

The full report of the proceedings is also available at
<http://www.jnu.ac.in/SSS/CSMCH/thmfnsi.pdf>

Acknowledgements

Report Prepared by: Nalini Visvanathan

Transcribed by: Neha, Prachin, Shaweta, Shilpa, Sumegha

Language Edits: Daya Lalvani

Design, Edits and Coordinated by: Ranvir Singh

Consultation Organized Collaboratively by:

Centre of Social Medicine and Community Health

(Represented by Ritu Priya and Rajib Dasgupta)

OXFAM India

(Avinash Kumar, Biraj Swain and M. Kumaran)

Centre for Equity Studies

(Harsh Mander and Dipa Sinha)

Public Health Resource Network (PHRN)

(Ganapathy Murugan)

South Asian Dialogues on Ecological Democracy (SADED)

(Vijay Pratap and Ovais Sultan Khan)

<u>Preface</u>	i
<u>Background Note</u>	ii-iii
<u>Executive Summary</u>	iv-xvii
<u>Extract of Recommendations</u>	xviii-xxv
<u>Abbreviations</u>	xxvi-xxix
<u>Inaugural Session: An Overview</u>	1-14
Chair: Prof. Imrana Qadeer	
• Introduction to the Policy Consultation – <i>Ritu Priya</i>	2-3
• Starvation, Entitlements and the National Food Security Bill - <i>Harsh Mander</i>	4-6
• Agriculture, Ecology and Nutrition Linkages - <i>Uma Shankari</i>	7-13
• Comments from the Chair – <i>Imrana Qadeer</i>	14
<u>Session 1: Methods of Identification, Measuring and Tracking Hunger</u>	15-65
Chair: Prof. Veena Shatrugna	
• Identifying Starvation Deaths by JSA-Commissioner's Office Methodology and Tracking Families with Starvation Deaths in Three States – <i>Ashwin Parulkar and Ankita Aggarwal</i>	16-19
• Measuring State of Food Insecurity (SOFI) in the World – <i>Vikas Bajpai</i>	20-26
• Tracking Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) - Monitoring Child Nutrition, Based on Arm Circumference Measurement - <i>Dipa Sinha</i>	27-29
• Protocols for Tracking Child Malnutrition Designed by the Action Against Malnutrition (AAM) project – <i>Vandana Prasad</i>	30-35
• Community Monitoring and Engagement in Reducing Child Malnutrition – Lessons from Thailand’s Success - <i>Nalini Visvanathan</i>	36-42
• The Experience of Community Monitoring of Nutritional Status and Interventions in Maharashtra and Orissa - <i>K.K. Pal</i>	43-49
• Developing a Socio-Medical Tool for Nutritional Surveillance: Sharing the Follow-up Action of Workshop-2010— <i>Ritu Priya</i>	50-55
• Discussant’s Comments <i>Imrana Qadeer</i>	56-57
• Comments and Discussion (Open House)	58-65
<u>Session 2: Analysing the Trends and Determinants of Nutritional Status: the Indian Scenario</u>	66-88
Chair: Prof. D. Banerji	
• Time Constrained Mother, Shrinking Care and Expanding Market: Emerging Model of Chronic Under Nutrition in India – <i>Sanjay Chaturvedi</i>	67
• State Level Analysis of the Nutritional Trends and Experiments/Schemes–	
• <i>Chhattisgarh</i> : Trends in Nutritional Status and Nutritional Schemes in Chhattisgarh – <i>Samir Garg</i>	68-73
• <i>Jharkhand</i> : Jharkhand State Level Analysis of Nutritional Trends and Experiments/Schemes - <i>Nasreen Jamal</i>	74-77
• Discussant’s Comments - <i>Vandana Prasad</i>	78-79
• Comments and Discussion (Open House)	80-88

Session 3: Linkages of Nutrition, Work and Food Production Systems **89-147**

Chair: Dr. Mira Shiva

- Agriculture in the 12th FYP Through the Optic of Institutional Mechanisms, Access to Small Women Farmers - Biraj Swain and Ranvir Singh 90-96
- Right to Food Approach to Food Security Through the PDS - Kavita Srivastava 97-100
- Can We Sustain Nutritional Security When Agriculture is Unsustainable? — Kiran Kumar Vissa 101-106
- Decent Wage – Dithi Bhattacharya 107-111
- State Level Experiences of Agriculture, Food, Ecology, Work, Diets and Health Linkages:
 - Punjab: Organic Cultivation and Traditional Cuisine: Women Respond to the Crisis of Chemical Farming in Punjab - Amanjot Kaur 112-114
 - Andhra Pradesh: Community-Managed Nutrition Centers Improve Nutritional Status of Women and Children: Success of Indira Kranti Patham (IKP), A Livelihood-Based Project, Leads to Scaling up Across AP State - Lakshmi Durga 115-124
 - Eastern Uttar Pradesh: Agricultural Productivity and Nutritional Linkages – Dr. Shiraz Wajih 125-131
- Discussants' Comments - Rohan D'Souza, Ramila Bisht, Umendra Dutt 132-137
- Comments and Discussion (Open House) 138-147

Session 4: Directions for Policy and Polity to Reduce Hunger in India **148-175**

Chair: Shri T. Vijay Kumar

- Issues for Implementation of 12th Plan for Reducing Hunger- Biraj Patnaik 149-152
- Panel on Post MDG Discussion Framework – M. Kumaran, Peter Kenmore, Paul Divakar 153-161
- Panel on Role of Civil Society and Polity - Vijay Pratap, Harsh Mander, Avinash Kumar and Madhuri 162-172
- Comments and Discussion (Open House) 173-175

Annexures

List of Participants **176-178**

Preface

The idea of organising this consultative workshop was initiated by Oxfam India and Jawaharlal Nehru University's Centre of Social Medicine and Community Health (CSMCH). South Asian Dialogues on Ecological Democracy (SADED), Centre for Equity Studies (CES) and Public Health Resource Network (PHRN) were soon involved as partners since they have been collaborating with CSMCH on related issues since 2010. While all the collaborating organisations were involved in the planning and conceptualisation processes and choice of speakers, discussants and chairpersons, SADED took on the responsibility of organising the workshop and preparing the report.

The entire proceedings were audio recorded and transcribed. The transcripts were first edited for textual continuity and then sent to each speaker and discussant with a request to respond to editorial queries for clarifications and substantive corrections. With a few exceptions that arose when the speaker was unavailable, the editor and producer worked with each speaker to integrate the presentation and supporting graphic materials before finalizing the drafts. Lastly, the recommendations made in each presentation, which are given at the end of the executive summary, were abstracted and compiled in a form that is easily accessible to the reader.

We hope the proceedings are found useful by those interested in policy formulation to deal with the problem of malnutrition and hunger in India and elsewhere. It may also be useful for those studying the inter-disciplinary discourse on the issue, and for thinking about civil society action and shaping its future direction, especially after the enactment in September, 2013 of the National Food Security Act, 2013.

Background Note
Tracking Hunger and Malnutrition for Food and
Nutritional Security in India
A Policy Consultation

There is widespread poverty, food insecurity and under-nutrition in India. Human Development Report 2011, using multidimensional poverty indicators showed that more than 50 per cent of the population is poor in India. The household level data on calorie intake collected by NSSO, indicates that the average calorie consumption among population in India is falling over the last twenty years. Despite the ongoing debate which is attempting to interpret it fully, the decline of calorie intake among the poorest households in the past decade provides strong reasons to question the official interpretations which brush aside this inconvenient debate and data. The National Family Health Survey that gives us the proportion of undernourished adults, based on anthropometric indicators (assessment of physical features) shows that one-third of adults in India have low BMI (body mass index) status. With regard to child malnutrition, the 2011 Hunger and Malnutrition (HUNGaMA) Report released by the Prime Minister indicates that 42 per cent of the children were underweight and nearly 59 per cent were stunted (survey based on 100 districts in India). In 2004-05 according to NFHS -3, that collects nationwide data, 40.4 per cent of under-3 children were underweight and 44.9 per cent were stunted. When compared to NFHS2 (1998-99 to 2005-06), some progress in child malnutrition was observed. However, the trend in under-3 child wasting increased from 19.7 to 22.9 percent and severe child underweight for children under 3 (below -3 Standard Deviation), increased from 6.7 to 7.9 per cent from 1998-99 to 2005-06. Survey on nutrient intake in pre-school children between 1975 and 2006, done by National Nutrition Monitoring Bureau (NIMB) has not shown any substantial improvement in their dietary intake over the last two decades (Twelfth Five Year Plan, Vol. 3, p.201). At the same time IMR, a sensitive indicator, “fell by 5 per cent per year over the 2006–11 period, an improvement over the 3 per cent decline per year in the preceding five years” (12th Plan, Vol.3, p.3). Interestingly, NNMB shows that only in 22 per cent families did - “both the adults and preschool children have adequate food” (ibid). This proportion has further declined from “30 per cent to 22 per cent over the last 30 years” (ibid).

The extent of under-nutrition captured among social groups based on gender, caste and religion, shows that women, Dalits, tribals and Muslims have worse conditions than the rest of the population. The Twelfth Five Year Plan, based on NFHS-3, reports huge gaps in child mortality (per 1000 live births), infant mortality and underweight children among SC/ST children and others. The plan document, based on NFHS 3, also speaks about ‘huge large inter-state variations in the patterns and trends in underweight prevalence’. It identifies Madhya Pradesh (60 per cent), Jharkhand (57 per cent) and Bihar (56 per cent) as the three worst performing states in this regard. The Sachar Committee Report (GoI, 2006) based on NFHS2 shows that Muslims suffer from the highest rates of stunting and the second-highest rates of underweight children among all social groups, including SC, ST, OBC and OC. Further, using region-based SRS data and performing statistical analysis to control for other factors, the committee concludes that Muslim children are at a slightly higher risk of child malnutrition than 'other' Hindu children.

The enigma of excellent economic growth in the last two decades in India, coupled with slowly improving mortality and under-nutrition indicators and worsening intake indicators, throw serious methodological and policy challenges.

One of the important challenges is deeper understanding of the method involved in estimating hunger and malnutrition at all-India and regional level. The other challenge is to address invisibilisation of hunger and malnutrition by the implementation machinery that implements programs. Despite sample surveys showing high proportion of children suffering from under-nutrition, the administrative machinery discourages collection of evidences of the same at village and hamlet levels. For instance the, Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) mechanism that

generates data on malnutrition – right from hamlet to national level - refuses to collect and report accurate data. Similarly, health workers fail to identify the children classified as malnourished through the sample surveys. The severe under - identification and under - reporting of data has direct knock-on effect on the implementation of the health and nutrition programmes. Ironically, the programmes that seek to address the problem end up invisibilising the problem. Apart from fear of accountability, and maybe due to it, a major reason for under-identification of the problem is the faulty design and use of tools for identification of the problem. There is urgent need to critically evaluate these tools and propose methodologically sound alternatives. While malnutrition is invisibilised by faulty tools and under-identification, hunger is practically invisibilised due to absence of any system to recognise, record and identify households and people living with hunger and to recognise illness due to hunger and deaths due to starvation.

One step towards addressing this administrative invisibilisation is through simple community-based tools at last-mile delivery point that could be effectively used to hold the food, nutrition and health programs accountable. Rapid assessment is also required to highlight the need for urgent concerted action locally and nationally to mitigate the impact of food shortages. Besides facilitating methodologically sound easy-to-use tools, another step forward would be to critically assess the systemic lapses in food and nutrition programmes, including identification of starvation, hunger and malnutrition. This assumes great importance in the context of the National Food Security Bill, which is based on existing food and nutrition programmes. Policy obsession with targeting, cash transfers and wheat-rice centric food entitlements are some of the issues that need urgent attention. Again, easy-to-use instruments to assess the programme lapses would be useful in capturing implementation flaws and policy gaps.

Apart from addressing systemic issues in food, nutrition and health programs, it is necessary to recognise that it would not be possible to address hunger without addressing the determinants of hunger and malnutrition. Essential programmes such as ICDS are top-up services which strengthen nutrition of the vulnerable within households. The absorption capacity to utilise services of these schemes is located in the ability of working women to control their working hours, conditions and wages, and women farmer's access to land and property rights. Similarly, the hunger and nutrition in India has structural linkages with agriculture, especially in the context of declining production of 'core' food grains, inadequate production of other sources of nutrition, state induced crisis of viability/ sustainability of small and marginal farmers; and diversion of agricultural land by 'land grab' for corporate use.

Recognising the structural determinants of hunger and under-nutrition and learning from past experience, it is important to engage with policy gaps in the 12th Plan and optimise implementation of the positive elements within it. It is also an important juncture for engaging with the post 2015 development agenda discussions internationally. This policy discussion will, we hope, add value in terms of strengthening the campaigns, academia and think-tanks to hold governments accountable, and in their own work towards understanding and dealing with the problem of hunger. Specifically the policy consultation will attempt to (a) discuss the Indian enigma and issues related to measurement and tracking hunger, (b) bring together experts and practitioners working on different facets of hunger and food security issues to facilitate a policy dialogue, and (c) feed into UN post 2015 discourse and the 12th Five Year Plan implementation framework.

Inaugural Session

Prof. Ritu Priya introduced the themes of the two-day policy consultation, the organizations that were co-sponsoring the event, and the issues that would be covered. She noted that the first workshop on a similar theme had been held in May 2010 and many of the participants in that workshop were also present at this meeting. While building upon the earlier discussion on defining and developing tools for early detection of hunger and malnutrition, this time the issues of food production and agriculture impacting on food and nutrition security have also been included. They pose two dimensions of the current civil society action related to food security. This consultation was an attempt to draw upon this diverse experience for informing the National 12th Five-Year Plan roll out and the international post-MDG policy discussions.

Setting the tone of the workshop, Ritu Priya outlined how planned development, through successive five-year plans, has approached the malnutrition problem, by initially emphasizing agriculture and then moving more and more to supplementary feeding, mothers' education and micro-nutrients in the form of therapeutics and food additives. She argues that the Green Revolution accelerated the processes that were leading to compartmentalization and separation of agriculture, food production systems, local ecology, and dietary patterns. She concluded that in the latest exercise in national planning, the 12th Plan has completed the process of medicalising nutrition and excluding people's agency in all forms of food production while elevating medical and agricultural technologies to a paramount stature. Noting the defining role of political action in moving forward the agenda of civil society groups, she said that the final session was dedicated to the policy ramifications of the issues to be raised and debated at the consultation.

Addressing the pervasive malnutrition found in almost fifty percent of Indian children, Harsh Mander discussed the curious paradox of persistent malnutrition in the face of an extraordinary growth in the Indian economy over the last decade. Drawing on his grassroots studies of hunger, starvation and the tragic deaths that result from destitution in parts of rural India, he described how these individuals have grappled with endemic hunger, consumed pseudo foods to quell the pangs and met their end quietly. While he acknowledged the failure of governance to correct inequities, he also attributed the paradox to Indian society's longstanding apathy towards inequality and injustice, which has resulted in a seeming indifference to the plight of neighbors and community members at both the city and village level. He called for more accountability from the state by the enactment of a right-to-food law, and he also underscored the need to name the vulnerable groups like women, children, migrants, the chronically ill, the homeless, the aged and the disabled, so that their entitlements will not be overlooked.

Uma Shankari, a landed woman farmer from the arid region of Rayalseema in Andhra Pradesh, brought up the everyday realities of farming in a water scarce area during a period of dramatic changes in the local water table. She started with a historical picture of the area, where her farm is located, when the farms once grew traditional food crops that provided sustenance and did not draw on huge underground supplies of water and the community was bonded at all times. She divided her canvas into three sections with the first one marked by the sustainable use of water from open wells; she followed it by showing a second period when tube wells proliferated in the 1980s and 1990s leading to gradual water depletion; and, finally, she depicted the third period in a state of water crisis to which the state had responded with a rural employment scheme to provide livelihoods. Supported by graphics, she showed how the advent of tube wells and the introduction of commercial crops and modern farm inputs requiring large amounts of water had depleted first the surface water and then, over time, penetrated deeper reservoirs as the water table sank lower. Farmers who once did not buy food are now forced into the market and rely increasingly on state subsidized food rations. The switch to cash crops and the larger role for farm machinery and

technologies have alienated women, who have lost their traditional work opportunities. Even as the youth are migrating from the farms, the speaker saw the need for moving farm populations to water abundant areas if they are to continue producing food.

The three presentations of the Inaugural Session underscored the themes of persistent child malnutrition and hunger in the Indian population that affect most drastically the women, children and marginalized groups such as Dalits, tribals, the aged and the infirmed. They highlight the determinants of the twin problems of hunger and malnutrition in the context of a growing agrarian crisis generated by a development model that tends to alienate the majority from their food production processes, as well as lead to environmental degradation making agriculture unsustainable and thereby exacerbating food insecurity. And they highlight the frequent disjuncture of social security schemes and systems developed as a response to these problems by a distant state pursuing an economic model that accords low priority to human development.

Prof. Imrana Qadeer, the chair for this session, cautioned the group not to create another short-term program like the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), which has been running for 40 years. She emphasized the need to keep one's eyes on the larger development process, even as immediate needs are being addressed.

Session 1: Methods of Identification, Measuring and Tracking Hunger

Dr. Veena Shatrugna chaired the first thematic session, covering the methodological approaches to measuring hunger and its outcomes, varied stages of malnutrition and ultimately, for some, starvation and possibly death. The session continued the discussions initiated three years ago and presented outcomes from the tasks adopted by the group that convened in 2010, as well as introduced related topics such as community-focused nutrition interventions and data reliability.

Ankita Aggarwal and Ashwin Parulkar presented their findings from tracking families that had starvation deaths in three states, a project that was mooted at the first consultation in 2010. Ankita Aggarwal spoke about some insightful interviews with families of the deceased, in particular a family where three generations had succumbed to starvation in the space of 24 hours. In another instance, they visited a village where 11 persons died after consuming a poisonous root, for lack of other options to stave off hunger. Based on visits to nine sites of starvation, she said they had broadly demarcated the causes of starvation deaths. From the public health perspective it was telling that the lack of "affordable and quality health care" had deprived the deceased of appropriate care resulting in debilitation that led to a cycle of unemployment, malnutrition and further debilitation. Other causes were lack of employment opportunities, denial of entitlements like food ration in the often dysfunctional Public Distribution System, inability of local people to extend aid, and the general apathy of public officials administering the life-saving entitlements. Their findings show that to cope with constant hunger individuals are using mechanisms such as eating smaller amounts, compromising on critical household needs, filling up with pseudo foods some of which could be harmful, and in one instance eating decayed meat that proved lethal to many children and adults of the same village.

Ashwin Parulkar pointed out that many of the programs charged with delivering food to different groups in the population are authorized by the landmark Supreme Court judgment in 2001 to enforce the right to food. Since implementation was by the state, they interviewed state officials about starvation deaths within their jurisdiction and found that these deaths were being attributed to illnesses, the proximal cause of death, without any acknowledgement of the dominant cause. Media attention generally brought short-term attention and relief to the community but did not lead to permanent changes. It was the failure of the critical Public Distribution System (PDS) to meet the needs of the vulnerable that created and exacerbated the conditions of starvation. What became apparent from their visits was the absence of monitoring and accountability systems that the victims could access to register their grievances. Officials had generally been unresponsive to victims, or

their families, when contacted. In this situation, he saw the potential for a newly developed starvation monitoring protocol to engage local officials and community groups in assessing early indicators like daily calorie consumption and BMI at the office of district officials like the CMO, as a form of preventive action that would avert starvation deaths.

From qualitative evaluation and interpretation of hunger and of starvation deaths, the focus of the presentations turned to quantitative indicators and data treatment of under-nourishment at individual, group and population levels. In an insightful analysis of data from the FAO's annual publication, *State of Food Insecurity in the World (SOFI)*, Vikas Bajpai demonstrated that data distortion in an official report can project a more optimistic outcome for meeting the MDG 2015 goal of reducing the proportion of hunger in the population by half.ⁱ He critiqued the assumptions and arbitrary measures used by FAO statisticians to arrive at the projection of the proportion of undernourished in the population for the year 2012, a decline that appears to be a promising trend for meeting the goal in 2015. However, this decline is not in accord with a slower trend registered earlier and conflicts with Indian data. Arguing that the food markets in developing countries are integrated with those in the developed world, he also questioned the exclusion of food losses in the developed countries in estimating the proportion of undernourished in the population of developing countries. And, importantly, he showed how consequential these distortions of development indices can be when UN agencies influence the decisions taken by Indian economists in the Planning Commission for fixing the daily calorie intake threshold for determining those falling below poverty level.

We then moved from global data on the undernourished to the reality of malnourishment among Indian children. In the next five presentations, speakers examined the use of various scientific measurements and community-based observation strategies for assessing malnutrition in children and in communities.

Dipa Sinha reviewed the use of key anthropometric measurements for diagnosing malnutrition in Indian children. She described the current emphasis on Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM), a diagnosis based on weight for height Z score less than 3 standard deviations. In government clinics, this diagnosis is made to determine the eligibility of children for treatment at the Nutrition Rehabilitation Centres (NRCs). However, she pointed out that the measurements, methods and standards used for screening children for SAM, including the introduction of Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC), on the recommendation of UN agencies result in the missing out of many cases of malnourished children. She challenged the guidelines transmitted by the WHO and the reliance on African data for recommending MUAC for Indian children. Using data from her field studies, she showed discrepancies between MUAC and weight for height scores for the same group of children. She challenged the notion that MUAC data from Africa can be extrapolated to the Indian setting and argued that all children, regardless of their measurement status, should be monitored and treated.

Following up the earlier presentation, Vandana Prasad described the protocols developed by her group of clinicians and community health workers for treating malnourished children in some of the distressed states such as Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh. Like the preceding speaker, she challenged the limitations of a focus confined to SAM that denies treatment to needy children many of whom do not survive. Her exposition of an alternative care approach to the treatment of malnourished children emphasized individualized and continuous care that refrains from rigid categorization of children by nutritional status and does not exclude any child. This is a comprehensive approach that gives equal weight to the treatment of all children, regardless of their presenting features. She stressed the value and importance of process orientation (in contrast to products) and the need to create community ownership through their active participation. She also wanted institutionalization of key systems and saw the absence of harmonization among government schemes and programs resulting in a lack of collaboration between agencies like the ICDS and NRHM as a major problem. Her alternative approach recognizes that both children and

mothers need crèches to meet their needs. Finally, she wanted community health workers to be supervised in a supportive manner, so they can learn while they improve performance. At the community level, she noted that women's groups would be strategic partners to help implement a comprehensive program for child malnutrition.

The recognition of the community's potential for playing an active role in monitoring, assessing and responding to the dietary needs of malnourished children was reinforced in Nalini Visvanathan's presentation of Thailand's successful nationwide intervention to reduce child malnutrition. She pointed out that historically, when large scale nutritional surveillance was introduced in developing countries, there had been a role for community members to participate in these scientific surveys as lay workers. India has national data on child nutrition, gathered at varied intervals of time, and some robust data sets that provide national and state (district) level data; however, there is little data at the village level. Thailand's success was founded on a broad platform of social development through a national anti-poverty scheme later bolstered by a basic minimum needs approach that engaged communities in planning to meet their requirements at the local level. A review of the country's successful reduction of child malnutrition from over 50 percent to less than 20 percent describes the critical role played by planning, integration, social mobilization and local surveillance (community monitoring) in this achievement. Theoretically, programmatic features like community engagement and participatory learning about the problem and action to address it are important determinants of success. However, she concluded that an overriding factor is the exercise of political will, a commitment by governance structures to eradicate the problem and a concerted effort to do so and she argued that an index of political will would help monitor and assess the actions to be initiated.

Using primary data from Maharashtra and citing secondary data from Orissa, K.K. Pal presented examples of community-based monitoring systems that can engage communities in nutritional surveillance activities. He stated that community level data on children's nutritional status is available at the *anganwadi* centres (AWC) and data from groups of AWCs is being regularly aggregated and then transmitted to the District in the form of computerized monthly project reports. However, the AWCs do not get back detailed data on their individual centers that would help them map the nutritional status in the communities they serve. This serious shortcoming is being addressed in Maharashtra through the introduction of a feedback loop in the system of data transfer from the AWCs to offices at district, state and national level. In Orissa, there was an active role for the community through the adoption of a Positive Deviance model of nutritional status assessment and monitoring by the community. Initiated by the state, this community-based intervention had a positive impact on the nutritional status of children. Both programs target community-level data assessment, monitoring and action, reinforcing the feasibility and viability of engaging local communities in activities that enable nutritional surveillance.

The community thread was picked up again in Ritu Priya's presentation on the efforts made collaboratively by JNU and SADED to develop a socio-medical tool for nutritional surveillance following the workshop held in May 2010. She described the reasons that led the faculty at the Centre of Social Medicine and Community Health to decide on designing a socio-medical tool that could be used for community-wide nutritional surveillance. Distinguishing between nutrition surveillance and monitoring, she also noted the limitations of the Indian data systems used for surveillance, which lack information on vulnerable groups and households. Because the state and civil society intervention are presently aimed either at national or state policies including macro-level agricultural and food distribution systems, or on micro-level individual assessment and dietary supplementation efforts, she proposed a *meso* level approach that would be focused on the community level. The May 2010 workshop had passed two resolutions, one validating the protocol for starvation deaths developed by the Supreme Court Commissioners and the Jan Swasthya Abhiyan (People's Health Movement's India chapter); and the second endorsing the need to develop socio-medical tools for alerting communities about incipient food shortages, so timely action can be

taken by both civil society/community and by officials in local administration. The criteria she proposed for the nutritional surveillance system emphasized that it must allow for the diversity of local contexts, and integration of the multiple domains that play a role in food security systems. Finally, she discussed the effort of the 'Koi Bhooka Na Soye' initiative to build a surveillance tool with broad sensitivity for picking up data that would meet the established criteria even while relying on people's knowledge. She spelt out the assumptions and principles underlying the development of the tool.

Discussion:

Questions to the speakers from the participants ranged freely over all the issues with some heated discussions on the relative importance of MUAC and the emphasis on management principles to the loss of individual rights for children, the role of bureaucrats in monitoring hunger, the value of "charisma" or charismatic individuals in community engagement, and the need to do studies tracking hunger and malnutrition or nutritional surveillance.

Session 2: Analysing the Trends and Determinants of Nutritional Status: The Indian Scenario

The third session, chaired by Prof. D. Banerji, analyzed the trends and determinants of nutritional status in two Indian states, with weak social development indicators, and the schemes and interventions that addressed them. Both Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand are newly created states, which have a large concentration of tribal populations, among India's most vulnerable groups whose poverty and precarious livelihoods have exacerbated levels of hunger and malnutrition in their communities.

Samir Garg of the Right to Food Campaign in Chhattisgarh presented data on the state-wide decline in the incidence of under-weight children below three years, citing data from the National Family Health Survey as well as the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS). There was a slight increase for wasting but a marked decline in stunting. He claimed that the rural Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) has declined by half since 2000, representing the greatest decline of any state during that period. Behaviors related to breastfeeding and hand washing have also improved markedly. PDS coverage has increased significantly to 70 percent of the population, and its effect is enhanced by employment generated through Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). However, low birth weight and low BMI among women still persists; and malaria is a widespread problem not adequately addressed. Other issues are displacement of people from their lands in farming areas and farmer suicides. He argued that many positive changes have resulted from the deprivatization of PDS, the public procurement of rice and the inclusion of vulnerable groups like the old and disabled, regardless of whether they were below poverty level or not. The increased coverage from deprivatization should benefit tribal groups in particular, who were unable to access the PDS system. He also pointed out that the number of ICDS centres had more than doubled in the last ten years. Women's Self Help Groups are involved in the effort to provide fresh hot cooked meals for children. Evaluation surveys have found that Mitans, trained women community health volunteers providing nutrition counseling to mothers, are effective in their outreach. A recent initiative by the state, he said, is the starting up of a crèche program run by the mothers who volunteer to cook the meals and provide care. Finally, earlier this year, the state has launched a progressive Food Security Act that upstaged the current efforts for passing a national bill.

According to Nasreen Jamal, Jharkhand state's direct nutrition services are found only in seven of the twenty - four districts in the state. The coverage is uneven and made available through different programs such as ICDS, NRHM and Midday Meal Programs in the schools. Consequently, civil society groups have come together to start a movement or campaign called Jharkhand Alliance for Health and Nutrition (JASHN) which led to the Jharkhand Action on Sustainable Health and Nutrition that has convened individuals, community groups, NGOs and government officials to work for their common goals without the support of external funding. To assess health and nutrition services

through community monitoring, they devised a report card that was administered by CBOs, NGOs and activists who volunteered for monitoring the functioning of 1,210 *anganwadis* in areas like growth monitoring, supplementary nutrition and attendance at Village Health and Nutrition Days (VHND). She emphasized the importance of nutritional supplementation for malnourished adolescent girls, who would otherwise go on to deliver babies of low birth weight, and also the need for educating them on hygiene and nutrition to sustain the benefits of the intervention. Finally, it was the community mobilization efforts of the campaign that enabled a public dialogue between senior administrators and members of the community. The dialogue led to positive developments such as district-level action plans that reflected a growing awareness among the people of their rights, particularly the need to address child malnutrition.

Discussant

Vandana Prasad commented on Chhattisgarh state's contradictory actions of deprivatization of the PDS and concurrent privatization within the health sector. She also noted that the state's progressive food security bill had overshadowed the currently unsuccessful attempts to pass a similar bill at the Centre. And she challenged the notion that health activists, such as the Mitans, should not be paid for the work they do and instead be treated as volunteers. She warned that the successful community-based monitoring reported from Jharkhand should not be allowed a takeover by the government, considering what had happened to such efforts under the NRHM. The newly restructured ICDS pilot is introducing community-monitoring of the ICDS, so she felt the lessons were timely.

Discussion

In the discussion that followed the session, questions from those in attendance complemented those raised by the discussant. They included comments on the viability of long-term government support programs and the need for self-reliance; leadership roles of NGOs and CBOs versus a collective role for the community; political will; trend towards privatization; payment of volunteer workers and politics in general.

Session 3: Linkages of Nutrition, Work and Food Production Systems

The third session, chaired by Dr. Mira Shiva, ranged across many cross-cutting themes and substantive areas, focusing attention on Indian government policies and the lack thereof in agriculture and food security, on small and women farmers, trade unions and farmer organizations, decent work, social wage, and sustainable and holistic agriculture. Limitations of space diminish the overview given here on such substantive exposition and discourse, so readers are advised to consult the presentation transcripts for greater details.

Biraj Swain presented a paper, jointly authored with Ranvir Singh, titled, "Agriculture in the 12th Five Year Plan Through the Optic of Institutional Mechanisms, Access to Small and Women Farmers," noting subjects that appear in the document, some for the first time, and the potential implications. She took an "empathetic and charitable" view of the state in order to recognize and utilize initiatives aligned with objectives shared by progressive non-state actors. In the 12th FYP, she identified some favorable trends such as the return of public investment to the agrarian sector; emphasis being given to farmers-producers' organizations and the extension services; recognition for the current limitations of agricultural statistics and the need for a national hub with capabilities for extensive data dissemination. She found significant the re-coupling of public procurement with public distribution, as well as the return of small farmers to the agenda of planners, which would reinstate a critical player in this sector at a time when crop production is in serious decline. She underscored the irony of Indian farmers who produce food grains becoming "net food buyers;" the broken extension services system and dearth of training facilities; the bias in loan disbursement towards large landholding farmers as well as the preferential treatment of wealthy borrowers, agri-businesses and non-farmers, in the tolerance shown for debt default. Women farmers are

recognized in this Plan document; however, she found that their role in the care economy is overlooked. State supported crèche and toilet facilities for women are negligible. To address these deficits, she thought data disaggregation is necessary as well as public policy support linking women's collectivization to poverty alleviation schemes, but most of all engendering the department from frontline workers to policymakers.

Using the 12th FYP as a platform for uncovering two decades of neglect and marginalization of the rural economy, she reiterated the urgency for the state to address the agrarian crisis, which is undermining rural development and destroying livelihoods, by setting a progressive and maximalist agrarian agenda. She called for expanding and deepening public investment in agriculture and agricultural systems; and for liberalizing credit flows to this sector directed especially to the small and marginalized farmers. In conclusion, she listed policy actions that would benefit women and small farmers. They include harmonization of programmes with shared objectives; opening of more agricultural department offices for farmers to travel shorter distances in acquiring advice and inputs; research into drudgery reduction work for alleviating the additional burdens borne by women farmers and farm workers; expansion of research and extension services; and the re-coupling of public procurement with the PDS. Finally, she spoke on the need to end discrimination against Dalits and low caste farmers in the public procurement processes while offering them fair price for their agricultural, horticultural and dairy products.

A current issue with major implications for the situation of hunger and malnutrition in India is the National Food Security Bill, which is before the Indian Parliament concurrent with this policy consultation and is nearing passage. Kavita Srivastava presented the stand taken by the Right to Food (RtF) Campaign in this arena. Starting with a historical note on the origins of the campaign which is located in the famous People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL), Rajasthan litigation on the Right to Food in the Supreme Court in 2001, when there was hunger amidst plenty, she described both the evolution of the campaign, and its activities during the last 12 years, to make the Government responsible and accountable for the elimination of hunger and malnutrition from the country. She referred to the 2004 collective statement and the 2007 charter of the campaign, which formally established the collective and its organizational principles.

She said the movement for a comprehensive national food security law began in 2009, when the President announced the Government's intention. She shared the contestations and the discussions within the campaign and the final emergence of a framework which addresses the enhancement of agricultural production, decentralised procurement, and decentralised storage connected integrally to universal entitlements for the PDS. It included special obligations for children, women, and the vulnerable, and the exclusion of commercial interests in food schemes. The campaign asked for an effective and independent grievance redressal system from the block level to the state level. However, the Government's framework for the bill has revolved around food grain availability and that too only in partial fulfillment of the individual/household need for cereals alone, leading to drafts that have been minimalistic and piecemeal. The very first draft of the bill was set out by the Group of Ministers, whose less than minimal provisions were not acceptable to the campaign members. The National Advisory Council (NAC) also provided two drafts of their version of the food security bill. She pointed out that the final version, presently in Parliament, has resisted addressing the fundamental issues of food security. Instead, their narrow vision has ignored issues of food sovereignty, distributive justice and resource control and has opened the door for commercial interests. By bringing in cash transfers as an important mechanism of reform of the PDS, the writing on the wall is clear that the almost half a century old fair price shop, the symbol of cheap food and the important connections between local production, procurement, storage and distribution will end and the markets will take over.

Turning the session to agricultural livelihoods and sustainability, Kiran Vissa asked participants to broaden the framework for viewing food security in order to link hunger and malnutrition to the poverty prevalent among farmers. He pointed out that 84 percent of farmers can be classified as

“small”, “marginal” and “landless.” For a majority of this group, their incomes are too meager to cover their monthly expenses, thereby creating conditions for indebtedness. Agricultural growth accounts for a small fraction of India’s economic growth, hence growth in this sector has to be expanded to erase poverty more uniformly. The minimum support prices (MSP) fixed by the government are mostly inadequate for farmers to recover their costs, making it increasingly more attractive for them to buy food rather than grow it. He underscored a need to address the tension inherent in the problem of keeping prices low enough to be affordable for the majority and yet high enough to provide fair remuneration for the growers. Using the example of AP, he showed how the price of rice has been kept artificially capped to distort market realities and progressively devalue primary production. He argued that the introduction of the PDS, with its dominant emphasis on grains such as rice and wheat, is responsible for changing the priorities of farmers who were accustomed to growing a diversity of crops. The widespread adoption of rice farming, a wetlands crop, led to the sinking of bore wells at extreme depths to access water in land unsuited for rice cultivation leading to water loss and land degradation. When the government adopted the green revolution model for agricultural production in India, it set in motion processes with long-term deleterious effects on the land, the people who depend on it for their livelihoods, and those who rely on it for sustenance. Its macro-impact is spread over the deficits and distortions related to food production, which he had described earlier, and its micro-impact is visible in the deprivations created in families once accustomed to subsistence farming that took care of all their nutritional needs through a diversified diet. Summing up, he advocated for a food security policy framework that gives central place to sustainable food production and secure livelihoods for food producers, especially small farmers; and the implementation of land reform policies to provide land to the landless.

In the presentation that followed, Dithhi Bhattacharya provided an exposition on wages, starting with the notion of decent work and just wages and then elaborating on the concept of social wage versus a purely monetary wage. According to her, food security for a worker can only be guaranteed by a wage that provides the social infrastructure that can sustain the worker and her family. She defined social wage as *“the component of the wage that ensures food security, ensures access to affordable, quality public health care, and most importantly old age pension.”* In India, she pointed out, a minimum wage falls short of the coverage extended by the social wage, because it does not incorporate the savings needed for supporting workers in retirement. There is inherent discrimination in the norms being used to set wages, particularly in the case of women, and they persist even when seemingly progressive minimum wages are enforced for low level work such as domestic labor in Tamilnadu. She also cited the induction of women as voluntary workers in national programs addressing maternal and child health as examples of the government’s use of honoraria to pay women workers less than their dues. Another example of a discriminatory system was the Employee’s State Insurance (ESI) Scheme which does not include all workers within its scheme. The agricultural sector accounts for 51 percent of the work force, overshadowing a manufacturing sector that relies on imports and is not capable of absorbing the influx of rural residents seeking work in urban centers. She linked the exploitation of these workers in their factories with the recent social unrest seen in Gurgaon. Speaking of the MDGs, she expressed her concern that the private sector is a major player in the creation and implementation of plans for achieving these goals and that it would result in greater privatization and unpaid work. As an example, she offered the explosion in private schools that are filling the gap created by public schools failing to teach children the basics. Her overall recommendations included a combination of wage and social wage interventions to increase the workers’ overall standard of living; the building of social alliances by recognizing and reinforcing linkages between groups that support workers’ rights to organize and to collectively bargain; and support for the ratification of ILO Conventions 87 and 98.

A new focus was introduced by the next three speakers who addressed state-wide experiences or planned interventions in agriculture, food, ecology, work, diets and health, and the linkages between

them. They were followed up by the discussants with their commentaries, and then an open discussion, prompted by questions from those in attendance.

Before describing the resistance to the dominant agricultural growth paradigm in Punjab, Amanjot Kaur spoke of the absence of hunger in Punjab, the Green Revolution's model state which provides food to other Indian states. She narrated the changes over generations in her family, where the food they presently consumed was observed to be less energizing. Her concern, she states, is not food scarcity but food safety. As a college student she had found that 70 to 80 percent of girls who volunteered to donate blood were anemic, hence were unable to do so. Similarly, anemic girls and school children complained of joint pain. Punjab represents only 1.5 percent of the total land area in India, yet it uses 18 percent of the pesticides used in the country and 10 percent of the fertilizers, the highest in the country, with 87 percent of its land dedicated to agriculture. The intensive nature of agriculture in the state results in the close proximity of houses and farms to the sites of cultivation. Increasingly, she said, land for farming was disappearing because high land values are resulting in their appropriation for non-agricultural purposes. The scarcity of land for growing food represents the second dimension of the crisis they are confronting.

In response to the contamination of their foods with pesticide and the lack of diversity from monocropping, women had come together in a group to grow organic (chemical-free) vegetables for domestic consumption. Locally they have seen a spurt in spontaneous abortions, suggesting the vulnerability of women in their reproductive phase who have been exposed to the chemical pollution. Her group has increased in size to 600 women who are growing organic produce like leafy vegetables to break their dependence on mainstream agriculture. Their initiative is inducting children for cooking classes to transmit cultural values with food knowledge. She made clear, convincingly, that chemical-based agriculture must be categorically rejected for the regeneration of farming in Punjab.

Lakshmi Durga Chava spoke about Andhra Pradesh's (AP) successful poverty alleviation program, Indira Kranti Patham (IKP) formerly known as Velugu, for the empowerment of disadvantaged rural women, including Scheduled Castes and Tribes, through the vehicle of self-help groups (SHGs). The program is being implemented by the Society for the Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP), with financial support of the World Bank. She described the hierarchical network that links SHGs at the village level to the Mandal, a higher administrative unit, through a representational system. The Nutrition Day Care Center (NDCC) program was started about seven years ago, when surveys showed that women in the SHGs were spending disproportionately on health and were in need of health education and counseling. She emphasized that the program addresses the nutritional needs of the child during the 1000 days now determined to be critical for growth, starting in the pre-natal stage and covering the first two years. AP's progress on the MDG goals was not at level with neighboring states even if the nutritional status of children in AP compared favorably against the national averages for stunting, wasting and underweight. However, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes record higher levels of malnutrition. From her account, the NDCC program was designed to intervene with these and other disadvantaged groups by providing fresh cooked meals and day care facilities for pregnant women and their children. A nominal fee is charged to cover costs of the cooked meals, and women work on income generating tasks through their SHGs to raise the funds that will help them defray the expense. She pointed out that these activities are not physically demanding and are well suited for pregnant women who should be avoiding the hard labor that characterizes the normal routine of many rural workers. She reported that during gestation women gained on an average 9 kilograms and the average birth weight was almost three kilograms. There are over 4000 nutrition centers and the Common Income Generation Scheme enables them to become self-supporting within two years. Looking forward, she said that the program should view the nutritional status more broadly and involve other sectors, emphasizing the critical initial 1000 days of life.

Shiraz Wajih brought back the forum to issues of agricultural productivity, this time in the context of the small and marginal farmers of eastern Uttar Pradesh. Here, in this state, agriculture is still a principal livelihood for a majority of people and he stated that women farmers contribute close to 70 percent of the agricultural productivity. Nevertheless, the official statistics on women's land ownership, their role in extension services and their use of technology and resources show their presence is negligible and do not reflect the extent of their productivity. Small farmers own 90 percent of the land in this region; however, the majority of small farmers are living below the poverty level and malnutrition is pervasive in this group who are the major food producers of the state. As in the case of Punjab, farm lands are being taken over for non-agricultural purposes decreasing food production. Since food productivity accounting favors mono-cropping, small farmers with diversified cultivation are at a disadvantage. Moreover, the degradation of the commons, on which small farmers depend for resources, has negatively impacted their livelihoods. He echoed the views of the earlier speakers when he distinguished between universal problems such as decline in millet and pulse production, increased costs, government emphasis on food purchases for food security, decreasing sizes of land holdings, and the newer challenges like floods and water logging, climate change impacts and conversion of land for non-agricultural purposes. During food shortage periods, which lead to forced migration of the farmers, food distribution for those left behind is prioritized to benefit men and children, leaving women farmers the most deprived.

Reflecting on these growing threats, he recommended strengthening farm system resiliency by adopting the following four mechanisms: 1) Redundancy through diversification that complements crop growing with livestock, vegetable and kitchen gardens including intra-crop and inter-crop diversity. All forms of diversity to enhance the redundancy of the farm. 2) Flexibility through a robust system with strong interlinkages to withstand extreme stress. 3) Responsiveness through time and space management that helps small farmers to recover from losses or mitigate their impact. 4) Capacity to learn from indigenous and local sources of knowledge rather than rely on extension services geared to the big farmers. Its principal approach is innovativeness that allows small farmers to adapt their resources to the threatened environment for devising appropriate technologies or interventions to address the situation. Finally, to ensure food security and good health for small and women farmers and their families, he advocates that a major portion of their diverse food production must be dedicated to their own household consumption and only the surplus taken to the market.

Discussants

Rohan D'Souza, the first discussant, reflected on the decline of farming the world over, the continuing exodus of rural residents to urban centers and the forces of the market that shaped lives and livelihoods. He saw imagination playing a deterministic role in attracting rural youth to the unknown metropolitan worlds of cities like Mumbai, Kolkata and Delhi. The agrarian crisis has generated a narrative of misery and despair and it is important to balance that with a narrative that depicts the allure of the cities to understand rural decay and the flight of youth.

Ramila Bisht, the second discussant, reminded the forum that gender relations of production in agriculture represented a complex dynamic that could not be addressed without due regard not only for the intersections of class, caste and class but also of tribal, regional and cultural identity. Moreover, the prevalent capitalist system of patriarchy governs relations of reproduction, influencing household labor distribution and family decisions. And she also reminded participants that nutritional security must be viewed in the context of public health issues such as health care services, sanitation, hygiene and water.

Umendra Dutt, the third discussant, used the earlier presentation on widespread chemical pollution in the farmlands of Punjab to give a detailed account of how the Green Revolution has ravaged fields and farms, leaving behind death and destruction. In spite of having the highest tube-well density in the nation, the state is facing a serious water crisis in farming hinterlands. He cited the case of three

villages that had run dry in three different districts, the suicides by farmers facing water scarcity and without alternatives for agriculture, and the abnormally high incidence of cancer found in farm families living in the areas affected by pesticide pollution. He called for a rethinking of rural development policy by the government, even as farm lands were being taken over for non-agricultural purposes. Finally, he described resistance by groups such as his to counter the state's dominant paradigm of development.

Discussion

Despite shortage of time for questions and comments, a number of issues were raised even if there were limited responses. The multiplicity of issues raised cannot be listed here; however, the notable comments to record include the domination of the upper castes' agenda in the focus given to food security instead of land ownership. It was pointed out that the topic of land distribution and land rights had not been strongly integrated into the food security discussion taking place. There was disagreement over the usefulness of the extension services, whose decline had been pointed out by a speaker, and a forceful plea to put politics at the centre of both planning and discussion.

Session 4: Directions for Policy to Reduce Hunger in India

The final session, under the chairmanship of Vijay Kumar, was reserved for exploring policy directions to reduce hunger and malnutrition, bringing together practitioners, advocates and activists for charting the strategic paths that could be taken in tackling a persistent problem.

Issues for Optimal Implementation of 12th Plan for Reducing Hunger

Biraj Patnaik, advocate for the Right to Food campaign, and adviser to the Supreme Court Commissioners, analyzed the 12th FYP to highlight trends and developments critical for reducing hunger and malnutrition. At this time, the first budget proposal had not been announced but the document's draft release indicated the relative emphases to be given. Of significance to this forum was the restructuring of the ICDS. The main features proposed were the recruitment of a second *anganwadi* worker in the pilot program to run in 200 districts, a longstanding recommendation of the RtF Campaign and child rights groups; the starting up of a crèche for children under two years in five percent of the pilot districts; and creation of infrastructure for improving facilities that would be done in convergence with NREGA. Importantly, midday meal schemes are being expanded to include older children in primary schools and given greater financial flexibility to cover inflationary increases. Overall, the states would get more flexibility in carving out their programs; however, there would be no conversion of ICDS to mission status. The criteria for including recipients in the PDS are still being determined at this time. He distinguished between the subsidy transfer proposed in the Plan and the cash transfers that were supposed to happen, explaining that the latter would not be feasible since it conflicted with the grain procurement process already in place. Water, sanitation and primary healthcare, areas that affect malnutrition, had gained little in the Plan.

Panel on Post MDG Discussion Framework

M. Kumaran, of Oxfam, found a sharp disjuncture between the Government of India's (GoI) presentations of the advances it has made to reduce poverty and malnutrition and the prevailing knowledge about the situation derived from national surveys conducted over three time periods. It is apparent that the GoI is anxious to meet the targets set for the MDGs, and therefore interprets data to make targets appear attainable by the 2015 deadline. He presented evidence of high levels of malnutrition among marginalized groups such as the SCs and STs, and of an expanding crisis in the agrarian sector leading to inflationary prices and lowered levels of food consumption - evidence that contradicts the official statements on India's progress toward meeting MDG 1. And he recommended action at many levels for the post 2015 development agenda, primarily an emphasis on honestly appraising lessons learned from meeting the MDGs and applying them to the new framework; a rejection of the market-centered model of neo-liberal growth that has negatively

affected the country, particularly the disadvantaged groups; reinforcement of the paramount role played by the state in administering welfare programs; a legal guarantee to food rights; support for the small farmers and land holders; and attention to social inequalities across all goals.

Paul Divakar, representing 'Wada Na Todo Abhiyan', (WNTA), or 'Keep Your Promises Campaign' describes it as "a network of organizations with various ideologies" that will work to align the domestic agenda with the international goals as part of its mission to make the government accountable for its commitment to eradicate poverty and social exclusion. Starting with the shortcomings of the MDGs, he underscored the absence of a strong human rights orientation and language that has led to the insignificance of the social barriers of "discrimination" and "inequality" within the implementation framework. He proposed strengthening the post 2015 development agenda by emphasizing human rights considerations, incorporating and distinguishing between forms of discrimination and inequality as well as setting measures for tracking discrimination within the larger measurement process. Finally, he asked for building accountability into the MDGs during implementation by including the affected communities in monitoring processes; and creating fiscal transparency to ensure that allocated funds are fully disbursed and used as intended.

Peter Kenmore of FAO, described the processes underway for the development of the post 2015 development framework. There are two global processes, one of which is an intergovernmental process arising out of the Rio conference. The other global process from the office of the UN Secretary General has three streams with the first bringing together the "elites" as he termed them - three country presidents and a group of twenty eminent persons together for consultation. The second stream is thematic and includes food and nutrition among the nine areas chosen for expert-led high level consultation; broader participation is ensured through ongoing online consultations with stakeholders. Finally, the third stream has planned for 100 national consultations, including India, where nine sub-national consultations have taken place, each convened by an institution. He estimates that 6000 individuals have been brought into the consultative process representing farmers' associations, women, academics, researchers, corporations, industries, civil society organizations and government officials at local, state and national levels. Emerging issues in India are inequality through such social determinants as caste, class, religion and ethnicity; extreme poverty; lack of productive employment and environmental degradation. Global priorities were human rights; reducing inequality and improving inclusion particularly for the bottom 20 percent; better health and education; a rewritten gender target; and governance.

A Panel on Civil Society and Polity

Vijay Pratap of SADED, spoke of the context which generated the second meeting. An attendee of the first meeting had later pointed out that, politics and political economy had neither figured in the presentations nor in the discussions of the first meeting. The task following that meeting was to develop a nutritional surveillance tool to pre-empt hunger; however, the challenge was to find those who could use it. In Bihar, *anganwadi* workers are facing extortionary demands and are therefore unsuited to take on this work. Corruption is a political reality that must be acknowledged. He discussed democratic socialism and the agenda of the democratic socialists, and current realities where socialist values have been subverted by the new so-called socialist politicians. He felt the presentations have skirted the subject of Dalits and Muslims, and that even their usual surrogates such as landless labor and unorganized workers were barely mentioned. He concluded by exhorting the group who represent the "liberators" to develop humility and listen to those whose liberation they were seeking. They have to relinquish their privileged status and yield the floor to those at the bottom in order for those groups to be politically empowered, which can then lead to nutritional empowerment.

Harsh Mander from Center for Equity Studies spoke about the role of civil society institutions and individuals outside the governmental spheres in battling hunger and malnutrition. His approach was to support those suffering from hunger by helping them find ways of meeting their needs without

compromising their dignity or their self-respect. And he argued that interventions that demonstrate caring, compassion and solidarity for those in distress are no less legitimate than traditional approaches to seeking justice from the state. It is necessary to understand the factors that propel people into conditions of acute deprivation and suffering, in order to institute the right responses. In his view, social protection mechanisms like food distribution programs are not charity given by the state. He lauded the socio-economic rights framework, which places every individual on the same plane implying that all are of equal worth and merit the same dignified treatment. It also offers justice seekers a powerful tool to make the government accountable to the citizens for ensuring that no one goes hungry. He saw a large role for public compassion, which appears to be fading even as the state and its programmatic instruments have failed to address hunger through insensitivity and indifference. To avert a brewing social crisis from the disappearance of public compassion and cohesion, he proposes the revival of traditions of caring like the *langar* (a communal free kitchen among Sikhs) that demonstrates community response to the needs of others.

Avinash Kumar from Oxfam emphasized the importance for those campaigning on issues of hunger and malnutrition to focus on raising the level of political commitment for the right to food and nutrition, using the universal language of rights in their advocacy. To build up pressure on the politicians and policy makers, he argued that constituencies at the grassroots must be mobilized to bolster the work of advocates. In addition, he argued that there must be a concerted effort to link up with states that have launched food programs more progressive than those proposed by the Centre. Finally, he stated that the nature of politics has changed and non-elected bodies such as the Planning Commission are instrumental in making policies. A shift from elected representatives to non-elected managers would reduce the leverage of electoral constituencies in their demand for political commitment and their ability to ask for accountability. Consequently, this would be an unfavorable trend to watch and counter. He also noted that numerous policy bills have been passed and await implementation because the political will to implement them is missing. Finally, he wondered whether the campaigners should invest heavily in getting the legislation passed when the current political economy, reflected in the government's strong market orientation, will continue to exacerbate the inequalities that create hunger and malnutrition. He raised some searching questions that suggested the need to rethink strategies and forms of action. His proposal is for the many progressive groups running individual rights campaigns to join together on a common platform using the universalist language of rights. Admittedly, it would take a long time in a society fractured by social divisions, but these efforts at language development could be more rewarding than the mere legislation of rights that may not be enforced.

Madhuri from Jagrit Adivasi Dalit Sangathan (JADS) argued provocatively that the question about why there is hunger should take precedence over the forms of tracking to be deployed. Hunger exists because of 'violent expropriation' and 'loot'. She reminded the group that the hungry were not waiting to be saved by the benevolence of the activists, advocates and practitioners gathered there. She also pointed out that the hungry were part of survival networks that had now failed and questions should be directed at what had led to their failure. She criticized the mainstream approach of assuming a top-down stance in locating and feeding the hungry. The means for producing food - land, forests and water - were stolen from the people to whom they belong in order to expand industrial growth and enrich the wealthy. Unfair global trade arrangements have made local communities vulnerable to corporate expansionism, denied protection to Indian farmers while allowing the US government to provide subsidies to its farmers, who are dominant in the global market. She contradicted a previous speaker's assertion that the MDGs were better than the Washington Consensus, arguing that they were part of the Washington Consensus. To address racism and discrimination, the work had to begin with the dispossessed Native Americans in the United States where a disproportionate number were languishing in jail. She warned that the struggles of the marginalized for just causes are being co-opted and converted in ways that suit those in power and there is need to raise awareness about this matter. In conclusion, she called on the academics, experts and NGOs to bring their resources to this struggle.

Discussion

Vijay Kumar, Mission Director, National Rural Livelihoods Mission, Ministry of Rural Development, the chair of Session 4, apologized for running out of time for a full discussion. He commented on the extent and depth of feelings demonstrated in the meeting on the subject of hunger and malnutrition and found it to be educational. He emphasized the importance of collectivization of the people such that they can own and give shape to the structures and processes that improve their livelihood and ensure food security.

Biraj Swain of Oxfam thanked the chair and the co-organisers for the efforts they made to bring about the two-day workshop. She spoke about the diversity of the gathering representing the academy, civil society, community groups, bureaucrats, practitioners and activists and the elevating discourse it had produced. She complimented Ritu Priya for her leadership in bringing this group together and Ranvir Singh for managing the logistics very effectively. She also thanked the Centre of Social Medicine and Community Health, which hosted the event, and those who represented the co-sponsoring organizations: Vijay Pratap (SADED); Harsh Mander (Centre for Equity Studies); Vandana Prasad and Dr. Ganapathy Murugan (Public Health Resource Network). She thanked Peter Kenmore of FAO for their support and for his role in bringing the issue of discrimination to the fore at the UN agency.

Thus, recommendations emerged from the consultation for technical intervention and political action by civil society for re-orientation of policies. It brought focus on the power of community level initiatives within the larger adverse social, political and economic context, nationally and internationally. Reiterating that nutrition security required the responsibility of the state in ensuring basic needs of adequate food, safe water, sanitation and health care for all, several community level interventions provided pointers for policy. Initiatives addressing tracking of hunger and malnutrition, using positive deviance and collectivization models, addressing women's workload and sustainable and holistic agriculture were highlighted. It was also recognized that, while these meso-level activities may help in some amelioration of conditions of the deprived, they must also contribute to the struggle for macro policies that lead to egalitarian control over resources and a humane, sustainable development model to ensure food and nutrition security with dignity. Forging linkages across all these spheres in a coherent systemic perspective is one of the biggest challenges.

ⁱ MDG 1 / Target 1.C:

[Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger](#)

- About 850 million people, or nearly 15 percent of the global population, are estimated to be undernourished.
- Despite some progress, nearly one in five children under age five in the developing world is underweight.
- Children in rural areas are nearly twice as likely to be underweight as those in urban areas.

Extract of Recommendations Based on Presentations and Discussions

Inaugural Session: An Overview

Ritu Priya

- a. Food security and food production are inextricably linked and must be considered together.
- b. Restore the link between local ecologies, food production and dietary patterns for ensuring sustainable food and nutrition security for all. Review and redesign International and national policy frameworks related to food production and food markets accordingly. Diversity of dietary patterns should be nurtured rather than destroyed by homogenising distribution mechanisms and nutrition advisories.
- c. Instituting measures for tracking of hunger and malnutrition from micro (individual), to meso (community) and macro levels for effective action to mitigate it in the immediate and medium term is also necessary while the larger policy paradigm is addressed.
- d. Therefore civil society and political processes should address these dimensions in a comprehensive and holistic manner and not by medicalising the discourse and solutions.

Harsh Mander

- a. Impose legal duties on the state in relation to starvation.
- b. Defend the right to food of vulnerable populations, including women, children, destitute, migrants and the aged.
- c. Enact a law for food provision and a complementary law for food production (to ensure food provision is feasible).

Uma Shankari

- a. Promote local self-sufficiency in food through support to farmers.
- b. Population resettlement in water rich areas to ease population density and water shortages.
- c. Food processing industry to be reserved for the small scale, where the primary production should be in the hands of women.
- d. Food distribution rather than cash distribution.

Discussant

Imrana Qadeer

- a. Create long-term strategy in tune with larger developmental processes rather than short-term strategy to meet emergency situations e.g., ICDS.

Session 1: Methods of Identification, Measuring and Tracking Hunger

Ankita Aggarwal and Ashwin Parulkar

- a. Diagnosis of starvation status from BMI (< 16.5) should be made by the District Collector, Chief Medical Officer, PRI, family of starvation victim and community members.
- b. Improved functioning of public programs relevant to nutrition and hunger.
- c. More extensive media coverage of the issues.
- d. Public action(s) in demanding accountability from officials entrusted with running public nutrition programs.
- e. Emphasis on the rights basis for food programs and the necessity for mechanisms to enable individuals to access rights.

Vikas Bajpai

- a. Development policy should not be constricted by narrow premises.
- b. Ensure greater transparency in data on nutritional status and computation of numbers of the hungry and malnourished.

Dipa Sinha

- a. Comprehensive approach to addressing child malnutrition.
- b. Aim should be to treat every child.
- c. Emphasis on the prevention of SAM and all other forms of malnutrition.
- d. Adherence to locally tried and tested anthropometric measurements for assessing nutritional status.

Vandana Prasad

1. *Care Delivery – Create flexible systems that permit all variations.*
 - a. Individualized: Every child has to be kept in good health and well nourished; must be followed to logical conclusion for relevant condition.
 - b. Continuous: Every child must be followed through all the way to keep him or her alive and to keep him or her well.
 - c. Greater reliance on common sense with nutrition awareness rather than fixed, standardized regimes. Augment caregiver’s basic understanding rather than rely on prescriptions.
 - d. Every child must get a diverse, good quality diet: locally produced, calorie dense and protein rich with enough diversity to provide micronutrients.
 - e. More attention to growth faltering, illnesses and lack of appetite.
 - f. No special therapeutic food: higher frequency of the baseline good quality food along with more oil, home visits to find reasons.
 - g. Respond to illness, child’s lack of appetite, persistent growth faltering with referral.
2. *Program Management: Emphasize Process Orientation and Community Ownership*
 - a. Convergence of ICDS, NRHM and NRC for greater synergies.
 - b. Greater institutionalization of resources and services.
 - c. Expansion and enhancement of infrastructure, particularly child care facilities.
 - d. Tracking and analyzing the growth curves of every child, using a system of alerts to notify a range of critical symptoms and events.
 - e. Well coordinated referral system to minimize delays and save lives.
 - f. Working with local women’s groups and stakeholders in participatory forms of action that allow communities to assume ownership of interventional programs.
 - g. Supportive supervision of child care workers.

Nalini Visvanathan

1. *Index of Political Will/Commitment:* Creation and popularization of a political will index to:
 - a. Track and monitor the commitment of local and higher level government administrators to enforcing policies derived from laws and legislation safeguarding people’s right to food.
 - b. Gauge outcomes of promises made to the people for food security on public platforms or in political manifestos by parties at the Centre/State.
2. *Integration of Community Participation at All Levels of Government Supported Nutritional Interventions Including:*
 - a. Planning for local health and development.
 - b. Monitoring for growth and changes in health and nutritional status.

K.K. Pal

- a. Based on Maharashtra's findings from ICDS data, the implicit recommendation would be to track children from "the mother's womb until they reach two years of age".

Ritu Priya

- a. Community-based socio-medical surveillance system needs to be operationalised for identifying early signs of food shortage and acute malnutrition.

Session 2: Analysing the Trends and Determinants of Nutritional Status: the Indian Scenario**Samir Garg**

Based on Chhattisgarh experience:

- a. Use of trained community health workers in nutrition counseling at the household level.
- b. Oppose taking women's labour for granted and using it for free.
- c. Deprivatization and expansion of PDS system.
- d. Use of SHGs and Panchayats for ICDS supplementary nutrition programme provisioning.

Nasreen Jamal

- a. Broadly, community mobilization through such activities as report cards and public dialogues (*jan samwad*) can lead to greater awareness of rights and the capacity to advocate for themselves and others.

Sanjay Chaturvedi

- a. Women's workload and time for child care needs to be addressed for improving child nutrition.

Discussant**Rama Baru**

- a. Link micro determinants to the macro determinants to understand the points of intervention.

Discussant**Vandana Prasad**

- a. Need to exercise caution in order "to protect state's forward-looking policies against retrogressive central policies".
- b. Women health workers, regardless of the label given to them as "activists" are entitled to be paid for their work.
- c. Community-based monitoring and social audits initiated in Jharkand should be safeguarded from government influence heeding the example of the fate of community-based monitoring under NRHM.

Session 3: Linkages of Nutrition, Work and Food Production Systems

Biraj Swain and Ranvir Singh

- a. Expanding and deepening public investment in the agricultural sector.
- b. Liberalizing credit flows to smallholder producers.
- c. Data disaggregation to determine the utilization of claims by women farmers and “small farmers within the intersectionality of caste, class and marginalization” and the regular incorporation of such disaggregated data into annual agricultural statistics.
- d. Public policy support for women’s collectives.
- e. Greater attention to policy coherence in reaching the public.
- f. Coordination mechanism at the Centre for programme harmonization and to enable all departments to speak coherently to citizens about programmes that cut across multiple areas of governance and oversight.
- g. Emphasis on drudgery reduction technologies to lessen the burden of women agricultural workers, who are forced into manual labor within the home and in the fields.
- h. Greater proximity to offices of the agricultural department for farmers, thereby reducing time spent in accessing market inputs, by expansion of office branches in rural areas.
- i. Reduction in food wastage by exploring loopholes in the consumption and storage side, with attention to retail markets.
- j. Coupling public procurement with the public distribution system.
- k. Creation and development of agricultural data and resource centre for systematic review of inflation, hunger and nutrition intersectionality to provide answers for questions such as, “What kind of agrarian policy works for better nutrition?”; What kind of food pricing policy works for better nutrition”?
- l. Fostering the development of a progressive farmers’ institution to monitor trends and respond in timely ways to issues as they arise.
- m. Address farm-gate discrimination characterized by the marginalization of Dalits and low caste farmers and producers in the procurement policies and actions taken by the public systems.
- n. Undertake research to uncover the agrarian produce market, especially of dairy and meat products that would expose discriminatory conditions and enable small and marginal farmers to circumvent them.
- o. Pay greater attention to research and extension, with emphasis on the latter.

Kavita Srivastava

- a. Any food security bill must address issues relating to control and access of resources, like water, land and forests, with food being the first call on any of these resources.
- b. Any food security bill must address issues related to revival of agriculture.
- c. Any food security bill must promote livelihoods in particular.
- d. Food security must address food sovereignty and preservation of local food systems.
- e. Food Security must provide non-food entitlements like sanitation, drinking water, healthcare and social security apart from food entitlements across ages.

Kiran Kumar Vissa

- a. Food security policy framework should give central place to sustainable food production and secure livelihoods for food producers especially small farmers.
- b. Procurement of a broad cross section of grains, including coarse grains (millets) and pulses, into the public distribution system with preference for local procurement and distribution. As a rule, the procurement price should provide farmers sufficient margin above their total cost of cultivation, correctly estimated.

- c. Revival and strengthening of small scale cultivation of vegetables for food security, as well as of domestic animal husbandry for diversifying diets and preventing malnutrition.
- d. Implementation of land reform policies to provide land to the landless.

Dithi Bhattacharya

1. Promotion of a *Just Minimum Wage*:
 - a. A need-based minimum wage must be indexed to inflation, as specified in the 15th ILC norms and subsequent Supreme Court orders.
 - b. Inclusion of all work in the Schedule of Employments covered under the Minimum Wage Act.
 - c. Non-discriminatory bases for determination of wage -Equal wage for equal work for women workers, workers in employments traditionally performed by Dalits and adivasis, contract workers.
2. A combination of wage and *social wage** interventions must be used to increase the workers' overall standard of living. (*universal food security; universal access to affordable quality public health care; old age pension indexed to wage)
3. Building social alliances by recognizing and reinforcing linkages between groups that support workers' rights to organize and to collectively bargain.
4. Support for the ratification of ILO Conventions 87 and 98.

Amanjot Kaur

- a. Safety of the food produced must be a central concern, both for the producers and the consumers.
- b. In areas such as Punjab where high chemical use in agriculture is viewed as the basis of their economy and where serious negative health consequences are also recognised to be due to this, beginnings can be made by women cooperatives to grow organic food in home gardens to avoid pesticides found in commercially grown vegetables.

Lakshmi Durga Chava

- a. Broadening the lens through which nutrition is viewed, to encompass multiple sectors that influence nutritional status.
- b. Focus on the health of mothers and infants, during the critical 1000 days of life including from ante-natal to post-natal stage and early childhood (2 years).
- c. Practice economies of scale to reduce individual household expenses and improve dietary status, through community run nutrition and day care centers that serve mothers and their infants and young children for a small fee paid through funds raised in microenterprises.

Shiraz Wajih

Strengthening farm system resiliency, when threatened, by the following mechanisms:

- a. Redundancy through diversification that complements crop growing with livestock, vegetable and kitchen gardens including intra-crop and inter-crop diversity. All forms of diversity enhance the redundancy of the farm.
- b. Flexibility through a robust system with strong interlinkages to withstand extreme stress.
- c. Responsiveness through time and space management that helps small farmers to recover from losses or mitigate their impact.
- d. Capacity to learn from indigenous and local sources of knowledge rather than rely on extension services geared to the big farmers. Its principal approach is innovativeness that allows small farmers to adapt their resources to the threatened environment for devising appropriate technologies or interventions to address the situation.

- e. To ensure food security and good health for small and women farmers and their families, a major portion of their diverse food production must be dedicated to their own household consumption and only the surplus taken to the market.

Discussant

Rohan D'Souza

- a. Analyzing village-city linkages is necessary for a fuller picture.
- b. Narrative of injustice and suffering, covered in the consultation, must be balanced with a narrative of hope and emancipation.

The urban bias, market orientation and the factory to farm logic generates a design for industrial agriculture, and a seduction of imagination. Therefore essential to rethink and recalibrate our notions of production systems around a farmer-centric imagination versus the industrial notion of production, so that the rural area can actually overflow the city.

Discussant

Ramila Bisht

- a. Analysis of women farmers' situation must be placed 'within systems of capitalist patriarchy, giving emphasis to both gender and class differences'. [Women's role in agriculture varies across caste, class, tribe, region, religion, culture, and...within food production, it cannot be decontextualized from its local social structural and cultural norms.]
- b. In improving nutritional security, public health issues such as access to health services, water, hygiene which are all critical for nutritional outcomes, must be addressed.

In assessing production systems, intra-household food distribution should be examined because it impacts nutritional outcomes.

Discussant

Umendra Dutt

- a. Redefine 'rural development' to enable a paradigmatic shift in the approaches used by government.
- b. Prioritize sustainability, emphasizing scarce resources like water and land for agriculture (Reference to dangerous depletion of water resources in the state).
- c. Demand democratization of the agenda for agricultural research in the country to challenge research promoted by external vested interests such as Monsanto.
- d. Challenge Punjab's development model that is leading to the shifting of vast acres of land from agricultural to non-agricultural purposes.
- e. Challenge the proposal to replicate Punjab's so-called Green Revolution successes in eastern parts of the country.
- f. Propose JNU's Centre for Social Medicine and Community Health should initiate a study of how "disease patterns" (spread of cancer in rural Punjab) create "economic and social stress".

Session 4: Directions for Policy to Reduce Hunger in India

Biraj Patnaik

- a. Civil society needs to exert greater pressure on government to ensure that at least the 12th Plan commitments are fulfilled.
- b. Other measures need to be explored as well, since the 12th Plan and National Food Security Act hold out no promise of making a dent on malnutrition and hunger.

M. Kumaran

- a. Lessons learned from meeting MDG 2015 should be frankly articulated in detail and applied to the creation of the post 2015 framework.
- b. Change in trade rules to correct imbalances.
- c. Need to bolster the state by strongly stressing its importance for public welfare and for protecting the interests of disadvantaged groups.
- d. Need for an alternative model of development.
- e. Include goal to reduce inequality in income and wealth (including land and natural resources).
- f. Legal guarantee to food rights must be an important component of measuring progress.
- g. A goal to address social inequalities across all goals.
- h. Continue with targets, retain coupling of under-nutrition with poverty.
- i. Facilitate channels for public participation and scrutiny at global, national and sub-national level.

Peter Kenmore

- a. Build in a rights approach in the battle against hunger.
- b. Governance change to build resilience in communities.

Paul Divakar

- a. Including core aspects of human rights in the new MDGs framework.
- b. Incorporating issues of discrimination and inequality.
- c. Distinguishing between forms of discrimination and inequality.
- d. Integrating discrimination into the measurement process.
- e. Building Accountability into MDGs.

Vijay Pratap

- a. Do-gooders should cultivate the ability to listen to those they want to liberate, hear how they formulate their aspirations and question self-reflexively whether they have any suggestions for helping the oppressed to liberate themselves.
- b. Choose political instrumentality where the elite thinkers step aside and give the “fora of political expression” to the ordinary and to the lowliest.

Harsh Mander

- a. The battle against inequality and injustice can be fought in many ways; love, compassion, non-violence, rights and dignity are as powerful an expression as protest marches and battles on the street.

Avinash Kumar

- a. Creation of a common platform for rights advocates for developing a language of universal rights that will provide an overarching framework for social movement campaigns in the context of the prevailing political economy.

Madhuri

- a. Re-examine the crisis of hunger and the violent expropriation by local and global capital that lead to it.
- b. Avoid approaching hunger in a top-down fashion and understand why the complex survival networks of the marginalized are no longer working.
- c. View people not as “beneficiaries” but members of communities with distinctive characteristics that define them socially, culturally and economically.

Abbreviations

AAM	Action Against Malnutrition
AHS	Annual Health Survey
ANC	Ante Natal Care
ANM	Auxiliary Nurse and Midwife
AP	Andhra Pradesh
APL	Above Poverty Line
ASHA	Accredited Social Health Activist
ASHA	Alliance for Sustainable and Holistic Agriculture
AWC	Angan Wari Centre
BGVS	Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samithi
BMI	Body Mass Index
BMN	Basic Minimum Needs
BPL	Below Poverty Line
CAG	Comptroller & Auditor General
CBHI	Central Bureau of Health Intelligence
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CDPO	Child Development Program Officer
CHC	Community Health Centers
CIG	Common Income Generation
CINI	Child In Need Institute
CMAM	Community Management of Acute Malnutrition
CRP	Community Resource Person
CS	Chief Secretaries
CSE	Centre for Science and Environment
CSMCH	Centre of Social Medicine and Community Health
CSO	Central Statistical Organization
DDS	Deccan Development Society
DFID	Department for International Development
DLHS	District Level Health Survey
DPCE	Daily Per Capita Expenditure
DSS	Decision Support System
EPW	Economic and Political Weekly
ESI	Employees State Insurance

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FCI	Food Corporation of India
FCRA	Foreign Contribution Regulation Act
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FNHD	Fixed Nutrition and Health Day
FS	Food Security
FSA	Food Security Act
FYP	Five Year Plan
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GO	Government Orders
GoM	Group of Ministers
HRLN	Human Rights Law Network
HUNGaMA	Hunger and Malnutrition
IAMR	Institute of Applied Manpower Research
IATP	Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
ICAR	Indian Council of Agricultural Research
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Services
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
IFA	Iron Folic Acid
IKP	Indira Kranti Patham
ILC	Indian Labour Conference
IMR	Infant Mortality Rate
INCLIN	International Clinical Epidemiology Network
IPR	Intellectual Property Right
IYCF	Infant and Young Child Feeding
JASHAN	Jharkhand Alliance for Health & Nutrition
JE	Japanese Encephalitis
JNU	Jawaharlal Nehru University
JSA	Jan Swasthya Abhiyan
LANSA	Leveraging Agriculture for Nutrition in South Asia
LBW	Low Birth Weight
LLIN	Long Lasting Insecticidal Nets
MD	Mission Director
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MDM	Mid Day Meal

MFC	Medico-Friends Circle
MoRD	Ministry of Rural Development's
MP	Madhya Pradesh
MSP	Minimum Support Price
MTC	Malnutrition Treatment Centers
MUAC	Mid Upper Arm Circumference
NAC	National Advisory Council
NAPM	National Association of People's Movements
NCPDR	National Commission for the Protection of Child Right
NDCC	Nutrition Day Care Centre
NES	Nutrition Security Evaluation
NFHS	National Family Health Survey
NFSB	National Food Security Bill
NGOs	Non Governmental Organisations
NIMB	National Nutrition Monitoring Bureau
NIN	National Institute of Nutrition
NNMB	National Nutrition Monitoring Bureau
NRC	Nutrition Rehabilitation Center
NREGA	National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
NRHM	National Rural Health Mission
NRLM	National Rural Livelihood Mission
NSS	National Sample Survey
NSSO	National Sample Survey Organisation
OBC	Other Backward Castes
OC	Other Caste
ORS	Oral Rehydration Salt
PC	Planning Commission
PDS	Public Distribution System
PHC	Primary Health Center
PHRN	Public Health Resource Network
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
PNC	Pre Natal Care
POSCO	Pohang Iron and Steel Company
PPT	Power Point
PUCL	People's Union for Civil Liberties
RCH	Reproductive and Child Health

RGSEAG	Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for the Empowerment of Adolescent Girls
RtF	Right to Food
RtI	Right to Information
SADED	South Asian Dialogue on Ecological Democracy
SAM	Severe Acute Malnutrition
SC	Scheduled Caste
SCSP	Scheduled Caste Sub Plan
SDTT	Sir Dorabji Tata Trust
SECC	Socio-Economic and Caste Census
SERP	Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty
SHG	Self Help Group
SOCHURSOD	Society for Human Rights and Social Development
SOFI	State of Food Insecurity
SRS	Sample Registration System
ST	Scheduled Tribe
UID	Unique Identity
UN	United Nations
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UP	Uttar Pradesh
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VCDC	Village Child Development Centres
VHND	Village Health and Nutrition Day
VO	Village Organisation
WCD	Women and Child Development
WHO	World Health Organization
WHZ	Weight for Height Z_Score
WNTA	Wada Na Todo Abhiyan
WSF	World Social Forum
WTO	World Trade Organisation

Inaugural Session

Chair: Prof. Imrana Qadeer

Ritu Priya
Harsh Mander
Uma Shankari

Introduction to the Policy Consultation

Ritu Priya

Many of the participants present here were also present for the discussion and workshop on Developing Tools for Early Identification of Acute Hunger for Effective Administrative Action, which was held in May 2010 and was organized by the Centre of Social Medicine and Community Health, JNU; South Asian Dialogues on Ecological Democracy (SADED)-CSDS, the Supreme Court Commissioner's Office and the Centre for Equity Studies (CES). The present consultation has been organised by Centre of Social Medicine and Community Health (JNU) in collaboration with Oxfam India, Public Health Resource Network (PHRN), Center for Equity Studies (CES) and SADED.

Why 'Tracking Hunger and Malnutrition for Food and Nutritional Security' is important at this point, is because we want to know about the ongoing public debate and concerns of policy makers with regard to this issue; the public debate which the Right to Food Campaign, the Supreme Court Judgments and the Office of the Special Commissioners to the Supreme Court on Hunger have initiated and which has been spearheading a lot of the monitoring of the programs related to food in the country. Despite all the civil society action, the movement groups, the National Advisory Council (NAC) and its efforts in developing the Bill which is now placed before Parliament, there seem to be a lot of contentious issues both in terms of the magnitude of the problem of hunger and malnutrition, the dimensions of the problem, how to view the nature of the problem, the determinants and the kinds of strategies and efforts that need to be made. And all of these issues are backed by a history of the way planned development has happened since independence, as well as by using arguments that nutrition science and public health nutrition seem to be providing for both sides of the debate, or rather just one side of the debate really.

If we briefly go into what planned development, in terms of improving nutrition and nutritional status of the people of the country, has done since independence we must look at the five-year plans. In the plans, we see a very clear movement starting with the first and second five-year plans in their viewing of agriculture as 'the' way to deal with nutritional problems. We move to the third plan, looking at the need for supplementary feeding; with focus on education of mothers for improving nutrition so it is the knowledge of mothers which is the problem, we need to promote kitchen gardens and agriculture becomes more of an economic activity.

And that shift continues down the line to the point where instead of basic food and staples, micro-nutrients start being viewed as 'the' major problem of malnutrition in the country and you have something called 'hidden hunger' in that view. We then move to over-nutrition becoming an issue. If we look at the fifth and sixth plans, we start finding the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), and so on. That's when green revolution had also come in and changed the nature of Indian agriculture completely. The link between agriculture, food production systems, and the local ecology and diet seems to be broken somewhere; green revolution completely breaks that by food grain production happening and being promoted in certain parts of the country, and the products being distributed to the rest of the country as a means of addressing the issue of nutrition.

The public distribution system (PDS), minimum needs programme, ICDS all of these interventions clearly move us into supplementary feeding, and provision of subsidized food as the answer. Where does this food come from? By the green revolution vision, it was to come from farmers in certain parts of the country. But gradually we have now moved to a stage where that logical step further has gone on and now the break between agriculture, people's own agency in producing and procuring food and the state's role in that, have moved to saying now we can actually do away with looking at agriculture as PDS being supported by farmers and agriculture, we can now move to cash transfers and thereby completely break the link between production and procurement and then distribution of food. This, of course, has happened in the 1990s when we moved from a welfare state to a market-led state and planning.

Then we can see how the movement is facilitated by nutritional science and public health nutrition; it is nutritionists, it is pediatricians, it is public health experts who envisage micro-nutrient supplies as the answer today. They do not look at the issue of loss of diversity of foods in the diet for example

as 'the' issue; micro-nutrients as sachets and sprinklers are being offered as the solution to micronutrient deficiencies. The move by green revolution to only two food grains instead of the multitude of grains that were traditionally grown and used across the country, a decrease in access to the naturally available foods and the production of these other foods and their access or utilisation as food by the people who are actually producing them are ignored as causes of the basic deficiencies in access to food and the accompanying micro-nutrient deficiencies.

Hence so, this move is what has brought about a break in the way the policies are now addressing food entitlements on the one hand and agriculture on the other, as two completely dichotomous issues. And then addressing that, people who are working on the ground, civil society groups, are also getting caught in this bind because they see the gravity of the situation in terms of malnutrition, hunger, lack of food and starvation deaths, and therefore the prime issue becomes firefighting that to ensure that the state at least acknowledges its responsibility of dealing with hunger. And ensuring that at least the poor, the most vulnerable, children and pregnant women get their entitlements and those are codified into a legal instrument as the Food Security Bill.

On the other hand are people who are looking at agriculture as an area which is losing out, where the farmers' livelihood and work is not to be valued any longer as a society. Devaluing that is obviously leading to farmers committing suicide and people moving out of agriculture completely and so on. Therefore addressing these issues becomes two different sets of civil society action and activity.

Looking at it from a holistic public health perspective, we at the Centre would see it as something which has to be looked at as a continuity, as a whole which could be seen really as two ends of this continuum, where agriculture and food production provide food, work and the livelihoods, which allow people to access the food on one hand. On the other, it also creates the work patterns, whether for women or for mothers, and therefore the impact on childcare and nutrition and so on.

Therefore these developments in the food production system are also what very clearly link to access to food and the lack of access to food in the process. That is why this two-day workshop structure where we have looked at the whole spectrum of issues, from food deficiencies, responses of the state to the problem, to those of the food production system and its impact on health and nutrition. It does mean that the spectrum is therefore going to be foregrounded by some issues which are very much part of this policy discussion but we may not be able to go into the depth of each one of them. What we trying to look at is the linkages and how the linkages are getting made. What the process from the first plan up to now the twelfth plan has done is: one, completely medicalised nutrition as an issue; two, it has completely removed people's agency in any form in food gathering, in food production, in its access and so on; and three, it has centralized these and brought them completely under two sets of technologies - medical technology on one hand, and agricultural technology on the other.

How do we now take these issues forward in the policy debate within the country? What does the twelfth plan allow for in its document because the government and the Planning Commission have had to retract on some of the things they had planned earlier? It had made some concessions to various civil society actions and to the democratic demands of an electorate. So how can we identify those and use them in the coming five years?

The MDGs are now, in 2015, supposed to be coming to an end, including one of them which was moving people out of poverty, hunger and malnutrition. With the international discussion presently focused on setting the post-2015 international development agenda, can this workshop generate inputs for that debate? How would we see inputs in that for nutrition and food security, what are the issues that need to be highlighted there?

So this is how we propose to spend these two days of discussion looking at the policy issues. One issue which got centrally raised in the last workshop, and is very central to what we see as crucial for development (and the history of the past few years has also shown that) is the role of civil society and polity in moving this agenda forward and the perspectives that it will take which can be discussed in the final session.

So we will begin now with the first session...

Starvation, Entitlements and the National Food Security Bill

Harsh Mander

India, as we all know, is a country of enormous wealth and endemic hunger. It is one of the fastest growing economies of the world and yet every second child in India is malnourished. Every third malnourished child in the world is Indian. If we look at our policy and programmatic responses over the last decade, they have had a very peripheral, minimal impact on hunger and starvation. It's a problem which seems completely intractable. In the works of Amartya Sen on famines, one of the most influential observations is the belief that India has been able to overcome famines largely as a result of its democratic framework. And yet the puzzling paradox is that while democracy has been successful in ending famines, it has been singularly unsuccessful in preventing individual endemic starvation and enormous levels of malnutrition. So where do we go from here as a country?

When speaking about this issue, I want to start with a plea that this should not be a detached, dispassionate discussion, about the over 200 million people who sleep hungry almost every night. Over the years of having witnessed and spoken to people living with hunger, with a kind of detachment which is drawn from technical scholarship – as economists, planners and nutritionists, I just want to underline that our discourse on hunger should be informed by what it means to *live* with involuntary hunger and the intense human suffering this entails. I want us to reflect on how millions of people cope with the fact that they know that there is no food for them and for the ones they love and for those who are dependent on them- and with the daily realization that there is nothing that they can do about this.

Dealing with Endemic Hunger

In a study undertaken by the Centre for Equity Studies, we tried to understand how people live with hunger. We found three broad kinds of ways in which people deal with endemic hunger.

First is that they teach their bodies to live with less and less food. They go down from three meals to two, and from two to one, until they are able to battle their craving for food.

Second is that they resort to what I call 'pseudo foods', which are things that are available in the environment free of cost to fill their stomach, but which have zero nutrition and can even be poisonous at times. They obtain foods like mango kernels, tubers, grasses, and starch water strained out after cooking rice, by begging from the neighbors.

The third way of coping is a very broad category which I call making desperate choices - like putting oneself or one's children into bondage, sending one's children out to work, distress migration, selling off one's child. I had gone to a family where the mother said, "I loved my child so much that I sold her, why don't you understand?"

The Indian Paradox of Hunger and Malnutrition

This avoidable human suffering is not something that can be described in statistics. We need to recognize the enormity of this and then the fact that it persists in an India of rapidly growing wealth, an India which still produces enough food to feed all its people, and an India having a functioning democracy. And paradoxically, a government which does a lot for people in terms of programmes, right from the time that you are born to the time that you die in terms of schemes and programmes like pregnant mothers' entitlements, breast feeding support, ICDS (integrated child development services) up to the age of six, mid-day meal, PDS, MNREGA, pensions, insurance, etc. India presents the most complex paradox in terms of persistence of hunger, because countries which are much poorer than us, which do not produce much food, donot have functioning democracies and where states have much lower capacities, have done much better than us in addressing hunger and starvation. Hence scholars and activists need to understand what are the barriers resulting in the stubbornness of persistent malnutrition and hunger and what is the suffering that comes from it.

At the Heart, an Unequal Society

I believe that the answers to this paradox lie partly in the economic policies that we have adopted. It is also a spectacular failure of governance and government in its accountability to the poor. But the answers to the puzzle probably also lie deeply embedded in the enormous inequalities and the layers of these inequalities. We are historically one of the most unequal societies, but more importantly, we are culturally most comfortable with our inequalities. I believe that the battle against hunger can only be won when we battle both inequality and indifference. That is where my convictions lie.

Enacting a Right to Food Law

But then let us move on to how we can make the state more accountable through enacting a right to food law. It is the protracted years of our engagement with the case in the Supreme Court, which tried to expand creatively the Constitutional right to life, and which taught us about the contours of the right to food. All of us are familiar with the fact that it is the civil and political rights which are guaranteed in the Constitution, and socio-economic rights were placed as not legally binding but as morally binding duties of the state in the chapter on Directive Principles. But it is very interesting that Article 21 or the fundamental right to life was earlier envisaged as a negative right, to protect your life against state intrusion, which means that your life and liberty cannot be taken away or breached by the state without due legal process. It is now being creatively seen by our courts, and increasingly through the rights-based legislation that we are witnessing in this century, as a positive fundamental right to life, which not only requires the state not to encroach on that life, but it also creates positive obligation for the state to provide that which is necessary for a life and a life with dignity. And that is where legal rights to food, health, shelter and other social determinants come in.

Right to Food versus Right to Freedom

The second half of the twentieth century saw extremely sterile debates globally about two kinds of rights. One kind of rights is called civil and political rights, which are the rights of liberty, free speech and expression, to organize and so on; these are the kinds of rights that are placed in our Constitution as fundamental rights. The other sets of rights are rights to food, education, health care, shelter and social security. One set of political systems said that they can guarantee civil and political rights but cannot guarantee socio-economic rights. The other political system, which did not speak about rights, guaranteed all its citizens food, health care, education and shelter, and even provided this substantially, but this was at the cost that they could not guarantee political freedom. So in a sense human beings were always told that you have an utterly unreasonable choice, 'either choose bread or freedom; but you can't have both'.

There is a question I would like to ask the audience. Many of us would assume that a hungry person would choose bread over freedom. But a short story by O. Henry describes it in a different way. The question is, suppose it was a cold winter night in Delhi and I was freezing to death and I wanted to find a way to be guaranteed food and shelter and protection from the extremes of the climate for the rest of my life by the state, how would I do it? The most intelligent way would be to go out and kill someone. Confess your crime and hopefully you will not get hung, only get life imprisonment. But the fact that we don't make this choice underlines for me that I want my bread but I also want my freedom. I think that the big political battle in the twenty-first century would be to build a political system which guarantees you both. That is where I would place our efforts to build a right to food law. And I think however weak the law now before the Parliament, we will make all efforts to make it strong. But the fact that we all have even reached here collectively is very important, as it is a means of securing bread with freedom.

Food Security, Food Rights and Food Sovereignty

There have been various debates about the various contours of the law currently before Parliament. One of the important questions is whether it is enough to have a law which guarantees the provision of food, or whether it should be of ensuring the *production* of food?

In national literature there are three concepts that we often get confused with by erroneously talking about these inter-changeably- food security, food rights and food sovereignty - and these are actually related but distinct. Food security is about the availability of the food, and physical, social and economic access to food. The notion of food sovereignty talks about the exercise of effective control of local communities over their food production. The notion of food right is about the socio-economic right to food and talks about duties and the state as the duty bearer. I understand that the food rights discourse has been different from food sovereignty and food security discourse: as one which creates legal duties on the state to secure the provision of food or the means to access to food for all those who have food insecurity. This provisioning of food will be done in three kinds of ways, through subsidized food grains by the PDS; secondly by provisioning of cooked meals through ICDS and community kitchens; and thirdly through unconditional cash transfers like benefits for pregnant mothers, and old age pensions. This law makes legal entitlements for states to provision food and for the means to provide food, so as to enable leading an active and healthy life. It deals with all these but it does not deal with the issues of food production. The issue of food production needs a separate legal and policy framework in my opinion and we need to talk about it to complete the whole picture.

Instrumentation of Rights: Naming the Vulnerable Populations

There were many debates during the formulation of the bill till now and most of the debates have disproportionately focused on the Public Distribution System. I think this is an important part of food provisioning, but not all of it; and other aspects deserve equal scrutiny and reflection. Debates around the PDS have been universal versus targets, what kinds of quantum and inclusions, issues of coverage, and now on issues of quantity. But other important parts of the bill focus on children for reasons of malnutrition occurring irreversibly in children; the rights of children by making ICDS a universal right; support to breast feeding; and right to school meals- but what about children not in schools? Then it's about women and largely in the reproductive age group and beyond, then vulnerable groups like migrants, homeless, people living with HIV/AIDS, TB and other debilitating ailments, aged, disabled and so on.

Creating a Normative Framework for Legalization

Talking about starvation, the law needs to make legal duties for the state in relation to starvation. As Commissioners to the Supreme Court, we prepared a starvation protocol and even submitted it to the Supreme Court but the Court has not yet passed final orders on this. Most of this has got knocked out of the Food Bill along the way. We should also focus on defending children's and women's right to food, destitute feeding, migrants, and the aged and so on, and the duties of the state in relation to starvation. But remember also that this law creates a right for food provision and needs a complementary legal framework for food production.

Lastly, even if a law comes through Parliament would it end hunger, this is something that I am often asked? Clearly, it will not end hunger but it will create instruments in the hands of those who are vulnerable to hunger to demand accountability from the state. Secondly, it would create a normative framework, which would say that we do not morally accept this as a people, and that is why we need a right to food law, and we need it now and comprehensively.

Thank you.

Agriculture, Ecology and Nutrition Linkages

Uma Shankari

Good morning friends, thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to participate in this seminar. First of all, I want to say that although I am from the so-called civil society, always ready to criticize whatever the government does, I have great respect for the much maligned bureaucrats. They have been designing the laws relating to food security, the public distribution system (PDS), the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), and so on, and even more importantly, they deliver these services to such a huge population. But then we must also think of some long-term issues, and being a farmer, I often ask myself where are we going about food security?

I want to say that we are often forgetting that agriculture is about food. Even farmers have forgotten that. Even farmers think that agriculture is about money. The consumers, people who are eating three meals a day, especially as they are becoming more and more urbanized, when they eat, they are not thinking about where it is coming from, they are thinking food comes from the shops. They forget that somebody has to grow this food.

Today I want to bring your attention to a very small place where I am living since the last 25-30 years doing farming and observing and dialoging about food and agriculture, but I am sure if there are farmers in this audience, they would say, "yes this is what is happening in my place too."

This is a place which is not a very well water-endowed kind of place. It is 50 kms from Tirupati in Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh. There are many such places in India which are not well water-endowed. Agriculture always has to be seen along with water. Water and agriculture are like lovers, couples, some people may like a fat spouse, some people may like a slim spouse, but no plant can live without water and soil moisture, and low rainfall regions have developed/evolved their own ways of making enough food with lean water regimes, and that is the kind of place from where I come, and there are many such places in India.

Farmers and Food Purchase

An important thing to remember in this context is that farmers are very reluctant to buy food and eat. That's what I have noticed. If they have a cow and it goes dry, they would rather go without milk than go and buy food. They are so used to growing their own food, rather than buying food that there has always been a great reluctance to buy and it continues to be so. It is kind of you know, "how can you go and buy food?" Therefore, they keep adjusting with whatever is there. If there is a lot, they will eat more; if there is less, they will eat less. If there is only one kind of thing available, then they will make do with that. Earlier, and even now, cash is meant to be spent on luxuries, on needs which cannot be fulfilled locally, like an allopathic doctor, English-medium education, college fees, a whole lot of plastic, aluminum, steel-ware, furniture, machinery, foot-wear, clothes, mobile phones, motor bikes, etc. The only exception to this rule nowadays I find is the meat on Sundays. In our place at least, it is readily bought and eaten on Sundays and festivals, there is a sense of well-being attached to meat and sweets. A lot of sweet shops have come up in the last one or two decades. Meat and sweets are seen as a small luxury we can afford to buy now and then, on some occasions. I find that even if the son is earning comfortably, money would be saved to build a house, perform marriages, to buy gold or for meeting health emergencies, but not much would be spent on food.

I would divide the time span of let's say 50-100 years into three periods, one would be what I call 'the bullock period'- the pre-electric pumpset up to 1970; and the second period is 'the borewell period', and the third period is 'the NREGA period'.

'BULLOCK PERIOD'

I find that in the pre-electric-pumpset period up to 1970, people were always reporting plenty of water in ponds, tanks, lakes, wells, fields, and soil. Wells supplemented surface irrigation and wells had water at 30-50 feet below the ground level. Although only one-third of the land got assured irrigation to grow wet crops like paddy and sugarcane, there was enough soil moisture to give good yield even in rain-fed crops. Therefore, a very wide variety of crops were grown in both wet and dry land: paddy, sugarcane, banana,

coconut and vegetables under assured irrigation, through tanks and wells, but cereals like *jowar*, *bajra*, *ragi*, maize and fox tail millet; a whole variety of pulses, some of them you may not have even seen today like broad-bean in which you eat only the seed, cowpea, horse gram, green gram, black gram, and oilseeds were mostly in our place; peanut and sesame; and a whole lot of vegetables including *paan*, i.e., betel (people were addicted to it) and tobacco in small quantities would be grown. And a whole lot of freely available green leaves, fruits and berries from the surrounding uncultivated neighborhood areas. Farmers were always experimenting. They even experimented with beetroot, cabbage, carrot, cauliflower and vegetables. Herbs and spices - chilies, onions, garlic, turmeric, ginger, betel leaves and tobacco were also grown for home consumption. Milk was a much valued food and every family had cows, bullocks and buffaloes - buffaloes especially for milk, but cows and bullocks were always there, and since there was no milk-marketing outlet at that time, all the milk was consumed locally as milk or as buttermilk. Meat was a highly preferred food, and sheep were raised, both for their dung as well as for meat; sheep manure was highly valued and sheep meat was highly appreciated during special occasions.

I remember the inauguration of the school in our village Dalitwada meant that the sheep was 'cut' in my house, which is actually an upper caste house, and the whole village was fed. Poultry were raised for eggs and meat. By all the above I just want to tell you about the range of foods available, and what was considered valuable. I mean nobody thought that you have to spend money to have food. If somebody visited you, you just had to go and 'cut' your own chicken and feed, or if there were a lot of people, or if there was a festival, 'cut' your sheep. So poultry was raised for eggs and meat, fish was available for free in paddy fields, not only in ponds or lakes, but in paddy fields, and the rule was that in the morning time up to lunch, whatever fish was available, you put in a pot and that was for the owner, and from afternoon time, after lunch, whatever fish was available, it was for the workers. Even Dalit agricultural workers had bullocks, sheep and poultry and they are the only ones to eat beef and they ate beef quite frequently. Even till 1980s, beef was Rs. 5 a kilo and chicken or poultry and mutton would be something like Rs. 60-Rs. 80 a kilo. But today, they are both priced more or less same, just ten rupees difference. So they have to buy beef at a fairly high cost, because people keep cows in much reduced numbers, bullock keeping has practically disappeared. Apart from this, there were wild pigs, deer and rabbit meat which were hunted; and specific communities and families ate specific meats; like the caste of bangle sellers ate cat meat, and the tribals ate birds, and some Dalit families ate field rats. My worker once told me "field rat is as good as mutton you know." There is termite during monsoon, and many families ate mushrooms during rainy season. So there was a large range of foods available and grown and since most of it never had any market outlets, they were all consumed locally.

No shortage of Water, Work and Workers

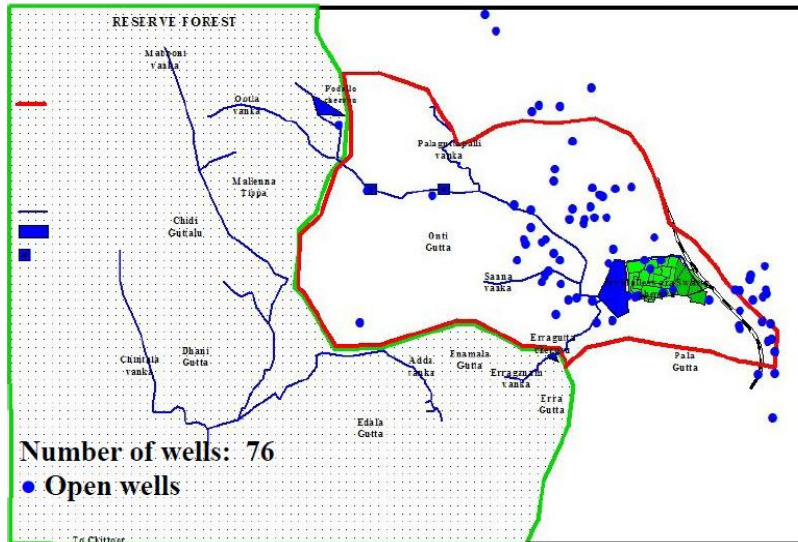
There was year-round cropping, starting from June to the following June, there was no spare time left. All the time there was something or the other coming up, something either had to be planted, or was ready for harvesting, something had to be weeded, so continuous work. And women, their hands were very full, I always found them working, in fact, they did not have time to cook and eat, they had so much work. And all the food processing was done by the women, separating the edible portion from the chaff, cleaning, sun drying... and cooking is actually food processing. After all you can't eat paddy or brinjal straight from the plant; you have to make it into rice, then you have to make it into 'food'.

So cooking or this kind of food processing was being done thrice a day and throughout the year with no holidays for women. So there was both job employment for people who were landless and for people with land there was more than enough work. I would find them working all the time, the only difference was that they were not rushing around like in the city, but they were sort of working at a leisurely pace, but all the time working. So practically everything was consumed and shared locally, very little was sold and whatever cash came in, it was all tucked away as gold to be encashed for meeting emergencies and as a status symbol.

'BOREWELL PERIOD':

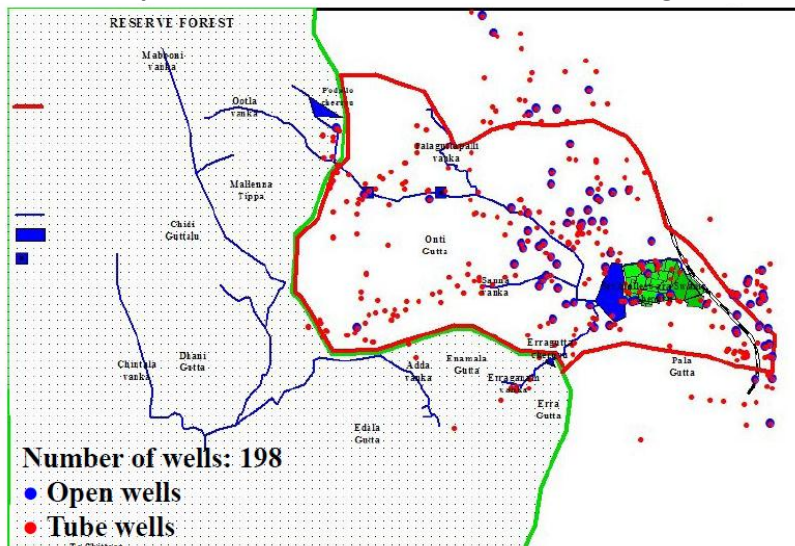
I just want to show you one or two slides about how the water situation changed. So this is up to 1970s - there were many wells, sustainable water usage and water was collected through the-water-lifting devices drawn by bullocks.

Up to 1970's: Sustainable Water Usage



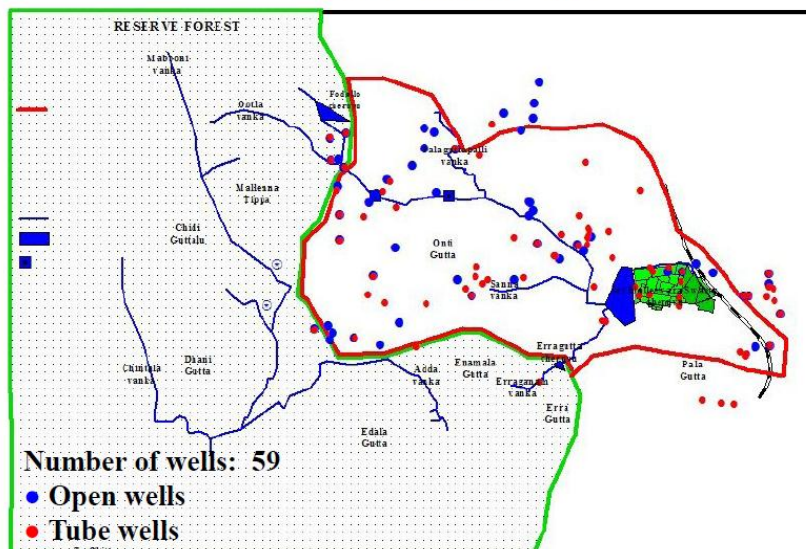
During 1980s and 1990s, how many borewells have come up, before that and after that.

Up to 1980s and 1990s: Excessive Water Usage



And after we went through the borewell period, this is how the water situation became in 2002.

Since 2002: Water Crisis



All those borewells which were there during this time, which is about 200, came down to again 59 functioning wells. So this is the period when the two developments took place: 1) the revolutionary technology to lift water, which was truly and literally a watershed for the village; 2) the 1970s not only witnessed the electrification of the pumpset, but also introduced the concept of cropping for cash. In our area sugarcane, milk, meat and mango became the main cash crops. From then onwards, water starting depleting gradually but surely. The main thing is that the discharge of ground water became more than the recharge. Our area, geologically, is called a 'hard-rock' region in which water does not go on percolating. Below a certain level, the water actually comes up because there is a layer of hard rock, into which it cannot percolate easily. But during the borewell period, we were going beyond this permeable region into the hard rock and mining water from pockets of stored water. So from 30 feet, last year somebody drilled to a depth of 700 feet, and still no water. We have gone from 30 feet to 700 feet, it means that we have drilled water twenty times more but then we cannot expect 20 times more rainfall! In fact, if the rain fall is double of what is 'the normal' for that region, there would be floods and breaches.

The amount of unsustainable mining of water we are doing is so absolutely horrific, that even by 2000, a study was saying that in India, food production was 25 percent more through mining of ground water. Some 75 percent of India's agriculture today is dependent upon ground water irrigation and at least 25-35 percent is through unsustainable mining of water.

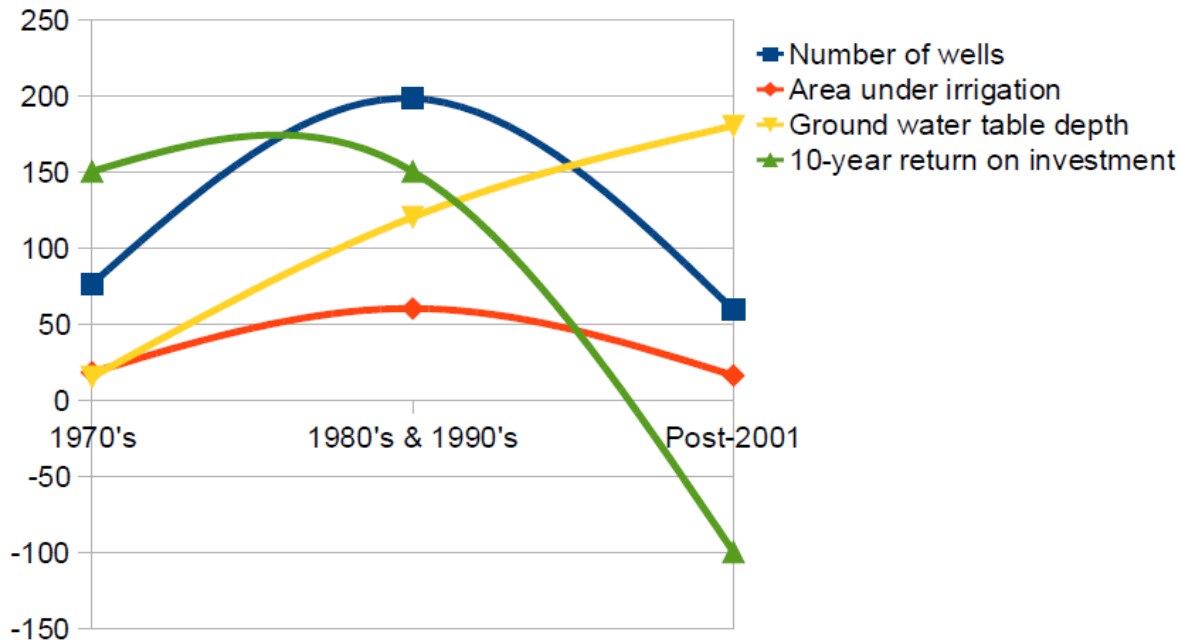
Shift to Cash Crops

Why is it happening? Because farmers have found that the only way to get money is to grow assured irrigated crops and through the so-called cash crops, the government has been repeatedly, not only government, I mean all the experts, all the economists, have been urging us to grow cash crops and to shift to horticulture, and perennial tree crops, not only in the water-limited regions, but even in places where water is a plenty - like in Punjab and Haryana. When you shift from food crops to perennial tree crops, say like mango or eucalyptus or subabul plantations, then there is no employment throughout the year. There is no work. The farmers are also feeling that we are facing year on year losses growing food crops, the workers are also becoming bold and demanding their rights, they are no more subordinate and subservient, so let's put plantation crops. So to avoid workers, they are doing plantation crops but the fact is that agricultural workers cannot work on hungry stomachs, so the more the farmers avoid labour intensive crops, the faster the workers are disappearing. There's an acute shortage of workers to grow all these crops – it is a vicious cycle.

This is another thing that people do not understand: that agriculture is a very human enterprise. You can have forests for instance without human intervention; they are best left alone. Nature will take care of them, but agriculture is all about human attention and human effort - seed selection, understanding the soil, crop mixes, harvesting at the right time, right way of storing the produce so that spoilage is minimal, and so on – the human agency of the farmer is extremely important; and the age-old indigenous traditions in agriculture if not preserved, would be like re-inventing the wheel.

Coming back to water, you can see the reduction of water for agriculture over the decade 1990-2000 in this slide.

Water and Agriculture Over the Decades



The number of wells has come down. Area under irrigation actually has simply stagnated and the ten-year return on investment has come down drastically. So this is the story from 1970 to now.

'The NREGA Period':

And then 2006 onwards, I think the NREGA came later than sooner. It should have come much earlier because mostly the agricultural workers are from Dalit families and they definitely needed a much higher wage. But because the farmers' income was coming down, there was this great reluctance and there was a lot of antagonism to NREGA. It is quite strange, actually it's quite mixed, the small and marginal farmers from upper castes are in fact finding that the NREGA is another escape route for losses in farming and they are doubling up as farmers as well as workers. Dalit NREGA workers also have their own small bits of land and they also do farming. But NREGA gives work only for about 20 to 40 days in a year, and that too not for everyone. In the meantime, workers are going as contract labourers, navigating to places where there is assured irrigation and a better income. Regions like ours, these so-called dry regions, they are becoming drier, they are having plantation crops and no work, and therefore, no workers.

So actually what is happening now is people are becoming poorer. In our village everybody has taken a white card, there is nobody without one, except me. So they are all becoming dependent on the PDS more and more. The PDS supplies a quota of about ten days of rice, and nowadays, in AP, they are also supplying some small amount of pulses and oil. In fact, as Harsh was saying, people are adjusting to what their rations can give, and whatever they are buying they are keeping it to the absolute minimum. So they buy rice, and little else, except on Sundays and festivals they go and buy meat for the sense of well-being. But on other days, they adjust with whatever is available free locally like the greens and so on. And all those food items which they were growing have actually disappeared.

As for Andhra Pradesh, macro-data about nutrition, I don't want to go into too much detail, except that anemia among women has actually increased from half in 2000 to two-third in 2005-2006. So in just about five or six years, it has actually grown from half the population to two-third, sort of alarming!

I want to talk about what questions are being thrown up by my experience and what the data has shown. As a farmer, should I grow or should I buy food? Farming has become so unviable because

cost of cultivation is always higher than returns resulting in year on year losses; so many farmers feel that you actually save money by keeping land fallow and buying the food rather than growing it.

Youth Exodus from Farms and Farming

Not only are the returns less, but farming is something you cannot do alone because you would need workers. These would be either your family members, or workers which you would have to hire. What is also happening is that due to year on year losses in agriculture, farmers feel there is no future in agriculture and they are educating their children with a vengeance. Today in my village, there is nobody below 40 years of age. All the children have gone to residential schools, even the ten-year-olds.

I just want to conclude by flagging some issues. From self-grown to purchased food - even in the best PDS scenario or the ICDS -they are all doing their bit, and in AP, people are sensitized enough to demand better services. Today wages are supposed to be much better even in real terms, but can they provide enough food and nutrition, can they play the market in such a way that they can fulfill the need for this kind of nutritious food by buying?

Decline in Women's Earnings

Women, I find, are losing both on employment and on cash. If food crops are not grown locally, they neither have employment nor cash nor food, and increasingly, this food processing is also being done by machinery and the mills. For instance today, all of them are buying parachute coconut oil brand. So actually why should coconut oil be made by the Maricos This means a case for bringing food processing into local areas and especially into the hands of women- which means new trainings in handling machinery, but also in how to manage these enterprises, how to cooperate and work collectively and so on.

Decline in Agricultural Workforce

The growth of workforce in the agricultural sector has predictably declined in AP from 2.28 to 1.32 but the rate of growth in employment in non-agricultural sectors has also declined from 3.8 to 0.47. So all these people who are coming out of agriculture, are they really getting absorbed in non-agricultural occupations? That is something we need to think about.

At the national level, shortages of pulses and oil are a well-known fact, but if this trend continues, would we become a net importer of food? Many countries which have taken to export-oriented growth have become net importers of food. Are we moving towards the same situation? Today actually 250 million tonnes of food grains are quite a consolation but then can this continue with land being diverted for non-agricultural purposes, agricultural workers fleeing to cities, and water shortage becoming worse than before?

There is a view that areas which are suffering from water shortage should use their scant water resources for industry and domestic purposes, rather than for growing food, which takes up on an average 1,000 liters to produce one kg of food. In fact, it is rapidly happening even in rural areas. Today, farmers in our village are finding it more profitable to sell water for drinking purpose for construction, rather than for growing food. And there is no end to selling water.

Food Vs. Cash Support

Early on, when we had just moved to the village, people used to keep coming to us for support and help for cash, and our *tauji*, told us that whenever anybody comes and asks for cash, we should instead- give food plenty of food, after all how much can they eat? They will eat double of what they are used to eating but do not give cash because there is no end to cash. So that is a reminder to us that today we might be thinking of cash support by the government but then you know, there is no end to cash. The more cash support you give, I think we will just need a lot more printing presses! You never know, every village may start having a printing press to print currency notes.

I just want to stop here; there are also other issues- like India has become a very highly water-scarce country with very high population densities. Can we even move population to less water-scarce

areas rather than import food? Should this become a part of WTO negotiations that people also can be moved, not just trade in goods and services?

Some things to think of for the future but in the short-term, even as the bureaucrats are trying to come up with the best legislation and delivery systems on food security - we need to think about how long-term self-sufficiency and food security should be built through agriculture and that cannot be done by starving the farmers.

Thank you very much.

Thank you Uma, I think that was very enriching. We would love to hear more except that I have to keep some time limit. So, I thank both the presenters. Well, we talked of many things and we know that this seminar is addressing an area which is full of contradictions and conflicts. So you have economists telling us that there is no poverty and the others telling us that there is excessive poverty. The economists keep expanding their domains so they are also now telling us that there is no malnutrition and that it is not a big problem.

There are policy makers, who are on one hand telling us we are ashamed of the state of affairs of child malnutrition in this country and then, on the other hand, you have legislation which simply forgets children. So essentially, what I think was said by Harsh is that the code is the class and caste structure of our society and it's our comfort with it which makes us forget, and the long-term trend in academia is that we're expropriating people's experiences, we're expropriating their knowledge and we're reconstructing it in a way that it supports the neo-liberal development in this country, the results of which you have just now heard, and this is from Andhra Pradesh. So you can imagine what is happening in the other states.

So all I would say is that I hope that in the discussions that follow, we will not only focus on what is to be done in the short-term, because if you remember ICDS, it came in the 1970s as a short-term strategy and we had hoped that over the next twenty or forty years, whatever the time, you know the overall development will take over and this programme will become unnecessary, and today you are fighting for its existence. So please remember, you are not to create yet another strategy in the hope that this is a short-term strategy to take care of the emergency situation and let it get so completely isolated from the larger developmental processes. I think it is a major challenge, so I wish us best of luck for the next two days.

Session One

**Methods of Identification,
Measuring and Tracking Hunger**

Chair: Dr. Veena Shatrugna

Ashwin Parulkar and Ankita Aggarwal
Vikas Bajpai
Dipa Sinha
Vandana Prasad
Nalini Visvanathan
K.K.Pal
Ritu Priya

Identifying Starvation Deaths By Jan Swasthya Abhiyan (JSA)-Commissioner's Office Methodology and Tracking Families with Starvation Deaths in Three States

Ashwin Parulkar and Ankita Aggarwal

Ankita: Hi, my colleague Ashwin and I will be presenting the study that we did in 2011 on starvation deaths in three states. We will start with the objectives of the study, the methodology, the findings in relation to the causes of the deaths, the mechanisms that were used for coping with the starvation that led to these deaths, the food security of the affected communities since the deaths, and finally the lessons.

The objective of the study was to investigate the reasons why starvation deaths took place – why was it that the family in which the death took place could not prevent it; the community in which these people were could not prevent it; and why the state and state programmes could not prevent the deaths, and what happened to the situation of food security of these affected families and communities since the deaths, and also how the government has responded to these deaths. The study was conducted in three states that have the highest levels of hunger, which are Bihar, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh.

In Bihar, we went to Gaya. In Jharkhand we went to Chatra, Dhanbad and Ranchi, and in Madhya Pradesh we went to Anuppur and Satna. We studied those cases that have received substantial attention either from the media or from government officials, and the state advisors to the Supreme Court Commissioners in the Right to Food Case helped us identify these cases. We spent about three to four days in each case talking at length to the families that had lost a member and other members of the community, to find out why was it that they could not help in avoiding the deaths, and what have been the changes in the situation of hunger and food security since the deaths have taken place. We also spoke to the journalists who have played a role in writing about these deaths and also with government officials about the current situation of food and work related programmes.

I will briefly talk about two of the cases. One was in Banwara village in Gaya where three women of different generations died in the same household within a span of 24 hours. The first person to succumb to starvation was Geeta Devi. She was about 40 years old. There was no food in the house for about four days because the NREGA was not functional. The name of this household was not there in the BPL (below poverty line) list because of which they were not getting PDS (public distribution system) rations. A few hours after Geeta Devi died, her daughter-in-law who had given birth to a child, also succumbed to hunger; ICDS (Integrated Child Development Services) in the village was defunct because of which she was not getting take home rations. Because she could not feed her child, her one-day old daughter also died. Then, in Hindiyakalan village in Chatra, 11 people died after they ate *gethi*, which is a poisonous root. Normally the Birhors do eat this root but only after seeping it for 24 hours under running water; to drain out the toxins. But in October 2008 there was so much hunger, again because the PDS wasn't functional and there wasn't any work available and people couldn't even wait for 24 hours to eat *gethi*, and they ate it without detoxifying it and because of food poisoning, 11 people died.

After visiting nine sites of starvation, we have come up with some broad causes of starvation. One of them is the absence of affordable and quality healthcare which results in debilitation due to illnesses such as tuberculosis and filariasis, which are otherwise curable and because of the debilitation, people are unable to work and earn a living. And because there is absence of affordable health care, people also have to spend from their pockets, which is often at the cost of purchasing food. Then we also saw widespread lack of employment opportunities, which worsens in the case of drought because then there is no agricultural work either. And then very poor functioning of NREGA (National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) and we got complaints of all possible forms of irregularities in the programme such as not getting even close to 100 days of work. Those who did

get work did not get the full payment on time. Some people did not even have job cards and bank accounts.

Then, of course, (there was) the denial of entitlements under food schemes. For instance, especially in Bihar, many of the victim households were excluded from the BPL list because of which they were not getting PDS ration. Even those who were getting rations, were not getting it for all the 12 months, and that too not the entire quota. In several places the *anganwadis* were not functioning, because of which children under the age of six years were not getting meals, and pregnant and lactating women and adolescent girls were not getting take home rations. At some places the mid-day meals were not functioning, because of which children of school-going age were also denied meals.

Then in some places the community, other people in the community, were actually not able to help these families because they themselves were in a similar situation of hunger. But in some other places we saw that there were some families, which were better off, but for whatever reason did not help the families that lost members. And when we spoke to these families and asked why it was that they couldn't help, they said that they did not know that there was no food in these houses.

And there was also a general apathy of the government officials. For instance in Anuppur, one person who did not have any food in his house for four days went to a *sarpanch* to ask for some money so that he could borrow food but he was refused. And we also think that these starvation deaths can be traced to historical inequalities because in the case 56 almost all the deaths, the victims were either Dalits or adivasis; these groups have been victims of historical discrimination, because of which they have higher levels of landlessness and lesser access to nutrition, health care, education, and employment, which results in generally higher levels of deprivation amongst them.

So what are the coping mechanisms of starvation? Harsh actually talked about some of them. Of course, the most obvious one is eating lesser quantities of food than what is required for an active and healthy life and reducing physical activity to save energy. Then, compromising on other crucial expenditures such as medicines and eating what he called pseudo foods, which fill your stomach but do not have any nutritional value, for instance, wild leaves and poisonous roots. In fact, in one case in Gaya in a village called JalheBhongia, again the PDS was defunct and the NREGA wasn't functioning. There was hunger in the entire village, which forced some people to exhume a goat and eat its rotten meat which caused vomiting and diarrhoea and because there was no sanitation facility in the village, it contaminated the water, as a result of which 14 people died - of which 10 were children.

Ashwin will now talk about the state responses to these deaths and what lessons we take back.

Ashwin: So just to put the state responses in context, let me just mention that we should talk about the failure of programmes, and it is also important to mention that all these programmes which all of us, or many of us, in this room probably know about – the PDS, NREGA, ICDS, several of the pension programmes - are sanctioned as rights to food on the basis of the Supreme Court case in 2001, which came about because of starvation deaths in Rajasthan. So, we will get an opportunity to hear briefly about state responses, what did the state do, what did the local officials say; but it is important for us to first state that we had briefed these officials about these programmes in the context of the fact that these programmes are rights and that in each of these cases all the programmes were defunct. Most of the official response was that people had died because of illnesses. Now it is true that the proximate cause of death is often illness – tuberculosis, filariasis - but there seemed to be a lack of acknowledgement or awareness of the continuum of malnutrition, starvation, hunger, and how these are in fact interrelated deprivations.

We just want to say about MananBigha, in Gaya District of Bihar where a man by the name of KangreshManjhi died, the official cause (given) was tuberculosis, but he had been malnourished and hungry for quite some time. The local reporter had reported his case five months before his death and that actually led to some local response. He and his family went five days without food because his wife had been bitten by a dog and had to go seek medical care. He died and this story was

reported but the post-mortem showed that because he had a few grains of *khichdi* in his throat that starvation was not a cause of death. So these are some of the responses that you often find in these cases. We selected cases that had significant media attention and that had been followed up by state advisors to right to food. Now in each of these cases that attracted media responses, you did have immediate action by the local officials but it was short term. So local politicians, or even the District Collector/public officials, would come with cash handouts, maybe one to two months of grain allotment, but no long term access to the right to food programmes.

There have been some positive changes since the deaths, particularly in the PDS in each of these cases. The people had died when they were not getting any access to the PDS. The PDS would be defunct usually for an indefinite period of time. During our visits we saw that while the PDS was not completely functional, it is actually better than it was at the time of deaths. So, for instance, instead of not receiving grains at all, people would receive (grains) four-to-five months a year. Again, it should be provided all the time, but there was a slight improvement. In Chatra where numerous people died because of eating the poisonous root, they are now getting rations 35 kg a month, and that actually was sanctioned by the state policy after these deaths because that case had received significant media attention. These changes were a result of public action, so that has to be acknowledged. But the long term denial exists in the sense of denial of actual rights to numerous programmes - those eight right to food programmes that I just mentioned¹. In each of these places, there is not one distribution centre where each of the programmes functions as it should. In one case the widow of the person I mentioned before, Kangresh Manjhi, is yet to get a BPL card and this is despite numerous discussions with block level officials on our part.

Now, I'll just wrap up here by talking about the implications for policy since this is a forum to discuss issues for policy. The major defunct programme with respect to starvation deaths was the PDS - the inability of people to get their PDS entitlements. So one can say there is reason to move towards a more inclusive PDS. Of course, the programmes on the ground that exist to address malnutrition should be implemented with quality. Of course,

we all know that the Supreme Court called for an increased allocation of funds (for) a better implementation of ICDS; but in some of these villages, the ICDS only nominally exists, in the sense that centres are in place for ICDS but provisions are not there, materials are not there, the workers are not there all the time. There is cause to look into the implementation of malnutrition programmes more comprehensively.

Free meals for the destitute are particularly important for people who are physically disabled or people who are prone to starvation, because conditions of destitution are outside their control.

One of the most important things we saw was that the grievance redressal system is sorely lacking. If a person's right to PDS, ICDS, or any of the right to food programmes is violated, there really is not much recourse for these people if the officials that run these programmes do not feel that they have an onus to respond. There were times when block officials were contacted, when people had complained, but they gave up because their demands were not answered. And so without accountability, and without monitoring systems, there really is no chance for these rights to be accessed.

Now the last thing that I will talk about here, as Harsh mentioned, is a starvation protocol which had been recommended by the National Advisory Council in their draft bill and is based on the Supreme Court Commissioners' draft in consultation with a group called Hunger Watch Group. This was a protocol or policy that called for a proactive engagement of local officials and interested groups, including the community, to investigate and approach starvation as a living condition preventatively

¹Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), Targeted Public Distribution System (PDS), Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS), National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS), National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (also known as the Midday Meal Scheme), National Maternity Benefit Scheme, Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AYA), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGA).

- before deaths occurred. There are two main components, I mean there are other components but I'll just briefly discuss two indicators to assess starvation – kilo calorie intake and body mass index. If a person consumes 850 kcals a day or less, he or she should be deemed as starving. Secondly, if a person's body mass index, which is a person's weight relative to height, is below 16-16.5 he or she would be considered as starving. Effectively, the diagnosis would be carried out by the District Collector, Chief Medical Officer, District Panchayat as well as those in the community - especially those in the community who are from families of the victims of starvation deaths. And finally, just to reiterate, there is a drastic need for improvement in those programmes that are relevant to hunger - such as nutrition, employment and health schemes. And the media do play a crucial role in preventing or at least acknowledging that starvation does exist. Harsh mentioned that one of the key findings of Dreze and Sen² was that democratic institutions do help prevent famine and they do talk about the role of media and we saw the role of media as a very powerful tool in the rights of hapless citizens that sometimes do not have a voice of their own. And lastly, would like to stress the importance of public action in demanding accountability from officials responsible for these failures and in staking their rights for better implementation of government programmes. Just to wrap up, better implementation of government programmes should be viewed in the context of rights and what it means to not only deem a programme a right but have mechanisms in place to ensure that citizens have the ability to access those rights.

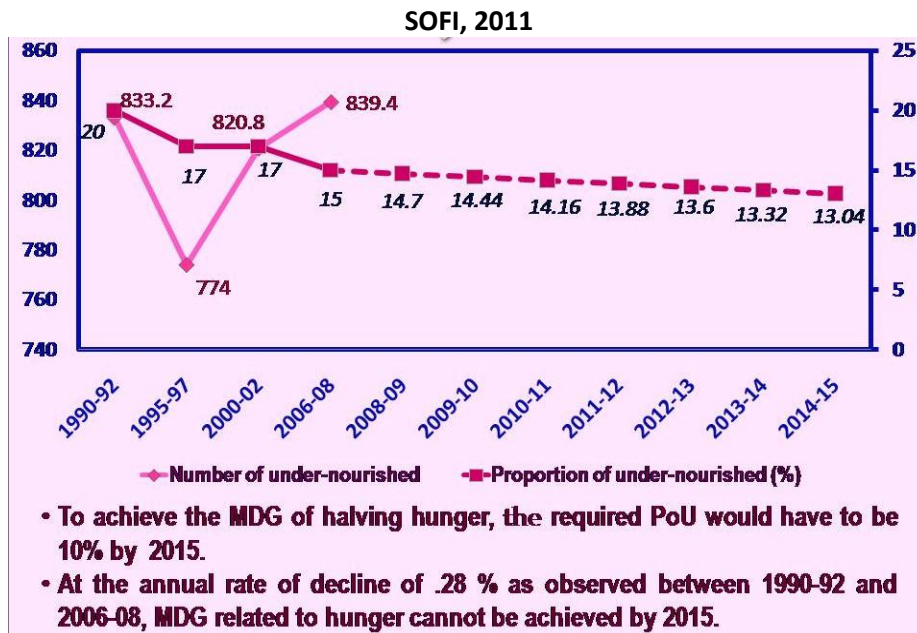
Thank you.

²Dreze and Sen, *Hunger and Public Action* (1989) Clarendon, Oxford, 1989.

Measuring State of Food Insecurity (SOFI) in the World

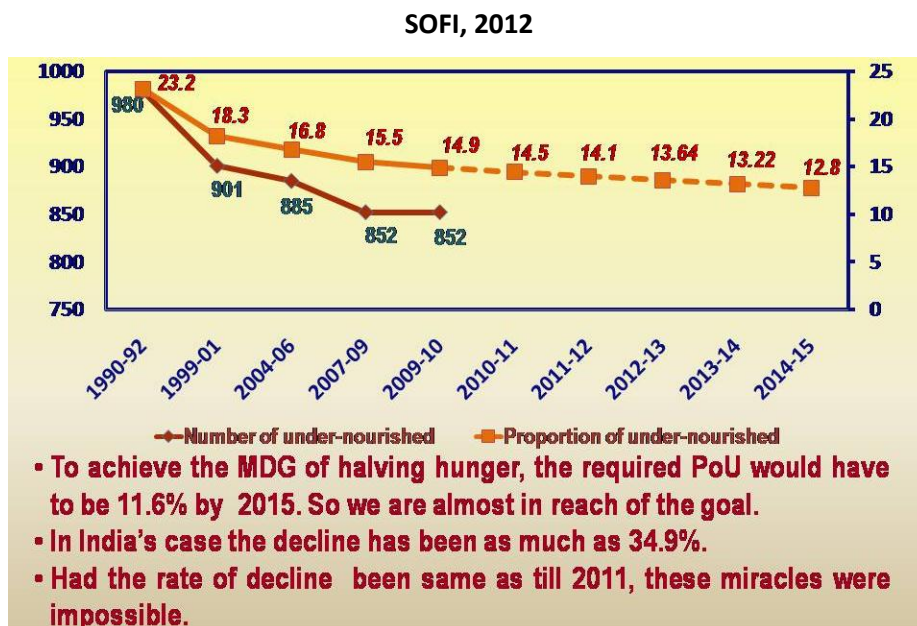
Vikas Bajpai

The SOFI 2012 report has put the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of reducing chronic hunger by half very much within reach by 2015. Nothing could be more welcome than this, the only caveat being that this claim should stand the test of scientific scrutiny. The following graph provides a background for this discrepancy. Till 2011, these were the trends:



You see huge fluctuation in the numbers of undernourished people and a declining trend in the proportion of under-nourished population till 2006 to 2008. If the same trend continues till 2014 to 2015, we would have reached a proportion of 13.04, which is not 50 per cent of the 20 per cent that was recorded in 1992. So it would not be possible for us to achieve the MDG for hunger.

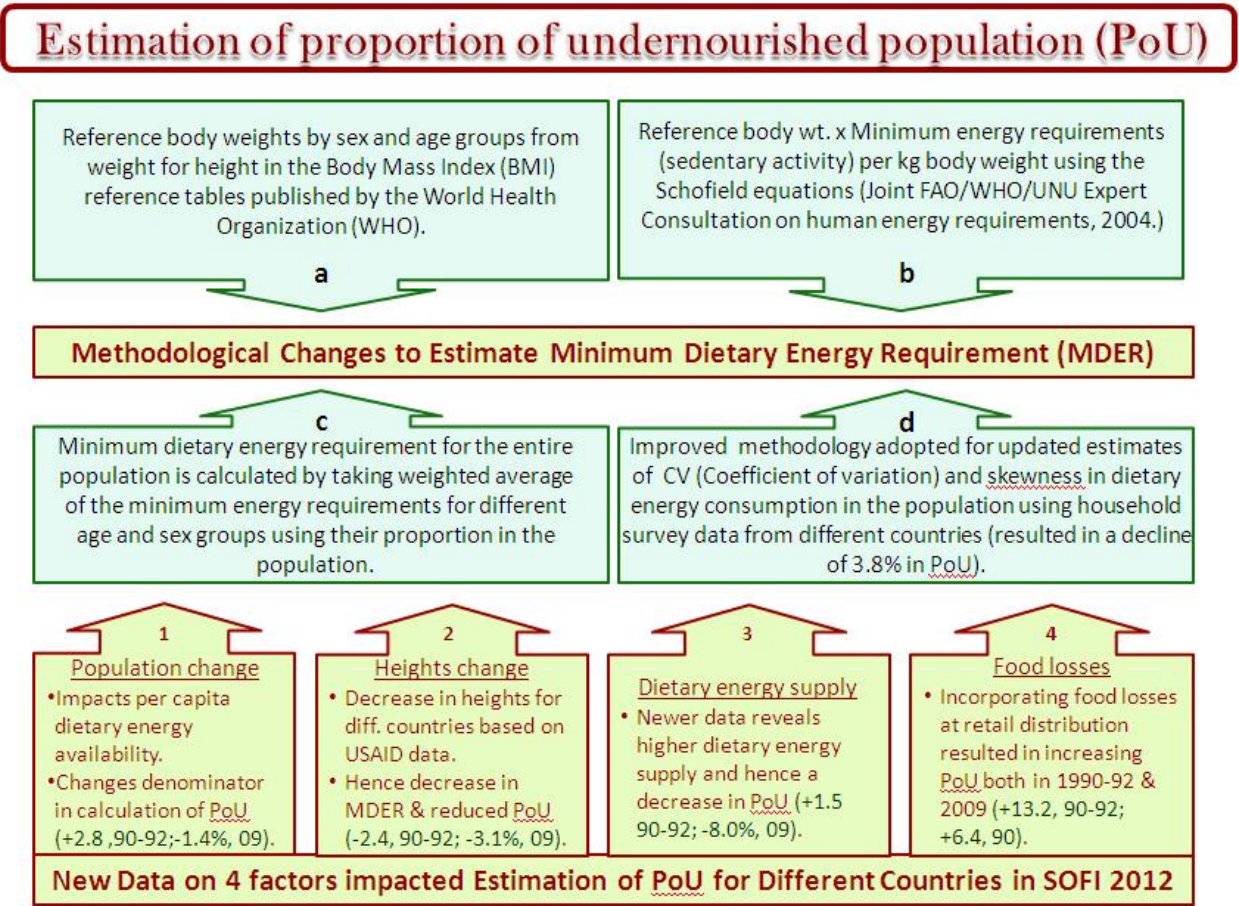
However, in 2012, the SOFI team has smoothed out all the rough edges both in absolute numbers as also the proportion. So by 2014 to 2015, we would be very much at a striking distance of achieving the goals; the proportion would then be 12.8.



Participant (Audience): Are these BMIs?

No, these are not BMIs. The lower graph is the absolute number of malnourished people in the world and the upper graph is the proportion of malnourished people. This is the data of SOFI 2012. I was illustrating the difference between what it was by 2011 and what it is now in 2012.

In India, well, we've had a handsome decline of 34.9 per cent in malnourishment; but then had the same rate of decline continued to be seen in 2011, these figures would have been impossible. To explain this, we will briefly recapitulate the FAO methodology for estimating the prevalence of malnourishment. The first thing is that they take reference body-weight by sex and age-groups from weight for height in the BMI reference table of WHO. Then reference body-weight is multiplied by the minimum energy requirement for sedentary activities using standard methodologies. They have been using this method even earlier, not just in 2012. The minimum dietary requirement for an entire population is then calculated by taking weighted averages for race, age and sex groups and then there are some statistical techniques or methodologies which they have evolved to have a very precise estimation.



However, there are these four aspects – Population change, Height change, Dietary energy supply and Food losses, for which FAO has claimed access to primary data from new sources, and consideration for this new data has helped in bringing the levels of malnutrition down; but we can clearly see that all adjustments on account of population change, height change, dietary change and food losses, increase the prevalence of under-nutrition in 1990, thereby facilitating projection of a much decreased prevalence of under-nutrition for 2014-15.

Well, this is somewhat strange, nonetheless. Now the FAO's statisticians know what their drawbacks are, and they say that well. They acknowledge that prevalence of under-nutrition is based purely on the terms of dietary energy availability and its variation in the population, thereby neglecting the qualitative aspects of nutrition. Further, the prevalence of under-nutrition is based on energy required only for sedentary activities even though there could be alternative indicators

corresponding to higher activity levels, and that the impact of short term price and other economic shocks have not been captured in FAO's methodology.

Now we know that for countries like India there is a huge proportion of the population that lives in chronic hunger and even short term price changes can be potentially catastrophic for this section. So they ought to have taken note of this. Now the disconnect between the methodology and the reality is - that FAO chooses minimum dietary requirement for sedentary activities. I have tried to illustrate this further.

Disconnect between methodology & the reality										
Country	Parameter	1990-92	1995-97	2000-02	2006-08	Nature of work	Dietary allowance for a reference Indian male and female (kcal)			
							1977*		2011**	
							Males	Females	Males	Females
India	MDER	1740	1750	1760	1780	Sedentary	2425	1875	2320	1900
						Heavy	3800	2925	3490	2850
Occupied Palestinian Territories	MDER	1670	1670	1670	1690	*ICMR (1990), **ICMR (2011)				

Country	Year	Life Expectancy at Birth (Years)	Crude Death Rate	Proportion of low birth weight babies (%)	Infant Mortality Rate (Per thousand live births)	<5 years Mortality Rate (Per thousand live births)	Maternal Mortality Rate (Per 100,000 live births)	Anemia Prevalence in Pregnant Women (%)
India	1990	50 ¹	7.4 (2008) ³	30 (1984) ⁵	81 ¹	115 ¹	-	58.7 (2005-06) ⁹
	2010	65 ¹		30 (1999) ⁵ 30 (2007) ⁷	48 ¹	63 ¹	200 ¹	
Occupied Palestinian Territories	1990	-	4 (2011) ⁴	9 (2000) ⁶	-	-	-	38.6 (2006) ¹⁰
	2010	70.8 (Males) ² 73.6 (Females) ²		7.3 (2006) ⁸	20.6 ²	25.1 ²	29 ²	

Sources: WHO, 2012a¹; WHO (2012b)²; CBHI, (2009)³; WHO (2012c)⁴; WHO (1984)⁵; UNICEF & WHO (2004)⁶; UNICEF (2006)⁷; PCBS (2009)⁸; IIPS (2007)⁹; Khader et.al (2009)¹⁰ Notes: The figures in parenthesis are the year of the statistic.

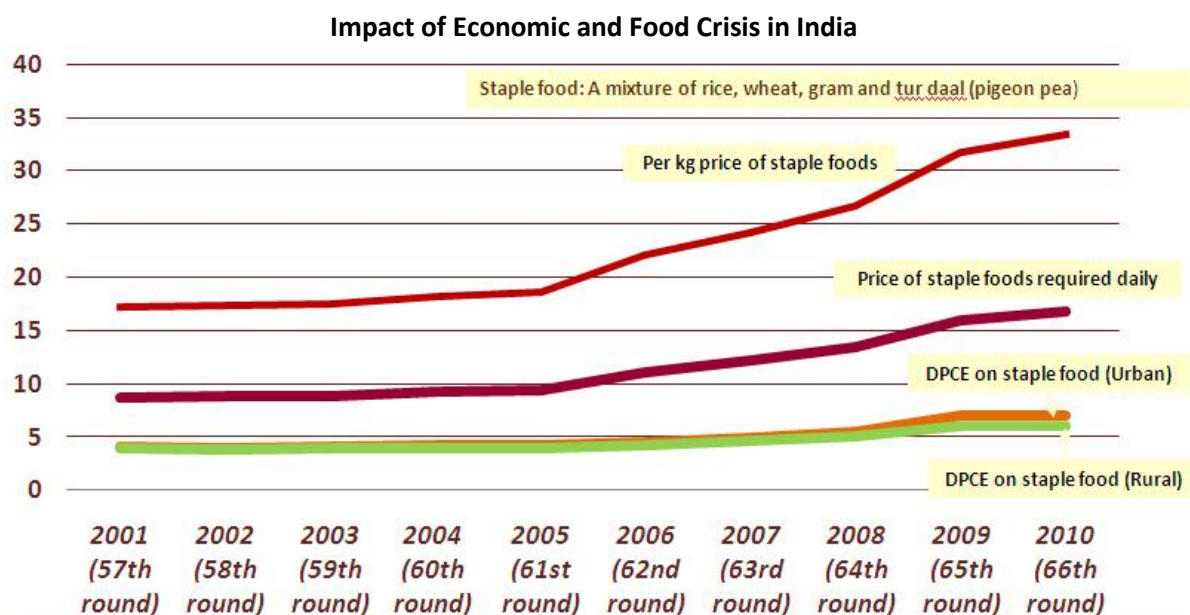
The dietary energy requirement prescribed by FAO for occupied Palestinian territories, is second only to Laos from the bottom. We can see, that the minimum dietary energy requirement for Palestine is consistently below that prescribed for India. For example, for the year 1992, the prescribed energy requirement for India was 1,740 calories, while that for Palestine was 1,670 calories. Likewise 1,750 calories, in 1995-96, for India, while for Palestine it was 1,670 calories - consistently lower than that for India. However if you see the health outcomes – even though there may not be any perfect co-linearity between dietary requirements and health outcomes, but yes, there is more or less a positive co-linear relationship, and in terms of health outcomes you can see that life expectancy in India in 1990 was 50 years, in 2010, it was 65 years, while in Palestine, in 2010, it was 70.8 years (males) and 72.6 years (females). Crude death rate is 7.4 in 2008 for India, while in 2011 it was just 4 for Palestinian territories. Likewise IMR, while it was 48 for India in 2010, for Palestine, it was just 20.6. Under-five mortality is 63 for India and 25.1 for Palestinian territories.

If we were to use FAO's estimates for any kind of policy directions, we can see how much haywire it can go.

Impact of Economic Food Crisis: we know of the 2008 to 2009 economic crisis, which was described as 'economic tsunami' by the former chief of the US Federal Reserve. However, SOFI 2012 trivializes the economic and food crisis of 2007 to 2008 as being – "only a mild slowdown in GDP growth in many developing countries, and increases in domestic staple food prices were very small in China,

India and Indonesia (the three largest developing countries).” Not even one study is quoted to support this assertion. Why does SOFI trivialize the entire economic crisis by merely saying that it was only a mild slow-down in GDP growth in many of the developing countries and consequently the domestic food crisis was very small especially in countries like China, India and Indonesia, three of the largest developing countries which could potentially contribute huge numbers to the number of malnourished? But SOFI 2012 just makes this assertion in the report. There is not even a single study to back up the FAO statement. Whereas, earlier FAO’s studies themselves said that an additional 115 million people are being pushed into hunger by the global food and financial crisis of 2007 to 2008, SOFI 2012 simply makes these numbers disappear.

But then we did a little empirical investigation of whether actually the economic crisis had any impact on hunger in India and here will show you these four graphs. The uppermost line is the trend in per unit price of staple food items and we can see that from 2005 onwards, the slope has increased sharply. The second graph is the price of staple foods required daily to meet the daily minimum dietary energy requirement. This was arrived at by taking into consideration the proportion of calories in Indian diets that are derived from food grains and then dividing this by the number of calories derived from one kg of a mixture of staple food grains. The total weight of daily food grain requirement was thus calculated in kgs and multiplied by the price of a 1 kg mixture of staple food grains to arrive at daily required expenditure on staple food grains. The third line is daily per capita expenditure on staple food for the urban area, and the fourth is for the rural area.



The required daily expenditure on staple food was arrived at as the expenditure required to meet the proportion of calories derived from foodgrains which was calculated to be 1732 calories.

Beginning 2005 and through the crisis years right through to 2010, the gap between staple food prices, required daily expenditure on staple food and the actual DPCE has been widening progressively.

Now we can see the huge gap between all of these graphs and beginning 2005 onwards, the gap has started increasing. So by no figment of imagination I think can it be said that the economic crisis has had no impact on hunger in India. The actual daily per capita expenditure on staple food grains in both urban and rural India fell increasingly below the required daily expenditure. These are all hard empirical facts, there is no inference involved in this.

Now, SOFI 2012 claims that there has been new data on food losses; however, all the data on food losses that they have discussed is from the developing countries alone. I just want to show this table to bring out the fact; even though this data is pretty much dated and I couldn’t get a later data, it is evident that there has been a progressive integration of food chains of the developing and the

developed world. These have been fast integrating. It is noteworthy to see the increase in exports of processed food from the developing regions to the developed world as such. So the idea is you know, how can you just discuss food losses only in developing countries if you are taking that into account to measure the prevalence of under-nutrition in the world? Food markets in developing countries are progressively getting integrated with the international market. So what is likely to be the impact of food losses occurring in the developed world? I mean, unless you take that into account, then you really can not reach a realistic estimation of prevalence of under-nutrition.

New data on food losses and PoU

- **SOFI 2012 report has taken account of food losses only in the developing regions to estimate the PoU in these regions.**

Table: Processed foods export growth rates (percent per year).

Processed food	Global		Developed regions		Developing regions	
	1975-85	1985-95	1975-85	1985-95	1975-85	1985-95
Meats	6.7	10.0	6.1	10.0	9.4	10.1
Dairy products	6.4	9.5	6.5	9.2	3.1	19.5
Processed rice	1.9	7.5	2.4	2.3	1.6	10.3
Sugar	-9.4	9.1	-4.1	13.6	-11.1	6.1
Total processed foods	5.3	9.4	6.6	9.2	2.8	9.9

- **Food markets in developing countries are progressively getting integrated with the international markets.**

Food wastage is a huge problem within the developed countries, which if reduced, could possibly make more food available within developing countries. This can happen by two means – first, there will be lesser need to export from developing countries to developed countries and thereby developing countries could have their own food for their own consumption; secondly, it could possibly lower food prices due to greater availability of food in the international market by cutting food losses in the developed world. I am saying *possibly*, because just availability of food does not mean that it is going to the hungry. Food is another weapon in the armory of the developed world; even in our own country, we know food can be exported for feeding pigs and cows in the developed countries rather than feeding the poor at home.

Well, the consumer-level food wastage in Europe and North America - just see the numbers; it is 222 metric tonnes, while the food production of entire Sub-Saharan Africa is just 230 metric tonnes. Just imagine, if this much of food could be available in the international market, not as aid but for the countries to buy, what impact it could have on the numbers of malnourished. But this is not taken into account by the FAO. India’s food losses increased at an annualized rate of 0.007 per cent. Between 1990 and 2012, the flipside of the retail-level food-wastage argument is that there is already a push for entry of multinational retailers and multi-brand retail in India in the name of preventing food losses. This is being done despite the fact that industrialization of the food chain is the biggest reason for huge losses in the west.

New data on heights in different countries: What FAO was doing until last year was that for the countries for which anthropometric data was not available, they took the anthropometric data of ethnically similar populations, say of a neighboring country, and used that anthropometric data as the proxy for the country for which data is not available. However, this year they say that they have had access to new demographic and health data and, anthropometric data for different countries from the 'Demographic and Health Surveys' service programme of USAID. But then, they have found that the heights for these countries for which data was not available, are lower compared to ethnically similar populations. They assume that since the heights are lower, lesser energy is required. But it is really surprising as to why it did not occur to them that if the heights are less than ethnically similar populations, then it is a clear-cut sign of malnutrition?

It is not that they could not have known all this because in case of child malnutrition in the new norms which WHO has come up with, they have taken a pool of well-nourished children of different ethnicities, from different parts of the world and then they have calculated the standards against which malnutrition is to be measured. So why could the same not be done for the purpose of calculating under-nutrition?

Moreover, nowhere in the report have they mentioned the names of the countries for which this data has been made available, the sample size of the data sets, and whether it was representative or not. And at least in the case of countries like India and China, all of this data is available. There are regular government surveys which provide this data. So if it is for smaller countries in Africa or elsewhere, unless that data set could have been provided publicly, it is very difficult to determine how there has been so much impact just because the US had that data available and not the national governments of these countries.

Data on Dietary-Energy Supply Again: Now to move to the statement for which we have new data sets available - which is for information about dietary-energy supply. Surprisingly enough, this new data, has changed the dietary-energy supply estimate as far back as the 1991 estimate. I mean, it would have been interesting to know as to why if this data was there in public health, why could it not be accessed earlier and if it is the new data, then how is it possible to assess information as far back as 1992? All these things you know, one 'has to' believe them but no information is provided about it in their annexure or anywhere else, nor referrals to the sites where you can access this data and then see it for yourself.

The Consequences of Methodology for Policy: As far as FAO's methodology is concerned, as I have already said, it bears no relationship to the real lives of people. Given the eminent guiding role of FAO, the data it generates are meant as hard facts for policy planners around the world, especially so if these help to justify the official policy paradigm irrespective of the consequences. The statisticians at FAO have been wise enough to play their part as I have mentioned earlier, but by the time it comes to our Planning Commission (PC) all these statements evaporate and what FAO says becomes sacrosanct.

The daily dietary-energy intake in India has been falling consistently over the years. As of 2004 to 05, the proportion of people consuming less than the poverty line cut-off calorie norms that is 2,400 for rural areas and 2,100 for urban areas, was 87 per cent and 64.5 per cent in the rural and urban areas, respectively.

So the biggest question now is how does one improve the rigour if students fail to make the passing percentage? And if the Indian policy establishment is to be believed, then it is by reducing the passing percentage. So what our Tendulkar Committee does, it reduces the poverty-line cut off norms: 1,800 calories, both for urban and rural areas, rather than the earlier norm of 2,400 and 2,100 calories. And to justify that, the handholding effect of FAO estimate on Indian policy-makers, take evidence from Tendulkar Committee that the revised minimum calorie norm for India as recommended by FAO is currently around 1,800 calories per capita per day, which is very close to the average calorie intake of those near the new poverty line in the urban areas, i.e., 1776 calories, and higher than the revised FAO norm (1,999 calories per capita) in rural areas in the 61st round of NSS. So there is the continuum between what the FAO does and what our policy establishment does.

Well, there are many warning signs if one wants to look at that. Poverty in 2004 to 2005, 27 per cent of the Indians, they consumed less than twenty rupees a day and those who spent mere 93 rupees a day, they were considered high. Between NFHS III and the HUNGAMA (Hunger and Malnutrition) report of 2011, the stunting among children less than three years of age increased from 45 per cent to 58.8 per cent. But the malnutrition continues to decline it seems. According to the Central Bureau of Health Intelligence (CBHI), the data on morbidity for most and mortality for many in chronic conditions is increasing, including in children.

In conclusion, I would say that the purpose of development policy is to facilitate greater human welfare, not to constrict it within narrow premises. The methodology involved by FAO fails to capture the nutritional requirement of millions suffering from hunger around the world; much worse, it becomes expedient in normalizing the current abominable state of hunger in the world.

Thank you!

Tracking Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM)- Monitoring Child Nutrition based on Arm Circumference Measurement

Dipa Sinha

Good morning. I will be quite short as what I am presenting is not an area of specialisation for me. I am not a nutritionist or medical person, but the whole issue of SAM and how SAM is measured and monitored has now begun to touch all of us who are not technical experts, but have been working on nutrition from a public health and social sciences perspective. What I am presenting is based on our recent engagement with some of the technical issues and the issues that are arising which have significance for how quality is (defined), and how protocols are operationalized for severely malnourished children.

Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM)

So, severe acute malnutrition, as all of us know, and as the WHO defines it, is very low weight for height, below -3Z score, also identified by visible stunting or by the presence of nutritional oedema and they have also now included a mid-upper arm circumference of < 11.5 cm/115 mm. SAM children are said to have a higher risk of mortality. This is substantially higher than normally nourished children and the median under - 5 case fatality rate for SAM typically, again the WHO tells us, ranges from 30 to 50 per cent, which is why it is claimed that there should be an increased focus on SAM. And this is something we have been seeing in India also over the last three to four years where we are repeatedly told by many, it started with international organisations and now even government, that we must focus on SAM because that is where children are dying, so that is where our first focus should be.

Managing SAM

In India, the NFHS 3 data show that there are about 6.4 per cent children who have weight for height Z score < -3 SD, which is about 8 million children at any point of time one can say are severely acutely malnourished by this definition. The main strategy for managing SAM in India has been through nutrition rehabilitation centres (NRCs) and under the NRHM, now many states, especially in the North, have been setting up NRCs. There are almost 2,000 NRCs now, across the country for the treatment of SAM. This (slide) is basically based on a paper which is in your folder, which I did some time back with Dr. Vandana Prasad and Dr. S. Sridhar. How it works out in the field is that it is ICDS which is doing regular growth monitoring and identifying children who are severely underweight. ICDS takes only weight and based on the growth charts that they have, they identify children who are severely underweight. Then these children are referred to the NRC. The NRCs are only for children who are severely wasted, who are SAM, so we find that between these two itself, there are many children falling between the stools.

To share the data from NFHS, it shows that about 36 per cent of SAM children are not severely underweight. So the ICDS is not even picking up 36 per cent of 8 million children. On the other hand, 62 per cent of the severely underweight children are not SAM, so of the 100 children we are referring to NRCs, 62 per cent are simply sent back based on the weight and height measurements, as they do not meet the criteria at all. After this, what has more recently been happening and again influenced by the experience internationally and especially in Africa; what is being used for community - based programmes for identification of SAM is the Mid - Upper Arm Circumference, the MUAC. MUAC is recommended because they say it is easy to use, although in our recent experience in Madhya Pradesh, where we did training and got the field workers to use it, we found that it is not really so easy. 'Not much training required', is what we are often told but that is not what our experience is really showing. The argument also is that the community understands the measurements because there is this coloured tape, and all that the community has to understand is that when the tape is put around the child's arm whether it is showing red or green. Also, the other thing we are hearing now, when we talk about there being a difference in the children identified by the two methods, is that there is no clear overlap between the weight for height Z scores and MUAC, that MUAC identifies even more children who are at the highest mortality risk.

WHO-UNICEF Statement

The WHO-UNICEF joint statement on this, however, says that the prevalence of SAM, the number of children with SAM based on weight for height below -3SD and those based on the MUAC cut - off of 115 mm are very similar. So based on this, what we are given to understand, is that MUAC and weight for height Z scores can almost be used interchangeably and MUAC is recommended because it is believed that heights are very difficult to measure and therefore this is an easy alternative to identify children with SAM. If we now look at comparing how many children are less than 115 mm by MUAC and how many children are weight for height Z score less than -3 SD, from the HUNGAMA survey, we do not have the unit level data but what is in their report.

MUAC vs WHZ (HUNGAMA Survey)

	% of Children WHZ < -3SD	% Children with MUAC <11.5cm
100 Focus Districts	3.3%	1.7%
6 Best Districts from Focus States	3.4%	1.3%
6 Best Districts from Best State	4.7%	1.2%

In their various different categories of districts, the HUNGAMA survey finds about 3.5 to 4.5 per cent children less than -3SD weight for height but less than 11.5 cm MUAC is about half in each of these categories. So if we used only MUAC, half the children who are SAM are not even identified.

We recently did a survey last year with an organisation called Vikas Samvad in Madhya Pradesh in two districts in four blocks and there weights, heights and MUAC were measured for about 2,500 children, of which 1,879 were over 6 months of age.

MUAC vs WHZ (Madhya Pradesh Vikas Samvad Survey)

4.9% SAM on the basis of MUAC and 8.5% on the basis of WHZ

	MUAC ≤ 11.5	MUAC > 11.5	Total
WHZ ≤ -3SD	28	132	160
WHZ > -3SD	64	1,655	1,719
Total	92	1,787	1,879

SAM & MUAC: What is the Congruence?

So this is the data from that survey where again we first found that prevalence of 4.9 per cent SAM if we used MUAC as the basis, and a prevalence of 8.5 per cent if we used weights and heights as the basis. But then when we break this up, we find that is not as if the 4.9 per cent children with low MUAC are a clear subset of the 8.5 per cent with low weight for height Z score; but that they match very little. So there were 92 children who were less than 11.5 MUAC, i.e. is in red MUAC, of which only 28 were SAM by weight for height. There were 160 children who were SAM by weight for height Z score of which only 28 have MUAC less than 11.5cm. So there were only 28 out of this big subset who are both red by MUAC and SAM by weight for height Z score.

Now why we are concerned about all this is because we want to reach out to every child and which protocol is used really determines how many children are even identified. At the very first step of being identified for follow up and treatment we are going completely wrong by focusing first exclusively on SAM, and then on SAM, this whole confusion of using MUAC or weight for height and saying that MUAC is much easier to use and that *anganwadi* workers cannot do heights. We are just losing a whole set of children in our programme. The questions (arising) on what measurement

should be used, what should be the referral criteria, what should be the exit criteria, all of these questions are based on what we are finding just with this little data. Also, therefore, what should be the components of community-based management of malnutrition, because the buzzword these days is CMAM which is community management of acute malnutrition. So again, we are talking about community-based systems for managing and treating malnutrition but only for SAM children who do not require NRCs; and who are these SAM children we really do not know because they keep saying that MUAC is the same as weight for height and we find that they are not the same.

Reliability and Validity of MUAC

So, basically in terms of the issues for discussion, one is the whole reliability and validity of MUAC, and the technical question that comes up is that since all the studies which recommend MUAC are based on African populations, how does that play out in a sample, in a situation like India, where the stunting rates are so high? Veena and Vandana are here to help with any technical questions that come up later, but basically in our Madhya Pradesh survey the stunting prevalence was 57 per cent, so what does that mean to the MUAC measurements? We do not have paediatric body composition data in India. The mortality risk studies, which force us to then focus only on SAM (when this whole SAM business began in India about a couple of years back, in meetings we were told that we do not care for children's lives because we wanted to talk about all kinds of malnutrition and not just SAM immediately) are not based on India population.

And, of course, the other argument is that the problem can be solved if you just increase the cut-off for MUAC from- 11.5 and say, make it 12.5 - but even that really does not solve the problem very much, it definitely increases the sensitivity, specificity but it does not make it very much better, and the problem still remains. And then (there is) the larger question of comprehensive strategies for addressing malnutrition for every child and all forms of malnutrition. And this whole debate on measurement is somewhere taking us away from this kind of a comprehensive approach. And in the technical questions, is measuring height really so impossible to do because you keep hearing time and again that we cannot do heights so we have to look at alternatives? There is a need for talking about strategies for preventing SAM and other forms of severe malnutrition also. So we really need to think about growth monitoring and designing the various protocols for management based on different kinds of malnutrition on the basis of the principle of addressing every child. I think it is great that Vandana is presenting next because she will be talking about the kinds of protocols we think should be there.

Thank you.

Protocols for Tracking Child Malnutrition Designed by the Action Against Malnutrition (AAM) Project

Vandana Prasad

Thank you for pointing out that the multilateral agencies involved here are clearly UNICEF and WHO. Earlier we were talking about FAO. Just one point to elaborate on, in Dipa's presentation before, is the mortality aspect-you know, this a very compelling kind of idea that MUAC (mid- upper arm circumference) is linked to mortality. Why are we forgetting the fact that one-half of the South Asian enigma, I mean apart from the fact that we have double malnutrition, is also that we have halved mortality and that mortality in India is not following the same pattern as mortality in Africa? There are no studies to show what is the key one thing that links or corroborates with mortality in India, in the context of malnutrition, so I think it is slightly fallacious, it is not evidence based. That is the only point that I want to make. It may be or may not be, and of course, there is a very high correlation between severe acute malnutrition (SAM) on the whole and mortality, but there is also (the fact that) we do see mortality in all children all the time, all the time anecdotally. There are no studies just now to show that.

In ten - fifteen minutes it is very difficult to speak in terms of protocols because protocols are very detailed programmatic instruments, so I thought that I will just talk about key programming principles, and obviously this is to offer a kind of counterpoint to a more dominant paradigm of programming that is going on. So what is the dominant paradigm of programming that we have been kind of tackling and fighting, which is leading to, I must say - through quite a lot of struggle - leading to some sort of consensus emerging?

The Limitations of SAM-Focused Strategies

What we are having to battle is this very minimalistic understanding of malnutrition. So you limit everything. You saw that in malnutrition it is to limit it to SAM, or in growth monitoring limit it to MUAC and that is the paradigm that we are trying to fight through our understanding of programming principles for malnutrition. Without going into details, the basis for everything that I am saying are theoretical principles within paediatrics, and within public health, embedded very, very firmly. And there is a lot of evidence. I am not, however, in a position to offer you evidence in ten - fifteen minutes. And there are also field observations for many years, records of nutrition rehabilitation centres (NRCs), records of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), registers, formats, guidelines, what is going on in government, how government is making protocols, etc, in the NRCs, malnutrition treatment centres (MTCs), health services and child death audits.

Through the Commission, in particular, in the last six months, I have followed literally scores and scores of children who have died, and so I feel extremely comfortable in saying that children do not only die in the situation of SAM, they die on the way, on the route to SAM where we are not offering any kind of programme really. They die still within SAM after having exhausted all our programmatic options that are currently available and that (outcome) is really the key thing. So I think everybody understands that the intervention framework for proximal determinants- please forgive me, it is not that I do not understand agriculture, livelihoods, gender and all that, but now I am talking about the proximal determinants in creating services with children who are in a situation of malnutrition-will need an overall perspective of care. We need food very clearly, and we need disease prevention, and also management of disease and referrals for serious cases.

An Alternative Approach

Now, to state what we need and what we currently have. I can not belabour the point that what we need is a comprehensive approach. This is based on sound public health principles, sound public health principles which say that if you want to shift a population in one direction you have to focus on the whole population, you cannot target the "5 ke neeche aur 95 ke upar" (below five and above 95 per centiles) of your bell curve and hope that you are going to make an impact. You have to think of something that shifts the majority of the population along to be able to focus on the minority

also, which means you need a comprehensive approach as well as a targeted approach, both things, not one vis-à-vis the other. Now obviously for us, I must say that is the basis and the approach chosen is the 'rights' perspective. There is no doubt about it, we want to talk about *every* child and we want to talk about *individualised care* for every child. Why? Because children do not suddenly land up with severe malnutrition. There is a whole course of events that unfold for weeks and months before they reach the situation where they can be called SAM or called by any category name.

Individualised Care

Children go in and out of categories all the time throughout their lifetime before they die, before they get well, before they get further unwell; there are ups and downs in their growth charts. So if you want to prevent children from dying, if you want to make sure that they are well looked after, the care has to be individualised. You should be tracking children along the entire spectrum of whatever is happening to them. When bad things happen to them you try to help them recover, and when good things happen to them, you promote that whole idea and this is a well-understood paediatric principle.

Each child, at each stage of malnutrition, must have a programme and flexibilities are required within the programme to suit individual children. What this also means, when I speak of flexibility, is that we understand that malnutrition is not some highly medicalised issue that people do not understand, that growth workers, health workers will not understand, or their families will not understand. Yes, there are technical aspects but if I were to compare it, as a doctor, with any other one situation I would compare it not with pneumonia but with diarrhoea. And here also we can compare our mismanagement of malnutrition with the way in which we have mismanaged diarrhoea by making it medicalised, by not focusing on oral rehydration, by going for a product driven kind of strategy of what kind of oral rehydration solution (ORS). So, instead of home-based ORS, we depend only on packaged ORS that is standardised; on zinc tablets, etc., which can not be supplied, and we move away from the community-based approach, from accepting that people have an inherent common sense understanding that needs to be augmented.

Continuous Care

So people have an inherent common sense understanding of nutrition/malnutrition, health and disease, which needs to be augmented and that is the only way in which we can actually approach it. We need continuous care, like I said, every child has to be followed all the way through to keep him or her alive and to keep him or her well. They are to be followed all the way through, through systems that belong to different departments and different ministries so the issue of convergence is absolutely paramount. It has to be impact-orientated. Today, in our programmes, nobody is tracking impact at all. What finally happens to that child is of no concern. Only that you fulfilled your schematic requirement. *Pandrah din lena tha, pandrah din le liya, pandrah din mein who theek ho gaya toh theek ho gaya, aur mar gaya toh mar gaya.* (If the child had to be taken in for 15 days the child is taken in for 15 days. If he/she gets well, he/she gets well; if he/she dies, he/she dies). Nobody cares what happens to the child itself, so we are fulfilling some kind of schematic requirement, which has no interest in the impact, the final impact. And we have seen how they are irrational, that is why the paper titled 'Falling between two stools' also makes it clear that they are irrational. And thus, they are not very cost effective.

If you are looking to save lives really, which is what you keep saying in the discourse, that is not very cost effective because if you spend 15 days worth of intervention, which is very high cost intervention in an NRC, but the child goes out and dies in 10 days then what was the point of investing in that. Simply by not going as far as was required, you wasted that investment even in terms of just sheer money, you wasted that investment.

Process Orientation with Community Ownership

What we need is a process orientation with community ownership and community participation rather than a product orientation, which I explained earlier. And I think that we also need institutionalisation of the key systems, which are involved. Now the health system is to some extent institutionalised through the NRHM etc., to some extent. Even there I would say, I mean we have seen community health centres (CHCs) where frankly... the only thing that is working is the NRCs now. You cannot get paediatric health services; you cannot get basic paediatric services for ill children. All you get is this NRC - NRC limited to 15 days of an intervention, nothing before, nothing after. But still, as compared to the ICDS, there is some institutionalisation. So there is some infrastructure, there is some human resource. Whether you get it or not is another thing but at least it is stated in policy that you are supposed to get it and in the ICDS we do not have any of this. We do not have infrastructure, we do not have a skilled human resource and workers rights and welfare, which in our understanding of programmes are absolutely critical. The child care workers, their situation and their own sense of it, their understanding and their perspective and their attitude and the support that they get are absolutely critical to good programming. What we have is all what is on the other side, I think enough said about all of it.

Current Gaps and Inconsistencies

Have I left out anything? Except that the schemes are such that they do not fall in place together. The ICDS is functioning in one silo, the NRHM in another silo. The NRC and the ICDS do not corroborate, even in terms of when children will be referred, when they will be taken up, so children are referred like that, children are discharged and not taken back in the ICDS. There is such a huge mess between these two systems, which is a large issue that it is easy to really fall between the cracks and die. This is the confusion that currently exists. In terms of more detailing of what are the gaps in actual services- we do not have child care facilities to house interventions of nutrition and health. We do not have a programme currently for community-based management of malnutrition. This is coming up. Like I said, through this entire struggle and discourse, discussions and these kinds of meetings, I think that in some time, I hope within this coming year, there is going to be more consensus and there is going to be a programme on community-based management of malnutrition. There is no protocol for growth faltering currently. So I can keep deteriorating, deteriorating till I reach some standard line, so this kind of focus on growth monitoring is very important to us in programming, and it currently does not exist.

Supportive Supervision

There is very poor work with communities and women's groups on the whole issue, and there is very little to decentralise these programmes, to place them in the hands of communities and to allow them to fully understand and take charge, with quite a lot of support. I think there is no getting away from the fact that supportive supervision is a key requirement. And there is inadequate convergence, ineffective response by ICDS, National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) and other food security systems. So everybody knows this, I won't go into it.

In Conclusion

What is it actually that we want? We want exclusive breastfeeding, we want complementary feeding from six months onwards but the key thing that makes it different here is that we want locally produced, calorie dense, protein rich food and we want it for all children. We want a good baseline; good quality nutrition for all our children. Those are the basics that we think a decent programme should have.

And for disease prevention, treatment and rehabilitation also we need a good healthcare system in which the MTC or the NRC plays a part. We need to keep focusing on care and stimulation for children and we need to work with the more distal determinants such as NREGA, current....issues, food security, etc. Now as a result of this understanding what did we do? We put together policy

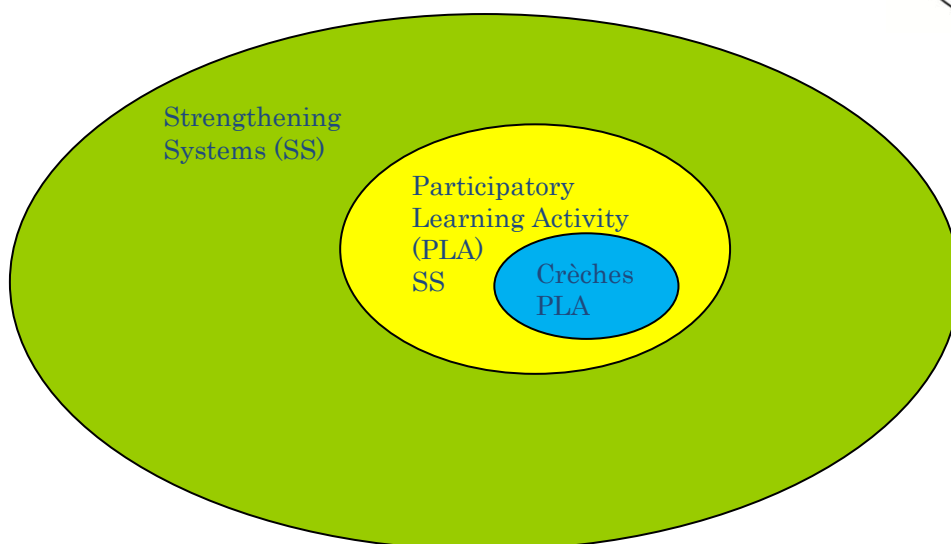
recommendations for the 11th and 12th Plans. The working group for children under six, Jan Swasthya Abhiyan (JSA), Right to Food (RTF), many people are sitting here who belong to this group and to some extent it was the work in the 11th Plan that has led to the ICDS restructuring the policy that is now out. But at all times what kept coming back to us was: “Where is this working on the ground? Where is it happening - this comprehensive approach, this child-centred approach? Can health workers do it? You are saying they can even do heights and lengths but has it ever been seen? Can they understand what growth faltering is? Can they understand when to refer, not to refer?” These challenges kept getting thrown back at us.

We took up this challenge and in collaboration with PHRN, Ekjut, Chaupal, CINI, JSS, and Idea supported by SDTT, we have now put together a programme called Action Against Malnutrition (AAM) in six Blocks of three states.

The AAM Programme: A Demonstration



The Intervention Block



Key Principles for an Effective Strategy

	WHAT WE NEED	WHAT WE CURRENTLY HAVE
1	Comprehensive approach	Narrow (SAM focused)
2	Child-centred; individualized; each child at each phase of malnutrition must have a programme, flexibility required.	Scheme-centred
3	Continuity of care	Fixed packages of care; Uncoordinated and confused treatment regimen
4	Impact orientation	Impact disregarded; Impact indicators neglected completely Monitoring stops at outcomes
5	Rational criteria for entering and exiting programme.	Criteria for entry and exit from programme are irrational
6	Cost-effectiveness (from rational approach)	Wasteful (of both human life and money)
7	Process focussed: emphasis on community ownership	Product focussed
8	Institutionalization; emphasis placed on building infrastructure, human resources, workers' rights and welfare	Informal structures, non-institutional and lacking an organizational vision

What does an intervention Block look like? Now I have to get into some detail without giving too much background. In any given Block we will be working in the whole Block on systems strengthening basically ICD and NRHM. In three-fourths of the Block what we will be doing is a very intensive kind of *community mobilisation* with women and women's groups primarily, but also with men. Early information is showing us that it is quite useful and quite important to have men participate and wherever men are participating there seems to be greater energy around. And in about 30 villages of a Block, we will be running crèches. Now, clearly also, just to say upfront that the crèches are not taking away from any ICDS programme so everything that the ICDS is supposed to offer... like the take home rations, the growth monitoring, the home visits etc., is supposed to continue and supposed to be pushed by us. At the same time, what we will be covering is the care gap and the other gap in terms of feeding, supervised feeding that can be done in the crèches.

Tracking and Analyzing Growth Faltering

These are the models and guidelines that we have developed and there is a fair amount of detail available on each. There are entry registers, attendance registers, illness registers, records, child health report cards, health check-up forms and the protocols, which are, listed *neeche (underneath)*. So, basically what we are tracking is growth faltering illness and lack of appetite as being three very important things for us. Any child who starts to dip in his or her growth charts will indicate something is not going right. Now we have to find out what that something is, there has either been a death in the family, or there has been drought in that area, or the family has suffered some catastrophic problem, or the child is just sick. It is just sick. And you do not know what the significant factor is, but something is happening and it is our job to find out what is happening there and then and take appropriate action. Appropriate action at community level to start with, and if it continues, then referrals must be made and the problem has to be escalated so that other people can jump in and help out.

Raising Red Flags

So the basic objectives are: every child has to be kept in good health, nutritional practice are in place and be followed to logical conclusion. Impact is important to us. Common sense and nutrition awareness, rather than fixed, standardised regimes which are top down, both allow people to make good judgement calls on the ground, at field level. Every child must get a diverse and quality diet which is calorie dense and protein rich with enough diversity to provide micronutrients. There is a focus on growth faltering, illness, lack of appetite and other red flags. So it is not just this, but there are other things - like we would put in signs of pneumonia, signs of dehydration, all those kinds of things such as seizures - many of those things which are obvious to people and people recognise; it is not rocket science, they do not need to be a doctor to recognise something is going wrong - all these are being covered under red flags.



Baselines and End Lines

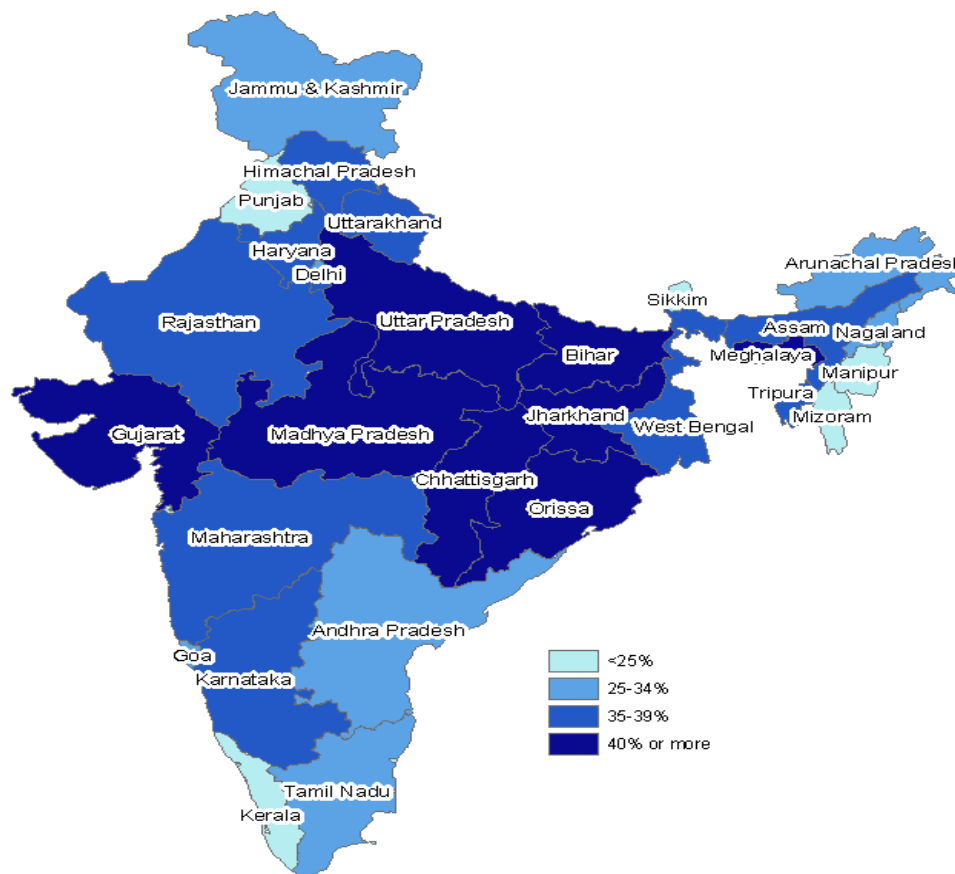
There is no special healthy food product. We have a good baseline. What we do is just start to feed that baseline more frequently, so we add a little oil and if that still does not work, then we have to make a referral to make sure that the child is not sick. So there is no special food that is coming pre-packaged that has a standard and a label attached to it. We do what we can with the good quality food we have, and through ICDS and this programme we need to show that it works. It is going to work because we are going to study all of this. We are doing baselines and end lines and we have quite a detailed MIS in the programme. So we will show that it works, and we have seen it before. We have seen it in mobile crèche programmes and other programmes. It does work. Illness, lack of appetite and persistent growth faltering mean referrals and that is really the basis of the protocols. And, finally this is just an end slide I use everywhere.

A Review of the Community Monitoring and Engagement in Reducing Child Malnutrition: Lessons from Thailand's success

Nalini Visvanathan

I was asked to talk about nutritional surveillance as it relates to community actions in dealing with and tracking hunger and malnutrition. More than twenty years ago, I studied and researched dietary practices and nutrition education; now I find in the current context of undernourishment that I have a lot of re-learning to do and a lot of updating. This is not a technical presentation, nor is it based purely on data or indicators. In fact, this presentation is based on an evolving paper that examines the cases of Asian and Indian community-based nutrition interventions that have had remarkable results. Let me first begin with an overview of the data we have available at the national level and its apparent limitations.¹

Percentage of Children Under Five Years Who are Underweight



Source: Fred Arnold, Sulabha Parasuraman, P. Arokiasamy and Monica Kothari. 2009. *Nutrition in India. National Family Health Survey (NFHS-3), India, 2005-06*. Mumbai: International Institute for Population Sciences; Calverton, Maryland, USA: ICF Macro.

To begin with, what struck me is that we have what is called an Asian enigma - A period during which the economy was said to have shown high growth but was simultaneously marked by a very high percentage of children who were considered malnourished. So, I wanted to begin with this map where you can see the extent to which malnutrition in children under five is widespread. My aim is to analyse the prospects for decentralizing data-gathering through the involvement of communities in monitoring their own nutritional status. I looked at what we have in terms of data sources. (And we do have robust data systems.) However, they are not updated as regularly as we would like and, I suspect, they are not reaching the communities that need to be informed about their status. They are certainly being used, as was intended, by policy planners, bureaucrats and scholars.

NATIONAL NUTRITION MONITORING BUREAU

Data Source	Survey	Frequency	Subject Area	Sample Population	Indicator/Measurement
NNMB	Annual surveys	1974-81 every year then 1991-91, 1994-95	Dietary intake & nutritional status	Pre- school children, 5-12 children & 12-21 yrs females & males	Average consumption of nutrients per consumption unit per day & Anthropometric and clinical measurements by age, % prevalence of deficiency signs
	Linked survey with NSSO	1983-84	Expenditure pattern, food consumption & nutritional deficiency signs		
	Repeat Rural survey	1988-90, 1996-97	Food consumption, energy intake & protein intake	For all age groups, 11 indicators	Average consumption of food stuffs, nutrients, stunting, wasting and undernourished, energy & nutrient intake & prevalence of deficiency signs
	Repeat Urban survey	1993-94	BMI, Diet intake	Pre- school children, girls, boys & adult males & females	BMI & GOMEZ Classification
	Tribal survey	1998-99	Food & nutrient intake, protein calorie adequate status	Age distribution as 1-3, 4-6, 7-9, 10-2, 13-15, 16-18 & > 18 yrs	GOMEZ & SD classification for pre-school children

This chart gives a chronological list of surveys done by the National Nutrition Monitoring Bureau, annual and repeated surveys. Their surveys were done not at regular time intervals but over uneven periods of time, making it challenging to track changes in food intake and nutritional status indicators. But I did want you to see how the available data are spread.

NATIONAL FAMILY HEALTH SURVEY

Data Source	Survey	Frequency	Subject Area	Sample Population	Indicator/Measurement
NFHS	NFHSI	1992-93	Population, health, quality of health and family planning services, domestic violence, reproductive health, anaemia, the status of women & the nutrition	Women 15-49 yrs & Men 15-49 yrs	BMI, Anaemia & Food Consumption
	NFHSII	1998-99		Under 5 yrs	Micronutrient intake, anaemia, child feeding practices, breastfeeding frequency & duration and nutritional status of children
	NFHSIII	2005-06			

The National Family Health Survey came out about every six years covering a period of 13 years between 1993 and 2006. With its sample population being women and men in their reproductive years, the survey covered both maternal and child health indicators including children's nutritional status. I will get to the conceptual models later but let me first give you briefly the early history of the development of nutrition surveillance systems.

I went back to a period in the 1950, not expecting to find much sensitivity to some of the issues that occupy us now. However, I was surprised to find that in the 1950 and 1960, there was a high level of recognition for the need to involve communities, and for the value of their contributions that I had not expected.

Early Milestones in Nutritional Surveillance Methodology

During the post-World War II period, two UN agencies, the FAO and the WHO took the lead in setting up expert committees to develop guidelines and frameworks for assessing nutritional status within newly-formed nations of an expanding post-Colonial world. Notable among these was the WHO expert committee that framed the recommendations for the development of a Guidebook for nutrition workers (WHO, 1963).ⁱⁱ Its objective was to enable nutrition workers to make individual and community assessment of nutritional status using multi-disciplinary approaches that would help to standardize measurement.

The first major guide for conducting community-wide assessment of nutritional status was a 1966 publication by Dr. D.B. Jelliffe which was actually a World Health Organization Monograph, titled “The Assessment of the Nutritional Status of the Community.”ⁱⁱⁱ This publication, which was widely used, brings us into the arena of community participation in making a health-related assessment, mainly restricted to those with medical credentials or to lay workers under the direct supervision of medical personnel. The dominance of clinicians at that time placed doctors and scientists in control over lay workers trained to gather data but perhaps not given as much independence as they are given today. Still, the literature of the early years of nutritional surveillance appears to recognize the value of community involvement and demonstrates sensitivity around ecological and cultural issues, and socio-economic factors that create hunger, starvation and malnutrition.

During the next decade, the 1974 World Food Conference did help to generate a system for nutritional surveillance which was presented in the WHO Technical Report No. 593, Methodology of Nutritional Surveillance (1976)^{iv} that became a standard reference of the time. Leaving aside the historical details let us turn to a well-rounded definition of community-wide nutritional assessment from Dr. Jelliffe. I believe this assessment is extremely valuable in showing an early commitment to community participation in nutritional assessments:

“The principal aim of the nutritional assessment of a community is then, to map out the magnitude and geographical distribution of malnutrition as a public health problem, to discover and analyse the ecological factors that are directly or indirectly responsible and, where possible, to suggest appropriate corrective measures preferably capable of being applied with continuing community participation.”
(Jelliffe, 1966; p.7)

For me, this definition emphasizes the need for local input, community involvement in looking at and in determining what indicators to use, how to go about measuring them and the longstanding recognition of the importance of involving communities in health promotion on the part of pediatricians and public health practitioners. To get back to the issue of the Asian enigma, hunger in a growth economy, we have been hearing from previous speakers that children in India suffer very high levels of stunting, underweight and wasting. Additionally, seven out of ten of them are anaemic.

Selecting the Case

Thailand’s experience is an exemplary case of how community participation at many levels can lead to widespread improvement in children’s nutritional status. In 1995, the *Food and Nutrition Bulletin* published a set of articles that evaluated the success stories in child nutrition rehabilitation in Asia.^v Members of UNICEF at that time analyzed some of the failures that had taken place in programmes funded by UNICEF and pointed out how there was a disjuncture between the surveillance system and the information that needed to be transmitted to the community. So we see, at least in the

literature from the early 1990s onwards, communities being involved in nutritional assessments and a greater recognition for their role in bridging communication between those who compiled the data and those who contributed the data.

Background

Between 1982 to 1991, Thailand reduced malnutrition rates in pre-school children from over 50 per cent to less than 20 per cent. 'Pre-school children' is not a category (referring back to Vandana's concern about placing children in categories), but a grouping. I did not find an age-range listed but it is obviously children below six years. Thailand had initiated action to bring down the child malnutrition rate soon after Alma Ata (1978) and they had created a primary healthcare (PHC) strategy which mobilized volunteers at the village-level. But the PHC strategy by itself was not effective in reducing the rates as much as expected. In 1981, the government introduced the Poverty Alleviation Plan, and in 1986 the country adopted the Basic Minimum Needs (BMN) approach, which was defined as a socially-oriented, community-based, inter-sectoral development process that was carried out by local people. The specialists, who had reviewed this programme, feel these two actions of the government were meant to strengthen social development in the country and involve the people in the processes of local and national development, thereby creating an enabling environment of increased knowledge and heightened consciousness for social change.

Critical Factors in Thailand's Success

Nutrition specialists, Tontisirin and Gillespie (1999)^{vi}, have identified four factors critical in bringing down rates of child malnutrition in Thailand on a national scale.

Planning

The first factor was **planning** that engaged the stakeholder communities in dialogue with administrators. At the macro-level, it involved specialists, bureaucrats and policy planners, and at the micro-level, community leaders as well as professionals, NGOs, government officials, and government officials at the district level were involved.

Integration

The second factor determined to be critical was **integration** of nutrition with other sectors, i.e., as pointed out by some speakers earlier today, it was recognized that malnutrition is a multifactorial problem. They discovered that, in particular, factors such as livelihood, household income, education and agriculture had a very close connection to the nutritional status of the population. In 1981, the National Poverty Alleviation Plan had started income generation projects that promoted agriculture and education, and the linking up of the projects that were started in these sectors with the campaign to bring down malnutrition rates proved successful.

Social mobilization

The third critical factor in Thailand's success story was the campaign's adoption of **social mobilization** as a communication strategy to mobilize support and disseminate relevant information. Service providers based in the community became the facilitators; they were initially trained for sensitizing the local population about the issues, thereby emerging as leaders who could work with community members and key opinion-formers. A second group was created and constituted of volunteers, who were made *mobilisers*; they were residents of the community who were selected to be the link between service delivery establishments, the community and the members of the families or the households with children in the target age range.

Women played a key role, although men were also included and they participated. There was no monetary compensation for mobilisers but they, as well as their families, were given free medical services. For the purpose of easy identification, they were given a badge and uniform and their work was occasionally recognized through certificates and awards. These were the only material compensation they received for the work they did.

One of the crucial factors for the success of the mobilisers was the training that they received- introductory training, an orientation as well as continued training. They learnt about the theory and practice of basic nutrition and health which they had to impart to the mothers in their communities. I did not mention earlier that each mobiliser was responsible for about 10 to 20 households. This is actually a small number when you compare it with the ASHAs, who have a much larger responsibility in terms of households and population. Ten, twenty households perhaps represent a lesser remit, however it may also have enabled the mobilisers to act and function more efficiently as motivators and facilitators with the families.

Under the supportive supervision of the facilitators, the mobilisers tracked the nutritional status of children; in turn, they used growth charts and similar aids to help the mothers understand and learn the principles of growth-monitoring. And they also promoted ante-natal health for the mothers and post-natal care behaviours, and encouraged maternal childcare practices that included breast-feeding, weaning or complementary feeding, immunization and growth-monitoring. But their ongoing training, as far as imparting substantive knowledge of the areas they were covering in their work, also gave them communication skills to contact local bodies such as women's groups and associations and foster self-help.

Local Surveillance

Finally, the fourth factor for Thailand's success was **local surveillance**. All pre-school children in the community were weighed every three months and these surveillance activities educated the mothers and the mobilisers, giving them experiential knowledge of growth monitoring and stages in malnutrition such as growth faltering. They also set goals in the Basic Minimum Needs (BMN) programmes and measured the indicators for them. In this process, they could observe the interrelations between progress in social development and the overcoming of child malnutrition.

Contextual Factors in Success

- Political commitment that filtered down to all levels and recognized nutritional goals as an integral aspect of development;
- A culture that involved women in decision-making and the presence of literate women;
- Presence of diverse women's organizations and service delivery capacity;
- Charismatic community leaders able to mobilize people and enhance their sense of capability;
- The "parallel implementation of poverty-reducing programs, particularly integrated with nutrition-oriented programs or projects." (Tontisirin & Gillespie, 1999; p. 45)

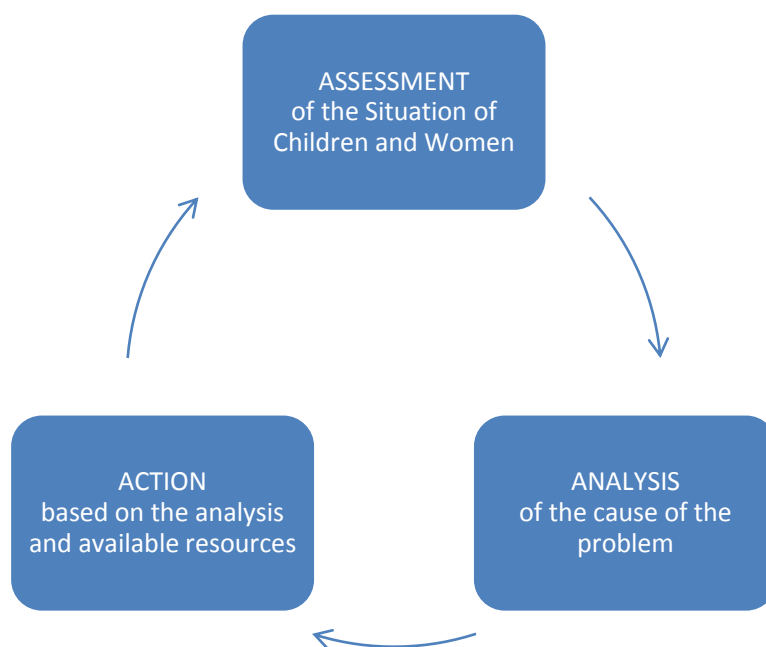
Programmatic Factors in Success

- Awareness creation of the causes and consequences of malnutrition viewed within a hierarchy;
- Creation of participatory learning and action to address problem(s)
- Clear identification and definition of time-bound goals at all levels of the project;
- Inculcation of a sense of joint ownership by government and community and its promotion by facilitators
- Effective leadership, training and supervision of facilitators and *mobilizers*;
- A balance between grassroots and higher level actions as well as community-based monitoring.
- The participation of local NGOs through personnel, training and initiatives that stress accountability and thereby contribute to sustainability.

The slides above list the contextual factors (p. 45) and the programmatic features (pp. 45-46) that are associated with the success of 21 community-based nutrition programs to combat malnutrition

in South Asia which Tontisirin and Gillespie have culled from a UNICEF study. It is a compendium of factors that are relevant to health and other social programmes. Foremost among these factors are the culture that involves women in decision-making processes, the capacity to deliver services, charismatic community leaders and the parallel implementation of poverty-reducing programmes that I have mentioned, particularly integrated with nutrition-oriented programmes or projects. Programmatic factors such as participatory learning and action, clear identification of time-bound goals, joint-ownership by community and government and community-based monitoring or oversight are other features critical for success in other areas as well.

UNICEF: 'TRIPLE A' CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR NUTRITIONAL SURVEILLANCE



Source: <http://archive.unu.edu/unupress/food/8F162e/8F162E04.gif>

It is necessary to link process to outcome. UNICEF used the Triple A model to link assessment to analysis and then to action for introducing a process orientation for service delivery programs that characterize nutrition interventions. And it is important for us to understand that communities and stakeholders, regardless of their level of education, are intelligent people who need to understand the processes that are being set in motion. They must not only be part of the process but also understand the conceptual foundations of the programme in order to identify the problem, understand how it is being addressed and what to expect as outcome. And by bringing them into that process, we assure a better outcome that can be sustained.

Finally, and this is the last slide, I wanted to focus on political will. When we read about the success of public health programmes, we learn that political will was instrumental in bringing about success. But we do not, as far as I could see, have an index of political will, we do not have a way of assessing the political commitment of the Planning Commission, for instance, or the lower level district functionaries, in order to monitor fluctuations in their commitment and make them accountable. We know once actions have been planned, and laws have been passed, it is sustained political that will ensure that they are implemented or enforced and that the people benefit from them. I do want to end by asking you to think about a political will index that civil society organisations and activist groups can develop to make our bureaucrats more accountable.

Thank you!

ⁱI appreciate the assistance of Ganga Goswami and Dinesh Joshi with my literature search, and the support of Monika Walia for organizing and processing data.

ⁱⁱ WHO Technical Report Series No. 258 (1963). Expert Committee on Medical Assessment of Nutritional Status. Geneva; World Health Organization.

ⁱⁱⁱ WHO Monograph Series No. 53 (1966) D.B. Jelliffe. *The Assessment of the Nutritional Status of the Community* (With special reference to field surveys in developing regions of the world). Geneva, World Health Organization.

^{iv} WHO Monograph Series No. 593, (1976). Methodology of Nutritional Surveillance, Report of a Joint FAO/UNICEF/WHO Expert Committee, Geneva: World Health Organization.

^vJonsson, U. (1995). "Towards an Improved Strategy for Nutrition Surveillance," *Food and Nutrition Bulletin*, Vol. 16(2).

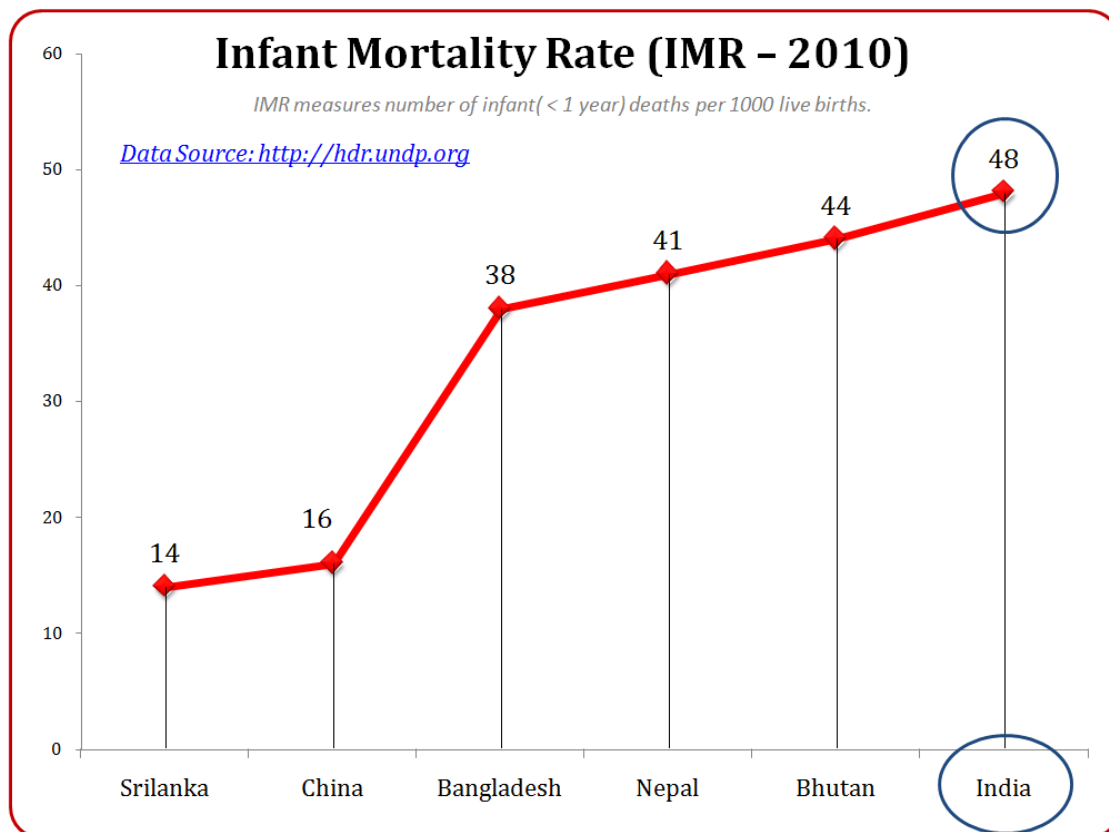
^{vi}Tontiserin, K. and S. Gillespie, (1999) "Linking Community-Based Programs and Service Delivery for Improving Maternal and Child Nutrition," *Asian Development Review*, Vol. 17 (1, 2) pp. 33-65.

The Experience of Community Monitoring of Nutritional Status and Interventions in Maharashtra and Orissa

K.K. Pal

I am not an expert in nutrition. I was brought into the arena of nutrition surveillance system and related data analysis by Dr. S.B. Agnihotri about fifteen years ago. Dr. S.B. Agnihotri often talked about *chakravyuh*, the vicious cycle of malnutrition our children are suffering from.

For me, it has been another kind of *chakravyuh*. I entered into this *chakravyuh* and could not come out of this because once you see the data on malnutrition, find out that things that could be done and are not being done, resulting in high morbidity and mortality of our children, it is very difficult to walk out from this.



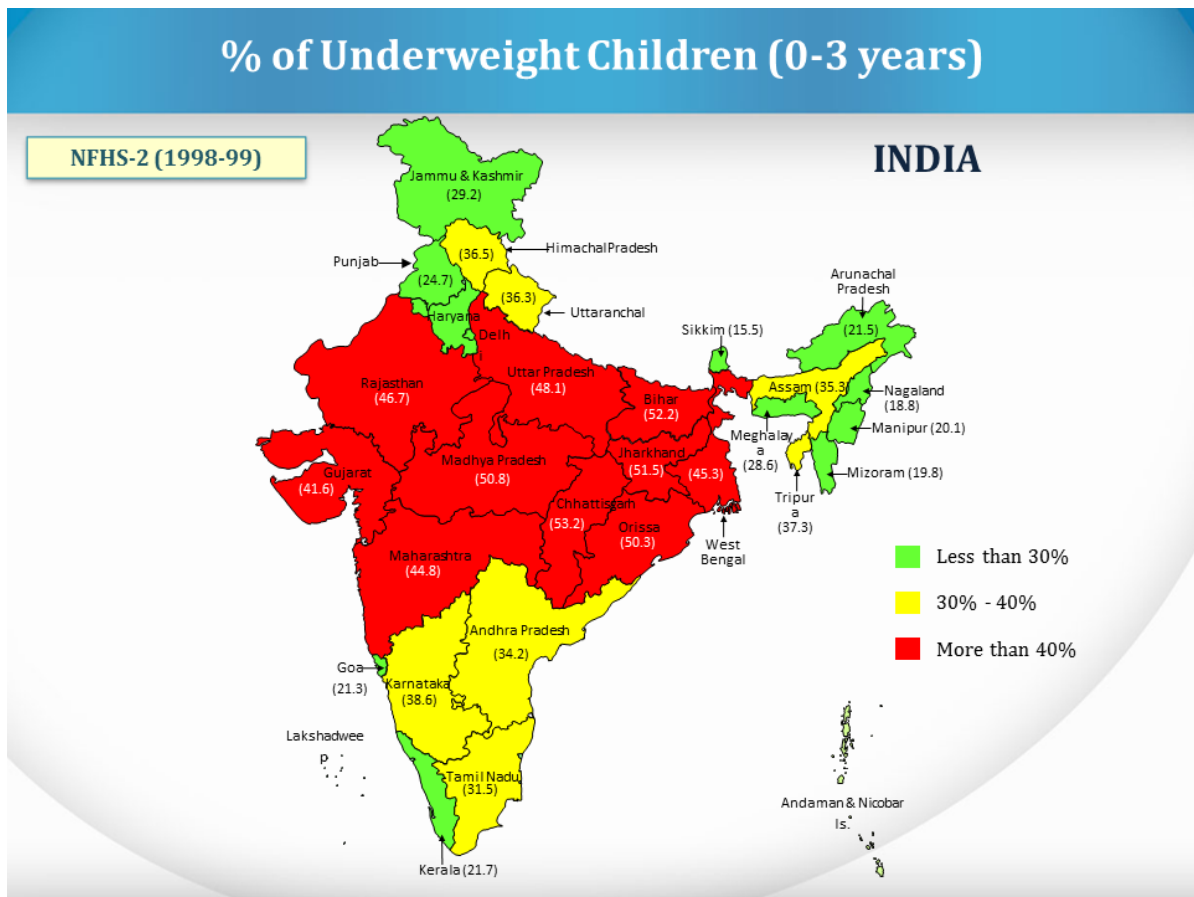
Today, my talking points are:

- Reduction of malnutrition: what (National Family Health Survey) NFHS 3 and NFHS 2 reveal.
- Two states (i.e., Maharashtra and Orissa) which reduced most between this period.
- What was the strategy in those two states?
- Can we go for (Anganwadi Centre) AWC/village level nutrition surveillance? Why (Integrated Child Development Services) ICDS nutrition data do not expose malnutrition of children at village level?
- I take the cue from Vandana when she says that every mother and child needs to be tracked. Is it possible? Can it be done?

Looking at what is happening now, it is very much possible. We have to have a clear mindset about it.

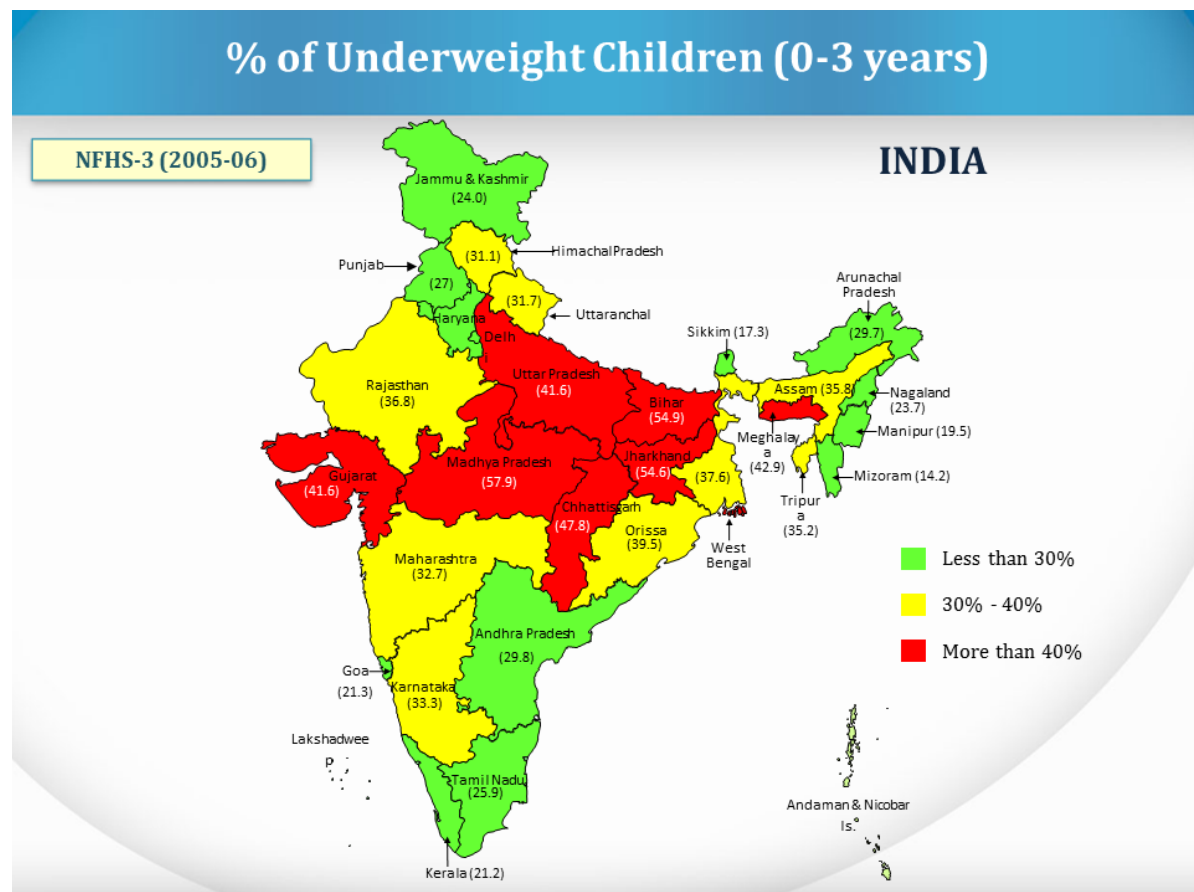
I will go straightaway to NFHS 2 and NFHS 3.

% of Underweight Children (0-3 years)



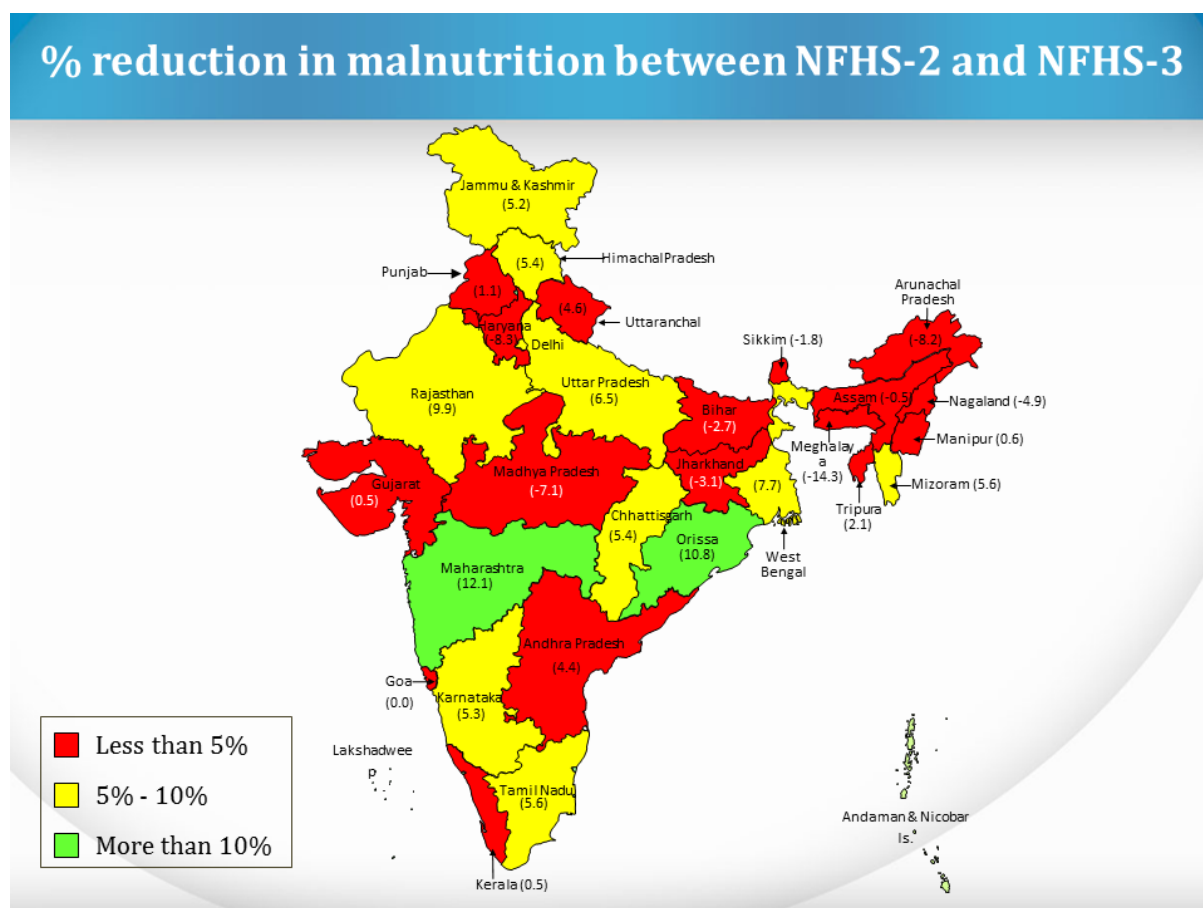
This graphic depicts the prevalence of child malnutrition in India during the period 1998-1999, when the NFHS 2 was conducted. Here you can see States with malnourishment in more than 40 per cent of children falling within the red zones.

% of Underweight Children (0-3 years)



And if we look at NFHS 3, conducted in 2005-2006, and compare it with NFHS2, the situation has changed somewhat but not to the extent we would have liked. And states like Meghalaya have again turned south with increased malnutrition.

But if we look at the states, which have turned around most between NFHS2 and NFHS 3, these are Maharashtra and Orissa.



Maharashtra reduced Under-3 malnutrition by 12.1 per cent and Orissa by 10.2 per cent.

Let us see what was in common in those two states, and what perhaps brought the welcome change over there.

Both the states tried to take ICDS closer towards the community.

Firstly, they tried to increase weighing efficiency by aiming to weigh all children and thereby expose malnutrition.

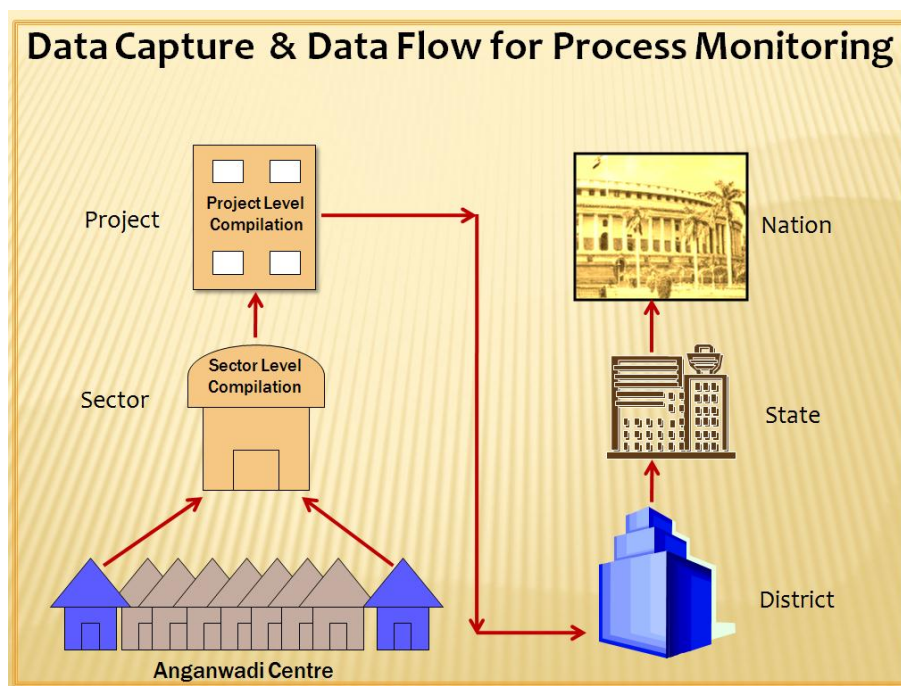
Secondly, both states focused on community interventions and looked at children with compassion and not as a number in ICDS.

Maharashtra strategy was taking care of Severe Acute Malnutrition and/or Moderate Acute Malnutrition (SAM/MAM) children in Nutrition Rehabilitation Centres (NRCs), but then they found it difficult in certain cases. Taking mothers out of the village or home for long periods of time was found to be difficult, especially when the mother had other children to be looked after. So, gradually they moved towards Village Child Development Centres (VCDC) (alongside NRCs). Thus the VCDC came into existence and definitely gave the desired result.

In Orissa the strategy was 'We too can do' (*Ame Bhi Paribu*), a very intense 'positive deviance' programme involving the community and it definitely showed results. It was a very intense positive deviance programme and very difficult to implement. It took a lot of energy and time but again it definitely showed certain results with a kind of intensity that was possible at that point of time.

Why does nutrition surveillance by the ICDS not expose the extent of malnutrition in a village?

Let us now look at the data flow system of ICDS:



Nutritional status data of children comes from anganwadi centres every month. Huge datasets, collected manually, come to the sector – (20-30 *anganwadis* form a sector) – where a sector supervisor again manually compiles the data.

From the sector, the compiled data goes to the project. At project-level the data is again compiled into the project-level Monthly Progress Report (MPR). This project level data is then disseminated to the district, state and nation.

And what we see all over India is the project-level data.

Now, this is a system where a lot of manual work goes on at every level starting from the *anganwadi* worker level to the sector level (seven pages for each *anganwadi* centre) and then finally to the project level. And what happens to the data? Nothing! No analysis, no action plan!

So, everything goes up and up and up, and nothing comes down to the child from that data. No exposure of malnutrition at village level, no action plan based on data collected by an AWC.

Nobody knows what is happening at the anganwadi centre level. The anganwadi worker does not know, the supervisor does not know, the Child Development Program Officer (CDPO) hardly knows because everybody is busy filling up forms without having an analysis of any kind.

Pockets of malnutrition within the ICDS project remain unseen. And severely malnourished children needing urgent therapeutic interventions are, most of the time, completely unattended by the healthcare system.

In the present system:

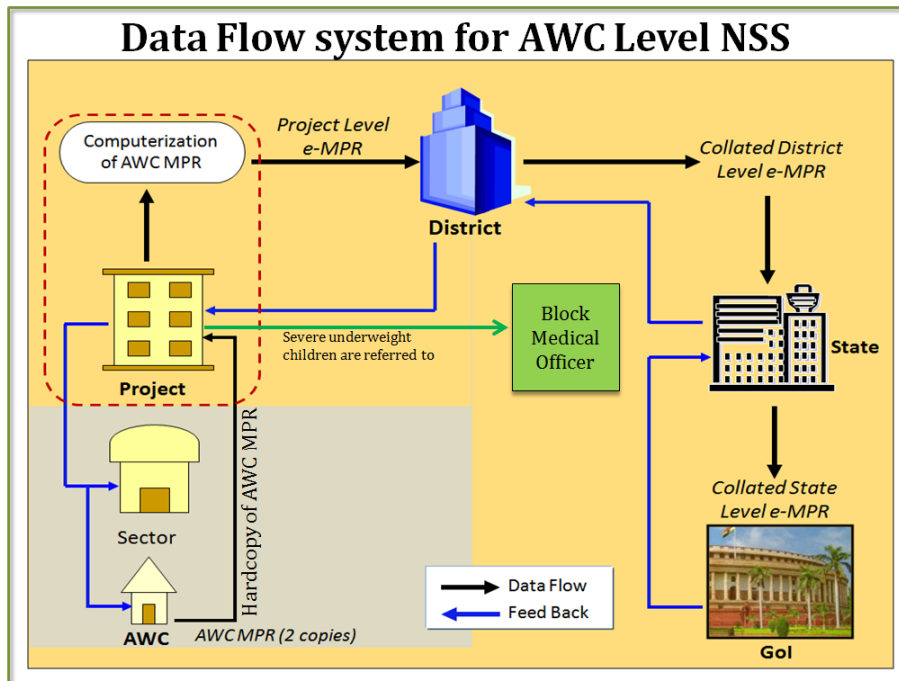
- At no level, can the current month's data be compared with the previous month's data so you do not know what is happening – good or bad;
- Chances of error increase as every compilation is manual. And since nothing comes down, nobody feels any urge to provide good/correct data. Hence, the quality of data goes from bad to worse every time.

- Much valuable information is lost as the data is collated at project level. For example, at the *anganwadi* centre level we have very detailed information with complete breakdown of the nutritional status of children by age and by sex.

We lose all that detail when we look at ICDS project level data.

New Initiative in Maharashtra to Analyse AWC/Village-Level Data for Action Plan

A recent initiative started in Maharashtra envisages the data at the *anganwadi* centre level. There are 89,542 rural and tribal *anganwadis* in Maharashtra. All the AWCs of every village have been mapped and AWC level data is being uploaded to the web.



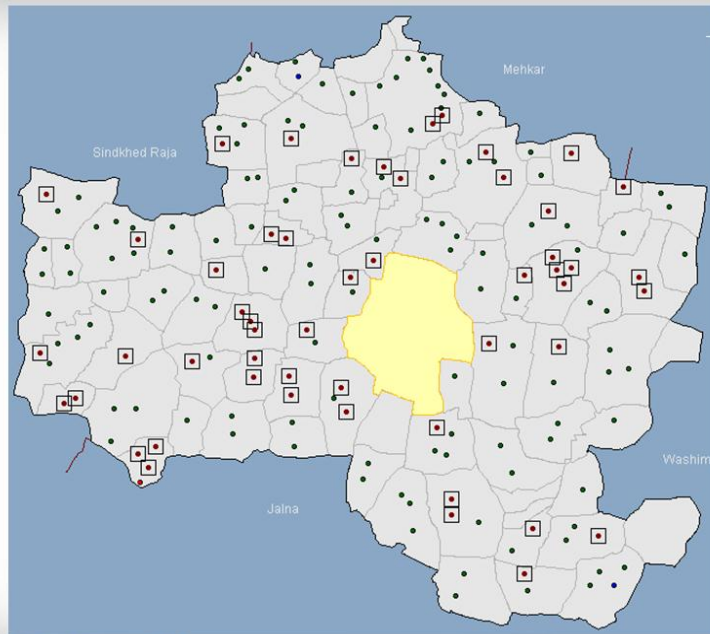
In every CDPO's project (which is at sub-district level), we can determine where say, more than 2 per cent children are underweight.

In fact, a very interesting scenario is coming up with newborns; during the 0-6 months time when they are breastfed, we found in 155 *anganwadis* reporting 95per cent of children as normal. The moment children enter the 6-12 months age group, (when they are started on complementary feeding), the percentage of normal children drastically falls. It further slides when these children are between 1-2 years.

The above scenario gives a clear understanding, not only where things are going wrong, but also what is going wrong.

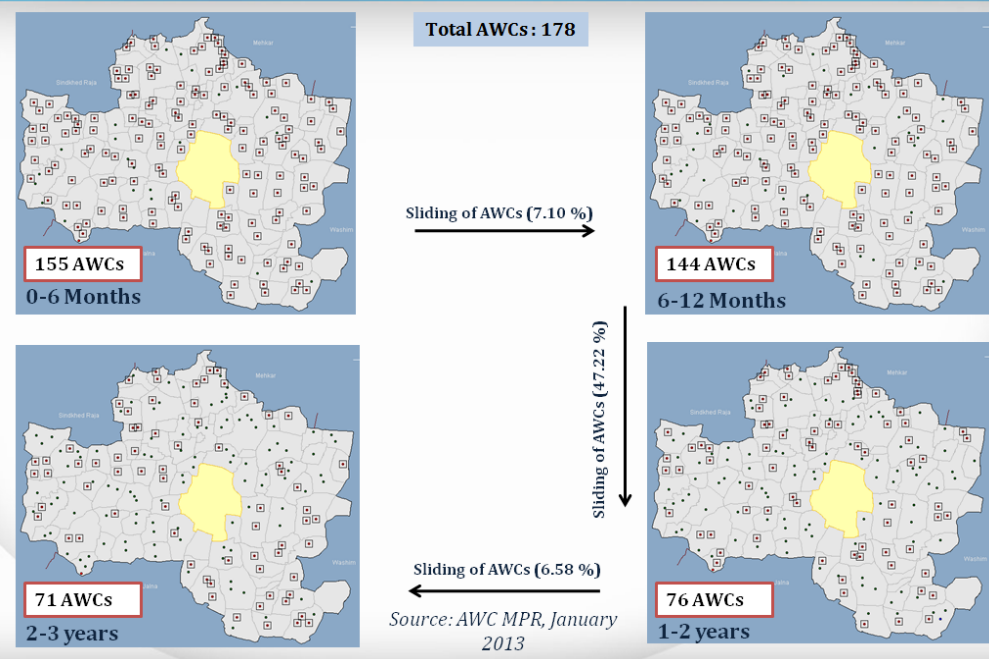
This is the advantage of making every *anganwadi* visible.

AWCs where % Severely Underweight Children is more than 2 %



Source: AWC MPR, January 2013

AWCs where % Normal Children is more than 95 %



The data reveal

- A considerable number of children are born with LBW (low birth weight).
- Poor growth of foetus and poor complementary feeding practice (after six months of age).

These are the two main causes of child malnutrition in the state of Maharashtra, which have established the urgency of tracking all children from mother's womb (<9 months) to two years.

Presently, Child in Need Institute (CINI) and Nandi Foundation and quite a few other organisations are working on pilot projects in India to track mother and child for the first 1,000 days of child's life (<9 months to 2 years of age), like Vandana said.

Finally, things have started happening. Though still in a very nascent stage, and in small areas, it is doable! With a hope that government, and specifically ICDS, in the near future will take up such initiatives - with that ray of hope, I conclude my presentation.

Thank you.

Developing a Socio-Medical Tool for Nutritional Surveillance: Sharing the Follow up Action of Workshop 2010

Ritu Priya

What I will very quickly try and do is report back on what we have done since May 2010, when the conclusion of that workshop was really to say that we need a community based nutrition surveillance system which can be used by communities and by civil society groups working with communities. It was also hoped that the tool as such can be used by administration and by government if they want to use it. What was the need felt for doing so, and what is it that we have done since, I will briefly try and share this with you now.

Reasons for Focus on Surveillance

I must add that this idea came from an effort where we asked ourselves what the Centre of Social Medicine and Community Health in Jawaharlal Nehru University can contribute to this kind of discussion and what we could see that was missing in it?

One, there was a lot of confusion about language and terms, which were loosely used to mask and fudge ideas. For instance, the kind of use of terminology which tends to show that interventions are inclusive, being comprehensive and so on, but actually end up doing the reverse and we have seen some evidence of that in the morning.

So let me begin by looking at why we said would develop a surveillance system. We already have in our nutrition programmes, the whole issue of monitoring. So what is the difference between monitoring and surveillance? Why are we talking of a community-based surveillance system? We already have growth monitoring by the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) and it is meant to be for every child, every month. The individual child's growth monitoring and then attending to growth faltering, and thereby individual targeted action. Surveillance is meant to be at the sub-population or population level. If we look at the present documents since our workshop in May 2010, we see that there was in August 2010 the Planning Commission multi-stakeholder retreat on addressing India's nutrition challenges and that report has recommended again surveillance and monitoring and the two terms just come to be used simultaneously together all the time. So what is it that is different and why do we need to have it looked at differently?

Definition for 'Monitoring' Versus Definition for 'Surveillance'

We looked at some of the public health nutrition books and so on to see what the terms mean. Now clearly what we have is 'nutrition monitoring of the individual child' which is growth monitoring. There is 'nutrition monitoring at the population level' which measures the nutritional status of populations or a sub-group, the changes in it, and largely focuses on programmatic indicators. 'Nutrition surveillance' is the ongoing systematic collection of population level nutritional data, and one of the things that can happen at periodic points of time. *Surveillance is the ongoing systematic collection, analysis and interpretation of health related data, in this case nutrition related data, which includes indicators of outcomes and determinants rather than input and process indicators so it is not as programme-oriented as monitoring can be.* The difference between the two is also that the measures collected for surveillance purposes are often less precise compared to measures collected for monitoring systems. In surveillance, the early detection of the occurrence of adverse effects that prompt intervention gets precedence over scientific completeness. So you are looking more for sensitivity rather than specificity of what is it that you are identifying, in an attempt to get it quickly and rapidly and thereby be able to intervene early enough.

Why the need for a new nutritional surveillance system? Presently we have the National Nutrition Monitoring Bureau (NNMB), we have the National Family Health Survey (NFHS), we have National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) giving us the intake data and consumption data, District Level Health Survey (DLHS), now the Annual Health Surveys and the Integrated Child Development

Services (ICDS). All of these do collect health data in communities of which nutrition is also a part. They do provide enough data to track broad trends over time and compare across regions and groups that are covered. Yet none of these data systems identify vulnerable groups and households. And they do not lead to local analysis or action. ICDS could do that, but it largely is focused on the individual child and does not do group level or community level analysis, which the CDPO could; there is a possibility and we hope to build on that in the surveillance system. Surveillance, that is continued data collection for early detection of distress at population level, is absent in this whole framework. The ICDS, like I said, could do this. Since levels of endemic chronic under-nutrition are so high, the surveillance system would record this. So, it is not only recording distress and the early detection of distress, but documenting what is endemic and prevailing. The surveillance system picks up the chronic malnutrition, which is there and also early signs of acute malnutrition at a population level.

'Meso' Level Approach

The second need was also that as far as the discourse of civil society on food security and the right to food campaign and so on are concerned, like I said in the morning, there were two very clear approaches. One is, what was seen as the micro level, minimalist approach, which is saying relief for the poor - security for entitlements through subsidised food supplies. Or you focus on identifying SAM and doing something about the children so they do not die. The other is macro level completely, which advocates for strengthening agricultural resources of food and sustainable ways of ensuring distribution and access to everyone. What was felt missing completely in this was the meso level approach. Where it is not the individual or the macro national level policy planning level or state planning level, but you are looking at community level; and you have heard enough about that from several presenters now to say that community level is seen as important. The meso level solution was to bridge this micro-macro divide, proposing therefore that a community level strategy be worked out.

May 2010 Workshop Resolutions

The May 2010 workshop concluded with two resolutions. First, that the socio-medical methodology for investigating and establishing a starvation death, as developed by the Jan Swasthya Abhiyan and adapted for use by the Commissioners to the Supreme Court, was technically valid. Now that is a methodology which used biomedical dimensions as well as social dimensions, and the social context in which the death occurred and therefore justified identifying the death as due to starvation, and not merely looked at the grain in the stomach as Ashwin told us in the morning. Second was, that there is a need to develop socio-medical tools for early identification of acute food shortages and economic distress so that the community can start taking action, and so can the administration, if it is interested in ensuring that starvation does not happen. This also got initiated because the Secretary of Disaster Management in Bihar asked the question that said okay, you are technical people, tell me what we can do to prevent the starvation, you are coming to us after a starvation death, to investigate it, but what do I do if I do not want starvation deaths to happen? So there are administrators who want to do something and that gives the hope also that this will be used.

Reasons for Community-Based Surveillance

Now, why a community-based surveillance? There are surveillance systems where you have got data on food prices; you have got data on how much is being bought off the market and therefore consumed. There is what the NSSO gives us: what is being consumed by households. And you have anthropometry by NNMB, and so on.

So what is this, which is different? One, that all that data tends to come after sometime and therefore is neither ready nor available for early detection or for early action. Two, that to understand the reasons and review strategies, for the whole enigma that we have before us in India, of saying why whatever levels of increase in income, is not translating into nutritional

improvements. Only the very local examination would help us to look at context specific pathways to understand how this continuing malnutrition at the levels that it exists,

The crux of it being that we are looking at the need for community-based surveillance so it can address all the three negative outcomes of the development of agriculture, food production and nutrition policies in the last five decades, that I again spoke of while introducing this consultation. One is that, it reduced the diversity of foods and food production systems and increased disparities; two, it did not incorporate all the multi-dimensional factors that are involved in food and nutrition; and three, that it completely removed agency of communities. So only through a community-based surveillance system can we bring back some of these.

Criteria for Proposed Surveillance System

Therefore, one, the surveillance system must give due consideration to variation and diversity of dietary pattern and access to food based on regional ecology with caste, class and gender dimensions being woven into the process of surveillance and then the action. Two, can it incorporate the multiple links of nutrition security with food production systems, food prices, work patterns, employment, income etc? Third, can it facilitate action by communities and bring back agency of communities in this process? What I was referring to was also taken up by the multi-stakeholder retreat on addressing nutrition challenges of the Planning Commission what I have quoted here. I'll just read out one part of this, the rest is for you to read yourself:

"Have an effective nation-wide surveillance mechanism in place to provide insight into the causes and remedies of malnutrition; also devise a method for timely intervention. Build ownership of the programme amongst households, communities, civil societies and local bodies of governance. There should be an inclusive community surveillance mechanism in place. It would be beneficial to engage and assist CBOs, NGOs, institutions, etc."

Now by looking at this, it also is not 'not doable'. We already have the example of Thailand, as Nalini has already described. Bangladesh is another which has had a fairly sharp decline, and a steeper decline than India has had over a period when it also had instituted community-based surveillance from the mid 1990s to 2006-7. So we are not only looking at much smaller countries, but are also talking of our Indian states and state level action and that is where we can see similarities. We have also had examples such as Professor Banerjee has used the 'self reported hunger' as an indicator; asking for lack of two square meals a day or how many were getting two square meals. He used it largely as an indicator of, and for classification of, households by socio-economic status. The Planning Commission subsequently did that and introduced it in as a tool in its methodology for assessing poverty households.

Now, what this indicator can do, is that it allows assessment of broad changes in hunger over time, when you have got the same indicator being used over different periods of time. This is the absolutely base level question of asking, how many days in the year do you get two square meals a day, or do you not get two square meals a day. It gives us a measure of the absolute minimum number of houses in poverty because it is the households who are self-reporting, not getting adequate food in the day, which is where a large part of under-reporting happens. As conditions change, indicators and tools have to be revised and one can see that, as various surveys have shown, the percentage of families who say that we did not have two square meals a day have fairly, significantly declined. Yet certain issues do exit, like I said of families not wanting to own up to it, or families not even recognising that there is hunger because there is adaptation process by which the low levels of intake are taken as normal and therefore a non-recognition of the issue. But this tool does show the use of lay perception in assessing that nutritional problems could be one of the tools along with other sources of data. Therefore, the need again for a surveillance mechanism.

Prior Efforts at the National Institute of Nutrition (NIN)

The NIN, we found, had made efforts in developing this kind of a community-based surveillance system in the mid- 1990s and we are trying to see what it was. We could not get all the documents and we were hoping that Dr. Veena Shatrugna would help us to procure more details on it. But what we could get was an abstract from Dr. Krishnayya and Ashtekar, 1996 where they describe how NIN had attempted to develop and pilot a model to forecast nutritional stress on a village-wide basis, to create a model to be used at district level, very close to the kind of thing we are talking of. It was designed with the following objectives and methodological approach. The general objective was to develop a nutritional surveillance model at the village level useful for micro planning using simple yet sensitive indicators.

The specific objective was:

To study the relationship of agriculture, economics, environment and basic indicators, taking multi-dimensional factors.

To identify sensitive indicators associated with nutrition and health status.

To develop a simple, fast, cost effective surveillance tool.

But it appears from what we see in Krishnayya and Ashtekar that they did a modelling exercise, again using macro data sets for analysis and not undertaking location-specific data gathering and mobilisation efforts. [You know, much like at this point of time, administrations identify drought affected areas and put in relief works. Actually today this is one way the administration has of identifying populations with likely food shortage and providing relief.] Here, this seems to be a similar kind of methodology and we know from the drought affected area identification that it happens several months after a series of distress conditions have already set in. So this does not seem to be adequately what one needs.

The NIN seems to have concluded (from the several findings that they had from their modelling and attempts to use the model), that they had great difficulty in identifying any country- wide indicators that could be easily used nationally due to variations in data-gathering systems across states. Also, the variation in determinants, even within a state, across districts and villages, made the model an extremely complex exercise. Third, that the model which was developed did not succeed in getting operationalized is obvious in the fact that we do not see it anywhere on the ground. So, what is it that we have learnt? One, we see that it again was not really looking at community-level and community-based data gathering exercises, and two, this approach of looking at common indicators all across the country had not worked.

The JNU - *Koi Bhookha Na Soye Tool*

What we therefore have attempted to develop through the CSMCH, JNU and SADED's *Koi Bhookha Na Soye* initiative (No one goes to bed hungry), which was taken up after May 2010 to bring groups together to work on this from the dimension that the gentleman earlier has talked about-what can the communities themselves do about it. We perceive this as complementary with the Right to Food approach of ensuring that the state recognises its responsibility. These two came together and have attempted to develop a tool for community level nutritional surveillance with consideration of all the issues that were discussed in that workshop and many of which have come up in this morning's discussion as well. In the initial stages we had a discussion with Dr. Veena Shatrugna and Vandana Prasad which was very valuable. This tool has now been field tested with health workers in four *bastis* of Delhi and in the Hapur rural area. We have got feedback and attempted to develop the tool and build the feedback into it so as to strengthen it further. What my presentation includes is the objectives that we set out, the basic elements of the background of the tool, and the principles used.

The objective was to develop a data collection and analysis tool that generates data for the following: one, early detection of food shortages, impending food shortages at community level; two, providing information that facilitates local action at both individual and collective level and

three, providing information that can be used for administrative action and policy formulation. Can we do this together through one methodology? Possible additional uses that one can envisage are, for example, now that we have also getting over-nutrition being reported, diabetes in malnourished persons being reported and so on, this kind of a surveillance system could also pick these kinds of elements and changes that are coming into the nutrition scenario in the country. Special surveys could be added on, at specific sites with specific purposes at points of time. Issues related to the Indian enigma of economic growth without commensurate reduction in malnutrition could be examined and the debate could have a better understanding through the smaller community datasets. The debate which includes looking at this enigma of not decreasing malnutrition at one level and also the contentious facts therefore of decreasing need and demand for calories because the manual work required has gone down. The fact of changes in diet pattern where you are seeing that the kind of foods that people are diversifying into, eating more of oils and meat and animal products and so on. Where is that happening? We have papers by different people bringing up this debate and if we can examine some of that through this data gathering tool there would be additional benefits that one can see.

The assumptions in developing the JNU - *Koi Bhooka Na Soye* tool as we dubbed it, were three elements – the natural history of endemic and epidemic under-nutrition, again this is something that Vandana referred to. We are looking at chronic malnutrition-starting from low birth weight to chronic malnutrition, to the intervention of acute and acute-on- chronic being the frame which really then leads to the cycle of malnutrition, disease and death, both as childhood deaths and as starvation deaths. This tends to happen in those who are chronically malnourished and go into periods of acute malnutrition. We are looking at this continuum which is important because the current major focus is on acute malnutrition alone and SAM, without looking at the whole trajectory before that. This tool must attempt to do that.

Secondly, the causality of hunger and malnutrition in India - again we have got arguments being made that maybe we are looking at an overestimation rather than an underestimation, because the causality and it is not getting affected by economic growth and so it is being proposed that it is probably not economic factors which are important, it is mothers and how they behave and so on and so forth. The causality, as data show, is very clearly that a large part of the under-nutrition is caused by income levels, poverty and disparities in society. Therefore, the kind of dietary intakes that happen. Not to ignore the fact that there is some under-nutrition which happens in those with higher incomes and there the factors are different. But we also need to recognise what higher incomes in our case in India mean; when we say higher incomes we say APL (or above poverty line), is again not rich people or affluent people we talk about, because what we call middle class really is the top 5 per cent so we are talking of 60 per cent of the population - people who are above the poverty line and yet very close to it and often insecure in that frame. But there will be overlays of environmental conditions, communicable diseases and so on which would add on to the process, including the lack of diversity that happens in food, adding to the micronutrient deficiencies as well.

Thirdly, the perceptions of hunger and malnutrition that do or do not lead to recognising the problem and then leading from it, action taking. Here I won't go into the details of each of these since time is short but we spelt each of these out so that together we can see a full model of what we were wanting to capture through the surveillance system. Just very quickly to say about the perception of chronic malnutrition; it is not recognised as hunger. What we find through various studies and ground experience is that the communities themselves do not recognise it because they get adapted to or have got used to those levels.

The healthcare providers today are not doing what they were doing 15 years ago i.e., listing malnutrition as a priority issue and part of the explanation seems to be the medicalization of interventions that have come in for malnutrition, and we have studies to show that. But in the perception of administrators, it is not recognised to the extent that it exists in their area.... 'Yes we have figures showing that in the country there are 45% to 50% of children who are malnourished but not in *my* district, not in *my* state' or the ANM will say not in my area but somewhere it must be

there. So, this non recognition of what is there in our area where we are meant to act means that action does not happen. The documentation does not happen and the action does not happen.

The current international paediatric and public health nutrition-led discourse has also revived what was an old formulation - acute malnutrition is important because intervention can do something about it, while for the stunted it will only mean more obesity of the child and therefore we should not do food supplementation for them. That is the whole rationale being given for why SAM alone should be addressed. Completely not accepting this as a part of our conceptual framework, recognising also that people's perception and knowledge has a lot of relevance to understanding what happens to the changing food production and access, and definitely in picking up economic distress and early signs of food shortages, compelled us to build that into our approach.

Thus, the tool was developed with principles adopted keeping in mind that it fulfils the following **basic requirements**: it should identify chronic and acute malnutrition to address the entire spectrum, should identify community level shortages of food, should be able to capture early signs of food shortages or impending shortages and economic distress, and to facilitate local action at both individual and collective levels, so the method of data collection would be such that it will facilitate action as well.

The essential characteristics were to be the following: it should be usable by health workers, easily analysable at local levels, should combine biomedical and social indicators of under-nutrition and its determinants, should be flexible to allow for local specificities to be incorporated and yet it should then be generalizable enough so that we can aggregate upto larger levels, and should be comparable over time. That is when surveillance will become meaningful. The methodology therefore had to be multidimensional collecting quantitative and qualitative data and it should fulfil the required criteria.

In conclusion, what I have attempted to do, is to firstly demonstrate the necessity of developing a community - based surveillance and I think all the presentations of the morning have really helped us look at that issue. Secondly, to share the thought process of developing a tool to undertake community - based nutritional surveillance by very rapidly going through that. I have attempted to generate wider interest in community - based surveillance, through which we hope that we can pick up early signs of impending hunger and initiate local action. Whatever analysis we may have of the situation and of the macro economy context of policy making as it is, can we still attempt to do this kind of community - based surveillance and then use that data for action?

Session 1
Discussant's Comments
Imrana Qadeer

Imrana Qadeer (Discussant): I am not a discussant but I am just initiating a discussion because one really needs to read papers if you want proper discussion. The point I would like to make is that I really do not think that these two sets of papers can be separated. They flow into each other, they are very connected. I would only emphasize a few things: can not but look at nutrition historically, and I think it is very important to remember that we have got so used to having programmatic interventions in the name of welfare. But we have forgotten that there is something called the 'overall direction of development'. We again and again get caught, and I think today we are facing that dilemma once again as to how do you critique both together and develop programmes of action and intervention. You are working in a situation where the state, as we know, is in the denial mode, they do not wish to accept that malnutrition is a major problem, they do not wish to accept that people are dying of hunger so they are always finding excuses that people are dying of TB, cholera and so on.

So what is it that we need to begin with in this situation, where there is forced denial and medicalization of a problem which is largely social (in nature)? I think this point was made very well by Madhuri working with the tribals, that who is going to trust us? So it is a political question and I feel that the only rationale of debating these issues for us here is that it is very important to question the kind of knowledge that is being generated and legitimized not only internationally but also nationally, which is very frightening, and therefore for me, the kind of issues that you are raising, as to the validity of simply focusing on acute nutrition, the importance of looking at nutrition as a social problem, the problem of tools. Now again, this whole issue of tools is very critical because we are again medicalising measurements also.

I am thinking in this whole development, you have to put the whole thing on its head and ask yourself if you want a people-centred approach to development and therefore nutrition, then what kind of tools. Somehow, in the definition of nutrition, families and mothers and their ability to recognize that the child is not doing well, is being completely sidelined and I would wish to emphasize that when we talk of tools, the biggest and the most critical instrument that you have is the mother. A mother can say she is not hungry but she will not tell you that her child is not hungry. So this logic that is being forwarded by the social instrument, like asking people 'have you had two full meals? Is the family able to take food?' is irrational. I reject it because yes, people get used to it, so it underestimates your measurement. But it does very easily show you where the need is. And it is one of the most simple instruments. So why are not we giving it the kind of importance that it requires and along with that, as Vandana said, go on putting in all your other tools.

So again, when we talk of tools, I do want to say that it does not mean that one is not concerned about the larger issues of deprivation. For example, when NRHM was happening and NRHM to me is essentially a reproductive health-oriented, population-control centred programme, the state identified districts which are at high risk and it wanted to deal with all those districts, and I am amazed that when it comes to nutrition, that approach simply evades us. So when we are talking of tools, I think the most important tool is that you see which are the poverty-ridden districts and ensure that these are covered, not only by your PDS but by all the interventions that you are talking about.

So when you say that you know that the strategies are micro, macro and meso, I have a slight difference because I feel that you can have micro and meso from the neo-liberal administrative point of view and you can have micro and meso from the people's perspective. And it is good to know that we are talking of community measures and of developing tools at the community level, I think already there is enough experimentation within this country where people have tested that community can monitor their children. Work has also been done like the AIIMS group which went to

Bilaspur and monitored nutrition, and they have even developed instruments which can be used at the lowest possible level to measure simple things.

So there is enough potential and today I feel that we have to argue for a rights-based approach and unless and until it becomes a rights-based approach to nutrition; and we argue with the community as to what the community's need is and what the community shows on the forefront, we will all the time be fighting within ourselves about which is the better tool. I think these tools, as Vandana said, have to be tested at the ground to learn which ones can be used by the communities to take this struggle forward.

Thank you.

Session 1

Comments and Discussion (Open House)

This long session was divided into two parts, so that clarifications, comments and open discussion happened once after the first four presentations, i.e., of AshwinParulkar and AnkitaAggarwal, VikasBajpai, DipaSinha and Vandana Prasad. The session then continued with presentations by NaliniVisvanathan, K.K. Pal and Ritu Priya. The discussants comments, and open house discussion finally occurred at the end. Here both rounds of discussion have been put together in one place for the sake of uniformity and readability.

Biraj Swain (Comments):

I just want to underline the importance the presentation made by Dr.Vikas, Two points: (1) this particular report came in when FAO was being led by the Brazilian Food Minister Jose Graziano da Silbva and Brazil had been commended for handling hunger. As you know, unlike many UN bodies, it is actually a member-led UN body, so India has a lot of say and India has had a lot of voting power and its always had southern leaders, which is why it became important for us to look at why 14 per cent hunger went down.

(2) We did have a period of three months of discussion before Vikas, Kumaran and I got together to look at it and Vikas led this brilliant piece of analysis. (1), FAO never told us what is episodic hunger versus chronic hunger. So, seven years of high food inflation!!! does it qualify for episodic or chronic, that also was never given. (2), A UN agency has a private dataset and computation methodologies not made public unless asked for. We are not sure who then will sign up to that UN agency where our country government pays for contribution from here and might want access.

We also feel in a self-reflecting mode, that one of the things that got really locked out is that the campaigners allowed this report to go unchallenged. The numbers were not challenged, no questions were asked about figures as they were accepted. It was a huge internal fight for us to get resources, and a lot of the current work would not have happened. My name is BirajSwain, I lead the Food-Justice Campaign of Oxfam India. I think this particular work can be called collaborative of three individuals, i.e., Vikas, Kumaran and Biraj.

The point is that globally campaigners did not ask this question; internally within institutions it becomes very difficult to allocate resources at our discretion also. I think that is also a question to ask in the meta-narrative of campaigners not engaging with esoteric indicators, and our lived realities and living realities becoming increasingly measured by esoteric indicators.

Dr.Vikas Bajpai: There is one more point. These are not just inadvertent technical glitches of some, it has a politics behind it and one must recognize that politics to be able to tackle all this.

Veena Shatrugna: I'm sure there are Indians who are a part of playing the same game so let us not put it all at the door of the FAO.

Dr Karanveer from UNICEF: Thanks for the presentations. There is no doubt that prevention should come first; it has to be given a lot of importance. I just want a clarification about data and this is especially on MUAC. We are in the process of analyzing data from three states, i.e., UP, MP and Jharkhand, and we have data for almost 6,000 children in the age group between 6 months – 59 months. What we have seen in this data is that more children are being identified through MUAC rather than weight for height. We also saw that about 83 per cent children had a MUAC less than 115; 75 per cent had weight for height less than -3SD; and 62 per cent had both, MUAC as well as weight for height less than -3SD. So this is the data we are analyzing and once we are through with NSS, we will of course share it.

Dr. Deepti Agrawal: I am from the Ministry of Health. I do appreciate that there are a lot of organisations participating here and I think it is a good thing because it provides details and also scope for new ideas. What I want to ask is that weight for height is not good enough, MUAC is not good enough, underweight is not good enough, the programmes based on these anthropometric measurements are not good enough, so what is the perfect way of identifying children? As an alternative the academicians, the NGOs, and researchers are saying - what is that needs to be done?

Secondly, I want to ask that what is the alternative for management principles? In the previous presentation, someone said that for all the starvation deaths, the proximate cause was an illness.

As a management principle, say out of 100 children you have five with the most likelihood of dying, who would you reach out to? And can a comprehensive approach be delivered through one single programme, one single school, one single player, or are we going to talk of multiple things happening at the same time and are we not doing that?

Subhojit (Research Scholar in SIS, JNU): I just do not have any intellectual? insights into the matter, except for some of my observations since I have visited some 6-7 districts of Bengal and 2-3 districts of Andhra Pradesh. I really appreciate the fact mentioned by ankita that the basic problem the malnourishment, poverty, and starvation has been the caste hierarchy. The lower caste people get much more discriminated against. It is much more hierarchical than discrimination ...

Regarding the ICDS, furthering Ankita's argument, or the MDM (Mid Day Meal) scheme, I have found that in Bengal, except in the district of Purulia, this programme is largely working ineffectively because of the lacunae of intrinsic vigilance mechanism approach. The people who are given the task at the district level to take care and be vigilant about these programmes and to make surprise visits in various schools, they do not take care of that. I think I would mention regarding the Purulia district where the District Collector of Purulia was given an award by the Ministry of Rural Development. He made a surprise visit to a rural school, and found that the MDM staff (the cooks), were cooking two varieties of food - one for the teachers, and the rather the students. So these people were suspended along with the Headmistress, and he was given the award by the Ministry.

Lastly, regarding the attendance register etc., very recently, the food department of West Bengal government, came out with a very good idea that there should be a biometric attendance system, so that nobody can get out of this. So if that is implemented at a national level, part of the problem would be solved.

Madhuri (Adivasi Sangathan, MP): I am not an expert of any sort. But, there are a few questions, a little uneasiness with the track we are on. One is when there was a presentation on starvation deaths, these people were described, you know what is the description we give of a person who is facing hunger or starvation? We tend to look at entire communities, members of the communities as beneficiaries of government programmes which is fine. The government programmes must work. But as a reason for starvation, we are looking only at where a particular programme fails. These are members of communities, they are farmers, they are workers, and they have been part of subsistence systems of different sorts for very many years. Surely they should be looking at that subsistence system also, not just at the government programme.

As a member of an Adivasi Sangathan, I am facing frustration for many years due to the situation which has been very eloquently described. I was just thinking that we are not able to have a great deal of faith either in the NRCs or in the ICDS. It is not because we do not want to, it is because it is very difficult to see these things functioning. I mean I envisage a completely different system of governance, a completely different will of the state from what we think. We are talking about a state which functions entirely for corporate interest, and we are asking it to implement, to function as if it is there to save dying children. It is not there to save dying children. So when we are talking about interventions, when we are talking about even tracking hunger, you identify in order to resist, so we

should have identification is not the point, but the redressal that it envisages goes against the grain of the system of governance that we see. How much is this worth investing in, or should we be thinking of different stands altogether.

Vikas: I just want to bring in one point with regard to malnutrition. I have been reviewing these programme implementation plans for the next year for different states which we have been getting at NHSRC. Now in each state, there is a new buzzword, each state has to propose many NRCs, etc., and all that. What happens to the ICDS and what happens to the child - before they have to go to an NRC, etc., it is nowhere in the radar of the policy planners and other departments whatsoever. It is an important piece of information which I thought should be there.

Vandana: I just want to respond to three points relevant to me, one to the person from the Health Ministry. See what should we do, what anthropometry should do, I think we should do it all, and we are doing it all. So for example, our workers at the crèche level, who are village women and probably have less formal qualification than *anganwadi* workers, they would be expected to do health related work, but with support, every six months. They would be looking at heights, weights, and age, and they would recognize growth faltering. I think that is the thing. So we are doing it all and we are not seeing that it is impossible as the whole of Maleghat region is also doing it all, because they have a whole support structure there. They have the Rajmata Mission there and they are doing it so it is not that it can not be done provided there is a will to do it. I think that the will to do it is the thing I want to keep hammering on. You must have the will to do it. Why should we have a different will for our own children when they go to a pediatric clinic, and a different will for poor children who need it even more? So I think we can do it.

In a hundred you only have to reach one, where is the premise coming from that you only have to reach only one or five? I say we can reach 100 and we must reach 100. I mean when are we going to have that vision? Sixty-five years down the line we do not have the vision to reach all our children, and that is not acceptable. We have to reach all and the strategies have to be essentially multi-factorial, there is no magic bullet. There is no one thing or top three things, one magic bullet. Even if you look at the strategy we have used, it is a fairly comprehensive strategy. People can still tell us that are not looking at agriculture, or livelihood, yes we are not. But it is not that we would not be collaborating with people who are.

So we must have the widest possible understanding and then take the widest possible approach. Sometimes you will be limited by resources, mostly they would be human resources I think, and it should not be financial resources. And that also if you have settled a whole structure of supportive supervision, you will get that. But this one is distant from even that vision and that thinking. You say 62 per cent have both MUAC and weight for height, it is not that 40 per cent is unknown that forty per cent do not fit the bill is known from the 1960 and UNICEF has known it. I think what we resent sometimes, what makes us suspicious, upsets us, is an overplay of certain things. Everybody agrees that MUAC has a role, it is a good thing. We should have it, we should consider it, but when we are weighing pros and cons, costs and benefits, why should there be an overplay on certain things and you know you try not to engage with certain issues?

Let us be upfront to the whole country. Forty per cent will fall out. Would we have decided or would we have not decided? Maybe we would have still decided to do MUAC. But I do not think this kind of discourse happens, this kind of transparent discourse using evidence in a fair way, I think there have been many presentations which we have been. We have looked up evidence whether it is fortification for anemia, we have looked up raw evidence now, we have examined papers, and we feel that the way that evidence is treated is not fair. It is not even fully honest sometimes. That is what is the problem. Everything will have pros and cons, let us put it on the tables, weigh these things and take a decision as a country, so that is the only discomfort. Otherwise I agree with you

that you do not have to do studies again and again if we know that 40 per cent will fall out and 60 per cent will fall in. The question is whether it is good enough for us.

Madhuri, with absolute agreement with you, I do not think that there is anybody who would disagree but I just want to say that struggle happens at every level and I respect people struggling at every level, whether at policy level or programme level, I think the struggle is the same. We are all struggling in the same dominant paradigm - which is about commercialization, profit-making, and privatisation, I do not know if it is worth it, maybe it is not. I feel not all of us can afford to struggle only at one level. I think it is the convergence of these various levels and elements of struggles with the understanding that you place, that is very critical, and you must understand that. Finally it is all politics, and finally it is all socio-economic issues. We must understand the politics of management, and the politics of programmes. So with the understanding of politics only can we intervene in programmes, that is absolutely true. But at the same time, it is very important to intervene at every single step that is going on; it is part of the larger struggle. That is all I wanted to say. Take Home Ration, I agree, people are finding every possible pathway to beat us, but we keep fighting back, and then they keep fighting back, and then it keeps going on. Thank you.

Ashwin: I think you are absolutely right that people who die from these circumstances, we cannot look at them as 'beneficiaries of programmes'. With that said, I think it is exactly because they are citizens with rights and that is the lens that we could also use to look at to see the extent of deprivation, extent of their exploitation and exclusion.

Now, I think it is partly the result of a short presentation in a weekend, getting to listen to all the stories of people, but, I certainly, do not think either one of us would say that the extent of poverty some of these people face is 'only' the result of the failure of some programmes. These programmes or rights, and the establishment of those rights came through a legal-democratic process that has to be respected. So in another way there is absolutely no way that we can look at the situation of certain destitute populations without understanding their access to their state, their access to 'programmes'; those programmes converge/convert into rights through democratic process and the extent to which any person is deprived of any right has to be considered in a context of how that deprivation affects one's life or livelihood.

As you said, we have to look at the fact that these are labourers, that there is an ingrained structure, that there is a political economy at play, absolutely right. And I argue that the exclusion of certain people from employment opportunities, not just NREGA, but historically from opportunities for farm work, opportunities for any kind of remunerative labour in an area, is also correlated to the extent that those people who do not have rights to the programmes that the state has sanctioned. So that is just one aspect.

The second one, the gentleman had spoken about why these rights? Exactly, I think that is absolutely right. It is something we did not get into but that is one aspect that we observe time and again. It is definitely the question we ask numerous people and the answers that we got were striking, and they were somewhat shocking that people would not help, or that people could not help. And I think that is an area that needs to be explored a lot more. For now, it is something we both could agree with. It is not just the state vs. citizen or citizen vs. the state or something like that. At the end of the day we have to look at how that operates within the community.

Dipa: I will just take half a minute to repeat two things which Vandana has already said. One, on this whole management principle, and the other about which five to first look at. I think it is high time we start talking about all children, and even in terms of management principles, we can not keep waiting for every child to fall in to that five. I mean that is the whole point of prevention; and the problem is also that each ministry and department is looking at what they can do, but are not looking at the child and what the different programmes can do. We do have prevention programmes, the point is to bring it all together. So I would go with Vandana and say 'do it all'. Do

the weight, height, MUAC or whatever else, but think of the child and see how it can be prevented from falling into severe malnutrition.

There is one more point. I think again and again the point that even the SC is saying that decentralize it as much as you can. So Maharashtra pretended that it was Mahila Mandals, but it was not Mahila Mandals at all. It was three Mahila Mandals for the entire state. So decentralize as much as you can, take it down to the village-level and let people decide what they eat, which we are not able to do because of how much malnutrition is getting medicalised and the norms that are stringent norms from government on each micro-nutrient, how many milli, micrograms, which a village SHG is not able to cook. So take malnutrition out of this, stop medicalising malnutrition and give people control over their own food. I think that would do.

Veena: I do not think there was any question for FAO. I think people really liked the fact that you ripped open what for us was very important. But I would like to make closing remarks, not on this part of the session. I felt very unfortunate that we did not get a picture of the people who died of starvation. What is the kind of land they had, yes they have mentioned caste? But land in the rural areas is so crucial, who was working on the land, was there a lot of migration? This as a picture would have signified the kind of situations in which people die of starvation in today's world. But just to also remind you the 850 calories that they have taken as a cut-off, really come from pure arithmetic that we all did. You know it means that persons have already reduced in weight 35kgs, to and then they starve. You know that they are going to die in four-five days because they have already been starving for may be ten, twenty years. They are at 35kgs which is really an adolescent's weight very often in today's Delhi.

So 35kgs, 20-25KL per kg body weight gives you 850 calories so even the cut-off they have taken is really unfortunate and if we assume 60 kg people do not starve, I mean that is an assumption in India. Really, Indian starvation is very different from what happens in Africa. And one is not surprised that they have landed up with these figures of less than 16 BMI, we have something like 3-4 per cent less than 16. So there is something about Indian body composition that allows you to linger on when you are hovering around death. These people actually work on construction sites.

And this, I keep saying it, with a high calorie-diet you just conserve fat, So we have much more fat than muscle. We might still struggle and work for two-three hours a day but this is the fact that keeps you going. Both your MUAC gets affected and both the 16 BMI survive. High-cereal-calories, that is energy calories just convert to triglycerides and fats in our body. So we are just flabby, with no muscles and that is the kind of body-composition but I think much more work will be done eventually. But it is a pity, we have just seen the kind of picture that he was talking about, but I am sure you would have it in your paper.

With that, permit me to go on to the next part of the session. Thank you very much for your contribution and this leaves one really disturbed. However, we certainly have made strides as far as MUAC is concerned and as far as tracking children is concerned. I think the credit goes to the speakers because otherwise we would have been stuck with NRCs saying 'yes', 'no', 'yes', 'no' based on small take that would have decided the future of our children. Thank you very much for contributing.

Moving on to communities, may I call on Nalini to speak on community-based evidence, generation and action on malnutrition.

Veena: Thank you Ritu. It looks like you are planning for two decades of malnutrition, whereas economists are telling us it is disappearing from this country! So we are at variance with the economists as usual.

Biraj: Ritu, at some point I think, for the larger audience, if we can have a discussion about the applicability of your tool for criminal culpability of senior administrators in districts having year on

year starvation deaths. I think that would be a really imaginary and progressive application of your tool beyond the realms of academia and beyond the realms of communities for prevention, but for some sort of accountability.

Vandana: I had a couple of comments on self-reported hunger. While I absolutely agree with the general principle of it, I think there are two issues. One is that where there is no conscientisation around hunger; people, they adapt, they speak of what they know as to be 'not hungry' and is that going to be good enough? Especially in the context of children, because what we have found is that our programmes and schemes are quite willing to fill children's small stomachs with cereals and food grain, and they would say therefore that they have had two-square meals a day because that is their interpretation. I mean, what are children eating? They are eating a huge amount of rice or wheat, and tiniest amounts of *dal*, if at all, in a day.

It is not right and it is not adequate. So I think that without a discourse on understanding requirements, especially in the context of children, where you see even among adults that there is no conscientisation around nutrition, around the disparities in nutrition, the inequities in nutrition. In the current context, and therefore self-reporting, is definitively a starting point, for sure, but it will be hugely under what we would really want to project for.

Sachin: Good afternoon Ma'am. I am Sachin from Nepal, currently studying at the Centre of Social Medicine and Community Health. Regarding Nalini Ma'am's presentation, some kind of 'charismatic' community leaders have been mentioned (as if) they would do some kind of spectacular things. In our generation, we have been 'guinea pigs' of different kind of charismatic leaders like Comrade Prachanda, Modi and Mannmohan Singh. I am not getting a clear sense of the specific charisma at community level that Ma'am can foresee. Although I am a student of social science, still I am not able to see how it is going to work out and what kind of construction is this. Better if we can have more on this.

Mohan Rao: I do not know if this is relevant since Dr. Pal is not here. He said with reference to the data being collected by the ICDS that you cannot compare data from month to month. I just wanted him to explain what he meant by that.

Sachin: I know how three characters' characteristic features are getting blurred very interestingly. If I see them from a cinematic lens, then all these three look similar. At this kind of a critical juncture, what kind of charisma are you looking for? Thank you.

Participant: 'You mean Prachanda, Manmohan and Modi?'

Veena: I think Aamir Khan is doing something now. He was on TV.

Vijay: Formally Prachanda's party...

Veena: I think he was talking in the context of Thailand. Let's not collapse the two.

Sachin: Because it has been recommended that there should be some kind of a charismatic leader, but what is this charisma, who is charismatic and who is not? Is it Fair-and-Lovely (that is makes people charismatic)? How to understand this charisma?

Nalini: I got those points from the critique of the case, so it is not my choice. But traditionally I do know that charismatic leaders are often given a great deal of credit for transformations which other wise could have been difficult if there were no charismatic people or people whose personality was not very attractive to the community. So there is an emphasis on having charismatic leaders and I take it in that context that the authors of that review said that it would be an asset to the programme, and as asset to the interventions to have charismatic leaders involved. It is not my choice, not my selection, but I am merely giving you what was pointed out as an important aspect.

Veena: Actually in today's world we would want to know 'charismatic' to the women or to the men. I think we have a right to charismatic people.

Ritu: Biraj I think your question would come much more in the context of the Commissioner's Office and their investigation of starvation deaths since those are very concrete and real and the experience that has happened of non-action, i.e., the follow-up studies showed that the households where the starvation deaths had been identified by Commissioners of the SC, did not get action and therefore, all of that. So that is very clear and does not require a surveillance mechanism to do that. But what one could envisage is that the surveillance mechanism, if it throws up consistent endemic malnutrition as well as the acute exacerbations at specific points of time, and if it is pointed out to any functionary of the administration and it is not attended to and it worsens, that would definitely be something of that nature. We need lawyers to tell us exactly how and in what way this can be done, but one can see that this is a possible line of action.

Vandana: But the whole issue is of being able to fix responsibility and accountability. Because there is such a mix of non-effort and failure at every level (that) to say that it is a particular person's precise fault is difficult. Every person you try to pin down has a fairly plausible list of reasons. I think that in this whole arena that is a big problem.

Ritu: As per the documents prepared by the SC Office, the SC has said that the Chief Secretary of the state would be held responsible, which is your highest bureaucrat of the state. Who should then go down the line and pin it on somebody. But that is where the SC holds it.

Participant: Has it ever happened? Disciplinary action is very limited.

Ritu: Yes, that is the challenge in enforcing 'rights'.

Biraj: Last year we sent someone to Bolangir, and Bolangir is a classic case because it is rice surplus and it is also the ground zero of starvation deaths. It is the same family, the father, son... So the MP, his father is the MLA, and elder? brother is the Zila Parishad chair. So coming to the political level, if you are looking at criminal culpability and the cusp of political commitment, this is probably one of the best test cases. And there was a clamour for criminal culpability of the highest administrator and the senior-most politician in this food chain. I do not think there was much progress made there. And we also could not come out with a report which is stinging or airtight enough to either be

judicially acceptable or push the boundaries of political discourse. So I am just thinking where are we in those cases?

And this is a really good case because it is three generations of the same family; distributive justice at its worst and from the view of starvation deaths.

Veena: These are most difficult times for questions of nutrition, health, etc. politically, as everything now is being left to the market; and for us to talk about culpability, I think even the SC has not been able to fix responsibility. We have not even been able to get the Secretaries to come and attend; invariably the Chief Secretaries (CSs) do not turn up. The SC has to name them and shame them. I mean these are very difficult times.

Ashwin: By the SC guidelines, the CSs are culpable. It seems almost impossible to get any sort of conversation on such a thing as starvation deaths of these people. We tried contacting these people numerous times. We were not successful, but more importantly, I think what the possible benefit of something like a pro-active investigation tool is to treat malnutrition and endemic hunger as a living situation vs. something that we are aware of (only) when people die of it, and then try to prove how or why or who is responsible.

Veena: Actually in all this I think what seems to come to our rescue is the press. I think it was mentioned by you that it is only in cases of 'breaking news' that made sense to the administration and it is very unfortunate. But in Andhra Pradesh for instance, it is the stringers, located in small towns, who occasionally sends the breaking out news. These stringers brought up information about deaths and epidemics to the National Commission for the Protection of Child Right (NCPCR). They play a very interesting role and I wish somebody would look at it. It is their news that comes from the remotest corners that seems to make some headway. I think we must take press into confidence without being used by them and I do not know how much experience we have in this room but yes, the press does play some useful role today.

With that, thank you very much for this session. Thank you Ritu, the speakers, and participants for such an interesting session where we have learnt a lot.

Thank you everybody.

Session Two

Analysing the Trends and Determinants of Nutritional Status: The Indian Scenario

Chair: Prof. D.Banerji

Sanjay Chaturvedi
Samir Garg
Nasreen Jamal

Time-Constrained Mother, Shrinking Care and Expanding Market: Emerging Model of Chronic Under-Nutrition in India*

Sanjay Chaturvedi, Siddarth Ramji, Narendra K .Arora, Sneh Rewal, Rajib Dasgupta and Vaishali Deshmukh

Abstract

The South Asian enigma, characterized by high levels of under-nutrition despite high Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and agriculture output continues to challenge all stakeholders. We used an exploratory inquiry into processes that play out at societal and household levels and attempted to capture intersections of chronic poverty, food availability, market and public services. Community - based qualitative investigation and respondent validation exercise was conducted to finalise the emerging model and fittest narrative of under-nutrition in under-five children. The most forceful themes that emerged were overstretched multi-tasking mothers with insufficient time for child care, feeding, leisure, dwindling family and community support; “ready-to-eat” market foods that are almost universally available; and rising non - essential expenditure at household level. There is a need to shift from explanation of individual behaviours which frequently have a colour of “blaming the victim”, and to consider the expanding role of main care provider, the mother, with changing economic and social dynamics.

*Dr. Sanjay Chaturvedi, who presented on behalf of the group of researchers, wanted only the abstract to be put in the public domain at this juncture, and did not want the presentation shared until the study is published.

Trends in Nutrition at Status and Nutrition at Schemes in Chhattisgarh

Samir Garg

Thank you, Chair. My name is Samir Garg, I come from Chhattisgarh. I have been associated with the Right to Food Campaign for the last ten years. Will be talking about the trends in nutritional status in the food and nutrition scene in Chhattisgarh. From the main data sources, data is available on child under-nutrition, that is underweight percentage for children under three years. NFHS data, as all of us know, shows some decline for Chhattisgarh. It was the second highest decline after Odisha in child malnutrition between 1998 to 2005, when ICDS itself had been reporting malnutrition figures in the state and there had been a decline according to them also.

Nutrition Status Trends – Underweight % (under-3 year children)

Source	1998	2004	2005	2007	2009	2010	2011	2012
NFHS	53% (WHO)		48% (WHO)					
ICDS Reported		55% (IAP)						42% (WHO)
Nutrition Security Evaluation							35% (WHO)	
Swasth Panchayat Survey				40% (IAP)	45% (IAP)	44% (IAP)		

Nutrition Status Trends Stunting and Wasting (Under 3 Years)

Stunting

Source	1998	2005	2010
NFHS	61%(WHO)	53% (WHO)	
Nutrition Security Evaluation			35% (WHO)

Wasting

Source	1998	2005	2010
NFHS	25%(WHO)	24% (WHO)	
Nutrition Security Evaluation			29% (WHO)

One major study which took place recently came out this year. It measured child malnutrition and that showed it was significantly lower at 35 percent. There is another source which is like a community-monitoring source, which is called the Swasthya Panchayat Survey, done by community volunteers. These surveys showed that malnutrition was more prevalent and there is a little increase from 2007 to 2010. Based on these sources and Nutrition Security Evaluation (NES) of 2011, it seems that Chhattisgarh has cut down child malnutrition by one-third in the last one decade. The trend for

stunting --- there was a reduction till 2005 and according to NES 2011, there has been a very steep decline in stunting also. Wasting, however, has increased from being stagnant earlier.

Other indicators include low birth-weight. It has decreased compared to earlier data, for which now there are two sources. Annual Health Survey (AHS) has also reported low birth weight data for 2007-2009, i.e., 18 percent. Earlier, we used to talk of at least 35 percent children having low birth-weight in Chhattisgarh, but now it is lower than that. Among women with chronic energy deficiency with BMI below 18.5, there is a marginal drop from 48 percent to 44 percent. And we do not have data beyond that. Significantly, malnutrition figures for men are also very high in Chhattisgarh. In Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), according to the Sample Registration Survey (SRS), there has been a huge decline in Chhattisgarh. It is the fastest decline in the country, especially in the rural IMR, which is about half of what it was in the year 2000.

Some of the other related indicators show that breast-feeding related behaviors have really improved in the state, they have actually picked up in the last ten years. So this is exclusive breast-feeding, which in 2005, is 73 percent as per National Family Health Survey (NFHS-3), which was much higher than the national average of 28 percent. And in 2011 (NES) it is 84 percent. Other breast-feeding indicators like early initiation of breast-feeding, show high rates in Chhattisgarh. Complementary feeding also seems to have improved. AHS has reported another major change which is in terms of under-age marriage of girls. AHS reports that now only 6 percent of the marriages were under the age of eighteen. Hand-washing with soap after defecation has increased, an indicator that some people have related to malnutrition. Therefore when we compare this with the data for Chhattisgarh, HUNGAMA has reported 25 percent and NES (2011)... has reported it as 64 percent. Child immunization again has improved a lot from 21 percent (NFHS-2 1998) to 73 percent (AHS 2010).

PDS coverage has improved a lot. Right to Food Campaign has been conducting several surveys and the Commissioner's Office has been conducting a lot of surveys on food security programmes over the last ten years. PDS coverage has increased. In 2005, there was no Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) and now about 60 percent people are getting wages under M? NREGA work and there is a lot of change in the effectiveness of the PDS, how much more it is reaching the people. Our own surveys showed that in 2003 only 28 percent were card holders or beneficiaries getting PDS entitlements in the correct quantity and it has really increased in 2011, reaching 93 percent.

Here, combining all these indicators, there has been some progress made by Chhattisgarh on nutrition. So things which I have already mentioned, such as education of girls beyond eighth standard, has improved a lot in this period. Even Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) coverage has improved, and access to hand pumps for drinking water has also improved. What are the concerns? A major concern is persistent high rates of women having low BMI. Low birth-weight is still a problem. Malaria is a huge issue in Chhattisgarh and not enough has been done on malaria other than, the distribution of Long Lasting Insecticidal Nets (LLIN) and bed nets in tribal areas, but other than that the programme has not moved forward.

Then post - Salwa Judum, in the conflict area in the south of Chhattisgarh, our estimate is that about 50,000 to one lakh people have still not moved back to their homes to their village in fact a lot of them are in Andhra. So they are not getting any access to food security here or there. Our state has seen a very rapid industrialization of mining and mining-based industries, power plants, steel plants and there are a lot of natural resources which are being diverted for that even from good farming areas. Farmer suicides are very high in my state.

Evolution of the State Public Distribution System

Reforms in PDS

- Complete de-privatisation of Fair price shops by early 2005
- De-privatisation of steps in the delivery chain above the FPS
- Shops were given to: Local rural elected councils (Panchayats), Women's Self Help Groups, Forest Protection Committees, Cooperatives
- Viability of shops improved by providing working capital and increasing commissions
- No. of shops increased from 5000 to 10000
- Ensuring timely door step delivery to all outlets through state run corporation
- Computerising operations upto Godown level (one level before FPS) helped in transparency, maintaining control, measuring performance and above all in cutting down delays

Looking at the food security programme, I have reviewed the Public Distribution System (PDS) in some detail in terms of how it has evolved since 2003. So till 2004 we had a highly privatized PDS. All the ration shops and, fair price shops were run by private traders. There were very few shops, about 5,000, to cover 20,000 villages. In a state with low population density, scattered habitation was a big constraint and the coverage was very poor. So you go to any tribal habitation, you will find that most of the people there are poor and they deserve food security support, but less than half of them would have ration cards and deliveries were also very poor, and those who have the cards amongst them, about one-third of them were able to use them.

Impact of Deprivatization on the PDS

The situation has changed since then. It started in 2005 when the new PDS control order was adopted by the state and the major reform there was of deprivatization. It is again in a way counter-intuitive in this sense where a lot of things are being privatized. So PDS was one thing which they deprivatized to make it function and they handed over their shops to Panchayats, Gram Panchayats and Cooperative Societies and in some cases, Self - Help Groups of women.

They made the shops viable by providing them working capital. The number of shops was increased so that each Panchayat has at least one shop in the community. There were further reforms for ensuring doorstep delivery and computerized operations down to the godownlevel.

Women's SHGs running Fair price shop



This is a picture of women running a PDS shop. Then there was a very great deal of clarity about entitlement, i.e., 35 kg per month per family, and there are no month-to-month variations. They direct communities to monitor it. So it was done in an open space. It was distributed in front of the public, and the grievance redressal system was made effective by using a toll-free helpline. So a lot of other departments also have helplines, but this one works where some action gets taken once you file the complaint.

As a result of these efforts, the government gained more confidence in the PDS and the PDS coverage was expanded from November 2006 onwards. It has expanded from 19 lakh families to 35 lakh families, so now it covers about 70 percent of the population in Chhattisgarh. Having more beneficiaries has improved the system because now, a majority of the villages, 70-80 percent of the villages have become beneficiaries so they could exert pressure on the system to perform. So the state government has been allocating significant amounts of funds from its own budget for public purpose. The entitlements include 35 kg of rice, two kg of pulses and one kg of salt for a family per month.

Vulnerable Population Groups Included

All vulnerable sections like the old and disabled, have also been included, irrespective of whether they are Below Poverty Level (BPL) or not. So the improvement in PDS in Chhattisgarh involved a lot of effort. It was a series of measures starting from deprivatization which was the most important one. So it took four to five years of tedious work and it was not based on any magic-bullet approach. So it was not health-computerization or IT solving the problems in the system there. It was a lot of other supportive things.

Public Procurement of Rice

Another thing which has really helped the PDS in Chhattisgarh is the strong system of public procurement of rice. As we know, there is a minimum support price mechanism everywhere but at a lot of places, there is no effective mechanism to actually buy produce from the farmer. Chhattisgarh has managed to set up such a system, so the results are that in 2002, they were able to procure 1.5 million tonnes. Now it has gone up to 7.1 million tonnes. So it has increased about five times in the last ten years and it has helped the PDS and now Chhattisgarh is one of the contributors to national food in terms of rice. It provides employment to about 10 lakh farming families and about one – and a half lakh other workers involved in transportation in related sectors. So that about covers PDS.

Expansion of ICDS

ICDS in Chhattisgarh

- Expanded from 20,000 Anganwadis in 2002 to 50,000 in 2012
- Has good coverage - 23 lakh of 34 lakh children under 6 years covered
- Hot Cooked Meals for 3-6 years old children through more than 10,000 local SHGs
- Ready to Eat powder (weekly THR) for under-3s, pregnant women through more than 1,300 local SHGs
- Double Fortified Salt has been introduced (significantly costlier)
- Eggs unlikely to get introduced
- SHGs face delay in fund flow

If we look at ICDS briefly, there has been significant expansion in ICDS from 20,000 to 50,000 centres over last ten years. So the coverage has always been good in Chhattisgarh, among the highest in the country as about 60-70 percent of the children get covered. Then it provides hot, cooked meals for 3-6 year-old children through local SHGs and more than 10,000 SHGs are involved in this work. Ready-to-eat powder, which is the weekly take-home ration but it is not a factory manufactured thing. It is processed by local women, SHGs and about more than 1,000 groups are doing that.

Recently they have introduced double-fortified salt for which we do not know the results yet; but one thing we know is that it is three-times costlier than the iodized salt. So the new allocation is from four rupees to six rupees in the restructured ICDS, and some of that increase is going for this salt. Regarding the allocations, it has from April onwards been increased from rupees four per child to six rupees per child per day. I which the central government had allocated for fifteen districts only. Their restructuring plan is only for 200 districts across the country, so for the remaining 12 districts of the state, the state government has taken a decision to allocate funds from the state budget. So throughout Chhattisgarh it is six rupees. But elsewhere it is very unlikely that eggs would be introduced despite a lot of advocacy to put them in because of the school of thought that '*yeh rakshasi pravritihai*' (i.e., it is a demonic act) with regard to non-vegetarian food, so it is unlikely to come in.

So ICDS, overall, other than on the issue of non-vegetarian food has supported a policy of decentralized provisioning through women self-help groups as they moved to contractors five years ago. But the SHGs themselves face a lot of delay in fund-flow so the quality can improve further if fund-flow is improved.

Role of the Mitanins in Nutrition Counseling

Another factor is the Mitanin programme, a community health-worker programme. It started in 2002 and covered entire rural Chhattisgarh by 2003. There are about 70,000 Mitanins now, including those working in urban slums. So I have listed it as a nutrition intervention although it is a community health-worker programme because we see nutrition as one of the areas in which the community health-worker has to work and a difference has to be made on the health front also because the two are so inter-related. What is different about the Mitanin programme is that there is proper support structure for the Mitanin. They are trained on social determinants of health, issues of gender and poverty, how health is not just about drugs and medicine, it is also about issues of poverty and they are also trained on food security programmes, social security programmes, social exclusion, etc. The role they have played has also been found effective by the food and nutrition security evaluations. They have set home visits for counseling and nutrition.

My experience in Chhattisgarh nutritional counseling is still important. Mothers know a lot of things but still they have gaps in knowledge. But it has to be done in a non-victim-blaming kind of manner. So Mitanin being from the same community is able to do that better. They have organized community-monitoring on food and health entitlements and organized collective action for that through village health and nutrition committees, which are quite vibrant in Chhattisgarh. This effort has also been very useful.

Creches and Community Kitchens

- Another new exciting intervention has been the crèches and these were piloted by the ZilaPanchayat of Surguja in 2012. A about six months back we saw that crèches were started. This scheme is with Gram Panchayats, it is facilitated by Mitanins and they provide three hot, cooked meals per day for children in the age range of six months to three years, pregnant women and also lactating mothers. That has been a significant feature that pregnant and lactating women were also included and entitled to have food there. They provide eggs four times a week, vegetables, oils, pulses and rice. Eggs, vegetables and oils are seen as essential elements. Other regular features are de-worming, Iron Folic Acid (IFA) supplementation, growth monitoring, counseling and referral. Tracking growth-

monitoring is part of the protocol but it is much more difficult to train large numbers of people on that. Based on this experience of one district regarding crèches, the state government has announced a new scheme.

Mothers as Creche Workers

One of the concerns with this design, although they have been working well in Surguja, is that they do not have crèche workers. They do not have professional crèche workers but mothers take turns. So one day one set of mothers takes care of children and there are no wages. They are entitled to receive food there during the day, but no wages are paid. The government is highly unwilling to create any scheme which involves recruitment of staff because government is now increasingly seeing investment in all kinds of staff, even teachers and *anganwadi* workers, as a burden, since they unionize, then they want regularization, better salaries, etc. therefore there is resistance to that. This state scheme started with 2,000 crèches in 2013 and it is likely to be expanded to 20,000 across all 85 tribal blocks of the state. There is adequate allocation for crèches other than the workers.

The good thing about these crèches is that they are under the control of the mothers. The mothers are running it, and the money comes to them. They buy whatever they want to buy, they decide the menu. It has a lot of variety in it. Each centre prepares a chart and puts it up their centre own so each centre has a different kind of menu, but certain things like oil, vegetables and eggs are common in all.

Chhattisgarh's Progressive Food Security Act

The significant recent development has been in the winter session of the state legislature where they have enacted a Food Security Act (FSA). The Act says that it would become operational within six months of its enactment so it will become operational by May 2013. In many ways it is much better than the national version, which has been going around for quite some time. It entitles families to 35 kg rice per month and at rupees one per kg. The significant thing is the coverage. The coverage promised is 90 percent families in the tribal blocks and 80 percent in the rest of them. The coverage is likely to increase from currently 35 lakh families to about 50 lakh families. It also covers ICDS and mid-day meals as legal entitlements. They have made a new addition kitchen for feeding destitute populations. So it still remains to be seen how they run it but these are the provisions which the FSA has provided.

In a nutshell, we see that PDS and Mitnans are both critical for the level of success Chhattisgarh has had in terms of dealing with child malnutrition. A deprivatized and expanded PDS functions better in our experience and de-centralised supplementary nutrition programme provisioning through SHGs and Panchayats, for ICDS works better. And community health workers, when properly supported, can play a big role in nutrition.

Thank you!

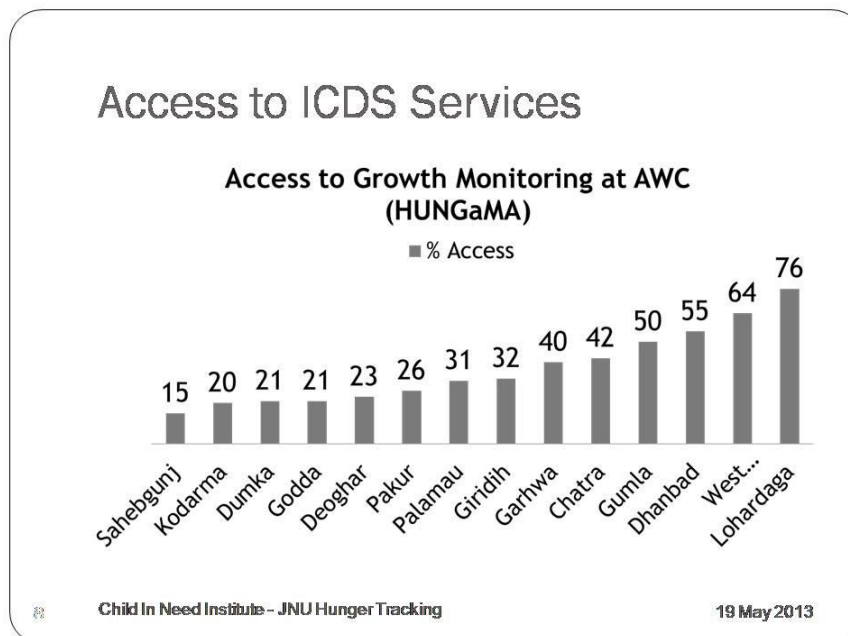
Jharkhand State-Level Analysis of Nutritional Trends and Experiments/Schemes

Nasreen Jamal

Good afternoon. My name is Nasreen and I work for an organisation called CINI (Child In Need Institute), focusing on health and nutrition issues. If you see a human body, the heart is on the left side of the body. The question to ask is what would happen to the health of the body if the heart is malnourished? Similarly, we can say that the state of Jharkhand, which is geographically located at the heart of the country, is also very malnourished. This is worth reflecting upon.

Nutrition Services in Jharkhand

There are multiple factors that could account for malnutrition: it could be that the population is vulnerable because it belongs to the Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes, or it could be an issue of food insecurity, or it could be the result of a poor governance system. As of now, the state offers certain direct nutrition services through Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) or the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), which have components of growth-monitoring and promotion, disease prevention, supplementary nutrition, micro-nutrients, mid-day-meal programmes in schools and adolescent anemia programmes under the name of SABLA (Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for the Empowerment of Adolescent Girls-RGSEAG) However, these services are found in only seven districts of Jharkhand. Regarding the anemia programme, I feel that it is nominal because even iron tablets are still not available as freely as they should be. There are some indirect services also.



If we look at the HUNGAMA report, we can see that the access to growth-monitoring at *anganwadis* ranges from a low of 15 percent coverage in Sahebgunj District to a high of 76 percent coverage in Lohardaga District indicating the uneven coverage in the state. Considering the state of affairs in Jharkhand, we often wondered what could be done. Civil society, which is a part of the community, is also aware of the concerns that we are facing as a state.

The situation was such that people were ready to work towards making the state prosperous even without funds, as long as there is genuine leadership given by individuals or NGOs and so on. In that spirit, a movement or campaign called *JASHAN* (Jharkhand Alliance for Health & Nutrition) was organized that led to the formation of Jharkhand Action on Sustainable Health and Nutrition.

Government officials, CBOs, NGOs and individuals participated and gave the movement this name. This is special because this is a non-funded venture. We decided to create a community report card after discussion with the community. This report card covered ICDS, mid-day-meals, PDS (Public Distribution System), etc. This report card was finalized and subsequently shared through block, district and *panchayat* dialogue.

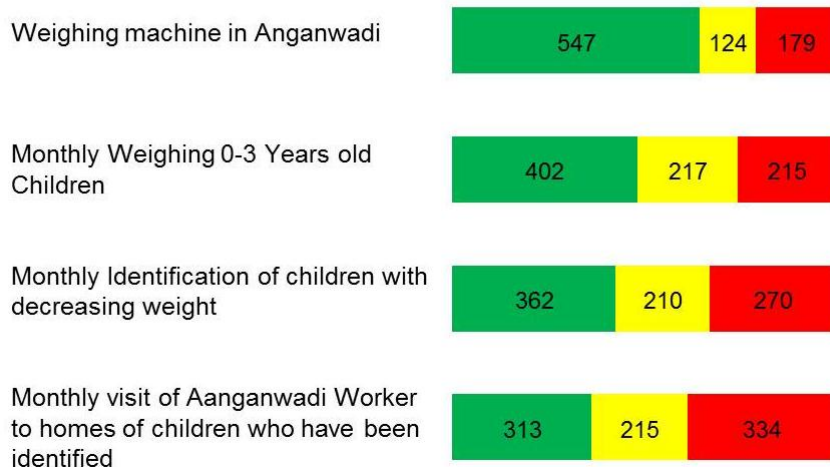
Community Report Card

The report card had 32 questions. For instance, it contained a question on the community's perception regarding service delivery, its quality and quantity, and the community's perception towards behavior and practices etc. A total of 1,210 *anganwadis* were covered by CBOs and NGOs who worked for the movement without anyone paying them. The network had many organisations like the Public Health Resource Network (PHRN). A total number of 20 districts were covered including 75 blocks, before this report card got done. Following is an analysis of this report card. It is a colourful report card using the colours of traffic signals, which would be easily understood by many of the community activists. For instance, red colour signifies danger so it needs to be changed into yellow or green.

Starting with data from a block-level analysis, followed by district-level and finally a state-level analysis, a comprehensive picture of the situation in Jharkhand was compiled. This report card included many more questions for gathering and presenting data such as if an *anganwadi* has a functional weighing machine then it is marked in green, and if it is not working properly then it is marked yellow, and if it is missing then it is marked red.

GROWTH MONITORING

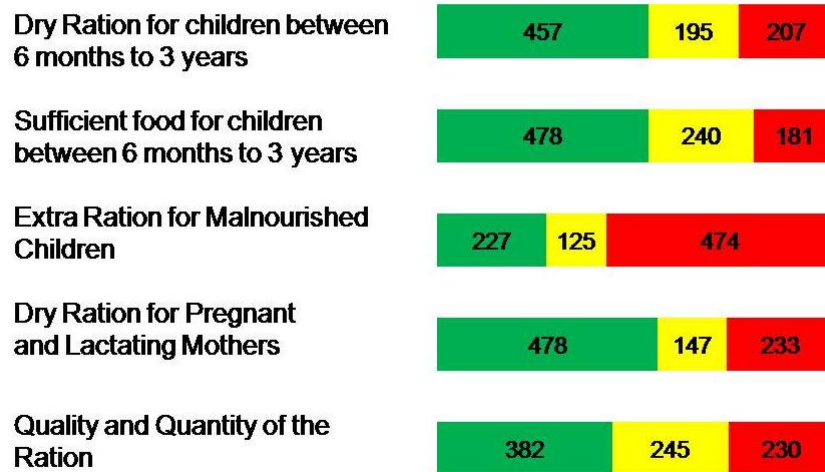
■ Ok ■ Satisfactory ■ Poor



Therefore, this is how questions are answered in the report card. If the machine is being used to measure weight, then it is marked in green, if the machine is being used for weighing only a few times, then that was marked yellow, and if the machine is not being used to measure weight at all then it was marked red. Some 1,210 report cards have been compiled to give a state-level analysis.

SUPPLEMENTARY NUTRITION

■ OK ■ Satisfactory ■ Poor



Similarly, there is a question about supplementary nutrition like dry ration and whether it is being given or not. There are no indicators without red marking here. In fact, there are some indicators that show extended red, for example in the case of the indicator regarding malnourished children, who should be getting extra food, the answer (bar) is mostly marked in red. Coming to VHND (Village Health and Nutrition Day), although people know about it, they do not participate or engage too much because they do not know what happens there.

Education for nutrition, health and hygiene

Adolescent services like providing nutritive food to adolescents are very limited, even iron tablets are hardly being distributed and the *anganwadi* worker, who is supposed to counsel young girls, is not able to do it as well as we expect. These girls, who will grow up to be future mothers, are so malnourished themselves that naturally they will give birth to malnourished babies. That is where malnutrition truly begins. These girls do not even know what all they should be eating for their own well-being, and so it is no surprise that they do not know that children over the age of six months have to be given supplementary food along with breast-milk. If you talk to a new mother, she would say 'I do not let my child away from my sight for a minute; it is always in my lap'. But if you ask her about feeding practices since the child completed six months, she says she feeds it only breast-milk, which is obviously insufficient. Such behavioral practices can be easily learnt during counseling sessions with the *anganwadi* worker but that is not happening with a high frequency.

Another thing to mention here is that with children coming to the *anganwadi* centre, one has to ensure that they wash hands before eating food. This is not being checked at the *anganwadi* centres so obviously it is difficult to ensure health, hygiene and nutrition for our children, as all these indicators are interconnected. Lack of mid-day meals is also a reason why many children are malnourished in Jharkhand. Schools do not even have iron tablets to give them. PDS shops do not open every day in the village and therefore villagers are being denied daily rations.

Community Mobilization

The public dialogues happened in 12 districts which brought together the community, government officials and the District Collector on one platform for a *jansamvaad* (people's dialogue). Every district had evolved an action-plan. We have analyzed the result of each action plan. We see that a large-scale awareness has come about in people as they are slowly getting to know about their

rights. In fact, many people have started 'breaking the silence' due to this dialoging, especially on the issue of nutrition, which was never as popular as education or health.

At many places, government officials are also making plans to deal with malnourished children by asking: what are their estimated numbers? What are the best counter strategies? This has happened in Hazaribagh. And Chaibasa Zila Parishad has also taken a similar initiative. So we see that in the post-*JASHN* campaign period, a lot of results have materialized. Now a second part of the same movement is pending, which would hopefully cover up the gaps faced during the first part.

Jan Samwad



Child In Need Institute - JNU Hunger Tracking



19 May 2013

Here are some photographs of the *jansamvaad*. About 17,000 people have participated in this campaign process, where people have shared one platform and have been educated about their nutritional rights and how to access them.

Thank you!

Session 2
Discussant's Comments
Vandana Prasad

Vandana Prasad (Discussant)

Thank you to the Chair and to both the speakers for very interesting presentations. I here were some similarities and many differences also in the aspects that were covered in the presentations. From the point of view of malnutrition, both the states were in dire straits at one point of time; one is now making an advance and one clearly not. Here you know Chhattisgarh is doing well as is publicly acknowledged and Jharkhand is not. It did not come out clearly in either of the presentations but there are major governance issues that could be reflected upon which would have clarified to us our own analysis of why this seems to be so, because for example, one would have liked to hear from Samir (about) the situation of governance. You are basically reflecting the translation of a political will vis-à-vis food security in Chhattisgarh state and that we have been seeing through press, media as well as through the reporting of the campaign that does exist, while in Jharkhand, in juxtaposition, there is a complete administrative apathy and mis-governance, very explicit corruption. For example the Mission Director (MD) of the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) is languishing in jail at this moment of time, etc., so there are very clear-cut kinds of differences in governance which I think would have been interesting for the house to have analysis on. Where Chhattisgarh is concerned, you are showing a good picture, I think it has to be said that we need to see the methodology of the sampling also because one concern is: "are we covering all children?" There are these vast belts where we know that services do not reach. Are those people being counted - is one big question mark, at least in my mind, in the so-called Maoist-affected areas?

But even if we acknowledge that yes, in (the area of) food security, there is this good thing happening, but there is a very paradoxical situation where absolutely the opposite is happening in the health sector. For instance, you have deprivatization of PDS on the one hand and a very concerted move to privatize the health sector on the other. What sense does that make? How is that happening? What is the analysis? Is it that *Jan Swasthya Abhiyan* did not do as good a job as the Right to Food campaign? I am asking this with a serious point that there are obviously reasons why a state has been motivated and mobilized to perform in a particular way.

I do not want to flatter campaigns too much but it could be so. So what is the understanding of why the same processes that have been acknowledged to be useful in food are exactly the opposite of what is going on in health? Are there agencies that are not playing their role or playing a role but not managing (to have an impact)... it is all balances of power eventually, so who is wielding the power in health to be able to do that?

I think also of concerns (expressed) that natural resources were being taken over and privatized. So is this what we are seeing just now as low-hanging fruit? You know starting off in a very bad situation, is it going to plateau and then deteriorate because at some point of time, deterioration in health systems and the loss of natural resources will make a difference to nutrition and food security. Just now it seems not to be the case but is that just a matter of time? I am concerned.

Another thing that was visible from the presentation is state-allocations to the business of nutrition. We have seen this in Chhattisgarh, you mentioned, but we know also in MP (100 crores from the state exchequer), AP, Odisha and Jharkhand the *Jeevan Asha* programme had allocated some amount from the state money. So in a sense, what we are seeing is that state governments are starting to do more than what has been pushed by the central government and in some situations, like in Chhattisgarh, you bring this up and again it is the case is MP policy: state governments advancing beyond national policy, in some cases, national policy almost making a bottleneck to state progressives like in the Food Security Act. Some say it is doing clearly better, you mentioned that in

your presentation. We know about Tamil Nadu, Kerala, etc. If the national (thing) were to succeed, it will actually bring a bottleneck, it will be retrogressive for some states; so like wise in integrated management of malnutrition. So many of the processes that are happening in Chhattisgarh state...had the centre-level had its way, they would have curtailed it. So what does that mean? That we have to be very alert at state-level to protect state's forward-looking policies against the retrogressive central policies, that is one thing that comes (through) clearly.

In Chhattisgarh, we have been noting and we have had huge fights on this issue, about taking women's labour for granted and making it free. The *Mitanin* programme is a good example of that and now the crèche programme which is going to be a state-level programme. So are we saying that forever more women are going to be performing child-care as a public service without any remuneration, without any social welfare, without any rights as workers? Now it is a matter of a debate. We do understand the business of health-workers and their role as activists. It has been my personal contention that drawing a salary does not make you or not make you an activist. All activists also earn their livelihoods from somewhere. Therefore activism comes from the kind of support, capacities and powers that are given to people and Chhattisgarh has done it with the *Mitanin* programme. It has allowed the *Mitanin* power and agency. It has given them a perspective and self-esteem. Even if they get paid, if that is retained, they will still be activists. There is no contradiction between people getting paid for their work and being able to perform as activists. This is my personal contention. So just a concern on the crèches.

You have illustrated the roles of community-based monitoring of these services in Jharkhand also. It is very fortunate that in the ICDS restructuring policy, this has formally come in. Here social audit for ICDS etc. has come in the same way as NRHM had community-based monitoring for NRHM. Now the risks are also the same. The way *sarkari-fying* community-based monitoring for NRHM goes in a particular direction, so maybe the case with the ICDS but we have to take that space and we have to work around it. These were just my comments to the presentations,

Thank you.

Comments and Discussion (Open House)

Ritu: Thank you Veena. Can I now request Prof. Banerji to come and start the next session which he chairs? Prof. Banerji needs no introduction. He is the founding chair of the CSMCH, who is known even more for his work on TB, on health culture and its use in various kinds of research in health systems. Dr. Banerji, there are three speakers for today and I leave it to you to introduce them.

Prof. Banerji: Thank you. Yes, I think we have fortunately a small group; hopefully we will finish within time. May I now request Dr. Sanjay Chaturvedi to come here. Also, Dr. Rama Baru, then we have Samir from Chhattisgarh, Nasreen Jamal from Jharkhand and Vandana Prasad. As Dr. Ritu Priya introduced me, I left the centre since 20 years back. Since then I am doing very little reading. And when you just emerge after a long period of time, you say what sort of world am I seeing? Today, I saw a facet of nutritional world and those who know me a little bit know that I am still rather active in my thinking. Therefore the best thing I will do is not to do much talking. What I will do is leave you with four lead speakers and then we have the discussion. If there is any time at all, then I will be talking, otherwise that will be all. Dr. Sanjay, introduce yourself.

Banerji: You'll have a lot of questions to answer.

Rama Baru: Thank you Dr. Banerji. I am going to make my comments based on the presentation that you (Sanjay Chaturvedi) have made and the abstract that I have. I want to summarise what I have understood from the presentation. This is part of a larger study taken forward by the INCLIN network. What you have presented today was the findings from the inductive methodology component of the study. It had both the quantitative and qualitative components and you are really presenting the perceptions of mothers and their reporting of what are the constraints that they face in dealing with an under-nourished child. That is the way I understood it. You also said that your own work threw up, in a sense, problems with the victim-blaming approach which is the normal, rather dominant discourse when it comes to why children are undernourished in a community.

Having made these comments, I want to make some conceptual observations on this study, and the way it has been presented. When you are talking about the South Asian enigma, which is what the abstract begins with, i.e., you have a country which has experienced sustained high economic growth but you also have very high levels of under-nutrition persisting. It seems to me, somewhere you are looking at mothers and their perceptions, without placing it in the larger framework of inequalities as they exist. Who are these mothers? They have a certain location both in terms of the regions they come from as well as the social composition that is their caste, class composition, and therefore when you are looking at their perceptions, we have to locate them in terms of where they are coming from. That is one part.

The second part is when you are looking at high levels of economic growth, you are also talking about a certain penetration of the market in various spheres of people's lives and the food industry has very successfully moved into rural areas. What we really need to do is - what I am trying to really bring forward is that the title itself to me, is talking about discretetes. To me that does not capture the processes of the link between the time constrained mother, shrinking care and expanding markets. They are not discrete events. These are all collective and they are placed in a certain rubric of the socio-economic relations that exist. So are we saying that the Dalit woman and her family and the mother in the Dalit family has the same set of experiences as say an OBC or an Adivasi and others?

My worry is that when you say chronic poverty also, chronic poverty is a condition, but if you do not look at the social determinants of chronic poverty and be able to engage with the nature of relations, then we just come up with various, what I would call, risk-factor kind of an approaches that 'these, these, these' are important. However we are not able to really understand the processes that exist. What are the social processes behind all of this?

I think this is where I have many questions about the way you have conceptualized this aspect of the study and therefore, yes the inductive methodology is very useful, but where does it begin and where does it end, and how much can we really extrapolate from these kinds of studies. That is all I have to say.

Banerji: We will have discussions together after the two presentations, because I want to remind you that the subject for your talk was a review of experience of community-based determinants of persistent malnutrition despite economic growth in India. And you tried to relate it to clinical epidemiology. Now we will go on to the second talk by Samir. This is regarding state-level analysis of nutritional trends and experiences in Chhattisgarh.

Banerji: Thank you very much Dr. Prasad. Now we will have discussions based on three presentations and what the two discussants said.

Vijeta: Good afternoon every one. I am from the Centre of European Studies, School of International Studies. What I am going to say has nothing to do with this. I am from Jharkhand. I have been closely associated with a couple of NGOs there, when I used to go back home during my days. What I wanted to put in perspective was the fact, which I kind of figured out when I was working there with the tribal population. I feel that the biggest problem is that their livelihood has been lost and that is the whole reason for the multiple problems that they face including malnutrition. When their livelihoods have been taken away, their culture is dying, and some of them are working in mines for wages as low as thirty rupees per day (till two years ago). There is just this vicious cycle where they have very low life expectancy, etc. Therefore what I feel that in this current scenario, what has to be done and what very few NGOs are doing is that they are re-creating a kind of livelihood structure for them which incorporates their culture, and prevents them from dying and also gives them a space in the current market situation of today.

There is this one NGO which is called Kalamandirin Jamshedpur. They have introduced some things called 'eco-tourism' and 'cultural tourism' where they allow the tribal people to create bamboo products, *dokra*, (metal costing artifacts) sculptures, metal-craft, grass mats, vegetable dyes, etc., things that are indigenous to them and also have a value in the market, and they sell those things and they earn livelihoods and therefore in a couple of villages like in Seraikela, Godda etc., they have their own livelihoods which is sustainable. They are confident and there is very low malnutrition and problems like that. Here I feel that a re-creation of their livelihood systems has to be done.

Thank you.

Nasreen: What you said about the livelihood problem, that is more aggravated among the tribals and primitive tribes. However what we are trying to say is that the government has several schemes for them. If people are aware then they can, to a large extent, resolve the issue of livelihood.

Vijeta: Sorry to interrupt. I forgot to share that all the things that we are discussing since morning today, I feel that all these things are from a medium-term perspective. However, if we think about the long-term, we cannot continuously say to people that you depend upon policies that will keep on making you secure. People need to have some level of independence in terms of being able to earn their of livelihood and buy food.

Nasreen: You are right, but government does have a large number of schemes after taking into consideration that these schemes are for tribals and primitive tribes. For instance, if they cannot venture out to access them, they should get facilities close to where they live. I only want to say that whatever people's rights are, that is something people should get. If government is giving it to us, why should we leave it? If the government is putting aside funds for us, why should we not take the benefit of that and instead allow the government to 'digest that money'? Therefore malnutrition and health problems start from there in my view.

Sachin: I want to say something about Nasreen Ma'am's presentation. My Hindi is not that good so please bear with me. When you were presenting, you were saying that NGOs or individuals should come forward in leadership roles. I could not understand which kind of leader do we want? There have been so many leaders, Marx, Lenin, Mao, Ambedkar, Bhagat Singh and so on, many 'liberators' came. Despite that, the situation is the same. So what kind of a leader are we looking for, with certain stereotypical physical attributes like a beard, etc.? Please tell us.

Nasreen: I agree with you that leaders can be of many kinds, but in the context of the kind of creation of a network comprising civil society, CBOs, NGOs etc. In Jharkhand, we have 109 NGOs and people from civil society have come together. On every issue, this network meets and takes decisions. There is a coordinator in the network, who we choose as our leader. That person is at the state-level. The leader, according to us, is not a political leader or a bearded man. He is someone who thinks about the community without being greedy for money.

We can say that a large number of networks collectively decided about the choice of leader during *JASHN*, our campaign, which is very much active. If ever you visit Jharkhand, you would see the network really working at ground-level.

Sachin: So on one side, the network is leading the movement within the community and on the other side, you need an individual leader too? Is this community work? How does it work?

Anonymous: I have been associated with *JASHN* and I feel that it is about a collective leadership. I know at least 6-7 many people who have been associated with *JASHN*. So whether or not who coordinates, people run this campaign together, collectively.

Banerji: Any other question?

Vijay: Sachin seems to be very upset with the question of leadership as against hunger considering his experience of Nepal. In Nepal, a consensus has been arrived at in favour of American-consumer paradigm. As of now, the Maoists' party in Nepal, i.e., the Congress have formally passed a

resolution that they would bring about socialism through capitalism. Therefore, I think Sachin should discuss the dream (and) not individual leaders since all of them want to go in the same direction.

But on the subject of leadership, at least in the context of Jharkhand, I want to understand more. Earlier, I was part of an organization called *Judav* based in Jharkhand. *Judav's* FCRA was cancelled because they worked on issues such as displacement of the marginalized. Dayamani Barla, a social activist, also had to go to jail two or three times in Jharkhand for raising questions about displacement.

So maybe Nasreen can speak about the relationship of leadership, community and state in Jharkhand. Usually the government labels any community struggle as a 'Maoist' struggle. To my knowledge, Jharkhand has signed 102 MoUs with companies, not even at one location can one find conclusive evidence to say that it is a 'Maoist' resistance. Local communities are struggling there. There are no front-ranking parties or NGOs to take lead. Therefore when we talk of leadership or collectives, then we are either referring to ideologies or project NGO-alliances as 'leaders'. However the actual struggle on the ground, at least in Jharkhand, is being led by the people themselves, through their community-leadership and not through our modern sector, party and NGO leadership. That is my understanding. I would like your reflections on that.

Nasreen: When we are talking about leader or leadership, this is a network. If we look at it from another angle then it is a network made of NGOs, CBOs and people from civil society, media-persons and so on. To run this network, there is a state-level advisory committee, not an individual. They sit together, and plan about how to tackle malnutrition, so then from our point of view, there is no one particular leader. It is one advisory committee comprising members who have been working on nutrition. Such meetings happen once or twice a month and they take up issues like health, education etc., too.

Theirs we felt that since health and education are generally spoken about from before, nutrition figured prominently as a topic of discussion for us and our campaign made rapid progress with regard to that. Even if we consider that we had a first meeting in January, then by June, we have reached the state-level in terms of community-based monitoring which was completed within six months. Therefore in this phase, there was no one particular person who led this. It was a collective effort of many people. There are Right to Food, PHRN, CBOs, NGOs etc., who have together decided upon the work strategy and taken the initiative. So there is no one leader we are talking about.

In this initiative people have taken no money but when it came to organizing *jansamvad*(public dialogue), there were donors who volunteered like Plan India. The government also took the initiative to organize *jansamvad* in respective districts, be it arranging the hall, food, travelling and so on. Here, we can see that there is no individual leader here. This is a collective group that has cultivated similar thoughts and they are moving ahead with that. That is all what it is.

Veena: I have a question for Dr. Sanjay Chaturvedi. I won't go into the details of your study. I found it very disturbing that at a time when most states in north India have taken on the question of food, (and not in the south for obvious reasons) questions of food are asked addressing the questions to the state, that it is the state's responsibility to either control prices or distribute it etc., How is it that your study has inverted everything and looks at alcoholism and a market that perhaps provides them with Tiger biscuits once or twice a day, because we did a little survey outside JNU and sometimes the mother would give the child two rupees to buy Tiger biscuits, good, bad or evil, whatever it might be.

However can not imagine your study coming out with research which is completely in contrast with the kind of hunger you see in UP, Bihar, MP, Jharkhand, and Chhattisgarh. I found it really disturbing. How did you arrive at these variables as the most important for child nutrition? Because the political

atmosphere is very different. Somewhere there is a disconnect and I think you owe it to us and to the activists who have been working so hard, not me though.

Chaturvedi: Thank you for your rather emotive response to it. First I would respond to Prof. Rama Baru's observations about the study. Yes Ma'am, a large part of this study was quantitative, semi-quantitative. I have shared with the organizers before that I would restrict myself to the inductive part of the study. And no, the study was not about mother is perceptions alone. There were several stakeholders and whatever core themes are emerging was beyond our control. Your concern is also that probably we are not the players in the data generation???. We are only interpreting, that you are saying is partially related to what Prof. Rama Baru was also alluding to, that we need to locate these stakeholders in a map and in a context. Probably in my mind, that would be forcing the etic over the emic. If something emerges, yes, it is there, but if something is not emerging, then probably forcing those type of discourses and constructs, taking from universities, professors, ruling classes, governments or NGOs or activists or ideologies, etc., It would amount to forcing. This perspective probably would destroy the spirit of induction. Therefore whatever I am presenting here was what emerged from these stakeholders, where mothers were a clear part, but there were several other stakeholders. So whatever is being presented here is a synergy and after the triangulation across stakeholders, that is being presented here. If that is not to our liking or if it does not fit our constructs, then the investigator cannot help it.

Veena: The question was not of like or dislike. It is not a personal thing. Does not it disturb you that you have not captured the travesty of hunger?

Chaturvedi: It disturbs me also. I am on the same page as you. However the first core theme was fragile food security. If you go back to the model about what was presented after respondent-validation, the first core theme to emerge was fragile food security. That was there. Here the entire discourse in the paper is working on that watermark. So probably there is no wishing away but if that core theme is not shouting from the rooftop, probably I cannot help it and I am disturbed.

Veena: I am 'shouting' because the mike doesn't work! I am just trying to be audible. And mine wasn't an emotive response.

Banerji: There is obviously a lot that has to be looked into; whether the model was validated or not...

Vandana: Mr. Chaturvedi I am also a little aggravated. You were talking about methodology. I think you were making a lot of allusions that suggest you were using grounded theory, theoretical sampling and all that. You say that we play a merely facilitative role or that of an interpreter in that. I think reflexivity is a huge part of any qualitative research that we do. I do not think any researcher is completely vacant of perspective and analysis. We try to take care of these things, I mean because you did not present data, you see, that was part of my problem as you were going on. I could not sift out from where, I mean you do not source your data to me and you are saying that all this is happening through data.

I think that the point all of us are making is that we know research is not apolitical and when you are talking of economic growth in India and you are talking about women's work, I really appreciate your findings in terms of women's work, but the point I think that Prof. Baru was making I will just highlight. It was that the same era of economic growth that has caused a feminization of poverty and

casualization of labour is what impacts women's time, work, her loneliness, her isolation and her work-burden, and that is all we were expecting to find in your analysis. I respect what you found, those three issues that you came up with. I think I tend to agree with them also, there is a market which is unregulated; there is the issue with women's work. However you do not connect the same period of economic growth to its influence on these three issues and I think that is merely the point that we were trying to make which would have come in the areas of your discussion for example. Maybe it could have come in your final conclusions which link you to policy advocacy. I remember reading this paper, I remember feeling grateful that these kinds of findings have come from the so-called non-left, as we say 'we do not shout from the rooftops' ideology. I am very grateful for this paper but we feel that when despite economic growth in India you discuss it in such frame, these comments would not have come. But the fact that you are relating this to the economic growth and economic growth has an influence on all these issues that you have found has to be exposed as well.

Samir: I wanted to respond to Dr. Vandana Prasad's comments quickly. One about the study, the evaluation. It had a huge sample size: 5,000 children and 18 blocks, 10 districts. Tribal districts were covered well. The sample had Bastar, etc., the Naxal-affected areas also. Regarding political will, the situation in Chhattisgarh has been of political stability but for PDS there is not the story of translation of political will into a successful programme. PDS figured nowhere in Raman Singh's manifesto when he came to power so it was not functioning and the people's movements made a lot of hue and cry about it. Right to Food Campaign picked up from 2002 onwards and luckily at that point, the kind of bureaucracy that was there, they were willing to listen to the suggestion of deprivatization.

Raman Singh still does not have any commitment towards deprivatization. So in health, what is happenings, that they see that the public system is not working, so give it to the private sector. So there it was a private system which was not working, so give to the public. That can be one explanation but otherwise overall, it is a high trend towards privatizing in most of the things including health, which is very worrying.

In IMR also, Chhattisgarh's first five years really progressed very fast. Further progress is more gradual so it might happen in nutrition also. But in nutrition, one can clearly say that the nutrition programmes are strong and expanding. New programmes are being added, new entitlements are being added and being delivered. Therefore there is a likelihood that the trend might continue for some time. Alienation of natural resources, selling them to industries, is a major issue and the adverse effects of that we will get to see at the state-level population-level data, we'll get to see it maybe in one or two decades so it might be early. However in those localized pockets, there obviously it disrupts everything, not just nutritional effects, it is the entire lives of people there, where it is happening.

So our *kharif* output this year has gone down compared to last year because a lot of lands being given in irrigated, double-cropped area to industries. In one non-tribal area there are 38 power plants coming up in one district alone. These are the long-term threats. Therefore the same state which does good welfare programme or a good PDS also does *SalwaJudum*, also sells off land and rivers to industries.

Regarding central-state experience, central government has been problematic, especially in PDS. They have been trying to penalize Chhattisgarh. They refused to give the APL allocation in Chhattisgarh because it was expanding its PDS. I agree with your comment that volunteerism and activism, that (they need not be like) paid people can be activists.

Mitanins as well as mothers who are giving time in crèches need to be paid. There issue is that with Mitans there are some who agree that some payment should be given, but in crèches, the trouble is that government does not want any new workers. So we had a choice either to have no

programme, or to initially start with allocation of 25,000 rupees per year. Within six months it increased to 50,000 per year. There is still some hope that at some point of time the demand for payment to these mothers will be met. But from their perspective, they are still willing to live with this exploitation because otherwise a mother has to give seven days of the week, now she has to give one day and on that day she gets a couple of good meals there. So that compensates, to some extent, but obviously there are no answers, so that critique is absolutely valid.

Imrana: I think Vandana has very clearly posed the question that on one hand the same state is selling its natural resources, its forests and its water, while hundreds of MoUs are being written out on the other. And, it is also giving you food and we have the food campaign going on and we are trying to prevent starvation deaths and ensuring food. And we all know that in the long run, who is going to win, so I just want to know that do people in these two states, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh, people who are working with food campaign, what kind of links they have thought of with people who are fighting for land-resources, and forests and water.

Samir: Actually, there are a lot of overlaps in these groups. So the same groups which are active in the Right to Food, most of them actually are active in the fight for saving the resources. However the success rate varies. Here, much more failure has been encountered because the state has been much more determined to take over the resources, to sell them, whereas food is something they are willing to concede. So that is the situation in Chhattisgarh.

Imrana: It is very clear, and if you look at it in financial terms, a universal PDS will cost the state one-fifth of what it gives away as tax redemption to the big industries. Therefore, subsidy to food is nothing compared to the profit that the corporates are making. So we are thinking that we are winning, but actually we are losing, so I am just trying to see what is it that a singular campaign does in the direction of development.

Vikas: There are many issues that have come up in between. Continuing with my concern about politics and the appropriate leadership, I do not think leadership should try and avoid political ideologies. And leadership should be able to think of alternatives to the present situation of the society, including being connected with various organisations working in the society, in some way or another.

As far as Nepal is concerned, there is a great number of people who are struggling. I was at JNU for a recent meeting also attended by Nepal's leaders. As far as Chhattisgarh is concerned on one hand they are providing food through PDS and on the other hand they are signing MoUs, etc. I think we should try and understand this within a political perspective. Today, what the UPA government is doing at the centre, if Chhattisgarh is bringing out a policy in opposition to that then it should be seen as a favourable political move. In order that such policies do not succeed in the medium or long term, the state government is only starting economic policies like MoUs, etc. Therefore I do not see that there is a great division between what Chhattisgarh government is doing and what the government at the centre is doing. It is just a matter of their political convenience. Anyhow, both the parties and political forces, they are appeasing the corporate sector, who are the real power horses of this country.

Ritu: I wanted to ask Samir and Nasreen, how do they see the conclusions that Dr. Chaturvedi brought out? He is looking at women's work, he's talking about alcoholism and the impact of that on households and food for the children and so on. Do you see these as important because in both your presentations, you are sticking to schemes and programs and what they are doing and their outcomes? The question that Madhuri put out - that you are looking at people only as 'beneficiaries' and everything else as an impact as if of programmes and benefits of these programmes and benefits. But there is another larger frame that is changing their lives, both in terms of access to food and its utilization and all of that. So the two have to sort of talk to each other, what Chaturvedi is saying and as Veena pointed out, he is not bringing in the schemes and what PDS is doing and other parts of it. But if that was not what was said to them by their respondents, I take the issue that it is the kind of questions, the way you pose them, the way you interpret them, all that is the researcher's prerogative. But if we take at face value what the findings are, then we need to get them both to talk to each other. That is the point of linking these issues together. Samir, I have seen some of your work on how food patterns have changed within the changing market and access etc., if you could reflect on it.

Samir: Amongst the factors that I listed, fragile food security and markets further worsen it. So price rise has been a major issue, like one of the increases in malnutrition in 2008-09 was clearly because of rise in food prices and we observed in the field that a set of things had disappeared from people's diet. Like tribal people were not using oil, they were boiling their food and pulses and vegetables consumption really went down.

About alcoholism, I am not so sure, so tentatively it does not seem to be that significant, not even in my field experience. However, in government discourse, there was a campaign against malnutrition ('*kuposhan virodhi abhiyan*') that the government started. The same vegetarian minister started it. And they held *aashal* rally etc. but the main focus was on opposing alcoholism. They were saying that children are malnourished because their fathers are alcoholic, so that kind of a formulation might have happened in other parts also. It might have led to people to believe that, I do not know, but it does not appeal to me personally for reasons because of which I find it difficult to believe.

Women's work, definitely, we have a huge women's workload issue. In Chhattisgarh, especially in tribal societies, which are even worse, they are supposed to be less patriarchal but women's workload is huge for tribal women as well. That is why I think things like crèches, day-care centres, etc., need to be seen as a centre for maternity entitlements.

Nasreen: The nutrition report card I was talking about in my presentation, I forgot to share one step regarding that. That report card got filled up within the community by *mahila mandals*, youth groups, etc., who were trained about the 32 questions regarding PDS system, etc., how to fill those up in the report card etc. This was not just a survey format. It was a process that required a proper initial orientation that started making them aware about the issue. For instance, they came to know that PDS is there to serve them. They knew some things earlier, but not everything.

So when they were with the service provider, filling up these cards, their training actually began right there. When community people got the card filled and later shared it with others through the platform of *jansamvaad*, they felt that this voice was going to the government officials directly and to society at large.

The analysis of report cards was delivered to government officials a day in advance so that they could understand the and prepared for the *jansamvaad*. So even the government officials knew beforehand that their services, etc. were not reaching community people, who have filled up these cards themselves. Awareness, therefore, began from there. Then we printed out these reports and stuck them at the *anganwadi* so that they could know and could go and ask when this red mark would become green. So we have succeeded in raising the awareness of people. Her, whenever the

community-based monitoring will happen the second time, probably then they would be able to share their level of success. So we can safely say that the community has become aware and that they have started raising their voices.

Participant: I wanted to Nasreenji a question and I am echoing what Ritu Priya has said before. Do you think male alcoholism is a big factor that causes malnutrition?

Nasreen: This issue is very different. If you talk of tribals or even non-tribals, then this means two different things for the two of them. When we speak of nutrition and alcoholism, then somewhere or the other we need to understand which community we are addressing. We have to first understand this and then we can elaborate on further.

Banerji: I think we had a good discussion. Think we should stop here now or continue this outside. Thank you very much!

Session Three

**Linkages of Nutrition,
Work and Food Production Systems**

Chair: Dr. Mira Shiva

**Biraj Swain and Ranvir Singh
Kavita Srivastava
Kiran Kumar Vissa
Dithi Bhattacharya
Amanjot Kaur
Lakshmi Durga
Shiraz Wajih**

Agriculture in the 12th FYP Through the Optic of Institutional Mechanisms, Access to Small and Women Farmers

*Biraj Swain and Ranvir Singh
(presented by Biraj Swain)*

Thank you Dr. Shiva. Ranvir has a fresh-out-of-the-oven PhD on private sector participation in Delhi in the healthcare sector. He has been working with us for the last three months. yesterday Nalini talked about a political commitment/will index and that is when the trans-disciplinary and normalization of diverse inputs and outcomes are challenging, i.e., the Hunger Reduction Commitment Index. Well Ranvir was part of that show also. He has been a great asset to the team. I led the food justice campaign at Oxfam but like Dr. Shiva said, I have been working on areas related to food and nutrition and their intersectionality with public policy, both in South Asia and East Africa. So I keep saying that I am someone who works in the hungriest and poorest parts of the world and on the intersectionality of public policy for the last nine to ten years. But otherwise, I have been in the development sector and in the public policy discourse for about 13-14 years. Still it does not make us any happier or make us any more confident.

This is an interesting analysis because we actually wanted to be empathetic and charitable to the state instead of taking an antagonistic or adversarial position; we wanted to recognize what the state is doing and see if we can find a handle for civil society and campaigners to exploit that initiative. That is how this work started, with a literature review.

Agriculture in 12th Five Year Plan

So this is what the 12 Five-Year Plan says: public investment is back in the discourse. This is the agriculture chapter of the 12th five-year plan (FYP). It is actually juxtaposing public investments vis-à-vis subsidy and saying how subsidy has been individually directed anti-collectivization, and unless and until you talk of agrarian sector with enough amount of public investment, things are going to stay in the crisis-mode. We think that is a great mention.

Second, it is talking about farmer producer organisations from Kudumbashree, to the Deccan Development Society model, to the Joint-Liability Groups of farmers in Maharashtra and AP. It does talk about farmers' producers organisations. We think that is good work but it does not use the word 'collective'. Fine, we are ok with that, we can make peace with that but it still mentions farmers' producers' organisations. It talks about extension services for the first time. I will be showing you a few graphs about the public investment and extension and that is probably the last mile delivery bridging the gap between research, labs and farms as one of the issues, and the under-investment and de-privatization of extension services is recognized in the 12th Five-Year Plan (FYP) document.

It also talks about recognition of agricultural statistics. I am surprised that for the first time we are hearing that the Central Statistical Organization (CSO) is not a good reference point for either agrarian investments or crop-cutting datasets to declare a drought. Yesterday Ashwin and Ankita were talking about drought and starvation deaths. Do you know relief (response) starts kicking off only when the district is declared drought-hit and that is based on crop-cutting data which are dated, antiquarian and colonial also.

So the FYP document is actually talking about the inadequacy and the limitations of the agrarian statistics and asking for a revival of the agricultural resource data centre and for making a national grid for the wider dissemination of data. We think that is a great mention. That is also recognition of the fact that we have been planning for so many years with the wrong tools and wrong data sets. It talks about the need to protect, it is talking for the first time about the damage that is done by the decoupling of public procurement from public distribution and the need to recouple them again, and finally the need for the agriculture department to work with the consumer welfare and food and public distribution department. So that recoupling restitution is also important because it is about protecting the farmers from price shocks and protecting the consumers from food inflation. It does

not mention the reasons why they need to be recoupled, but we would like to elaborate and say that this is the rationale for recoupling.

Aggravating Small Farmers' Plight

It brings back the small farmers to the heart of the discourse, yet it does not talk about peasants and marginal farmers - but then most of English literature is not talking about peasants and marginal farmers either. At the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, one of the super elitist agricultural-science' universities in the entire world where I teach a course called 'Future of Agriculture' the subject of peasantry does not appear there either and Sweden, i.e., the Scandinavian block is supposed to be the most progressive and welfarist nation?... We should also be happy and recognize the fact that it talks about small farmers even though it stops short of mentioning peasants and marginal farmers. And finally, it takes a maximalist, progressive vision of farmer's welfare.

I do not know how many of you have been tracking M.S. Swaminathan's reinventing of his own politics. He has been arguing since 2007, as per the Farmers' Commission to rename Department of Agriculture and Cooperation as Farmers' Welfare Department. About time, that is all we would say.

So this is what it is. I think the importance of small farmers in the Indian agrarian sector cannot be overstated. We are not going to reiterate it over and over again. Desai et. al. did a brilliant paper in EPW in December 2011 in which they analysed Indian agricultural policies, instruments and their implementation over four decades and I think it is a really good span. Twenty years of pre-liberalization and 20 years of post-liberalization and the first thing is the Indian government is in denial. Our crop production is flat-lining, it is not plateauing, it is flat-lining. Their analysis says that in spite of all the investment under new programmes, under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, the maximum production enhancement growth has been exactly 1.3 percent. But the latest datasets, again from the same FAO that we were talking about yesterday, i.e., the Asia-level dataset, actually says that Indian crop-reduction is flat-lining. So we are all just cereal-secure. Juxtapose this with agricultural abandonment and the numbers are about 15 million for the last two decades, according to Ashok Mehrotra, the Director of the Institute of Applied Manpower Research (IAMR). A simple mathematics works out to 2,000 farmers abandoning agriculture every single day, that is got to have some impact on crop-production and of course cereal production data sets. While Philippines is going up, China is pretty much going at an exponential rate. So it is important to recognize that our production is flat-lining.

In terms of small farmers, one of the reasons why we are also advocating universalization of PDS is number one, 70 percent of Indian farmers, as everybody knows (including Ashok Gulati who says this), are net food buyers. Here inflation gives a body-blow to our food producers' distress number one. Number two, 41 percent of the total net Indian food grains is produced by the small farmers. However, 50 percent of Indian farmers do not have PDS cards. So it is the food producers who are going to bed hungry, which is why it is important to re-prioritize them in the agrarian sector. The average landholding, this is the basic statistics, is landholding of 1.67 hectares, 83 percent of farm households are small, with an operational area combined at 44 percent; one-third of them belong to the marginal social groups. There is a substantial reduction in public support through agriculture.

Broken Extension and Poor Training Facilities

I do not know how many of you have the copy of the IDS Bulletin (ref: *IDS Bulletin*, Special Issue 1, July 2012, Wiley-Blackwell). I can show the datasets. This is page number 98. Ramakumar talks about the public investment in extension as of 2004-06. Again we are talking about the same faulty agrarian statistics and inadequate tools...but still that is the best that we have as of now. Page number 99, 0.13 percent budgetary allocation growth to extension and training and we have this naïve assumption that knowledge and technology go to the farmers through the market, which is why in India, one of the countries with one of the best grid of state agricultural universities and national agricultural universities, all are actually decimated, starved of funds and now the

department too. Ranvir did an institutional analysis the structure of the department of agriculture, both at the federal level and at few selected state levels. There was an inverted pyramid with the extension cadre either dying, dead or being killed, and the current ratio is about one extension worker to about 5,000 farmers.

We are talking about knowledge transfers and even the ASHA and the health worker is getting a radial coverage of about three kilometres (i.e., coverage of about 3,000 population). And we are talking about hand-holding and knowledge transfer, and the kind of ratio we are talking about is one knowledge worker, one extension worker to 5,000 farmers. It is impossible with that kind of a ratio to do any kind of knowledge and technology transfer and Desai et al. say that the maximum, optimal ratio that we should be talking about is 1:500. This we are almost operating at only one-tenth the times of that optimal size, which is why bridging the gap between lab and farms becomes almost a non-starter.

So one of the core points we are making is (the need for) strengthening of the extension services. I know Umendra is going to tell me what about the percentage of public investment which is going into organic research. I think Umendra will take us through that and they are hardly miniscule; none of our agricultural institutes are doing any kind of organic research. That is another battle that we have got to fight, but the point is even while the budgets are shrinking, the extension cadre is dying or being killed. That sort of tells us what kind of technology and knowledge transfer is going to be possible.

In the Debt Trap

The second is on page number 100. Ramakumar talks about direct and indirect finance spread. From 1985-2010, which is a very good spread period of about 25 years, indirect finance has increased from 16.8 percent to 23.9 percent, which means that this is money which is being routed through commercial banks, and cooperative banks, and which is going into non-agricultural purposes. And direct finance has decreased from 83.2 percent to 76 percent. The direct money access - with this we are talking about an extremely magnanimous definition of agricultural credit and anything and everything that happens in rural areas, the vicinity of a rural area is qualified and acknowledged as agrarian credit. In spite of that, there is still that kind of money-shifting by more than eight percent. Similarly, the loan portfolio outstanding, now this has been an eye-opener. The point is, not only is money shifting from the small/real farmers to agri-business and non-farmers, but also the tolerance to debt default is also shifting from small/real farmers, to agri-business and non-farmers, and all in the name of agrarian credit!!!!

The loan portfolio outstanding says that the non-payment default is not amongst the small but among the big farmers or the non-farmers at the size of 10 to 25 crores. So I seriously have not met a farmer in my life who takes a loan of the portfolio of 10 to 25 crores size, and (I find) default in that category has increased from 1.3 percent to 12.6 percent from 1990 to 2005. We are talking about 15 years of liberalization where the tolerance to default by agri-business has increased massively, from 1.3 percent to 12.6 percent. Intolerance to real farmers taking loans of the portfolio size of two lakhs has increased. So basically the loan default at two-lakh portfolio size has shrunk from 82.6 percent to 44.3 percent.

So (as for the) the default happening at the two-lakh portfolio which is probably real farmers, mid-size and small farmers or the marginal farmers - they are not defaulting as much. Their default has almost halved, whereas the agri-business default has increased by almost ten times, i.e., from 1.3 percent to 12.6 percent. That is about agrarian credit.

Women's Participation

Now to women farmers; like we said, this five-year plan document is actually recognizing the role of women farmers and the challenges around that. However, what it does not recognize is what your INCLLEN data said yesterday, about the feminization of agriculture in the context of care economy. The household chores that burden are still with the women and the feminization of poverty means

the work-burden is just increasing exponentially. The state support, be it crèche, be it worksite facilities - has been more or less non-starters. Ditthi is here, she is going to talk us through decent wage work and what is happening to women workers. Last year, *The Journal of Agrarian Studies* did a study on the NREGA wages and the discrimination around wage rates still exists. Similarly, the uptake of worksite facilities for women workers in the best performing state, either AP or Rajasthan, is still a non-starter. So having said that, I think I have already talked about the indebtedness, access to credit.

Debt Waiver: Questioning the Relief

On the debt waiver, all of us know of the 2008 public policy announcement of debt-waiver for Vidarbha farmers, which was expanded to the entire country, and we also know that the 2009 UPA election victory is credited to the debt-waiver. But how serious was the debt-waiver? Again Ramakumar has done a piece of work for us. The 2013 parliamentary budget session is also going to be rocked by the Comptroller & Auditor General (CAG), which has been looking at balance sheets and the routing of debt-waiver money and how 41 percent of the debt-waiver money is held in Mahalakshmi branches of many commercial banks. We do not know if farmers hold accounts in Mumbai, and that too in the Mahalakshmi area, which is mostly the commercial bank headquarters, and 41 percent of the debt-waiver accounts are held over there. Ramakumar also looked at what happened post the debt-waiver, other than the moral hazard of financial indiscipline. If a country government is really serious about the debt-waiver and farmer welfare, what should it do?

Number one, even in colonial times, Sainath says, debt-waiver was extended to informal credit. We know farmers do not have access to formal credit, so if you are serious about debt-waiver you give it to informal credit also, to people who are taking it from money-lenders. But our 2008 debt-waiver was just limited to public sector bank credit, not even commercial bank credit, forget about informal credit. Number two, this ceiling even in Vidarbha area, where tribals have more than two hectare land holding, was capped at two hectares in wasteland in the rain-fed areas. This has knocked out many eligible farmers who were reeling under debt. Number three and most important, when you declare a debt-waiver, you also follow it up with public policy welfare measures so that the next set of crises does not happen, and we know farmers are still committing suicides and there has been nothing done after the 2008 debt-waiver; and now we hear there is a package but what about the package which was going to avoid the second stage of crisis. So we think it was a very non-serious, populist, electorally directed debt-waiver. But we also have individual provisions, not institutional provisions, that we think is the kind of relief that is also important. But this kind of non-serious relief is a half-way measure and extremely cynically utilitarian also.

For example, you can buy a Mercedes Benz at 6.23 interest rate in Mumbai, but if you buy a tractor, considering the fewer number of banks willing to give you tractor loan, the interest goes up to 12 percent, and if you buy a pair of bullocks from informal credit, the kind of interest rate you are probably going to pay ranges from 24 to 36 percent. The only English word that you can think of for that kind of credit policy is repugnant or grotesque.

Co-Constructing Hope

So the way forward - we have been very unambitious with that because this is precisely written to engage with the government like we said. We started with a charitable and empathic approach which is why we also thought let us see we should see what is possible under the present circumstances. We are not prescribing a revolution but we are also sure that even these things would not be acceptable.

Number one we think data disaggregation is very important, be it waiver, be it any kind of investment, be it Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana. We would like to see how much of that is actually been claimed by (a) women farmers, and (b) by farmers within the intersectionality of caste, class and marginalization. We want that kind of data at this point. We want that to be introduced into agricultural statistics.

Number two, we want public policy support for women's collectives. I do not want to start another debate about self-imposed pressure on showcasing organic as the ultimate silver bullet and the *nirvana* mantra, but we do think that public policy support is required no matter which form of agriculture, which form of technology of farming you adopt and that is important also for women's collectives. Just saying collectivization is far better for negotiating rates is not good enough given the importance of externality, the enabling environment and public policy support. Why did Kudumbashree work, because it was talking about recoupling, decoupling and coupling? It was coupled with the poverty alleviation programme in the state of Kerala, which actually invested in collectivization of women. So probably, interest in collectivization, coupling it with poverty-alleviation programmes, having maximalist definition of farmers, having empowered market linkage and all the public policy support and externalities which are required and the way to go forward is to embed the five-year plan document on engendering the departments from policy level to frontline workers.

Ranvir did a larger piece of analysis about how many women there are from policy-level till the extension level and the farmgate margins, which we think is important to engender. But we also need to establish a definition of what is gender, and how much of testosterone pumped men trapped in women's bodies can be called women, but that is another story.

Coordination mechanisms: We talked about policy coherence and policy and programme harmonization yesterday. Madhuri has challenged us yesterday about not reducing farmers and every other citizen to a 'beneficiary', which is why we think, it is not important that we have vertical departments. It is important that all of them speak coherently to the citizens of India, which is why we do think a coordination mechanism is important. I know Veenaji has told me no more international mentions, but last year, UNDESA (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs) and Gender in Agriculture Partnership (GAP) did take a pledge that one of the post 2015 development indicators has to be about the coordination mechanism at country government, and practically anybody and everybody who attended the Rio+20, every country government signed on to that.

We support research towards drudgery reduction, because we know feminization of agriculture is here to stay and we also know the drudgery of care economies and they are here to stay. We do not know-re-civilisation of men by women- when that is going to come through. Then it is about time we have public investment in agricultural research institutions about drudgery reduction technologies. I know this is an extremely unambitious and half-way measure, but this is doing the best; like we said we are not calling for a revolution at all. And of course, feminization of agriculture in the context of care-economy, I do not know how many of you are aware, that India does have a directorate of research in women in agriculture which is located in my home state in Orissa in Bhubaneswar which has ...money for doing any kind of research and innovation on poverty reduction. We think these are the kinds of areas: investment in organic research; public policy investment in drudgery reduction methodologies; revival of the cadre of extension workers - these are the things that we need to be serious about.

Physical Access: On the institutional front, we think departments, and since I am standing in the Centre of Community Health and Social Medicine, and I do know that you will be very skeptical about it, yet even the Health Department, states that no Indian citizen will travel more than three kilometres radial distance to access his or her health care at the first port of call... for any kind of primary health services. What stops the whole body of agricultural cooperation departments and the entire paraphernalia both at the federal level and at the state level to ever fix a radial distance? The literature does not have a radial distance recommendation for how far any Indian farmer has to travel to access market inputs. There is absolutely no recommendation, no normative recommendation that underscores how much the department needs to go closer to the farmer and we do think that is where we need to state how serious are we? How close do we want to get to our farmers? How deep do we want to penetrate? Do we want to sit at the block headquarter where public sector banks are meant to give credit or be happy at the district headquarters? The public

sector banks have been rapped on the knuckles to go the maximum mile to the block headquarters? Why cannot the SBI go down till the *Panchayat* or village level? So these are the things we are asking. When were they ever meant to sit at the metropolis or at the district headquarters?

Food wastage, I am a little skeptical about it, but globally there is a huge amount of discourse and traction around food wastage. Vikas told us about the SOFI report on food wastage and the food wastage which is scripted into the retail chain at the international retail thread. However, we think we should just not look at the production side of wastage but the consumption side also, especially the retail side and the farm-to-fork wastage and experiences about the entire country knows and see what kind of support could be provided. This means also storage support and not FDI retails, and that is not the silver bullet, we are not very clear on that. Evidence is still divided and inadequate for any policy prescription of FDI's impact on food wastage.

Coupling public procurement and PDS, supporting strengthening of research and extension, more extension than research, because I think right now we are doing a lot of dodgy research and the public vigilance on the research agenda of Indian agricultural universities is pretty low. So till we have built our capacities to do vigilance of the research agenda, I think let us just focus on extension and let us take a breather from dodgy research. Convene policy forum and round table around credit. We think our credit policies are completely bad, Ha-Joon Chang the Korean economist from Cambridge, has been writing about it-the rise and fall of microfinance. DFID (Department of International Development) funded a systematic review in forty countries- forty years, systematic review of the devastation micro-finance has unleashed onto rural credit. Did we have to wait for 40 years and so much devastation to say that microfinance does not work? So we do think that it is about time we got serious about rural credit and agrarian credit and look at what model works and how; and we think globally everybody is grappling with it, so we do not have ready answers at this point of time, especially after the systematic review was published last year. We have been going on and on about how we have got it completely wrong but the point is what is the right answer. I think that is a collaborative search that we have to do.

Agricultural data and resource centre, systematic review of inflation, hunger and nutrition inter-sectionality - like we said yesterday, LANSAs (Leveraging Agriculture for Nutrition in South Asia) have been talking about the inadequacy of nutrition and food pricing policy, inadequacy of literature and evidence review on that. And there is a whole body of commentators like Lant Pritchett etc., talking about the inadequacy of systematic review and randomized control trials to even grapple with issues like this. We do not know which methodology to adopt, but we think this answer needs to be given in the context of what kind of agrarian policy works for better nutrition, and what kind of food pricing policy works for better nutrition. I think the time cannot be more apt than now to support building progressive farmers' institutions. From Bharat Kisan Union to Farmers' Forum, they have been institutionally classist and elite capitalists. So unless we have progressive farmers' institution models, just saying collectivization are not good enough because India has the tendency of photostating bad examples rather than the good examples, and we photostat quite fast. So instead of having a regressive farmers' institution becoming a template for the entire country, it is much better to actually invest time in finding out the most progressive farmers' institution. It is like selecting the Deccan Development Society (DDS) model and Kudumbashree model, replicating them and then providing the public policy support for that.

Farm-gate discrimination: There is a denial and we have been breathing it and living it for the last two years with the government of India about farm-gate discrimination. Most of the time they would say "sanitation," "it is distance" and all of those lead to discrimination for not buying from Dalits and low caste farmers and producers. Then we respond that we are also talking about horticulture, milk, dairy producers and the kind of discrimination they face. But again, at the university, there is a lot of work happening in Malawi on discrimination, especially the kind of discrimination women farmers face at the farm-gate level. We think it is about time that we have those kinds of research studies in India. Thorat has been writing about rural market and labour market discrimination. We think that that template needs to be extended to look at farm produce

discrimination and their caste and class ways, and especially when we try to use sanitized terms like “distance” and “lack of sanitation”, “hygiene” and “discrimination”, particularly in dairy products and perishables like meat products, etc., what is the kind of research that we need to introduce to make the agrarian produce market, a market that empowers the small and marginal farmers,

Like I began, we started with an empathetic reading of the 12th FYP and yet we were left with many unaddressed core agenda, and asking for more, and dare we say disappointment!

Thank you!

Right to Food Approach to Food Security Through the PDS

Kavita Srivastava

I am not doing any power points presentation PPTs because we have run them several times over. I did try to do a cash-transfer PPT, but it is not complete, so we will give it all to Ritu Priya. Friends, thank you for inviting me. Like I told Ritu that places like JNU are pretty high-brow, particularly the seminars, etc. Perhaps we are not the people who can raise your academic levels, but definitely we can share some of the approaches which can make a change in your ideas on what to research and how to research. Whatever I am going to be sharing, a lot of it is already in public domain, and a lot of friends know about it. So maybe if we do have a discussion, it would be very useful.

Friends, I looked at the schedule; Harsh gave a brief presentation on what we are getting in the name of Food Security (FS), but I will just try to recap because it is important to see a debate of what is happening to the National Food Security Bill since the 2nd of May 2009, when the President of India announced in a Joint Parliamentary Session, (when the new Parliament had taken over, and when new MPs had been elected in 2009), as well as in one of her speeches that a Food Security Act (FSA) was to be introduced, for providing 25 kgs of entitlements to all poor families, that is what it was. Since then, the Right to Food (RtF) campaign which has been in existence for more than 11 years, officially since 2004, when we formed what we now call the 'Right to Food Campaign', before that, we were part of what we call the 'support group' for the RtF case in 2001.

The People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) led about 56 organizations in Rajasthan and we came to the Supreme Court (SC), basically looking for relief for Rajasthan, but since we were coming to the SC, we had to talk in terms of an all-India level and then file the famous Right to Food (RtF) case. Therefore we had constituted a support group with lots of people from all over the country, which was guiding the case but by 2004, we realized there was so much public action and so many other ideas emerging, that we could not remain narrowly within the framework of the RtF litigation, and so we had to expand. In 2004, we formed the RtF campaign which consisted of more than 14 national networks, i.e., (1) the National Federation of Indian Women, (2) the Human Rights Law Network (HRLN), (3) the PUCL, (4) the National Association of People's Movements (NAPM), (5) Jan Swasthya Abhiyan (JSS), (6) the National Campaign for People's Right to Information, (7) Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samithi (BGVS), (8) National Campaign for Unorganized Sector Workers, (9) National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights, (10) National Confederation of Dalit organisations, (11) New Trade Union Initiative, members of the former support group of the RtF campaign, some individual members such as Jean Dreze and Ritu, (12) Breast Feeding Promotion Network of India and (13) Alliance for Sustainable and Holistic Agriculture (ASHA). So these national networks and about 16 state campaigns constitute the Right to Food campaign.

In 2004, we had embarked on this campaign with a charter. We do have a small charter that puts us together; so what I am presenting is a kind of collective position, while we may have individual differences. There have been instances in the campaign where certain individuals or groups have emphasized certain issues while others have disagreed with them. There are differences within the campaign that exist and so you may hear different voices at different points of time for some of the issues as we also have seen now, when it has come to the cutting edge.

So friends, from the announcement of the President of India and our own process, starting from the 18th June of 2009 to date, which has been a long journey of more than three years and nine months, where have we reached in terms of the FS bill entitlements, and in particular, where have we reached as far as the PDS is concerned?

Now the government in 2010, came out with a first draft by the Group of Ministers (GoM), but luckily because the RtF voiced such a strong defense, the GoM actually then came out with another draft, it is all on our website and we can also provide it. It was like a five-page draft, but when it came to the definition of FS, it was only distribution of food grains. FS has nothing to do with nutritional security in this act. Of course, it was 25 kgs of food grains and a lot of gravel etc. in it. So obviously, the primer which is in your bag, this came out of that that was presented, in which as I

said, they were talking of something to just fill our stomachs up, whose stomachs also, because the divide of the above poverty line (APL), below poverty line (BPL) and the really small percentage of the BPL. So, of course, it was condemned through a week-long *dharnaat* Jantar Mantar and followed by public meetings with a lot of MPs where we tried to show what was wrong and that is how this primer came out. Following which we made our presentation to the National Advisory Council (NAC) on drafts they prepared. We have had two drafts by the NAC of the Prime Minister of India.

What is very interesting is that the constant government debate has been anchored around two issues: availability of food, availability of funds and now we are seeing a third, that is the beginning, on what they think is 'reform'. So they've brought in schemes like AADHAR and cash-transfers as avenues that will ensure better distribution so, hence these have been the three things around which the government debate has revolved and that is how their drafts?

Even the NAC, if we look at their drafts, what we learnt from this entire SC case was that it was a good framework for food entitlements for a kind of independent grievance redressal system and independent accountability system because of the SC Commissioners, and a whole framework of FS, which included some entitlements, like the PDS, pensions, and ICDS. In fact, it took a lot of badgering within the SC to actually get ICDS as a guarantee. We really had to work hard to universalize it and after all that, the NAC picked up a lot of this. They picked up some of the things that we had said which I am going to share, but of course, even the NAC's considerations were also related to a framework of only food entitlements; they did not want to get into the fundamental issues of FS, how you define FS, as distributive justice and a kind of investment and the kind of approach where you have got to look at food sovereignty, and where you have also got to look at control over resources. If you look at the NAC draft, these come in as 'enabling' provisions.

Also, the NAC draft 2 which was prepared after Prof. Jean Dreze had resigned offer has one year tenure, and who had a one-year tenure resigned, was even devied pensions. Pensions were dispersed with and we all know that on an average, older people only consume around 1,500 calories, which is well below what they ought to be eating and even in the SC discussion, several times it came up where pensions were protected, that pension is a part of FS framework for the poor. However, pensions were thrown out, they said it is too much money, it will expand the food subsidy, etc.

Now what do we finally get? Finally, what was presented in the NFS bill placed on 23rd of December 2011 in the Lok Sabha, and what came out on January 17th 2013, almost 13 months later, I mean what goes in, and what comes out, what we had actually asked for is something that we go back to the President is speech of 2009 and we actually go back to the Group of Ministers (GoM) draft.

The RtF campaign has totally rejected the present NFS bill that has come out in the Standing Committee because the bill has totally rejected the children's RtF, the *anganwadi* as a guarantee and as space for caring, nurturing and advice and nutritional counseling, they have totally thrown out putting accountability and responsibility on the mechanism of the WCD towards children and mothers. They have thrown it out. They have brought in the two-child norm which is completely ridiculous for providing a maternal entitlement. Grudgingly they have brought in maternal entitlement, but only a thousand rupees per month for a mother and that too only for the first two children. The children that followed, you can allow the change that they ought to be penalized and the mothers ought to be penalized. This is something which violates any kinds of norms of justice. They have also excluded all the vulnerable, homeless, and destitute people from accessing community-kitchens because according to them, it is very difficult to identify them, so they reject the whole idea of community-kitchen. Then they have left out pensions in the initial NFS bill that was presented in 2011 in the Lok Sabha. They had thrown it out there and the Standing Committee confirmed this. They also do not guarantee nutritional security at all in the FS bill because they do not talk of pulses and *dals*. These go into annexures, schedules, things that 'ought to be done'. They do not provide a legal safeguard against GM-foods at all. In fact they talk of fortification of grains, they also do not throw out commercial interests in providing cooked meals or home rations, which come in as ready-to-eat. They have not taken things that could have straight away been taken from

the SC to prevent commercial interests and they are also promoting cash-transfers on UID, with no legal safeguards against it. There are these grievance redressal mechanisms devoid of any criminal penalty, which are not independent. The Standing Committee does talk of what can be provided from, how the panchayats can respond but the grievance redressal mechanism actually begins at the district-level and it is not independent even at the state or centre, and all of us know any kind of guarantee should begin backwards, if I do not get it, then what is it, then who is going to be penalized, how am I going to be compensated and what is the method of accountability within the department? These are hardly dealt with, in a very diluted fashion.

Apart from diluting legal guarantees of the Supreme Court regarding the PDS, which is at the core of the FS bill, now we had, from the beginning, what is it that we are giving us of course, even this bill puts production, procurement in the annexure as 'storage' although it does talk of some orders that the department ought to be issuing in the Standing Committee bill, does talk of that but nothing beyond that. What does it mean in terms of what the RtF campaign had envisaged? And what is it that we are going to be doing? Madhuri and I will jointly share that having given this background.

According to us, *any FS bill must address issues relating to control and access of resources*, like water, land and forests. We very clearly said that the first call on any of these resources is for food and this is, I think, non-negotiable. This should be accessible and in control of the people. Second, *any FS bill must address issues about revival of agriculture*. Third, *any FS bill must promote livelihoods in particular*. We just saw in the previous presentation, small and marginal farmers constitute the largest section of our people and it is that livelihood, how do we protect? Then, so their protection, their livelihood, *FS must also address food sovereignty and preservation of local food systems*. And of course, *FS must provide non-food entitlements like sanitation, drinking water, healthcare and social security apart from food entitlements across ages*. Now if we look at our definition of how the campaign defines FS, we find that everything is out. All the things that I have read out, even non-food entitlements of course do not even exist like sanitation, drinking water, health care, social security in terms of pensions, have been thrown out, and maternal entitlements are so distorted.

The only emphasis that the FS bill has in terms of PDS is that they will be providing subsidised food grain, they have not connected it to what our framework was, that if you incentivize production, you announce prices to farmers before they are growing food then more farmers will grow. You announce the minimum support price (MSP) to farmers before they grow, so then they will be an incentive to grow that kind of food, and if they are made available that money, then obviously farmers will try to get back into farming of food crops, which a lot of it has now gone out of people's hands. And secondly, we had also talked of decentralized procurement because at the moment the largest food procurement is only from one area is the green revolution belt, which includes Haryana, Punjab and parts of AP, also decentralized storage. This is not to undermine the FCI, but one would mendaciously think of FCI trying to promote a mechanism of storage right down to the block and panchayat-level so that food security is not just transportation of food from one end of the country to another.

However, FS should be viewed at the block and also at district-level. So this kind of framework we have had and therefore PDS gets connected as a large part of that chain where the person has the right not just to rice or wheat, as what is given in the PDS, but we talked extensively of millets because food security is also connected to nutritional and health security, that is also part of our definition. In fact we have a chart which Mira has provided. Things that it shows - such as the level of iron enrichment you do get through millets. So while millets have come in - how millets will be procured, there is nothing stated about it in the Standing Committee bill. So in a very minimalistic way, we are trying to connect the production, procurement and decentralized storage to a distribution system.

Now of course, when we only talk of PDS and divorce it from FS and all the other things then we get what Sharad Pawar's affidavit filed recently in the SC in the GM-food trials says. RtF has condemned it, last week only. He says that in order to ensure FS for the millions of hungry people in this country

we have to get on with GM-food and GM-trials. So going against the independent committee of the SC that rejected GM-trials, Sharad Pawar goes to the Ministry of Agriculture, we have that affidavit and the critique. Mira is part of a group of people who immediately wrote a 24-page critique to the whole issue. Of course, the RtF also condemned it through a letter to Sharad Pawar in a press conference.

So when you divorce food production, procurement and decentralized storage from the PDS, then you will talk of GM-food because you do not see the links and we are very clear, as I stated earlier, that agriculture is something that not only feeds the family of the producers who are growing it but also it feeds the country. Therefore it is imperative that small and marginal farmers really need to take care of their livelihood, and without protecting them, even an entitlement-based FSA cannot exist.

Now the whole threat to PDS therefore, comes from the approach in which the RtF is looked at, it comes from something like the way GM-food was being pushed and I think this ordinance ought to take that into cognizance. It comes from the whole pushing of UID and cash-transfer. Now this is something which the RtF campaign has rejected and we are actually monitoring this entire UID-based link to schemes which are going on now in approx twenty districts of the country. Of course, they were ambitious, they said they would take some thirty schemes and push it as pilots in fifty districts which finally they came down to seven schemes and some twenty districts, of the country. I come from Rajasthan, and we also have three districts. We would be very happy if the concerned department or centre of JNU helps us with this.

The present Standing Committee bill caused a whole debate of APL and BPL which was integral to our argument from 2009. *That APL and BPL just will not do, it has to be a universal entitlement for everything: food, health, education, work and social security.* They have to be universal entitlements in the PDS, to get it out of the APL-BPL debate; of course what we now have in the Standing Committee bill is a single-pricing system, but a single-pricing system which will only provide 25 kgs to 67 percent of the population. Now this still does not get universalized, though we would like to acknowledge that they have come down to single-pricing system for 67 percent of the population, that is really not enough, so we are not going to support the bill.

I just want to come to the last part of cash-transfers and UID, which I was talking about. We have had experiments in the country where we have had cash-of-kerosene and UID-for-food, i.e., UID-for-food in east Godavari, cash-for-kerosene in Alwar, (Rajasthan) and there have been other experiments in NREGA in Jharkhand and in some other places. What we have understood, interesting to see in the backdrop of Jean Dreze and Reetika Khera's study of 11 states with a lot of other research assistants with them. They showed that in state after state, except for Bihar, corruption in PDS had come down heavily: at 4 percent in Tamil Nadu, 6 percent in Chhattisgarh, but even in other states, it has come down - like in Odisha it has come down by 16 percent, now what is it that cash transfers and UID tell us?

Even if you see it from the point of view of production and incentives to the farmers, cash-transfers mean that they do not have to procure at all because they are not accountable to giving a kind of stable price to the farmer but when it comes to the entire PDS, and if you look at corruption, apart from the fact that what is going to happen, whether the grain will at all be available, when it comes to corruption, even in east Godavari, experiment of UID and cash transfer shows 15 percent of diversion even now. These are some immediate results, so I think Madhuri should add to some of the things that we are going to be doing for public action that we have planned now since we have rejected this, and also how inimical this whole approach of the government is towards food security.

Thank you!

Can We Sustain Nutrition Security When Agriculture is Unsustainable?

Kiran Kumar Vissa

The time is short and it was more than evident from the previous three speakers that the issues are too complex to be compressed into the given time. But my advantage is that half the points that I wanted to make have already been made very powerfully by other speakers. So I will try to focus on the areas which are remaining. It is clear why agriculture is central to the discourse on hunger. We should also keep in mind that a large percentage of the poor we are talking about in India are actually engaged in agriculture as their livelihood. Therefore, if agricultural livelihoods are not addressed, then hunger and the underlying poverty which is causing hunger and malnutrition will remain. Here, we need to look at agriculture as a central issue.

Income Across Farmer Categories

Income and Expenditure of farmers

Land holding (acre)	Category	Total Income (Rs/month)	Expenditure (Rs/month)	Percent of farmers
<0.02	Landless	1380	2297	36 %
0.02 - 1.0	Sub marginal	1633	2390	
1.0 - 2.5	Marginal	1809	2672	31 %
2.5 - 5.0	Small	2493	3148	17 %
5.0 - 10.0	Semi-medium	3589	3685	10 %
10.0 - 20.0	Medium	5681	4626	6 %
>20.0	Large	9667	6418	
	Total	2115	2770	All farmers

Source: Arjun Sen Gupta Commission (NCEUS), 2007

Let us look at some figures of the actual income situation of various categories of farmers. In terms of landholding in acres, the first two columns show that about 84 percent are in the small, marginal and the landless categories, and the third column shows the total income per month per family. This is the total income, including whatever supplementary income they might be getting from non-agricultural sources, and the fourth column is the total expenditure for a month.

So we see that actually for a majority of the farmers, (more than 84 percent of the farmers), their monthly income does not even meet the monthly expenditure that they have, forget about savings for the future, and so on. Even the monthly expenditures that we are seeing for example, 2,400 rupees per month is actually not sufficient to meet the complete nutritional needs, schooling and health expenses, and so on. However, even that is not being met by the net income of the farmers.

The data are from the 2007 report of the Arjun Sengupta Commission. The numbers in 2013 would be a bit different, but the pattern is very similar. Therefore, for 85 percent of the people engaged in agriculture, which means about 50 percent of the entire Indian population, net incomes are very much lower than their actual expenditure. Even that expenditure is below the poverty line, as per the Planning Commission's distorted version of poverty line.

So that is the situation and we need to recognize it. Unless we address that, we cannot address hunger and malnutrition. As Biraj also pointed out, I think now the fact is established that agricultural growth and agricultural income are central to addressing poverty, and have been emphasized in various reports, hence we have to address the challenge of converting this knowledge

into practice at the level of policy making and on the ground. The recent FAO report, the SOFI report actually gives a couple of examples of other countries like Vietnam and Tanzania, where they show how consistent agricultural growth actually has an impact on malnutrition, under-nourishment hunger and poverty.

Agricultural Growth Within Overall Growth

Agricultural growth and poverty reduction

- **Indian & international experience shows – for “growth” to be poverty-reducing, it needs to enhance agricultural incomes**
- **Vietnam experience between 1990 & 2010 (SOFI report):
Agricultural growth: 4% while overall per-capita growth: 5.8%
Poverty reduction: 63% to 17%, Undernourishment: 46% to 9%
Agrarian development involved small-holders & labour.**
- **Tanzania experience between 1990 & 2010 (SOFI report):
Agricultural growth: 3.8% - but productivity declines and land expansion to marginal lands without ownership by poor.
Poverty reduction: 72% to 68%, Undernourishment: 28% to 38%**
- **Need for equitable distribution of land and resources**

The Vietnam experience is very illustrative. They have had a consistent agricultural growth of 4 percent whereas the overall per capita growth is 5.8 percent. In India, we keep talking about 9 percent growth, overall, but agricultural growth is only 1.3 or 1.5 percent and so on. So there they actually have agricultural growth as a major component of the overall growth. Then it is clear that it is actually poverty-reducing growth. We do not have poverty-reducing growth; our growth is exacerbating the inequalities. So the Vietnam experience shows that over two decades poverty level went down from 63 percent to 17 percent. The figures also show that under-nourishment has gone down. Whereas we know in another country, Tanzania, there was good agricultural growth, but under-nourishment increased 10 percent during the same period. So it is not just agriculture that matters, but how the whole agrarian system is working that also matters.

In Vietnam, the land is much more evenly distributed, so any agricultural growth automatically benefits the small producers, and as the productivity increases, even more land is brought under cultivation. The agricultural labour also benefits, and so a wide range of benefits of growth is seen, whereas in Tanzania that is not the case, therefore poverty and under-nourishment levels have stagnated or worsened. Hence, I think that we should not only emphasize agricultural growth and development, but we also need to look at how agrarian development is happening, the characteristics of the agrarian situation in terms of landholdings and in terms of control over resources, the kind of issues that we have just talked about.

Comparison of Costs and MSP (A.P.)

Crop	Cost/quintal (State govt est.)	Recommended MSP	Avg Market Price
Paddy	1341	1250	1300
Jowar	1302	1500	1400
Maize	1229	1175	1244
Tur Dal	4044	4000	3826
Groundnut	3695	3700	4678
Sunflower	3706	3700	3650
Cotton	4239	3600	3884

Costs, Prices and Ceilings

I just wanted to bring in one point, which I think is important. Let us look at the cost and prices, how much is the agricultural cost, the cost of cultivation of various crops and the minimum support prices (MSP) that are declared by the government and the actual average market price that the farmers get. We find that for many of the crops, the recommended MSPs often barely cover the cost of cultivation; sometimes they are lower than the cost of cultivation, for example, paddy in AP, and sometimes the average market prices are also below the recommended MSP.

So when even the costs of cultivation are not being met by the prices, then how can farmers survive, how can the cultivation survive? That brings us to the point that Umaji was making yesterday that farmers are now finding it easier to buy food than grow food, especially at two rupees a kg rice and one rupee a kg rice that is being quoted. So if we are pushing farming into a situation where it is actually cheaper to get food from outside than grow it then where are we going to end up? How can we be sure about continued production?

Of course, the corporations will come in and they will take over the entire agriculture. At that time, the state will step in with enormous subsidies, like the way the corporations get in the US because of an entirely different set of lobbying where they won't be talking about peasants or social justice. There they get the corporate benefits like the other corporate sectors are getting now, but we do not want that; so we need to actually look at the whole picture of how we sustain a small-farmer economy. There are tricky issues involved of course, such as crop prices for example. As mentioned in the discussions on hunger and malnutrition, food prices being low or being reasonably low and affordable for people, are an important determinant for keeping hunger and malnutrition low, but remunerative crop prices are crucial for farmers.

So this is the tension between the two, and we need to determine how we need to develop a system where both interests are balanced. Majority of the farmers' income actually comes from the market sales prices, but when the prices are kept low through various mechanisms, for example, when the rice prices in AP are now going down, the paddy prices farmers are getting this year are pretty good, more than the investment, etc. However, the government has immediately intervened saying that even in the open market the consumer price should be only thirty rupees, so no shop can sell above thirty rupees per kg. It is a ceiling that they have set, so now it automatically pushes down the prices that the farmers can get and immediately the market prices that the farmers get, goes down. Similarly, when the price of maize went up few years ago they immediately stopped their export, therefore the prices came down. I am not disputing the policies of capping the exports or capping the prices, but we need to have a mechanism of reconciling that with the interest of the producers.

Historical trend has been actually to devalue the producers, and this is true for all primary production. Basically, the whole western model of development devalues primary production. So when we talk to farmers, they say that in 1967 or maybe by 1970, one sack of paddy would cost the same as 98 gms of gold. The gold prices have gone up 200 times while paddy prices have gone up by 10 times. So there is a twenty time difference between the rest of the economy and the primary producers, and this distortion has to be addressed.

Negative Impacts of Fixed Prices

The distortions have resulted from the way the government has addressed pricing in the past - from 1950s or 1960s onwards, and the kind of policies they have put in place including the PDS and the investment system. So that is not related to distributing the food but it is actually related to how you reconcile the interests of keeping the food affordable and meeting the interest of the food producers. Now if we are abandoning that, it has actually more profound consequences than just changing the pipeline for delivering the food. So even the earlier systems had their own distortions, for example, two rupees a kg rice which was introduced in AP, immediately had a few (I mean over the last ten-twenty years, more than that actually) distorted impacts on food production. It was not taken into consideration when the others were being introduced, for example, millets were not included, pulses were not included, only rice was included and the fact that the green-revolution package was also entirely about promoting rice and wheat and the fact that you are also doing huge procurement from the government of only rice, meant that every single farmer, somehow or the other, wanted to shift to rice, which means that, even in dry areas, people use borewells to go down 400 to 600 feet so that if they strike water, then they can start growing paddy.

Therefore, what you introduce as a scheme can have an impact of wider scale which is not recognized. I mean, it was pointed out at that time also that it should be a more broad-based PDS system, but it was not done. Now we seem to be falling into the same trap again of actually looking at only the food entitlements, ignoring the entire effects of whatever system is put in place, so I think that we need to recognize this.

Procurement of Broad Cross-Section of Grains

One is that, as Madhuri was saying, public procurement of a broad cross - section of grains, and ensuring a remunerative price to the farmers should be the starting point of the food security system and then you build in the pipeline, i.e., it goes to the people through the PDS system and so on, and local procurements so that we do not get into these distortions. I am sure that if enough thought and effort went in, *jowar*, *bajra* and *ragi* and all these grains could have been included in the PDS and their production also could have been increased to actually meet the demands of the PDS system. However, that was not done because the developers were only viewing the PDS against the needs of populist programmes and that is why they are still talking about 25 kgs of rice.

Low Prices in the PDS Devalue Farming

Another example I just wanted to put on the table is that this two rupees a kg rice, when it was introduced in 1982 in AP, the actual cost of procurement of rice by the government was rupees 2.85, which means 85 paise was the cost at which the government was able to get rice, that was the production cost of rice, which was already being, maybe reasonably, remunerative to the farmers. In the outside market, it was selling for five rupees, but they gave it for two rupees. But why after thirty years are we still talking about one or two rupees per kg? I mean I totally agree with the PDS system and public provisioning, but I think the price should be six or eight rupees. (Consider) the impact of actually increasing the price in the PDS also, from two rupees to let's say six rupees and the impact of that on the poor who are buying the food, which I think is something they can actually afford, given the changes in income levels from 1990 to 2012. However, I think keeping the prices low basically gives you the populist results; it has much more impact on the producers and the price that the producers get, and it also gives a message of devaluing agricultural production. Basically, the farmers are being told that whatever they produce actually has such a low value.

I mean there are tensions between these two; I am not saying there is a clear-cut solution, but I am saying that unless we actually get this into our discourse we are not going to come up with holistic solutions. The other aspect is the way it was managed i.e., through the PDS system as well as by reducing the input cost, reducing the cost of cultivation. To keep the cost of cultivation low, fertilizer subsidy for example, was put in place. In fact, when India justifies the fertilizer subsidy internationally, it is shown as a 'food subsidy'. It is basically shown as subsidy for providing food to the Indian population, therefore they are giving fertilizer subsidy. Now the fertilizer subsidy is being phased out and along, with the credit system and the extension system, since these were all put in place so that the cost-of-cultivation could be low. All these provisions have been thrown out or have been progressively weakened in the last couple of decades, but we are not looking at these issues as a part of the food security debate. Hence, I think that those issues need to be looked into, and then lastly I will get to the problems with the production model itself.

PDS and Green Revolution Contribute to Mono-Cropping

This whole green-revolution, particularly the focus on two or three crops, combined with the PDS which is focusing only on those two crops, has created a lot of distortions in terms of mono-cropping, loss of food diversity and locally grown produce in the villages. The shift to cash crops has meant that large areas are now being shifted or have been shifted from food crops, growing diverse foods, to cash crops. For example in AP, in just the last four to five years, the area of cotton cultivation has grown from 38 lakh acres to 54 lakh acres. These were all dry-land areas, where they sow pulses, millets, maize, etc. Hence, the impact of this change on malnutrition and food security, I think, is enormous both at the micro and macro-level. How much access do families that produce food have to food for their households? This situation has changed enormously over the years. If you go to districts, you will find that in tribal areas farmers were committing suicide because they had shifted to cotton. And those who faced deprivation before, but not at the basic survival level, are seeing that happen.

Therefore, at the micro-level the availability of food has reduced at family-level, and at macro-level there is an impact on the total food production. When Sharad Pawar talks about "how do we feed the growing population in 2050" at the same time he celebrates that the cotton cultivation area has doubled or tripled. There is a fundamental contradiction here which has to be exposed. Pawar thinks the best way to map the macro-level food security situation is through diversion of land for non-agricultural purposes, and by diversion from food crops to cash crops. Both these actions are being encouraged in a big way by the government and its policies and, at the same time, they talk about not having enough food to feed the 2050 population, so that the only solution is GM-crops.

I think this whole discourse needs to be opposed strongly and also the fact that farmers are being turned into net purchasers of food. I think that is a very problematic situation and unless it is addressed, even the traditional growing of vegetables and fruits, on small patches of land just sufficient for the family, will go out of practice. And the whole animal situation, which was brought up yesterday, shows it is unviable to do animal rearing, whether it is sheep, goats or cattle. That loss has an impact on the household level milk and milk consumption, as well as macro-level production. However, the macro-level production gets taken care of ultimately. It would be taken care of through bringing in the corporate model in which if certain amounts of milk and meat are demanded by the people at large, those targets will always be met, but at the cost of small, marginal farmers being thrown out of agriculture and into areas where it is not sustainable. Therefore, unless we factors these things into the food security debate and look at the holistic picture, we cannot get anywhere, and we would kind of repeat the same mistakes that we have made in the past.

Land Reform: Who Controls Macro Resources ?

The third dimension is, of course, who controls macro resources. Land shifting into corporate hands and the unfinished agenda of the land reforms - where there are many pockets where most of the farming is done by tenant farmers with absentee landlords getting all the benefits. There are areas where there is a huge percentage of landless labourers. Hence, we need to address the land reform

agenda and the issue of the tenant farmers, as that is also central to the issues of food security and corporate control of seed sector, etc., that have been mentioned. I think that all these elements form the third dimension of where this agricultural model is taking us.

Therefore, unless we address the entire situation of agriculture on these three dimensions, we cannot talk about a sustainable food security system for the country. So what is to be done? I will just specify in broad terms. While we need to look at the holistic policy framework, food entitlements and food rights are just one part of that, if we are only going to make piecemeal legislation or policies for all these elements, we will continue to make the same mistake that we have made in the past.

A holistic Policy Framework

The fact is that ultimately if the drivers have a different vision, unless we actually challenge that vision and come out with a holistic vision in this debate, whatever little crumbs that we get in terms of legislation or policy will also be oriented towards their own vision. In order to achieve small-holder livelihoods, ecological agriculture and the rights over land, water, seed, ASHA (Alliance for Sustainable & Holistic Agriculture) has come up with the Kisan Swaraj Neeti policy framework. I hope you will look at the Kisan Swaraj Neeti statement; food justice and food rights should be part of it (food security), and rejuvenating the entire rural economy and correcting the rural-urban imbalance should be at the centre of it. And then, social security and protection of rights for all, urban, especially unorganized sector. Therefore, all these things should be a part of a holistic policy framework and that is when we will actually address the problem of hunger and malnutrition in a holistic way. Like Harsh was saying yesterday that it is a big paradox, why in spite of this growth, hunger and malnutrition still persist? I think it is because we are looking at these issues in a piecemeal way.

Thank you!

Thank you for inviting me to speak here. I have been hearing the presentations since the morning. There has been a lot of useful information and data - that is very difficult for us to digest immediately. I would just like to begin with an example. I would like to speak about something which is a personal experience which kind of moved me at a time when I was not sure what I would do later in life. I took my six-month old daughter to a tea garden where I used to work and I put her on the ground of one of the shanties, which was supposedly a worker's house. A two-year-old child came to play with my six-month-old child. My six-month old child was six kilos of weight and this two-year old was five kilos. I did not know what to do. What can we do to change the situation? And from there we actually began a journey which was how to deal with starvation deaths, with hunger in tea gardens, and how to take it to other sectors.

What we saw through the whole exercise was hunger. If we look at it from a nutritional point of view, all that we say is true, but there is the other side of the story, which is if you cannot give a decent wage, which can actually sustain you and your family, which comes along with a social infrastructure in which you can sustain your family, then nutrition is not enough.

Defining 'Decent Wage':

Therefore, we were looking through the 15th ILC (Indian Labour Conference) norms of fixation of minimum wages of what should be a 'minimum living wage' as per the Government of India norms. The calculation of minimum wages, according to the 15th ILC norms, comes to Rs. 400 per day. I am sure most of you know what the wages are in tea gardens. It is only Rs 91 after a very hard collective bargaining agreement that they signed two years ago. Do you know what the rationale behind this Rs 91 is? The rationale is that – plantation owners, in addition to this cash wage, provide a component of wage in kind. What is this wage in kind? The wage in kind are those which the plantation owners has to provide under the Plantation Labour Act, which is basically healthcare, maternal benefits, education, crèche, and housing.

Decent work and Decent wage

In a situation where decent work is a distant reality, increasing overall standards of living can only be achieved through a **combination of wage and social wage interventions.**

Increasing wage income alone will not be sufficient in the short-run, in expanding overall consumption as well as developing an asset base for working class households.

An inclusive growth path must set basic minimum living standards through an array of key social wage interventions that can then enhance political and economic participation of workers.

Economic Crisis and the Tea Industry

Now, what has happened with the crisis? The crisis in the tea industry came with the collapse of the Soviet Union which was the primary buyer of Dooars tea, along with the entry of new players in the industry. The market today is dominated by three global players. Tetley and Unilever are the biggest multinational brands which control the tea industry at this point. I am going into great detail about the tea industry because my ground experience comes from there and also the fact that even

though the tea industry is one of the oldest organised industries in the country, yet hunger and starvation deaths still loom large over there.

Hence, what we are trying to talk about is that we cannot have a complete notion of 'wage' because a monetary wage is not enough. Even if we use the 15th ILC norms, this wage is not enough for a family in a state of complete immiserisation. This wage is not enough to take the family to a life which is worth living. So what we need is a series of social-wage interventions, which if not given in the short term will never enable us to make that leap.

When we talk about living standards, unless we go into the social-wage issues, we will never be able to talk about decent work and decent wage. Therefore, we have been demanding a just minimum wage, a wage that is need-based and covers all workers. Minimum wages are paid to workers employed in employments listed in the state schedules of employment. This is the root of exclusion. The just minimum wage is a wage that is universal, non-discriminatory vis-à-vis employment, gender as opposed to a minimum wage which is defined by exclusion.

It is very interesting to note that in a state like Tamil Nadu (TN), where you have minimum wages for even domestic workers and garment workers, even if you are being paid a minimum wage (in a sector that employs more women, whether it be domestic work, or the garment sector), minimum wages are deliberately kept low. Thus even if workers are paid minimum wages, the discrimination is inherent to the wage-setting norms.

Minimum Components of a Social wage

- **Universal Food security**
- **Universal Access to Affordable Quality Public Healthcare**
- **Old age pension indexed to Wage**

Defining Social Wage

How do we define social-wage? Social wage is that component of wage that ensures food security, ensures access to affordable, quality public health care and most important, old-age pension. The minimum wage in India does not take into account savings, and hence completely ignores survival of working people beyond their working age. In case of food security, we agree with the RtF campaign demands for universal food security. The recent Parliamentary Standing Committee report has recommended that *anganwadis* should be dismantled because they are not efficient.

Women as Honorarium Workers

It is interesting to note that efficiency is expected from *anganwadis*, while the government refuses to even accept them as 'workers'. They are termed 'honorarium workers'. How can the government expect efficiency from people who are performing this work voluntarily? *But the underlying point about honorarium workers is that the government has actually created a whole section of the workforce, which is primarily again women, as honorarium workers, where the government does not pay wages because they are not workers, but they have to do more work than anyone has ever done before!* They deliver key social programmes such as childcare, nutrition, health care. They even work as enumerators for the National Population Register. How do you expect efficiency from people who are paid Rs 2,000 a month to do (all) this.

ESI as a Discriminatory Model

In case of public health care, we have tried to look at a model of expansion of the Employees, State Insurance (ESI). The ESI today is a model which between one person and the other. The ESI does not even extend to all workers in the formal industry. What we are talking about is an ESI, (wherein) anybody who works in this country should pay the required contribution for the ESI, whether they access it or not, they should pay for it. Inefficiency of ESI is not even due to unavailability of funds and yet people are unable to access it. We need to recognize that some people will not be able to contribute to ESI. We need to have a cut-off, which could be that workers who receive less than double the minimum wage be kept out of the contribution net. This can be different but this requires discussion.

We have looked at the social wage components from various angles, but there is one thing that is common in all aspects of it today, and it is the fact that all these benefits are arbitrarily determined. So whether it is healthcare, or maternal benefits, or pensions, the benefits are arbitrarily decided as lumpsum amounts. There is no basis for these sums. *There has to be some notion of what a fair pension is, or what is a fair contribution for healthcare, or what is it that a mother needs as maternity benefit, and how do you index it?*

Hence, we have been stressing the standard notion for calculation of pension - if it is 50 percent of the last drawn wage for government employees then this norm should also apply to workers receiving the minimum wage? The idea is to index it to the minimum wage.

Urban Flight

Why am I going into all this? As Rohan was saying, there is something we must look at - whether it is the seduction of the city that brings people from villages to the town, or whether people really want to stay in the villages? The point about the cities today is, as Madhuri was saying, and I do agree with her, that people do not want to come to the cities but they are compelled to do so both because there is distress at the village level, and there is also a mirage of the city. What do we see in the cities today? The latest global employment trends released in January this year says that the economic growth in 2000s is because of improvement in labour productivity rather than job-creation. And the total employment in India grew by just 2.7 million from 2004-05 to 2009-10 compared to over 60 million during the previous year, which is 1999-2000 to 2004-05. This does not suggest a static labour market. What it suggests is a dynamic transition which is continuously changing, young are moving out, there are women who are coming in and then going back to the rural employment where their work is not regarded as work. There is all that transition which is happening.

Decline in Formal Employment

Even where jobs have been created (a large share of the workers, one is in agriculture, two is in urban informal sector and in all manner of unprotected jobs). The share of formal employment has declined from 9 percent in 1999-2000, to 7 percent in 2009-10, and it is declining every day and we can see it all the time. Finally, when the process of structural transformation has begun, we do not really know what the direction is, we do not know in which direction we are moving, whether it is the manufacturing that we are looking at, and if yes, will it be able to absorb the rural workforce which is migrating to the cities? It does not seem to be doing so.

What we see is that manufacturing is (becoming) more and more capital - intensive, more and more reliant on import of capital intensive goods. Prof. Mrityunjay Mohanty shows how the manufacturing sector has not been able to absorb rural workers. Therefore, this is something that we need to look at because the share of employment in agriculture is still as high as 51 percent.

Social Alienation: Gurgaon Workers

We also need to consider the Gurgaon phenomenon that is highlighted in the media daily - a story of violent worker protests. Having worked with garment workers in Gurgaon, the workers are primarily men who have come without their families to work here, to sustain the agriculture back at

home. So they have no social infrastructure which supports them, there is nothing that they can do, and there is enormous amount of exploitation within the factory where they mostly work on contracts, where they are not even paid the minimum wages in many cases. They work not just as contract workers, they work as apprentices, they work as temporary workers. They are trapped in an employment relation – they cannot go back, but they cannot stay here. This is the situation of the manufacturing industry.

Reaching MDGs through Privatization, Unpaid Work

When I was invited to speak here, I was requested to speak on the MDGs. On the sidelines of the 2010 MDG summit was a private sector summit. The private sector summit dictated the terms of the MDG summit. The private sector summit called for “provisioning through the deepening of market access and limiting the role of government”. There is something which I can not resist mentioning as I was preparing this chart - I am relieved that the decent work agenda was not touched as an MDG goal to be pushed. We are getting a targeted food security bill through cash transfer and who is going to deliver it - the private sector.

How do we do the universal primary education? We increase enrollment because that is the indicator. However, basic reading and arithmetic skills of the child are on the decline. Private school enrolment last year has increased only for ten states. This year’s ASER (Annual Status of Education Report) report states that it has increased for all states. And how are we delivering this right to education? We are delivering it through Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan through para teachers. Then we look at the whole issue of gender equality, and empowerment of women. How do we do that? We look at women’s participation in employment. And what is the kind of employment women have access to? Low-wage sectors like garments, domestic work, honorarium workers and then, most of all, self-employment. Self-employment is being shown as the remedy for everything. Self-employment means that you are liberated, but that is not true. Self-employment does not liberate you. It just puts you in a capitalist framework in which you cannot identify your employer. *We have gone back to the old put-out system and we are calling it self-employment. Why can not we identify the employer? If you are doing zari work, and you are calling it self-employment, why can not we find the supply chain where your product goes? So it has been done purposely, to keep women out of wage employment so that they cannot participate effectively in economic and political life.*

Then we come to child mortality, maternal health goals, how do we deliver that? We are delivering it through ICDS and NRHM, with *anganwadis*, ANMs and ASHAs, as honorarium workers. Therefore, I am actually glad that they have not done anything for ‘decent work’ because I can see what they would have done for ‘decent work’ too. This is not the kind of employment we want. This is not decent work.

The third UN Private Sector Forum in 2010 also said that for the six MDGs they would advance business solutions, which are: (1) poverty and hunger, through PPP and business models that extend supply chain and create employment; (2) maternal and child health and HIV AIDs, through PPP to improve access to health services, create demand for health services through innovative approaches, use new technologies; (3) access to education, through mapping technologies, accessible devices, affordable computers that combine textbooks, notebooks, etc. So that is how you reach education to people, and this is how we are looking at meeting the goals.

And what is the government supposed to do? Their expectation from the government is a regulatory framework that upholds property rights, accelerates entry to the formal economy and roots out corruption, capability-building and access to finance, securing necessary investment in core infrastructure: roads, energy, telecommunication, promoting fair, non-discriminatory global market. And our government is happy to do so.

Right to Organize, to Bargain Collectively

If we believe that our government is not a part of this framework and we will be able to get to where we want to get to, I think we need to re-think. I think it is very important for us to understand what is it that we are demanding. We are demanding a larger share of the cake; we are demanding a

larger share of the profits that are being held by a select few. Coming from a trade union, we are not talking about a revolution but we definitely think it is important for us to organise at the ground level so that our demands come from the ground and they are organic.

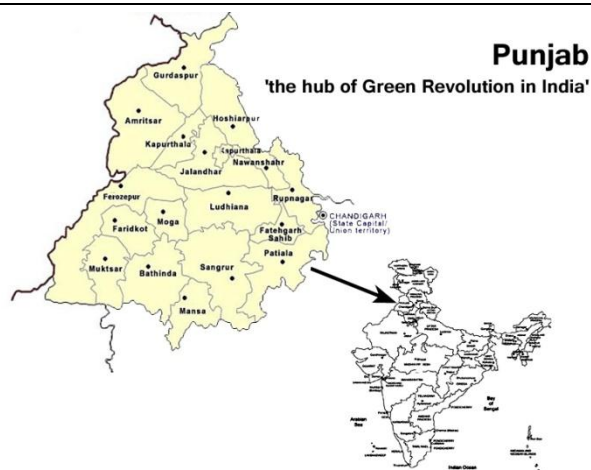
Now the point about whether we have the right to speak for ourselves is the biggest challenge today, because the attack of capital today is primarily on the fundamental rights of workers to unionise and to collectively bargain. We need to collectively fight, to get every worker their rights to organise and their rights to collectively bargain for what they want and for that, it is not the MDGs we need to look at, but we really need to look at a collective campaign in which we look for the ratification of the ILO Conventions 87 and 98, and for this, we need to build a social alliance with everybody who is here fighting different battles. The problem today is that we fight our own battles and get caught in a web, we have to contend with very high stakes, and what happens is that we forget to build linkages. These linkages need to be very strong in order to build a meaningful social alliance.

Thank you!

Organic Cultivation and Traditional Cuisine: Women Respond to the Crisis of Chemical Farming in Punjab

Amanjot Kaur

“In our childhood when we used to get tired from our work then our grandmother used to say that today’s food does not provide any ^{energy},”



In the discussions that we are having here on hunger and death from hunger, being from Punjab, I would say that I have neither seen such hunger nor have I seen people dying from hunger. If we talk about Punjab then we find that it is a state, which does not have any scarcity of food as we provide food even to the other states. Therefore, when we all are talking about the issue that everyone should get food, our concern is that we need safe food. On one side, people are dying of hunger, but in our case people are dying of food. If we look at Punjab, we will see that we have enough food, but our day begins with taking medicines and our evenings also end by taking medicines. Hence, what should we do about such food, which is making us sick?

I would like to say that in our childhood when we used to get tired from our work, then our grandmother used to say that today’s food does not provide any energy. She used to say that her generation used to be more fit and could do more work even today in comparison to today’s generation. She used to distrust the food that we eat. My grandmother never got any qualification to say this. She did not even know that there were pesticides in our food but she knew that something was wrong with the kind of food that we were eating and that it was affecting us in a negative way.



Near about 800 women are growing their own poison - free and nutritious food at their kitchen gardens

Therefore, our concern is just not food. This means that we do not want to have just food that is put on our plate, but we want to have nutritious and healthy food. When we had a blood donation camp in our college, we found that 70-80% of the girls could not donate blood as they were found to be anemic. So we see that on one hand in our state we have a lot of food and have the capacity to eat a

lot of food [“having two bowls of vegetables in our state is considered as just tasting the food”] and at the same time, on the other hand, we see anemic girls and children of 5th-6th standard complaining of joint pains and respiratory problems. Therefore, we need to consider whether our food is actually making us healthy or whether it is undermining our health, which is in turn making us spend more and more on medicines.



Increased diversity in food

Some facts that I would like to stress here are that Punjab is 1.5% of the total geographic area of the country and has the highest area, that is 87 % of its land, under agriculture. Continuously throughout the year, land is used for agriculture, except for a little time after harvesting the crop. In this area, we are using 18% of the pesticides that are used in the country and 10% of the fertilizers. We are completely involved in agriculture and our houses and farms are not very distant from the cultivation.

Nowadays the land prices have gone so high that we do not have much land. Earlier, farmers sold their land in the hope of buying it back in the future, but now that is not possible. The farmers from whom the land was taken have never got any land back since the money was spent in other ways like buying cars, big houses, etc., as our dreams have changed. One crisis is that we do not have safe food to eat, and the other is that we do not have land to grow food. Now while we are battling for organic food everywhere, I think our priority should first be that of acquiring land. Agricultural land is largely being converted into non-agricultural uses like marriage halls on most of the highways. This has further reduced our food security. There is a strange contradiction where on one hand our government is telling us that we need more and more food as people are dying of hunger. Therefore, they are asking us to produce more food by using pesticides, and if that is not enough, then they are getting us to genetically modify food and they are trying to bring bio-diversity into our food for us, which they themselves have taken away from us. Our land is being taken away from us and the industries are trying to do farming on the same farms. Where is our food security going? On one side, we are talking of hunger and on the other side, those who are getting food are getting sick from it. Every year we are losing the land on which we grow food. I am not able to understand what food security we are talking about.



Women are saving Rs. 500 to 2,500 per month by growing vegetables, and availability of vegetables is Now 15 days to one month (depending on the size of kitchen garden and Number of family members)

Our food habits are changing; there is no diversity in our food like the intake of pulses have been reduced to once or twice a month. “*Bathu*” and “*chalai*” are considered as weeds. Having vegetables for all meals in the day is considered high status, and pulses are considered as food given to the sick. Similarly, chapatti from “*bajra*” is considered as made of cement, and we eat wheat throughout the year. The effect of such food on our health is seen everywhere in the villages when people talk about different symptoms like joint pains, headache, etc. They all know that their food is the reason for this and they say that this has started happening only after they had started taking such food. Even when they go to the doctor, he tells them not to eat certain things and recommends organic food. The situation is such now that when women get pregnant for the first time they do not share the news of their pregnancy as there is a high rate of spontaneous abortions, especially in the first pregnancy.

When we started talking to people about their opinion on the issues, then people suggested that the use of pesticides is the main reason for their ill health. When we spoke to women, then they said that at least for our domestic consumption we could grow organic vegetables in our house. Now 600 women grow organic food, especially green leafy vegetables. We also organize food festivals where ladies cook and share their food with others. When we started this initiative the administration was not so supportive, but slowly we got their support - like the administration from Barnala and Faridkot districts have visited us. We have also tried to involve children in kitchen gardens, which will help bind them to their culture and agriculture.

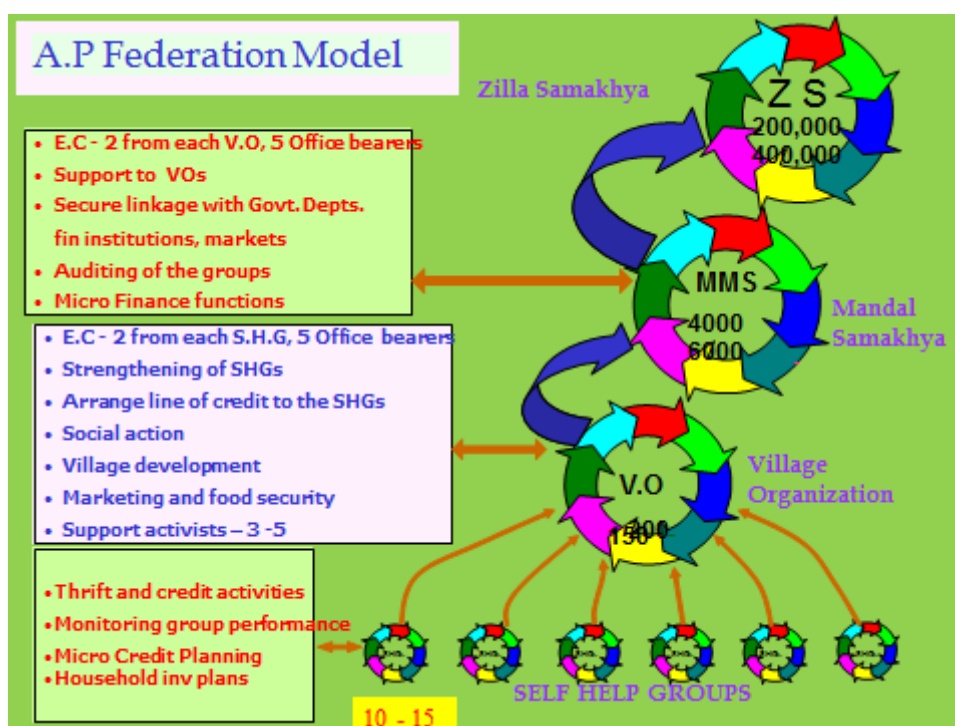
Community-Managed Nutrition Centers Improve Nutritional Status of Women and Children: Success of Indira Kranti Patham (IKP), A Livelihood-Based Project, Leads to Scaling up Across AP State

Lakshmi Durga

I am so glad for this opportunity to share the experiences in implementation of community - managed health and nutrition interventions at this policy consultation workshop. Since morning, we have been listening to speakers talk about the issues around policy influence. However, I am here to share the challenges experienced in seven years of programme implementation and in its scaling up. As I have been with the organisation since inception of the programme, the real challenge is to present the seven years of experience in 15 minutes. I also hope that this consultation will show the direction to take for policy level discussions.

I think it would be nice if we could spend some time getting to know about the platform on which this model is designed, the innovation, the challenges and the scale of plan.

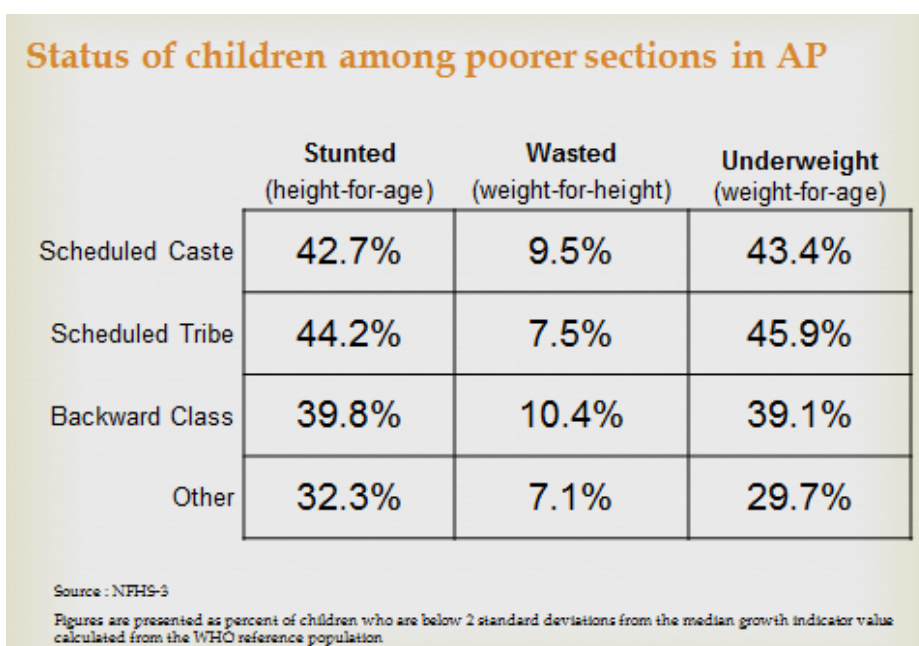
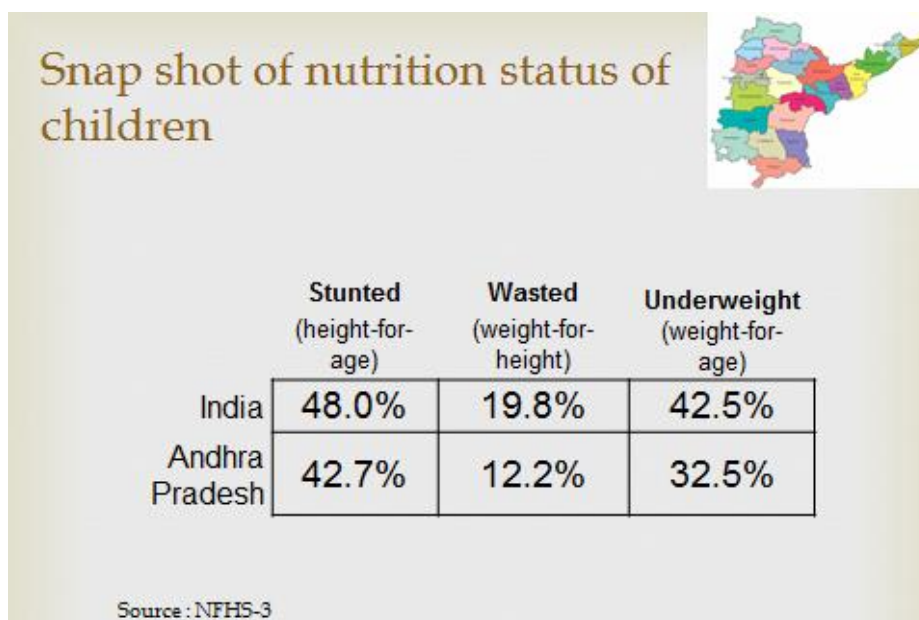
As requested by Dr. Mira, I must inform you that the Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP) is an autonomous society established in Andhra Pradesh for the implementation of the poverty reduction programme in the state. Initially, it started with a programme called Indira Krahthi Patham (IKP), formerly known as Velugu. In the year 2000, with the World Bank support, the poverty reduction programme started in six districts. Later in 2002, it was expanded to the entire state to cover 22 districts. In this federation model, 10-15 women are organized into a Self - Help Group and federated at different levels to take up different activities. SERP works in close coordination with members of SHGs and also in convergence with other government departments.



This slide is about the federation model. It starts with Women’s Self-Help Groups (SHGs) constituted with 15members. In a village there will be about 15-20 SHGs. Two representatives from each SHG get federated at the village level called Village Organisation (VO). The members from each VO, federate at the Mandal level (the administrative unit in AP), called the Mandal Samakhya (MS). Similarly, the members from all the MSs federate at the district level called Zilla Samakhya. Federation at every level has different roles and responsibilities and carries out different activities.

So far, over 10 million women have been organized from 36,000 villages. Of course, it is the outcome of the 16 years' effort while implementing the rural livelihood programme in the state of Andhra Pradesh.

Why do we need to focus on health and nutrition in this livelihood programme? The rationale is: (1) When an assessment of the livelihood program was done in six districts before being expanded to the entire state, the results showed that 56 percent of the women in SHGs were spending their income on health-related issues. (2) The huge network really did not show any improvement in health and nutrition indicators, as there is no special care for women and children. (3) No knowledge among women about the existing government schemes and their entitlements (4) There is a mismatch between the design and implementation. This led to additional focus on health and nutrition issues, along with livelihood aspects of the project.



As we see, malnutrition is a big issue in India, and AP is not an exception to this. We all know about the health and nutrition indicators. The nutrition indicators are very poor, especially among children, and more specifically among scheduled tribes and scheduled castes (STs/SCs).

How far is A.P from MDGs (4 & 5)?

S.No	Name of the state	IMR	MMR	CMR	TFR
1	Andhra Pradesh	49	134	52	1.9
2	Karnataka	49	178	50	2.0
3	Kerala	12	81	14	1.7
4	Tamil Nadu	28	97	33	1.7
5	MDG target set by 2015	28	109	42	2.1

Source : SRS 2007-09

Inequities in nutrition ...

India: Percent of children under 5 that are undernourished (by wealth quintiles)

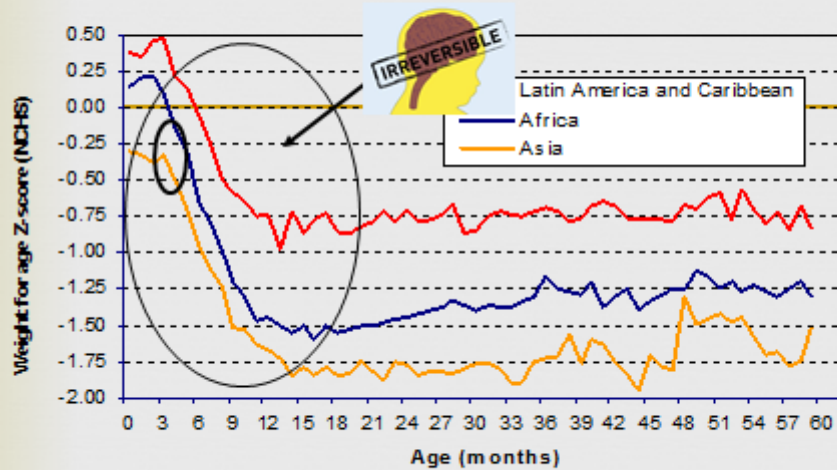
Wealth Quintiles	% Under-weight children (weight-for-age below -2 SD)	% children anemic (HB<11 g/dl)
Lowest	60.7	78.8
Second	54.0	79.0
Middle	49.2	75.1
Fourth	38.9	72.3
Highest	26.4	63.9

Undernutrition affects the poorest most, & by targeting malnutrition we target the poor; but, it also affects the non-poor...

Repositioning Nutrition, 2006

The status of MDGs in AP is very low compared to other South Indian states like Kerala and Tamilnadu. If we look at the nutritional status of the different quintiles, it reveals a lack of knowledge and access to public health programmes in addition to the issues of poverty.

The “Window of Opportunity” for Improving Nutrition is very small...pre-pregnancy until 18-24 months of age

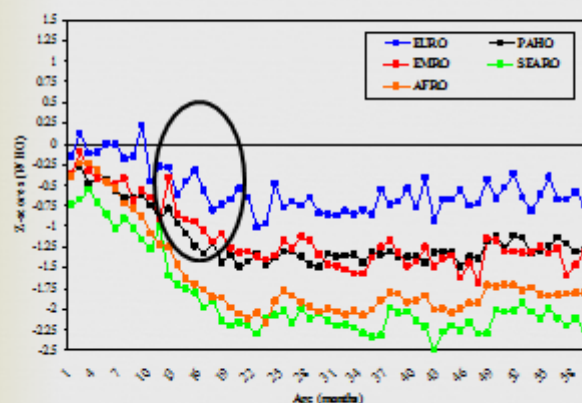


Repositioning Nutrition, 2006

New Evidence shows the “window of opportunity” may be even smaller than we had anticipated...with a larger part of the damage happening before birth...

Mean height for age z-scores by age relative to the new WHO reference

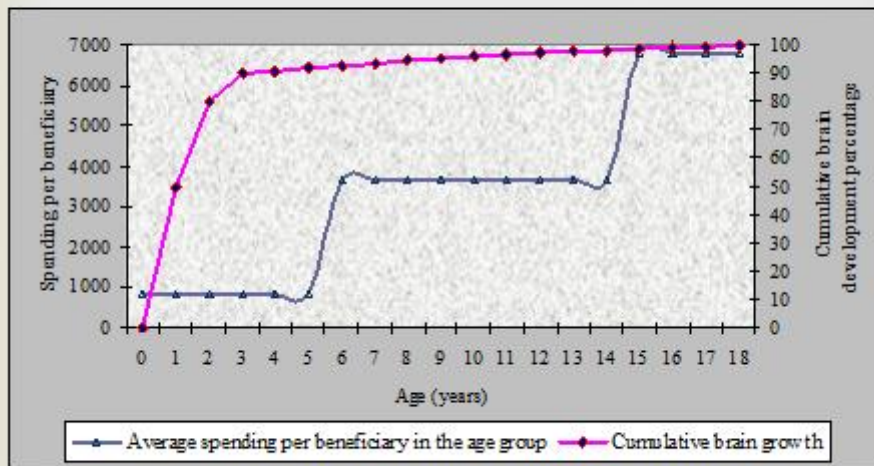
By region (0-59 months)



Source: Victora CG, et al. Worldwide timing of growth faltering: revisiting implications for interventions using the World Health Organization growth standards. *Pediatrics*, 2010 (Feb 15 Epub ahead of print)

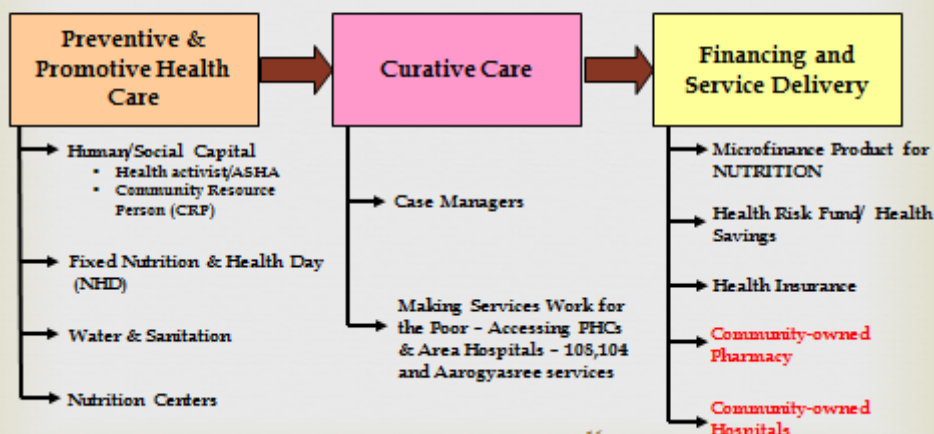
We also knew that the ‘window of opportunity’ is only for 24 months which accounts for 1,000 days of initial life of a child. In India, the investment in child development programmes is not aligned with the cognitive development of the child.

Public Funding on Children in India



We also know about the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) programme which is being implemented since 1975. There is no focus on the critical group due to Take Home Ration (THR) and there is no opportunity to interact with the women to talk about the Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) practices. In view of this scenario, SERP focused on community managed health and nutrition interventions along with the livelihood programme. The objective of this is not to have parallel programmes but to empower the Community - Based Organisations (CBOs) to improve women's access to and utilization of services from the public health facility, to bring change at the level of household behaviours related to maternal and child care measures.

IKP Health Value Chain towards reaching MDGs



In the context of reducing expenditure on ill-health, SERP facilitated the processes and looked at the areas that the community can manage. An attempt was made to look at the value addition to reach

MDGs and focus on interventions that can be managed by the SHG federations. It included a focus on adopting preventive and promotive health-care issues, few curative measures, and financing for health and nutrition projects at village level. As the SHG network had experience managing economic activities, the products related to health and nutrition were also taken up to add value in reaching the MDGs.

All the activities were not initiated by the village organisations at once. They were phased in, and started with universal activities like Fixed Nutrition and Health Day (FNHD) in convergence with the line departments, health savings and community gardens. We were so busy with the distribution of the iron folic acid (IFA) tablets that we never bothered to encourage the promotion of local gardens. So once the environment was established in these villages with the universal interventions, which takes about four to six months in any village, the focus turned much more to complex issues like working on nutrition, especially providing nutrition to the vulnerable groups, and then to water and sanitation issues. Unless it is integrated with water and sanitation issues, the impact of nutrition cannot be seen.

All these interventions were not implemented solely through the project functionaries. They were carried out by developing the social capital at village level and providing support for bringing awareness to other villages and also by establishing community managed health and nutrition interventions. All these best practitioners are identified among the SHG members who have interest and experience in health and nutrition issues, and can develop them for implementation of the Community Resource Person (CRP) strategy. Therefore they are the ones who are going to focus on various issues to introduce them through discussion at the village level. Now, I would like present more details about the nutrition intervention which had greater impact on improved maternal and child nutrition outcomes.

The Nutrition Day Care Centre (NDCC) intervention was started in 2007, and reached 4,264 villages. Here I would like to share the impact of these community - managed nutrition centres. Some 48 percent of pregnant women gained 10-12 kg. and 43 percent gained 7-10 kg. weight during pregnancy, 97 percent of the women received ante-natal care (ANC) and 97 percent prenatal care (PNC). There is no low birth weight baby born among the 28,000 deliveries that took place in these centers. Some 52 percent were born more than 3 kgs at birth. In the initial days of intervention, 29 neonatal deaths and 12 infant deaths were recorded. What is this nutrition centre? This is a simple place which has a small building with two rooms, with a small attached kitchen and a garden. The cook who is also a SHG member identified for this work prepares the food every day at the center. The cook is trained at a home science college on safe cooking methods for retention of nutrients and also the preparation of millets at the Deccan Development Society.. The health activist identified is also a SHG member and given regular training once every fortnight; she, in turn, conducts regular nutrition and health education sessions for the mothers when they come to eat at the nutrition center.



This slide is just to show the different activities of the center - like provision of balanced diet with millets and sprouts, nutrition health education sessions, fixed NHD, growth monitoring and complementary foods, income generation activities, community gardens and regular trainings for the members enrolled at the center when they come to eat.

The Common Income Generation (CIG) activities provide some income to the VO and also to the beneficiaries. It is a good opportunity for the health activists to conduct the health education sessions when they come for CIG activities. Each centre is provided with different types of economic activities, which provide an income of Rs. 6,000 per month. The nutrition centre is a one-stop shop that provides Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) and nutrition services. It is a community-owned center, affordable to the members through the income generating activities. Here the members need to pay one - third of the diet cost (Rs.10/day). The center becomes sustainable in a two-year period through CIG activities. As mentioned earlier, it is not being done by any project functionaries. The 4,200 centres were visited by the CRPs who have been identified as best practitioners and are trained and encouraged to support the community members in other villages for the establishment of nutrition centres. You might be wondering about why we need these NDCCs when AWCs are available. Just look at the investment required for one NDCC and for one AWC. It is just Rs. 3.50 lakh as a one - time grant for NDCC, whereas it is 5.76 lakhs per year to run the AWC.

Investment for one Village for 5 years: NDCC and AWC

<u>Nutrition cum Day Care Centre</u> (<i>one time grant</i>)		<u>Anganwadi Centre</u> (<i>Every year</i>)	
	Unit cost (Rs)		Unit cost (Rs)
Consumption loan corpus for 30 BPL beneficiaries	250,000	SNP cost for 80 APL+BPL beneficiaries	360000
Health CRPs resource fee & Health activist incentives	50,000	Salary component for AWW and AWH	204800
Non -recurring expenditure	50,000	House rent	12000
Total	350,000	Total	576000

Note: Additional cost for monthly training at NDCC and induction/ refresher training at AWC

You can identify the differences between the *anganwadi* and the community-managed centre. In terms of the nutritional requirement, the NDCC provides the breakfast, lunch and dinner, whereas it is only supplementary food at *anganwadi*.

Services provided at NDCC are complementary to AWC and not parallel structures.

S.NO	Particulars	NDCC	AWC
1	Provision of diet	Nutritionally balanced diet	Supplementary nutrition
2	Nutrient supply	2800 Kcals ; 65 gms of protein	500 Kcals ; 15 gms of protein
	Diet cost	Rs 30/day/pregnant Rs 16/day/child	Rs 6/day/pregnant Rs 4/day/child
3	Budget requirement	One time grant (i.e.,Rs 3,00,000/center)	Yearly release (i.e.,Rs 1,69,692/year)
4	Investment	Capacity building	Project mgt
5	Management	Community owned	Functionary driven
6	Nutrition Education	2 members at every SHG to review, educate and encourage to practice at HHs	Weakest component s of ICDS
7	Capacity building	Hands on training on regular basis (Fortnightly)	No regular refresher trainings for the functionaries
8	Community based monitoring	Regular social audit to assess the outcomes by external community representatives	Weak accountability to community.

The total cost of the diet comes to about Rs. 35 per woman and Rs. 12-15 per child. The investment provided from the project is of three models depending on the number of beneficiaries at the centre (i.e., Rs. 3 lakhs, 1.25 lakhs and 0.75 lakhs as a one - time grant per NDCC).

So every month, the VO looks at the income and expenditure statement and also reviews both the health and nutrition outcomes, as well as the income over the expenditure of the center. In case of any variation, the VO immediately plans to take up revenue generating activities as per the local demand and marketing potential. Here, the core element is focused on building the social capital and ensuring that the women get their entitlements from the public health system and take up some enterprise activities so that it will not be burdensome for their families to pay the amount as it runs on payment per plan.

The phasing of NDCCs started with 200 centres in the first year, 400 in the second year, 600 in the third year and 1,000 centres in the fourth year. However in the fifth year, over 3,000 centres were established in one go. This is mainly due to the development of social capital from these 1,000 villages and that could multiply the centers in a much faster way. Mobile technology was recently introduced to track the member-wise details, as women are so comfortable in using mobiles. So the software developed is loaded into the mobiles and the Health Activist, who is trained, is able to send reports comfortably through mobiles and recently this has been recognized as a global best practice by the UN Foundation who is working on 'Every Woman and Every Child'.. for the community managed M-NDCC in 2012 with a grant award of 2,00,000 dollars to scale up the intervention. This acts as a Decision Support System (DSS) for the health activists as it comes as alerts to her mobile which will enable the Health Activist to take up the follow up action immediately.

When we look at the sustainability of the model, the source of income is mainly through three ways: (1) Interest generated from the Internal lending of the initial corpus of Rs 3 lakhs. (2) Member contribution @ Rs 10/day. (3) Income generation activities.

Repayment pattern



☞ Diet cost : Rs 30-35/day	
☞ Member contribution	: Rs 10/day
☞ Income through CIGs	: Rs 10/day
☞ Interest thru' internal lending	: Rs 5/day
☞ Dovetailing from ICDS	: Rs 5/day????
☞ VO profits	: Rs 5/day
Total	: Rs 35/day
☞ For children :	Rs 12-15/day

Due to marketing issues, the income from Common Interest Group (CIG) income generation activities is not regular in all the centers. In view of this, the recent focus is on reduction of diet cost by tying up with the other units of IKP, such as agriculture, dairy, poultry and also some marketing activities. This is being piloted in about 100 villages to bring down the cost by 50 percent.

For implementation of community - managed health and nutrition interventions under IKP, government (1) government orders (GOs) were issued by the departments like (2) health, women, development and child welfare, and rural water supply. It really took a long time to convince the Principal Secretaries until we took them to the project areas and they had seen the results personally and been convinced before they issued the GOs which took about two years. For operationalization of the GO issued, it is still taking time and is not being adopted in all the districts. The impacts I shared were based on internal MIS data. But NDCCs also got evaluated by external agencies in 2009 and 2012 (Early Outcomes of NDCCs by SOCHURSOD, AP, 2009; Assessment of Nutritional Status of children under 5 years by SOCHURSOD, AP, 2012). The results revealed that there was a good improvement in the utilization of the public health services and even in the provider-dependent services such as Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY), in the intervention areas.

The average weight gain during pregnancy was 9.01 and birth weight of the baby was 2.912 kg. These results gave us confidence to replicate and expand its coverage to 4,264 villages. In the current year, under Scheduled Caste Sub Plan (SCSP), the Government approved the sanction of 1,200 new centres. Due to regular health and nutrition education sessions, there is a lot of change in women's knowledge levels and adoption of practices related to communicable diseases and childcare practices.

Due to its comprehensive design, the model was recognized as an innovation in nutrition in 2009. When we looked at the investment made and compared it with the benefits, we found it to be much more, and the same was shared with the beneficiaries. The total investment made in seven years is 178.18 crores and the programme reached about 2,20,800 beneficiaries at all the 4,264 centers. Thus on an average, Rs. 8,064 is the investment made per beneficiary to get the package of benefits per members or their households.

For example, a household needs to invest Rs. 15,850 to provide a package of services for the 1,000 days of the initial days of life. Whereas it is only Rs. 14,000 if a member gets enrolled at an NDCC where the members get additional benefits of health and nutrition education sessions to take care

of themselves and their young infants. These savings are being used to convince the community members to take part in this programme and also to claim ownership.

When we look at the amortization for the next 10 years, the investment will be only Rs. 800 in 2020, for which the investment in Year 1 is Rs 8,000. This model got good political support. During the visit of the Hon'ble Chief Minister to a center in Visakhapatnam where he spent about 40 minutes to interact with SHG members and beneficiaries to understand the processes and see the outcomes, he announced the expansion of the model to every village in the state in a phased manner as it needs an initial investment of Rs 3 lakhs. The great challenges are mainly to convince the policy makers to expand this programme and also to build the capacity of the stakeholders to manage the programme on their own.

The model is being considered for replication under National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) where the efforts are under progress to establish a platform such as SHGs and their federations at the village level. Once the platform is available, which is the pre-requisite, it can be replicable and sustainable.

Finally, I would like to state that there is a need to broaden the nutrition lens. There is a need to have a multi-sectoral nutrition lens. The narrow nutrition lens should be broadened by providing more space to the other sectors and agencies to become involved and to participate. The documented financial requirements must be considered while making budget allocations.

For more details, please refer to:

- 1) www.serp.ap.gov.in
- 2) <http://go.worldbank.org/305MTTK2Q0>

Thank you!

Thank you Dr. Mira Shiva. I am from eastern UP, and the topic of interaction assigned for me is agricultural productivity and nutritional linkages, especially in the context of small, marginal and women farmers in eastern UP. I come from *Gorakhpur Environmental Action Group* as Dr. Mira said; we are a non-governmental organization working for the last two decades with small, marginal and women farmers, especially on the issue of agricultural productivity. There are nine agro-climatic zones in UP and the experiences I am sharing is from the eastern part of UP, especially the northern part, which is called Trans-Saryu Region - in the foothills of Nepal - Himalayas. The region is affected by floods followed by water-logging. The duration and magnitude of water logging are gradually increasing. Therefore, both floods and water - logging are causing problems. In most of the discussions on nutrition and food, generally the discussions are limited within the framework of distribution and supplementation of food. I wish to point out here that I am happy to be a part of this forenoon session, where food production and nutrition production are also thought (to be) as important as distribution and supplementation.

So I will be focusing on agricultural productivity and especially of the small and marginal farmers of eastern UP. Most of the farmers in eastern UP, and most of the places in UP as well as the country, are producing for two main purposes: for production, and for consumption. If you go to the smaller, marginal and landless farmers, basically, almost 80 percent of the production is for their own consumption and a very small part, approximately 20 per cent of the production, is reserved for the market. Hence, their sale in the market is only 20 percent because there is hardly anything left for the market. As such, the minimum support price and all those arrangements have not helped significantly.

In UP, agriculture still is one of the major livelihood activities providing maximum employment to people. The small and marginal farmers are more than 90 percent. The increasing population and shrinking land areas for agriculture are causing land fragmentation at a high rate. If you go to eastern UP, because of the good soil and good availability of water and a high population density, the land fragmentation is very high. The average landholding of a farming family is about one acre or less.

Women Farmers in Agricultural Production

Women farmers are significant contributors in agricultural productivity and almost 68 percent of agricultural productivity is contributed by women farmers. However, if you pay attention to the presence of women farmers, in terms of women's control over land, or their presence in the extension centre, or their access and control of technology and resources, the situation is quite discouraging. In various surveys, we found that the land ownership of women farmers is less than three percent, and if we turn to agricultural extension, the presence of women farmers at government extension centres is less than one percent. If we turn to the extension workers, it is 0.01 percent. Therefore, presence of women farmers is very marginal in terms of agricultural productivity and technology access itself.

[Question from the audience: Can I ask a quick question? When you say that 90 percent land is actually owned by small, marginal farmers, how much percentage of the total land is actually owned by them?

Answer: Land owned by small and marginal farmers including share croppers is almost 90 percent.]

Small Farmers are BPL and Malnourished:

The small farmers also constitute a majority of the population living below poverty line [BPL] and if you go for [those] BPL, there is a lot of overlap between these small, marginal and landless farmers, the BPL families, and those who are malnourished. Consequently the major producers of the [UP] State are malnourished and have less food. This is the major issue. As the earlier speaker pointed out, a large amount of land is being gradually transferred for non-agricultural and what we saw is

that approximately 2,50,000 hectares of land have been transferred for non-agricultural purposes during the last few years. This excludes the land which has been degraded gradually because of floods, and because of other factors, erosion, and so on.

It will be important to understand the traditional food system in the area if we are to consider food security. Generally, there was an integration of various components or activities which made the food basket of farmers diverse. And that included livestock, poultry and the water bodies of the village, the kitchen garden, the village orchard, the common land, fodder land, and so on. If you see the farm or the agricultural field of the small landholding farmer, you will observe that the common land, or public land, or village land, is also important as it contributes to the agricultural productivity of the food for the family of the poor farmer.

Food Productivity Measure Biased Toward Mono-Cropping

There are two issues which I would like to emphasize, and maybe some of the policy implications also:

Firstly, the general, conventional system of cultivation for food productivity or farm productivity is mono-cropping. Therefore, it is either wheat or paddy or any crop which is produced per unit of area of the land that is being calculated in the conventional terms in the government system as the 'farm productivity'. However, if you look at the small, marginal farmers, the total food or the total productivity is the cumulative system of the number of things produced in the farm. So maybe, a woman farmer, who was awarded can never be a progressive farmer in the government's definition. Hence, that is the issue actually; that is the policy which is being adopted about how a small farm of a small farmer is recognized or de-recognised: progressive farmer or non-progressive farmers, productive farmers or economically not viable farmers. Therefore, that is a major concern if we talk of food or nutrition.

Secondly, the small farm land actually is largely dependent upon the common land or the village land, so it is not the isolated piece of land on which the farmer is practicing, and it is also the common land or the village land which is as important because a lot of inputs are coming to the farm from this common land. As a result if the common land is degraded, or the common land is gradually encroached upon, if water bodies are under litigation or getting degraded, all these can affect the food and nutrition of the small-sized farms. Thus these are the few major issues I wish to highlight here because these issues are creating a lot of problems to small and marginal farmers so far as food and nutrition are concerned.

Decreasing Diversity, Complexity in Cropping System

There are changes generally over two major aspects: one is at the farm-level, changes like decreasing diversity and the complexity in the cropping system by which the crop production has got limited to the wheat-paddy cycle, and the disintegration of the farm sub-system. All the farm sub-systems like the livestock, the orchard, poultry, the compost etc. - all these are gradually being disintegrated from the cumulative farm system that existed earlier. Through such integration the input of one component of one farm element was coming from another. Now with the disintegration, the inter-complementarity of farm sub-system has gradually declined and this is ultimately increasing the input cost of the farm and ultimately affecting the food and nutrition.

Disappearance of Millets and Pulses

The second problem is that the millets and pulses have decreased drastically. Millets everywhere have degraded and the area sown under millet hardly exists. The pulses have gone down mainly because of the wrong policies of the government. Because of the interest of bigger farmers who grow sugarcane, the area actually which was already good in terms of the ground-water table or the rainfall, was actually pumped with a lot of canals. The canals are there mainly for the bigger farmers who are the sugarcane-growers. Hence, the sugarcane lobby had an impact and in general, water logging has increased and because of that, plants like sesame (*shisham* in Hindi) and pulses have

disappeared and there is hardly any area which exists which has pulses now. *Arhar* (yellow *dal*) was the main pulse crop which was grown and its disappearance has added to the protein deficiency in the area where it was grown.

Increased Input Cost

Third is the increasing input cost. Earlier my young friend was speaking about increasing chemicals, the chemicals are increasing here also, but not like Punjab and Haryana, but we are still better off than most of the so - called 'progressive states'. Agricultural production is gradually becoming market-driven the ultimate impact of which is that the food diversity has reduced. The diversity of food which is available in the plate of a farmer or the plate of a person living below poverty line has gone down. Secondly the nutrition intake has reduced and buying food is gradually increasing because there is less diversity, there is less food. For nutritional security, buying food is the main thrust of government schemes. Food and water contamination have increased a lot because of fertilizer and pesticide use. Food production has become cost-intensive. These are the major issues affecting farm productivity as well as the nutrition of a small farmer.

Decreased Landholding

At the landscape or ecosystem level, the land size is gradually decreasing, that is one major impact, and then, the common resources are shrinking. Hence, the sources of fodder, fuel and food, the common food which was coming from the village, are decreasing very fast, ultimately affecting the increase in food cost in agricultural production and decreased food availability. So both at the farm level and at the ecosystem level, the impact is there.

New Challenges: Flooding, Climate Change and Food Shortages

Besides those challenges, which are rather universal in nature, there are some new challenges which are coming up. These are like floods and water - logging. Dr. Mira was talking of Japanese Encephalitis, one of the major issues coming up because of water - logging. Water - logging is happening in areas with low slope gradient, i.e., below the foothills of Nepal-Himalaya, so much so that even a small disruption causes it. There is more water-locking than water - logging, because the attention which was to be given to drainage was not given and it has ultimately increased water logging. Therefore, besides health, it is also increasing water - logged areas. Earlier, if the *kharif* season was adversely affected due to floods, there was an opportunity of recovery in the *rabi* season. But because of the increased water-logging period, the *rabi* crops are also getting affected. These are exacerbating the already existing problems.

The second is the climate change effect which is visible: sudden hot winds during winters or maybe flooding seasons, early or late floods, the humidity increasing in the winters, and so on. This is also affecting the farm productivity. Third is the unplanned development. There is no (attention to the) context of the local ecology or the local situation in the development of the local area. The District-level agriculture plans hardly consider any local problem. They are top-down - coming from the top. Fourth is the land going for non-agricultural purposes. Therefore, these are some of the issues which are the new challenges before the small and marginal farmers.

SEASONAL DIAGRAM

(Village : Chandipur, Rohini basin)

MONTH	APR चैत्र	MAY वैशाख	JUN ज्येष्ठ	JUL आषाढ	AUG सावन	SEP भादो	OCT क्वार	NOV कार्तिक	DEC अगहन	JAN पौष	FEB माघ	MAR फाल्गुन
VARIABLES												
FOOD AVAILABILITY	30/30	30/30	30/30	20/30	15/30	5/30	30/30	25/30	20/30	15/30	10/30	5/30
LIVELIHOOD	15 days daily wage labour in villages/ local cities	25 days daily wage labour in village	15 days daily wage labour in village	25 days wage labour in vill. paddy field	20 days wage labour in village	10 days wage labour in village	25 days labour in village paddy field	4 days labour in village		Migration		
FOOD HABIT	Bread seasonal veg.	Pulses, Bread vegetable	Pulses, Bread vegetable	Pulses, Bread vegetable	Salt Bread Onion	Bread Salt Fasting	Rice Pulses (If not flood)	Rice Vegetable Pulses	Rice Vegetable	Rice Salt Oil	Bhuja Fry Potato Sugar beet	Bhuja Fry Potato Sugar beet

● Food gap month

This is one of the seasonal diagrams which shows the food-gap months. Food availability is not a year - round problem, but is a problem during a few months only. This is an exercise conducted in one of the villages to observe how many days of two square meals is available to the poor and marginal farmer families. There are few months actually which are food-gap months, where less than 15 days' food is available if you consider two daily meals for a family. These are August, September or January, February, March. The issue here is that food supplement, or the food availability, is not the problem throughout the year but there are a few food-gap months in which special attention is required so far as the small farmers are concerned. These are the times actually which also match with migration. These are the months when people migrate outside and this is mostly forced migration which is not voluntary. These months require supplementary food. The lack of food availability during flooding months hurts the women most. Whatever food is available, almost 50percent, is consumed by men and then children get some food; consequently the women farmers are the most deprived group during floods and water - logging.

Remedial Mechanisms

These are some of the mechanisms which are needed and which are policy-related issues. For example, how do we make the farm system resilient in terms of flood, in terms of climate change, or in terms of emerging challenges. There are four major criteria which were identified while working with small and marginal women farmers. The first criterion is **redundancy**. How do we enhance redundancy? There is no single path which has to be adopted. There have to be various paths that have to be adopted. If the crop is lost, there is livestock to help the farmer, if livestock is lost, at least vegetables or a kitchen garden are available. So this diversity of the livestock and agriculture, intra-crop diversity and inter-crop diversity, and the farm elements - all these forms of diversity actually enhance the redundancy of the farm. The second criterion is **flexibility** that even in an extreme situation enables the farm to be saved. Hence, it is the robustness of the farm system, and the strength of its different interlinked components that make the farm system robust, and consequently flexible enough to withstand extreme stress.

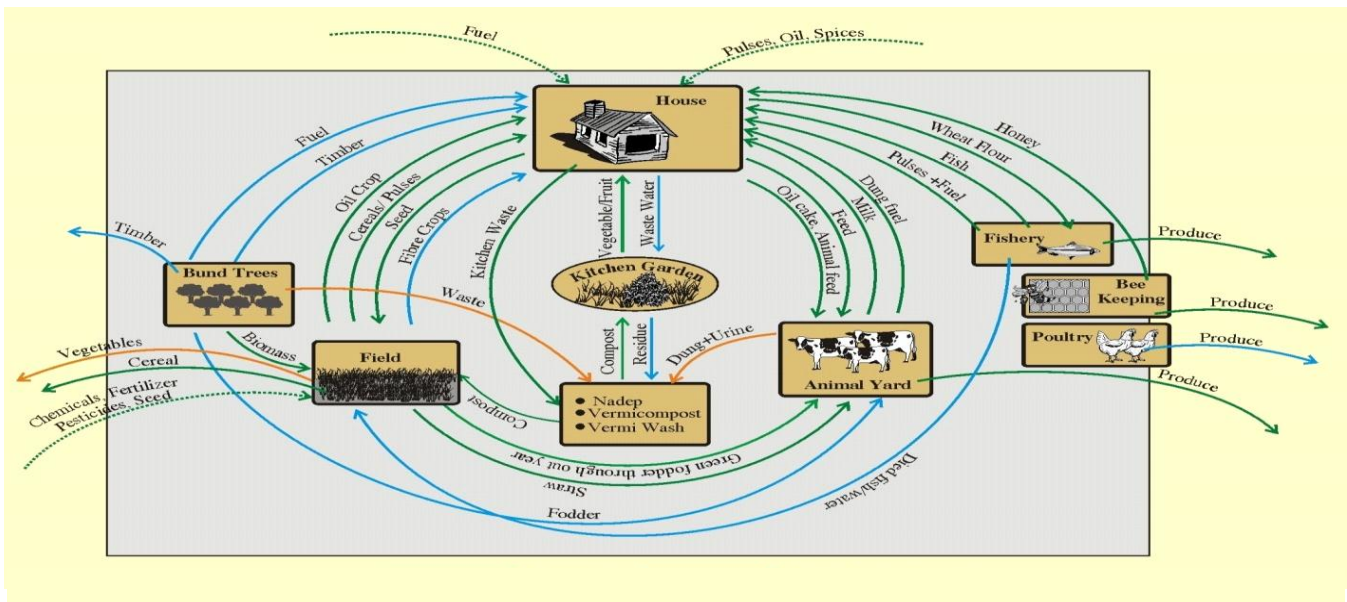
Resiliency in Flood Affected Area to be Developed Through

Criteria	Examples
Redundancy	Diversity : Livestock, agriculture
Flexibility	Robustness of Farm System, Drainage
Responsiveness	Time & Space Management in Cropping System
Capacity to learn	ITK, experiment etc

Time Management



Integration of Farm Sub System



The third criterion is **responsiveness** as these last few diagrams actually show how to do time management and space management that can help the small farmers to recover the losses, or to reduce or mitigate losses due to floods. The first time management approach is about how the farmers have invented practices, in which they can pre-poned the crops. There are various traditional varieties which exist which can be pre-poned and the crop can be harvested before the advent of floods. The second approach is to plant water-withstanding crops, like a number of paddy varieties which exist, instead of gradually being degenerated or lost during the flood. The third approach is to post-pone the crop so even if the water is retained for some period, you can still sow and harvest

after the flood has receded. Hence, time management and crop-cycle management help the small farmers to enhance production and reduce the input cost.

Under the second category of responsiveness, i.e., space management, farmers practice multi-tier cropping. For a piece of land, there are three different tiers which can be practiced and the farmers are doing it. These two mechanisms, time and space management, have helped farmers to recover or reduce losses as well as enhance production.

The fourth criterion is the **capacity to learn**, from the indigenous knowledge, or the local knowledge, or the wisdom, and the space for farmers to innovate. A number of practices have been innovated by farmers and they have been very helpful. However, unfortunately, the whole extension mechanism is not working, [Biraj was saying something about 5,000 farmers to one extension worker. Besides the number of the extension workers, you should also look at the content of the extension]. What is the delivery which the extension worker is making? Generally, the extension workers promote the use of fertilizers, pesticides or seeds. The extension system is a highly top-down operation and highly male-dominated.

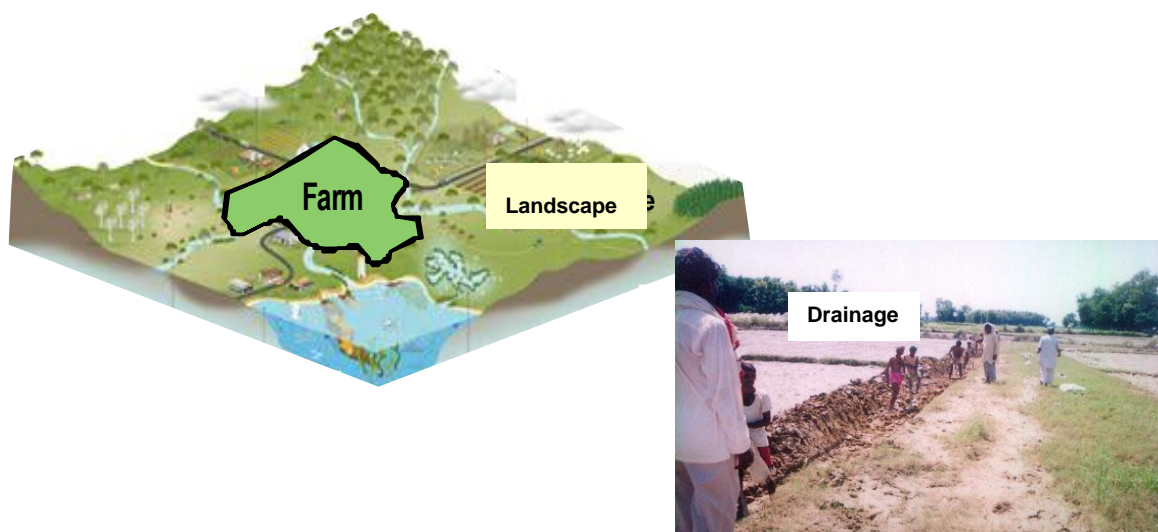
Small Farmer Innovativeness

The whole extension system and the manner in which government schemes are implemented are biased towards the big farmers. You can not demonstrate a technology if you have less than five acres of land, so you hardly get any five - acre land in the small family. With this restriction of the demonstration processes for the schemes which the government provides, the small and marginal women farmers are pretty marginalized. *So given the space for the farmers to innovate, they have invented a number of practices like floating nursery, portable nursery, growing food on rooftops and so on. And there are various mechanisms that farmers have developed themselves which have helped them to enhance productivity and ensure nutrition.*

This is again what I was explaining earlier, that the farm is not an isolated patch but works in the context of the ecosystem of the village. If the water - logging is increasing and if we do not provide drainage in schemes like Jawahar Rozgar Yojana and MGNREGA, where most of the work is being done as earth-work, the inadequate local drainage systems will enhance the water - logging to a large extent and negatively impact farm productivity.

Small interventions, like linking the water - logged area to the water bodies through using the MGNREGA-like schemes, increase the drainage that enhances farm productivity and that also enhances the recovery possibilities in flood-affected areas.

Ecosystem Approach in Rural System Establishing Link between Farm-Landscape and Drainage



This is the last slide which shows the robustness of the farm system. This is the diagram of one of the model farmers encouraged by GEAG. Note the flow patterns which exist between the livestock, the household, the orchard, the poultry and so on, the small fish in fisheries (and as Dr. Mira also said - local varieties of the fish), that can be reared. So the inter-linkages reduce the need of input cost from the outside ultimately leading to lesser input costs in a farm production system. That enhances farm productivity as well as food availability and, therefore, nutrition.

Thank you!

Rohan D'souza (*Discussant 1*)

I am going to be brief since is another session after the break.

I should begin with accepting my suitable embarrassment when Dr. Priya asked me to be the discussant, I just casually said yes without looking at the entire conference agenda carefully. I do not really have great competence in this area so if I am going to say something out of ignorance and stupidity I hope I will be indulged.

Just some commonsensical points I am going to try and make. One is, of course that I should echo the general assessment which all speakers have pointed out correctly and factually, and they have substantiated what they are saying that you have a situation where much of what is considered farming in India is being impoverished, some would also maybe refer to it in a strong word 'genocide'. This is a situation that can best be summarized as 'a crisis'.

However, I would like to also add that post-1945, this has been the general pattern for most countries in the world, especially what is now called the 'developed world'. The percentage of population in the US is now four percent in the agricultural sector - much of that is again corporate agriculture. Britain I think is also three or four percent; Japan is two percent; much of Europe, Spain, France and Italy - about ten percent. This trend, what Hobsbawm in one of his books called in the late 20th century 'the death of the peasantry'. It reflects that global direction in which, what we understand to be the 'modern economy', is looking like an urban bias, bias towards service sector, and bias towards manufacturing. Both these sectors invariably grow at the cost of the farming sector.

Therefore, there is this very clear, identifiable movement. I wonder if the speakers today were capturing that while they were outlining what was happening in India as well. India and China are latecomers to the genocide process perhaps. So I think one would have to establish, as one of the speakers pointed out, the context in which this is happening; the existence of a larger arrangement of political economy, but besides urban bias, one could also perhaps take a second framework, that is the emergence of the market as profit deciding how agrarian production takes place and without looking at it as something that produces 'public goods' or being run by public goods. Even for the green-revolution and for all its complications, extension services and government investments, they came in as public goods; but today, increasingly post-1990, what one can see is that what you are trying to get the farmer to do, who is no longer the peasant, is to accept the calculations of the market. And, the market has no safety net so he is a speculator, he is playing the market in different ways, he is making calculations in order to make profit or sink. I think that is another register that one can capture in all the presentations that have been made.

But I think the third, equally vying register, is one which could argue that the previous model was farm-to-the-factory i.e., you move from the farm to the factory; but now, I think increasingly with IPR (Intellectual Property Rights) GM and corporate agriculture, you are seeing the reverse: the factory moving to the farm in terms of how all these elements and all these inputs are really designing industrial agriculture in fundamental and profound ways. I think that also has to be acknowledged. So I would say there would be three registers that all the speakers have directly or indirectly, spoken of: one of urban bias, second of the market, and the third the factory-to-the-farm logic.

Whether we have real solutions to this, these anxieties, are far bigger complications. Do we have responses to this? We know elements of the disease, I am sure we could get the Right to Food

legislation, we could try to argue for various kinds of ways through which to train and to prevent a massacre as it were. We have the facts and the truths so to speak, but do we have an imagination to counter this? I think one of the speakers pointed out very clearly that if you have a farmer-centred notion of production as opposed to industrial notion of production, perhaps you can rework the digits of the response. I think that is the point that was made.

Acknowledging at the same time that the village in India, historically, has not always been the site of equality and justice, has been a point of brutal exploitation, hierarchy, domination and so forth. Hence, that is not an imagination that one can just walk back to the past and say which is better. In certain ways we have to rethink and recalibrate what we mean by a farmer-centric imagination and you know, I feel I will be stating this in the general sense since I do not have the facts, but for what one can just say living in Delhi and talking to people of many other parts of India, most of the youth in India want to flee the farm, they want to flee the village. The seduction of the city is immense for various reasons. They always think that they have a chance to make it in the city. Therefore, in many ways, there is this bizarre situation where you are going to get only older people who are farming. In Japan, the average age of a farmer is something like 70 years! Same is true for many parts of the world as well, and even in India, this is going to start changing, where you will get older and older people who might be securing the knowledge, securing the ideas and trying to preserve whatever is left of this livelihood strategy.

So how exactly, could one look at this seduction of imagination as a problem is also very crucial. And I would say it is crucial because if we understand the urban bias, then the way out is, I mean, can the rural area actually overflow the city? ... I do not know, historically there has been an example, though I am told that when Argentina's economy collapsed, and even in Spain today, many young people are sort of going back looking for livelihood options, including Greeks.

So this is the point that we have to really think about. I fully accept, I think the evidence is overwhelming, the truths of the street is all out there factually and otherwise, that this is a sector in distress and that there is no doubt that it has to be rescued. However, can you rescue this sector without in some way also humbling or humiliating the urban mindset? What I am trying to suggest is that we can not really see these as apart. Most of our speakers, often go to talks in what is happening in farming, but we do not seem to staple onto it, how it is linked and related to the city.

I think it would do us some service if we were to draw into an analysis these connections and these linkages. I am not again in any way attempting to limit I think a very good and profound point made by three speakers earlier, but I simply think that these connections could be absolutely vital if we are to understand the whole situation. I think the imagination of Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai or Bangalore, for a lot of rural youth, is a psychological moment that one would have to grapple with very profoundly. Therefore it is not only the narrative of injustice and suffering, but if there is going to be a narrative of hope and emancipation, then you have to see the whole picture.

Thank you for this opportunity. I must also say I learnt a great deal, I have taken great notes

Ramila Bisht (*Discussant 2*)

Friends, I would like to thank all the speakers for the very rich presentations. What the three papers really brought out was the centrality of food production for food security and nutrition. Implicit in all the three presentations, I think was the critique of this globalized food production system which is about food-for-profit for a few people, and not nutritional needs for all. Then Madhuri talked of global food trade, or global agri-business, or to look at the involvement of global capital in agriculture. I think that was a very pertinent point. From this, the speakers therefore also tried to tell us what kind of food production systems would be viable for nutritional security of the country. And they talked about local food production and the linkages it has to nutritional status of the community.

The Kiran Vissa last speaker talked of the farmer-centric agriculture, which is important for all kinds of ecology, whether we are trying to talk of dry-land, or mountain areas, or rain-fed ecology. While this is important what is also important, is how do we then answer questions of sustainability for

small farmers in this kind of an economy? In what way can we stop these: the kind of work that is going on, the kind of production that is coming out from this system, and therefore he talked about *kisaan swaraj niti* which looks at control and access to all kinds of resources in this kind of food production system.

Biraj and Rohan talked about farmers' abandoning agriculture and fleeing from there, which is also a reality and, therefore, we find that this has led to feminization of agriculture in a big way. However, based on my limited field experience with the peasants in Uttarakhand and in certain other mountain areas, I find that the picture of male-female participation in agriculture is actually quite complex, with men migrating or moving away from agriculture, women taking on those responsibilities, then at the same time, men retaining their agricultural positions and women also moving to wage-agriculture. Therefore, the reality of both men and women in agriculture is very dynamic and complex, and this needs to be captured whenever we are attempting to make any gendered analysis of agriculture.

Therefore, while focusing on women farmers is important, and this focus would perhaps lead to returns to women, we must also bear in mind that these returns are determined by systems of capitalist patriarchy, where both gender and class differences are significant. In fact, we have to be cognizant of the fact that women's role in agriculture varies across caste, class, tribe, region, religion, culture and, therefore, when we are talking of agricultural food production, it cannot be decontextualized from its local social structural and cultural norms.

And one of the speakers, talked about looking at agriculture as a rural livelihood, and this is very significant because it is important for the survival and dignity of the entire rural population, and therefore policy needs to be sensitive to it but the approach should be to look at the whole of agriculture in this light.

Lastly, what I felt was, that while addressing agrarian crisis is a foremost challenge for policy today, however, when we are talking of nutritional security, it implores us to address a range of other public health issues too, for instance, access to health services, water and hygiene, all of which are very important for nutritional outcomes and without that, nutritional security will not be made available. Of course, through the production systems, we are talking of what can go into the food basket, but we also have to look at what happens in the household in terms of intra-household distribution and issues of that kind, which are very important for nutritional outcomes.

Thank you!

Umendra Dutt (*Discussant 3*)

The English of a Punjabi can sometimes create problems for you and it may even disturb your knowledge of English, so kindly bear with that! Ok, in this post-lunch session, I will try my level best that none of you fall asleep. Friends, the issue is of hunger and malnutrition. As Aman said earlier, we should see malnutrition and hunger in the context of the green revolution that happened in select states. All these states, are providing huge amount of grains into the national pool. Punjab is providing almost 60 percent of rice to the national pool and 40 percent of wheat. Punjab farmers have also become prosperous. However, prosperity at what cost, and the question is: "is that prosperity sustainable?" Is it replicable? Can we extend a similar model to the other states? I think we should think a hundred times before doing this. Unfortunately, those at the helm of affairs are not thinking in a rights-based way. That is why now the talk of a second green revolution in east India is already very much on the cards.

In 2002, one village from district Bhatinda, Harkishanpura, was put on sale. An entire village put on sale! Why? Because the entire village had got into a debt-trap and the village declared itself up for sale. It put up a kind of a protest. I went there and found that apart from agricultural debt, two other things were there. One was the water problem. The entire crop failure is related to two things - one is the high use of pesticides, and the other that is water issues. Then, apart from water problem,

another significant crisis is of health - problem of cancer, which was present in high rates even in those days even. That was 2002. In 2005, another village Mal sing wala, district Mansa, also put itself up for sale and here, it was due to the same problem of water, which was the root cause.

Then in 2010, another village Mullanpur Sangharsi, district Patiala - was put up for sale in a likewise due to a issue.

Three different years, three different districts, three different villages, but the root cause was common: it was water. When you go and talk with the farmers everywhere, they say that they can not do anything without water.

After the 2010 episode, I wrote an article called "*Punjab A Dying Civilization?*" because just like in the Indus valley civilization, which was finished because of drinking water problems, a similar situation is present in Punjab today. Data-wise about five years back, you find that Punjab has 138 development blocks and out of these total 138 development blocks, 108 were declared as 'dark zones'. The 30 'white-zone' areas (four of these are 'grey-zones') are geographically located near Himachal Pradesh and Jammu-Kashmir border in the Shivalik mountain range, and another set of white-zones are bordering Haryana and Rajasthan, where water is of no use because you cannot drink it or even use it for irrigation. In the Shivalik mountain rage, you cannot dig a tube-well not can you put in any? kind of thing.

Punjab has the highest tube-well density in India, over 14 lakh tube-wells are running in Punjab and that is why the ground-water strata has already reached the third aquifer. Reaching the third aquifer means it is unsustainable and that danger bells are ringing. No technology in the world can recharge the third aquifer. You can not recharge it. That means, we are pumping out the water, which is primordial water, which is under the Punjab land from ages that is since thousands and thousands of years, and we have just that water in the last thirty years. So this green revolution brought prosperity, but it has finished the sustainability and the livelihood of - our future generations. This is one aspect.

Another important aspect is from what Aman suggested. There was a time when the Indian Army had 26 percent people from Punjab, and belonging to Punjab Regiment was the in-thing. Now, out of 10,000 Punjab youth who appear for the physical test exam, only 125 youth barely qualify for the physical criteria laid out by the Army. This suggests that the state which is known for its healthy population, only 125 of its young men are able to fulfill physical criteria for clearing the exam. This implies there is something seriously wrong with the health of youth from this state. This is one question. The second concern is regarding the issue of rising cancer in Punjab. Incidentally, in 2005, Down To Earth did a cover-story on Punjab.

I happened to be the one who was interviewed by VibhaVarshney, the magazine correspondent, who was doing the story. I had to mention the phrase 'cancer train' starting from Bhatinda, suggesting high cancer prevalence there. Patients board the train to go to Bikaner for cancer treatment. The correspondent caught on to the phrase and her subsequent article was called 'Cancer train'. Later on, I heard people coming to me and using the phrase when I had to tell them that it was me who had coined it in the first place!

Anyway, but in 2005, I feel that we will only have to check rising cancer rates in Punjab. Will give two-three examples as Aman said, we would have to understand that Punjab is using 18 percent pesticide of that used in the whole country, with 1.5 percent of total land area, and highest area under agriculture by any state, 87 percent of the state's land area. This whole equation makes for a very dangerous, and a horrible scene. This implies that in the entire Punjab, almost the entire population, is exposed to the environmental toxins all around the year. That is why in Punjab, in breast-milk samples, blood samples and through other tests - in all of them there was a high pesticide concentration. CSE (Centre for Science and Environment) study had concluded that American population had pesticide in their blood; in case of Punjab, it has 605 times to 1,300 times more concentration of pesticide in their blood. This data is revealing. That is why Punjab has become the 'cancer-capital' of India, having more than the national average of cancer patients. In a recent

cancer survey by the state government, the national average is about 90 per lakh population, and Punjab has crossed 140 per lakh population.

Particularly in the districts of South Punjab, Muktsar, Bhatinda and Mansa, it has crossed 250. Cancer is a devastating disease, ecologically and sociologically. We did a survey of about 350 families of cancer patients. Out of these, 320 families had sold some of their property, jewellery, shop, home, etc., i.e., anything of material value, so that they could get treated. The rest who didn't sell off these things were those who had additional sources of income other than agriculture. For example, if some body from the cancer-affected family was in a government job, then he did not have to sell his assets, but the rest had to sell. Cancer has such a big economic implication. We know of such families where three members have cancer in the same family who need to spend about 20 lakh rupees. They have sold their house and all their property for treating the three people, who subsequently died. Hence, there was loss of family members and of all the property too.

I feel that this 'violence of green revolution' (exposed) by Vandana is very applicable today, although she wrote it long back, because the reality of Punjab is very scary today. Apart from cancer, reproductive health is also an implication. In Punjab, when we started a study at Mirenkutna, where a lot of vegetables are growing and people are consuming them, you can not even imagine the amount of pesticide they are using. This is why when we interviewed few gynecologists there, they told that 90 percent of first pregnancies after marriage are getting spontaneously aborted. This is the highest rate. If children from here could participate in the programme of department of community medicine, JNU, then I would request Dr. Ritu and Miraji to raise Punjab's environment toxicity and health-related issues as they are a hurdle in maintaining Punjab's sustainability and livelihood. It should be discussed how disease-pattern creates economic and social stress.

Unfortunately, this is the model of development we want to extend to other states. We should learn the lessons from Punjab. Please remember that Punjab had a lot of water. It is the only state in India whose name has the word 'aab' which means water. Now this state has become waterless,- it has a higher percentage of 'dark-zones' than Rajasthan! The remaining 'white-zones' do not offer water fit for drinking. So you can understand in what deep crisis we find ourselves in Punjab.

Many farmers have committed suicide because they did not have access to drinking water as their tube-well ran dry even after digging up to 500 feet. After digging the tube-well to 500 feet, it still stayed dry because the water-level had dropped further. To dig up a new tube-well, they require about two-three lakh rupees which they do not have. We cannot say how many farmers have committed suicide due to this. The whole issue of hunger and nutrition has to be seen in this context.

I feel that Punjab has a high number of anemic women. I am seeing here, in terms of the number of parameters you are using to evaluate hunger and malnutrition, I feel that green revolution states should be thought of differently compared to the rest, particularly for Punjab, Haryana, western UP and some parts of Rajasthan. The situation may be similar at some places in southern India too where a number of intensive steps were taken to enhance agriculture. In Punjab, as Aman said, there is a lot vegetable growth but it has so much pesticide in it that instead of providing nutrition, it creates disease. For example, would two cups of pulses and four cups of vegetables give nutrition or not, you should think about it.

I think these are the things that we have to consider. Lastly, just two-three things, the Government of India's agriculture policy needs to be discussed along with planning for rural development. We have Shri Vijay Kumarji here who has great expertise in the area of rural development. I feel that we should re-define rural development and we should opt for a paradigm-shift vis-à-vis our thinking. What is meant by development? What kind? Whether it is sustainable? This talk about high GDP to growth-rate, I feel that this whole developmental paradigm has to be brought under the scanner in this context because Punjab has been the number one state of the country in that sense. Its worsening condition despite 'development' is worth noticing.

I feel that the development model in Punjab is wrong. Firstly, every year here, about 20,000 hectares of land is shifting out of agriculture for non-agricultural purposes. So in five to ten years, you would not be able to purchase any land here because if you see today, land costs one crore rupees per acre. In that sense, who will do farming here and obviously a farmer would think of selling it away for more profit. Therefore, all these things are linked and have to be considered.

Secondly, the soil fertility of the land is deteriorating fast. This, I feel, should be seriously viewed when you talk of hunger and nutrition, because of the highest percentage of chemicals used during agriculture, the food produced would cause more sickness than adding nutrition to the body. For example in Punjab, many children are being born with neonatal defects. This is directly related to folic acid deficiency, which is directly related to the level of pesticide-load in the body. Therefore, with high pesticide-load, then no matter what you feed the people, it will end up in some defect or disease. It is in that context, particularly when the government is pushing for the second green revolution in east India, I think we should speak of hunger and malnutrition. In that context. Is this model worth replicating at other places?

Lastly, I feel that the Indian agricultural universities and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) should be seriously questioned about their role in developing agriculture. We should demand the democratization of agri-research agenda. The research is being promoted by Monsanto, etc. Anyway, I used to often question why those who retire from the entomology department then join one or another pesticide company! Why? Agri-kit recommendations for *rabi* and *kharif* every year favour use of pesticides. The department of entomology basically is the nodal department for making recommendations. After every year, when the new head retires from the department, he joins some pesticide company. Now we can imagine the kind of recommendations they must be making from before. I feel that we have to place ourselves in a wider context when we speak of hunger and nutrition so that this unsustainable model can be critiqued enough along with high pesticide body-load. How to do this? Let me add quickly to whatever Aman said, there is a large number of farmers and women who are associated with this work (of Kheti Visarat) in Punjab; we get very positive signs from there. I feel that if we speak in this context of green revolution, then maybe green revolution in east India can be avoided.

Ritu: Good morning everyone. Yesterday in the inaugural session, we had two speakers who gave us two dimensions of issue of food and nutritional security. Harsh Mander spoke of the role of the state and the nature of entitlements, the whole food security bill discussion and what is coming out of it or not coming out of it. Uma Shankari spoke of the conditions of farmers and agriculture and the agrarian crisis, the rural crisis in a sense, of both agriculture and what is happening to the social context, and food and diet in that process.

In the first session we have spoken largely of methods of identification, measuring and tracking hunger, and we had a whole range of methodologies from the international FAO methodology for identifying and estimating the numbers of people hungry in the world to the activists, individual child methods of measurement of mid-arm circumference and the limitation and problems with its use, the importance of that being that it was supposed to be rolled out in the Indian context through the *anglanwadis* immediately, so problems with that have an urgency that needs to be addressed. Then we had Vandana Prasad talk about the kind of policy issues she sees from her position as a public health nutrition person as well as somebody who is directly involved now with the rights of the child.

The next set was on community-based initiatives and surveillance methods and we had key presentations on that. Post-lunch was one sharing of the findings of the study by the India Clinical Epidemiology Network on what they see as some of the determinants of persistent malnutrition in children, the focus being on women's work and the fact that it does not allow them time and energy to put into childcare and nutrition, despite having the knowledge and the information of what requires to be done and is being told to them by the system. State-level experience of Chhattisgarh providing a relatively positive picture of what improvements have happened and Jharkhand where the picture is not as bright or as grim, but there are civil society initiatives which are taking it on, networks which are attempting to grapple with the situation.

So today, we are moving into the link between agriculture and nutrition with the implications of that for women's work, for diet and nutrition and childcare. The first session nutrition, work and food production systems would be chaired by Dr. Mira Shiva. Dr. Shiva again does not need much introduction. She is one of the leading persons in the campaign for rational drug-use and that is the work she is most well-known for, but she has also been actively involved with Medico-Friends Circle (MFC), representing the Jan Swasthya Sahayog – Peoples' Health Movement (JSS), with the Right to Food (RtF) campaign. She has been actively involved with the ecological impact of changes that are occurring and their impacts on health, the ecological context of food and nutrition, agriculture and so on, and therefore I request Dr. Shiva to take over the proceedings and take us through the morning session.

Mira: Good morning everybody and thank you Ritu. Continuing from what has happened yesterday, in this particular session, linkages of nutrition and our understanding of nutrition and what we have been taught in medical colleges and what most people understand is one idea that we know how nutrition needs are getting looked at. But the other important thing is that when they are talking about the question of food security because that is something Kavita has been dealing with, that what does food mean and what does nutritive food mean, and what are the differences and how important it is for this to be part of the general discussion and general debate because there is only carbohydrate being dished out as food and then everybody feeling happy, i.e., is it going to be 35 kgs or 25 kgs? Therefore, the discussions and debates on these issues are extremely critical.

The question of work, it is not just that women do a large amount of work but a large number of women are farmers, which people forget. So this gender dimension, and I think the friend from Punjab is going to bring that out, and the whole issue of redemption, that small farmers, what food

produces the maximum food and how do you calculate yield, one crop yield is that supposed to be a great thing? Unless adequate nutritive food is produced, there is no way you can have adequate nutrition to feed women, elderly, children and specially the lactating mother. Hence, this whole thing, linking all these dimensions together, is going to be discussed in this session.

I am going to request Biraj and Ranvir to make their presentation. Biraj is working on these issues for a very long time. Institutional gender analysis of Indian agriculture. I think the problems are huge, prospects and the way forward. Ranvir is now with Oxfam and I gather that he has done his PhD. What exactly it was on I was not informed, hope you are dealing with issues like this, it is extremely important. If more and more people put their minds to things that are problematic and finding appropriate solutions, it would be a big help for people in the field.

Mira: I have been told that we won't have any discussion right now. I am sure there are things in your mind, do write down them down because what Biraj has discussed, some of the issues are really very critical. Nutritive food is not the same as availability of food, what is happening to the farmers, etc., very critical issues have been discussed, but since we have other speakers, so. Anyway, thank you Biraj and Ranvir. Next we have Kavita.

Kavita is the General Secretary of PUCL also, besides being a Convener for the Right to Food Campaign, and Madhuri has been working on many things linking maternal mortality, maternal health with the farmers and the tribal people. Food is also produced in the forests and the fish, I feel, the whole food basket is quite big. Many people say that if the food of the forest people is denied them it affects their nutrition. It is not just the farmers who produce food.

Now I am going to request Madhuri and Kavita. We have a lot of respect and regard for both of them because they have been fighting on issues that are facing flack, especially Madhuri. I am just mentioning this for those of you who may not know. Madhuri faced all kinds of false allegations too. So people on the ground are doing this besides what you are going to present. So Kavita and Madhuri.

Maybe I should add just one line here. Right to Food, she will tell you how the case started or maybe it was discussed earlier. It was about PDS; keeping PDS alive and why PDS is so important from the perspective of procurement, MSP, farmer's producing and Madhuri, that many other things should be included in the Right to Food. A lot of conceptualization has come from the ground from them, so both of them make a very good team.

Mira: Thank you Kavita. I feel terrible for hurrying you up because these issues are important and they need to be shared. Madhuri?

Mira: Before Kiran, I would like to say a few words, and that is regarding this whole issue of intellectual property rights related to research and development, related to the technologies and the Indo-EU free trade agreement which is to be finalized, they want an opening up of the agriculture and the whole issue of processed foods. This means there is an agrarian crisis, there is a public health crisis and there is a nutrition crisis. There has been an absolute blindness to the issue of livelihoods. Farmer suicides should have been discussed, 2 lakh 70 thousand is something that should have shaken the health ministry and the public conscience. Kiran, I do not know how much you are going to be touching on this, why is it that the first thing being done is the whole thing about soya? Because if tomorrow GM-soya comes, or food security with imported food, and if vitamin A is going to come from golden rice, what is golden rice? Again, it is patented. As such, some of these issues are related to Intellectual Property Rights and why the control on seed, control on land, control on food, and the corporate farming, the control on distribution and the procurement, storage and corporate control definitely have conflict of interest and that is the point Madhuri was

trying to bring in because today policy-making is being done in partnership with the corporates, with absolute conflict of interest.

Biraj: Last year we did a research with Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP). Ninety percent of cereal-trade in the entire world is controlled by four traders be it wheat, soya, maize, corn, rice whatever. Therefore, that kind of concentration of power, lack of plurality in the global trade is completely well-acknowledged. There are two things I just want to mention. One, reclaiming the research agenda, but more importantly not even research as long as we have the capacity to be vigilant about dodgy researches in public-funded institutions. All I said is bridging the gap between the lab and farms, reclaiming the public institutions and also the national grid of trade and agricultural universities that has been decimated, and extension cadre is much less than needed. Please keep things in this context and do not pick any one agenda in isolation.

Mira: Ok, next speaker is Kiran from ASHA and we welcome him. He will speak about sustainable and holistic agriculture.

Mira: Thank you Kiran. There are two discussants now. Rohan is from the Centre for studies in of Science Policy from JNU, and after him is Ramila.

Mira: Just one bit, because the seed issue was mentioned, the Seed Act is being pushed by Mr. Pawar and what implication it will have for the illegalization of the seeds of the farmers, it is a systematic way of making the seeds that you have illegal, unless they are registered. So what does Seed Act mean, and the control on seeds? And again, the bio-piracy that is taking place of the flood-resistant and drought-resistant varieties because there is climate change, there is going to be more and more drought and floods. We have traditional varieties which are drought-resistant, flood-resistant and saline resistant! Hence, the bio-piracy of this which is taking place is not on the agenda. However, when you look at corporate control on the seeds and the policies that are going to be: one is the Seed Act and the other is Biological Regulatory Authority of India Act, which is most probably going to be pushed through in this session because, few people are looking at it. Those who have been looking at the issues of agriculture closely are in the middle of ten other things that are happening. Even, when there is a blind spot, many acts earlier have been pushed through.

I just wanted to mention this because when we are talking about the question of agriculture, nutrition and food security, land is taken away, and even where food crops are grown, food crops are going to go for making alcohol like barley, and corn and soya for animal-feed. So what is happening to land and what land is being used for, and even if food is grown, if you are going to have polished rice then what happens to the nutritive needs? So many of these things have to be looked at together and I think I should say thank you to all the speakers. They all made very valid points - Madhuri, Kavita, Biraj, Rohan, Ramila and Kiran.

Madhuri: This is something which came up from what Kiran and Rohan said. One is, Kiran brought up a point of tension between crop-price - the MSP and the consumer price, that tension I just wanted to say we need to examine it to see whether it is really a tension. Actually, I think there is politics here, which tells farmers that you cannot have a higher price because consumers have to be given a lower price and which tells consumers that they can not be given cheaper grains because farmers have to be given a higher price. Therefore, I think if you actually look at it, there is not any tension. It is possible to do both, it is possible to give farmers a good, higher price and consumers a lower price. However, this is an act of political mischief which keeps farmers and consumers at loggerheads. I think we can look at it further, there is no time, but this is something we have come up with.

Dr. Rohan, why are youth fleeing, I think that is a point which has come up. The historical experience post-industrial revolution has developed in us a mindset of fatalism, there is this linear progression of history, there is a farm, then there is a factory and then there is a post-factory and whatever it is, but this fatalism is also a politically nurtured fatalism that this is an inevitable process of movement. The youth are fleeing because the villages are dying; the villages are dying because they are being killed. So it is not as if this is something which is, in some senses, a natural inevitable thing; we need to look at that. You are right that the youth are fleeing, but why, and is it inevitable? I just wanted to bring that up.

Mira: Both points are really valid. Now should I say thank you and we move for tea? Kavita wants to show some slides. So we break for tea and come back in ten minutes.

Kavita: Friends, this is just to tell you quickly that the current budget requirement of the PDS is the first item on the table. Just now it is almost 50 billion metric tonnes, then you look at population for the year 2000 that is what is being distributed and the cost is 89,000 crores. If it is updated, which is what the Supreme Court has asked them, then it would cost them a little over one lakh nine thousand ... ninety six crores and it is 62 billion metric tonnes, they have just not done it. But if you go further down, you look at what the Parliamentary Standing Committee is recommending, it is coming down, which is a uniform individual entitlement; 67 percent population; the cost; you can look at both; the food grain is going to come down, which is almost 50 just now, to 49. This is what we are getting from the current legislation. Is this the food security bill we want? They are bringing down the amount that they are going to be distributing, this is what the Standing Committee has recommended, and this is the 2011 population for which they have recommended. Therefore, this particular bill is doing just no justice, of course, what we have asked and demanded is 50 kgs per household, on an average 10 kgs per individual in the household. Of course, if it is universal coverage with percent offtake, this is what we have provided, which the government says is impossible, but we have shown through our calculation that this is possible because the tax waiver on corporates in the last budget was five lakh crores. Let us see what it is going to be this time. So why can not budgets be adjusted? But this can mean austerity budget, they would be very happy with what the Standing Committee is going to give us, which is less grain and less amount of money.

Just to finish because we are leaving, we are not saying give us this or that. The present food bill of the government is about the entire agriculture and production framework connected to food security. It pertains to some of the entitlements, reducing PDS, and also the existing grains, for which we manage to get allocation for distribution through the Supreme Court. Therefore, we are basically going to sit on *dharna* continuously from 11th March. We are told that the food security bill may be placed in the Parliament in that week, 11th or 18th, before it closes for Holi. We are basically trying to say "reject it." We really do not want the government to pull wool over people's eyes that they are trying to bring any kind of food security. The whole effort from now has begun to expose this illusion, to expose the fraud of the government and we really need all of you to help us in that.

Thank you!

Mira: Thanks to Kavita. This issue about the content of the food security bill is very crucial and if the government says they have no money, but for the corporate tax relief and money in banks in the other countries, how do they have it? So therefore, that is another issue. Is there really such a thing that austerity measures should be tightening the belt of the poor, or there is a need for austerity for those who are wasting money on luxury items and all the kind of subsidies being given for corporate tax relief, etc. Hence, what I want to do now is thank you Kavita, and as she said, there is a *dharna*, if you could repeat the date again.

Kavita: On the 5th, it is one day within the Pension Parishad dedicated to the RtF. From 11th-22nd there is going to be a continuous *dharna* where we hope that you will all come to oppose this bill and we are doing *chanda* collection because this whole effort is contributory. RtF campaign is run by individual contributions.

Mira: We should show solidarity on this issue because if we get a good food security bill along with other sensible acts and policy, then only food and nutritional security can be ensured. Now I will be inviting Dithhi. She is going to be speaking on decent wage, minimum wage, who decides whether it is going to be cash, etc.

Vikas: Wish there could be the question-answer session.

Mira: Can I ask the organisers but they are not here!

Vijay: Give ten minutes if you can.

Mira: Ok. The discussant is Umendra. Then there is Shiraz from Bundelkhand and Lakshmi is there from AP. Dithhi is from National New Trade Union of India. They have been also a part of the RtF campaign and many of these issues, including Free Trade Agreement, issues of Intellectual Property Rights, etc., as all these topics are linked.

Vikas: Why resist from talking about revolution?

Dithhi: I would love to speak about revolution but I do not think people are ready.

Mira: We will have discussion after this session. This session by Lakshmi, is on state level experiences of agriculture, food, ecology, work, diets and health linkages.

Mira: It is a delight we see your figures of not having low birth weight babies in AP when we have such a large number of low birth weight babies in our country. However, I am sure some people would want to discuss a few things later. But that would be only Amanjot, who is from Punjab, Kheti Virasat Mission. She will share a lot of information on what is happening in Punjab.

Mira: Till she comes, I want to say that this with reference to Lakshmi's presentation is a government initiated programme. The moral of the story is that if the government wants to do what they can, and it will be interesting to know what is the genesis of the person who initiated it or how it was initiated because why other are unable to do the same. When you are saying 'best practices' it is not just the ICT, but the whole thing is a 'best practice'.

Lakshmi: Since we could see the platform, the capital, and the energy that the community members were having, and we know where the problems are in the existing system, so we are trying to fix them.

Mira: Will it not be demolished with a change in any government?

Lakshmi: No it will not be done. It is important to note that the government has initiated this programme by analyzing it, but they overlooked the children; they just looked at under-15 years, but they did not understand what the design of things is and blindly gave only pregnant and lactating mothers under ICDS. Hence, we now see there is a complication. At least we could influence the policy-makers to consider this.

Ritu: I just want to say since we are at it and you were asking about the initiation, if you could take a minute to say what has been the role of the World Bank to give us an idea of how the initiation happened.

Imrana: I think we should hold the discussion because there are many questions.

Mira: Maybe I can add one small thing, that '*bathua*' (which is a popular food), the agriculture people called it '*kharpatwar*'. I had never heard that word, but it basically means a weed. So who decides what is useful and what is not useful? For example, small fish is useless unless it is a commercial fish. So who is defining what should be good food and what should be bad food, while 80 percent of healthcare is being privatized? All these things are basically to be addressed together. I wanted to invite Shiraz. He has been doing a lot of work on Japanese Encephalitis (JE) in Gorakhpur and also on issues of environment and health and he will be sharing his experience in Gorakhpur. JE deaths of mainly poor children is being caused by a virus that is both water-borne and mosquito-borne. Deaths are taking place and solutions have to be comprehensive.

Mira: Thank you Dr. Shiraz. We have Umendra...

Ritu: May I just take half a minute and suggest something? There is a possibility that we break now for lunch, have him make his comments and have the discussion people have been wanting and then we move into the next session. Therefore, if you could ask the house what they would prefer we could do that.

Mira: Would you like to have lunch now and then a proper discussion? Ok, so now we are breaking for lunch and we should be back in half an hour.

Mira: We can have pending discussion for fifteen minutes now.

Vikas: There are a few very important issues we have talked about, all these policies and what ought to be done. However, the point here is that the structure of the society is not homogeneous. There are strata and there are power relations in the society, and for all these policies to be successful, they have to negotiate with this very complex social structure. Social structure, which is actively maintained not just administratively, it is maintained, militarily by police powers of the state, etc.,

and we have discussed policies and we have seen that one after the other, what their results have been.

Hence, if you are very sincere about this, then I think we also have to find greater articulation about how to engage with the politics that will bring about this kind of a change. Minus that politics, all these are promises and dreams written on water, they have little meaning otherwise. As such, I think all academics should sincerely look in this direction and we can not shirk our responsibility for this kind of a political intervention as well. Once we start intervening likewise, then we will also identify various kinds of politics which can enable this kind of a change. The other thing is, when we are talking about agrarian structures, and the most important thing, is the question of land. Nevertheless, for a very brief mention which came, I think in the morning by one of the speakers, this whole thing has just gone missing in our discussion.

As was told by Biraj, she did not take it up because she thought she will not be able to discuss it adequately, but then, in two days' time, we should have at least had some time set aside to discuss this most crucial question of Indian agriculture. Unless we address this question, I do not think we will keep reposing our faith in the powers that maintain the present structures. believe that they will be implementing all our good ideas and all that, which is not going to happen if the experience of the last sixty-five years is anything to go by. These are the two points I wanted to make very sincerely.

Prachin: My question is, why do you want to give the food security basically, and if I look at the food security discourse historically, the whole PDS came because of the middle and upper caste, because farmers had surplus production and you wanted to disperse that surplus production, that is why you brought in PDS and then (only afterwards) came the food security.

Why this surplus production happened? If I look at it, it is because of Brahmanical intelligentsia and bureaucracy in the country, and imported and implemented green revolution policies in the country. *Bania* capitalism in our country was hand-in-glove with this green revolution technology because it was promoting capitalism and technology. Hence, Brahmanical policy-making and *Bania* capitalism was hand-in-glove in generating this surplus production. Well yes, upper caste and middle caste farmers also benefited from it in terms of subsidies, irrigation, and minimum-support-price in the bargain. OBC males were in the Parliament and assemblies, and they also have been giving these subsidies and benefits to the upper and middle caste farmers.

Now, if I look at this PDS and the choice of wheat and rice in it, it seems a systematic choice and conscious neglect and exclusion of coarse grains that has happened in the PDS. If I look at second wave of food security discussion that is happening, it seems that the middle class conscience is not allowing you to suffer all this pain and it is hurting you, because somebody is dying of hunger, that is why you want to give away in philanthropy some food grains and distribute some cereals to them. Now the discussion is about whether to give them 35 kg or 25 kg.

In the current discussion, there is a lip-service paid to coarse grains, and coarse grains are being mentioned because there is environmental degradation and there is concern for micro-nutrients. Why I am discussing all these issues is because the crucial issue of land is not being addressed by the food security discourse historically, and these green revolution technologies came because we wanted to undermine the question of land-distribution. This current discussion on the food security bill is also neglecting land distribution. Is this a conscious choice or is it a casteist attitude of the people who are discussing this? That is my one question.

If we look at this whole question of food security from the perspective of landless Dalits, then the issue of land distribution and land rights would become integral to the whole discussion of food security.

Thank you.

Mira: Thank you very much. This is going to be discussed by Biraj Patnaik when or she speaks. Could Mohan say his point till the other person comes?

Mohan: I am rather perplexed with the Andhra Pradesh example that we heard about. There are extremely interesting improvements in weights of mothers and birth-weights of children, etc. However, it seems to me that it flies in the face of the macro-economic picture and all the other examples that we have heard about, so the questions I have are, one, how real is this? And secondly, often all the other examples that we have been hearing today, is this simply an outlier, an unusual case, which is therefore not very significant? How do you explain this? There is this mismatch.

Imrana: Just two questions. Dithhi talked about Gurgaon movement and the nature of the labour, but she mentioned only of the labour that is casual. I do not think that she brought in the very critical part of this struggle where the organized workers, the full-time workers have sided with the casual workers. I think it is a very important thing, and it is important because the latter come from a much better-off agrarian background. And they have the capacity to persevere and to demand, and they are technically also not the unskilled worker, one who is used to oppression. And to me, it is hopeful because the rural-urban link, or the agriculture-industry worker link, is possible in this struggle and I think it is very important because what I also miss in this discussion is the fact that the struggle is not for a share in the profit and these are the words used, it upsets me. It is for a different vision and I think that vision needs to be brought out. That is my question to her.

Then my question to the Velugu experiment, which is very impressive, I accept the data, there are a lot of good results. However, I want to know what is happening to the agriculture in that area. Are there any farmer suicides in that area? Are there any land-shifts happening? Are there any cash crops happening? Since morning we are talking of those issues so what is the background of this success, and what did they do with the 2,00,000 dollars I want to know?

Uma: Since morning we have been hearing that often solutions come from somewhere else other than from where we are. Some of the things I would like to just flag. Like, a lot of the times, we heard of women's collectives and I do think that they need to be strengthened, but men's collectives also need to be strengthened. I find men in a very non-co-operational kind of mood, and just as in the case of the recent rape incident in Delhi, the men have to be educated. Similarly, I think that in the rural areas, the men farmers need to be brought together. Right now, they are in a highly competitive kind of they do not cooperate, then it is most likely that the corporate control of agriculture will only increase.

Our friend Umendra brought up this water problem. I think that needs to be addressed as much as agriculture. Within agriculture, water is such a major component that the solution might have to come from there perhaps, and we need to really need to think of many things.

Similarly, Biraj kept saying about extension services. In my thirty-five years of being in the village, I have never seen an extension worker or extension officer do any good, but yes, I am lucky, because when they come, most of them, are actually agri-business agents. They only have these provisions for some chemical or the others to spray onto your trees and plants. Nonetheless there are other things which are societal concerns; like nowadays; increasingly we have forgotten that a rupee saved is a rupee earned. So all the time cash and money is being promoted, and now a friend from Andhra Pradesh, explained that if you bring in together many elements, then you can actually be saving rupees. But then, even within the rural areas, where there is such a thing about cash and particularly in the pre-election year, cash support will be presented at the table. I think every village will have a printing press. This is what will happen, it is easy to print money in India, as it has been shown.

Lastly, I am just thinking that there is talk about taking green revolution to eastern India and we will make a Punjab out of eastern India, but we really have to think of both safe food from the consumer's side, and not making a Punjab out of eastern India. Seriously, I think all people working

with women, nutrition, health, agriculture, industry, and rural economy, everybody has to think of this.

I often wonder, are we part of the problem or the solution? We are talking so much about inequality, while some people are always asking as their right for higher incomes, but are we ready to reduce our own incomes (for them)? I have never seen professors, or executives who are getting corporate salaries, say that their salaries should be reduced? Because at any point of time, there is only a definite amount of money and that has to be allocated and the stronger the voice, they will get their share.

Thank you.

Vikas: Regarding the Velugu experiment, willy-nilly I find or the impression I got, is that it is standing as a competitor to the *anganwadi*. I would have been much pleased if this whole thing was strengthening the *anganwadis* in some way and improving their functioning.

Mira: She said that they are linking it with the existing services of the government.

Lakshmi: I also want to say something in support of the Velugu experiment. It may be an island, but it is only because of such islands that we are also hoping for something from the government. Otherwise, our hopes from the government are at rock-bottom.

Madhuri: I just want to very strongly reiterate the point that Vikas has made. Bring the politics back to the centre of any planning and discussion that we do. Regarding the land rights issue, which is a good point, why are we not talking about land reform, but the question is no longer of land reform only. Eighty percent of Indian farmers are small and marginal farmers now. It is much more complicated. We need much more than land reform, i.e., land reform plus more.

And also my question is that why are the Dalit movements talking exclusively about reservation and not talking about the real issues of Dalits which is land. Land is no longer the crucial variable. It is land reform plus more, it is much more complex than what it used to be. Hence, it is land reform plus, I mean the location of power has become much more complex, much more non-transparent and much more difficult to trace, so it is land, it is trade, it is balance of payment relationship, it is all kinds of issues plus land. Therefore, know you have to look at the totality of power as it is operating and as you want to challenge it, you recognize power and then what is your challenge to power, in other words politics, which is really at the centre of this whole debate.

Mira: In this session, we heard the issue of production, the question of wages, the issue of what should be livelihood or dignity, or what should be the minimal, what should be fair? Now who decides what is fair? Those who are saying that the food security bill should be passed, or that there should be enough for others for them to be able to feed themselves, the right to healthcare agitation, etc., to be able to live with dignity. Who is controlling many of these particular brands including cocoa or tea? We see what has happened in Kerala, the drop of prices, etc., what has happened to the 'wasteland'; they call it wasteland, the village commons being taken over (that is where the people used to graze the animals), to pick up the fuel. Hence, the question is, what is happening to the issue of land being critical, but it is also the issue of village commons that was brought up. Moving to bio-fuels, today there are so many issues linked with the food, with nutrition in the coming time, the chemicalization of the body, and the chemicalization of the environment, of the water and the soil, are irreversible, from the issue of cancer, to the increase in birth-defects, and various health problems. Again, the question of privatization where people are excluded and the link

of nutrition and food as a determinant of health and healthcare services, and the indebtedness for the question of seed, buying all these inputs, as well as indebtedness because paying for the healthcare services because of the food not being nutritive enough, which is becoming more and more carbohydrate, the issue of pulses was brought up. Why pulses are not being grown, why soya, why are they importing *rajma* from China? Why the apples are coming from New Zealand and Australia? Therefore, this question of climate change, what it is doing at a time when we are having to import so much, and the fiscal deficit, that is another story.

Lakshmi: No, one thing is that in just ten minutes, it is not enough to try to explain a seven-year process. So people will be missing the issues. This is just to look at three-four points. Is it an outlier? No, we are talking about a whole process. I would request the people to come and visit the centres and understand what are the processes, then we will come to know if it is an outlier, or is it happening across the state.

Another important thing is that it is now twenty years of effort in building those institutions. You may find a strong institution, you may find a weak institution, and it takes a long time to implement these things also. Hence, that is one thing I just want to respond to the participant's question Mohan Rao's question.

Biraj: Just two quick responses, the land question, the point is well taken. However, as you can see in the abstract, we have already laid it upfront and honestly that we wanted to take an empathetic view of the state. We wanted to give credit for all that the state is doing. And the issue of land is a separate consultation. It is not about not recognizing the importance of land, but it is also recognizing the enormity of that issue, which is why we did not want to do a half-baked, half-way treatment of that issue, and we just put it upfront in the abstract itself, we have not consciously not looked at it.

On the extension one, I mean Uma, Madhuri and everyone in this room would know that I stand on the same side. The extension point is that India has had one of the best national grid (natgrids) of agricultural universities and it is also true that in the last forty years, as I was doing the literature review, there has been co-option and the asphyxiation of some of the natgrids. Thus, the agenda is to reclaim that and not allow them to abandon the farmers and us abandoning them either. It is about reclaiming it in a pro-farmer, pro-poor way. Hence, as long as we have that optic right, I think our recommendations about coming closer to the farmer needs to be looked at from that narrative.

It is about having a wish-list and vision for the state. What would we like the state to do? How we would like to reclaim, it is the other issue. One of the phrases that Kumaran, Ranvir and I use a lot, is that we are also seeing a 'toxic-cocktail' of progressive legislation, regressive implementation and reluctant regulation. And agriculture is not the only sector of that. Overall, the toxic-cocktail has spread across all sectors, including essential services.

Mira: Thank you, is there any other speaker who wants to respond to any other questions? I now close the session and invite the next Chair, Vijay Kumarji who is with the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), and is very much involved in the issues there.

Session Four

Directions for Policy & Polity to Reduce Hunger in India

Chair: Shri T. Vijay Kumar

Biraj Patnaik
M.Kumaran
Peter Kenmore
Paul Divakar
Vijay Pratap
Harsh Mander
Avinash Kumar
Madhuri

Issues for Implementation of 12th Plan for Reducing Hunger

Biraj Patnaik

Friends,

Fortunately I am going to be very brief today because I think there is nothing much to talk about on the 12th Plan. In any case, if you look at what is happening to the Five-Year Plans today, you will see that the Planning Commission has very successfully transformed our development philosophy from '*self-reliance*' to '*reliance*'. In fact, the quantum of plan-funding that we have these days is virtually irrelevant, and in the next few minutes I will explain why.

We should not be very optimistic about the 12th Plan, particularly because of the repeated reminders of the fiscal constraints that are issued by our beloved Prime Minister (PM), Finance Minister (FM) and other eminent people in the Government. Take the case of the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS). We will increase the Plan amount from 40,000 crores in the 11th Plan to 1,00,000 in the 12th Plan, which would translate to roughly 20,000 crores a year in terms of the allocated 12th Plan amount. However, when we look at the budget day after tomorrow, we are not going to be anywhere close to that figure for this year. This is the first budget of the 12th Plan to be announced. In none of the social sectors are we likely to see even that kind of a jump in the allocations that I mentioned for the ICDS. On the contrary, we are going to see jumps which are going to be either nominal or actually less than what was proposed in the Plan, and they can hardly be called 'jumps'.

I am not a good predictor of these things, but let me make two predictions, which are not just about the ICDS and the Midday Meal Scheme (MDM). In the forthcoming budget, the allocations to the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) would most likely not even be enough to cover for the galloping inflation we have been witness to. This will result in the NRHM being squeezed for funds. If we were to seek out the rationale for such low allocation, we would discover a larger plan of the government behind this move.

The purpose of this move is to offer a backdoor to the private interests in the health sector. The Government is not going to directly privatize the services, but rather squeeze them out for funds; so much so, in the name of fiscal deficit reduction, that public health services would hardly be able to compete with the private sector, which then grows by default. This is so much of a repeat of what was done to certain public sector institutions in the 1990. There is all the more reason to do this to the NRHM today, because the NRHM, despite whatever treatment it is receiving from the Government, is doing good enough to put up a credible challenge to the private sector which of course, does not like it. Therefore, in order to allay the fears of the private sector losing out to the better and more affordable healthcare services being provided by the NRHM, the Government will simply carry on cutting down the public health spending. The private sector will then flourish at the cost of a much more affordable public sector service system in the health services.

This explains why it is rather pointless to have much hope from the budgetary allocation trends in the contemporary scenario. I think that any rise or any fall in these allocations appears to be meaningless when the larger plan of the Government seems to be to orchestrate a systematic debilitation of most of our public sector services up to the point of their death - all for the benefit of the market. Like this year for instance, many social sector ministries were told in the middle of the year that they were to face major fund cuts to keep the fiscal deficits low. The Revised Expenditures from these ministries were not accepted and the ministries were made to run under severe financial constraints. Hence, it would be much more fruitful if we simply focus on what the Plan holds for the food and nutrition sector in concrete terms.

In the last one - and - a - half days, everybody has been talking about the ICDS and the National Food Security Bill (NFSB). Are there any big - ticket changes in store? What are the flip sides for any of the changes that might be introduced? What does the immediate picture look like? Now on child malnutrition, this Plan commits, at least in its vision, to much more than what we had in the last Plan. Of course, both for food, that is through the Public Distribution System (PDS) and the ICDS, as

well as for agriculture, much of the discussion happened outside the Plan process. So the ICDS was considered in a separate discussion, completely independent of the planning process. Fortunately, the discussions were concluded by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), the Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD), and the civil society consultations that followed, just in time before the Plan was finalized, so it could find a path within it. Otherwise it would have gone completely parallel to the plan process and probably much in vain. However, thanks to the timing, we have been able to restructure the ICDS with some positive salient features in this plan.

In 200 districts, we are going to have a second worker - the demand for which has been a longstanding one, not only for the Right to Food Campaign but also for the campaigners working on child rights for a very long time. We have seen that in states which have invested in a second worker, as in Tamil Nadu, and where they have put in additional resources, the ICDS works well. As a pilot in five percent, that is 10 of these 200 districts, you are also going to have an *Anganwadi* - cum crèche, which is an expanded ICDS Centre. Here, children below the age of two years can be left in the care of two workers. This intervention is again from the perspectives of both women's employment and children's nutritional status. Ninety percent of malnutrition manifests itself below the age of two and, therefore, I think this is a very, very significant and positive shift.

There is another move to significantly expand the infrastructure. A lot of this additional amount of 60,000 crores that has been allocated on paper is for ICDS buildings. NREGA is going to share that burden by contributing its funds for the *anganwadi* constructions. There will be other ways in which the governments at the state and centre contribute to these improvements. In addition, there is a lot of flexibility as compared to earlier Plan periods. Now the states can make and present their own plan, covering not only the midday meal scheme, but also others. Looking at all these steps, we can say that there are some positives in the Plan Document that need to be welcomed.

There is also an issue of a much-needed mission structure for the ICDS. Unfortunately, the Finance Ministry did not agree to give the ICDS the same kind of mission structure as exists for Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in education, and for the NRHM in health. If you had that kind of a mission structure then you would have had more of a chance for the programmes to be monitored better, with checks and balances, along with supportive supervision. It has not been featured in ICDS so far. The 12th Plan could have made this very important and much-needed improvement in the ICDS but it seems we will have to wait.

Additionally, it is disappointing that the Government is not ready to introduce inflation-indexing of the allocations to the ICDS at a higher base-price considering the high rates of inflation. It effectively means that the children will receive lesser food as entitlement under the ICDS.

On the PDS system, since the contours of the NFSB were not known then, the Plan remains vague about the reforms in the PDS and simply leaves the details to the provisions of the NFSB for as and when it sees the light of the day. However, I do not want to speak on the NFSB because other speakers must have addressed it more comprehensively; I will just stick to what the Plan says. As per the Plan the decision on who will benefit from the PDS under NFSB will be made using the findings of the Socio-Economic And Caste Census 2011 (SECC). There are two ways in which the Government can go about looking at the SECC because of the enormous pressure brought about by the civil society groups. The first and the most likely could be of doing away with the Poverty Line and determining the number of people to be excluded according to the SECC estimates, and subsequently including the rest. The second option could be to follow a three-step system of determination of the number of beneficiaries. The three steps are: to first identify those who can be excluded; second, to identify those who need to be compulsorily included; and third, to determine the target population using a set of seven criteria based on which benefits can be granted. The seven criteria for this are as follows:

1. Households with only one room, *kacha* walls and *kacha* roof
2. No adult member between the ages of 16 and 59
3. Female headed households with no adult male member between 16 and 59
4. Households with disabled member and no able - bodied adult member

5. SC/ST household
6. Households with no literate adult above 25 years
7. Landless households deriving a major part of their income from manual casual labour

My hunch is that even in the second way of using the seven criteria to determine the target population, the Government will try its best to use it in such a way as to arrive at a number closest to the Tendulkar Committee estimate of 44 percent. The Ministry of Rural Development's (MoRD) estimate was that 27 percent, or roughly one-third of the people, will get automatically excluded, whereas five to ten percent will get automatically included.

While this seemed to be the original plan, for now it would be impossible to execute it because we are just one year away from the General Elections. No Government in its right mind, even the UPA II, can actually one year before elections, declare a new system of targeting. Therefore, I think the only option left with the Government is the following, and this while we still do not know what the Abhijit Sen Committee would say on this matter. However, I think that the Government will really be left with the only reasonable option of keeping the thirty percent exclusion criteria for now.

Moving on to the changes that are expected in the PDS, the Plan talks about a subsidy transfer, which is very different from a cash transfer. There is a lot of confusion that has been created because of the direct cash transfer programme which was announced. Let us ignore what the Deputy Chairperson of the Planning Commission says on TV, as it is completely different from what is there on file and paper. No one in the Government, either from the food ministry, or from the Planning Commission, has ever suggested that there should be a cash transfer instead of food transfer, because that is not feasible for the Government. Anyone who knows anything about governance in this country should understand why it is so! It is just not possible because of procurement. To replace food grains with cash in the way that it is being understood in the context of discussions on cash transfer means you will have to stop procuring grains from the farmers. Today, we procure 80 million metric tonnes of grains from the farmers from which we distribute 60 million metric tonnes and are left with 20 million metric tonnes to store. The fact that in the recent past most of this stored quantity has neither been sold nor distributed and has mostly gone to waste, points out that our Government is in a logistical and policy quagmire on this issue. It must also be understood that for both economic and political reasons it is simply not possible for the government to stop procuring the grains from the farmers.

In this scenario, if at all the government were to stop food transfers in favour of cash transfers, the entire amount of procured grains would go to waste where price volatility in the international markets make export of these grains an undependable option for the government. It means that while procurement has to be sustained, it cannot happen without redistribution. Therefore, the idea of cash transfer is not stated in the Plan and that threat does not exist.

However, the Government is actively contemplating implementing either of the following two models in the PDS, though most likely not before the 2014 elections. The first model is to do an end-to-end computerization of the PDS and follow the model that has been piloted in the East Godavari district in Andhra Pradesh. This model is very similar to what has been done in Chhattisgarh under the Core PDS model. The only difference being that in East Godavari, they have used Aadhar-based entitlement and in Chhattisgarh, they are using the Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana card because they do not have Aadhar numbers. Here they are doing an end-to-end computerization while doing only the last-mile authentication of the entitlement holder. And it has worked well in both the Godavari model and the Chhattisgarh Core PDS model.

On the other hand, the second model is of 'subsidy transfer', which has been tried out through a pilot - though not a very well thought out one. Today, entitlement holders get food grains at Rs.3 from their local PDS outlets. The Government gives the shopkeepers food grains at Rs.3 and then the entitlement holder goes to the shop, pays three rupees, and collects the grain from the shop.

Here, in the existing model, the PDS shopkeeper has an obviously high incentive to black-market the cheaply-bought food grains where he or she can easily make a profit of Rs.22 on a kilogram of grain

which is bought from the government at Rs.3 when the market price is Rs.25. To avert this in the subsidy-transfer model, the PDS shopkeeper is given the kilogram of grain at the market price. The amount of subsidy, which is Rs.22 in our example, is transferred to the beneficiary's bank account. The beneficiary then collects this amount from the bank and adds Rs.3 from his or her own pocket, to pay the shopkeeper for a kilogram of the grain. In this way, the government intends to take away the incentive of black-marketeering of PDS grains by the dealers which has been a major criticism of the existing system. However I am not sure whether we are ready for such an arrangement because this requires a banking infrastructure, last-mile authentication and so many other things. But the 12th Plan makes a very decisive pitch for subsidy transfers and we will have to wait to see the final shape of it.

And finally, coming to agriculture, there is nothing innovative in the context of food security, particularly for the PDS. There are two things worth mentioning on this issue. Firstly, the government plans to undertake liberalization for allowing 'producer companies' to come up with the help of Government subsidies, and secondly it is also contemplating the setting up of a Warehouse Regulatory Development Authority or some such body that will deal with the storage problem comprehensively.

In conclusion, I would like to ponder on this simple question: if the Plan is implemented exactly the way it is, and its allocations are made exactly the way they are, are we expecting any positive changes? Yes we are, but maybe only a little when it comes to the question of actually reducing hunger. Even in terms of the core indices of malnutrition and so on, I am afraid, the 12th Plan, does not go far enough, and nor does the existing NFSB. And the reason for this is that the other determinants of malnutrition are not dealt with comprehensively. Despite the fact that the Government is, to be fair, trying to reform the water and sanitation sector, the challenge is that even in the case of supply of clean drinking water, we are facing a setback because of the depleting water table for which we still do not have an answer. In addition, there is a 15 percent annual slippage. In effect if you have to increase the coverage, you have to first deal with the kind of technological options we have, to the extent it is possible given the locally diverse manifestations of the issues. Regarding sanitation, of course, we have a long way to go.

For now I can say there is not much value or reform potential in the Plan, so I am not sure if we can have a very transformative period in the next five years. But this is where we are now. I will deal with the rest of the issues in questions.

Thank you.

Indian Experience in Addressing Hunger- Lessons for Post-2015 Framework

M. Kumaran

The presentation aims to draw some key lessons from the Indian experience for MDG One: poverty and hunger eradication.

GOAL 1 - Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger

Target 1: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day.

Target 2: Halve between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.

The Government of India has submitted a report about progress on these targets. We will briefly look at these reports and I will quote from it verbatim. Reporting on indicator one - the government has given a clean chit to itself, based on the controversial official poverty estimates and head-count ratio, without even mentioning the kind of debate or the kind of questions it has faced on the methodology and use of these estimates for public policy decisions.

“With the historical rate of decline the Country is likely to achieve poverty HCR level of 26.72% by 2015”.

Similarly, reporting on the indicator 2 government (merely) notes that “attaining MDG target for decline in under-nutrition has now a better chance”. That is how they have put it. That is how they appreciate the problem.

So what is not reported? Most of us already know what is not reported. Firstly, malnutrition is rampant in India and extremely slow progress has been made in addressing it. Secondly, some indicators of child malnutrition show that we have increased our incidence of child malnutrition over the years, despite high growth rate. Under - 3 child malnutrition (wasting) increased from 19.7 to 22.9 percent during 1998-99 to 2005-06 (NFHS). Similarly, severe malnutrition for children under 3 years (below -3 Standard Deviation), increased from 6.7 to 7.9 per cent from 1998-99 to 2005-06. Thirdly, despite reporting requirement, Government has not reported on crucial indicators such as calorie intake. The average calorie intake, as well as the head-count ratio based on calorie consumption has another story to tell in India. The proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption, has increased in India during the last two decades. Even the poorest 30 percent has experienced a decline in calorie-intake. Average calorie intake of poorest 30 percent was at shameful 1687 Kcal in 1993-94. This declined to 1,655 Kcal in 2004-05. Fourthly, the government has ignored a number of studies that speak of food budget squeeze and increasing hunger. While there is disagreement even among progressive social scientists over this, it would have been democratic and transparent to discuss these negative trends while discussing progress in hunger.

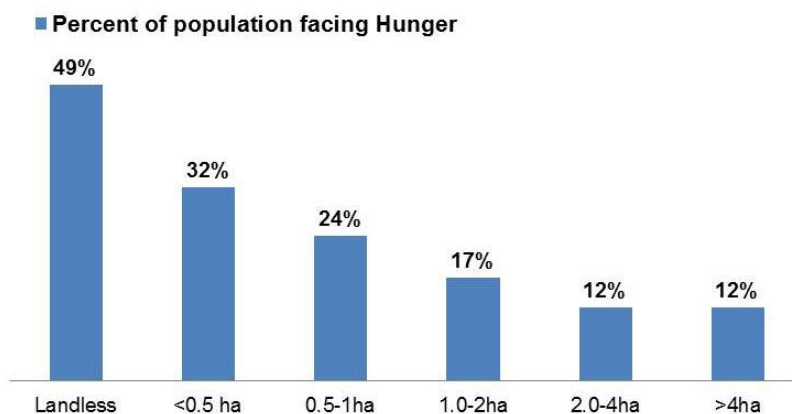
In the absence of accurate information, it would be really difficult to draw lessons in hunger reduction from India. What we know for sure is that there is no clear evidence that the actions for hunger reduction [listed by Government in the MDG report as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, (MGNREGA), Right to Information (Rtl), Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) and Public Distribution System (PDS)] have helped to improve status of hunger and under-nutrition. This could be due to poor programme design or poor implementation of the schemes. Other factors that could have reduced the effectiveness of these programmes are the prevailing agrarian distress, land diversion in context of land-hunger linkages (1), food price inflation (2) and food production crisis (4) and discrimination of social groups (5). In other words, it is likely that negative fallouts of the larger development model

* Draft Version: speaker’s approval is pending

followed by the government and the resultant social and economic inequity are greater than positive outcomes generated by these progressive public programmes.

RECOGNISE LINKAGE WITH AGRARIAN AND LAND DISTRESS

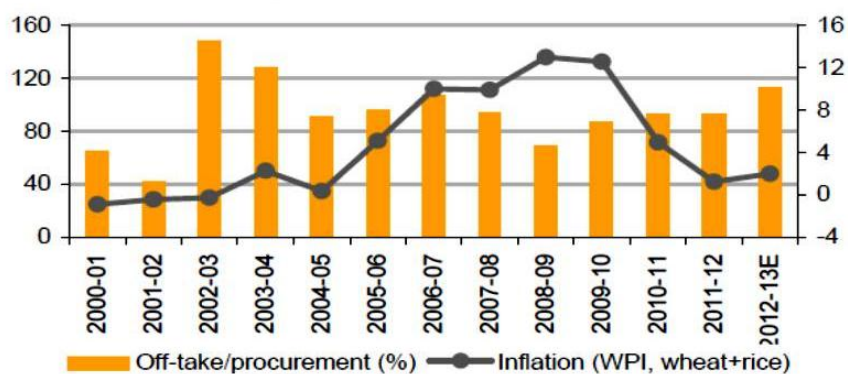
Figure 1: Incidence of hunger by landlessness and farm size in rural India



Note- Hunger is estimated based on NSSO 1993-94, using a threshold energy intake of 1 800 kcal/ person.day
Source: IARI-FAO/RAP study (2001) based on 50th NSS Round(1993-94) quoted in Virmani (2006)

RECOGNIZE THE BLEEDING IMPACT OF FOOD INFLATION ON MASSES

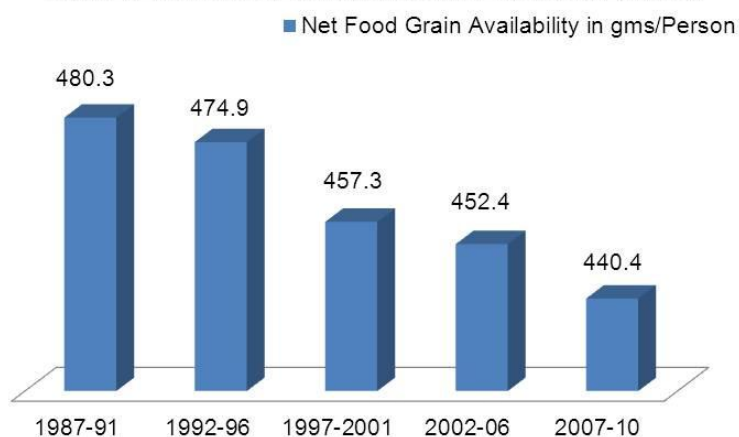
Figure 2: Trend in food inflation (wheat and rice) and offtake percent from Public distribution system



Source: APMC, CACP, Emkay Research

FOOD GRAIN PRODUCTION

Figure 3: Trend in per person net cereal availability (in gm)



Note: Years grouped as Four year average

Source: P. Sainath, The Food, the Bad and the Ugly, The Hindu, March 22, 2012

DISAGGREGATED PICTURE

Table 1: A comparison of under-nutrition/ mortality outcomes 2005-06

Mortality and Undernutrition	SC	ST	Others
1 Child Mortality (per 1000 live births)	83	84	62
2 Infant Mortality	39	46	22
3 Proportion (per cent) of Children with Anaemia	78	79	72
4 Proportion (per cent) of Underweight Children	21	26	14

Source: XII plan, Vol III, pp- 230

Recommendations for Post-2015 Development Framework

- If we have to make the post-2050 framework credible, then we have to honestly learn from the past about what went wrong/right. Otherwise, just having another set of new goals - maybe more ambitious, won't help. It will not give it credibility. Hence, the lessons learned from meeting MDG 2015 should be frankly articulated and applied to the creation of the post - 2015 framework.
- There is a necessity to clearly signal the need for change in the dominant model for economic growth. Market and neo-liberal theory of development have clearly not delivered. There is a need for an alternative approach for growth.
- There is also a need to bolster the State by strongly stressing its importance for public welfare and for protecting the interests of disadvantaged groups.
- Not 'easy wins' but 'must haves'. A goal to reduce inequality in income and wealth (including land and natural resources).

- Prioritizing agrarian small holder and livelihood base, price rise and land grabs requires a global agenda.
- Legal guarantee to food rights must be an important component of measuring progress.
- A goal to address social inequalities across all goals. The failure of the MDG design and indicators to “look beneath the averages” must not be repeated.
- Continue with targets, retain under-nutrition with poverty and do not forget lagging MDGs.
- Facilitate channels for public participation and scrutiny at global, national and sub national level.

Peter Kenmore

Thank you very much. I agree completely with what you said about the importance of (the concept of) discrimination. I am, however, going to try and keep the global part up to two or two – and - a - half minutes so that people can understand where the Indian process is with regard to global. Therefore, there are two global processes: the first comes out of Rio and continues, an inter-governmental process talking about the MDG type. The problem is although they pick three countries and thirty seats, as they have done and they have filled them, they still do not have a chair months after they should have. So we will see what happens with that one. The second is the UN Secretary General process, all of which comes in to report at the table this coming September. There are three parts ok Let us call it part one: the elites. Three presidents: Liberia, Indonesia and UK. Plus, twenty other eminent people, including one from India, Abhijit Sen , that is one stream.

Second stream is thematic: nine thematic areas including one on food and nutrition and that has led in terms of expert consultations. The one on food and nutrition has had a stakeholder meeting two weeks ago with an ongoing online consultation and there will be another high-level consultation on April 4 sponsored by Spain and Columbia, just as an example of those nine thematic consultations.

Third, most relevant, are National Consultations. There are about a 100 National Consultations, and of them, bluntly, the most important, the ones that will be led by not only the Heads of Governments, Heads of State that come together before the September meeting, but particularly at the UN General Assembly. Consideration will be number one India; number two China; probably Indonesia, Mexico, Turkey, Brazil, South Africa, Nigeria and Egypt-those are the ones that are going to definitely be looked at.

So India, although there are a hundred, India is consolation important. Within India, there are nine consultations. Each one is led by an Indian institution that is the Convener. So the work that Wada Na Todo (WNTA) is doing is linked in with that as well, and there is a consultation of civil society, of youth, of women, industry, research and academics, farmers' associations, government, locally elected officials and corporate and industries-CII is running that one. And these so far have involved consultations among about 6,000 people around India. Statistically and significantly, at least 6,000 people have had their opinions expressed and recorded in different parts of the country through local, state and national consultations and these are culminating in drafts and reports by the convening organizations. The Indian organizations that are convenors will be brought together for the first time in a session on March 12 at a so-called verification-validation workshop, where they will then put the drafts together into a fairly short report. We are talking about 15-20 pages, which means that each section, each sector will only get up to a page, something like that. All the other material will be annexed - papers presented, background papers, process documentation, all of this will then be annexed.

Consequently what are the things that are emerging, and while these are now kind of preliminary, am going to share a few things emerging from across these nine consultations in India itself. Four big issues, which in American English people call 'the worrisome-foursome':

Number one is **rolling inequality**: caste, gender, religion, class, ethnicity, however you want to split it. The point is these are real and match the consensus around all the consultations across the world; there is a gathering momentum, the desire to have a new goal, and it will be around inequality, which does not exist in the current set of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Number two is **extreme poverty**, which obviously had to be overlapping with inequality and discrimination, but extreme poverty documented and followed by interventions that can be made on it.

Number three is **lack of productive employment**, [lack of] jobs and this comes up again and again. It came up in youth, it came up in the one on women, and it came up in the one on farmer associations. This is something which is really emerging, especially in India.

Number four is of an indirect input, **environmental degradation**, and that includes everything we heard already, the brilliant presentation on Punjab which I agree with completely, and others give

testimony right up to climate change. If all of this is put together in one, and something better in the post-2015 on environmental degradation, it will definitely be a key target.

Therefore, those are the emerging issues that have come out of the Indian consultations so far. On March 12, we are going to see them all together for the first time, and I will be happy to share, and I am sure others will also be happy to share with anyone what that is. There is a website <http://www.worldwewant2015.org/india2015> and that will have all the papers and materials.

Now where we are looking at globally - the new framework must reflect the commitment to human rights, and then that is something with which we all agree was not in the old ones. The old MDGs, since we have all been sort of saying bad things about them, were a lot better than the Washington Consensus. I mean let us get real, there was a point to the MDGs. The fact that they were so heavily targetized is a downside on many things, it mobilized certain ways of looking at the world, not others, we will see. The targetization is the key in how that reflects in considering human rights, but human rights will be at the centre. Number two, reducing inequality and improving inclusion particularly for the bottom 20 percent. This is the global discussion, this is not just India, ... and I am sorry I should mention slave caste in Senegal - that is you are born into a slave caste and it is not just a commercial transfer if you are born into a slave caste. The other piece of work together with the social protection. The point is growth, the *mantra* of the eighties up to Washington Consensus, growth is necessary but not sufficient and that has to be faced up to. Better health, better education. And probably when we look at the general environment like water, which we heard about already from Punjab, water, energy, and food are connected to each other.

As soon as you start talking about biofuels and energy markets, and other ways that the energy market connects with agricultural production, you get into a problem. Together with food, this is an important issue. I think we are going to see that more strongly reflected as a result of what is going on right now, and including change of management at FAO headquarters, which is much more open to thinking about that. Definitely, January 2015 will have a rewritten target; I agree it is also a dimension of discrimination, but there will be a re-written gender target given the experience of what is good as of now. *Governance*, and this includes everything from corruption and inability to implement the planned programme, all the way up to the world financial market that the coordinator would like to explain, like the lack of governance, financial markets almost crashed four years ago... that was very interesting, let us see what happens. In any case, something about governance all the way from immediate ground level to global, and finally when we look at things like climate change and current environment threats, we got to think about building resilience in communities and not simply playing around with carbon credits and some kind of pseudo-market.

Thank you!

Paul Divakar

Internationally Millennium Development Goals are so broad, mounded and glossy, that unless they are transposed to the domestic level and analyzed according to each specific national context, some of them really do not make much sense.

However, MDGs mechanisms, like every international commitment, are sometimes necessary as these spaces give an opening to push for certain policies, creating threads to make linkages toward the amelioration of some social issues. Therefore, it is essential to look at some of the nuances within the goals, so that those with domestic relevance can be addressed.

I won't go into the details of the MDGs. Now these are being called the development agenda; therefore, discussions are being held on post-2015 development agenda, as opposed to MDGs.

So what are the shifts that we can expect in this new post - 2015 development agenda? From the perspective of this discussion, what are the relevant things that we need to push?

We in WNTA a network of organizations with various ideologies, are taking a broad view of MDGs and social identities, and how to thematically make the domestic agenda relevant to the international agenda. Also, part of our work is to make the country accountable for engagement towards MDGs (post - 2015 agenda).

The immediate critique that we find about the MDGs is that the broader human rights perspective that was there in the Millennium Declaration has not been prioritized in the actual setting of goals. This has happened even though the UN has given specifications in several areas, by producing a very detailed and expansive jurisprudence on how to and whether to enlarge the definition of human rights (for example, in case of caste, the UN has repeatedly stated that it is to be considered a form of racial discrimination; the same has happened for other aspects of discrimination based on work and descent, for caste and other aspects, for women's rights). At the same time, human rights aspects have started to be included and considered in the wider frame of development debate and this evolution has also led different countries to start caring and get committed to certain kinds of human rights-based frames. However, this positive climax suddenly changed when the discussion on Millennium Development Goals came in and reduced the entire paradigm of development to the accomplishment of some strict targets. Yes, it has relevance in some areas which need to be anchored to critical targets aimed at reducing various aspects of the problem. Hence, it has become a kind of a frame which has shifted our focus away from the earlier understanding, both in the case of the state as well as of civil society organizations. Over time, the focus has shifted and now seems to be on very specific and technical targets, and these targets do not seem to touch some of the core issues relevant to the domestic agenda that I talked about. Responding to these issues, we recommend:

1. Including Core Aspects of Human Rights in the New MDGs Framework

Therefore, the first question that should be considered when we propose some new frameworks, or certain aspects in the frameworks, is how to bring in the core dimensions of human rights. I am referring to the human rights approach and, therefore, the need for bringing in relevant accountability mechanisms in the whole framework. That is the major challenge that we have to look at.

2. Incorporating Issues of Discrimination and Inequality

A major deficit which we find is that inequality has not at all been addressed in the MDGs framework when it talks about reduction of several issues like poverty, and expansion of literacy and education, or of the health-related aspects, or when it makes comparisons between different countries.

Then the question for us is how should we bring in discrimination and inequality while ensuring that some measurements can be made? And how can these measurements be set so that some pointers or directives can be made in real time, and consequently have some effect on the domestic agenda?

This battle against discrimination and for equality should be a universal one, and should not result in a clash between north and south countries.

3. Distinguishing Between Forms of Discrimination and Inequality

The third aspect is also related to discrimination and inequality. In achieving any goal, we must examine the whole aspect of inherent, entrenched discrimination which can be based on caste, religion, ethnicity or gender. How do you measure this discrimination? What layers are you able to sift? We are so adept at making different layers that when you look at one layer you will never see, for example, the caste-based discrimination aspect at all. This will be merged so perfectly that you can only see it as class inequality. When we look at gender, we are not able to look at other forms of discrimination within gender. When we look at caste, we are not able to look at other divisive aspects within caste which are playing with it.

This is the challenge to us, specifically in South Asia, where identities and discriminations are based on one's birth, and linked to occupation. These are so entrenched; they are not just there in areas of poverty, health or education, but they can be seen in the way budgets are being allocated. Discrimination can also be seen in the way economic growth is being planned, it can also be seen in the way higher education is being planned.

4. Integrating Discrimination into the Measurement Process

Hence, without measuring discrimination or without identifying the different points at which discrimination is happening in every process, how are we going to go ahead? And then, how are we going to triangulate this issue of discrimination so that it just does not slip off easily? It is important to integrate discrimination with a measurement process which looks at how well we are faring in the process of achieving development. This is a major aspect. Back to the example of caste - work and descent - based discrimination are often neglected, although they are not just present in India but also seen in Africa. There is a caste system but it is not being talked about. In Africa, separate burial grounds can be found. It is just not brought out and discussed sufficiently.

If you have that kind of discriminatory structure which is embedded, then definitely it is going to be reflected in the economy, issues of livelihood, access to land, access to education and income levels. However, this issue has been seen as something that a few Indians have to suffer. In Japan also there is community which is affected with similar kind of discrimination. So how do we bring up such issues for discussion in the MDGs development agenda?

5. Building Accountability into MDGs

MDGs talk about different goals and targets, but how do we make Governments accountable for them? The importance of this point requires that we build in accountability measures. Domestic accountability is very important, especially if vulnerable communities are to be uplifted and to gain leverage in these trends. It does not represent just an obligation for the State to measure, or for UN to check how well we are doing, but it means giving some leverage to the communities in this process, so that communities can make demands and say: "These are the things to which the state is signatory. These are the budgetary provisions that you have made, so where are the expenditures? What are the ways in which you have made policies in this regard?" Thus, this kind of domestic accountability is totally absent. So this domestic accountability has to be ensured.

It is also important to have fiscal transparency. Grandiose policies are being made, but if one looks at the budgetary allocations, then there is a discrepancy, as they are not in line with the kind of allocation needed for these lofty policy plans.

If we look at the nature of the allocations that are being made in India, we would consider the Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) sub - plans. If we look closer, these plans projected an allocation of about 63,000 crore rupees, but the actual allocation that reached the communities has been of about 37,000 crores. If one looks at the different schemes within these sub - plans, then it is observed that of the total provisions in these sub - plans (around 27,000 crore rupees) the

nature of the financed schemes was such that they do not have any relevance to SC and ST. For example, in Orissa they have built general jails with this fund.

Therefore, it is important to think over how we are going to ensure fiscal transparency. Hence, immediately after any policy is made, the amount allocated for programmes and initiatives should also be declared. Along with the allocation, the ways in which communities can participate in the process should also be made clear. The way in which the whole process is made transparent and accountable should also be communicated immediately.

It is important to push these five aspects in the goals set, and then it will be possible to hold ourselves, leaders and states at all levels, especially at sub-national levels, accountable. Then we can make some progress.

Directions for Policy to Reduce Hunger in India

Vijay Pratap

My overall presentation title is Directions for Policy to Reduce Hunger in India. This consultations is in continuation with three or four events we had organised earlier, and I am also a co-organiser for this one. One of my fellow co-organisers told me that this present consultation is partly in response to the question by the director of AN Sinha Institute, Patna, Prof. D. M. Diwakar, and also Shri Vyasji Mishra, who is now Principal Health Secretary, Bihar and was present at the last workshop in May 2010 when he was the Secretary, Disaster Management and, therefore, responsible for dealing with starvation deaths, and wanted to develop mechanisms for not allowing them to happen. Prof. Diwakar had said that since there is no politics in the discussions, no political economy question, how can we handle the issue of hunger? Shri Mishra had wanted some suggestions for concrete action. This workshop did inspire answers to some of those concerns. This is not the collective view of the organisers, but my personal view that this workshop has two-fold goals, one given the present power structure, in the present frame work, how do we do surveillance of malnutrition and do pre-emptive work? In answering that question, I think this workshop has made progress and we have kind of quite comprehensively worked out a tool for experimentation on the ground to be handled by the communities. That has to be piloted soon.

However, the workshop or the organisers have to address the question of who will use that tool. After the last workshop, we had gone to explore the possibility with civil society and movement groups in Champaran District, Bihar, with Prof Ritu Priya, we explained the tool to them. Among them was an *anganwadi* worker and her husband. What they explained in turn makes it impossible to envisage how the present system can deliver. The salary the *anganwadi* workers were getting at that time was Rs. 1,200-Rs. 1,500 (though now it has increased). The monthly expenditure they had to incur, and they explained each step of it, including the bribe they had to pay, is up to Rs. 2,200. For vigilance, government or our polity has innovated that the chair of a mother's committee will have to sign that the *anganwadi* is working well and now even she takes her cut. So where do we move? So what tool and how to use it?

Two administrators are here with us now, and Biraj Patnaik, the mentor of many administrators, including the political administrators. I would like them to answer in the next workshop regarding this kind of a dead-end in the governance issues, when you raise the issue of corruption and when it is at its peak, even the best of democratic friends sabotage the movement by holding a press conference to say that this movement is a fascist movement. Hence, corruption and the governance issues were beyond the scope of this workshop. But can they be handled through the state apparatus and through civil society, which is so alienated from its own milieu of the marginalized majorities? Can we have any kind of meaningful surveillance in such an environment, that is one question that haunts me.

Framework of Democratic Socialism

The other part is also in a way related to this policy business. My generation, which was recruited in the early to late sixties, whatever it had to do, it has delivered. Some broad framework of democratic socialism starting from Nehruvian socialism to Lohia's¹ socialism, does not differ much in content, only in terms of moral rigour. Lohia thought he was a more authentic Nehruite than Nehru himself. It gave the then Prime Minister (Nehru) the logic of his politics. It had inspired the country to empower the disempowered in one slogan '*pichara pawe sau mein saath*' (the deprived must get their share of representation as sixty out of every hundred).

In political power sharing, and in state-administered government jobs, women, the backward Muslims and OBCs, the peasant communities and the Dalits included - they all put together, should

get sixty percent of their share. Except the government jobs, and the jobs now taken out of the public sector and contractualised, this goal has been more or less accomplished, thanks to Lohia's dream (of that) democratic socialism.

Democratic Socialist Agenda

The other dimension of democratic socialist agenda was the promise in terms of delivery to the masses; in that it has not only miserably failed, but has blunted itself completely that now with those ideological formulations and those instruments it is not possible to carry on because Mr. Mulayam Singh depends upon Ambanis, and for Mr. Nitish Kumar, Pavan Verma is the new Chanakyaⁱⁱ. There is a recent book by Pavan Verma, who has become spokesperson of Nitish Kumar's party, and Mr. Pavan Verma says, "Education sector must be deregulated. Education should be for profit only then Indians can be educated". So if this is the kind of understanding that the movement's continuity has today, there is no choice. They are only divided within, about having one dynasty or the other. Modi or Rahul Gandhi, both do not present a very promising choice; and as for Nehruvian socialism or Lohia's socialism - to me in terms of values, there is not much difference. Hence, that kind of politics has run its course. People of my generation are not willing to be a part of an immeasurable gestation period to build a new instrument, they are willing to become either volunteers of ArvindKejriwal or be part of social movements and fight Montek Singh ji and Manmohan Singh ji, who appear to be taking revenge on Congress for the 1984 carnage.

Missing Social Segments and Themes in the Consultation

Therefore, overall polity is a problematic issue. Parties are no more there to take up people's issues in consonance with the fast changing situation and its challenges. Now about how to exert influence even for the limited purpose of surveillance of malnutrition? In that, I think with due apologies to myself, because I am co-organiser, I think this workshop has failed miserably. We have spoken of the plight of the agricultural and women farmers. However, there are villages in which artisan castes and Dalits will have a greater nutritional stress and in the entire workshop, Dalits and Muslims, were not at all mentioned. However, do not they have a greater plight? If you want to restrict the discussion to just the policy question, you do not discuss Dalits and you do not discuss Adivasis, whose forests and foods have been taken. A recent issue of EPW describes how indigenous people were able to have good quality nutrition, which we have now destroyed. No mention was made even once by the main presenters regarding or Dalits or the OBC Muslims, or the artisan OBCs, Hindus or Muslims. If we are modernist, and if we believe only in the consumer identity, even then we would need to discuss the same people.

If we are shy of using regressive terms like 'Dalit' and 'Muslims' then at least we could have talked of modern categories: landless labourers, agriculture labour, unorganized sector, which is 97 percent, and the way they are contracted. Gurgaon, Maruti and other working class issues were mentioned almost in passing. So what are we talking about? Even while laying down a map, Madhuri says do not think about the uni-linear textbook evolution-of-economic-stages from village to urban areas. But there is such powerful, global, manufactured consensus on chasing the mirage of America's consumers paradise, and even our Dalit voters are manipulated into that because the rest of the society is so anti-Dalit that whatever a Yadav tells a Yadav, and a Chamaar tells a Chamaar, it will be heard in awe; not what you are saying, even if it is in their interest.

Liberators and the Liberated

Therefore, this is the kind of situation we face and I will conclude by saying that all of us, 'the do-gooders', should have some sense of humility and some ability to listen to those whom we want to liberate, hear how they formulate their aspirations and ask ourselves if we have any suggestion, even the mildest or the weakest one, for empowering them to liberate themselves. Even if they will be liberated this time by us, they are still going to face genocide through starvation if we remain as their liberators. Hence, we should think of some political instrumentality where we are not in the centre-stage, we are not 'the doers' and we give the fora of political expression to the ordinary and

to the last, and to the lowliest. That is the route to political and nutritional empowerment. Political empowerment is the only route and that can happen if we voluntarily, like the voluntary poverty of Gandhi, dis-privilege ourselves in the political instruments of the NGOs, in the organisations which we are heading, and for that we have to re-imagine our political instruments. Parties are not that, present civil society organisations are not that, they are controlled by supremos just like the parties are controlled by supremos and dynasties. The only possible image of organization I have is the World Social Forum (WSF)ⁱⁱⁱ provided it is not controlled by big donor agencies and thrives more and more on philanthropy of ordinary citizens, like communists and socialists used to take a monthly levy. If the open WSF process is run by our collective political philanthropy, then that kind of instrument has some hope of bringing Dalits Muslims and tribal people together to articulate their liberative urges and we will be part of them, preferably behind them.

Thank you!

ⁱ Ram ManoharLohia, a socialist leader, thinker and politician.

ⁱⁱ Mulayam Singh Yadav and Nitish Kumar have been members of Lohia's socialist stream and are now Chief Ministers of two of the large Indian states, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar respectively. Ambanis are the biggest industrialist/capitalist house in India today. PavanVerma is a bureaucrat who resigned to join Nitish Kumar.

ⁱⁱⁱ The World Social Forum is an open space for dialogue across ideological positions for people who are opposed to what the World Economic Forum stands for and to the ideology of violence as a means of social and political change. It allows for expression of issues that can contribute to its slogan 'Another World is Possible' and attempts to generate a new culture of progressive politics.

Fighting Injustice through Rights and Caring

Harsh Mander

Yesterday I spoke at length of the paradox of stubborn and persistent hunger and malnutrition in a country with wealth, food production, state capacities and democratic traditions which should have helped end hunger long back. My diagnosis of this paradox and the explanation for this paradox are rooted primarily in the inequality of our society, the tall barriers of caste, class, gender, religious community, ethnicity, disability and a whole range of others.

My limited task for this session is to talk about what role civil society and people outside the state have in battling hunger and malnutrition.

I acknowledge completely that the nature of our politics which Vijay Bhai alluded to, the structures of injustice and inequality, the structural violence that Madhuri spoke of are at the heart of creating, recreating, and producing and reproducing inequality, hunger and malnutrition.

The question is: what do we do about it?

Interventions of Caring and Solidarity: Enabling Survival with Dignity

My point of departure is - though I am respectful about the whole range of interventions to fight structural inequalities and re-imagine alternative politics - I think there is also a role in the meanwhile to stand by the people who are suffering and to help them find ways to survive with dignity in their battle for justice and a dignified life.

There is no claim in this of providing a complete, or even an adequate, answer to the basic causes of their hunger and deprivations. However, I think there is a significant, but very incomplete, role in this whole jigsaw of building a better society and state, in enabling the people who are suffering to be able to survive with dignity - even while larger battles against structural inequalities and exploitative political systems and frameworks are being waged.

Therefore, with that note and without sounding apologetic about what I said yesterday and what I am saying here, I believe that within that framework, of efforts to build and strengthen a just, humane and accountable state and the idea of just, humane and accountable society, interventions of caring and solidarity with people who are suffering are also legitimate. There are many pathways for constructing this large mansion of a just and humane world, and we need to be respectful about each other's role while building it (i.e., of achieving our shared goal of a just, humane and accountable society and state).

That is the point I really want to make. I have great respect for a whole range of interventions and politics to restructure our world, as long as these are non-violent and democratic. Never the less I also want to underline that while people are struggling for a fairer, kinder world, there are children, women and men struggling with want and hunger today, and we should not lose sight of them. I have often talked about the many years when I have seen people living with hunger, people teaching their children how to sleep hungry, people surviving on one meal a day and people making desperate choices like placing themselves in bondage or sending small children out to work. I think that we have to identify the fundamental causes which push people into these situations of completely unacceptable suffering, but I do believe also that there is a legitimate role to reach out to these people, in solidarity and empathy, with food and services which can help them endure and survive.

Social Protection is not State Charity

Madhuri said that poor people are not begging: surely they are not begging but I think the Public Distribution System (PDS), midday meal scheme and entire framework of the social protection programmes are not in the nature of state charity; instead they play an important role in enabling people to survive with dignity, while the larger battles are being fought around them. It is this framework of state provisioning of food that I strongly endorse, and I would like it to be

strengthened, even though I recognize fully that it is not by itself a *solution* to the poverty that I was discussing.

Social and Economic Rights Underscore Intrinsic Human Equality

I think we should gain strength from pluralist respectful discussions about different ways of building this mansion for a new and just society. Within that framework, as Avinash mentioned, I think the rights framework offers an extraordinarily important instrument of great potential for achieving outcomes of justice. There is within the idea of rights the endorsement of each and every human being as equal in intrinsic worth and dignity. So the woman on the streets outside with matted hair and a confused mind being pelted with stones is as worthy a human being as my mother and yours. This recognition is an important moment in human understanding and civilizational consensus. Because of the fact that we have equal worth and dignity, we also have equal rights. In the second half of the 20th century, as I said yesterday, we saw this extremely sterile debate about whether bread is more important or freedom. One set of governments said we will guarantee you your political freedom but we can not guarantee you food, health care and education. Moreover, another set of governments said we will ensure that everybody will have food, education, etc., but we cannot guarantee you your political freedom. Therefore, humankind almost had to choose between bread and freedom. I believe that was an extremely unreasonable choice.

I see a great significance in at least the acknowledgement that human beings legitimately require both bread and freedom, and both should be accessible to them as rights. States must be legally accountable to ensure both, and not one or the other. This is what the rights discourse has contributed and I think it is important.

I believe, therefore, that we should strengthen and deepen the framework of social and economic rights.

Right-to-Food Bill and Indian Democratic Traditions

In addition, and we do not have time to discuss this in detail, I think non-violent civic resistance is central to democracy. The story of the Right to Food campaign in India is a rich one. This loose grouping of organizations, starting from the 2001 petition in the Supreme Court until today, has helped people, Politics and the policy framework to build up incrementally to the Right to Food Bill. I think this has been an extraordinarily important contribution, politically, for disadvantaged people all over the world, to have a more egalitarian engagement with the state, and to make a state the primary duty bearer with the legal duty to ensure that all people have sufficient food to lead an active and healthy life.

I want to clarify that even with all of this rights-based legislation, there is not going to be an overnight an end to hunger or malnutrition. Far from it. However, as Amartya Sen has reminded us, democracy has been significant in preventing the suffering from famine, but singularly unsuccessful in reducing starvation and malnutrition. I think the process of using legally enforceable rights is going to be useful in making democracy work better for people living with hunger than what they had recourse to in the past.

Compassion and Love as Forms of Resistance

I think there is also an extremely important role, a very radical role, in public life and social action, for public compassion. There are many forms of resistance, and compassion and love constitute very important forms of resistance. I was deeply troubled during the last six to seven years when I investigated starvation deaths. *Having witnessed the intense suffering of those living with endemic, hopeless hunger, I will carry the burden of that searing memory in my soul, a burden too heavy for not one but several lifetimes.*

In every case of starvation and hunger that I investigated, I was struck by the spectacular failure of the state and its programmes and its denial insensitivity. I must say that I was perhaps even more

profoundly struck by the failure of public – social - compassion. When I saw a 32-year old widow who had died, when I went to Andhra Pradesh with a whole set of my colleagues, I remember her 10- year-old son telling us how she died. When his father died one year earlier, his mother, 32 years old, started collecting curry leaves and she would sell it and used to earn Rs. 25-30 a day. There was obviously not enough food for three children so she would feed them and say to her children ‘my time is over, it is your time to eat.’ She was just 32 years old and she said, “My time is over.” So she got weaker and weaker. Eventually, she could not get up from her bed; and then her elder son dropped out of school. He started collecting curry leaves, but he earned even less. Finally, his mother died. His anguish was that, there was not even some rice; you are supposed to tie some rice in the corner of her saree when you are burying her. When they bury their dead, they tie some rice on the saree edge, and you can not take that rice from neighbour’s house because it is considered inauspicious. He said ‘we did not have any rice at home to tie in her saree when she died’.

Need to Re-establish our Traditions of Caring for Others

The anguish I experience is that, it is not an overnight catastrophe; if somebody dies of hunger then it happens over a period of time, over several months, over a year, over more than one year. In a village everyone knows each other. People knew she was dying. So the failures of our state are founded on our failures as a society. I think we need to re-assume responsibility as a people, and to collectively care more. In our country we have a tradition of not just giving food to the hungry, but giving food to the hungry with dignity. The idea of *langar* was an extremely important one. Chisti had invented it in Delhi The whole idea that you feed people, with affection, with respect, with dignity, with cheerfulness, it was from the 13th century. The Sikh Gurus picked it up in the 15th century. There is this beautiful story told about Akbar. He went to visit one of the Gurus. He was seated by the Guru at the langar with a beggar next to him. He was given simple food to eat. He ate and he was happy.

Radical Ideas Embedded in a Community Tradition

These ideas are very progressive even today. To me these are extremely radical ideas of equality, brotherhood and sisterhood, of respect for the people who are in want of dignity. We seem to have lost these increasingly today. I observed while working with homeless people in Delhi that today Gurudwaras are keeping out people who look like destitutes. I wrote about this. I was born in a Sikh family. My Uncles and some other relatives who are on management committees of these Gurudwaras got really upset because of my writings. They said, ‘You defamed us by writing this’. I had many discussions with them. They told me, ‘You do not understand, these poor people come here, maybe they are drunk, they take drugs, they are dirty, they make the temple premises impure’. My only question to them was that, were poor people different during Guruji’s time? He (Guru Nanak) felt that temples were not turned impure by inviting the poor with respect and dignity and serving them alongside the likes of you and me. What has changed today? In an article I wrote that if the President today, like the Akbar in those times, is invited to a Gurudwara Sis Ganj, then he will be deprived of the company of the city’s most destitute people.

I believe that there is a social crisis in this drying up of egalitarian compassion. I believe, in my way of understanding politics, that there are many ways of fighting inequality and injustice. Love, compassion, non-violence, rights, dignity, struggle, battles on the street, all of them have a role. Moreover let us be respectful of these many ways to fight injustice and not say that we have the only one answer.

Thank you.

From a Legislation - Based Right to the Language of Universal Right: The Road Ahead for Civil Society

Avinash Kumar

I will begin in the context of the current discussion, which is actually broadening the entire scope of the debate; but I am still going to begin on a very unambitious note in terms of the role of civil society and polity. One of the critical components of our work needs to revolve around raising political commitment beginning with, of course, the Right to Food and nutrition in terms of a universalist language and that is very, very basic. In the current context, let us at least begin from there, begin from there not just in terms of building further pressure on policy makers, who are behaving almost like a stone-wall, but actually going back a step deeper and building pressure from the grassroots, mobilizing people.

The second part for us is then linking with the states, I am sure in the last two days we have heard about that, where many states have articulated policies that are actually much more progressive than the centre's proposed bill, and how do we link with those states so that the bill does not overturn the entire policies and ambitions brought in by states like Tamil Nadu, Orissa, Chhattisgarh and so on.

The third part concerns the larger question which is related with the point about linkages with the state and the politics, which is also the larger question about the changing nature of politics and which is, *"How is it that we are rapidly veering towards a system where it is the non-elected bodies like the Planning Commission (PC) and not elected representatives, not your ministries, which are calling the shots?"* We heard from Biraj Patnaik earlier that ministries are getting bypassed, state governments are getting bypassed. However, it is the non-elected bodies, with an almost quasi-managerial logic of 'efficient' functioning, administration, etc. [which is the logic of the last 20 years of managerial (posts), headed by the 'CEO' of this country], that are institutionalising this discriminatory process and not actually the people who get elected. And it is the latter who need to be held responsible, and need to be made accountable, and they need to be actually brought into the centre of the debate. I think this is a larger question for all of us to think about, and we really need to question this paradigm in which the PC and bodies like these are taking increasing interest in terms of deciding what is happening.

Policy Frameworks

Now I am going to come to the other factors which are linked to the larger debate, there is a plethora of policy frameworks which are right now in disarray actually pending in Parliament. There is a whole range of Parliamentary Bills which have been passed, but without getting stubbed out because of lack of complete political will to implement them.

Six months ago, there was a huge media-led uproar, backed by, of course certain sections in the government, which said basically that the government suddenly can not move further because we can not move in the right direction, which essentially meant that we can not get Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Bill to be moving forward. So the entire debate around policy was determined by the FDI issue. Unfortunately, around the same time, and now also you have a whole range of bills, some of them got mentioned obliquely if not directly: bills on land acquisition, mining bill, women farmers' bill - all these bills are dying, dying their quiet death, and we are not talking about them. These bills are very intricately linked to this larger debate of food security. You have Forest Rights Act, even implementation of Right to Education Act which has a component of midday meal as its part, which is actually meeting its three-year deadline of all the key activities by March 31, with none of it actually completed. Measures like infrastructure, appointment of teachers, etc., have not happened because of want of basic elements such as budgeting, financing, and resources; the fact is that many of these policies are a part of those basic things to be addressed so that people can implement them. And so it is not happening. I think we have to really increase our ambit and talk about food and hunger rights, not just protection against hunger. We have to look at this larger policy framework which is extremely critical for us.

I want to quickly move on to the third part which is again linked with politics. In the last more than twenty years, we chose a certain developmental trajectory, which is market-driven, etc., and which is obsessed with the growth paradigm, of course, as we know. And then in the last 10-15 years, we also suddenly saw a very contradictory, but very interesting development, which the state is now appropriating - the language of rights. So in the last ten years you would have seen so many *legislations* for rights, for example, Right to Information, Right to Employment, Right to Education Act, you have right to health bill lying there on the Health Ministry website, and a whole range of acts which have suddenly been passed in the language of rights, which is very interesting. So what does it mean for the movements? Obviously in some ways, it reflects what Madhuri was referring to also as the safety valve mechanism; it explains some of that framing, but I think it is also a question of how do we actually see these rights themselves.

Legislating “Rights” vs. Challenging Growth and Market Orientation

Rights by nature, by basic understanding, should have a universal language. And we know that most of these rights are actually tentative. Judging by the way they are getting interpreted, they get reduced to a numbers game, hence it is either 25 percent, 30 percent, 35 percent or 44 percent in terms of who is eligible for which rights. In this whole debate around numbers, what happens to the rights? Hence, you have appropriated a language of rights, but you have actually killed them in the very way in which you have formulated the language of rights in the policy framework. I think this contradiction needs to be understood by us also in terms of not just attacking this larger paradigm of politics in which actually there is a hand-in-glove, very smooth operation of rights and rules happening. It also raises the larger question for us, as civil society members, who are putting our energy behind getting these acts passed and finally when we have them in a truncated form, then putting all our energy behind getting them implemented but without questioning the larger paradigm of growth which remains unchallenged. That is the question I want to pose. Do we continue sinking all our energies in getting these rights - based legislations (however truncated they maybe) implemented so that people on the margins get survival comfort, or do we also go beyond to challenge the larger growth-oriented market driven policies which are keeping the status quo as it were, even worse, making growing inequality stare straight into our faces?

I am not denying that part of these rights - based legislations has happened thanks to us; for many years civil society has struggled for this. Right to Food, Right to Education, all of this actually resulted due to long struggles by civil society. It was not that the government suddenly woke up one fine day; they have happened after a lot of struggles. And yet what we have got is actually very, very limited in scope in terms of definition of those rights. The challenge before us is how do we go about it? Do we spend all our energies in terms of getting bills implemented somehow, or do we look at the larger question of the way in which the entire political economy is getting decided? Do we remain separately aligned to the right to food movement, right to education movement, the landless, etc.? Or do we actually explore, and I think this is what was getting raised by all the speakers, and create some kind of a common platform. To take one example, the fact that the move from food crop to cash crop is not just sudden, or just due to the lure of cash, is also driven by the fact that increasingly the entire market, the entire set of services is getting monetized. It is actually the increasing role of the markets, right from the water, to education, to health, which is forcing the farmers to move to a cash-based economy. It is the larger question which we need to ask again, so these are the questions as civil society members, whether from Oxfam or the socialist movement, we need to ask on common platforms. I think this is a very critical question.

Challenges of Implementing Institutionalised Rights

The last point which I want to come to is the fact that we had a very strong civil society rights movement, which has managed to institutionalize some kind of rights-based language into the legal language, which is a great achievement and should be cherished. Yet, somewhere I feel [and Harsh is here, of course he can talk about the entire rights-based language of the 2001 public interest lawsuit (PIL) onwards, the role of the right to food movement, etc.,] that the larger battle of how do

we go back to the universal question of rights is still open, especially from the grassroots. We have made it very convenient for the government to pass the laws but not implement them, because we do not force them to implement them and also because not enough demand is getting generated from the ground in terms of the implementation of those rights. And this is where I think I want to come back to what Vijay Pratap ji was saying and others were saying, that if in a society we are fraught with various kinds of divisions on the ground, along the lines of race, caste, ethnicity, religion and gender, obviously the language - building of a universalist kind is going to be a much tougher battle. Sometimes we just abandon it. We think that they have got a legal entitlement and that is good enough. And I think that is a tough nut to crack. And how we work on that is going to be through several years of struggles, in terms of actually generating a genuine demand for a universal right rather than just getting a legal entitlement either through the Supreme Court, or without denying its importance, through public policy.

Thank you!

Madhuri

I could go on all night but fortunately for all of you, I have to leave. So I will try to be very brief. That means I might be a little offensive so please forgive me.

Taking off from what Vijay Bhai said, all that I want to know is why are we tracking hunger? For whom are we tracking it? And what do we plan to do about it? Do we have an answer to the question as to why there is hunger? We are not addressing that at all and we are taking hunger as a given and just seeing how much there is, is it getting better or worse, how do we map it, what are the various statistics, should it be BMI, should it be the other one, whatever...the upper-arm circumference measure, and so on. Now these details at some point are valid for the practitioners, the experts who are involved in it, but then we are missing the wood for the trees. There is hunger because there is expropriation; there is violent expropriation and loot, that is why there is hunger.

The hungry are not *bechare* beneficiaries who are waiting there for us, for our philanthropy, to help mobilise governmental aid. They have been a part and continue to be a part of complex survival networks. Why are those survival networks failing? Why are they hungry? The expropriation that is leading to hunger must go. We are not addressing those issues, and that is the primary thing. This is a very top-down approach that we have where there are only the hungry, we target them, we catch hold of them and put something into their bellies - it is offensive.

But the point is our approach. First, what we need to stop doing is to say - here are all these helpless masses that need to be fed by us. Secondly, we need to re-look at why there is this crisis of hunger and what is to be done about it.

I come from an Adivasi area which wants Public Distribution System (PDS), which wants Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) work, which wants various government schemes because everything they had has been so completely obliterated that now they are forced to go to these schemes. However, let us recognise that this is a desperate last-minute-survival stand. It is *not* the preferred option.

(I did not talk about how Adivasi economies try to subsist and survive because there was not enough time and it is a complex issue. I do not want to romanticize it and at the same time it is a very important issue, so for lack of time I didn't talk about it at all.)

There is hunger because food - producing resources are being stolen from the people. You can not have food security when all land under food is being handed over to industry, when water is being diverted from cropland to industry, when forests are being devastated and thousands of hectares are being given to POSCO, etc., while local communities are being denied access. You can not have food security when you are being helplessly thrown to the mercy of global markets which are controlled by monopolistic capital, and your government policy is forcing you into "free-trade" agreement of various sorts, and pushing you into debt. When America can have farmer protection, we cannot do it because under WTO it is not allowed, it is allowed for Americans but not for us. Therefore, this is a framework with which we should be beginning (though I know it is a little late in the day to say all this at this meeting).

People are not "beneficiaries". People are *Gonds, Baigas*, from this village or that, from this community or that, who farm this or that type of land and who have this or that kind of culture. There are communities and there are specific cultural, social heritages, resources, strategies and sensibilities. Our own industrial heritage has taught us to see people as atomized, homogenised individuals so you simply pick at numbers and say this much or that much about interchangeable units in a homogenised mass. That is not how non-industrial cultures are, and they are still the dominant cultures in the world.

When you talk of discrimination - I am a woman with a very strong, passionate involvement in the women's movement, but I have a problem with identity politics and the rhetoric around discrimination. You are right, we must fight discrimination, we are all a part of it, we suffer it, our

people suffer it. (I mean I am a woman *visibly* and it is an identity that I carry all the time, all my life. it is like a race. The discrimination that gender and race entail can not be avoided by being covered up by education or cultural so-called "assimilation"). But, let us not use the discourse of racial inequality or gender inequality to paper over (which is what we are now doing), to paper over the very naked, violent, ugly assault of global capital on our lives in the post-industrial world.

If we are talking about racism and discrimination, let us not just talk about caste, or about traditional racism in Senegal (as Mr. Kenmore did), let us also talk about, for instance, the United States of America. The blacks and not just the blacks (of whose situation we are well aware), but also lesser - known instances, the Native Americans like the Navahos and why half their population is in jail? Why, after being pushed onto Reservations over the last 200 years, they are still there and now those Reservations are being targeted for uranium and coal mining? Let us talk about that.

We need to be aware of how our very genuine concerns as Dalits, as adivasis, as women, are being manipulated to cover over, to divert us from something else. Hence, we need to be aware of that, not to give up those struggles, but to have awareness while we fight them.

I think that is about it, I must thank the organisers, and it was quite an enriching meeting, I do not have many opportunities for this kind of interaction so I am very grateful for it. However, I would think that we still need to go very much further, and think of creating situations where people like us are standing shoulder-to-shoulder, *respectfully* in struggle, with people who are facing and are fighting with immense courage the onslaught that we are now living under. The academia, the experts and the NGOs should be part of *those* struggles, they should be strengthening those struggles with their resources. You have been endowed and empowered with access to information and the wherewithal for processing that information. As you know, the people have a right to call upon you to use these resources to strengthen their struggles.

Thank you!

Session 4

Comments and Discussion (Open House)

Vijay Kumar: Good afternoon! We are onto the last session. I have some logistical issue which I will try to resolve because we are supposed to run this from 2:30-4:30pm and we are at 4pm already! So can we all agree to one cut-off time and then go on with the rest of the programme?

Ritu: Well it was two and a half hours but if you can cut it down to two. I think we can close by 6 pm, so is that reasonable?

Vijay Kumar: Yes. So this seems settled and we can go into the schedule. This is the fourth session on narratives for policy to reduce hunger in India, and there are three panels. Therefore, I would now request Biraj Patnaik, Principal Adviser to SC and Commissioner's Right to Food, to kindly tell us what he expects are the issues for the 12th Five-Year-Plan.

Vijay Kumar: Thank you Biraj. We go to the second panel now, which is on post-MDG discussion framework, and I thought that by itself it should be a subject for one workshop, but we have to do all this in thirty minutes and we have three speakers: Paul Divakar, Peter Kenmore and Kumaran. We have ten minutes per speaker in this panel as well and we can get through this session on time. Mr. Paul Divakar, Convener of *Wada Na Todo Abhiyan*, National Campaign for Dalit Human Rights.

Vijay Kumar: Thank you so much. It is not an easy topic and I put some undue pressure on the speakers in the interest of the audience. May I now request Peter Kenmore, Country Representative, FAO.

Vijay Kumar: Thank you . Now may I request Mr. Kumaran from Oxfam?

Vijay Kumar: Thank you very much. I knew that I had set a very impossible task for the panelists, so my apologies for cutting your flow of thoughts. However, thank you very much and I see a lot of continuity involved in all the three presentations. And personally, it has been very educational for me. Can we finish the next panel and then take the set of questions? So we move to the last panel and then take the set of questions. So we move to the last panel, and my recommendation would be that each panel deserves a full workshop and we are not doing justice, I am aware of that. Hence, this is the absolutely last, the panel on the role of civil society and polity with very distinguished panelists: Shri Vijay Pratap, Shri Harsh Mander, Avinash and Madhuriji. So, may I request Shri Vijay Pratap to start off?

Vijay Kumar: I did not have the heart to stop you! Thank you so much for a very powerful plea. May I request Madhuriji to be the next speaker?

Vijay Kumar: May I request Avinash to speak please?

Vijay Pratap: I have one question for the two of you, Vijay Kumar and Harsh. For anything good to happen from the government's side, you always need a special vehicle like NRHM, Velugu or your

pesticide-management, so what about the rest of the bureaucracy which is run by poor persons' tax-money? Because when they buy salt, you take a tax and you are not using that bureaucracy so...?

Vijay Kumar: Sure. I will answer that. May I now request Harsh to speak?

Vijay Kumar: So we come to the end of a very exciting session. Mr. S.R.Shankaran I was a great mentor, at least in my life, he made the difference in the way I turned out and so there is a need for a conscience-keeper, and that is why I like what Harsh said in the end, that there are different pathways, different entities within the government. We were greatly influenced by him and very early in the career I worked mostly in the tribal areas. I have come to believe that wherever the poor people have played an active role in whatever intervention, such programmes succeed. Therefore, when we visualized the Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty in Andhra Pradesh, we felt that there is need for a sensitive support system which has to be involved only in building the leadership of the poor as a dedicated entity within the government whose only task is to build strong institutions of poor. Lakshmi Durga, what she has presented is an outcome of not looking at nutrition in isolation, but looking at the power of the poor. It is not looking at them as supplicants, but it is looking at them as really capable and how can they multiply their power, how can we ensure that their dreams are fulfilled through their actions?

And this process actually started in Andhra Pradesh about 20-25 years ago, again thanks to Shankaransahab's inspiration and also a colleague, Mr. K. Raju, who is now Joint Secretary in the National Advisory Council. He was heading a pilot project, the UNDP South Asia Poverty Alleviation Programme, where they experimented with how do you organize the poor, how do you build strong institutions of the poor? So of these pilots that were run in different countries, the Indian one was the most successful one. And then the state government decided to scale it up.

When I was working in the tribal areas, I also had a very novel system of getting young professionals. I used to go to TISS, IRMA, IITs and so on. I used to ask youngsters to come and go live in the tribal areas with no agenda. First you have to bond with the community and then through them you have to, figure out what you should do. So through these early lessons of the UNDP pilot culminated in this Velugu programme that brought these two experiences, and our only role is to continuously build all the capacities of the poor and we felt that organizing women and women's institutions was the first step. It is not a sufficient condition, but it is a necessary requirement. It is not just the 'do-gooders' let us say within the government or outside the government because that alone will not solve anything. Even a policy framework, whatever policies you may have, they are only addressing the supply-side, but if the people themselves do not articulate these programmes, in fact somebody asked a question that if ICDS is there why do not you strengthen the ICDS? However, we found that the ICDS was offering only a very partial solution, but institutions of women could articulate a complete solution for nutrition issues so why should we settle for an incomplete solution? That is the reason why the Nutrition-cum-Day Care Centres succeeded. Hence, we are addressing the complete nutritional requirement and not saying that we will give supplementary nutrition, let them find out the rest of nutrition themselves!

I think when we look at it from the point of view of the poor more and more, I think you get lessons for what interventions are important. How do you negotiate, being within the government to negotiate with other government departments is very important for us also. We can not take it for granted that just because you are here so things would happen; they do not happen! Often the biggest battles are within the government because when you are looking at it from the point of view of the poor, a different solution emerges. Nobody says I will be happy with only one-third nutrition, naturally, each one of us wants complete nutrition. Hence, whatever is true for us, is true for any human being, any citizen.

Actually this was a very important planning point so I feel that I was also looking at you know how do I respond because I was also wondering what I was doing here because of the kind of anger which is justified, I am not denying that, but I found a solution in what Harsh said. I think there are a lot of things to be done, but I think one lesson coming from a lot of time spent in the government would be that we have consistently under-estimated the power of the poor. When we develop a framework to unleash that, then I think this beautiful building would be built. This is my limited experience.

Thank you very much. It has been a pleasure. A very distinguished panel and it has been a great educational experience personally for me. So thank you very much!

Biraj Swain: Only three points. When we started, we wanted to focus it around post-2015 but in a way it is good that it actually became a great transformative dialogue between food and nutrition activists and the agrarian champions. We see between climate change and agrarian champions that conversation does not happen, whereas these two days have been designed meticulously for that conversation to happen, and there is a new phrase that should have been included in the IDS bulletin that I edited, where the author talks about new rules, new roles and new alliances and taking the phrase from Harsh and Vijay Kumar ji, love, compassion, struggles recognizing power of the poor and solidarity are probably the new rules, new roles and new alliances that we would like to build upon and that is the edifice that we want.

We have got a huge list because this has been a strange collaborative with a University, an academic institution and NGO like Oxfam, and organisations like CES at the forefront of the disadvantaged and the marginalized and in the public policy spaces coming together and working and organizing this meeting. Hence, the list goes as such: first it has to be, yes it is a little embarrassing to call one of the main organizers to thank upon but I think Ritu di (she has told me I cannot call her Ma'am and I cannot behave like Kumaran!) so Ritu di she has been warm, generous, inspirational and it has been a great pleasure and she has been very collaborative in bringing everyone on board. Thank you very much for your leadership shaping this workshop the way you did. Kumaran take a bow from Oxfam-side. It is Kumaran who has been leading it. I know I walk away with a lot of credit, but this show is not mine and it is Kumaran's! He has allowed it to take shape in a way where intense conversations happened, but at the same time everybody gets a say, which is, I think important. The folder, the bag, the logo, everything's been printed by Ranvir, so from logistics to the printing, to making it sound sexier and more attractive than it is, Ranvir is the perfect PR and logistics person, and most important, he is also a co-author of the paper with what I kick-started the day. I am sure that the centre also is recognizing more about its student, which it did not know. We are deeply grateful to the Centre of Social Medicine and Community Health. We could see the solidarity and support of every single faculty member and every single student. I always kept questioning Kumaran, "Why are we holding this in this centre? Why are we not going to the CESP etc.?" For once, thank you so much for vetoing me! I think it was great to have this workshop at this center where we co-hosted this. Thanks to our co-organizers SADED, CES Harsh, PHRN Vandana Prasad's group, Dr. Ganapati's group, CSMCH, of course, where we are sitting, and yes, of course my employer and our organization Oxfam and the Food Justice Campaign. Two people - Deepak is not here, but a lot of the flexibility we got in shifting away from post-2015 and allowing these great transformation dialogues to happen is because of Avinash's support. So we need to recognize that free-flow, otherwise we would have been control freaks so that is important to recognize. Thank you very much, and I hope this is just a beginning, and that we really co-script the new roles, new rules and new alliances, And FAO, of course, Peter has been alive in more ways than one. He has been a black sheep in UN's staff but he has also probably been some of the good things that is happening to FAO as an organization as well as the global reforms dialogue. Many people do know that he is one of the biggest allies on discrimination and making that issue alive in the corridors of power and not allowing it to be invisibilized. We need to recognize, like Vijay Kumarji said, the internal battles, trust me the breathless internal battle within UN spaces is no less either. Hence, we need to recognize when people are fighting within their own boundaries and pushing the limits also.

Thank you very much!

List of Participants
(25th and 26th February, 2013)

S. no.	NAME	AFFILIATION	EMAIL
1.	AAKANSHA NATANI	CEP/JNU	atakanka@gmail.com
2.	ADITI SOOD	NAMHHR	aditi@sahayaogindia.org
3.	AMANJOT KAUR	Kheti Virasat Mission	amanjotkaur23@gmail.com
4.	AMBARISH RAI	RTEF	amb1857@gmail.com
5.	ANIL JACOB	The Union	ajacob@theunion.org
6.	ANKITA AGGARWAL	CES	aggarwal.ankita87@gmail.com
7.	ANUP K DAS	CSSP/JNU	anupdas2012@gmail.com
8.	APARNA MOHANTY	CSMCH/JNU	aapparnamohanty@yahoo.co.in
9.	APRAJITA SARCAR	CSMCH/JNU	aprajita@gmail.com
10.	ARATHI	CSO	athirarathi@gmail.com
11.	ARCHANA DIWATE	CSMCH/JNU	archudiware@gmail.com
12.	ARCHIS MOHAN	SADED	archis.mohan@gmail.com
13.	ARVIND KUMAR (DR.)	GAE/SSS	arvindamkumar@gmail.com
14.	ASHWIN PARULKAR	CES	ashwin.parulkar@gmail.com
15.	AVINASH KUMAR	Oxfam India	avinash@oxfamindia.org
16.	AYOR BHASKAR	Independent	ayorbhaskar@gmail.com
17.	BAMDEV SUBEDI	CSMCH/JNU	Subedi_bd@yahoo.in
18.	BHAT IQBAL	CSMCH/JNU	bhat.iqbal@gmail.com
19.	BIRAJ PATNAIK	SC. Comm. Office	biraj.patnaik@gmail.com
20.	BIRAJ SWAIN	OXFAM India	birajswain@hotmail.com
21.	BIRODH BOHARA	Green Features	birodbhohara@gmail.com
22.	CAROLINE	CSMCH/JNU	nettocaroline89@gmail.com
23.	D BANERJI	NHPP & CSMCH	banerjinucleus@gmail.com
24.	D. ARUTSELVI	CSMCH/JNU	darutsetri@gmail.com
25.	DAKSHA P.	CSMCH/JNU	dakshap@gmail.com
26.	DEVRAJ	CSMCH/JNU	devaraihosahally@gmail.com
27.	DEEPAK SINGH	Jamia Hamdard	deep_singh9421@rediffmail.com
28.	DEEPTI AGRAWAL (DR.)	MOHFW	
29.	DEVENDER	CSLG/JNU	devjindolia@gmail.com
30.	DIPA SINHA	CESP	dipasinha@gmail.com
31.	DIPAK ABNAVE	CSMCH/JNU	dipakabnave@gmail.com
32.	DITHHI BHATTACHARYA	NTUI	secretariat@ntui.org.in
33.	EDWARD PINT)	CSMCH/JNU	e.premdas@gmail.com
34.	ESHTI SHARMA	CSMCH/JNU	eshis16@gmail.com
35.	FAKHRUZZAMAN	CPS/SSS	fakhruzzafiez@gmail.com
36.	G. R. SINGH		
37.	GANAPATHY MURUGAN	PHRN	ganapathy@phrnindia.org
38.	GOLAK B. PATRA	CSMCH/JNU	gulu.jnu@gmail.com
39.	HARSH JAITLEI	CEO, VANI	info@vaniindia.org
40.	HARSH MANDER	CES	manderharsh@gmail.com
41.	IMRANA QADEER	CSD & CSMCH	imranaqadeer@gmail.com
42.	IPSHA	CSMCH/JNU	lpsaha.28@gmail.com
43.	JAGANNATH	CSR/JNU	jagannathina08@gmail.com
44.	JYOTISHMITA	CSMCH/JNU	jyotishmita.sarma@gmail.com
45.	JYOTSNA SIVARANAYYA	CSMCH/JNU	jyot_siva@yahoo.com

46.	K B SAXENA	CSD, Delhi	saxenakb2@gmail.com
47.	K. SAIBABA(Dr.)	IFPRI, Delhi	dr.ksaibaba@rediffmail.com
48.	KARANVEER SINGH (DR.)	UNICEF	ksingh@unicef.org
49.	KAVITA SRIVASTAVA	PUCL & RtFC	kavisriv@gmail.com
50.	KIRAN KUMAR VISSA	ASHA	kiranvissa@gmail.com
51.	KIRTI SINGH	CSMCH/JNU	Singhkirty74@gmail.com
52.	K.K . PAL	Riddhi, Kolkata	kamalpal@riddhi.org
53.	LAKSHMI DURGA	SERP	lakshmidurgac@gmail.com
54.	LAKSHMI RAJ	CSMCH/ JNU	Jblilakshmi99@gmail.com
55.	LEENA UPPAL	CJSJ	leena@chsj.org
56.	M. KUMARAN	OXFAM	kumran@gmail.com
57.	MADHURI	JADS	Madhuri.jads@gmail.com
58.	MAIRAJ FATIMA	PAIRVI	mjfatima.jmi@gmail.com
59.	MALOBIKA	CSMCH/JNU	malobikabhattacharya1@gmail.com
60.	MANIKA	CSLG/JNU	lawmanika@gmail.com
61.	MARYKALI YEPTHOMI	CSMCH/ JNU	marykali.yepthomi@gmail.com
62.	MESHACH SUNNY KUJUR	CSMCH/JNU	kujurmeshach@gmail.com
63.	MIRA SHIVA	People's Health Movement	mirashiva@gmail.com
64.	MOHAN RAO	CSMCH/JNU	mohanrao2008@gmail.com
65.	MUHASIN KT	CSMCH/JNU	muhsinmunna@gmail.com
66.	NABIL A.	CSMCH/JNU	nabiljnu2012@gmail.com
67.	NALINI VISVANATHAN	Independent Researcher	alamel10@yahoo.com
68.	NASREEN JAMAL	CINI	rsnasreen@gmail.com
69.	NEEMA BAJAJ	CSMCH/JNU	meenabajaj@gmail.com
70.	NEERA SARA		neerasara@rediffmail.com
71.	NEHA	CSMCH/ JNU	nehad87@gmail.com
72.	NIKLAS TOIVAKAINEN	SADED	niklas.toivakainen@helsinki.fi
73.	NISHANK	ASHA	nishank.kisanswaraj@gmail.com
74.	NISHANT ANBER	CSMCH/JNU	kumarnishantanber@yahoo.com
75.	NITIN SINGH	CSMCH/JNU	nitinsingh@gmail.com
76.	OVAIS SULTAN KHAN	SADED	india.ovais@gmail.com
77.	PAUL DIVAKAR	NCDHR	pauldivakar@ncdhr.org.in
78.	PETER KENMORE	FAO	Peter.kenmore@fao.org
79.	PRACHIN	CSMCH/JNU	prachinjnu@gmail.com
80.	PRADEEP	CSMCH/JNU	pradeep.mpt@gmail.com
81.	PRASHANT PATHAK	PHRN	Prashant.pathak@phrnindia.org
82.	PRIYA VERMA	CSMCH/JNU	priya1385@gmail.com
83.	PRIYANKA ROY	CSMCH/JNU	priyankaroysskm@gmail.com
84.	RAJASHREE SHARMA	CSMCH/JNU	rajashree.rajs@gmail.com
85.	RAMA BASU	CSMCH/ JNU	rama.b.varu@gmail.com
86.	RAMESH BABU	CSMCH/ JNU	babujicm@gmail.com
87.	RAMESH SINGH	Green Features	rameshsinghcsds@gmail.com
88.	RAMILA BISHT	CSMCH/JNU	ramila.bisht@gmail.com
89.	RANI ROHINI RAMAM	CSMCH/SSS	rohini.redstar@gmail.com
90.	RANVIR SINGH	Oxfam	ranvir.jnu@gmail.com
91.	REENA NAIN	CSMCH/ JNU	reenanair9@gmail.com
92.	RICHA	PAIRVI	march26_1989@yahoo.co.in
93.	RITU PRIYA	CSMCH/JNU	ritu_priya_jnu@yahoo.com
94.	ROHAN D'SOUZA	CSSP/ JNU	rohanxdsouza@gmail.com

95.	RUCHI KASHYAP	Atmashakti	atmashaktikust@gmail.com
96.	S. S. SIRSIKAR	CSMCH/JNU	kesirsi@yahoo.com
97.	SACHIN GHIMIRE	CSMCH/JNU	sachinshamvab@gmail.com
98.	SAMIR GARG	SHRC, Chhatisgarh	koriya@gmail.com
99.	SANDEEP	CSMCH/JNU	snoomao@yahoo.com
100.	SANJAY CHATURVEDI	UCMS	cvsanjay@hotmail.com
101.	SANTOSH	CSMCH/JNU	santoshnahinaxakar84@gmail.com
102.	SANTOSH SINGH	National Social Watch	santosh.singh@socialwatchindia.net
103.	SARDA PRASAD	CSR/SSS	spkjnu@gmail.com
104.	SARITA BACPANDEA	CHSJ	sarita@chsj.org
105.	SHAMETA	CSMCH/JNU	shametahnas@gmail.com
106.	SHASHI B. PANDIT	AIKMM	shashi.pandit@gmail.com
107.	SHASHWATI GOSWAMI	CSMCH/JNU	shashwati.goouri@gmail.com
108.	SHAWETA ANAND	CSMCH/JNU	happinessisachoice@gmail.com
109.	SHILPA DESHPANDEY	CSMCH/JNU	forshilpadeshpande@gmail.com
110.	SHIRAZ WAJH	GEAG	geag@vsnl.com
111.	SHISHIR KUMAR	CSMCH/JNU	shishiryadav16@gmail.com
112.	SK ABDUL MATIN	CPS/JNU	abdulmatinjnu@gmail.com
113.	SMBINDNA	Nai News	naiindia@gmail.com
114.	SUBHOJIT	SIS/JNU	
115.	SUMALI BANERJEE	CSR/SSS	banerjee.sumali@gmail.com
116.	SUMATI DAS	NCPCR	dassumatip@gmail.com
117.	SUMEGHA	CSMCH/JNU	drsumeghasharma@gmail.com
118.	T. VIJAY KUMAR	Min. of Rural Dev.	vjthallam@gmail.com
119.	TOMBA	CSMCH/ JNU	tomkosan@gmail.com
120.	TSHERING LEPCHA	CSMCH/JNU	nueltlepcha@gmail.com
121.	UMA SHANKARI	ASHA	umanarendranath@yahoo.co.in
122.	UMENDRA DUTT	Kheti Virasat Mission	umendradutt@gmail.com
123.	VANDANA PRASAD	PHRN	chaukhat@yahoo.com
124.	VEENA SHATRUGNA	Retd. NIN	veenashatrugna@yahoo.com
125.	VEENA VANDANA	CSMCH/JNU	veenavandana87@gmail.com
126.	VIJAY PRATAP	SADED	vijaypratap@vsnl.net
127.	VIJAYTA	CES/SIS	vijayta.mahendra@gmail.com
128.	VIKAS BAJPAI	CSMCH/JNU	drvikasbajpai@gmail.com
129.	VIREN LOBO	Executive Director, SPWD	spwd_delhi@yahoo.com ajaybhan@yahoo.com
130.	ARUN KASHYAP	One Village	onevillage2012@gmail.com
131.	ALOK KUMAR	CASP/CSCSEAS/JNU	alokkumar27@rediffmail.com
132.	SUJEET KUMAR	CSL/ JNU	sujeetmath@gmail.com