

ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

MANAVA ADHIKAR SEVA SAMITI

(MASS)

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Message from the Desk

Dear Friends,

In our developmental journey, 2021-22 will remain a landmark year for us all. This is due to the impact of the coronavirus, which brought about worry, tension, and fear regarding life and livelihoods, permeating every aspect of our daily lives. The unexpected and complete halt to all activities caught everyone by surprise, and it was no different for MASS. Our normal life of engaging with communities came to an abrupt stop. The biggest challenge for us was how to mobilize resources and reach our primary stakeholders.

Despite financial constraints, MASS played a steadying role and found timely solutions to keep team motivation and energy high. Moreover, by empowering the rural poor, we have created lasting ripples of change that lift families and entire communities out of poverty.

None of this would have been possible without the trust and faith of our supporters, donors, and well-wishers. We express our gratitude to everyone who works for MASS, especially our donors, supporters, and well-wishers, for their timely cooperation.

We are extremely thankful to the state, district, and block administrations for their cooperation in our efforts. We are also truly grateful to everyone in the MASS family for everything they did during these tough times. We feel confident that we are stronger and wiser to face future challenges.

This year's annual report showcases the impact we've had on so many people across our operational areas. As we move towards another year, we look forward to bringing meaningful change to the lives of the poor we work with. We also anticipate fostering lasting partnerships to help us achieve our organizational purpose and ambitions.

Best Wishes,

Chittaranjan Hota
Secretary

ABOUT MASS:

MASS is a leading community based humanitarian organization dedicated to fighting poverty and social injustice. We place special emphasis empowering scheduled tribe, scheduled caste, women, children and vulnerable youths because our three decades of experience show that their empowerment benefits whole communities. MASS works more than 15,000 HHs in two states i.e. Odisha and Chhatisgarh. There's no magic formula behind MASS's ability, year after year, to reach so many people. Our impact is the result of our experience, partnerships and strategy.

At MASS, we take pride in our mission to serve individuals and families in the State's poorest communities. But we never let our pride obscure the simple fact that none of our work would be possible without the generosity and compassion of our donors. With their support we could reach the larger vulnerable people with tools and information to promote gender equality and empower the poorest of the poor to claim their rights.

MASS strongly believes that the disadvantaged need opportunities, not charity. Our aim is to make the disadvantaged self-reliant thereby enabling them to lead a life of dignity.

VISION: A society where communities are empowered enough to analyse their own problems, assess their own needs, strengths, and prospects (avenues), fix/plan their own developmental goals and are equally capable of acting towards attaining these goals in self-sustaining ways to live a dignified life of their own.

MISSION: To dedicate itself as a facilitating institution in the development of the downtrodden masses to develop their socio-economic and cultural condition through facilitation of participatory Research, Training, Networking, Advocacy and Action Initiatives both at the grassroots and at a broader level.

VALUES: Transformation Integrity Diversity Excellence Equality

LEGAL STATUS:

- SRA Registration number & date: 1898-249 Of 1988-89
- Date of Registration: 03.11.1988

- FCRA Registration: Registered under FCRA dated on 29.07.1991 bearing No: 105060032
- Registration under Income Tax: Registered under 12A of Income Tax Act.
- PAN No. AAAAM2540E
- TAN No. BBNM02201D
- 12AB No. AAAAM2540EE19944
- 80g No. - AAAAM2540EF19934
- CSR 1 No.- CSR00022577
- NGO DARPAN ID. - OR/2017/0161384

DEVELOPMENTAL INTERVENTIONS:

- Community Health, Education and Child Projection
- Empowerment of women and livelihood Promotion
- Agriculture and allied activities
- Natural Resource Development Program (Jal, Jameen& Jungle)
- Climate Change and Environment conservation
- Migration Services Program

STAKEHOLDERS:

- Multiple Marginalized women from rural poor
- Children under difficult circumstances
- Unskilled and unemployed youth
- Small and marginal farming communities and forest dwellers

COVERAGE

- States covered: Odisha
- No of Districts covered: 4
- No of Blocks covered: 19
- No of GPs covered: 76
- No of villages covered: 327

Activity Highlights for 2021-2022

Education services for children under difficult circumstances:

Mass believes that every child should have access to quality education. Consequently, MASS is dedicated to ensuring that children in tribal-dominated villages have such access. Typically, tribal children face challenges attending school regularly due to poverty, often engaging in child labor. Moreover, parents in these villages may not prioritize education. The lack of both supply and demand for education in these areas further hinders children from attending school, and many migrate for work on a daily or seasonal basis. Compounding these issues, teacher absenteeism is prevalent in many places. Hence, MASS is committed to enhancing access to education for these children, also addressing concerns related to out-of-school education, early childhood care, and pre-primary education.



Outcomes of the interventions include:

- Identification and enrollment of 156 child laborers in schools, ensuring the continuity of their education.
- Increased participation of SHG members in sending their daughters to higher education.
- Admission of 19 girls from Dakara GP in college.
- Provision of counseling for parents and children to cope with their day-to-day situations.
- Special emphasis on girls' and women's education to empower them and their families educationally.

Establishment of Seasonal hostel for migrant children:

For children from migrant families, MASS manages a project called Seasonal Hostels. The objective behind running such schools is to sustain continuous mobilization efforts for



guardians, School Management Committees (SMC), and directly for the children of migrating families. These children were compelled to accompany their parents to work in brick kilns. Parents, well-aware of the seasonal hostels, leave their children before outmigration.

Overall Outcomes:

From 2021 to the school year 2022, 810 children have enrolled in 16 Seasonal Hostels. MASS has been selected by the planning coordinator of Bargarh district for monitoring and supervising the seasonal hostels.

By the order and recommendation of SSA, District Project Coordinator, Bargarh, MASS developed a collaboration plan with 16 head teachers, BRCC, CRCC, and 3 block and district planning coordinators.

Joint efforts have been taken to ensure the success of the Seasonal Hostel and all its activities. This led to organizing 57 guardian meetings, 32 SMC meetings, and 3 joint meetings cum orientations with the help of BRCC, CRCC, Block Officer, guardians, and SMC.

Intensive discussions were conducted to understand and implement decisions that helped mobilize migrant families at the village level to send their children to seasonal hostels.

The 810 children enrolled in seasonal hostels are covered by United Insurance Company (16 nos.).

Two SMC trainings and two seasonal hostel staff trainings have contributed to better planning and management.

ID Cards have been provided to all children, and close collaboration with the CRC and the headmaster ensures quality in the school.

A public display of emergency numbers, a social map, a list of children, a menu, and a daily routine was made available. This activity has been carried out in association with Lok Drusthi organization with the active cooperation of district education officers under Sarva Sikshya Abhijan.

Child Protection Programs:



MASS is committed to enhancing the recognition and redress of violations of children's protection rights. Staff

members operating at the village level are oriented in this regard. Notably, the Paikmal block of Bargarh district is a migration capital, where more than 22% of children migrate with their families or alone. MASS continually raises awareness about safe migration before the actual movement occurs.

Mobile Van Campaign

MASS organized a campaign using banners, posters, packs of cards, and leaflets, utilizing a decorated van that moved through various locations. The campaign covered one block, three panchayats, and 10 villages in a day, reaching more than 200 people. A memorandum with signatures was submitted to the state head, and local market awareness was also conducted.



Child Sensitization Program:



Twenty-five students from 6th to 7th class in Jamseth School, Jamseth GP, Paikmal Block, Bargarh district, were sensitized about child issues, adverse impacts of child migration, and provisions for child education, protection, rehabilitation, and health. A drawing competition was held, encouraging the students and building their confidence.

Stakeholder Meeting:



A meeting was conducted on child movement, trafficking, and the government's role in Paikmal block, Bargarh district, with the involvement of 35 leaders from various committees and groups. The meeting discussed the root causes of child runaway incidents, missing children, and issues related to mobility and migration. Stakeholders signed a demand paper to be sent to the state head.

Community Sensitization:



A program held at Bararahmantal village under Bartunda Panchayat, Paikmla Block, Bargarh district, focused on child issues. Forty-eight members participated, aiming to unite voices and raise demands for justice. The meeting highlighted the responsibility of guardians in child mobility, and plans were made to meet with GPs and block committee members.

Health Education and Malnutrition Reduction Awareness Program:

This program is a core activity of MASS, focusing on creating awareness about positive community healthcare integrated with reproductive and child health, adolescent wellness, malnutrition correction, hygiene, cleanliness, and prevention of waterborne diseases.



Health-Related Outcomes:

Organized awareness programs on Pulse Polio, utilizing audio messages through loudspeakers in remote areas.

Used a mobile van to increase awareness in 25 villages of different Gram Panchayats.

Conducted 75 meetings with health service providers, PRI representatives, local government officials, and individuals involved in various health issues.

Held 17 awareness meetings on malnutrition, linking 12 malnourished children to health sub-centers.

Educate people on legal provisions, symptoms, risks, and myths related to health.

Organized a workshop on safe abortion in collaboration with the Health Department.

Conducted health training among community members to improve their health-seeking behavior.



Facilitated advocacy initiatives at the community level to improve the implementation of national and state health programs.

Conducted rallies and awareness programs through the malaria department on malaria prevention, antenatal care, pre-natal check-ups, immunization, including IMR and MMR.

Adolescent Health Programme:



Collaborated with the Women & Child Development and Education programs, providing separate training programs for boys and girls on sexual and reproductive health. Attended by 420 girls and 530 boys, this initiative aimed to optimize resources and avoid duplication.

Response to Covid-19:

In response to Covid-19, MASS undertook strategic and collaborative actions to bolster public health efforts. More than 11,250 vulnerable families were supported with dry rations, health kits, reusable masks, and awareness-raising programs.

Awareness followed by Relief distribution during COVID-19 Pandemic crisis:



UNDP Supported COVID-19 Response Project:



Initiated by UNDP, this project covered six blocks in Bargarh district. It was designed to provide assistance to returned migrants and marginalized sections, including Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes. This joint effort with government front-line functionaries aimed to address challenges during the pandemic crisis.

Activities	Achievements
<i>Village level awareness generation meeting in 34 GPs</i>	705
<i>Beneficiaries involved</i>	20, 282
<i>Posters and leaflets dissemination</i>	500
<i>Number of families got benefited through the establishment of nutrition garden villages having 21 variety of vegetable plants</i>	2527
<i>No of members insured their life through (PMSBY, PMJJBY, APY) schemes</i>	3304
<i>No of families recovered their existing business and improved livelihood under Covid assistance program.</i>	132
<i>No of farmers made their farmers ID when volunteers linked their information in online.</i>	201
<i>No of landless farmers got 27 lakhs initial support under BalaramYozana and revived their agricultures through leased land.</i>	56
<i>No of eligible neglected beneficiaries got their pension by the support of district administration.</i>	92
<i>No of beneficiaries linked their Aadhar number and accessed to food security scheme.</i>	353
<i>No of Job card holders engaged regularly 50 days to 200 days and created NRM based infrastructures for future livelihood.</i>	4345
<i>PRI members, Rozgar Sahayaks, ASHA, Anganwadi workers, ANMs and other frontline functionaries trained on COVID response, MGNREGA, social protection schemes.</i>	1000

International Rice Research Institution (IRRI) Supported Project:

The IRRI-supported project intervened in four blocks, namely Paikamal, Jharbandh, Padampur, and Gaisilet, of Bargarh district. The objective was to increase the productivity of the pulses-based cropping system and farmers' income. The project aimed to induce system-level changes by addressing major gaps, stabilizing system productivity, and increasing farmers' income, particularly in stress-prone areas. It sought to establish sustainable pulse-based farming systems in Odisha.



Awareness Programme:



Mass conducted fifteen awareness meetings in thirteen villages across the four blocks, involving AAO, VAW, Krushaka Sathi, as resource persons. In this program, MASS volunteers provided information on the objectives of this program and how farmers can utilize their fallow land for the second crop of pulses.

Selection of Site for Rice Fallow Areas and Beneficiaries:

A total of 120 hectares of land selected in consultation with the four blocks that remain fallow dry season due to various and social factors. The selection beneficiaries was undertaken



were AAOs from during the biological of

participatorily from rice fallow areas through village meetings followed by discussions based on the project's objectives. Four Mass volunteers identified 368 beneficiaries for pulse cultivation on rice fallow areas in 120 hectares across 25 villages in the four blocks. The seeds were distributed by government officials/representatives.

Seed Treatment cum Awareness Training:



This program was conducted in twelve villages from the four blocks, and 376 farmers were oriented about seed treatment, land preparation, pulses cultivation, pest control, and crop management.

District Level Training:

A district-level training program was conducted on pulses cultivation on 4/2/2021 at the Jharbandh Block agriculture office. BAO Mr. Mantree, AAO Jharbandh Block, Agriculture Engineer, Padampur, Krishak Sathi, and P.K. Dhala of IRRI provided training to farmers on pulse cultivation, from land preparation to harvest.



Coordination with the Department:

In November 2022, MASS formally sent a letter to the CDAO of Bargarh district, updating them with information on the IRRI pulses fallow program. Through his recommendation, MASS could send a letter to all the AAOs of the four blocks. With the help of BAO, AAO, VAW, and Krushaka Sathi, villages were selected, and farmers were identified for pulse cultivation. Due to their cooperation, MASS conducted awareness meetings, seed



treatment, and crop management training. Periodically, BAO, VAW, Krushak Sathi, and AAO visited the demonstration field and guided farmers on pest control and crop management.

Crop Management Training:

Sl. No	Block	Venue	Total Participants		
			M	F	T
1	Gaisilet	Ainlabhata	22	4	26
2	Gaisilet	Mundapali	18	5	23
3	Paikmal	Nilathar	21	6	27
4	Paikmal	Ichhapur	14	3	17
5	Padampur	Dahita	16	5	21
6	Padampur	Amdahan	15	7	22
7	Jharbandh	Dewanpali	11	6	16
8	Jharbandh	Kaipani/ Bilashpur	13	9	22
			138	47	184

Crop Cut:

Crop cuts for three varieties of pulses were carried out separately in response to project requirements. Most of the crop cuts were conducted in March and April, making it challenging to bring government officials to the crop cut sites due to

their engagement in year-end activities, except in Gaisilet and Jharbandh Block. Additionally, IRRI sent a crop cut report, so Mass volunteers, KrushakSathi, AAO of Jharbandh, VWO, and farmers completed the cut and submitted it. Farmers completed crop cuts in March and April. In the four blocks, Black Gram PU-1 produced an average of 200 kg per acre, while Sikha and Virat produced 3 to 5.5 quintals per acre, IPM.



Progress

Sl. no	Name of activities	November	December	January	February	Total
1	No of Blocks covered	4				6
2	No of villages covered	7	25	25	18	75
3	No of Male Beneficiaries covered	77	275	178	106	636
4	No of Female Beneficiaries covered	26	54	48	32	160
5	Total Beneficiaries covered	103	329	226	138	871
6	No of General Beneficiaries covered	35	97	97	57	286
7	No of SC Beneficiaries covered	12	21	24	17	74
8	No of ST Beneficiaries covered	56	211	105	64	510
9	Area covered in Ha	0	21.5	55.5	43	120

Follow-up Action on Agriculture Development Program:



Follow-up programs have been conducted under our agriculture development program, implemented in Kalahandi & Rayagada districts of Odisha, focusing on knowledge dissemination activities, linkages, providing hand-holding support, training, and capacity building for the farmer community. This requires field intervention. We were involved in the ITC Mission Sunehara Kal for agri-development activities last year. During this time, we provided follow-up to our previous activities in other villages and the same villages.

5. Sustainable Livelihood Enhancement of Tribal and Marginalized Community in Remote Villages of Bargarh and Sambalpur District Supported by SCCF:

During this period, we employed the same methodology, utilizing local resources to improve production, productivity, and diversification through skill-building and support. To reduce vulnerability, marginalized and migrant communities were encouraged to engage in entrepreneurial activities for livelihood generation, income, and employment. The support and coordination of local governments, PRIs, and institutions continue to foster stakeholder participation.

Due to drought, small and marginal farmers have been negatively impacted this year, compelling them to migrate. MASS has taken action to negotiate with Mission Sakti, OLM, agriculture, forest, health, and Panchayat Raj Departments to access available services for our stakeholders. MASS also emphasizes developing various local income generation activities, income-based cultivation to mitigate drought and unemployment for stakeholders, especially migrant families. Moreover, farmers and producers are encouraged to closely interact with local government, PRI members, local political leaders, and service authorities to declare crop failure due to the drought situation, enabling them to access compensation and food for work from the state government. To some extent, this has been implemented, and many individuals now have access to government facilities.

Additionally, efforts were made to train village leaders and build their confidence to influence policy and advance livelihood, agriculture, and forest-based agriculture (plantations) by engaging with different stakeholders. In the process, we focused on addressing the adverse impacts of climate change and improving conservation and management of nature.

Achievements

Identified farmers train on agriculture improvement.	300
Farmers supported for vermicompost tank construction	17
Farmers supported for vegetable garden preparation under OLM	733
women engaged for goat rearing	155
De warming of goat	702
No of Prani Mitra volunteers got appointment through OLM	05
No of migrant people and vulnerable families engaged in IGP activities.	167
Families Accessed safe drinking water	54
Women SHGs got support through OLM for purchase of NTFP and establish link with NTFP producer group	37

No of people got employment under MGNREGA and OLM through campaigning events	201
No of Farmers practices integrated farming like Paddy, pulses, Millets, Bins Varsity and Nuts.	211
No of farmers engaged in 16 varieties of traditional paddy seed cultivation covering 120.50 acres of land	157
No of farmers engaged in pulses & oil seed cultivation in 57 acres of land.	119
Formation of seed bank	27
Farmers get benefited	522
No of farmers engaged in horticulture crop cultivation	449
Farmers accessed to various Government supported agriculture Schemes and facilities	419
No of farmers covered under crop insurance	188
No of farmers enrolled under Kalia scheme	493
No of people got job card on an average of 35 to 40 days under MGNREGA	435
Migrant labour and other vulnerability families are linked in pension, MGNREGA, Agri extension support, loan to women, covid inputs, Labour card support etc.	904
No of families got house under PMAY	100
No of Kendu leaf puckers earned Rs 5, 72,242 from leaf plucking through our intervention	1105



Vaccination camp by Local Resource Person



Rearing of goat and poultry

Forest Rights and Natural Resource Management:



It has been a long struggle to persuade people to give up private occupancy and develop community property resources for mutual benefit. MASS has been partnering with local communities to restore and enhance the productivity of the natural resource base around operational districts since the 1980s.

Overall Impact and Outcome:



Farmers have gained various benefits through horticulture, vegetable cultivation, seed banks, and vermin composting activities. As part of our natural resource management, we have also monitored the groundwater level through different well sources during the pre-monsoon and post-monsoon periods, covering more than 600 wells this time in the districts of Bargarh and Sambalpur at various places.

Regeneration of the forest has been carried out on 70 hectares of land, of which 80% was common land. Additionally, watersheds have been developed in two sites covering 18 hectares. Under MGNREGA, massive plantation work has been carried out in the forest area, involving about 300 job card holders who worked 25 to 30 days.

A series of awareness programs, workshops, and training are conducted among villagers to develop, conserve, and protect their natural resources. As a result, more than 150 villages are in the process of filing CFR claims in Sampalpur and Bargarh districts. More than 56 people from 40 villages were involved in digging farm ponds and water wells through the linkage of government programs and schemes. 73 acres of wasteland were transformed through horticulture gardens. Now, we are preparing our farmers to practice natural farming where they get all the manure from trees.

Implementation of Community Forest Rights:



Though the Forest Rights Act 2006 is implemented, the identification and allocation of individual rights and common forest rights are delayed. In this context, MASS and the local communities have come to value common benefits and have initiated efforts to secure Community Forest Rights (CFR) under the Forest Rights Act (FRA). In some cases, both individual and common forest rights

have been claimed, while in others, the process is still ongoing.

A total of 120 CFR claims were deposited in the SDLC, with 10 claims out of 120 sent to DLC. Furthermore, 10 forest management committees (CFRMC) have been constituted to ensure better forest management.

As part of the CFR process for smooth implementation of CFR claims, MASS conducted a state-level training for government personnel at Kuchinda subdivision. MASS also formed two FRC networks, which are now advocating CFR claim processes in our region. Efforts have also been taken to reduce forest fires, including awareness, capacity building, and on-the-spot actions.

Water and Sanitation:



A major objective of MASS is to raise awareness about the issue of safe drinking water and sanitation. Our community organizer visited various schools and educated students and the community about how to use the toilet and how to maintain a clean and healthy environment. Additionally, MASS educates women SHG members and villagers on how to construct and use toilets.

Potential Impact and Outcome:

117 toilets have been constructed through our intervention during the reporting year 2021-22. 29 toilets have been constructed by one of our Farmers clubs in their villages through RWSS support.

At Dakra Gram Panchayat, a water tank action plan was developed by our initiative to provide safe drinking water during the summer months.

Awareness-raising campaigns were conducted at 50 remote villages in association with Swacha Bharat Mission involving various stakeholders like elected representatives, teachers, academicians, media personnel, parents, members of different village-level people's institutions, civil society organizations, and concerned government departments.

In addition, MASS also emphasized the construction and renovation of water harvesting activities through different government and non-government linkages in various schemes. Furthermore, MASS is measuring groundwater through open wells in the post-monsoon and summer seasons to assess water availability in different seasons.



Empowering Women:

MASS has established strong women's groups for their development. During the reporting year, the women's group developed a positive relationship with government departments through advocacy efforts to access government-endorsed programs, schemes, and services. We continued to mobilize women and young girls to take an active part in various networking initiatives (DU Campaign at the state level network on migrant child rehabilitation) and residential seasonal hostels.



Young girls and their mothers received vocational training in brick making, vegetable gardens, organic farming, goat farming, and chicken farming. They were also informed about various social security schemes like livelihood entitlements, RSBY, Janani Surkhya.

Women's Rights:



In rural areas, underprivileged women are often deprived of their rights. Despite efforts at all levels, gender equality persists and exacerbates existing imbalances in education, healthcare, social security, and financial security for women and girls. This also results in an uptick in domestic violence against women and girls due to ignorance or other socio-cultural factors. Women are often disadvantaged in decision-making and in obtaining economic and social resources wherever gender disparity prevails.

As a woman-centered organization, MASS supports disadvantaged women in rural areas who face various forms of abuse. Our goal is to provide them with a dignified living and help them become self-sufficient. In addition to self-awareness and communication skills, women at the organization receive training on self-employability, sexuality, and reproductive rights, among other topics.

MASS tirelessly works towards building a society where women and girls can access their rights, speak their minds, and live discrimination-free. MASS has worked with over 12,500 women across two states and supported them with livelihood opportunities in agriculture and entrepreneurship development.

Celebration of Different Days/Events:



While celebrating International Women's Day, the event brought together 1120 women staff, community-level women, youth leaders, and volunteers to celebrate achievements and discuss various issues affecting women and society at large. The goal was to create a safer and happier place for women.

Other significant days are also celebrated with women's groups like Labour Day, sanitation day, World Environment Day, World Water Day, plantation week, Earth Day, etc. Every year, we also organize SHG melas and People's Fare called Lok Mahosav/Ukia.

During the meetings, participants shared their experiences, concerns, and overcoming challenges to emerge as leaders and role models in their community.

In all activities, we have always included different stakeholders, including Block and district officials, CBOs, NGOs, CSOs, women activists, women leaders, local leaders, and PRI members.

Program on Road Safety Measure:

The Government of India declared a new road safety act for which awareness-raising programs were required to support the efforts of the government. To achieve a zero casualty mission, innovative road safety sensitization activities were organized in Jharbandh Block of Bargarh district during this period with the active participation of line departments and other stakeholders.



Besides, the organization has carried out different awareness-related activities like quizzes, organizing different competitions on the issue among school and college students, awareness rallies and campaigns through VAN, picketing on the road on seat belt and helmet-wearing matters, organizing awareness camps with multi-stakeholders while distributing various IEC materials on the issues. Guests and resource persons from various spectrums have participated and addressed the target audience on the issues to achieve our mission zero casualties

Recognition towards Response to COVID-19



This year, considering MASS' contribution, Mr. Chitaranjan Hota, Secretary, was selected as a member of the task force by the government Department. He was awarded by Piramal Foundation along with district administration for serving during this time in an aspirational district like Rayagada.

Covid Response - In 2021 – 22 MASS took some significant steps to covid respond. In Maneswar Block MASS was the Task force member. MASS distributed masks, sanitizers, Oxy meters, and thermometers, PP kits to 870 ASHA workers, 424 Health workers. A series of awareness-raising programs were conducted vaccination using loudspeakers in remote villages and slum statements.

Working on Green or Renewable Energy:



In light of the current energy crisis, we have begun the awareness process for renewable and clean green energy in conjunction with a partner organization. MASS will be able to do some more work in this regard for the promotion of livelihood by using this solar energy technology for the rural tribal community of this region as we are about to enter into an MoU with a partner organization. As we advance this solar energy issue and build our community's capacity, we will go step by step.

Weavers Group Marching towards Skill Building:

The Weavers group in the operational area is moving towards business activities now. As a



part of progress, two weaving groups started their business with limited working capital. By providing business development and design development training to the group members, we are building their capacity. A one-month type design-making training was also conducted for the Basundhara weavers group along with establishing a link with the district textile department. 7 nos. of artisans also took dying training held at Singpali village. At the same time facilitating their market linkage activities by providing hand-holding support to them from time to time when and where required.

Internship, Exposure, and Study Visit by Others to MASS:

Time to time many students, researchers, journalists; development practitioners visit our project area. Our demonstration center, MGNREGA work in project villages, development of the livelihood of women, organic cultivation adoption and the development of forest resources give us the opportunity to attract various people to visit our area and enhance their knowledge.

At Kuradhiphasa, two groups visited to learn how women collect forest products and wild honey for sustainable livelihoods. Another group of the same Balangir district at Brahmantal visited different developmental works on MGNREGA in forest, commons, and individual land. These works generated regular employment and livelihood infrastructures of the village for future income generation.

To see the success and space ON ORGANIC farming along with other learning, this year the sixth-semester botany students from Anchal College Padampur visited our organic field. They enriched their knowledge of vermin compost, organic production, indigenous seeds, etc.

Panchayat elected members during their training by the government. The administration selected Kuradhiphasa as the field where 100 people of two batches visited a variety of linkages, MGNREGA activities, forest activities, and different types of livelihoods in groups and on an individual basis.

18 nos of students from MSW department of Sambalpur University visited our Jujumura center and villages on the promotion of organic cultivation. They also discussed the role of people's institutions in linkages of beneficiaries with various government programs and provision.

Networking and Alliance Building:

MASS strives for building networks and alliances. MASS has been associated with several national and international institutions, networks, and alliances for the purpose of gaining knowledge and experience. In this context, we have associated with Odisha State Food Commission, SIRD, KVK, CHES (Central Horticultural Experiment Station), Indian Institute of Management, Sambalpur, MSW department, University of Sambalpur, the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), National Rice Research Institute (NRI), etc.

There are also various committees at various levels of the organization, such as the advisory committee of NSS Sambalpur University, the District Road Safety Committee, and the task force committee at the block level.

We are actively working with Networks like VIBHA-VANI, Wada Na Todo Abhijan on SDG, VANI, common health, right to education, right to food, western Odisha migration network, Jana Swasthya Abhijan, common health, FOGGO, network on commons, etc.

Besides, the govt. & non-govt. come for an exposure visit to the organization and host a session where we share successful experiences.

The Act and Provisions Need to be Equal for Everyone

The village of Bramantal, situated in the Paikmal block of the Bartunda Panchayat, is located 130 kilometers from the district headquarters. Surrounded by dense forests, home to various wildlife, and nestled near the Gandhamardan hill, the village comprises 112 families, including two SC families, 80 ST families, and 30 OBC families. The majority of the families make a living below the poverty line through occupations like migrant work and the collection of Non-Timber Forest Produce (NTFP). However, children's education often takes a back seat due to these challenging circumstances.



The village hosts a primary school catering to first to fifth-grade classes. Adhering to the Right to Education (RTE) norms, provisions such as free food, free dress, and free study materials have gradually increased enrollment to 96%, with the School Management Committee (SMC) taking responsibility for ensuring quality education. Through various initiatives, there has been a notable decrease in the ratio of seasonal dropout students.

In the academic year 2019-20, the government circulated a circular stating that schools with a student



capacity of fewer than 20 would face closure, and students would be transferred to the nearest school. Unfortunately, Brahmantal School fell under this criterion, leading to its closure, with 27 students being enrolled elsewhere. Learning about this, the villagers took immediate action, filing complaints with the Block Education Officer (BEO) and the Tahasildar of Paikmal.

The villagers argued that their village, surrounded by forests, posed risks for children traveling to other schools, citing a past incident where a person died and four were injured in a tiger

attack. Additionally, the constant presence of bears on the roads heightened concerns for their children's safety. Another village, Bhuinkahra, with low student capacity, enrolled children from Brahmantal village without informing their guardians, aiming to save their own school.

When MASS staff learned of this situation, they motivated the villagers to assert their rights and fight for justice through legal means. During the visit of the collector of Bargarh district to Paikmal Block, MASS initiated efforts to encourage people to voice their concerns. After meeting with the collector, the villagers emphasized that their village had 27 children, making it eligible to run a school under existing provisions.

Recognizing the potential consequences, including migration, dropout risks, threats from forest animals, and flash flood dangers, the villagers stressed to the collector that every act and provision should be applied uniformly. Dharani Endja, a villager, succinctly expressed, "Every act and provision should be the same for all."

Upon learning about the situation, the collector inquired with the BEO, who remained silent. Subsequently, the collector instructed the BEO to conduct another inspection, take necessary actions as per rules and regulations, and expedite the reopening of Brahmantal School.

A Dream Come True

Describing a woman who single-handedly supports her family of four, facing numerous challenges, requires a deep appreciation for her courage and bravery. This is the story of Mrs. Larin Kerketa, a woman who, despite hardships, successfully raised her four children with unwavering determination.

For tribal people, the forest is not just a resource; it is their life. Born and raised in the forest, tribal communities understand that their survival is intricately linked to the well-being of these wooded landscapes. Mrs. Larin Kerketa's narrative exemplifies how, with the forest's support, she managed to navigate the difficulties of life when no one else stood behind her.

In 1972, tragedy struck as Mrs. Larin Kerketa lost her husband. Left alone with her four children, she departed from her home state, Jharkhand, and settled in Padiabadmal. Her sole livelihood became collecting Non-Timber Forest Produce (NTFP) items. When financial difficulties arose, she attempted cultivation in a designated area. However, the village head opposed this initiative.



In 2009, a turning point came when MASS initiated work on the Forest Right Act. Mrs. Larin Kerketa actively participated in training and awareness sessions. Empowered by the Individual Forest Right Act, she successfully claimed land patta in 2012. Over the next decade, she not only provided education to two of her children through income generated from NTFP collection and cultivation but also transformed her land into a flourishing source of sustenance.

Today, Mrs. Larin Kerketa is not just collecting NTFP products but engaging in paddy cultivation and vegetable cultivation on her 5-acre land, alongside her family members. This diversified approach has significantly increased her annual income to 25 thousand. Her success story has become an inspiration for the entire village. Witnessing her achievements, 19 more families applied for land patta under the Individual Forest Right Act. Furthermore, the entire village followed suit, applying for land patta under the Community Forest Right Act, and establishing a community forest management committee.



Expressing her gratitude, Mrs. Larin Kerketa acknowledges the role of MASS in her journey. She thanks God for the opportunity to connect with MASS, emphasizing that the support received has not only granted her land, a dream she never thought possible, but has also allowed her to provide a good life for her children. For this, she remains eternally thankful to MASS.

Continuous Effort Changes Everything

After MASS' continuous effort at Khabsadera village of Tamperkela Panchayat, Rengali Block. The villagers are gradually changing their mindset on not depending only on single crop or agriculture. They are also learning that if they do multi-crop cultivation and other agri-entrepreneur activities, their livelihood and financial status can improve. They can provide for their family with a stable income and can feed their family for the whole year. In addition, they

can have financial independence for the year. Based on this effort many people from this village have developed interest in mushroom cultivation after paddy cultivation.

In this village some women are growing mushrooms for financial support. A young woman, Tapaswini Mirdha, lives in this village with her husband, 3 sons and a daughter. Her family depended on agriculture for their livelihood. They have land, water facility and human resource so after MASS guidance she has developed her interest in mushroom cultivation.

After the paddy season her family collects paddy straw to grow mushrooms. She has land so she built a shed near her house for mushrooms. But she does not have enough money to build a shed and purchase mushroom seeds. During the SHG meeting she asked the SHG staff and MASS staff if there are any possibilities to have some financial support for her business. MASS provided her 10,000 thousand support from a member who knows mushroom cultivation (he also cultivates mushrooms). With the help and guidance of her family members, she started her mushroom cultivation. She gets 10 kilograms of mushrooms daily from her mushroom shed which they sell near their villages. From this business they raise Rs 15000 per month.

Her family now has two sources of income, so they plan to construct a concrete house. Her whole family thanked MASS for giving them a way to develop their income source and financial support to start their new livelihood opportunity.

Continued efforts even after death

Maa Durgeibudhi is a leading Self-Help Group (SHG) at Mithapali Panchayat, primarily due to one of its members, Mithila Jani, aged 42. She resides in Kuraadiphasa village of Mithapali Panchayat in the Paikmal block of Bargarh district. In this village, Mithila Jani has successfully formed five SHGs and has undertaken various development initiatives, including a honey business, multiple cultivation projects involving women, and small-scale businesses. She played a pivotal role in managing her family with her income, upon whom her family was dependent. Mithila Jani actively participated in different training sessions, meetings, and built successful relationships with banks, OLM, and other organizations.



With MASS's support, she gained knowledge about life insurance schemes and shared this information with her group members. However, five members of her group initially disagreed with her. In an effort to motivate others, in 2019, Mithila Jani enrolled herself in two schemes:

Pradhan Mantri Jiban Surkhya and Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Surkhya. The annual premiums for these policies were only 12 and 330 rupees, respectively. Her dedication to social work and women's development was truly commendable.

Tragically, Mithila Jani fell ill with a fever in January 2021, and she tested positive for brain malaria. Despite undergoing treatment, she passed away after being bedridden for a month in February 2021. The staff confirmed her insurance, and with MASS's support, her son communicated with the bank and Tehsil of Paikmal.

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GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
Sambalpur Municipal Corporation

CERTIFICATE OF DEATH
Issued under Section 13(7) of the Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969 and Rules of India
State and Union, India 2019

This is to certify that the following information has been taken from the original record of death which is in the register for Sambalpur Municipal Corporation, of Taluk SAMBALPUR of District SAMBALPUR of State ODISHA.

Date of Death: 14/02/2021 Permanent Address: KUMHARIPADA,
Village: PANDUA, PS: KANAKAL, BARGUDA, ODISHA, INDIA

Name: MITHILA JANI
Name of Husband: NANI JANI Place of Death: KUMHARIPADA, SAMBALPUR

Date of Registration: 14/02/2021 Registration No: 1000001

Signature of Registrar
DR. MAHENDRA NANDA
Registrar, Births & Deaths
SAMBALPUR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

Date: 14/02/2021

The bank and Tehsil provided initial support for the documentation of the death certificate, legal heir certificate, and insurance claim, etc. After submitting the required documents, her son, Dibya Jani, received 2 lakhs of rupees. These funds now provide crucial financial support to her family. Out of the 2 lakh rupees, they invested one lakh rupees to develop their cultivation. Dibya Jani, pursuing a laboratory technician diploma at Nrusinghanath Ayurvedic College and taking computer classes at Paikmal, has another 1 lakh rupees deposited in his name for his future.

Following this incident, the villagers understood the importance of Mithila Jani's efforts to motivate others to take insurance, realizing how she had successfully

secured her family's future even after her death. Subsequently, the villagers requested MASS workers to enroll them. A total of 30 women have enrolled themselves in that village, and 25 have prepared their insurance documents. Finally, it became evident that Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials have a tremendous impact on community awareness and action.