

# WORD: Women's Organisation for Rural Development



## ***ANNUAL REPORT - 2015-2016***

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## **ABOUT THE ORGANISATION**

Women's Organisation for Rural Development (WORD) is a Non-Governmental Organisation registered under the Societies Registration Act 1860 in 1991, run by a group of women from Koraput with a mission to bring about justice and equality among the people of Koraput, at the grass root level. WORD believes in self-reliance and strives to bring about a change in the community by empowering them to address their own issues through collective action and lead a dignified life. WORD remains a catalyst in the process and lends a helping hand to the most deprived especially the women, children and the disabled.

### **VISION OF WORD**

*To Strive towards "a Just and Equitable society" through the initiative of the people.*

WORD visualizes a Just and self-reliant society where all the members enjoy equal rights, opportunities, justice and participate in democratic decision-making to resolve the issues of the society. WORD also envisages a society where people can live with dignity, challenging discrimination and exploitation and exercise their rights for the development of self and the society at large.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

- ❖ To empower people to assert their rights and fulfill their responsibilities.
- ❖ To enable the people irrespective of their caste, creed or religion towards a better standard of living through identification of their problems, causes, needs and developing a plan of action.
- ❖ To ensure absolute participation of the people by attaining opportunities for education, human resource development, ensuring liberal and democratic approaches and a better living environment.
- ❖ To create a change in the behavioral patterns of the community to mainstream women in the development process.

### **GOAL**

To overlay and motivate socio-economic, political and cultural development for empowering the communities in the vulnerable sections of the society.

### **POLITICAL GOAL**

Grass root level governance by strengthening of the Panchayat Raj Institutions.

## OBJECTIVES FOR THE YEAR 2015-2016

### 1. Women and Village Development:

- a. To capacitate 200 women on Palli Sabha and Gram Sabha for the preparation of micro-plans and submission for resource mobilisation.
- b. To reduce cooking drudgery for women by providing solar stoves/smokeless chullah to 200 families.
- c. To provide electrification of three remote tribal villages.
- d. To improve village infrastructure and resources worth Rs.1, 00, 00,000 in 50 villages for rural connectivity, agriculture, sanitation, drinking water, land development etc.

### 2. Livelihood:

- a. To improve the nutritional status of 1500 farmers by encouraging consumption of tubers (potato, sweet potato, yam), spices (turmeric, ginger, pepper), cereals and vegetables.
- b. To incorporate skills training for 500 women and setting up production units for 30 SHGs that will result in an increase of income from Rs. 15,000 to Rs. 30,000 by the end of March 2016.
- c. To reinforce the livelihoods of 200 deserted/single women with financial support of Rs.6000 for the first year and followed by increased income of 10% from second year onwards through goat rearing, poultry etc.

### 3. Health:

- a. To address the issue of malnutrition amongst infants and toddlers through communication strategies and convergence with NHM – 2000 families.
- b. To reduce MMR by supporting 200 High-Risk mothers for safe delivery through counseling and care.
- c. To bring forth physiotherapy as well as provide financial support for operations of the disabled children – 10.

### 4. Children & Education:

- a. To instill the values of education and sustain the model residential school for 100 children
- b. To provide education for 400 children from remote villages through enrollment campaigns in schools
- c. To support 100 distressed and needy children through 1098 CHILDLINE services.

## 5. Environment & Climate Change:

- a. To incite afforestation in 100 acres of denuded forest lands through plantation campaigns.
- b. To mobilise alternative energy resource, i.e. solar energy for lighting in homes and schools and pumping of drinking water.

## THE INTERVENTIONS

### 1. Capacitating of Community Based Organizations:

WORD firmly believes in the power of people and has initiated different Community Based Organizations starting from the Village Development Committees (VDC), Mahila mandals, Women Self-Help Groups, Farmers groups, Disabled Peoples' Organisation, Village Forest Committees and focus groups at village level to Regional Women Federation, Farmer council, Panchayat Development Committee and Panchayat/Block federations. There are 80 active VDCs, 40 farmer groups, 200 women SHGs and one federation for each of the women, farmers and the Panchayat.

This year WORD emphasized on revisiting the village micro-plans in the target villages and identifying priorities and in capacitating the CBOs to address their issues in the Palli Sabha and Gram Sabha meetings. Mock Palli sabha and Gram Sabha meetings were conducted in the villages to ensure that the people, especially women, would clearly be able to advocate their needs and priorities. This resulted in an elevated representation of women in the Palli Sabha and Gram Sabha by 80 and 60%, respectively.

Through active participation, many schemes were accomplished in the villages and some of them worth recognition are the MGNREGS works, different social and food security schemes, irrigation, school building, burial grounds, street roads, village roads, household latrines, village electrification, drainage, culverts, land development etc. Interestingly many of these works were covered through MGNREGA, where the people got both wages and as well as infrastructure development in their villages. WORD is a facilitating organization for conducting Social Audit for MGNREGS in Laxmipur Block and through social audits in various Blocks, WORD could identify, report and solve many issues related to MGNREGA, like late

*"Participating in the Gram*

*Sabha gave me self-*

*confidence to put my*

*needs in front of the*

*Government authorities*

*and I am happy that I got*

*a house through Indira*

*Awaas Yojana", says*

*single headed Ms. Laxmi*

*Jani.*

payment, pilferage , corruption etc., lobbying with the Panchayat and Block level functionaries.

**Achievements:**

- 75 village development micro-plans were prepared and submitted to the Gram Sabha by the CBOs and got integrated into the Block plans.
- Communities were made aware of the provisions under MGNREGS and applied for infrastructure development for individual and community as well. Project worth more



**MGNREGS work in progress**

**No. of Man-days generated: 57832**

**Amount of wages Received: Rs.20,761,097**

than Rs 30, 000, 000 were carried out in these 75 villages. Through this intervention, the migration of people during the lean season was considerably reduced and people received their wages.

- Ownership of land of the tribal people was ascertained by the tribal community by actively applying for Individual Forest Rights (IFR) and Community Forest Rights (CFR). The families also constructed houses on their lands and took up plantation programme on

the denuded community forest land. The title (property) has been issued jointly to both men and women and single women could get properties issued in their names that increased a sense of security and ownership.

- The VDCs and federation played an active part during summer to put up **Water points** in villages, markets, bus stand and other places where people would most likely gather to prevent getting a sun stroke. They also involved themselves actively in the cleaning of wells, tube wells, drainage etc., to prevent the spreading of diseases like malaria, diarrhea and jaundice in the winter. The women federation played an important role in enabling legal support to 8 women mainly during the year, who were harassed by their families.

*The Numbers:*  
*IFR received: 1339*  
*CFR received: 18*  
*No. of houses constructed in IFR: 235*

- They had a central role in identifying and taking up medical, restoration and educational issues regarding children to CHLDLINE and in informing 1098 for the inclusion of necessary help and support for the needy children in Koraput Region.
- The federation vehemently concentrated on the enrollment of children in schools during the academic year 2015-16 and continues for the year 2016-17.
- The federation took various steps to install electricity in three previously unelectrified tribal villages successfully.
- The farmer council was able to mobilise many interventions from NABARD, agriculture department, horticulture department, soil and water conservation, LAMP, cooperative societies etc.

All these achievements were possible by the CBOs through active interface and dialogue exchange with the Panchayats, government departments and other stakeholders. The community now feels self-confident in addressing their issues and in finding solutions for through interaction and convergence.

## **2. Agriculture and Livelihood:**

- **Sustainable Agriculture through Climate change adaptations:**

With growing concerns over Global warming and Climate change, there is a lot at stake for the farming communities. With variations in seasonal patterns, erratic monsoon cycles, natural disasters, soil degradation, crop damages due to new insects, pests and wild elephants, agriculture is hardly productive and food security being a great factor to worry upon. WORD is focusing on ecofriendly farming systems in the region to bring about sustainable agriculture practices. Major interventions are capacitating farmers for adopting better practices like System of Rice Intensification (SRI) paddy cultivation, line sowing, inter cropping, crop diversification, preparation and use of low cost farm manure, vermin composting, vermin wash etc.



WORD stresses upon the dignity of women farmers and not merely considering women as agricultural laborers. Various measures are being taken up for lessening the toil and health hazards of women in agriculture, through low cost agriculture equipment and accessories.

WORD encourages farmers to take up organic agriculture by providing technical trainings, inputs and advocating against chemical fertilizers. WORD also conducted research studies on organic vs. inorganic farming to make the communities understand the effects of chemical fertilizers on the soil and water through demonstrations. Organic backyard kitchen gardening was also fostered so that the families would acquire nutritious food to eat.

WORD also focused this year on supporting farmers in growing cash crops like ginger, turmeric, garlic etc., for making income apart from just food security. They were given updated technical skills on plantation, care and harvesting of the produce.

*“By taking up SRI paddy cultivation on my land I can now get three times the produce I’ve gotten earlier”, explains Mrs. Padma Gilori, Dolaiguda village*

In order to increase nutritional security, especially for the women and children, farmers were trained on cultivation of different types of tubers like Orange Fleshed Sweet Potato, Elephant Yam, Arrowroot, Colocasia etc., with the technical support of CTCRI ( Centre for Tuber Crop Research Institute), Bhubaneswar. A demonstration farm along with small units in the village level was set up to give handholding support to farmers on tuber cultivation.

Farmers are trained on seed selection, conservation and regeneration. **Seed Mothers**, women farmers who volunteer in taking the responsibility of conservation and propagation of untampered traditional seeds, are capacitated to identify the indigenous seeds and replicate them in their farmland and donate them to fellow women farmers for conserving them from extinction. Women farmers have also established **Seed Banks** to conserve seeds and distribute them among themselves during the sowing season in order to reduce the dependency on the external inputs and need for cash for purchase of seeds from market.

The farmers were also trained to mobilise various input support from different agriculture, horticulture, soil and water conservation departments as well as Panchayat and block for land development, bunding of farm lands, gully plugging for soil and water

retention, farm ponds, irrigation systems, check dams, agriculture accessories like sprayers, poly nets, subsidized seeds and vegetable saplings, fruit nurseries etc. so that they could develop the farm at a minimal cost.

### **Achievements:**

All the above mentioned interventions resulted in a better production with this year having around 70% of the targeted families enough food to eat throughout the year. More than 50% of the farmers sold their surplus and made a good income. The farm waste, the waste from livestock and from kitchens have also been put to good use by creating low cost compost units and using them in the fields. The farmers could obtain a good income from the cash crops and there is a greater interest amidst farmers for replicating the same in other areas as well. Many farmers have come forward for field visits to see the integrated farming sites and have applied these practices in their own respective fields. 57 varieties of different indigenous seeds have been collected, preserved and regenerated.



**Harvesting of Ginger Crop**



**Seed Bank in a village**

The disaster preparedness taken up by the people have helped them from natural calamities and crop insurance has supported those farmers whose cultivation was destroyed by the elephants this year. Dependency on external inputs has decreased substantially and the introduction of drudgery reduction tools has greatly benefitted the women farmers. Above all, people have realized the need to protect their farmland along with making optimal use of the land for production and safe guarding it for their future generations.

- **Livelihood sustainability:**

Apart from agriculture being the primary occupation of the target communities, the villagers resort to various secondary work like firewood collection, rearing of livestock, working as laborers in construction sites, agriculture labour etc. to improve the income

in the families. They could get productive employment in MGNREGS, soil and water conservation works, forest department activities etc. but since they do not have professional expertise or awareness on how to approach such interventions, WORD supports such communities and families in preparing a Livelihood plan so that they can make a forecast of their occupation and income for future and invest accordingly.

WORD helps families in getting registered for Job cards, facilitating the community to make job demands and motivating the village folks to take up work contracts themselves rather than entrusting it to the external contractors. Due to which, the village people will be paid for their own benefit and the quality of the work will also be better when compared to outside contractors.

Although the communities have basic skills on livestock rearing, they do not carry it out systematically as it is not considered to be an income generating activity. They are instructed about the productive breeds, veterinary care of animals, insurance and hygienic maintenance of the cattle so that they can concentrate upon livestock rearing more efficiently leading to better productivity and better source of income for families. WORD aids landless and single headed, old as well as disabled women in goat rearing and poultry so that they can make an income staying at home itself.

Training and upgradation of skills like tailoring, apiculture, mushroom cultivation, spices making, flour making, leaf plates, toys making etc., are imparted to the adolescent girls and women in the villages to start small self-employment units.



**Mushroom Production**

NTFP collection of brooms, herbal nuts and plants are some other work done by the people, which are supported by WORD as a value addition for more income.

Women Self-Help Groups are encouraged and strengthened to make savings, internal lending, and bank loans for different purposes along with the timely repayment of the loans. They are also provided links to other development sectors like Odisha Livelihood Mission, Mission Sakti, OFSDP etc., to get subsidized loans for taking up their production. Women cluster units take up different income generating activities collectively and make reasonable income for their families.

### **Achievements:**

MGNREGA was one of the major schemes involving employment for the villagers and this has been rallied extensively for income. Interestingly, migration has gone down from 10% to 2% in our target area through these interventions. Women have become self-dependent and they are now credit-worthy. Many SHGs apart from their own income generating activities have also involved themselves in community development like monitoring of schools and health facilities, control of Public Distribution Systems, participating in social audits of villages etc. The socio-economic independence of women has acquired them more political space in the community. No middlemen are involved, fetching the communities' fair price for their hard work. They have now more bargaining skills and are developing into women entrepreneurs.

Better income status has resulted to better living conditions. People are now sending their children to school and are remodeling their houses, purchasing agricultural equipment, livestock, cycles, two wheelers, mobiles, TV sets, etc., for their homes with the income earned.

### **3. Child Development and Protection:**

- **Children Education:**

Children are the future assets of the nation and they should be molded to face the challenges of the current world and emerge with creative solutions for overcoming these challenges. WORD insists on giving more prominence to children education and "Adarsh Vidhyalaya" a school catering to 100 children, mostly tribal and dalit children was established to give them comprehensive education from kinder garden to Std.VI. The school is residential in nature and is manned by four teachers along with support staff and has good infrastructure. Children are taught both Oriya and English and the tribal children are given space to slowly translate from their local dialect to Oriya.

The teachers and staff have the necessary qualification and experience to handle the children. The children are provided with food, accommodation, learning materials, uniform, shoes, bags and all the basic necessities required for complete learning. They are taught yoga, physical education, games and other extracurricular activities for physical, mental and spiritual development. They show active involvement in sports, drawing competitions, dance and drama making education interactive and interesting.



**Children with the Member of Parliament, Shri Jinnu Hikoka**

Apart from this initiative, WORD with the support of the women federation takes active role in the enrollment campaigns and encourages many new children to join village schools, tribal residential schools and other educational institutions. Many dropout children are also counseled along with their parents and have rejoined the schools.

- **Adolescent Girls education:**

Adolescence is a period of self-awareness, doubts, fear and planning for the future. The tribal adolescent girls have very few options as they getting married off just after attaining puberty, losing their childhood and innocence very soon. WORD through its interventions tries to create awareness on the health implications of child marriage and motherhood due to which many young girls have now joined the residential tribal school for secondary education.



Special programs are conducted to prepare them for skill development and also for family life. Different skills like tailoring, soft toys making, applique and patch work, jute craft etc., are imparted to the girls for additional talents apart from regular education. They are also given life skills and health education to caution against sexual abuse and legal systems in place, if need arise along with the awareness about safe sex and HIV/AIDS.

- **Children's' Protection:**

WORD believes in protection of children from harassment, abuse and right to dignity of life and in collaboration with CHIDLINe identifies the children in need of help through use of the helpline number -1098.

Through this medium, WORD caters to all children in four Blocks namely Laxmipur, Dasmanthpur, Narayanpatna and Bandhugoan. This year 100 children were identified under cases of lost child, child missing, child labour, child education, children needing immediate medical attention, child marriage etc., and have been solved amicably where follow-ups of some cases are currently still proceeding. Apart from this, various outreach programs, Panchayat, ICDS and School engagements and formation of children clubs were also formulated to give awareness upon the 1098 services to children, adults and other stakeholders.



- **Child Health:**

Another aspect to focus upon is the infancy period where the parents have to give more attention and care to the infant's health, immunization and nutrition to reduce the Infant and Child Mortality in the target villages. WORD with the support of UNICEF screen video shows in 80 villages showcase different topics of Fact for Life with special

emphasis on safe delivery, feeding of colostrum, exclusive breast feeding, complimentary feeding after six months, follow up on immunization schedule, hygiene and sanitation etc. WORD collaborates with the ICDS and Health departments to raise awareness and to bring change in behavior towards Infant and Young Child Feeding Practices.

#### **4. Community Health care:**

Mother and Child's Health is very crucial especially in the target area as there is still very low awareness pertaining to cultural beliefs which are impediment to better health status among the communities. WORD counsel the women on early pregnancy registration, regular health checkup, use of folic acid to prevent anemia, tetanus injections, checkup for HIV/AIDS, proper feeding habits, rest for pregnant women, institutional delivery, PNC and most importantly, care of self and child. WORD also fervently advocates against early girl child marriage which is one of the biggest social evils in tribal communities. WORD health workers conduct regular village visits for health checkup. They also refer difficult cases to the Block and District medical centres.



#### **Counselling Pregnant and Lactating women**

Depending on the season, WORD conducts health camps for awareness generation on water borne diseases, malaria, sun stroke, eye care and also collaborates with different health institutions for conducting free health services.

Special priority is given to persons with disability and WORD takes active part in the Block level disability camps and helps the PWDs in getting Identify Cards for them and involving them in various security schemes so that they can get their entitlements. WORD also sees to it that members of PWDs are engaged as staff, involving them in the different schemes of WORD for a better reach in the PWDs linking them with the people.

## 5. Environment and Ecology:

With the changes in climate being noticed even in the most remote villages in Koraput, its impacts are severely affecting the poor farmers due to erratic monsoon, landslides, scorching heat in summer, low water table, drying up of water bodies etc. Most of the forest land is denuded and NTFP base is slowly deteriorating. In the present context, WORD is trying its best to regenerate the existing forests and also has initiated the planting of new saplings with the support of communities on deforested lands. Plantation campaign was done in 50 hectares of land this year with inputs from forest departments, horticulture institutions and other stakeholders.

Village sanitation was also taken into consideration prodding and motivating people to use Individual Household Latrines, as well as for construction of cattle sheds, setting up of compost units etc. Swacch Bharat campaigns were actually applied in different villages to clean the drains, roads, bore well platforms, school boundaries, ICDS centres etc., to create awareness on cleanliness.



**Use of Solar lantern for study**



**Installation of smokeless wood efficient stoves**

With an initiative to introduce alternative energy, solar lanterns were distributed among 150 households. To reduce the electricity consumption as well as to advocate the use of renewable energy resources, solar cells are installed in the school. Apart from this in order to reduce the consumption of wood for cooking, special low cost energy efficient cooking stoves were installed in 100 houses to inculcate the habit of using lesser firewood thereby minimizing the cutting of forests. WORD team members, stakeholders and school children took up different events to address the issue of climate change among the communities and public at large.

## CONCLUSION

The year 2015-2016 was an intense one with filled with achievements, challenges and innovations. These have been made possible only through the valued relationship and trust the communities, stakeholders and donors have entrusted on WORD and needless to say the sincere efforts of the WORD team. We thank every single person who has been part of this journey and commit ourselves for yet another year of bringing about a Just and Equitable Society.



**THANK YOU!!!**

*Rk-i*

Dr. Racheal Raykumari

Executive Secretary