriages, social functions and other obligation, pollution (air and water) impacts on agriculture, decreasing soil health and fertility and climate change

uncertainties like drought leading to crop loss are the key triggers faced by the small and marginal farmers.

- 70% farmers leased-in land with 40% farmers leasing-in more than two acres.
- Tenancy arrangements are informal, by word of mouth but with varied arrangements. Tenants did not have access to MSP, subsidies, insurance and formal credit.
- Except for four districts, the returns were negative whether the tenant farmers sold the produce at MSP or at the market price.
- There was continued dependence on moneylenders and reliance was on more than one source for money. The average loan burden of the farmers was Rs 72,271 against an average area cultivated of about 5.08 acres. The loans were availed and used for multiple purposes, other than agriculture like health, education and social functions.
- Only 30% of the farmers had Kisan Credit Cards. A majority, being tenants, were not eligible to get institutional credit.
- The market had a huge influence on the farmers -- as consumers of agri-inputs and sellers of agri-produce they were at the receiving end all the time. The average return per acre of paddy was Rs7,546 when sold at MSP and Rs 2,024 when sold at the market price. While the MSP for 2015 was Rs 1,410, the average sale price was Rs 1,031 (27% less).
- Access to a mandi (wholesale market) was restricted because of distance, time and lack of registration.
- Access to public agricultural safety nets and local social safety nets was dwindling.
- Context of climate change added more to the uncertainties, particularly in certain agro-ecological and socioeconomic contexts with already reduced resilience (reduced ecological farming, knowledge and collective action and farmer's control).



Professor Ramesh Sharan, Department of Economics, Ranchi University, spoke on the critical links between agricultural production, pricing and the market.

He began by saying that public investments in critical infrastructure had decreased in the post-reform period. Subsidies and agricultural credit had also started declining. Socially, this coincided with the emergence of a strong middle class, with changing requirements of food and lifestyles and overall consumption patterns. Production schedules had also started shifting accordingly.

Thanks to MGNREGA and the demand for jobs being generated at the ground level, the rural wage level had gone up and the labour market too had undergone change.

Owing to the lack of a strong land policy framework, significant amount of land had moved from agriculture to non-productive purposes. Land leasing markets were active, with input sharing on the increase. A lot of tenancy reforms are required including the provision of long term interest free loans for small and marginal farmers to buy land.

As far as the credit market is concerned, access to institutional markets was limited, with credit being given to farmers on very limited terms. Pressure on banks and post offices was high.

The input market suffers from an influx of bad seeds and fraud seed companies, while the output markets are held hostage to contract farming and its manipulations. Such a situation thrives in the absence of regulations.

Recommendations:

- Promotion of aggregator companies
- Land policy reforms along suggested lines
- Advocating for social security legislations for labourers
- Revisiting the provisions of crop insurance because of the current challenges being faced by small and marginal farmers

Mr Debjee Sarangi, Founder and Managing Trustee, Living Farms, spoke on the issue of adapting, mitigating and resilience in case of agriculture and food.



Mr Sarangi spoke about his experiences in Muniguda, near Rayagada in Odisha. He began his presentation by mapping the food/sources that were available from the farm and the forest:

Food from the Farm	Food from the Forest
23 varieties of millets	62 varieties of fruits, nuts and vegetables
3 varieties of maize	29 varieties of mushrooms
2 varieties of sorghum	31 varieties of green leaves
330 varieties of paddy	37 varieties of birds
16 varieties of pulses	25 varieties of wild animals and insects
7 types of oilseeds	8 varieties of honey
32 varieties of vegetables	19 varieties of fish and crabs
	25 varieties of roots and tubers
	7 varieties of oilseeds



Against this significant range of products available in the area, his reflection was that there is scientific evidence to show that diversity provides a natural insurance against major changes in the ecosystem, be it in the wild or in agriculture. It is also known that genetic diversity will be crucial in highly variable environments, especially in areas experiencing rapid human-induced climate change. The larger the number of species or varieties present in one field or in an ecosystem, the greater the probability that at least some of them will be able to cope with changing conditions.

CHARTING A COURSE

After the input sessions by resource persons and sharing of ground level best practices/ research and in-depth group discussions, the participants were asked to come out with concrete actions/recommendations. There were three groups which collated their own points for the way ahead.

Group 1: Trade, Market and Pricing

- Collective marketing (cooperatives and federations of the farmers) and village level entrepreneurship (especially of youth) to be promoted for aggregators to achieve scale for collection of produce.
- Small and marginal farmers are not fully aware of the minimum support price (MSP) and Kisan Credit Cards (KCCs) - efforts to be made to raise awareness and also advocate for the simplification of forms required for accessing credit.
- Wide varieties of locally available resources, having high market value, need

Recommendations:

- Reclaiming our sovereign food system
- Dialogue between elders and youth so that there is transfer of knowledge and wisdom
- Creating contemporary activities to deepen communitarian ethos
- Listening to and mobilizing the youth to involve them in owning the discourse on food sovereignty
- Further strengthening the solidarity through horizontal networking
- Putting in efforts to make a shift from a ritualistic participation to a committed involvement by partnering communities, government functionaries and PRI representatives to articulate a vision on reclaiming our food system and committing to actualizing it.

to be identified and their value addition promoted.

- Pre-production assessment and market mapping to reduce wastage of produce should be carried out.
- Support to small farmers for post-production processes like grading for fair prices, processing and packaging and linking to the market. Livelihood programmes should look at support for developing infrastructure and capacities for primary value addition at the village level.
- Lack of storage facilities (at the village/ cluster level and market places) is the main concern faced by the small and marginal farmers. These should be picked up through advocacy at the Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) level. The representation of small and marginal farmers should be ensured in such fora.
- Revolving funds to be established so that flow credit can be facilitated.

- Advocacy for extension of MSP to vegetables and other produce needs to be taken up.
- Supply chain development and planning needs to be a key area of focus for small and marginal farmers.

Group 2: Adaptation, mitigation and resilience in agriculture and food

Instead of the phrase 'food security', we should adopt the phrase 'food sovereignty'

- Wherever located, we should look at unpacking and understanding community perceptions on food security and sovereignty, local area-specific climate stress and vulnerabilities.
- We should look at documenting community based adaptive practices that enhance resilience else there is a danger that such indigenous knowledge will die with successive generations losing interest. Such information should also be actively disseminated and promoted in public domains.
- In the tribal villages that we work in, small and marginal farmers have been conserving local indigenous seed varieties. However, over a few decades, this rich indigenous agro-biodiversity is depleting due to certain external factors. Field trials of indigenous crop varieties should be promoted as a priority.
- Community forest resources are under the ownership of gram sabhas and can be accessed strategically by informed collectives/farmers' groups. Harnessing this opportunity, farmers can decide what kind of agricultural inputs (especially seeds) that they want to grow and will also allow to be sown in their territory. This is one way of promoting food sovereignty and protecting biodiversity.
- Small and marginal farmers have access to both individual and common land which ensure food and nutrition security.

Rejuvenation and reclamation of common property resources involving villagers will help in building resilience.

- Community understanding of the process of environmental NOCs should be enhanced. Gram sabhas and gram panchayats should discuss land use in the villages and advocacy initiatives can be carried out accordingly (for example, village-wise water budgeting and cropping plans).
- Small and marginal farmers who live on mountains and near river banks are facing loss of fertile land either because of sand casting or landslides. There is no specific land policy to address these issues; we need to advocate for these.
- Inter-linkages between the Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP), The Forest Rights Act (FSA), Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas Act (PESA) and the Biodiversity Act should be worked out to advocate for protection of natural resources and promotion of food and nutrition security in village communities, especially tribal dominated ones.
- Flagship programmes like the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Generation Act (MGNREGA), should promote soil and water conservation in areas of community asset building.
- Locally appropriate climate adaptive livestock promotion should be undertaken with communities.

Group 3: Social distress and resilience

- A paradigm shift in the attitude towards small and marginal farmer is required. Sensitization of social workers, to be listeners and learners, when interacting with the community, rather than doers or knowledge/service providers, also needs to be undertaken.
- Pre- and post-psycho-social care needed to prepare farmers about the global context



and its impact on villages making them understand what the possibilities of disasters are and how to cope with them.

- Holistic interventions need to be designed with communities, including the understanding of indigenous farming practices, traditional knowledge and skills, considerations of erratic weather and vagaries of the market scenario in order to minimize the impact and distress on farming communities.

- Promoting collectivization at the village/ community level and developing social solidarity support mechanisms to provide platforms where distressed farmers can come and discuss issues and challenges. This should not be done only at the community level but also at the household level, including with women and young people.
- Strengthening decision making platforms for small and marginal farmers where they can have political voice and influence policy.

SUMMING-UP SESSION

Participants' reflections on the way ahead:

- Replicable models on water and soil conservation, good practices in agriculture and food sovereignty to be shared via a common knowledge platform.
- Identifying moot points for advocacy based on emerging issues (for example, identity/ entitlements of women farmers) and building some evidence for action through collectives.
- Attempting a critical assessment of policies related to food (for example, NFSA) and social security with practical recommendations for their implementation.
- Brainstorming on the possibility of building producers' groups of millet growers among communities being worked with keeping in mind the consumption/nutritive needs of local communities as well as the potential for a lucrative onward supply and marketing.
- Use of technology for weather forecasting and developing agro-advisories suited for small and marginal farmers. The particular work that needs to be done here should focus on providing information and its active dissemination in communities.
- Regional weather monitoring and forecast mechanisms to be tried across specific

clusters with interested NGOs and CBOs.

- Working groups with technical expertise on FNS issues should come together and prioritize some actionable points for future action.

IGSSS' reflections on the way ahead:

- Integrating the food and nutrition security framework across all thematic verticals worked with, for example, promoting local models of kitchen/homestead gardening, models of water conservation in drought affected areas; mapping nutrition deficiencies in the urban landscape with migrant/homeless communities; ensuring 'good food' while developing disaster resilient plans for villages; and building the capacities of young people and women to become nutrition champions in their communities.
- Consolidating the experiences/knowledge of indigenous communities worked with and adding value both in terms of technology addition and information/ dissemination, for example, undertaking participatory capacity and vulnerability analyses on the ground with communities before initiating any developmental work with a particular emphasis on locally available and culturally appropriate means

of food and nutrition. Also, promoting the use of indigenous sources of good food, now depleting, in communities worked with (for example, minor millets, traditional seeds and their conservation).

- Promoting sustainable low cost models of the supply chain, especially keeping the interests of small farmers and food growers at the centre, in one or two areas where work is currently going on in Hazaribagh (Jharkhand) and Jhabua (Madhya Pradesh).

- Facilitating knowledge sharing between likeminded organizations/community groups wherever possible both formally and informally.

- Initiating a mapping of programming results using the SDG framework and indicators on Goal 2 in particular: ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture.

CONCLUDING SESSION

Mr Peter Christoph Seidel, Caritas Germany in his concluding remarks emphasized on the need to understand different perspectives and problems of food security, hunger and nutrition. Food growers are suffering a lot because of hunger and malnutrition and do not have the means to cope with the complexity of prevailing socioeconomic realities. He stressed on ways of creating an area/ambience of learning, understanding, analysing and developing proposals on different aspects of growing food and buying and distributing better food. Further to this strengthening, how can CSOs strengthen the complex PDS system to address the issues of hunger, wasting and stunting more effectively? There is also the need for an adept facilitation of decision making processes among farmers about what to grow and how to develop a visible and viable way of addressing the challenges. Farmers should have alternatives in terms of technical solutions; only then can the global objective of reducing food insecurity and malnutrition be achieved.

Fr. Fredrick thanked all the resource persons and participants and emphasized the need for recognizing the intersectionalities between corporatization of agriculture and the resourcefulness of farmers and food growers, development practitioners and CSOs. He hoped that the learnings from the consultation where a range of stakeholders was brought together to identify existing challenges and opportunities would be taken to the field and translated into practice.

Mr Nelson concluded the session by flagging the tremendous potential of such forums in terms of a wealth of knowledge and resources (partners and programmes). He reflected on the capacities and human resources available and how we can make use of them optimally keeping critical areas of food and nutrition security in mind. He further added that advocacy for larger inclusive policies and people's movements, human resources and community mobilization was required to take the discussions forward strategically.



PARTNER PRESENTATIONS OF GOOD PRACTICES/REPLICABLE MODELS ON FNS

Name of the Partner	Operational Area	Model/Good Practices	Details	Takeaways
Abhivyakti Foundation	Jharkhand	Uncultivated food preservation and conservation for the Sauria Paharia community in Jharkhand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children engaged in identifying and documenting local food to make them aware about their rich culture and biodiversity Module on conservation of uncultivated food for community leaders and women developed and training imparted as part of the capacity building strategy Scientific documentation, in-situ and ex-situ conservation of species promoted as per the finding of the PRA Processing of food, post-harvest techniques, seed treatment and preservation promoted Food from forests using integrated farming and multi-tier arrangements promoted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uncultivated food from the commons is a good source of food and nutrition security for forest dwelling communities In-situ conservation of biodiversity is the best approach to ensure availability of food in lean periods Food from forests could be a promising model for tribal communities Involvement of children in documenting local food, training of women and community leaders on conservation of commons could be a good strategy to ensure food and nutrition in the community
Ekjut	Ranchi, Jharkhand	Combating malnutrition in rural India; Suposhan Karyakartas (SPKs) facilitating participatory learning and Action (PLA) meetings with home visits and operationalizing crèches as a best practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suposhan Karyakartas who cover pregnant women and children (<2yrs) identified SPKs facilitated PLA meetings with women Home visits carried out by SPKs to address immediate causes of malnutrition including counselling for IYCF, illness prevention and support for referrals Addressing malnutrition among the children Crèches for children between 6 months to 3 years of age ensuring protection, supervised hygiene and feeding operationalized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicated SPKs for facilitating PLA meetings and targeted home visits can help in reducing the rate of neonatal mortality Involvement of different groups in planning and monitoring through PLA followed by home visits can tackle the issue of malnutrition on a sustained basis Crèche facilities in rural areas are an important model in early childhood care and development Crèches not only ensure food and nutrition security but also make elder siblings free to join school
Pravah	Deoghar, Jharkhand	Multi-sectoral approach to food and nutrition security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoted a rights based approach to bridging the gap between nutrition and agriculture by implementing nutrition-sensitive programmes Nutrition sensitive agriculture (mix-cropping, crop diversification, integration of livestock in agriculture, local and traditional crop cultivation, uncultivated food consumption and conservation and use of homesteads as kitchen gardens) promoted to ensure round the year availability of nutritious food for households 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immediate, underlying and basic causes of malnutrition to be understood for planning FNS interventions A nutrition sensitive agriculture model can help in access to food and its availability among vulnerable communities Integrated farming is an effective tool to ensure food security and incomes for families; it can check migration issues in rural areas

Name of the Partner	Operational Area	Model/Good Practices	Details	Takeaways
AROUSE	Gumla, Jharkhand	Potato seed multiplication by SMFs in 2 blocks in Gumla	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensured quality seeds, increase in yields, reducing the cost of cultivation and risk of crop failure (standardization of package of practice (PoP)) Clusters of potato farmers identified and promoted as seed multipliers/producers Youths/collectives trained in diversification of farms and improving production processes Facilitated youths for crop planning based on landholding, irrigation facilities; an appropriate PoP developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youths/collectives of small and marginal farmers and a standardized PoP helped in ensuring the availability of quality planning material for potatoes A youth focused strategy in agriculture can help in entrepreneurship development among the youth
Regional Centre for Development Corporation	Balangir	Gharbaris (homeyards) for food and nutrition security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home yards used for growing herbs and vegetables according to season and livestock for household use and marketing the surplus Small sized homestead spaces (5 decimal), indigenous varieties of seeds, kitchen waste, water and crop residue used for setting up kitchen gardens Community mapping and crop/seed diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The practice ensures round the year availability of vegetables along with seed conservation, poison free farming and building resilient families Small pieces of homestead land have the potential of providing food security and biodiversity conservation
Swanirvar	West Bengal	Food and nutrition security: An attempt to build sustainable livelihoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training and counselling sessions for families conducted on the daily requirements of balanced food according to their age, sex and mode of activity Family specific kitchen gardens promoted as per the dietary needs of the families Climate resilient methods promoted Community seed and grain banks setup 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family specific kitchen gardens and climate resilient farming practices are economically productive and stable in seasonal stress and disasters Environmentally safe farming not only protects biodiversity but it also restores and rehabilitates degraded ecosystems Aligning household production with household consumption so as to maintain proper nutritional status and health
Centre for Environmental Studies for Social Sector	Vidharbha Region	Collective farming and marketing for food security and greater profitability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Created a group of 20 farmers having 2-3 acres of farmland) for cultivation of the same crops as per the market scenario or demand Farmers' Producer Company promoted Linkages established with the government for collective farming Imparted training to farmers for increasing the quality of production; established a market chain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collective farming helps in increasing incomes; concentrating farmers' skills on post-harvest technology will ensure that they get appropriate prices for their agricultural produce, hence affecting their profitability. Market linkages will also increase

Name of the Partner	Operational Area	Model/Good Practices	Details	Takeaways
NSVK – Naya Savera	Giridih, Koderma, Hazaribagh, Bokaro, Chatra, Palamu, Dhanbad, Gumla and Simdega	Zero cost farming and gravity flow irrigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost of cultivation reduced by promoting locally available resources (cow dung) Promoted gravity flow irrigation for vegetable cultivation thus reducing the use of electricity/diesel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both the practices helped in ensuring food security for 12 months which was limited to 6-7 months earlier Ensured seven more crops with the soil health test, improved irrigation practices, low cost organic initiatives, SRI, SWI and line sowing methods
Nongstoin Social Service Society	West Khasi Hills	Sacred groves - A traditional environment conservation practice by the Khasis of Meghalaya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sacred groves have been the best model of biodiversity conservation with rich flora and fauna Sacred groves help in maintaining the water cycle in local areas Promoted sustainable utilization and conservation of flora and fauna among children and the youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation of local biodiversity helps in increasing agricultural production, prosperity of the livestock and in soil and water conservation
MVSS	Sagar, Guna, Raisen, Ashok Nagar, Vidisha	Revitalizing agriculture extension through zero cost agriculture promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional practices for land preparation and seed conservation promoted among farmers Promoted multi-cropping/mix cropping and water resource management practices Popularized the use of traditional integrated pest management techniques (Matkakhad, Machhalikhad, Seengkhad, Neemkoti, green manure and natural growth promoters) Promoted production of bio-fertilizers (Rhizobium, Trichoderma, Azatobacter) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The model is sustainable due to its cost effectiveness and user friendly aspects Zero budget farming helped in increasing food and nutritional security of the families for 10-11 months
Jana Unnayan Samiti	8 districts, Dhalai, North/South/West Tripura	Sustainable livelihoods through various skill development activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided skill development training on preparing weed compost for manure, bio-pest repellent techniques and SRI Farmers linked to ICAR, NABARD and the Agriculture Department. Farmers' clubs formed and registered under NABARD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good linkages of farmers with different departments facilitated access to benefits of government schemes Focused training of farmers on the organic way of cultivation and SRI helped in enhancing crop productivity
Adilabad Human Promotion Society	Adilabad	Enhance food security by community based approaches for increasing food crops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dependency on external inputs in farming lessened by adopting mixed cropping and inter-cropping with legumes Techniques of water harvesting, drip irrigation, horticulture and livestock promoted Application of farmyard manure (FYM) promoted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water harvesting and conservation techniques and application of FYM and vermin compost Willingness among other farmers to follow the methods increased

Name of the Partner	Operational Area	Model/Good Practices	Details	Takeaways
Pragati	Jhabua, Madhya Pradesh	Indigenous agriculture systems for greater food security of tribal communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hedawaadi- the traditional farming system of vegetables and fruits was revived and promoted Plantation of fruits by families and marking for sugar apples and gooseberries promoted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uncultivated forest food ensured food availability during peak distress times (July-September)
Palli Unnayan Samiti	Sunderbans	Al Chaash (bund farming)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farmers took soil from their fields and made 1-2 feet high bunds around the land Bunds were used for vegetable cultivation along with paddy Farmers dug out soil and made bunds and the dugout part of the field was used for fish cultivation and the bund for vegetables in three seasons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bund farming has the potential enhance families' food security Use of traditional sustainable agriculture, particularly use of salt tolerant paddy seeds can ensure subsistence and incomes

