Inclusive Livelihood Interventions: Learning from the PACS Programme
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIACA</td>
<td>All India Artisans and Craft workers Welfare Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>AMCU</td>
<td>Automated Milk Collection Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>ARYA</td>
<td>Arya Collateral Warehousing Services Limited</td>
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<td>BDS</td>
<td>Business Development Service Provider</td>
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<td>BFSU</td>
<td>Business Facilitation Unit</td>
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<td>BKKY</td>
<td>Biju Krushak Kalyan Yojana</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBO</td>
<td>Community Based Organisation</td>
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<td>CIFA</td>
<td>Centre for Freshwater Aquaculture</td>
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<td>CLA</td>
<td>Cluster Level Aggregators</td>
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<td>CLS</td>
<td>Convergent Land Sites</td>
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<td>CRPs</td>
<td>Community Resource Persons</td>
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<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organisations</td>
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<td>DCS</td>
<td>Dairy Cooperative Society</td>
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<td>DFID</td>
<td>Department for International Development</td>
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<td>DLSR</td>
<td>Directorate of Land Records and Survey</td>
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<td>FIG</td>
<td>Fisheries Interest Groups</td>
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<td>FPO</td>
<td>Fishery Producer Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>HVY</td>
<td>High Yielding Variety</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information, Communication and Technology</td>
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<td>IRDP</td>
<td>Integrated Rural Development Programme</td>
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<td>INRIG</td>
<td>Indian Institute of Natural Resins and Gums</td>
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<td>JHASCOFISH</td>
<td>Jharkhand Fishery Cooperative Federation</td>
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<td>KV</td>
<td>Krishi Vigyaan Kendra</td>
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<td>LR</td>
<td>Land and Land Reforms</td>
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<tr>
<td>LPLD</td>
<td>Land Purchase and Land Distribution</td>
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<tr>
<td>MGNREGA</td>
<td>Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act</td>
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<td>MoU</td>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding</td>
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<tr>
<td>MIS</td>
<td>Management Information Systems</td>
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<td>NABARD</td>
<td>National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGB</td>
<td>Nij grih Nij Bhumi</td>
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<td>NRLM</td>
<td>National Rural Livelihood Mission</td>
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<tr>
<td>NTFP</td>
<td>Non-Timber Forest Produce</td>
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<td>OLM</td>
<td>Odisha Livelihood Mission</td>
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<td>PACS</td>
<td>Poorest Areas Civil Society Programme</td>
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<td>PAN</td>
<td>Permanent Account Number</td>
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<td>PCs</td>
<td>Producer Companies</td>
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<td>PoP</td>
<td>Package of Practices</td>
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<td>PR</td>
<td>Participatory Rural Appraisal</td>
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<td>PSCL</td>
<td>Package of Scientific Cultivation of Lac</td>
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<td>RLF</td>
<td>Revolving Loan Fund</td>
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<td>SC</td>
<td>Scheduled Castes</td>
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<td>SE</td>
<td>Socially Excluded</td>
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<td>SEG</td>
<td>Socially Excluded Group</td>
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<td>SGSY</td>
<td>Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana</td>
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<td>SHGs</td>
<td>Self Help Groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>SKEPL</td>
<td>Shree Kamdhenu Electronics Private Limited</td>
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<tr>
<td>SF</td>
<td>Solids-not-Fat</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOPs</td>
<td>Standard Operating Procedures</td>
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<tr>
<td>STs</td>
<td>Scheduled Tribes</td>
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<tr>
<td>TAR</td>
<td>Tax Deduction Account Number</td>
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<td>VLSC</td>
<td>Village Level Service Providers</td>
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<td>VSK</td>
<td>Vikas Sahyog Kendra</td>
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<tr>
<td>VWAS</td>
<td>Varanasi Weavers and Artisans’ Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>WASSAN</td>
<td>Watershed Support Services and Activity Network</td>
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<tr>
<td>WSC</td>
<td>Women’s Support Centre</td>
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The models utilised varying strategies to reach out to the socially excluded communities and augment their livelihood interventions by providing them with the required expertise, technical training and subsequent collectivisation and establishment of linkages with the market.

Foreword

I am happy to present this document ‘Inclusive Livelihood Interventions: Learning from the PACS Programme’ which captures the key learnings, details of the approaches and strategies adopted, their efficacy from the eyes of multiple stakeholders, including the communities, involved in the implementation of the programme.

Socially excluded households from rural areas have very limited opportunities to improve their livelihoods. They are inhibited by their socio-economic status, small and under-productive landholdings as well as the pronounced lack of systems that facilitate access to inputs, credit and market services. Livelihood interventions for socially excluded groups need to address the twin challenge of bridging the resource gap as well as the tougher task of alleviating the discrimination barriers they face in accessing resources, inputs and assets.

PACS Programme supported select livelihood interventions to demonstrate that inclusion of socially excluded communities, especially women, in the established value chains and facilitating a leadership role for them results in direct and sustained benefits. An increased household earning in turn impacts many other aspects of development and wellbeing.

These interventions had already established a proof of concept and PACS helped them to upscale along with organising, engaging and integrating socially excluded communities into value chains and markets. These livelihood interventions had explicit income generation and market integration approaches, with some focusing on increasing access to resources and assets, such as a piece of land as a means of enhancement of livelihoods base.

Bringing together technology and other inputs to enhance process efficiency and impact was the hallmark of these interventions and the implementation experiences demonstrated its efficacy at scale.

I hope that this document is able to inform the livelihood practitioners and development professionals on the challenges, approaches and implementation experiences of working with the socially excluded communities with regards to enhancing their livelihoods in some of the most challenged geographies across the intervention states of PACS.

Anand Kumar Bolimera
Director, PACS Programme
1. Executive Summary

The objective of the Poorest Areas Civil Society (PACS) Programme, funded by the Department for International Development (DFID) is to improve the access of socially marginalised communities to claim their rights and entitlements. Under its Inclusive Livelihood Development Programme, PACS over the past 3 years in different states of India; Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal and Odisha has implemented eight livelihood models to strengthen and support existing livelihood practices of Socially Excluded Groups (SEGs). These interventions primarily focussed on empowering the SEGs, who continue to suffer from disadvantages such as social marginalisation, reduced access to and participation in mainstream markets and consequently have lower incomes and poor quality of life. PACS intended to bridge this gap by facilitating the local partners in developing the capacities of the marginalised groups to pursue sustainable livelihoods through improved access to resources, opportunities, skills training, market integration and enabling support mechanisms. While the following eight models specifically looked at developing the capacity of farmers, producers and artisans from SE groups, special focus was laid on women as they are seen as a group that requires exclusive attention and support, given the patriarchal social context.

- The Lac Model, Gumla, Jharkhand
- The Fisheries’ Model, Palamu, Jharkhand
- The Dairy Model, Chhindwara, Madhya Pradesh
- The Handloom Weavers’ Model, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh
- The Market Oriented 4 Value Chain Strengthening Model, Jharsuguda, Odisha
- The Inclusive Value Chain Model, Kandhamal, Odisha
- The land Rights’ Model, West Bengal and Odisha
- The Triple Crop Value Chain Model, MP and Chhattisgarh

These models utilised varying strategies to reach out to the SE communities and augment their livelihood interventions by providing them with the required expertise, technical training and subsequent collectivisation and establishment of linkages with the market. For instance capacity building was at the core of various livelihood models. In this context, the interventions worked towards building the capacities at two levels: one at the service provider level and the other beneficiary/target group level. Capacity building of service providers’ firstly included selection of community resource persons (CRPs)/community mobilisers from the community, who then were transformed into the face of the project at the intervention site. This transformation was enabled by providing various orientation workshops and trainings on soft skills, technology and skill specific trainings to develop their capacity on the subject such as their respective Package of Practices (PoPs). Similarly capacity building sessions for the target groups were organised which mainly focused on four critical aspects of enhancing technical skills, livelihood diversification, business management skills and application of technology.

In order to sustainably link SEG to markets and value chains, PACS interventions focussed on institution building and collectivising small cultivators/farmers/producers. The interventions were instrumental in creating informal groups of 10-20 farmers/cultivators as they are known to possess better bargaining capacities and improved agency while dealing with stakeholders in the value chain than individual producers. Likewise in order to facilitate easy access to credit, technology, inputs and markets for small and marginal farmers’ viable producer organisation were formed. It was believed that through the formation of such producer organisation, the producers could operate at scale, avoid middlemen, increase their market share and negotiate better terms of work and wages with better pricing and margins.

Strengthening networks and linkages was identified as a necessary strategy for effective implementation of the programme. As the projects often involved high degree of collaborative work with other agencies. Accordingly PACS partners built linkages to connect, collaborate and work in synergy with other stakeholders. Some of the key networks and linkages established are strengthening networks with the technology and scientific institutes and government, in addition to developing linkages with the market. A range of services was acquired from these institutions like provision of equipment and machinery, institution building, business networking and marketing, innovation and knowledge transfer, technical training, research and infrastructure. Collaboration with different government departments was used for leveraging technical support, financial inputs and for utilising the existing platforms of other relevant government schemes.

Given the fundamental importance of markets in any livelihood intervention, building linkages with the market was extremely critical for the success of this programme. Especially because at many intervention sites, low population density in rural areas, remote location and high transport costs presented complex challenges in accessing markets. The producers were also constrained by their lack of understanding of the markets, their limited business and negotiating skills and lack of a structure that could give them bargaining power over the established market intermediaries. Keeping these issues in mind considerable efforts were being made to develop successful linkages between the target groups and their respective markets. For instance to provide access to an input market (inputs like labour, capital, land and raw materials) PACS programme concentrated on facilitating supply of inputs through the institutions they set up in their intervention areas. In the same way the lack of access to produce markets for marginal producers substantially increases transaction costs, post-harvest losses and reduces market efficiency. The situation is further complicated by the presence of multiple middlemen before any commodity reaches the consumer. Therefore to eliminate these middle men, it was essential to develop markets in the vicinity of the production areas. As a response to which PACS facilitated the creation of markets through enhancement of entrepreneurial skills of selected producers and leveraging the producer companies (PCs) to aggregate and sell the produce in the market. The idea was to develop the forward and backward linkages with the market in the intervention programmes.

During the course of the programme the interventions faced various challenges, some of which were successfully addressed, while others were not. Some of the critical challenges faced during the implementation included high dependency on weather conditions, complications in proving creditworthiness of SEGs, disturbed political contexts in intervention sites and difficulties in acquainting the target groups with the use of new technologies. However some of the critical factors that enabled the PACS programme to overcome these challenges and create newer opportunities for the SEGs sustainably involved networking with technical institutes and government departments, use of local facilitators and successful collectivisation of SE communities among other factors.

With the programme coming to an end, implementation of a well thought out exit strategy became very critical to ensure smooth transition of these models as PACS begins to phase out of these programmes. In this context the local partners have already initiated work in this direction and are trying to mobilise resources for the continuance of the programme.
The PACS programme, funded by the DFID, addresses social exclusion and discrimination faced by marginalised communities. It is being implemented in seven states of the country (Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal) through a network of 85 Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), 139 network partners and over 23,206 Community Based Organisations (CBOs).

The objective of PACS programme is to improve the access of the socially marginalised communities to claim their rights and entitlements. Its primary focus is to empower the SEGs, viz., the Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), Muslim, Persons with Disabilities and Women, who continue to suffer from disadvantages such as social marginalisation, reduced access to and participation in mainstream markets and hence have lower incomes and poor quality of life. PACS aims to bridge this gap by facilitating the local partners in developing the capacities of the marginalised groups to pursue sustainable livelihoods through improved access to resources, opportunities, skills training, market integration and enabling support mechanisms.

Under the Inclusive Livelihood Development Programme, PACS has supported the organisations implementing and steering livelihood interventions through funding, technical inputs and support. The livelihood programme aims at sustainable and equitable integration of the SE communities into value chains and markets. These models have specifically looked at developing the capacity of farmers, producers and artisans from SEGs, along with a special focus on women as they are seen as a group that requires exclusive attention and support, given the patriarchal social context.

PACS has implemented eight livelihood models over the past 3 years in different states of India, wherein each model targeted a different set of stakeholders with the objective to strengthen and support their existing livelihood practices.

For the purpose of this document, these eight models have been captured in detail along with their various nuances and their influence on the targeted communities. The document details the strategies adopted by PACS for these eight livelihood interventions along with how these programmes were able to reach the community and the challenges faced during the implementation of these programmes.
Livelihood comprises “the capabilities, assets (both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stress and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermine the natural resource base”, as defined by Chambers & Conway\(^1\). The fundamental principles for livelihood programming are that it should be people-centred, multilevel, dynamic and should eventually aim to achieve sustainable livelihoods. It identifies programmes based on the priorities and goals defined by the people themselves. Literature suggests\(^2\) that the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach, which addresses poverty, bases itself on three insights about poverty: first, fighting poverty is dependent on the potential of the marginalised/poor to take advantage of expanding economic opportunities; secondly, poverty is not merely low income, but includes under its meaning, other dimensions such as poor health, illiteracy, lack of social services and vulnerability. Lastly, the poor must be involved in the design of policies and projects intended to improve their conditions, as they are the most knowledgeable regarding their situation and needs.

Further, livelihood interventions have to be cognizant of the fact that there exist informal structures of social dominance and power within communities, which influence people’s access to resources and livelihood opportunities. Quite often, these inequities are invisible to outsiders. It is critical to consider these issues while designing interventions for SE communities as their access to a particular service is influenced by their ability to participate in a social setting.

The PACS livelihood interventions were designed with awareness of such issues and were specially targeted to involve community members from the SEGs. These interventions, while focusing on a specific skill, worked towards creating an enabling environment for the SE communities to actively participate in mainstream livelihood activities.
3.1 RATIONALE OF THE PACS LIVELIHOOD PROGRAMME

With the objective to empower marginalised SEGs, PACS implemented the livelihood intervention specifically in those states which had a high population density of the SC and ST communities. Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal and Odisha, for example, have a large number of inhabitants from indigenous tribes and SEGs with poor access to and availability of input and market resources.

The rationale for promoting and strengthening livelihood interventions was diverse, foremost among them being an acute lack of awareness among the marginalised communities about good practices in their respective areas of work. Due to limited knowledge on methods which could improve their productivity and quality of yield, the SEGs suffered from low productivity and reduced income levels. It was henceforth vital to build the capacities of the target groups on their core skills, business management skills and technology. Further, it was necessary to reinvigorate the traditional crafts and livelihoods followed by certain communities and support them in preserving their local arts and crafts. To ensure sustainability of their livelihoods, there was a need to create awareness about certain government schemes designed to benefit the marginalised communities and assist them in availing these schemes.

The following eight models were promoted and strengthened to offer livelihood support to SE communities under PACS.

1. The Lac Model, Gumla, Jharkhand

The lac cultivation model for livelihood was started in Gumla with the objective of including tribal women in the Lac supply chain and market. The model utilised scientific technologies and approaches to increase the yield of lac for women farmers. The programme was implemented by Udyogini – a non-Government organisation working in Gumla and covered over 8000 women, majority of whom belonged to tribal communities. The intervention facilitated entrepreneurship opportunities for the SE women and helped them organise and aggregate lac produce and to sell it effectively in the market. This had a significant impact in helping them increase their income manifold.

2. The Fisheries’ Model, Palamu, Jharkhand

The Fisheries model was established with the objective to revitalise fish cultivation as a livelihood option, since it is not time-intensive and can be practiced along with other occupations. Trainings were imparted to fish farmers on the best practices of fish cultivation - inputs, feed, disease, pond and nursery management. The programme was implemented by Watershed Support Services and Activity Network (WASSAN) and Vikas Sahyog Kendra (VSK) in Palamu and Latehar districts of Jharkhand covering 5000 households. The intervention mobilised potential fish farmers from the SE communities and focused on improving their technical, financial and negotiating skills through capacity building. This helped them in achieving better livelihood outcomes at the household level.

3. The Dairy Model, Chhindwara, Madhya Pradesh

In order to create sustainable livelihoods for milk producers from the SE communities, good dairy practices were introduced, veterinary services for the farm animals were provided and Automated Milk Collection Units (AMCU) at the milk collection centres were installed. The dairy intervention was implemented as a partnership between Intellecap, Parath Samiti and Shree Kaamdheenu Electronics Private Limited (SKEPL) in Chhindwara and Seoni districts of Madhya Pradesh. It successfully revived dairy farming as a livelihood option for the 5000 dairy farmers from the SE communities, along with many more in the area.

4. The Handloom Weavers’ Model, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh

This model focused on improving the sustainability of the handloom sector by extending support to the traditional Muslim weavers who had limited linkages with the market. The model intervention, executed by the All India Artsisans and Craftworkers’ Association (AIACA) and Traidcraft, reached out to more than 3800 weavers in selected clusters of Varanasi. The programme provided the weavers with training on new product designs, access to craft related schemes and supported market linkages through the facilitation of a Weavers’ Hub.

5. The Market Oriented 4 Value Chain Strengthening Model, Jharsuguda, Odisha

The model aimed to integrate the farmers from the SE communities into mainstream institutions through interventions in agriculture and livestock based livelihoods. The model implemented in Jharsuguda, Kolabira and Krimirika blocks of Jharsuguda district, Odisha by ACCESS Development Services, covered 3277 households (majorly SCs and STs) in the area. Market-based strengthening of select value chains (vegetable, chilli, poultry and goaery) was supported by systematically addressing three critical components viz., access to credit and input/produce market, institutionalising the farmers into a formal business entity and subsequent capacity building of the producers in operational management of the institution thus formed.

6. The Inclusive Value Chain Model, Kandhamal, Odisha

The inclusive value chain (vegetable and turmeric) model aimed to collectivise and establish producer co-operatives to offer institutional strength to the target SE population. The project implemented in Raikia and G.Udayagiri blocks of Kandhamal district, Odisha by ACCESS Development Services, covered 4108 households (mainly tribal population). ACCESS set up two producer companies (PC) in the said blocks to provide end-to-end services viz., aggregation and collective marketing of turmeric and vegetables surplus produce, provisioning of financial services, input supply services, procurement and packaging services, marketing services, technical services and networking services to its members.

7. The land Rights’ Model, West Bengal and Odisha

The land rights’ model attempted to demonstrate that secure land rights for the rural landless poor can act as a stepping stone for them to emerge out of poverty. The intervention provided a two way support system-convergence of different government departments to help the target population acquire land rights and subsequent planning and utilisation of the land in an optimal manner to enhance livelihoods. The intervention by Landesa was implemented in 5 districts of West Bengal and 6 districts of Odisha. It reached out to 35,717 poor, landless, SE households in West Bengal and to more than 5000 single women households in Odisha. Technical assistance was also provided to government departments through support in identification of vulnerable groups and their enumeration, Management Information Systems (MIS) development and joint monitoring.

8. The Triple Crop Value Chain Model, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh

The triple crop value chain model aimed to improve productivity and market information among farmers through practical hands-on training and farm advisory services. The project was implemented by Ekgaon in Mandla and Dindori districts of Madhya Pradesh and Bilaspur district of Chhattisgarh with a target to reach 10,000 small and marginal farmers from SC and ST households. The intervention focused on building the capacities of the farmers and promoting practice of growing three crops in their farms through farm demonstration plots. It also enabled farmers’ access to a market information framework through Ekgaon’s innovative ‘One Farm’ technology platform, offering mobile based farm advisory services.


These models have utilised varying strategies to reach out to the SE communities and augment their livelihood interventions by providing them with the required expertise, technical training and subsequent collectivisation and establishment of linkages with the market.

The following sections discuss in detail the strategies adopted under different models and their impact on the community.

Now I conduct home visits regularly, where I inform the dairy farmers on how to maintain cattle health. When the cattle suffer from a disease or illness, the farmers call me for the treatment. In fact, the community’s faith in us motivates us to do our job well”. She proudly added, “We are thrilled at being addressed as ‘doctor sahib’ now.”

- Ragmati, Chhindwara, Madhya Pradesh
4.1 Capacity Building of Community

**Resource Persons/Community Mobilisers**

The CRPs were selected from the community and formed the face of the project at the intervention site. They were often the active members of the community who were motivated to create a positive change in their community. Because of their perseverance and diligence towards their work, they were seen as valued members of the society and were frequently contacted for resolving livelihood related issues. Once the CRPs were selected, their capacity was built through various orientation workshops and trainings. Some of the capacity building trainings organised for CRPs have been classified as below:

**Capacity Building on Soft Skills**

The CRPs were trained on soft skills as a part of their mandatory training after recruitment. These included training on how to mobilise the community, communication skills and various Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) techniques. It was important that the CRPs learnt the skills of reaching out to the community as it was most critical to the success of the programme. To facilitate trust building among the communities, the community mobilisers even spent extended period of time with the community. For instance, a residential 20-day camp was setup in the field in the lac cultivation project to discuss the benefits of the programme.

**Skill Specific Trainings**

Skill specific trainings were provided to CRPs to develop their capacity on the subject. The CRPs received training on their respective PoPs on a regular basis. The PoPs comprise of good practices in farming, beginning from the quality of inputs, the infrastructure, planting and care needed until the stage of harvesting and post-harvesting storage, in order to ensure a superior quality produce. This information on PoP was extremely critical as the CRPs, in turn, had to disseminate this information and conduct trainings for the community members. The training modules and curriculum used for these capacity building sessions were developed by the partner organisations in collaboration with related institutes. Following the trainings, exposure visits were conducted to orient the CRPs to other similar successful rural livelihood programmes. These training programmes were conducted by PACS partner staff, resource persons from technical and scientific institutes and officials from the government departments over a period of 5-10 days.

The CRPs in the fisheries model acquired training on fish farming, breeding and hatchery management of freshwater fish, disease and health management, seed, net making, fish feed preparation, soil and water testing, (ph testing), nursery management, cleaning and preparation of ponds and water bodies before stocking breed, use of lime and so on. For most CRPs, the learning of new skills under the programme helped them to view the livelihood option from a different perspective. This is best summarised by Surendra Singh, a CRP in Palamu district of Jharkhand, “Bachpan mein hum machhli maarne ka kaam karte the, ab hum machhli paane ka kaam karte hain” (In our childhood, we used to catch/kill fish, now we are engaged in caring for and rearing fish.)

Similarly, in the Dairy model, a cadre of para-veterinarians (a total of 130 selected village youth) were trained to provide doorstep delivery of veterinary services on cattle health to the dairy farmers. During the 14-day training programme, para-veterinarians received extensive training on how to provide first aid and vaccinations to the dairy animals, treatment of common diseases of cattle along with technical inputs on artificial insemination and labour support. The theoretical training was followed by exposure visits to demonstrate cattle health and disease. Ragmati, one of the para-veterinarians of the Dairy model, who had received training from the partner staff and officials of the animal husbandry department stated, “Now I conduct home visits regularly, where I inform the dairy farmers on how to maintain cattle health. When the cattle suffer from a disease or illness, the farmers call me for the treatment. In fact, the community’s faith in us motivates us to do our job well”. She proudly added, “We are thrilled at being addressed as ‘doctor sahib’ now”. These para-veterinarians also support the farmers by providing information on good dairy practices such as green fodder planting and harvesting; which has led to improved health of farm animals and increased yield of milk.
Some livelihood interventions adopted technological interface as part of their core strategies. The community mobilisers, who constitute a crucial link in the transfer of knowledge, were equipped on the respective technologies. Android apps were developed and the CRPs were trained on how to use these applications to maintain records of households/farmers, to encourage market linkages, product promotion and outreach through technology.

In the Fisheries’ model, the CRPs maintained an inventory of all water bodies (individual as well as larger common water bodies) by a software interface which helped the staff to generate and upload real time data which was geo-spatially referenced. The records were regularly updated on the website, which also served as a monitoring tool to assess the work of individual CRPs.

In the triple crop farming model, mobile phones were used as a communication tool to dispense advisory services to individual farmers based on the information collected about their land, crop and other conditions. During the capacity building sessions by PACS partner, the CRPs were explained about the processes involved in data collection of individual farmers and advisory services to be provided through the interface of technology. Deepak, a trainer from Mandala district, Madhya Pradesh stated, “Through the text messaging platform, we provide the farmer with information on weather, land preparation, market rate; a process which cannot be done by a government department alone. This is what is different about the project—that it provides real time advice to the farmers which can be applied directly in the field and also links them to the market. The farmer directly benefits from it and has begun to receive the actual value of his crop.” It was reported that about 80% farmers followed this advice. Ram Prasad Sahu, a farmer from Madhya Pradesh agreed, “We learnt from Ekgaon (the PACS partner) that if we practice farming scientifically, follow line sowing, then the yield will be more.”

In another intervention, Pushpalata, an animator/CRP associated with the vegetable, chilli, poultry and goatery value chain project of Jharsuguda learnt new techniques. As a CRP under the PACS model, she is responsible for building the technical capacities of the women farmers in Kirmira block of Odisha on best practices in vegetable farming and livestock development. In the context of her work, Pushpalata stated, “The learning I have received from this project training is unparalleled. My theoretical and practical knowledge has been strengthened. Earlier, I did not know much about seed, natural fertilizers, or even poultry rearing. But after the training I have received, I feel confident to teach and share my skills and learnings with other women farmers. Since then, the productivity of the women farmers has considerably increased.”

- Pushpalata, Jharsuguda, Odisha

4.1.2 Capacity Building of the Target Groups

Capacity building of the target group (SE communities) provides them with knowledge and skills required to increase their productivity, reduce losses, deal with markets and improve their income levels. The capacity building sessions for the target group mainly focused on four critical aspects. The first involved enhancement of technical skills, which was important to build their capacity in the related thematic area or to introduce them to a new technology for the specific livelihood which they were pursuing. The second focused on livelihood diversification, to introduce them to newer livelihoods which could be practised along with the present occupation thus creating more opportunities for them to increase their income levels. The third aspect nurtured their business management skills to help them approach markets and adapt to the changing demands of the buyers. Last, but not the least, efforts were focused on building their skills on technology to help them utilise communication tools to reach out to prospective buyers and other service providers.

Primary Skill Enhancement

Nearly all the models of Livelihoods worked towards building and enhancing a specific set of skills of the target group by acquainting them with scientifically proven beneficial practices (commonly referred to as PoPs) for the related livelihood option. Since most of the SE communities were either living in a resource-rich environment (proximity to forests, land and availability of cattle) or were following a traditional craft (such as weaving or lac cultivation), the traditional sources of livelihoods were explored to introduce the PoPs. For instance, in the case of Lac model, the communities’ awareness of the traditional activity was strengthened by introducing the Package of Scientific Cultivation of Lac (PSCl), wherein the lac producers were provided the conceptual understanding of preparation of the host tree and its upkeep, along with demonstration methods for harvesting lac. In the words of Preetika, a lac producer in Jharkhand, “Earlier, people did not know about harvesting and spraying techniques during lac production, but after the demonstrations we have learnt it well and use it in our farms. Besides this, we have also understood the importance of using a specific technique at a particular time. Now that we inoculate, spray and harvest our trees at the right time, we have been able to increase our lac production.”

In the same way, under the crop value chain models in Jharsuguda and Kandhamal, the communities were trained on scientific practices for crop and vegetable production along with employing improved methods for care, growth and upkeep of poultry and goats. In the two (vegetables and turmeric) value chain model of Kandhamal, ICT (Information, Communication and Technology) extension tool was used extensively for the adoption of PoP among the farmers. The ICT platform, used by the CRPs, provided an interesting audio-visual method for introducing good farming practices to the excluded communities. Video clips were prepared on various aspects of vegetable and turmeric cultivation, which included soil testing, seed selection, nursery development, plantation, pest management, post-harvest management, primary processing (sorting, grading) and so on. The ICT tools were so successful that the district administration requested the video clips to be shared with Krishi Vighan Kendra (KVK) and the horticulture department.

Cooperative member demonstrating PoP, Odisha
Similarly, in the Dairy model, training sessions were held to introduce good dairy practices (cultivation and feeding of green fodder, maintaining good health and timely vaccination of the dairy animals) which led to increased yield of milk and better profits for the farmers. The model introduced concepts like creation of a separate feeding space (gowhan) for cattle to feed, to avoid spoilage of fodder when the cow/buffalo moves and defecates around the same area.

Under the Fisheries model, training sessions were held for the fish farmers to apprise them of the new methods of fish farming. The trainings were conducted with the objective of introducing to the community new methods of rearing fish in ponds/ water bodies (basic infrastructure requirement, seed, feed for the fish, maintaining water and soil quality and pH balance) which could be undertaken along with their primary occupation.

Mohd. Shamsul Ansari was an agricultural farmer in Palamu district. While working in his fields, he was informed about fish cultivation by the PACS partner in Jharkhand. Although he was apprehensive in the beginning, the interactions held by project staff “helped him understand that rearing fish will not require extra time or space and that he could use his rice farm to cultivate fish along side is main occupation” informed Shamsul. On one side of his rice farm where there ran a deeper ridge, water got collected and did not drain out easily. Guided by the PACS staff, he prepared the pond and put 250 fish in the water at the beginning of the season. Bidyabhusan, a VSK staff guiding him stated, “We trained him on preparation, rearing and harvesting of fish. Shamsul attended the trainings regularly and actively listened to our advice, as a result of which he was able to reap the benefits of fish cultivation.” Shamsul proudly informed the staff that he had sold 26 quintals of rice for INR 26,000/- and sold 4 quintals of fish for INR 38-40,000/-, all of which came from the same farm.

In the dairy farm model, the intervention encouraged farmers to take up dairy farming activities as a profitable enterprise. While most farmers had one or more cattle, not many looked at dairy farming as a very lucrative business option. This was primarily because dairy farmers were frequently confronted with the challenges of unavailability of adequate fodder, lack of veterinary services for their animals and fluctuating price for the milk they sold to the village Dairy Cooperative Society (DCS). The intervention worked towards addressing the aforementioned concerns by introducing the technique of planting green fodder for animals, creating a cadre of para-veterinarians and installation of AMCUs which was an efficient and transparent model of collection of milk. Empirical evidence from the field suggests that many farmers who earlier owned one cattle, bought another cattle as they now saw this to be a potential opportunity to get better returns. The PACS intervention, thus, revitalised dairy farming as a livelihood option; with more farmers beginning to take interest in the dairy sector. This intervention not only had an impact on increasing the income of the farmers but also helped in establishing a system of fair practices in dairy farming which encouraged other new farmers to take it up. Sagheer bhai, who heads the implementing organisation, Pararth Samiti stated, “The model has led to reduction in malpractices and social disparities to a large extent. Earlier when there was total dependence on paper records at the DCS, disputes were common, where the aggressive farmers held their ground over the timid farmers. Now since the process has been mechanised through the AMCUs and farmers are paid based on the quality of milk, exploitative practices have been reduced to a minimum.”

Livelihood Diversification

Besides strengthening the existing livelihoods for the marginalised communities, the PACS partners were instrumental in diversifying opportunities for producers/farmers by introducing them to newer livelihoods, which they could practise along with the present livelihood to supplement their incomes. The mobilisers and project staff held regular meetings and discussions with the target groups, informing them about the potential benefits and suitability of the occupation. Initially, the beneficiaries were resistant to take up new practices, however, with the constant guidance provided by the PACS partners, they gathered the courage to take up new practices.

I wanted to pursue fish farming as rain water during the monsoon filled the pond. However, I did not know about the suitable fish, how to keep the water clean for rearing and any technique that can be used for it. About a year ago, the CRPs visited my village and explained the objective of their programme. Slowly, with their constant guidance and monitoring, I was given trainings on critical information such as quality of seeds, feed, water and soil quality and made to understand how a pond ought to be prepared. Following their advice, I began rearing fish and made extra income. Going a step further, Narendra now plans to convert this pond into a (fish) nursery, allowing his fish to grow to a fingerling or yearling stage, and then sell it in the market to get a higher price.

Collection of milk at AMCU, Madhya Pradesh

CRP providing training on best paricises to fish farmers, Jharkhand

Narendra in Palamu district is a fish farmer, who has been cultivating fish for about 1.5 years. Besides his agricultural plot of land, there was a large area which he converted into a pond for rearing fish. During the PACS intervention, Narendra was informed about the scientific technique for cultivating fish by the VSK staff. In his words, “I wanted to pursue fish farming as rain
In Varanasi, most handloom weavers traditionally worked only on silk saris, thereby overlooking the potential market of a range of handloom woven cloth materials. The PACS partner introduced them to this idea and encouraged them to innovate and work on new designs to cater to the demands of the market.

Aftab, a master weaver mentioned, “For us, Benaresi saris mark our identity. We had always worked on saris in a traditional manner and had not thought of innovation in terms of variety. We were apprehensive of the acceptability of a product or design which is novel. However, the AIACA (PACS) trainings acquainted us to new designs and demands in the market. Since then, some of us have begun to keep one loom free for preparing new design. The PACS training has not only given us the confidence in our abilities but has also helped us in valuing innovation and new trends.”

Business Management Skills

It was realised that most community members lacked skills to strategically approach the buyers, traders and other market intermediaries and negotiate for better prices for their products. Further, as producers, their poor business management skills led to revenue losses. Recognising this to be a crucial gap, the partners focused on this aspect and organised trainings to inculcate in the producers various business management skills (such as book keeping, maintaining accounts, investment and profit details, and sales strategy). For instance, in the Lac model, local Village Level Service Centers (VLSC) were established to strengthen market integration through forward linkages. These women-run centres were trained on book keeping, records’ maintenance and business development skills, which they utilised to maintain records and for further strategy building, planning and production. Instead of individual lac producers selling their produce to the local trader giving a low price, the VLSC members aggregated lac from a number of producers and sold it in the market for a higher price.

On the other hand, the weavers in Varanasi carried forward the legacy and traditional craft of handloom weaving exceptionally well, but their reach was limited to a small customer base. Under the Weavers’ model, trainings were conducted for 30 small and medium master weavers on the general principles of enterprise management, production planning, designing, costing and pricing of the products, quality standards and certification, Craftmark compliances. Moreover, creation of a brand name and certification (Craftmark) increased the credibility of the quality of handloom processes and products. This translated into guaranteed minimum wages and improved working conditions for the weavers (ergonomically designed working area, availability of electricity, light, ventilation and so on).

Skills on Application of Technology

It was realised that for most of the community members, huge impact can be created by introducing and familiarising them with new technology. The introduction of technology and mechanisation was found to reduce losses in terms of time and effort and also improve communication processes. For instance, in the Weavers’ model, the weavers were encouraged to use smart phones and e-commerce platforms to reach out to prospective customers. They were

The gaddidars/intermediaries stole the limelight. Now, because of the website, many customers directly contact us for a particular order and explain to us their choice of designs and colour. At the same time, we do not get a low price for our products, as the customer pays us directly.”

- Anwar, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh

Mustaqs Ansari, a weaver in Varanasi shared how he currently sells at least 4-5 products per month through the use of ‘whatsapp application’ on his phone. He learnt the use of whatsapp in a demonstration by the local NGO partner. Now, he keeps in touch with his clients and regularly shares updates on his new products. He also had the opportunity to interact and

sell his products directly to end consumers through marketing platforms facilitated by the NGO partner via exhibitions and e-commerce tie-ups (such as with Dastkaar Fair, Jaypore.com).

Under the weaver’s model, a web portal (www.varanasiweavershub.com) was developed by the PACS partner, wherein a range of products (like stoles, dupattas, yardage, bed sheets, sofa covers) developed by the weavers have been displayed. This website also contains contact details of the weavers allowing the buyers to directly reach out to the weavers and vice versa. The weavers feel enthusiastic about the website as Anwar, one of the weavers in the area mentioned, “We have been working in this area for many years but often, people did not know about us and the products we make because of our low visibility in the market. The gaddidars/intermediaries stole the limelight. Now, because of the website, many customers directly contact us for a particular order and explain to us their choice of designs and colour. At the same time, we do not get a low price for our products, as the customer pays us directly.”

Similarly, technology as an interface was introduced for the dairy farmers in the form of automatic machines (AMCUs) which collect, weigh, analyse the milk sample and dispense the receipt of the corresponding payment to the farmer, based on the content (fat and SNF), quality and volume. Introduction of this technology made the process of milk collection and analysis easier and transparent, thus reducing error and malpractices such as adulteration of milk. Dairy Cooperative Societies (DCS) in Chhindwara district said that the average milk collected from the dairy farmers increased to about 450 litres in a day from 80 or 500 litres before the intervention. This increase in collection was attributed to the installation of the AMCUs in 50 DCs which led to increased uptake of dairy farming by new farmers motivated with the establishment of a fair and transparent process of pricing. A progress report on the model states that the milk fat and SNF (solids-not-fat) content increased

* “Whatsapp is a cross-platform instant messaging client for smart phones. It uses the internet to send text messages, images, videos, user location and audio messages to other users using standard cellular mobile numbers. Facebook is an online social networking service, offering a platform to reach out and connect with others using internet services.
by 8.3 per cent and 1.92 per cent respectively, due to the intervention and more farmers were willing to supply better quality milk as the returns were higher.

The Triple Crop Model in Madhya Pradesh and Chattisgarh made use of mobile phones to provide Farm Advisory services to the farmers. The model is based on collection of comprehensive information of individual farmer’s crop and land to provide need and context-based advisory services. It strategically used a set of algorithms to guide the farmer on site-specific nutrient management, soil productivity and suggested crop-cycle based activity according to season. Besides this, geo-location data based alerts (on temperature, weather conditions, propensity of a particular disease and pests being high for a crop at a certain time) were sent to farmers through regular voice messages. Consequently, farmers were able to make better and informed decisions regarding their agricultural practices.

4.2 NETWORKING AND LINKAGES

While the PACS Livelihood Partners have been instrumental in conceptualising the livelihood models and guiding their implementation, the projects often involved high degree of fine-tuning and collaborative work with other allied agencies. Strengthening networks and linkages was thus identified as a necessary strategy for effective implementation of the programme. To take the programmes forward, the PACS partners built linkages to connect, collaborate and work in synergy with other stakeholders. Some of the key networks and linkages established can be classified under three broad categories:

- **1 Strengthening networks with the technology and scientific institutes**
- **2 Strengthening networks with the government**
- **3 Developing linkages with the market**

### 4.2.1 Linkages with Technology Service Providers and Scientific Institutes

The livelihood partners established strong linkages with relevant scientific institutes and technical service providers so that the beneficiaries could be equipped with sound techniques. A series of interactions were held with these institutions by the local partners to explain the interventions and areas of collaboration. During these meetings, project objectives were detailed and the partners were sensitised and familiarised with the target group (SEGs). Along with this the role of the service provider/scientific institute in providing services of expertise, technical handholding and capacity building was also discussed. After multiple interactions, their role and the technologies to be introduced in the intervention were finalised.

The formalisation of the association was done through a (MoU) between the partner and the stakeholder. A range of services was acquired from these institutions like provision of equipment and machinery, institution building, business networking and marketing, innovation and knowledge transfer, technical training, research and infrastructure.

Among the interventions where linkages were forged with technical service providers, the dairy model presented a case of successful partnership with Shree Kamdhenu Electronics Private Limited (SKEPL) in Madhya Pradesh. The latter was instrumental in installation of the AMCUs - with the brand name Akashganga - and demonstrating the technique and benefits of the AMCUs to the Dairy Co-operative Society (DCS) members. The entire installation package consisted of the milk weighing machine, the vibrator unit, the testing unit or milk analyser and printer along with keyboard. Post-AMCU installation, SKEPL imparted on-ground training to the village DCS staff for effective utilisation of these machines. To address the challenge of power infrastructure, SKEPL provided inverters and battery units which ensured a smooth functioning of the AMCUs and which could be charged on completion of the milk collection process. As part of the programme, SKEPL also provides an employee to address operation related issues with the AMCUs and after-sales concerns that might arise during its usage.

### Apart from this, the intervention also developed partnerships with the scientific institutions to leverage benefits for the communities. During the course of their interventions, PACS livelihood partners established networks with scientific institutes whose services ranged from technical advisory to extending support in capacity building activities. This linkage was pertinent, particularly, in the Lac intervention model in Gumla district of Jharkhand. In the beginning of the project, the continued use of traditional techniques and lack of scientific knowledge among lac producers on brood inoculation and host rotation was identified as a significant bottleneck. This resulted in poor lac production and monetary losses. To address this knowledge gap, the partner successfully collaborated with the Indian Institute of Natural Resins and Gums (IINRG)1. A PSCl practices was developed by IINRG scientists to assist lac producers to meet the gap in brood.

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1IINRG (formerly Indian Lac Research Institute (ILRI)) is a nodal institute at national level for research and development on all aspects of lac and other natural gums and resins (excluding production), such as harvesting/tapping, processing, product development, training, information repository, technology dissemination and national/international cooperation.
Another livelihood intervention which was successfully linked with a scientific institute was the fisheries intervention in Palamu district of Jharkhand. The Centre for Freshwater Aquaculture (CIFA) in Bhubaneshwar has played a major role in the fishery market value chain as a knowledge partner. The collaboration was formalised with an MoU with CIFA for providing technical support to the project. The mid-term review reported that CIFA facilitated the training of more than 150 farmers on best practices in fish farming and pond management. CIFA also facilitated development of a manual on best management practices in aquaculture. It has developed manuals on fishery institutions, governance and financial system for panchayat level Fisheries Interest groups (FIG) and block level Fish Producer Organisation (FPO), although the former have not been instituted yet.

4.2.2 Linkages with Government Departments

The PACS Livelihood Partners’ collaborated with different government departments to strengthen their programmes. The partnerships were used for leveraging technical support, financial inputs and for utilising the existing platforms of other relevant government schemes. The linkages enhanced synergies and effectiveness in resource utilisation and helped achieve better results for the community.

**Technical Support from the Government**

One of the critical aspects of government support was provision of technical inputs to the programmes. At some places, government departments were a part of the capacity building workshop of the CRPs and beneficiaries. The involvement of government functionaries during trainings and demonstration further motivated the community to adopt new techniques over old practices.

In Jharsuguda, as a part of the vegetables and chilli value chain intervention, the Department of Horticulture extended its support in the development of IEC for PoPs. The officials also played a key role in enhancing the knowledge of animators, CRPs and beneficiaries for adoption of PoP through training sessions. The district horticulture department oriented the farmers on technical aspects of vegetable farming viz. drip irrigation, sprinkler irrigation, vermi-bed, and pusa zero energy.

As a part of the poultry and goatery value chain interventions, veterinary doctors from the Animal Husbandry Department played a significant role in training the CRPs on standard rearing practices of goats and poultry. In addition to this, on-the-spot technical guidance to farmers on shed repair, feed management, shed management, disease management and vaccination was also provided. Dr. Tapas Chowdhry, Government Veterinary Dispensary in Jharsuguda who supported the programme mentioned, “The Odisha government provides insurance to animals bought under the livestock loan offered by the Integrated Rural Development Programme.”

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**The Odisha government provides insurance to animals bought under the livestock loan offered by the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) and Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY). As a result, many farmers who do not avail the government scheme are left out. However, the PACS partner identified poultry and goatery farmers who had livestock without insurance and linked them to the department. The Animal Husbandry Department has provided insurance to these farmers under the PACS programme.”**

- Dr. Tapas Chowdhry, Jharsuguda, Odisha

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Sumira Topno is a lac producer in Kaamdara block of Gumla district, Jharkhand. She is one of the few farmers who have the Semialata farm for producing lac. The semialata variety tree does not grow as big as a ber or kusum tree, thus avoiding the tiresome and often difficult effort to climb it. In collaboration with INRG, Semialata was identified as a well-suited plant variety for cultivation of lac. Under the PSLC promoted by the PACS partner in Gumla, six other farmers including Sumira received the Semialata seeds free of cost. She said, “The staff visited my farm regularly and explained the correct way of handling the plant. Now, my farm is used as a demonstration plot for other lac cultivators. The lac produce is much higher than a ber or kusum tree, and is easy to harvest.” Sumira now single-handedly manages the preparation, spraying and harvesting on these host trees. She adds, “Further, a Producer card has been provided by the PACS partner to track the time for spraying and inoculation activities and recording the profits. In this manner, I am aware of how much I spend for inputs and what are the profits earned in each cycle.”

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*CIFA is the nodal technical agency in the country focused on inland fisheries and aquaculture and has worked in the project to build capacities of the NGO staff as well as individual farmers on a variety of aquaculture-related themes. CIFA provided assets in the form of hatchery units and a range of inputs.*
Mustaqim Ansari, a master weaver from Ramnagar cluster was supported for securing institutional credit under the weavers’ intervention in Varanasi. Mustaqim initially worked under a joint family business and then began an independent setup with one handloom. He attended the trainings organised by the PACS livelihood partner (AIACA) and gained exposure to new skills from the ‘design and business perspective training’ workshops. The staff commended his efforts stating, “Mustaqim was an active weaver, who took keen interest in the design and business trainings. In a span of three years, he single-handedly expanded his business from one to sixteen looms. But he lacked the financial capital to add 20 more looms to fulfil bulk orders.” The working capital required for the business expansion was INR 20 lakhs. Mustaqim’s loan request for this amount was initially rejected by the bank due to lack of formal documents viz. Form 16/Income Tax Returns, proof of business existence and audited balance sheets. The PACS partner staff supported him in formalising the required paperwork. “We explained to him that these are necessary documents before a loan application can be approved. We also supported him in organising them”, said a PACS partner staff. Mustaqim approached the bank after preparation and submission of all mandatory documents, subsequent to which his loan request was approved. As a result, he was able to achieve his goal of expanding his handloom business and managing his bulk orders.

Financial and Input Assistance Linkage

Linkages with the government were extremely critical to support the livelihood interventions in more ways than one. The implementation partners took cognizance of the constraints faced by the communities and worked towards developing linkages with the government to provide subsidies to the target groups. In most model interventions, the raw material like seed, fertilisers, other inputs for production/livelihood were successfully made available to the SEGs at subsidised rates after establishing linkages with the government schemes. In Jharsuguda, two PCs viz. Jharsuguda Women Agro Producer Company Limited and Kirmira Women Agro Producer Company Limited were established. These two producers companies have been reported to receive INR 2 lakh each from the District Horticulture Mission committee. Apart from this, the District Mission committee sanctioned subsidies for procuring vegetables and raw materials. About 18 water pump sets with 50 percent subsidy were mobilised from Agriculture Department and were provided to 18 farmers from 3 SHGs of Raikia block in Jharsuguda district.

In the same way, in Palamu district of Jharkhand, the farmers were encouraged to attend a week-long training on fish farming by the Department of Fisheries. The local PACS partner created awareness among the farmers on the need to attend the training and thus, facilitated the process of bridging the gap between the existing training course and the community. This extensive training covered topics like breeding and hatchery management of freshwater fish, disease and health management, net making, manure and feed preparation, soil and water testing (pH testing), nursery management, cleaning and preparation of ponds and water bodies before stocking breed, use of lime and so on. The farmers trained in these programmes were considered ‘adopted beneficiaries’ of the state programme and were entitled to benefits like free seeds (fish eggs) and subsidised feed. About 43 community members have been reported to join the programme through these trainings.

Linkages with Government Schemes

To provide comprehensive benefits to the SE communities, it is extremely important that efforts are targeted towards their overall integration into the fabric of society and economy. While the primary focus of the PACS functionaries was to support the livelihood model, they simultaneously worked towards the overall integration of the SEGs into the community. PACS livelihood partners worked with the communities to link them with central and state government schemes.

For instance, in Khandamal in Odisha, women farmers were enrolled in the existing state scheme, ‘Biju Krushak Kalyan Yojana (BKKY)’, the health insurance scheme for farmers and their families with the support from the local PACS partners. The project completion report cites that 1570 project beneficiaries were covered under BKKY in Raikia and G Udayagiri blocks.

Under the Weavers’ intervention in Varanasi, support and assistance was provided to weavers to understand the government welfare schemes and also for the enrolment. The Business Facilitation Unit (BFU) staff facilitated the weavers through the entire lifecycle; from the beginning (the application stage) to obtaining the ‘Bunkar’ and other ID cards, necessary for utilising various craft related schemes, programmes and subsidies by the government. They also worked towards enhancing the linkage with Office of the Development Commissioner for Handlooms and supported the weavers in availing Bunkar Credit Loan. Apart from this, they facilitated access to other services like opening of the zero balance Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) account and obtaining of Aadhar cards. In 2007, Mahatma Gandhi Bunkar Yojana was converged with the ‘Health Insurance Scheme’ (aimed at financially enabling the weaver community to access healthcare facilities in the country) to formulate a ‘Handloom Weavers’ Comprehensive Welfare Scheme’, which is also being facilitated through the BFU. As a result of their outreach services, access to social entitlements/government schemes has been facilitated for 2914 weavers (2044 enrolled and 870 applications in process) under the Weavers’ model until January 2016.

Among the interventions where linkages with government schemes were formulated, the inclusive land and livelihoods PACS intervention in West Bengal is noteworthy. In West Bengal, the PACS livelihood partner worked closely with the Department of Land and Land Reforms (L&LR) and Directorate of Land Records and Survey (DLRS) to facilitate land allocation to the targeted SEGs. As a part of the West Bengal Convergent Land Sites (CLS) model, a homestead site is prepared on land and allocated jointly to a wife and husband of an eligible family under the ‘Nijogri Nijo Bhumi-NGBN’ (My Home My Land)7. This homestead land site can be used by a landless farmer to build a simple house, plant vegetables and rear poultry and livestock. The PACS partner took the government’s NGBN scheme a step further, and under the CLS model, prepared a site plan with the block administration for provision of basic services like water, sanitation, rural housing, seed, and livestock support.

To make the CLS actionable, the stakeholders viz., L&LR officials, the Land Purchase and Land Distribution (LPLD) committee members and the beneficiaries of the NGBN, assembled and made a development plan, focusing on two levels: one at the cluster level and another at the homestead level. The cluster level development plan involved discussions on common facilities, such as land development, construction of approach road, internal road, supply of safe drinking water and street lights. The homestead level planning covered discussions on support required for housing and livelihood augmentation by using the land allotted to individual farmers. The role of PACS livelihood partner was that of a facilitator in the planning process. They focused on empowering the government functionaries on identification of target groups, planning and implementing the development plans through capacity development and mentoring support. The project completion report states that in West Bengal, 72,783 person days of work was created under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGA) for creating social infrastructure which provided beneficiary families with an additional option for earning wages.

6NGBN is a flagship land distribution programme introduced by the Government of West Bengal in October 2011, which envisaged post land allocation convergence of services to support the families.

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Programme (IRDP) and Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY). As a result, many farmers who do not avail the government scheme are left out. However, the PACS partner identified poultry and goatery farmers who had livestock without insurance and linked them to the department. The Animal Husbandry Department has provided insurance to these farmers under the PACS programme.”
4.2.3 Linkages with the Market

It is an established fact that markets are of fundamental importance in any livelihood intervention. A market is broadly defined as the sum total of all buyers and sellers in a given area or region. The value and price of items traded are according to the factors affecting supply and demand in a market.

Under the PACS programme, since transcending social barriers and improving access for SE producers was a key objective, interventions focusing on linkages with the market were extremely critical. At many intervention sites, low population density in rural areas, remote location and high transport costs presented complex challenges in accessing markets. The producers were also constrained by their lack of understanding of the markets, their limited business and negotiating skills and lack of a structure that could give them bargaining power over the established market intermediaries. IFAD in its discussion paper⁶ states that rural markets are characterised by extreme asymmetry of relations between small producers/consumers and a few market intermediaries. That is the reason why rural producers are often dependent on traders visiting the village to buy their produce and to sell them inputs. In remote locations, where few traders reach and sometimes none, the producers have little choice but to sell off their produce to the first trader who shows up, even if the deal is unfavourable.

Understanding the importance of focusing on markets led to considerable efforts being made to develop successful linkages between the target groups and their respective markets.

Input Markets

Access to an input market (inputs like labour, capital, land and raw materials) is a critical link in any value chain for sustaining the programme. As discussed in the IFAD paper⁷, rural people are often dependent on rural traders for supply of inputs and consumer goods, besides information about agricultural products and price. This asymmetric information often forces the poor to accept low prices for their products and to pay high prices for buying consumer goods. The PACS programme addressed this anomaly in the market by facilitating supply of inputs through the institutions they set up in their intervention areas.

In Jarsuguda, access to quality inputs market with fair price was identified as a challenge for the intervention. The producers were scattered and the demand for inputs was in small pockets. The two Producer Co-operatives (PCs) formed under the PACS intervention identified the challenge and initiated the facilitation of access to an input market. They worked towards acquiring the required licenses and certifications viz., Tax Deduction Account Number (TAN), Permanent Account Number (PAN), Seed License and Fertilizer License for supplying the necessary inputs. Once, the license was obtained, they made the supplies available to the farmers on subsidised rates.

In this regard, a farmer, Bilasini Jaipuria, from the ST community in Buyagondia village of Jarsuguda said, “Earlier it used to be a huge task to get seeds or other essentials but now with the establishment of PCs, it is extremely convenient. I just bought the High Yielding Variety (HYV) paddy seeds and fertilizers from the Producer Company and my neighbour bought 20 kgs of HYV paddy seeds. It cost us INR 200 less than the market price.”

Produce Markets

For a small or marginal producer, the lack of access to produce markets substantially increases transaction costs, post-harvest losses and reduces market efficiency - a situation which is exacerbated for a SE farmer with limited means. For any commodity, there are multiple middlemen before the commodity reaches the consumer. To eliminate these middlemen, it was essential to develop markets in the vicinity of the production areas. PACS facilitated the creation of 4.2.3 Linkages with the Market

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Understanding the importance of focusing on markets led to considerable efforts being made to develop successful linkages between the target groups and their respective markets.

Input Markets

Access to an input market (inputs like labour, capital, land and raw materials) is a critical link in any value chain for sustaining the programme. As discussed in the IFAD paper⁶, rural people are often dependent on rural traders for supply of inputs and consumer goods, besides information about agricultural products and price. This asymmetric information often forces the poor to accept low prices for their products and to pay high prices for buying consumer goods. The PACS programme addressed this anomaly in the market by facilitating supply of inputs through the institutions they set up in their intervention areas.

In Jarsuguda, access to quality inputs market with fair price was identified as a challenge for the intervention. The producers were scattered and the demand for inputs was in small pockets. The two Producer Co-operatives (PCs) formed under the PACS intervention identified the challenge and initiated the facilitation of access to an input market. They worked towards acquiring the required licenses and certifications viz., Tax Deduction Account Number (TAN), Permanent Account Number (PAN), Seed License and Fertilizer License for supplying the necessary inputs. Once, the license was obtained, they made the supplies available to the farmers on subsidised rates.

In this regard, a farmer, Bilasini Jaipuria, from the ST community in Buyagondia village of Jarsuguda said, “Earlier it used to be a huge task to get seeds or other essentials but now with the establishment of PCs, it is extremely convenient. I just bought the High Yielding Variety (HYV) paddy seeds and fertilizers from the Producer Company and my neighbour bought 20 kgs of HYV paddy seeds. It cost us INR 200 less than the market price.”

Produce Markets

For a small or marginal producer, the lack of access to produce markets substantially increases transaction costs, post-harvest losses and reduces market efficiency - a situation which is exacerbated for a SE farmer with limited means. For any commodity, there are multiple middlemen before the commodity reaches the consumer. To eliminate these middlemen, it was essential to develop markets in the vicinity of the production areas. PACS facilitated the creation of

The produce by small land holding farmers fetches them modest money from the trader. Now, with the aggregation of the surplus produce at the PC, the farmer who sells the crop is a shareholder of the Producer Company. The farmer need not run around to sell the crop. Her company buys the crop from her and pays her more than the trader. Additionally, she also gets a share in the profit that the company makes.”

- Amulya K. Mohanty, Jharsuguda, Odisha

Image 1: PACS partner encouraging farmers to join co-operative for better access to input market, Odisha

Image 2: Aggregation of inputs at the cooperative level, Odisha
of markets through enhancement of entrepreneurial skills of selected producers and leveraging the PCs to aggregate and sell the produce in the market. The idea was to develop the forward and backward linkages with the market in the intervention programmes.

For instance, in Jharsuguda, as a part of the vegetables and chilli value chain intervention, aggregation centres were set up. A total of 11 aggregation points, 6 from Jharsuguda Women Agro Producer Company (PC) Limited operational area and 5 from Kirimira Women Agro Producer Company Limited operational area were identified for direct purchase from small farmers. To market the produce in three (vegetable, goatery and poultry) value chains, five vegetable merchants, two wholesalers for poultry and five goat traders were identified by the PCs. Along with wholesalers, forward linkages were established to market poultry and goats to a few retailers as well. Till June 2015, Jharsuguda Women Agro Producer Company Limited had collected and sold vegetables worth INR 33,689 and Kirimira Women Agro Producer Company Limited had sold the same worth INR 30,086.

In Kandhamal, the marginalised farmers faced a similar set of challenges in approaching the producer markets. In particular, the beneficiaries from the tribal community in Kandhamal faced challenges in selling their produce as they had limited exposure to the markets, belonged to hard to reach areas where access was an issue and had a limited understanding due to low education levels. The PACS partner identified two local NGOs, namely, Samanwita and Kasam, to facilitate the collection of produce from the community. Along with this, marketing events (such as setting up stalls in exhibitions and fairs hosted by various government agencies and NGOs) were facilitated by PACS livelihood partner for the sale of turmeric. About 25 such marketing events were conducted which generated a revenue of INR 7 lakhs.

The Kandhamal intervention also undertook aggregation at the co-operative level. A total of 28 aggregation points (11 in Raikia block and 12 in G.Udayagiri block) were identified for procuring agriculture produce from the member farmers. These initiatives by the PACS partner ensured beneficiaries a guaranteed market along with a fair price for their produce. Savita Pradhan, a 43 year old woman farmer from Shuddhipada village, Kandhamal reiterated, “The aggregation point is just 1 kilometre away from my home. Since we have an aggregation point in the village, we save on transportation and are able to sell vegetables easily.”

Summarising the market produce scenario and the role of PACS intervention in building forward and backward linkages, the PACS partner in Odisha, Dr. Amulya K. Mohanty said, “The produce by small land holding farmers fetches them modest money from the trader. Now, with the aggregation of the surplus produce at the PC, the farmer who sells the crop is a shareholder of the Producer Company. The farmer need not run around to sell the crop. Her company buys the crop from her and pays her more than the trader. Additionally, she also gets a share in the profit that the company makes.”

4.3 INSTITUTION BUILDING AND CREATION OF COLLECTIVES

The strength of a project intervention is reflected in the collective power of the community while demanding equal rights and entitlements. This collective integration becomes pertinent for SE communities as it links them to markets and value chains in a sustainable manner.

The PACS interventions were instrumental in collectivising small cultivators/farmers/producers with the objective to empower them to create sustainable markets.

4.3.1 Creating Informal Collectives/ Cooperatives

Informal groups of 10-20 farmers/cultivators have been known to possess better bargaining capacities and improved agency while dealing with stakeholders in the value chain than individual producers.

In the analysis of the market chain in Gumla district, where the lac model is being implemented, the value chain was found to be heavily dependent on the intermediaries. The tribal women in Gumla, with limited exposure to markets, would often end up selling lac at lower price when they were in need of money. Also, the price of lac was dependent on the negotiators/bargaining capacity of the producer. In order to address these gaps, the Lac model built the concept of VLSCs who were trained women entrepreneurs (all belonging to SEGs) to eliminate the intermediaries or middlemen.

At the end of the harvest, lac from a group of producers is aggregated at the VLSC. The women entrepreneur managing the VLSC negotiate the price for selling the lac in the market. Around 25 women entrepreneurs were trained on enterprise development for setting up VLSC. Of these, eight have opened their own shops storing food grains and grocery items, and also serving as an aggregation centre for lac.

The Weavers' model, collectivises the group of weavers working at the base of the hierarchical structure of the weaving value chain who are usually daily waged skilled craftsmen working for a master weaver. These weavers are often governed by the exploitative rich traders (Gaddidars), and thus have no direct contact with the market. Consequently, they often do not have business management skills or opportunities to improve their earnings. Moreover, these weavers lack access to social entitlement schemes, to raw materials at affordable rates, to credit and financial assistance and other necessary capacities for design and market linkage.

I realised I could do something on my own. I had the potential and the resources.”

- Gopal, Varanasi, Uttar Pradh
Another intervention which leveraged on the collective strength of the target group was the Land Rights’ model in Odisha. Under the model, 53 Women’s Support Centres (WSCs) were set up in 3 districts, with the support of the state revenue administration headed by a Woman Nodal officer. The WSC first identifies all rural single women and woman-headed households through door-to-door survey, with the support of ICDS anganwadi worker. Then, an inventory is created of single women for facilitating land, social security and livelihood support services. In addition to this, the model also supports government officials in allocation of small house-plots within the vicinity of their village. Finally, it is ensured that these women are covered under housing, social security and livelihood support programmes. Through this model, 1541 households have already received land titles and another 18,459 households will receive them once the process of verification is completed. Nearly 250 out of the 1541 women who have received land titles have also received benefits from social security schemes. This intervention has helped in instilling a sense of dignity, security and confidence among women due to ownership of and access to land.

4.3.2 Establishment of Producer Companies

For small and marginal farmers practising agriculture, access to credit, technology, inputs and markets is a formidable challenge. It was thought that these challenges could be effectively overcome through collectivisation of the producers. Through formation of a viable producer organisation, the producers can operate at scale, avoid middlemen, increase their market share and negotiate better terms of work and wages with better prices and margins.

The vegetable, chilli, poultry and goatery value chain project in Jharsuguda established two all-women owned PCs, with the objective of purchase and distribution of inputs, aggregation of produce from its members and collective marketing of produce. Besides these, the members access other services such as financial services, insurance, technical as well as networking services through the PCs. They also support the farmers by developing their capacity in technical skills through demonstration plots in chilli, vegetables, poultry and goatery to improve practices and resultantly, increase yield.

A total of 3277 women from SE families of Jharsuguda, Kirimira and Kolabira blocks were organised into 260 Self Help Groups (SHGs). Under the PACS intervention, SHG members were mobilised, trained and supported to start and manage micro-economic activities in agriculture and related sector with special focus on livestock development (poultry and goat rearing).

To improve access to credit for women farmers in Jharsuguda, the beneficiaries of the project were linked to a Financial Cooperative named ‘Subhalaxmi Bahumukhee Mahila Samabaya Samiti Limited by the PACS partner. The cooperative promotes savings of women (through the SHGs) and provides credit to the women. With this linkage, the working capital and financial requirements for women farmers who want to undertake livelihoods activities (vegetable, chilli farming and goat and poultry rearing) are now being met successfully. As per January 2016, 2277 beneficiaries out of 3277 project participants have been enrolled as members and were availing financial services (savings and credit services) from the cooperative.

The two block level Producers’ Companies, registered under the Companies Act are Jharsuguda Women Agro Producer Company Limited and Kirimira Women Agro Producer Company Limited. Jharsuguda Producer Company has mobilised INR 5,28,700 as shared capital and INR 1,07,350 as membership fee from 1263 women farmers. Kirimira Producer Company has mobilised shared capital of INR 2,25,800 and membership fee of INR 43,300 from 561 members. Both the companies have completed all the licensing formalities and have received PAN, TAN, TIN, fertilisers’ and seeds’ licenses to support their businesses. For improved streamlining of activities and systems, the companies have developed Finance manual, Human Resource manual and Tally software.

Surendri Kisan, a young woman of 24 years, in Bhimjor village of Kirimira block (Jharsuguda) proudly showed off the demonstration unit of poultry set up in her courtyard. Her birds are now fed seed and water from specified containers as explained during the trainings. Pointing to the unit where vermicompost was being produced, she said, “I had no knowledge on organic and natural fertilizers, but I was taught this technique of utilising waste and creating organic vermicompost by the didis (organisation staff). It is not just economical, but has also improved yield in my farm.”

With enhanced farm productivity and better income levels, her children now attend school regularly.

Similar efforts to harness the collective strength of small and marginal farmers were undertaken in the Kandhamal model for two value chains, namely vegetables and turmeric. The project worked directly with 351 women SHGs, consisting primarily of women from excluded communities (with a majority of tribal population), to create producer groups and registered PCs. The establishment of these institutions offered a platform for the 4108 women producers to discuss and deliberate on their concerns regarding their livelihoods and to facilitate the mainstreaming and inclusion of the SE communities. Under the model, the two PCs, namely G.Udayagiri Women Agro and NTFP Producer Company Limited and Raikia Women Agro and NTFP Producer Company Limited were formulated. The former Producer Company has mobilised INR 1,61,500 as shared capital and INR 38,550 as membership fee from 713 women farmers. Raikia Producer Company, on the other hand, has mobilised shared capital of INR 1,77,900 and membership fee of INR 41,800 from 783 members.
The members of the producer organisations, comprising largely of women from SE communities, were given trainings on group management, crop planning, collection of shared capital, book keeping, inputs’ demand estimation, PoP (in both vegetables and turmeric), primary processing and agri-extension through ICT.

The two PCs offer services related to cultivation- from inputs, technical services (to improve yield) to processing and marketing. The PCs have obtained seeds’ and fertilizers’ license, along with completing other formalities to make business sustainable. While inputs (seeds and fertilizers) are supplied to the farmers at a lower price, the collection of produce is done by identifying 23 aggregation points for procuring agriculture produce from the producers. Thereafter, collective marketing of surplus produce is done via the PCs to get fair price of the produce. This saves the producers from exploitation at the hands of the middlemen and also ensures a sustainable market for them.

Under the Triple crop model, seven PCs have been set up in the two States (Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh). Specialised crop Production Clusters (with one or two specific crops) have been registered as PCs. To increase the accountability of the Board managing the companies, the farmers are inducted as board members. In all, nearly 13,000 farmers are linked with these PCs. The company has mobilised its farmers for shared capital money. The role of the PC is to connect the small and marginal farmers with the markets, for which farm level aggregators and cluster level aggregators (CLA) have been instituted. The Farm Level Aggregators’ role is procurement of the crop produce at the local level, grading and sorting of the produce and quality assurance. An innovative approach for this model has been introduced with the use of a mobile phone application for quality assurance. Once the produce is aggregated, it is tagged as per the farmer’s identification number using a mobile application. This Farm-gate traceability helps in maintaining quality assurance of the product and increases credibility and transparency.

An innovative approach for this model has been introduced with the use of a mobile phone application for quality assurance. Once the produce is aggregated, it is tagged as per the farmer’s identification number using a mobile application. This Farm-gate traceability helps in maintaining quality assurance of the product and increases credibility and transparency. Ram Prasad Sahu, a local level aggregator from Pathashhora village in Mandla district (Madhy Pradesh) said, “As compared to the other farmers, Ekgaon farmers bring a better quality produce and it’s graded. Grading fetches them better price in the market, and it is also beneficial for us. We can sell a graded yield at a good price.”

Further, warehouse facility has been made available at the cluster level along with transportation. After the tagging process, payment settlement is done for the farm level aggregators by the CLA.

To adequately address the PACS objective of reaching out to the marginalised groups, strategies were built to mainstream SEGs into livelihood programmes.
The involvement of PACS in the management of the eight livelihood interventions was through support in funding, planning and technical handholding, along with continuous monitoring and evaluation. To adequately address the PACS objective of reaching out to the marginalised groups, strategies were built to mainstream SEGs into livelihood programmes. The primary objective for these interventions, thus, centred on developing inclusive livelihood interventions - both by creating newer opportunities for the SEGs as well as revival of the traditional livelihoods in a sustainable manner. Some of the critical factors that contributed to the success of the programme were as follows:

**Networking with Technical Institutes**

The objective of skill building was achieved primarily through engagement with technical and scientific institutes. These experts were instrumental in designing and imparting training modules and in disseminating information on advanced techniques for improving the quality and quantity of their products.

**Involvement of Government**

Apart from the technical and scientific institutions, the most important linkage was forged with the government. Most of the interventions required active and constant participation of government departments to achieve project goals. Continuous engagement and follow up meetings with the officials were carried out to ensure their constant support to the programme.

**Introduction of New Technology**

Acknowledging the benefits of technology to revolutionise livelihoods, the models introduced the application of technology to collect data, and simplify processes for the benefit of the producers. Trainings were conducted for the target groups and community mobilisers to orient them about the new technology.

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5 Conclusion and the Way Forward
Collectivisation and Community Ownership

The PACS Livelihood Programme was successful in collectivising the SE communities and facilitating the creation of platforms which could be easily accessed by them. With the institutional capacities built, the target group developed a sense of ownership towards the programme. The marginalisation faced by the SE communities significantly reduced in the intervention areas. As narrated by a dairy farmer from the SC community in Chhindwara, Madhya Pradesh, “There is nothing different now between us (SCs) and them (the general population) as far as dairy farming is concerned. I have equal access to the DCS, I am treated the same as others when I pour my milk and receive payment based on the quality of milk I pour.”

Use of Local Facilitators

The change agents who imparted trainings were deliberately selected from the local communities to ensure acceptability and easy adoption of project activities and practices by the community. This worked well for the implemented models and led to better uptake by the community.

Reaching a Wide Variety of Target Audience

It is worth mentioning that although the programmes were focused on a primary target group, in effect, they reached out to a much larger audience than the targeted community alone. Often, farmers who had benefitted from the programme informed others to learn and improvise their practices based on their experience. In one of the villages in Madhya Pradesh, a woman quoted, “My husband would often go out in the field and tell other farmers to get associated with the project partner. He told them to get a membership in the Producer Company so that they could benefit from seeds, fertilizers provided by the company at nominal rates.”

Special Focus on Women

The programmes were instrumental in increasing the participation of women in livelihood related activities and strengthening their leadership for acquiring empowered roles. Sunita Malgam, a farmer in Banvatara village in Mandla district mentioned, “Earlier, husbands of the women attending the group meetings would reproachfully say, “What is the need of attending the meetings? What will you save?” But with time, things changed and the participation increased. The women began to attend the group meetings and trainings, where they discussed livelihood related issues with each other. In our village, we actively discuss about crop, savings, inputs and the PCs during the meetings. The women take inspiration from each other and insist that they want to be part of the group. They are encouraged by the learning they receive.”

The programme brought about changes in the social hierarchies- not just at the community level but also at the household level. Women actively participated in the training workshops and learnt new skills and techniques for increased production. Through the programmes, they were facilitated for acquiring homestead land, establishing entrepreneurial ventures and were offered lead decision-making roles in PCs. These were crucial processes in infusing them with a feeling of self-confidence and self-reliance.

However, it is important to note that during the PACS programme, the interventions faced various challenges, some of which were successfully addressed, while others were not. Some of the critical challenges faced during the implementation are as follows:

High dependency on weather conditions

Certain livelihoods, such as agriculture and fish farming, were completely dependent on natural weather conditions and were, therefore, inherently subject to the risk of failure.

Difficulty in proving creditworthiness

Often, it was cited that small farmers from SEGs found it challenging to secure loans from the banks, as their credit worthiness was questioned time and again.

Disturbed political context

Since the project areas also covered the left wing extremism affected states and districts, the communities had poor exposure to information and access. It was evident that the marginalised communities had limited access to the government schemes.

Utilisation of technology

It is yet to be seen whether the capacity of the target groups to familiarise them with a technology and to use the same is extrapolated to adopting newer technologies as and when they are introduced in the market.

Sustainability of the programme

This was a huge concern for the local partners. As the programme comes to an end, there seems to be lack of a clear exit/ phasing out strategy for these programmes.

Some of the model specific challenges have been shared as follows:

- The Lac Model in Gumla experienced several constraints in reaching out to the women in tribal communities, as traditionally, women have been associated with the low-end processes and are disconnected from the trading of lac. Their inherent lack of scientific knowledge, low literacy levels, limited access to organised markets coupled with deep-rooted gender based cultural biases made their entry into the male dominated market systems a challenge.

In order to overcome these challenges and bring about participation of women, a 5-step model was implemented by PACS. This included capacity building, skill development, to helping women assume strategic positions through service provision and entrepreneurship roles. For instance providing accessible tools for women like the secateur1 was a small but significant way of encouraging women producers in Lac. Similarly, the introduction of a women friendly variety of tree like the Flemingia Semialata meant that climbing trees was no longer a hurdle for women.

As Flemingia Semialata grows only to a height of 6 feet, matures much faster and giving significantly more returns than commonly planted varieties of Palash or Ber. The project implementation was also affected by the limited supply of brood which was managed by identifying 40-50 trees of good quality close to each other and encouraging the households owning the land to develop ‘brood farms’.

On that, that, to deal with the challenge of uncertainty of climatic condition, a PSCS was developed with the help of scientists from the INRGA to limit the impact of uncertainties due to climate conditions and ensure uniformity of cultivation through Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

- In Palamu, the challenges in revitalising inland fisheries for inclusive livelihoods included issues of ownership and access to water bodies. A large number of water bodies are in effective control of powerful caste. As a result of which traditional fishing communities were pushed out from these water bodies. The intervention focused on creating awareness on securing fishing rights in common water bodies.

Lack of quality inputs, in addition to the poorly integrated value chains to the market, specifically, in the absence of access to basic infrastructure such as nets, ice plants, cold storage facilities and reliable transport was a common problem faced by the beneficiaries.

As a response to this, the PACS project employed a range of thematic interventions to build community assets in the form of a hatchery, initiating input-related enterprises, piloted models for fish-duck farming, and establishing institutionalised support systems (inputs, credit, technology, management, price discovery, marketing, access to public investments and securing fishing rights in common water bodies etc.) through organising the ‘Fish Producers and

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1Earlier the women could not participate in pruning due to the use of heavy, blunt axes but secateurs are medium-sized scissors that women can handle deftly.
Inclusive dairy livelihoods project through innovative technology in Madhya Pradesh suffered from high pricing of the AMCU which were not affordable by all as these machines set up by Intellecrap were not subsidised.

However, to mitigate this challenge, a revolving fund was created within the project to give credit to the beneficiaries for installing the AMCUs.

The other issue that emerged during the implementation was lack of interest of district DCSs to install the AMU units because of limited income flows and their inability to regularise payments, which was an outcome of the dwindling demand of milk powder from the European market.

The Handloom Weavers Model in Varanasi was constrained by lack of understanding of mainstream markets. Weavers possessed limited business skills to access markets on their own; as a consequence of which, a few traders controlled the artisans and the market.

The PACS intervention worked to change the ecosystem by investing in capacity building, collectivisation and establishing sustainable institutions for integrating the weavers to the growing markets.

In order to address the core issues of direct market access, capacity building, product innovation and institution building, a professional facilitation centre called the BFUs were set up. The BFU was responsible for addressing the entire spectrum of small artisans’ needs – from facilitating access to government artisan schemes to procuring raw materials at fair rates, aggregating products, providing training and establishing market linkages.

The PACS ACCESS agriculture and livestock value chain development faced a challenge of low quality yields in Jharsuguda. To address this, a scientific and advanced PoP was developed for the local region of Jharsuguda with the help of KVK, the Department of Livestock and the Chipilima University.

To encourage the adoption of the new practice, demonstration plots had to be set up to encourage more farmers to witness results and to sign on to become part of the project. Moreover, for the initiative to gather momentum with the community of farmers, a cadre of CRPs had to be created to support for the implementation of the planned livelihood interventions. The intervention also faced trouble in establishing linkages for financial/credit support for investment in economic activities and microenterprises for women producers. However this was overcome by partnering with ACCESS promoted co-operative Subhalaxmi Bhamukeye Mahila Samayba Samhiti Ltd that provided timely and affordable credit and savings services.

The Inclusive Value Chain Model aimed to transform the agricultural prospects of tribal communities in Kandhamal. But the programme suffered from a myriad of challenges because of the inhabiting communities’ lack of access to market information on pricing and infrastructure. This was further exacerbated by the dense and fairly inaccessible terrain of Kandhamal, the prevalence of middle-men who not only controlled the farmer’s access to the market but also tied the farmers in a complicated web of social relations marked by over dependence. To cope with these challes, the PACS project had to provide holistic support to farmers to improve productivity including providing access to inputs, facilitating access to technical and financial services, logistics and infrastructure for primary and secondary processing, in addition to ensuring effective market linkages. This also included developing advanced PoP for turmeric and six other vegetable crops, setting up of the Small Producers Assistance Resource Centre for building engagement and trust with the farmers and aggregating farmers to set up PCs.

Since the Land Rights’ Model in West Bengal and Odisha often involved government officials in various activities, it was strained by difficulty in maintaining their motivation and timely completion of all planned activities during the project cycle. The project also faced a number of operational obstacles that prevented women from gaining rightful ownership over land, such as the attitude, mind-set and prevailing customary practices. In the context of Odisha, the land enumeration programmes completely failed to enlist single women and women-headed households, which had to be resolved by developing a unique enumeration method that involved the identification of all single women by Anganwadi workers. Also training and sensitisation of key stakeholders including the district government officers to last mile community workers on the various aspects of land ownership, social security measures and identification of women helped to mitigate the prevailing challenges.

In the case of West Bengal, the project experienced delay in the implementation of planned activities and service delivery because panchayat and parliamentary elections were held during the same period and a number of government officials involved in the project were transferred necessitating advocacy efforts all over again.

As the project involved closely working with the Department of Land & Land Reforms and other government departments, PACS had to often act as a facilitator to ensure that the activities are carried out with a sense of urgency and with quality. The project also used effective communication methods as a tool to facilitate regular engagement at the policy level as well as at the programme level.

The Triple Crop Value Chain Model faced the manifold challenge of remoteness of geography, uncertain climatic condition, lack of infrastructure, technology and knowledge of contemporary practices and the inability to get access to mainstream markets. To circumvent these challenges the intervention adopted innovative mechanisms for technological integration to bring in relevant tools, knowledge and know-how to farmers, like the Mobile-based ICT for farm advisory services, creating production clusters for better cultivation and bringing together value chain intermediaries among others. The Triple Crop Value Chain Model also faced problems in building trust among the community especially to change from their traditional cropping systems. This required the project interventions to deeply engage with the framers to demonstrate the significant measurable improvements in production by adopting the multi cropping model.

5.1 WAY FORWARD

It is important to acknowledge that most of the livelihood programmes are nearing their end after their implementation for two and a half years. Since the PACS’ strategy was to gradually withdraw its support after empowering the SE communities, it is important to ensure smooth transition of these models as PACS begin to phase out of these programmes.

Given the fact that a large number of beneficiaries, along with their families, in the five states stand much to gain from these livelihood interventions, it is extremely critical that a well thought out exit strategy is implemented. However, the local partners have already initiated work in this direction and are trying to mobilise resources for the continuance of the programme. While our interaction with the local partners revealed the following plans, it is important to note that they would need support and hand holding to ensure that they are successful in sustaining these programmes.

As a part of the vegetable and turmeric value chain intervention in Kandhamal, PACS partner has initiated convergence of the project with National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), along with Odisha Livelihood Mission (OLM) undertaking field appraisal. OLM has agreed to support the two PCs, whereas National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) Regional Office has encouraged the efforts of the intervention by...
agreeing to provide INR 5 lakh as loan support to one of the PC.

- In the intervention in Jharsuguda, the PCs through engagement with Arya Collateral Warehousing Services Limited (ARYA) are planning to undertake services of bulk storage of produces and risk management services related to commodities and inventories which inter-alia includes inspection, collateral management, valuation, quality testing, gradation, storage services, assessment, certification services, monitoring services and fumigation.

- PACS livelihood partner in Jharkhand, as part of the fisheries intervention, is planning to institutionalise and strengthen the FIG at the panchayat level and FPOs at the block level through linkages with Jharkhand Fishery Cooperative Federation (JHACOFISH), NABARD and NRLM in Jharkhand.

- The dairy intervention in Madhya Pradesh, executed by Parartha Samiti, has set up a section 8 Company, which will manage the revolving loan fund (RLF) which is currently being used to finance the AMCUs. The fund will continue to be used to improve the outcomes in the dairy sector through mobilisation of additional resources to strengthen the milk supply chain in the districts for larger impact, and as a working capital for running the operations of the company.

- Concluding their successful demonstration of the lac model, PACS livelihood partner in Gumla is now focusing on institution building by registering eight co-operatives in Gumla, which will be involved in the marketing of lac, which includes selling of brood-lac and selling of scraped lac. Their future strategy involves formulating a robust savings and credit mechanism to cater to the financial aspects of the co-operative as well as the members.

- Envisaging institutionalisation as a sustainable solution, the weavers’ intervention in Varanasi through creation of the BFU will ensure that the project activities are market driven and continue to grow in terms of its outreach. The ownership of the hub will lie with the weavers. The idea is to re-channelise a portion of the profits back into the hub and expand its outreach to an increased number of weavers.

- The land rights’ intervention plans to leverage on existing development administration system (especially local administration/line department officials) in planning, implementation and monitoring components of the intervention. It focused on empowering the government functionaries by building their capacity and providing mentoring support.

The above efforts indicate the enthusiasm and the motivation of the local partners to continue the intervention in their respective geographies indicating the success of the model and the dependency of various families on them. It would be extremely critical for PACS to ensure that strong linkages are developed for these models as they phase out of the programme.

A workshop could be organised to invite other donor agencies, CSR companies and Government departments to showcase these models and its achievement in the respective states. These stakeholders could be approached to facilitate the continuation of these programmes.

Annexure 1
About PACS

Poorest Areas Civil Society Programme (PACS) is an initiative of the UK government’s Department for International Development (DFID). Under PACS, DFID partnered with Indian civil society to help socially excluded groups claim their rights and entitlements more effectively, so they receive a fairer share of India’s development gains.

PACS, in its second phase of implementation (2009-2016), had been supporting the work of CSOs to promote inclusive policies, programmes and institutions at local, district and state levels in the areas of livelihoods and basic services. The programme was initiated by DFID in 2001 to support and strengthen civil society to help the poorest and most vulnerable in deprived districts in India to claim their rights.

Its first phase, which ended in 2008, focused on reaching all poor groups and tackling the general causes of poverty. Experience gained during the first phase of PACS showed clearly that the poor in India are not homogeneous: certain categories of people are particularly marginalised. While the persistent poverty of these groups can be partly attributed to general causes that create deprivation among all poor people in India, there are specific factors that aggravate hardship among the socially excluded and make it harder for them to escape poverty.

The second phase of the PACS Programme was implemented across seven Indian states—Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal covering 90 of the poorest districts across these states. These are the districts identified as those having poverty levels higher than the average for rural India. In addition a substantial proportion of these district’s total population belonged to socially excluded groups.

PACS worked with 225 civil society organisations during its implementation. The CSO projects supported by PACS were initiated in September 2011 and concluded by December 2015. This period also witnessed a number of thematic campaigns and other interventions carried out by PACS in collaboration with multiple stakeholders including the government.

PACS aimed at reducing the welfare gap between socially excluded groups and the rest of the population and achieving gender equality. The heterogeneity of the nature of social exclusion rendered the implementation of PACS to be specific and people centred. Driving on a Civil Society Organisation and community based approach, PACS stressed on empowering the socially excluded groups towards greater awareness and access to key government schemes. The selection of schemes have been such that PACS targets three major facets of human development: Livelihoods, Health and Nutrition and Education. Strengthening non discriminatory access of the socially excluded groups to the rights and entitlements enshrined in these government schemes on these three areas, PACS had strived towards bridging the welfare gap between them and rest of the population.

PACS Programme was managed by a consortium of organisations led by Christian Aid UK along with Caritas India, Access Development Services, Indian Institute of Dalit Studies and Financial Management Service Foundation.
Annexure 2
About the Livelihood Models

1. The Lac Model, Gumla, Jharkhand: Transforming the lives of tribal women through lac

- **Project Focus:** Enhancing livelihood of 8,000 families from socially excluded communities in Jharkhand
- **Geographical Area:** Gumla district, Jharkhand
- **Partner:** Udyogini
- **Target Population:** 8,000 women producers

- Lac is a resinous secretion from a scale insect called the Lac Insect (Laccifer Lacca), when they feed on host trees like the Kusum, Palash and Ber, that are found in abundance in the main forests of India. A highly remunerative crop, Lac prices are set globally and can bring significant economic returns to its growers, processors and the industry. Lac has the potential to serve as a sustainable source of employment and subsistence for farmers while also playing a vital role in environmental conservation. Being the largest producer of Lac, India contributes to about 70% of the world’s needs. 

- **Main Livelihood in the state:** Agriculture, Non Timber Forest Produce

Despite being the second largest producer of fish in the world\(^4\), inland fishery resources in India remain vastly underutilised due to unorganised fish production compounded by very poorly integrated support systems (technology, inputs, credit and market access). Inland fishery growth in the country is further impeded due to the pronounced seasonality and dispersed nature of water bodies, climate sustainability issues (flood/drought situations), and messy common property regimes. Jharkhand has vast inland fisheries potential in its ponds, reservoirs, checks dams and ahars covering an area of 0.45 million hectares. Fish production in the State of Jharkhand has seen a five-fold increase from 14,000 MT to 92,000 MT in the last 12 years. Recognising the potential in fisheries, the State Government has developed various schemes and benefits for fisheries including leasing out water bodies to communities for fishing. Moreover fisheries are an important economic activity in the state of Jharkhand for additional employment and income generation and it

\(1\)Report on Lac, 2010, Indian Institute of Natural Resins and Gums (INIRG)

\(2\)The Munda and their lac culture, Asian Mirror – International Journal of Research, Volume 1, Issue 1, 2014

\(3\)Handbook of Fisheries Statistics 2014, Government of India, Ministry of Agriculture
is estimated that about 1.35 lakh fishermen in Jharkhand depend on traditional fisheries. Palamu in Jharkhand, with its plentiful water bodies, presented an opportunity to develop a strong inclusive inland fisheries model that can provide nutrition for the local people as well as increasing the potential incomes of socially excluded communities.

The PACS inland fisheries project is brought as a partnership between WASSAN, community partner Vikas Sahayoga Kendra and a host of other ecosystem partners ranging from fisheries advocacy networks to scientific research, training and capacity building organisations. The project also banks upon the extensive on-ground knowledge and expertise on fishery implementation provided by the Revitalising Rainfed Agriculture (RRA) Network and other knowledge partners like the Centre for Freshwater Aquaculture (CIFA). The key processes followed by the project to establish a value chain involve: Establishing an inclusive institutional foundation for inland fishery development with an administrative block as a unit to organise the required support systems for productive and remunerative fish production; Developing Community Resource Person(s) (CRPs) who work at the Gram Panchayat level to carry out a multitude of tasks covering documentation (identification and registration of water bodies, collecting household level data, maintaining records of production), on-ground farmer support (training, pond preparation, facilitating supply of inputs, monitoring for disease) and post-harvest support and market linkages; Enhancing fish productivity through innovative technologies and training; Digitising information and knowledge for effective implementation; Promoting micro-entrepreneurship in local communities and establishing strong backward linkages through an array of income generation activities and services; and Convergence and alliances with the Government particularly important for expanding and rejuvenating water bodies, developing better fish markets, and accessing fishing gear and other support infrastructure that could be funded through various fishery promotion schemes and government bodies. The PACS-WASSAN fishery value chain development project is focused on establishing a sustainable institutional framework, using technology to create an open, efficient and inclusive implementation process, securing rights and entitlements over existing community-owned and public water bodies, as well as developing a robust local ecosystem for better fish production. Additionally, the livelihood intervention has established best practices that provide a framework within which inclusive inland fishery models can be replicated.

3. The Dairy Model, Chhindwara, Madhya Pradesh: Inclusive dairy livelihoods through innovative technology

India has one of the largest livestock populations in the world, with dairy being the primary livelihood source for over 70 million rural Indian households. According to LadderUp, a global financial advisory firm, the Indian dairy sector generated revenue of ₹5,500 million in 2012 and is further expected to reach ₹11,800 million by 2017. It is believed that India itself will need 150 million tons of milk by 2017 for domestic consumption. Generated revenue of $5,500 million in 2012 and is further expected to reach $11,800 million by 2017. It is believed that India will need 150 million tons of milk by 2017 for domestic consumption, with there further being significant opportunities to export to global markets. This additional demand presents a huge opportunity for stronger integration of rural households, especially women and small marginal farmers, by strengthening the dairy co-operatives ecosystem that grants them access to the organised sector.

In the socially backward communities of Chhindwara and Seoni, it has been noted that they still have very marginalised access to livelihood options and agricultural resources. In contrast with the challenges socially excluded communities face, there also exists a huge underutilised presence of livestock – approximately 4 million cattle in Madhya Pradesh. Madhya Pradesh has the largest livestock population in India and presents a unique opportunity to leverage the native skills of these communities in rearing cattle. The dairy industry, with the involvement of private enterprise and the proliferation of dairy co-operatives; is also fast emerging as an important means of livelihood in the State.

Therefore with concerted effort, capital investment and a holistic intervention, it was realised that dairy could become an important source of secondary income for the socially excluded communities of Chhindwara and Seoni.

The dairy initiative was implemented as a partnership between PACS, Intellecap, Parish Samithi, SKEPL and the DCS community in two districts. Intellecap, with assistance from SKEPL, aimed to create an operational framework for the DCS community. This was implemented to demonstrate the benefits of the AMCUs at all levels of the DCS community as well as identity potential consumers amongst village DCS’s. After the village DCS and milk producers were convinced about the concept, the PACS-Intellecap dairy project provided low-interest credit (repayable over 9-18 months) to the village DCS/ district DCS to invest in these AMCUs. The PACS Madhya Pradesh dairy project’s emphasis on creating sustainable livelihoods for milk producers from socially excluded communities and promoting inclusive growth across the entire dairy value chain was achieved through the introduction of three first-of-its kind inclusive business innovations, which are as follows: innovative and scalable milk collection technology, financial credit through a revolving fund within the project and lastly incorporate a Section 8 company to ensure sustainability.

4. The Handloom Weavers' Model, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh: Creating the yarns of sustainable weaver livelihoods

Coming a close second to agriculture, the handloom and handicrafts sector in India provides employment to over 12.4 million weavers and craftsmen predominantly in rural areas and socially excluded communities. One of the oldest living cities in the world, Varanasi is also known world over for its 800-year-old heritage, the ‘Varanasi silk weave’, which is hand woven by thousands of Muslim weaver households who have resided in the ancient city for generations. Kotwa, Lohta and Ramnagar are 3 clusters in the Kashi Vidyapeeth block of Varanasi, where 70% of the 35,000 residents are weavers - mostly contract or individual weavers and very few Ghivhas. The average age of weavers here is less than 30 years and they are able to earn about INR 50,000 per year (about INR 137 per day – which is barely at subsistence level for households comprising of 5-7 members). The absence of skills other than weaving, low levels of education and a strong attachment to their traditional livelihood collectively, limit weavers from seeking new avenues for employment. However while the demand for Benarasi sarees and brocades has declined considerably over the past decade, it is felt that there is strong potential to combine the fast paced growth of contemporary fashion purchase

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through online commerce with the growing demand for newer apparel forms like stoles, shawls, kurthas, Indo-western wear and so on. The PACS-Traidcraft Varanasi weavers project was established as a partnership between PACS and its implementation partners, Indian Artisans and Craftworkers Welfare Association (IAACA) and Traidcraft, who have been working together to build competencies in the Indian textile sector for over 7 years. The model involved providing capacity building support to strengthen institutional governance, enabling linkages and access to government and other institutional schemes and resources, support for developing/diversifying products and quality standards – through Craftmark certification, introducing innovative market strategies to improve market access to both domestic and international markets and setting up a business entity - Social Enterprise and BFU to provide all business support and facilitate linkages. The project is focussed on bringing back the pride in weaving through a systematic development of a weaver’s livelihood by investing in capacity building, collectivisation and establishing sustainable institutions for equitably integrating the value chain of weavers in growing markets. It further established a holistic livelihoods model that can be replicated and scaled across other handloom communities in India.

5. The Market Oriented 4 Value Chain Strengthening Model, Jharsuguda, Odisha: Empowering rural women farmers through strengthened value chains

Indian women have always shouldered the bulk of the work in agriculture. It is estimated that 981 million women farmers are engaged in agro-activities, from seedbed preparation and weeding to crop harvesting and livestock rearing in our country. Although women play substantial roles on the farm in rural areas, male migration to cities in recent times has rendered them completely overburdened and isolated on their small farms. The Census 2011 shows that for the first time since independence, urban populations in India are growing much faster than rural populations. An exodus of male farmers are quickly leaving farm work and moving to cities and other industrial jobs, leaving women behind to tend to the farm and home, all alone. What is even more unfortunate is that India’s women farmers are often unacknowledged for their work are impeded without access to land titles and other productive resources, have no prior knowledge of negotiating agricultural prices, are not part of existing value chains and lack a support system.

This alienation sums up the situation of women farmers who constitute 50% of the total farmers in an increasingly industrialised Jharsuguda district in rural Odisha. With Jharsuguda emerging as one of the most prominent recent industrial hubs in the state with increasing urbanisation and a growing population, the demand for food items such as vegetables, poultry, meat, fish, milk and consumer products is also proportionally increasing. These factors could contribute significantly towards opening up opportunities for local small farmers to grow commercial crops and do other allied activities such as livestock rearing to earn and supplement their household income.

The PACS project is working with ACCESS Development Services to establish a robust value chain in locally suitable agricultural and poultry products that can integrate socially excluded communities in Jharsuguda equitably with local markets. The PACS-ACCESS agriculture and livestock project is implemented as an inclusive value chain through the following key approaches of value chain facilitation: SPARC Centres and Community Resource Person, increasing agricultural productivity, formation and development of Women’s Producer Companies and microenterprise, facilitating market linkages and convergence with Government schemes to ensure that the producer companies are aware of market conditions. The project facilitated access to information on markets, prices, trends and forecasts as well as information on input suppliers, banks and Government programmes. Through capacity building, training and providing access to financial inclusion, the project aimed to empower small and marginal women farmers resulting in better choices for the family and the community. By promoting women-based and women-led producer companies, the programme has succeeded in integrating women in the value chain, empowering them to participate in markets, getting a fair price for their produce and overcoming the small farmer struggle of isolation.

6. The Inclusive Value Chain Model, Kandhamal, Odisha: Building tribal livelihoods through organic turmeric and vegetables

The forest cover in Kandhamal district in central Odisha is dense; the terrain fairly inaccessible with its interlocking spread of hilly ranges and narrow valley tracts. The abundantly rich biodiversity of land above the ground and precious mineral wealth below the ground belies the challenges encountered by one of India’s most distinct demographic groups – the indigenous people of Kandhamal district in Central Odisha. These groups eke out a living through subsistence...
cultivation on their small landholdings, labouring on the estates of nontribal farmers or depending on forest produce for survival. The Kondhs form over 51% of the population in the district of Kandhamal and constitute the largest tribal group in Odisha. Juxtaposed uneasily with development, the Kondhs today live in a shrunken economy that is characterized by primitive agricultural practices, yields that afford zero surplus, a high dependency on the monsoons as most rain-fed cultivation in the country is, and exclusion from the financial system. The tribal communities have little access to productive resources, infrastructure, and knowledge or markets that can further their own sustenance. The situation of the Kondh tribes reflects a larger dilemma that faces all of India’s indigenous tribes, numbering more than 80 million22 collectively, who occupy some of the most densely forested corridors running across the country — how can they integrate into the model of modern civilisation, while also protecting their traditional wisdom and identity? The PACS-ACCESS initiative that is running in the Raipur and G. Udayagiri blocks of Kandhamal is an attempt at this integration – by transforming the agricultural prospects of tribal communities from the bottom up by combining productive thinking on agriculture, community ownership of infrastructure and strategic value chain design with the inherent traditional wisdom and skills of these socially excluded populations.

The PACS project is working with ACCESS Development Services to establish a robust value chain in locally suitable agricultural and poultry products that can equitably integrate socially excluded communities in Kandhamal with local markets. The PACS Kandhamal project is implemented as an inclusive value chain through the key approaches such as developing an advanced package of practices for turmeric and six vegetable crops with the help of KVK. In addition to KVK scientists also training the ACCESS project staff and farmers on best practices, and are also available to producers to address any issues arising during cultivation. Secondly building engagement and trust with the farmers by developing SPARC - the Small Producers Assistance Resource Centre Consisting of a programme and technical leader, marketing/ block coordinators, a MIS coordinator, a value chain coordinator and Community Mobilisers. Additionally it focused on aggregating farmers to set up producer companies through a process of continuous sensitisation and awareness building and building market and institutional linkages to ensure that there are diversified linkages to the market. The PACS intervention in the Kandhamal district aimed to create a participatory and inclusive livelihood model in agriculture that can empower the producers of Raikia and G.Udayagiri and demonstrate a scaling model that can be replicated to other regions.

In rural India, an estimated 20 million families are both poor and landless23. Over millions in our country have no secure legal rights to the land they currently live and work on, which adversely impacts any efforts from these families to break free from the poverty cycle. This is particularly because land is not simply an economic resource. It is an important factor in the formation of social and cultural identity24 and is also an enormous political resource25. Landlessness contributes to many of the social ills associated with poverty: malnutrition, illiteracy, conflict, child marriage, and women’s disenfranchisement. The situation is aggravated especially in the case of women headed households and single women. In the context of West Bengal, it is widely recognised as one of the most progressive states in India when it comes to redistributive land reform. In 2008, the State alone had re-distributed over 22% of all the land that had been redistributed to peasants in India26. In October 2011, the Government of West Bengal introduced a flagship land distribution programme called ‘Nijo Griha Nijo Bhumi’ (My Home My Land) as an improvement to the earlier land allocation programmes. With a priority of having no homeless people in West Bengal by the end of 2015, the state government has committed itself to quick implementation of the programme to cover large numbers of landless families and to ensure that titles vest in the name of the women.

In order to create a comprehensive framework to address land rights effectively PACS partnered with Landesa as its implementation partner, and worked in five districts of West Bengal and six districts of Odisha to secure land rights for families belonging to socially excluded Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) households and for single landless women. Leveraging the strength of Landesa in working with the Government to ensure effective delivery of land distribution schemes, the PACS-Landesa project works through the primary vehicle of delivering and scaling up the model of ‘Convergent Land Sites’. A Convergent Land Site is a homestead site - a ‘micro-plot’ created under government land allocation programmes such as NGBN. The land titling is given jointly to a wife and a husband of an eligible landless

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22India, Foreign Affairs
23Strategies for building livelihoods for the poorest of the poor, Policy paper, Ranu Kayastha Bhogal, UNDP
24Rural Poverty in the Developing World, United Nations
25Budget Statement, Land and Land Reforms Statement, West Bengal
family through land purchase or vested land allocation. With joint land titles, the CLS programme has been designed so that women have higher tenure security over NGBN plots. The project piloted developed and facilitated the process of land distribution along with the Department of Land & Land Reforms and other government departments and acted as a facilitator to ensure that the activities under the state government’s multiple land and livelihood schemes are carried out with a sense of urgency and with quality. To meet important aims of the land schemes the project teams facilitated and developed site-specific convergence plans to ensure that basic facilities like land development, water and sanitation, electricity and housing are made available. The project also used effective Evidence based advocacy to facilitate regular engagement at the policy level as well as at the programme level.

The Government of Odisha has introduced a number of progressive land distribution laws and programmes to ensure land rights for weaker sections of society. The Odisha Land Reforms Act (1960) was one of the first pieces of land legislation to go beyond the ideological goal of ‘land to the tiller’ (giving land rights to the people who actually farm the land). It achieved a more pragmatic objective of promoting proper and effective utilisation of land in an effort to increase food production in the state and, by extension, the country. Since then, several measures have been introduced to take over surplus land by the state and re-distribute it among the landless. Despite progressive reforms and implementation over the years to address socially excluded communities, one area where land reforms are failing is in resolving the significant inherent gender biases. As per state revenue laws, it is the ‘family’ that is eligible to get land from government land distribution programmes. As a result, women’s land rights are subsumed with those of the males in the family.

Under the Land Ceiling Act (1974), the Government of Odisha distributes surplus land to landless people. Although a high priority is given to landless widows and unmarried women up to 30 years of age, significant gaps still exist between women’s land rights and their actual ownership and possession. In this context single women despite constituting about 11% of the population in the project districts in Odisha, and have been a group that has systematically been deprived of land and social security entitlements. Single women are considered as separate families only when they live on their own; when a single woman lives in her maternal or in-laws’ house, which is the common case, she is not considered as a ‘family’ and hence she is ineligible to get access to land rights.

The PACS project is working in 6 districts in Odisha that have a predominantly tribal population and low levels of literacy. Its key focus is on enumerating and including single landless women and giving them access to land as a foundation to ensure food, work and other human rights. One of the unique implementation models chosen for the project is the building of Women’s Support Centres. The implementation model includes engaging with the Odisha District Administration on a state specific scheme focusing on single women. Women’s Support Centres (WSCs) are being scaled up as part of the PACS project WSCs were being scaled up and focus was on identifying single women and ensuring that they benefit from the state’s land, social security and livelihoods promotion programmes. The project developed a unique enumeration method that involved the identification of all single women under various different recognised categories (such as widows, separated women and single women) and also included training and sensitisation of key actors such as the nodal officer, the Revenue Inspector and extends up to the community mobilisers who carry out the actual door-to-door enumeration work. The PACS project to secure lives and livelihoods through land for socially excluded communities in West Bengal and Odisha closely adapted to the government reforms, existing infrastructure and socio-economic nature of the communities in the two states while providing an overall framework for securing land rights for socially excluded populations.

8. The Triple Crop Value Chain Model, MP and Chhattisgarh-Invigorating smallholder prospects through triple crop value chains and mobile farm advisory

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26 Government’s door-to-door survey data from Mayurbhanj, Koraput and Kalahandi
27 Background paper for ‘The State of Food and Agriculture’, Lowder Sarah K, Singh Saumya, FAO, 2014
28 Small farmers in India: Challenges and Opportunities, Dev Mahendra S, Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research (IGIDR), 2012
Smallholder agriculture dominates the landscape of India’s agrarian economy—India has close to 13727 million farm holdings and 82% of these are less than 2 hectares in size, a trend that is growing every year. Small and marginal farmers make a substantial contribution to the production of high value crops with a share of 70% of the total production of vegetables, 55% of fruits and 52.1% in total grain output against their share of just 44% in land area.

Despite small farmers being vital to the agricultural landscape in the country, the ‘smallness’ of smallholders propagates to all types of capital they own including human capital (skills outside farm labour, ability), natural capital (soil productivity, crop biodiversity and land size), financial capital (money flows, credit worthiness), physical capital (infrastructure related to farming, mechanisation), and social capital (market intelligence, connections and networks with different stakeholders in the farming value chain). As a result, small farmers represent the most vulnerable class of Indian farmers with marginal farmer families comprising almost three-fifths of the nation’s hungry and poor, which is in contrast to the 50% of food they produce. The challenge of sustaining small growers from socially excluded populations in districts like Bilaspur, Mandla and Dindori (where there is a high concentration of tribal groups) is manifold—from remoteness of geography to chronic lack of infrastructure, technology and knowledge of contemporary practices as well as an inability to get access to mainstream markets to ensure their own livelihoods.

Therefore a holistic intervention for smallholder farmers was needed to increase agricultural entrepreneurship to support the next generation of farmers, strengthen women’s economic development, and provide extension services through Information Technology (IT) and institutional support that can improve agricultural productivity as well as enable better farmer organisation and access to markets through institutions like Producer Companies.

The PACS - Ekgoan project in the Mandla, Dindori and Bilaspur districts was implemented as a partnership between PACS and EkGaon - a social enterprise that bridges the gap between small farmers and profitable mainstream markets through its award-winning ‘One Village One World’ technology network. The model worked on promoting triple-cropping for produce which is aligned to the local geo-physical conditions to increase the total income for the household engaged in farming. Ekgaon’s farm extended Mobile-based advisory services - ‘OneFarm’ – to provide ICT based real-time technical assistance that was based on comprehensive knowledge of the farmer’s local plot and crops. The project also included creating production clusters for better cultivation, establishing linkages to mainstream markets and brought value chain intermediaries together that included key actors who belong to the local area and are associated with farming such as farmers, aggregators and marketers. The Ekgaon- PACS triple value chain development project pioneered several innovations in setting up a framework which inclusive smallholder livelihood models can replicate.

Annexure 3
List of Implementing Partners and Districts covered

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<td>5 districts of West Bengal and 6 districts of Odisha</td>
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29Small farmers in India: Challenges and Opportunities, Dev Mahendra S, Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research (IGIDR), 2012
The Poorest Areas Civil Society (PACS) programme is an initiative of the UK government’s Department for International Development (DFID). Under PACS, DFID partnered with Indian civil society to help socially excluded groups claim their rights and entitlements more effectively, so they receive a fairer share of India’s development gains. PACS, in its second phase of implementation (2009-2016), had been supporting the work of CSOs to promote inclusive policies, programmes and institutions at local, district and state levels in the areas of livelihoods and basic services.

PACS Programme supported select livelihoods projects in its seven states of intervention. These interventions had already established a proof of concept and PACS helped them to upscale along with organising, engaging and integrating socially excluded communities into value chains and markets. These livelihood interventions had explicit income generation and market integration approaches, with some focusing on increasing access to resources and assets, such as a piece of land as a means of enhancement of livelihoods base.