

Strengthening Decentralization for Poverty Reduction

A Logical Framework Analysis

Project Completion Report
Rural Decentralisation and Participatory Planning
for Poverty Reduction in Phiringia Block, Kandhamal, Orissa

Supported By
United Nations Development Programme, India

Project Implementation

NIPDIT

National Institute for People's Development Investigation and Training

College Road, Phulbani

Kandhamal, Orissa

Email: nipdit@rediffmail.com

1.0	Introduction	1
1.1	Context	1
1.2	Overview of Project Area	2
1.3	Area Coverage & Demographic Profile	2
1.4	Overall Objectives	3
1.5	Strategy, Resources & Partner Roles	3
1.5.1	Execution Strategy	3
1.5.2	Resources	3
1.5.3	Partners and their roles	4
2.0	Reporting on Project Output & Analysis	5
3.0	Reporting on Major Project Activities	10
3.1	Strengthening decentralization of decision-making and pro-poor development planning	10
3.2	Improving the fiscal domain of the PRIs for local level development through resource convergence and local resource mobilization	11
3.3	Enhancing the oversight function of the PRIs (especially gram sabhas) to strengthen transparency and accountability in local governance	11
3.4	Supporting enhanced devolution and autonomy of PRIs through facilitating policy-making for decentralization	12
4.0	Conclusions	14
4.1	Lessons Learnt	14
4.2	Project Methodologies	15
4.3	Strategies Adopted	15
4.4	Decentralization Tools used During Implementation	16
4.5	Challenges	16
Annexure		17

1. Introduction

1.1 Context

United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), the framework for all the coordinated action by the UN system has worked out 'strengthening decentralization' and 'promotion of gender equality' as the two priority goals. In pursuance to UNDAF, the Country Programme Review (CPR), 2002 undertaken by UNDP in collaboration with GOI has laid emphasis on strengthening the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs).

UNDP implemented the project "Rural Decentralization and Participatory Planning for Poverty Reduction"; in four states of Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Orissa in partnership with Planning Commission at the national level with the broad objective of making the project block the model for decentralization processes in the respective states. A total of eight districts (two in each state) were covered under this project. In Orissa, two blocks, Phiringia of Kandhamal and Bangiriposi of Mayurbhanj were the project areas.

NIPDIT, a voluntary organization with more than two decade of experience in tribal development executed the project in Phiringia block of Kandhamal district, Orissa.

1.2 Overview of Project Area

Phiringia is part of Kandhamal district, which was carved out of the district of Phulbani in 1994. The district comprises of 2 subdivisions, 12 Blocks, 2 Urban Local Bodies, 153 GPs and 2515 villages. The entire district lies in a high altitude zone with widespread inaccessible terrain of hilly ranges and narrow valley tracts that determines the livelihood pattern and socio-economic conditions of people. The district is ranked as a backward district. Its literacy rate is only 43.15% (male: 56.91%, Female: 29.49%). Density of Population in the district is only 81 and its IMR is one of the highest in the state i.e., 64.

Phiringia is one of the most backward blocks of the district wherein 73% of the population belongs to BPL category and the tribal population is 58.66%. There are 20 GPs in the block in which 11 are reserved for STs.

Education Status: Phiringia has one of the lowest literacy rates. It has poor educational infrastructure-1 college in the entire block having enrollment of 662 students, 10 high schools; one per two GPs and EGS or the primary school in less than 50% of the villages. (Source-Baseline Survey, NIPDIT).

Health Status: Phiringia is also quite backward in the health indicators. The entire block does not have a single CHC and there are only 5 PHCs in the entire block. Out of 20 GPs, only 14 have ANM centres and only 94 of the 236 villages have Anganwadi centres.

PRI Members' Profile: Phiringia is covered under PESA and most of the GPs are reserved for STs. There are a total of 243 ward members of which approximately 33% are women. All the 7 women Sarpanchs (out of 20 Sarpanchs) are from the GPs where the seats are reserved for women. There are 20 Samiti members and 2 ZP representatives from the block.

Revenue sources of the GPs: The major types of assets from which GPs generate revenue are NTFP, Pond, Shop Rent, Kirana shop, House, Tax on Vehicle, Market Complex, Cycle Token, Water tank, Haat, Selling of Cement Bags and other taxes. However, all the GPs had meager income from "Own Sources" (Kelapada-Rs. 30992, Ratanga-Rs. 12550, Jajespanga-Rs. 1400, Bandhagada Rs. 21830, Gochhapada-Rs. 32560, Dimiriguda-Rs. 7050, Taladandikia-Rs. 11000). The major items in which the functions have been decentralized were related to education, health and animal husbandry. The Standing Committees in none of the GPs were fully functional (In 10 GPs they were dysfunctional, in 7 functional but not vibrant and irregularities in 3 GPs). The major problems in the GPs are communication, electrification, drinking water, education, alcoholism, sanitation, village roads, and irrigation.

Performance of Schemes: Baseline survey undertaken during the inception of the project shows that there was not a single scheme which was operational in all the GPs. Most of the GPs had 1 to 4 schemes running. Among all the schemes, JGSY was operational in 13 GPs. It is worth the mention that in 3 GPs none of the schemes was being implemented. In one GP, 11 schemes were found to be operational which was maximum for any GP.

1.3 Area Coverage & Demographic Profile

The block comprises of 413 villages with a population of 77,259. Total number of households is 17150. The gender ratio is in favour of women (Total male population is 38458 & female population is 38801). Tribals are numerically

dominant with 67 percent of the total population followed by 29 percent SCs and 4 percent belonging to other social categories.

Beneficiary profile: 73 percent of all the families in the block come under BPL category. Only 524 families in the block are landless and not unlike other tribal areas people have problems of record of rights. The total number of skilled artisans is only 756 and they mostly belong to SC and OBC category. As per the baseline survey, the number of senior citizens receiving governmental benefits is only 971 which by any standards is very low.

1.4 Overall Objectives

The project had the following specific objectives under the broad objective of “making Phiringia (the project block) the model block for decentralization processes in the state (Orissa)”

1. Strengthening decentralization of decision-making & Pro-poor development planning
2. Improving the fiscal domain of the PRIs for local level development through resource convergence and local resource mobilization.
3. Enhancing the oversight function of the PRIs (especially *Gram Sabhas*) to strengthen transparency & accountability in local governance.
4. Supporting enhanced devolution & autonomy of PRIs through facilitating Policy-making for decentralization.

1.5 Strategy, Resources & Partner Roles

1.5.1 Execution Strategy

In sync with the objectives outlined above, NIPDIT formulated its own strategy to execute the project in the target area. They are the followings:

- Mass motivation and awareness building
- Capacity building of different stakeholders of the project
- Strengthening people’s engagement with Panchayati Raj Institutions
- Participatory development planning based on local diversity & learning process
- Engendering governance leadership
- Strengthening stakeholder’s associations
- Formation of NGO Consortium in the Block
- Convergence & collaboration
- Networking and Alliance building

1.5.2 Resources

The project team comprised of one Project Coordinator, two Training Coordinators, one Data Entry Operator and 20 Animators. The thematic heads of the organization (Gender, Disaster & Institution Building) also provided the knowledge and process inputs. One of the important arrangements in the project was to specially appoint one Animator per GP (with initial screening by the Sarpanch of the respective panchayat) who functioned as the links between the PRIs, community and the other implementing stakeholders of the project.

Apart from the resources from within the organization, expertise from outside, have been engaged in the project on the occasions of capacity building, preparation of MLP, mapping technical feasibility of the plan and in evaluation of the process & progress.

It is worth the mention that stakeholders' management (Govt. & PRI) as well as convergence & collaboration had the twin objectives of raising the stake of a wide-cross section and creating a resource pool that spearheaded learning process rather than top-down blue print approach.

The financial resource of Rs. 78, 00, 000 was allocated to NIPDIT by UNDP to execute the project. UNDP also provided Rs. 90,00,000 to DRDA, Kandhamal which had the component of Untied Fund support to the GPs.

1.5.3 Partners and their roles

At the State level, UNDP partnered with Department of Panchayati Raj, Cendret, XIM Bhubaneswar was the State level Resource Institution to provide technical inputs to the district level implementing partners. At the district level, District Administration, Kandhamal and NIPDIT (as NGO implementing partner) were responsible for execution of the project.

NIPDIT

- Mobilisation and working with the GPs and other stakeholders for undertaking assessment of local endowment problems, identification of community needs and preferences through participatory appraisal exercises.
- Facilitation of gender differentiated consultation and participation in the planning, implementation and monitoring process.
- Systematic consultation between a multiplicity of local development actors for participation in identification, selection, prioritization and implementation of development projects/initiatives/activities and drawing up micro plans.
- Documentation/facilitating updation of record keeping at panchayat level.
- Ensuring proper utilization of the untied funds by the GPs and the implementation of the micro-plans.
- Supporting capacity building of PRIs to raise resources of their own.
- Ensuring active role of the GS in community audit of accounts, selection of beneficiaries, functioning of the grassroots functionaries and holding elected officials accountable.
- Organization of public hearings and posting of budgets at public places for public access.
- Preparation of annual work plan and submission of financial and progress reports.

District Administration, Kandhamal

- Facilitation of coordination among stakeholders in implementation of the project and setting up a district level committee.
- Ensuring synergy & convergence with district programmes and RSVY (now BRGF)
- Facilitating the process of formulation of selected projects/actions with Panchayat Standing Committees and submission to block panchayats by the NGOs.
- Supporting the planning process at block and district level for sectoral and spatial integration of plans.

- Constituting technical support groups and hiring local resource persons for vetting and sanction of identified projects/initiatives.
- Developing local development financing plan including multi-year development budgets from different sources.
- Coordinating selection of Gram Panchayats (based on certain criteria) to develop a mechanism/framework to provide untied funds to pilot panchayats with other stakeholders
- Holding discussions to set up mechanisms for PRIs to raise resources of their own.
- Provisioning of guidelines to support GPs for presenting accounts and statements to the GS.
- Review of problems in linkages, administrative problems and facilitating coordination with various stakeholders including concerned line departments.
- Preparation of annual work plan and submission of financial and progress reports to the state government.

2. Reporting on Project Output & Analysis

Overall Logical Assessment (Qualitative)

Overall Objective	Output	Outcome Indicators	Description of results including quantitative results
Objective1 Strengthening decentralization of decision-making and pro-poor development planning	Integrated micro-plans developed at the GP level on a participatory basis	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community gains capability to devise its development plan based on diversity & learning processes 2. Community understands that preparation of micro-plan is a means to an end rather than an end in itself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Micro-plans developed in 236 Villages, subsequent consolidation at GP level plans and approval by the Gram Panchayat & Zilla Panchayat • Review of implementation of micro plan in village meetings, revisit in subsequent years & demand articulation for implementation of the same
	Need-based planning reflective of developmental needs of the community especially the weaker sections	Micro-plan becomes the guideline for implementation of development projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development interventions in the areas of agriculture, rural connectivity, health, poverty alleviation, natural resource management, education & commercial linkages • Road construction from Chirraguda to Padaripada & Road construction from Mandalipadar to Lampadar under NREGA, linkage of 3

			<p>beneficiaries under PDS in Pabingia & renovation of school wall in Pabingia through KL Grant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidences of people's reaction in case of plan deviation shows ownership of the plan
	Improve quality and extent of participation in planning process	Proportion of women regularly reviewing the progress on implementation of plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparatively larger representation of women (54-68%) in monthly & quarterly meetings organized for follow up of the micro-plans • Similarly, larger representation of women in MLP Revisit exercises undertaken in 2007 & 2008, public hearings and Social Audit exercises • Women made VLL in execution of NREGS work
	Micro plans reflect influence of the poor, women and marginalized communities in resource allocation	Participation level of women and poor families in expressing their issues/ needs in ward level/Gram Sabha level meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By the end of 2007 i.e, with the completion of MLP process, the average participation in the Gram Sabha reached 400 • Increase in participation is common to the entire village • In 2008, women participation in Gram Sabhas went upto 40-50% • Women representation & participation in Issue-based committees • Women participation & leadership evident in Public Hearings & NREGA Campaign
3 0 = 2	Gram Panchayats raise more	Extent of system development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GPs have increased their

	tax (including fees, cess, levies) resources without negative equity effects	for tax, non-tax revenue generation at panchayat and higher level	income through the avenues of GP Haat/Market complex, Vegetable storage, Processing units & Farmers' Outlet
	Participatory plan made by each GP to create income generating assets	Key areas of investment in Activity Plan prepared at the level of the GP prioritizes creation of income generating assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panchayats have articulated the demand for creation of income generating assets like; farm outlets, turmeric/oil processing units, rural lighting, infrastructure for drinking water & vegetable storage as key areas of investment in Activity Plans
	Better integration of planning by line departments and intermediate/district panchayats with GP micro plans	No. of items/planned activities of approved Panchayat plans covered/accepted in NREGA/BRGF or similar ongoing Government initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road construction from Chirraguda to Padaripada & Road construction from Mandalipadar to Lampadar under NREGA, linkage of 3 beneficiaries under PDS in Pabingia & renovation of school wall in Pabingia through KL Grant.
	Preparation of plan for utilization of untied funds to fund gaps in micro-plans	Identification of key areas of investment in GP level activity plan for capability enhancement and synergy building with fund support under existing programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GPs have identified key areas of investment under untied fund like; support for establishment of Panchayat Resource Centre to help farmers in procuring farm equipments, establishment of GP level library & Information Centres, support for Village Education Committee, gender training, organic farming, support for IGP to SHGs, vocational training & self-employment, solar lighting system, solar WLL phone, television & computer for GP

<p>Objective 3 Enhancing the oversight function of the PRIs (especially Gram Sabhas) to strengthen transparency & accountability in local governance</p>	<p>Gram Sabha better informed about plan, activities, budget, coverage of Gram Panchayats</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Palli Sabha & Gram Sabhas are held regularly with participation of all the cross-sections to articulate developmental issues & concerns 2. Community establishes its monitoring & vigilance system 	<p>office.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 140-150 village meetings per month with average participation ranging from 22 to 35 with women participation varying between 37 to 52% • Public Hearings on health delivery services, education, PDS & implementation of NREGA • Campaign on NREGS for proper implementation • Formation of Issue-based committees • Formation of Social Audit Team
	<p>Clarity on power & functions among the PRI functionaries improves & the systems, procedures & institutional structures of Panchayati Raj get strengthened.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The system, procedure and institutional structures in Panchayati Raj function well 2. PRI representatives lead the community development & empowerment initiatives & processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reorganization of the GP level Standing committees • Development of Monitoring Format by the Standing Committees • PRI representatives lead the community development & empowerment process. (See Case Studies)
	<p>Increased knowledge on the functioning of PRI and its goal of community development informed with social justice</p>	<p>Type of social justice issues addressed during social audit/plans review meetings in Gram Sabha/Gram Panchayat meetings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PRI representatives in panchayat meetings & people in village meetings deliberate on the issues of liquor, pension schemes, drinking water, housing, education and Women & Child development.

	Gram Panchayat accounting, record keeping and reporting improves	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> No. of GPs adhering to the rules & regulations for Financial Management as per the "Gram Panchayat Manual" No. of GPs prepare their Annual Activity Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 33 types of documents (including registers, receipt books, cash books etc.) are maintained by the GPs All the GPs prepare their Annual Activity Report
Objective 4 Supporting enhanced devolution & autonomy of PRIs through facilitating Policy-making for decentralization	GP improves core governance functions and delivery of civic services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> GPs hold regular monthly meetings and PRI representatives monitor service delivery Types of service delivery that is monitored by the PRI Representatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All the GPs hold regular monthly meetings & all the Standing Committees (7 types) hold regular meetings Standing Committee monitors service delivery with the help of a monitoring format PRI representatives in all the GPs monitor works under NREGS, worksite facilities & distribution of commodities under PDS
	Improved delivery of assigned functions, through oversight, converged resources, better targeting and community mobilization	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> PRIs are engaged in people's education on rights-based approach to development & take up the concerns of entitlements Types of service delivery that has improved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularization of PDS in Kasinipadar GP following the Public Hearing Linkage of poor households with Antodaya scheme in Pabingia GP Timely wage payment under NREGS in Balandapada GP
	GPs have functional and institutional autonomy as provided by CAA and state Act and policy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Development projects are implemented as per the plans prepared in the panchayat Community holds the official accountable for omissions & commissions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction of roads to inaccessible villages, renovation of school building, regularization of health services & PDS undertaken as per the plan finalized in the Panchayat

		3. Panchayat performs its compulsory & optional works without let or hindrance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a public hearing held in Kasinipadar, administration acceded to panchayat's demand of stringent action against the errant official responsible for irregularity in distribution of PDS
	Project lessons shared with state government to improve policy environment	Framework/guidelines of block/Gram Panchayat planning developed and shared with planning board/ concerned authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing of project lessons at National Review & State Review • Sharing of consolidated micro plans • Sharing of Block Human Development report

3. Reporting on Major Project Activities

3.1 Strengthening decentralization of decision-making and pro-poor development planning

Sl. No.	Particular/Activities	Cumulative Figures		Participants	
		Planned Activities	Achieved Activities	Male	Female
1	Selection of Local NGOs	1	1	12	4
2	Recruitment & Orientation of the Animators	Recruitment & Orientation of Animators in all the 20 GPs			
3	Review of Animators' Performance	Monthly review of all the 20 GP level Animators			
4	Capacity Building of PRI Representatives	20	20	336	223
5	Orientation program for members of GP level Standing Committee	20	20	313	108
6	Orientation of members of Block level Standing Committee	1	1	22	7
7	Orientation of members of District level Standing Committee	1	1	16 persons	
8	Development of Monitoring tools for Standing Committee	Development of 4 formats			
9	Training on Documentation	1	1	37	9
10	Training of Facilitators on MLP	1	1	15	8
11	MLP exercise at the village level	236	236	2832	1888
12	Gap filling Process	Done with the support of SRI, XIM, Bhubaneswar			
13	Sharing at Gram Panchayat level MLP	20 GP level MLPs have been shared with			

		the respective panchayats			
14	Consolidation at Panchayat Level	All the 236 village level MLPs have been consolidated into 20 GP level MLP			
15	Approval by Gram Panchayat & Zilla Panchayat	All the GP level MLPs have been approved by the respective Gramsabha			
16	Revisit of MLP	2 Prog.s in each of the 20 GPs	20	2563	1288
17	Orientation of the GP Functionaries on Record-keeping	1 Prog. in each of the 20 GPs	1 Prog. in each of the 20 GPs	63	17

3.2 Improving the fiscal domain of the PRIs for local level development through resource convergence and local resource mobilization

Sl. No.	Particular/Activities	Cumulative Figures		Participants	
		Planned Activities	Achieved Activities	Male	Female
1	Assessment of GP level Resource Mobilization & Resource Convergence	Assessment done in the case of all the 20 GPs			
2	Preparation of strategy for RCRM	Strategy preparation has been undertaken in case of all the GPs			
3	Activity Plan for Untied Fund	Done in all the 20 GPs			
4	Workshop on RCRM	20	20	272	135
5	Training on Financial Management	1	1	37	9
6	CBT for SHGs	39	-	-	1147
7	Credit Need Assessment & development of BDP	380 SHGs of 20 GPs			
8	Preparatory meeting of SHGs for Federation Building	177 SHGs comprising of 1289 members			
9	Orientation on Co-operative Management	1	1		28
10	Physical & Financial Review at the GP level	20 GPs		304	109

3.3 Enhancing the oversight function of the PRIs (especially gram sabhas) to strengthen transparency and accountability in local governance

Sl. No.	Particular/Activities	Cumulative Figures		Participants	
		Planned Activities	Achieved Activities	Male	Female
1	Organization of Village Meetings	-	3039	55265	40029
2	Cultural Shows	60	60	Approximately,	

				500 participants in each of the prog.	
3	Organization of cycle rally	20	20	45 village meetings	
4	Preparation of IEC Material (Leaflets, posters, booklets)	73 rd Amendment, PESA, Gender Integration, NREGA, PDS, Voting Rights, FRA, Hand book on Social Audit, Video CD "The Missing Link", Audio CD "Nua Sakala", Periodical "Swayata Sasan"			
5	Organization of Public Hearing	20	20	3734	5650
6	Exposure visit	3	3	60	28
7	Formation of Issue-based committees	-	-	66	66
8	Formation of GP Social Audit Committee	20 GPs		124	61
9	Formation of Disaster Management Committees	In 20 GPs, 120 Male & 69 Female			
10	Orientation for Social Audit Team			13	13
11	Orientation to PRI on Social Audit Process	Organized in 12 GPs, 236 participants			
12	Training on Gender Sensitization	10	10	122	53
13	Block level rally on Education Issues	213 participated & organization of 41 village meetings			
14	Capacity building of GP functionaries on record keeping & Internal Audit	229 persons in 20 GPs			
15	Cycle rally on NREGA	32 village meetings in 20 GPs			
16	Study on Gender Integration	Data collection from 10 villages of 5 GPs			
17	NREGA Benchmark Study	Data collected from 94 worksites in 20 GPs			
18	Study on Issue of Liquor	Study conducted in 120 villages of 20 GPs			
19	Rally on Anti-liquor	20 GPs, 132 village level meetings, 3 cultural programs & 1 Mass Meeting			
20	Study on PDS	Data collection from 756 HHs in 66 villages of 15 GPs			
21	Stakeholders' Consultation on Forest Rights	-	-	198	50

3.4 Supporting enhanced devolution and autonomy of PRIs through facilitating policy-making for decentralization

Sl. No.	Particular/Activities	Cumulative Figures		Participants	
		Planned Activities	Achieved Activities	Male	Female

1	Block level Consultation	1	1	300 participants
2	Consultation with NGOs	1	1	Representatives of 26 NGOs participated
3	Block level co-ordination meeting	2	2	72 participants
4	Sharing of Project learning in Quarterly Progress Review conducted by UNDP, Orissa			
5	Sharing of Project learning in National Review			
6	Process support to the GPs for Internal Audit of the GP	1 in each of the 20 GP	1 in each of the 20 GP	
7	Process support to the GPs for preparation of Annual Activity Report	1 in each of the 20 GP	1 in each of the 20 GP	
8	Preparation of "Process Documentation of Decentralization Process": Sharing of Experience in Phiringia, Kandhamal, Orissa	Document developed by external development consultants with inputs from Social Animators & organizations' project responsibility holders & shared with Dist., block & GP Officials, PRI representatives, CSOs working in Governance issues and other support organizations		
9	Preparation of " Process Document of Micro Level Planning"	Document developed by external development consultants with inputs from Social Animators & organizations' project responsibility holders & shared with Dist., block & GP Officials, PRI representatives, CSOs working in Governance issues and other support organizations		
10	Visual documentation of process & outcome of participatory development, "The Missing Link"	Document developed by external development consultants with inputs from Social Animators & organizations' project responsibility holders & shared with Dist., block & GP Officials, PRI representatives, CSOs working in Governance issues and other support organizations		
11	Documentation of Success stories in Oriya ("Dura Nuhein Aau Gram Swarajya") & English ("Empowering the 3 rd Tier of Panchayati Raj")	Document developed by social animators & project responsibility holders & shared with Dist., block & GP Officials, PRI representatives, CSOs working in Governance issues and other support organizations		
12	Publication of Guidelines on Social Audit (Oriya; "Samajika Sameeksya Margadarshika", English; "Trainers' Handbook on Social Audit")	Document developed by social animators & project responsibility holders & shared with Dist., block & GP Officials, PRI representatives, CSOs working in		

		Governance issues and other support organizations			
13	Development of E-Album on Project activities of RD Project	Document developed by external development consultants with inputs from Social Animators & organizations' project responsibility holders & shared with Dist., block & GP Officials, PRI representatives, CSOs working in Governance issues and other support organizations			
14	Preparation of "Block Human Development Report"	Document developed by external development consultants with inputs from Social Animators & organizations' project responsibility holders			
15	Press Meet on Progress & Prospect of RD Project	1	1	18	3
16	Workshop on "Block Human Development Report"	1	1	13	2
17	GP level Project Closing Workshop	20	20	2145	1742
18	Block Level Project Closing Workshop	1	1	230	285

Other Important Activities (Peace Building Meetings & Cultural Shows)

Peace Building GP level meetings& cultural programs in the aftermath of Kandhamal Riot was organized in the project areas for communal harmony and to restoration of peace. 18 GP level Cultural shows and 1 at district headquarter of Kandhamal i.e., Phulbani were organized under the initiative. On an average, 100 persons participated in the Pace Building Meetings & approximately, 300 participated in each of the cultural shows.

4. Conclusions

4.1 Lessons Learnt

The experience of development of micro plan based on local diversity and learning process shows the way for participatory development where articulation of people's need and its incorporation in the plan creates ownership among the people. This is evident in adequate factorization of the needs of the weaker section especially that of the women. Preparation of micro plan helps in creation of a sense of ownership among the people and leads to demand generation.

Preparation of micro plan makes the community aware of their entitlement relation with the institutions of governance. Development demand generated within the community gets the expression & vigour of demand for entitlements when people are involved in the planning process.

Most often the stereotypes like gender stereotypes lie buried in the collective psyche. Collective analysis leads to its extirpation where the community willingly does away with the practice as has been observed during project implementation where women have been made VLLs.

Common action to articulate development needs is more often a successor to participatory planning. A community can't be goaded into common action unless & until there is a collective thinking on community development.

Instruments of transparency & accountability can be prudently used by the community to demand entitlements. We have observed that some of the community members have used Right To Information demanding their entitlements.

In making the PRI the institutions of community development and community empowerment it is important that capacity building initiatives are undertaken for different stakeholders. Equally important is the strengthening the systems, procedures & institutional structures. There are evidences where the trained PRI representatives have become the rallying point of community initiative to demand its entitlements.

Conflicting situation emerged between EO and Sarpanch regarding maintaining T & A. In few cases, it emerged that PRI was interested to share the information but the EO seemed reluctant and projected him/herself as the head of the institution.

At the same time it was observed that the PRI representatives are ignorant of most of the circulars and orders of the government bearing directives on devolution of power (fund, functions & functionaries). Such ignorance makes the PRI representatives play second fiddle to the GP functionaries.

4.2 Project Methodologies

NIPDIT adhered to the following project methodologies

- Multi stakeholder management
- Investment on capacities & environment Building
- Collaboration synergy with Governmental efforts
- Human Resources
- Grassroots NGOs as Partner
- Operationalising Instruments like MLP, SC & Social Audit

4.3 Strategies Adopted

In implementation of the project NIPDIT based on its more than two decades experience in community mobilization adopted some of the time-tested strategies and brought about some innovations as well.

Phiringia not being its operational area, NIPDIT approached the community taking on board the District Administration & other grassroots level NGOs those who had presence in the area

From the very beginning, NIPDIT organized consultation of the NGOs explaining the objectives of the project and solicited the views & opinions of the participating NGOs on strategies & programs that had to be undertaken in realization of the project goals. A participatory resource mapping exercise of the NGOs was undertaken and on the basis of the expertise of the NGOs partnership was solicited.

NIPDIT along with the District Administration organized a Block level consultation where PRI representatives, community leaders & other members of the community were apprised of the project objectives & activities.

The most important link between the implementing organization and the community were the social animators who were selected from among the community. It is worth the mention that all the Animators were recruited on the basis of recommendation of the Sarpanchs of the respective panchayats.

The most important activity that was undertaken with utmost meticulousness was the capacity building of the PRI representatives & the social animators. Organization of the village meetings in the beginning of the project accustomed the community with the broad activities of the project.

Folk media & IEC materials were used innovatively to create awareness among the community on the rules, provisions, functions & powers of the Gram Sabha & Palli Sabha. Once the community was made aware of the

powers of the Palli Sabha & Gram Sabha and realized the importance of attending it, there was hardly any difficulty in regularizing it.

NIPDIT took care to undertake a study before launching a common action program or a campaign. All the action research were undertaken by the Social Animators where the community could introspect on the status, problem & prospect of the issue. For example, in the beginning of the project Baseline Survey detailing the socio-economic profile, infrastructural facilities & livelihood options was undertaken. Similarly, Study on aspects of Gender Integration as undertaken before the commencement of training on Gender Sensitization, survey on PDS was undertaken before organization of Public Hearings on PDS, Survey on implementational status of NREGA was undertaken before launching of Campaign on NREGS.

The most important strategy was development of participatory micro-plan that made all the sections within the community a stakeholder of the project. It is important to note that training was imparted to the facilitators as well as key informants from within the community before the MLP exercise was undertaken. The sense of ownership of the plan could be brought about with the participation of the community and approval of the Gram Sabha, block panchayat & zilla panchayat.

Another important strategy of the project was strengthening the existing system, procedure & institutional structures of PRI. Not only was there reorganization of the Standing Committees, there were programs of reorientation of the members. The Standing Committees were facilitated to devise Monitoring Tools to systematically go about their work.

Common action on NREGS, PDS and Liquor brought the community closer. Similarly, formation of Issue-based committees, Social Audit Team, Social Audit Committees provided the community an institutional structure to spearhead their demands for entitlements.

No less important was the Project Management System where the Project was monitored at every step of its progress & process. The performance of the animators as well as the project responsibility holders were monitored on a monthly basis.

NIPDIT has hired both individual & institutional expertise. Inputs solicited from State Resource Institute (CENDERET, XIMB), State Institute for Rural Development (SIRD) and some experienced development professionals have provided the project responsibility holders and the implementing organization insights.

The coordination & synergy with the District Administration in supplementing & complementing the initiatives & expertise provided the strength of a unified effort in course of implementation of the project.

4.4 Decentralization Tools used During Implementation

NIPDIT used the following decentralization tools during implementation of the project

- Preparation of participatory Micro Level Plans
- Capacity building of the Community
- Community managed institutions (Social Audit Committees, Social Audit Teams, Issue-based Committees)
- Community based monitoring & Vigilance Systems
- Facilitation for community devised Monitoring Tools
- Strengthening the systems, procedures & institutional structures of PR System
- Development of analytical skill among the members of the community through action research

4.5 Challenges

- Drawing people's faith and ownership at initial stage is difficult as it demands environment building initiative at community level
- Sometimes, key informants dominated the process where others were sidelined and ensuring everyone's participation became a problem
- Formation of a core-planning group raised expectations of the members wherein they started thinking of financial gains.
- The budget was planned on people's knowledge without appropriate technical analysis which may not have had actual fund requirements.
- Plans raised people's expectation to a greater degree and they repetitively asked Animators and project staff about the execution of plans and progress status.
- Certain social welfare schemes are for individuals in which individual interests are dominant over the community and collective interest. Trained community groups play a crucial role in this regard
- Lack of representation of people from each hamlet sometimes sidelined the process in favour of members representing the other hamlets. In interior GPs where a numbers of hamlets are scattered, the plan can be skewed to any particular hamlet within GP.
- Participation of PRI members and government officials sometimes sway or distract the process. Their non-participation can also bring in the issue of future ownership of plan execution.
- Difficulties in perspective building as people fail to visualize the situation unless it is highlighted and put forth through a special learning exercise.
- When completion of any work takes longer time, people normally loose interest to discuss the work and the money spent on it.
- Ward members are normally ignorant of different development activities and their active participation remains a distant possibility.
- Normally much more discussion takes place on type of work to be done and where to be done but after the work is completed; quality of work or on funds utilization is not discussed.

Promoting Gender Equality in PRIs: Kaushalya Malik, Sarpanch, Phiringia

Kaushalya lives in Sunakadu village under Phiringia Gram Panchayat. Sunakadu is one of the intervention villages under the UNDP RD project. Like most inhabitants of the village, Kaushalya belongs to a farmer family. She is educated upto 10th grade. Kaushalya stands out as a curious, aware and active person and has participated in various development works in and around her village. She is the president of the women's Self Help Group initiated by CART, a local NGO. The group has been active since 2002 and has 22 members.

Kaushalya is one of the five persons conferred with the President's Award for commendable work under WATSAN (Water and Sanitation program) from Kandhamal district. Being a member of SHG has provided many learning opportunities for Kaushalya. She has received training on SHG's, women's participation in PRI etc. She has been in close interaction with the Animators (under the RD project) and has known the project since its inception. She was particularly influenced by the gender mainstreaming training. When the post of the Sarpanch for Sunakadu was declared reserved for Scheduled Tribe Woman, Kaushalya decided to contest for the post. The SHG members supported the idea and made collective efforts by campaigning for her. Altogether six nominations were filed of which four contested elections. Kaushalya won by 200 votes, a remarkable margin considering that the total number of votes for the GP is only 5000 and that there were four contenders for the post. Following her election as Sarpanch, Kaushalya has attended training programs on Micro Level Planning (MLP), functioning of Standing Committees, PRI etc. She feels that the MLP has improved her understanding of problems and needs of the village and she is able to think of the whole village as a unit.

In March 2008, Kaushalya went for an exposure visit to Bolpur district of West Bengal to see the systems and functions of GP. She was a keen observer and had a very sound idea of what could be learned and applied in her own work. She felt that the indirect election of PRI (as prevalent in WB) is a good system because the Sarpanch can act as a village level official without being troubled directly by people with hidden interests. She also felt that the concept of Gram Unnayan Samiti (Village Development Committee) where all the villagers are members with a president and a secretary is not replicable in her own area. She, however, was very impressed by the extensive coverage of SHGs in Bolpur. Clearly, Kaushalya has been able to understand the different contexts of the two places and appreciates what she thinks will improve things in her own region.

Kaushalya feels that the RD interventions at the village level have helped create awareness among people about Palli Sabha and Gram Sabha and people are able to raise questions. She explained that the PRI officials in her block are more aware than their counterparts in other blocks because of the interventions under RD program.

(Based on personal interview in Sunakadu village, Phiringia GP, Nov 2008)

RTI Makes life easier: Jaleshwar Kanhar, Ward Member, Dimiriguda

Jaleswar Kanhar, a 52 year old man belongs to Sripalla village of Dimiriguda Gram Panchayat in Kandhamal District. Jaleswar is known among the villagers for his proactive attitude and selfless service to the community. He has been very active in the Rural Decentralisation program being implemented in his village. From the beginning of the project, he has helped in organizing village level activities such as awareness and training programs. He himself attended various orientation and training programs. Later he contested Panchayat elections and was elected as ward member.

In Jan 2007 NIPDIT conducted a training programme in Dimiriguda about Disaster coordination and management where Jaleswar was one of the participants. The training helped him to understand the role of PR officials in disaster management. After his election as ward member he participated in trainings on the roles and functions of PRIs. The training had a special component on Right to Information (RTI) Act, which generated a lot of interest and discussion on the topic. Jaleshwar was deeply interested in the provisions of RTI and considered it a useful input.

In an unfortunate incident, a stray dog bit a young girl from a very poor family of the village. The girl was taken to the Community Health Centre (CHC) at Phiringia Block HQ where she was immediately given an injection free of cost. Other injections were scheduled for the following days. However, on the second day, the family was told that the hospital has run out of stock for the injection and that they could buy the injection from the pharmacy, which was located in the hospital campus. The cost of one injection was Rs. 700, a big sum for the poor family. The family had no option but to manage the sum and purchase the injection.

When Jaleshwar came to know about the incident, he decided to use Right to Information Act for getting the details of the medicine supplies and stock at the CHC. Under the RTI Act, the hospital authorities were supposed to furnish the details as asked. This meant revealing the fact that the stock was available and that the hospital authorities were involved in malpractice in collusion with the pharmacy store. The authorities then requested Jaleshwar to withdraw his RTI application and agreed to pay Rs. 700 to the girl's family. Jaleshwar finally withdrew the application when the family was paid back.

Making PDS Transparent: Gochhapada

Gochhapada is a remote and backward Panchayat under Phiringia block. Over the years, a number of development programs have attempted to reduce vulnerability of people and to improve their living standards but there has been no perceivable change in the overall situation. Gochhapada is one of the villages under the UNDP RD program. The villagers and the PRI functionaries, including the Standing Committee members have been provided trainings on their roles, functions and possible contribution to the local self-governance system.

A recent incident in this village made the villagers take an unexpected step of exercising their rights as PRI functionaries and citizens. This is with respect to The Public Distribution System (PDS) which is an attempt of the government towards food security. Under the system, the PDS stores provide a quota of rice to selected families listed as Below the Poverty Line (BPL) families. The quota differs for families listed under Antyodaya and Annapurna schemes, designed to provide food security to extremely vulnerable families. In Gochhapada, the PDS store was not providing the allocated quota of rice to the beneficiary families for a long time. Several complaints were made during GP meetings and public meetings but to no avail since the Secretary of the GP were involved in the malpractice of selling the allocated rice to outsiders. However, the secretary and the storekeeper were caught red handed by two PRI members and some local youth while they were trying to transport 5 bags of rice from the store. When the PRI members and youth questioned them, the secretary used abusive language and challenged their right to interfere with the government system. Meanwhile a large crowd of villagers and beneficiaries gathered at the store. The PRI representatives contacted the district administration and demanded justice. Although some political leaders tried to interfere into the matter, the villagers remained adamant and the culprits were finally handed over to police. Following the incident, PRI members and people have become more aware and watchful of the development works in their village. Some PRI members/ issue-based committee members (formed during Public Hearing) acknowledge that training, information and constant interaction through the UNDP RD project has helped in making the local governance more transparent & accountable.

Public Hearing as a tool for decentralized governance: Taladandikia

Taladandikia GP is one among the twenty GPs of Phiringia Panchayat Samiti in Kandhamal district. It is situated 20 km south to the Phiringia Panchayat Samiti HQ. The bus service is available till Bandhagada, 11k.m from Phiringia. The rest of the 9 km journey to Taladandakia has to be covered by foot or on twowheeler. Provision of an all-Weather road-link to this village still remains a dream for the village. The isolation poses many barriers to social and economic development of the people of Taladandakia. The benefits of the development programs have remained limited to handful of influential persons.

The project on "Poverty Reduction and Decentralization of Power" has been implemented in the Phiringia Panchayat Samiti since February 2005 through joint efforts of the district administration and NIPDIT, with financial support from UNDP, New Delhi. Under this project, a variety of awareness programmes and skill development programs have been conducted in the project villages.

Public Hearings (Jan Sunwai) at the Panchayat level, aimed at ensuring effective implementation of various governmental programmes, is one of the most significant aspects of this project. In the Jan Sunwai held at Taladandakia, representatives of all government departments took part and discussed the issues put forward by the communities. The discussions focused on the irregularities in various schemes and facilities, especially in PDS, schools etc. As a result of open discussion and on the spot action, most of these irregularities have stopped. This has increased people's confidence and has encouraged them to monitor the programs themselves. People who had always maintained a fearful distance from government employees considering them powerful and inaccessible are now able to question them. The response time of the same government officials has changed for better. It is also a fact that the same officials or employees presently work better than before and help people in need. NREGS is now put to effect in this Gram Panchayat. Awareness generation & information dissemination has succeeded in selection of right leader for co-coordinating the work. Over a thousand people from this village have found wage-earning engagements in construction of roads and desilting of ponds in their Gram Panchayat after they were provided with job cards under the NREGS. The increased awareness has led to timely payment of wages. Besides this, the provision of training for the Sarpanchs and other panchayati raj representatives under the UNDP Project has enabled the PRI to become an institution responsive to the needs of community development & empowerment.

People of this Gram Panchayat believe that if the micro plans developed by the villagers are followed, their village can become a model of inclusive development process.

(This case was prepared by Animator Chittaranjan Kanhar in Oriya)