



ODISHA VIKASH CONCLAVE-2024

Viksit Odisha @2036:

Leveraging Demographic Intelligence for Development

On October 23, the Odisha Vikash Conclave (OVC) 2024, a vibrant multi-stakeholder platform, was held to explore the impact of demographic transition on critical areas of life. The fifth edition of the OVC, organized in collaboration with the Government of Odisha, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the Odisha Development Initiative, brought together over 350 participants from diverse sectors, including civil society organizations, government bodies, academia, corporate entities, Panchayati Raj Institutions, Community-Based Organizations, and the media. The conclave facilitated in-depth discussions on Odisha's demographic transition, its associated opportunities and challenges, and collaboratively developed a concrete action agenda for the state's inclusive and sustainable development.

The conclave focused on three major thematic clusters: i) Safety and Security of Women in Odisha; ii) Health and Nutrition, Population Ageing, and Education; and iii) Employment, Migration, and Urbanization. These discussions included contributions from practitioners, academic experts, government representatives, and community voices, ensuring that diverse perspectives were heard.

The deliberations examined Odisha's changing demographic landscape and its future implications across various sectors. Discussions led by subject matter experts, bolstered by robust data, were enriched by insights from practitioners and grassroots leaders. This collaborative approach, supported by aligned development organizations, fostered critical dialogue for reassessing and realigning state policies and programmes.

The key outcomes of the conclave included actionable policy recommendations for the government, an action agenda for civil society, corporates, and media, and a research framework for academic institutions. We are confident that these outputs will collectively shape a transformative development roadmap, envisioning a redefined Odisha by 2036.

Surakshya Project: Empowering Communities and Revitalizing Governance in Rural Odisha

The Surakshya Project implemented CYSD has transformed rural Odisha, especially in Nunmath and Chancher GPs of Kesinga and Bijepur GP of Titlagarh, addressing the lack of awareness and participation in governance. Prior to CYSD's intervention, many Gram Panchayats (GPs) had inactive committees, low attendance in Gram Sabhas, and limited awareness of schemes like Public Distribution System, MGNREGA, and pensions.

Surakshya tackled these issues by organizing sensitization programs for PRI members, community leaders, and marginalized groups, alongside capacity-building workshops, micro-planning initiatives, and awareness campaigns. These efforts empowered communities to actively engage in decision-making and transformed Gram Sabhas into spaces for meaningful dialogue.

PRI members like Mr. Premlal Bhoi of Nunmath and Mrs. Anju Kumar of Chancher now oversee development projects and ensure transparency in fund allocation. Women leaders, such as Mrs. Anjali Bag of Bijepur, a disabled woman, after receiving a training, has successfully linked to the pension scheme. Her efforts symbolize a larger shift towards grassroots empowerment, where leaders fight for their communities' rights and entitlements.

The project has greatly impacted persons with disabilities (PwDs), exemplified by Mr. Trigarta Bagarty from Bijepur, who received assistive devices and entitlements. "This support has significantly improved my quality of life," he shares.

Despite challenges like gender inequality, reliance on government schemes, and inconsistent community participation in environmental conservation, the Surakshya Project has made lasting strides. It has empowered communities to take charge of their development and governance, fostering an inclusive and participatory model for rural growth.



As Mrs. Anju Kumar, Sarpanch of Chancher, notes, "CYSD's programs have set us on the path of sustainable development." The project's impact extends beyond infrastructure, reshaping local governance and creating resilient, self-reliant communities.

From Struggles to Strength: Hemalata and Rasmita's Empowering Journey with SHG

Nestled near the foothills of Bajragadh, Hemalata Tandi and Rasmita Sunani, fuelled by their aspirations for change, established the Maa Jagadamba Self-Help Group in Sialdungri, located in the Keshinga Block of Kalahandi district. Together with like-minded women, they aimed to uplift their



community and families. Their venture began with manufacturing paper plates to cater to local celebrations. However, challenges soon arose—frequent machine breakdowns and inconsistent quality tested their determination. Despite setbacks, Hemalata and Rasmita remained steadfast, determined to overcome obstacles and create a brighter future through perseverance and collective effort.

During the COVID-19 lockdown, the Maa Jagadamba SHG's paper plate business stalled. Seeking alternatives, they began producing Mudki, a traditional snack, but without business knowledge, the venture failed too. Everything changed in 2023 when, under Project Surakshya, CYSD supported Hemalata Tandi and Rasmita Sunani in attending a training program in Bhubaneswar. They learned business basics, identifying opportunities, managing finances, and record-keeping. Hemalata recalls, “We saw a clear path forward for the first time.”

Armed with new skills, Hemalata revitalized the group, restarting Mudki snacks production with a proper plan. They improved quality, streamlined processes, and maintained meticulous records. Orders grew steadily, generating a monthly income of nearly Rs. 80,000/-. Encouraged by this success, they revived their paper plate business with better management practices and ventured into fish farming alongside.

Their success transformed their lives. Children gained better amenities and living environment and financial independence empowered the women. “We no longer depend on our husbands for decisions,” says Rasmita proudly. The ripple effect inspired other women in the village, with Hemalata mentoring them. “If we can do it, anyone can. All you need is the right support and determination,” she says with confidence.

Today, Hemalata and Rasmita are more than entrepreneurs—they are community leaders, guiding Sialdungri toward a brighter, resilient future. Their journey continues, fueled by determination and collective strength.

Kailash Sirika: Bridging Kolnara with Govt. Schemes through Panchayat Support Centre

At just 29, Kailash Sirika is transforming governance in Kolnara Panchayat, Rayagada district, by directly bringing essential government services to the community. His journey began when he realized many villagers struggled to access the government schemes and entitlements they deserved. Motivated by this awareness, Kailash established the Panchayat Support Centre (PSC) under CYSD's Surakshya project.

Kailash's path to becoming a change-maker was shaped by two key training programs. The first, an 11-day leadership development program, strengthened his skills in leadership, community mobilization, and governance. The second, focused on Enabling Social Security for Vulnerable Populations, taught him how to access and implement government schemes for marginalized communities. Together, these trainings empowered Kailash to bridge the gap between his community and often inaccessible government processes.

With his enhanced leadership skills, Kailash began working closely with local youth to support the PSC, which became a vital resource center in the village. He organizes mobile awareness camps in remote areas and visits the Panchayat office twice a week to assist with services like Aadhar updates, entitlement registrations, and schemes such as MGNREGS, CM Kisan Yojana, and widow pensions.

Since its inauguration on August 15, 2024, the PSC has facilitated services for 274 beneficiaries. Over 100 youth have enrolled in skill development programs, boosting their employability and income prospects.

Kailash's work has significantly impacted the community, making welfare benefits more accessible to women and migrant workers. "The PSC is more than just a service center; it's a lifeline for our community," Kailash says. Looking ahead, he plans to expand the PSC into a Panchayat Resource Hub, offering workshops on digital literacy and financial management to empower residents further.



Paramedics Empowering Maatru & Jaanch Committees in Sikharchandi Slum

The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others." This quote captures the essence of community health workers in Sikharchandi, who are transforming lives with support from CYSD and WIPRO Cares. Paramedics have revitalized the Matru and Jaanch Committees, empowering them to enhance healthcare and nutrition services.

Initially, these committees existed only on paper, with members unaware of their roles. Paramedics conducted monthly meetings with Anganwadi workers, ASHA members, and slum representatives to identify and nominate active members. Persistent efforts, including home visits, convinced individuals to take up their roles. Members' names were publicly displayed at Anganwadi centers to ensure transparency and accountability. CYSD further supported training sessions to educate committee members on their responsibilities.

Usually, the Matru Committee focuses on addressing malnutrition among children, overseeing the Supplementary Nutrition Programme (SNP), promoting hygiene, and encouraging parents to send children to Anganwadi centers. The Jaanch Committee complements this by monitoring AWC services, supervising food quality, and ensuring eligible beneficiaries receive necessary support. Regular monthly meetings allow members to discuss challenges and allocate tasks.

Jyosna Rani Sahoo, President of the Matru Committee, shares, "Before CYSD's intervention, I was unaware of these committees. Now, I actively work to improve healthcare and Anganwadi conditions." The committees also address infrastructure issues, such as lack of drinking water, by raising concerns with local officials, supported by CYSD.

Through these revitalized committees, Sikharchandi has transformed its approach to healthcare. These efforts show that effective healthcare is about fostering trust, collaboration, and community ownership. The committees stand as a testament to what communities can achieve when inspired and empowered to take charge of their well-being.



Champion of inclusivity: Jharana Musuka's inspiring journey of Community Empowerment

In the village of Patraput, Dunduli Panchayat, Kolnara Block, Rayagada district, 21-year-old Jharana Musuka stands as a beacon of hope and change. A graduate in Sociology, Jharana is a passionate community leader dedicated to improving the lives of those around her.

Her journey began with an awareness program in her village, where she witnessed the challenges faced by her fellow villagers. This ignited her desire to make a difference. Jharana's efforts were recognized when she received a certificate of appreciation from the Governor of Odisha for her outstanding service.

Using her academic background, Jharana tackled social issues like child marriage, actively working to protect children's rights in her community. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she distributed safety kits to the elderly, ensuring their well-being in difficult times.

As a community leader, Jharana mobilizes villagers for meetings and programs, fostering unity and collective action. She also played a crucial role in linking MGNREGS job holders to the Aadhar Payments Bridge System (ABPS) in late 2023, engaging beneficiaries, providing orientations, and facilitating the Aadhar linkage process.

Her dedication extends beyond her village. Jharana supported neighboring villages by accompanying beneficiaries to banks and helping them complete the ABPS conversion. She also volunteered to assist disabled children in applying for disability certificates and pensions, further demonstrating her commitment to inclusivity.

Through her selfless service and leadership, Jharana Musuka continues to inspire and uplift her community, leaving a lasting impact on those around her.



PHOTO GALLERY OF CYSD



Finger Millet (Ragi) Field visit at Kallar GP of K.Padapadar village in Boipariguda block, Koraput



Coconut plantation on Community Pond embankments in Delang block, Puri district



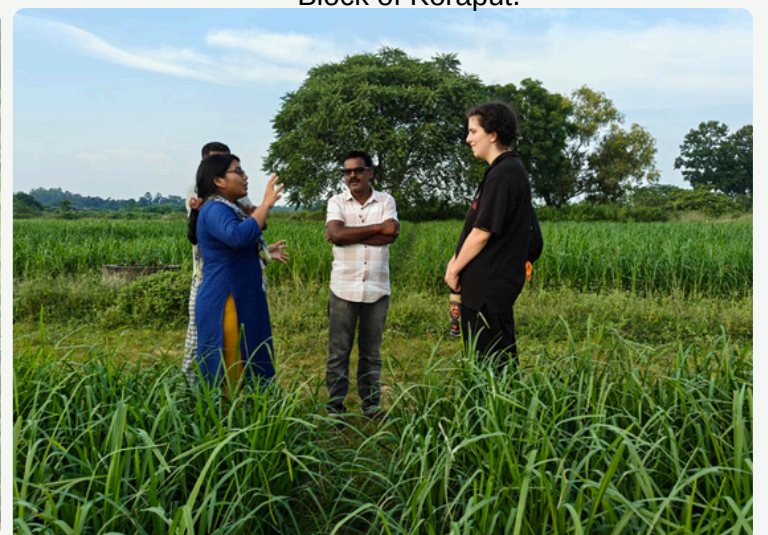
Coriander collective marketing by Deomali PG of Bhanjapodar village of Podagada GP in Dasamantpur Block of Koraput.



Potato weeding at Maa Kantabausuni PG of Purimunda village of Podagada GP in Dasamantapur Block of Koraput.



Julme Jani from Kapsiput of Laxmipur has cultivated various Millets crops Little Millet, Sorghum & Finger Millet.



Lia Stark, student - Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Australia - Intern @CYSD visiting millet fields in Saharpada block, Mayurbhanj.

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