

RIGHT TO LIVELIHOOD FOR POOR



Campaign Against Hunger & Disease 2010

Sustained livelihood is a Constitutional right of the Citizens of India. *Article 21* provides the right for dignified life. Deprivation takes place in the absence of required food, proper housing, supply of drinking water, minimum education, necessary health facilities that ensure adequate livelihood.

Livelihood is not limited with getting adequate food but also other components such as capacity of generating employment, increase in the level of income, consumption and access to services. To ensure livelihood for the poor and the marginalized, their capacity is to be enhanced to develop appropriate strategies depending on the basic resources both material and social that people possess or have access to.

The Arjun Sengupta committee on the unorganized sector assessed that 77% of India's adult population spend less than Rs. 20/- per day. This indicates their abject poverty. This consists of chronically undernourished families of small and marginal farmers and landless laborers. The position is serious in the case of women and children. The states of Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh, Bihar, Orissa, and Jharkhand are most affected states due to poverty.

Further, as per 2001 census, 84.33 million people were classified as members of scheduled tribes, corresponding to 8.2% of the total population. India's tribal people are among the poorest in the country. Most indigenous have been forest dwellers for centuries. Traditionally, forests met, most of their fodder, food, medicinal and other needs. Since the forests have been destroyed, their rights for livelihood too are denied.

Though the wealth of the country has grown by nearly 4% annually over the past few years, through the same period, the percentage of malnourished infant barely came down from 52% to 46%. Though there is a slight increase in the rate of literacy, large number of children are still drop outs, many of whom are working as child or unskilled laborers.

Climate change is another serious factor and the drought of 2009 is a wake up call towards the uncertainty of monsoon behavior. Global warming will make Indian monsoon more variable and less predictable. Our population is growing and per capita availability of arable land and irrigation water is shrinking

The neglect of post harvest technology and safe grain storage bring heavy loss to the nation and its people. If the situation continues, the strengthening of public distribution system in the country will be difficult. In the context of increasing hunger, India is listed at a low 66 in the food and agriculture organization's world hunger index of 88 countries. ***India occupies 132nd position among 179 countries in the UNDP's 2009 Human Development Index.*** Hence the need for legally mandated food security framework is imperative. This cannot be achieved without a collaborative participation of people from respective areas and regions.

Having assessed the countries present scenario, the expert committees advised the government for the implementation of comprehensive programs through flagships which would enhance an overall development of the vulnerable.

SITUATION IN INDIA



India has over 1000 million people as per the survey reports. Nearly 400 million people live below poverty line. There are 200 million landless labourers. Of the total 500 million work force, 92% try to find employment in the unorganized sector due to their lack of ability to find jobs in the organized sector and in this sector there is no provisions for social security. Only 8% are employed in the organized sectors such as government and companies and these people avail of social security schemes like provident fund, medical allowance, housing loan, festival allowance etc.

Flagship programs of Government

For an all round development, the Government is implementing various flagship programs such as Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan, Mid-day meals, National Rural Health Mission program, Total Sanitation Campaign program, Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewable program, National Rural Employment Guarantees' Act etc. But there are legal and other implications which prevent the smooth implementation and participation of the intended people. These schemes are either not being implemented or are not reaching the rightly deserved.



In these circumstances , the following efforts by us may promote sustainable livelihood for poor people.

■ **Promote People's participation**

People of different groups especially women who constitute a large section of the work force in the country should be encouraged for active participation. It is necessary that people's groups formed, should be federated and strengthened at regional and national level for addressing the issues in a comprehensive way.

■ **Strengthening of Panchayati Raj Institution**

As many of the government poverty alleviation programs are implemented through the Panchayati Raj, it is necessary that people who participate at different levels should be given adequate training for enhancing their capacity to carry-out these programs and make responsible decisions.

■ **Advocacy & Lobbying**

It is necessary to advocate and lobby with the government for amending the Food Security Act.

■ **Promote Convergence of programs**

As many of the children and workers are undernourished and receive minimum opportunities, there is a need to converge child care, nutrition, general health, education, mid-day meal schemes, sanitation and drinking water programs at NREGA sites for promoting comprehensive development.

■ **Diversification of livelihood**

Though agriculture is the main occupation of a majority of people, they should have the capabilities for strategizing diversification of livelihood (non-agricultural activities) that would generate income and make the people less vulnerable to economic shocks

■ **Promoting sustainable livelihood**

People should be at the center stage for experimenting and experiencing multi level approaches to development taking into account: natural, human, financial and social resources that would ensure quality of life.

Hence, let us join hands together and strive for inclusive approach towards development so that the poor receive their fair share of growth accrues.

"The total national income is not important but total national happiness is important"

- Nana Palkiwala.



Lenten Campaign 2009 Collection

Caritas India gratefully acknowledges the whole hearted contributions from individuals, communities and our local Diocesan Social Service Societies for the campaign "Peace & Harmony".

Thank you for spreading awareness and sharing resources.

The total collection for Lenten Campaign 2009 as on 31 December 2009 amounts to

Rs. 6,202,597 /-.

