ANNUAL REPORT OF NATIONAL CENTRE FOR ADVOCACY STUDIES

Bridging People.... Building Ideas

APRIL 2018- MARCH 2019

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The Year that was (2018-19)

In the year 2018-19 We commenced 2 major projects, one on Strengthening the Panchayat Raj Institutions on decentralized governance (with NFI) and the other on building capacity of grassroots organisations and embarked upon other minor assignments. As part of ongoing projects or as independent activities, the team undertook several capacity building programs, campaign support initiatives, networking efforts and knowledge creation programs. NCAS team went through a transition itself, while some of our experienced team members moved on from NCAS to the next venture, new faces joined our team.

Last year, Adivasi Resource Centre (NCAS’s Odisha Unit) took firm steps towards networking and capacity building of stakeholders on acts like Panchayat Raj Extension to Schedule Areas Act (PESA) 1996, Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006, Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, (LARR) 2013 and Tribal Sub-plan (TSP). Building further on work accomplished in previous year with Mankadia tribals, more efforts have been put into building awareness of this particularly vulnerable tribal group (PVTG). Mankadia tribals inhabit some dense forest areas of Mayurbhanj district. Sessions were held with displaced tribals of Mayurbhanj and Koraput district on building awareness around various social security programs of government and help them raise their voice for efficient and transparent implementation of policy programmes in Adivasi areas.

This report gives a glimpse of the activities undertaken during April 2018 – March 2019. The report entails details of the proposed and achieved outcomes of the projects, progress of ongoing activities, learnings from the activities and the challenges faced by the team. The report also captures way forward for the coming year at NCAS.
NCAS SILVER JUBILEE YEAR

As we Celebrate NCAS’s 25 years, it is indeed a moment of pride to look back at its long glorious journey. Our efforts in advocacy have helped human rights-based approach gain prominence. Human life with dignity is at the core of this approach. This essentially means everyone is entitled to equal social, economic and political rights. To ensure the same, NCAS has been using tool of advocacy to amplify the voices that fight against the inequality and injustice and most importantly make them heard. Several people associated with NCAS

For 25 years, NCAS has been facilitating advancement of human rights and has been a key witness to ever evolving journey of human rights and social change. Key contribution of NCAS has been to initiate people’s participation in the decision-making processes to fight the prevalent injustice and to assure quality justice for all. NCAS worked closely with various stakeholders like civil society organizations, grass root movements and activists to make people centred advocacy a mass movement. This has resulted in solid work in building institutional leadership, people centred advocacy for public policy and participatory governance systems. Emergence of social media as an advocacy tool and its exponential growth has changed the realm of advocacy significantly. NCAS is committed to accommodating this change and equip itself efficiently.
PROJECT ACTIVITIES.

1. **Research study on ‘Inequality and Education in India’**  
   Duration: February – April 2018  
   Donor: OXFAM India  
   NCAS team undertook an extensive study on Inequality and Education in India. This study was based on secondary data and it touched upon several aspects like – literacy and out of school children, access, enrolment and infrastructure in elementary education, quality of teaching and learning, phenomena of school closures, budgetary allocations for elementary education, divasingon and inequality. The study also documented 10 case studies discussing good practices, innovative experiments and success stories around the abovementioned aspects. This research study was an extremely insightful experience for the team involved as it not only enhanced research skills but helped team interact with several experts in the field of education.

2. **Health Budget Campaign Maharashtra**  
   Duration: Phase 1 year 2 up to June 2018, Phase 2-year 1 September 2017 to October 2018  
   Donor: National Foundation for India  
   NCAS is part of national Budget network of People’s Budget Initiative (PBI). As part of the nationwide alliance on Health Budgets between Jan Swasthya Abhiyan and PBI NCAS works with SATHI, Pune on Health Budget allocations and expenditure tracking in Maharashtra. We engage actively with grass root activists, media and legislators during this process. We divas in pre and post budget consultations that are widely covered by Marathi and English media. This year we tried to present people’s budget where we not only tried to demand additional allocations for social sectors but also gave details of the requirements and additional sources of revenue generation. A pilot exercise of Resource Gap Analysis was also conducted in this phase.

3. **Support to Adivasi Resource Centre – Odisha**  
   Duration: Up to July 2018  
   Donor: Holdeen India  
   Socio economic study on Mankadia Community in association with the Gram Swaraj Organisation in Boripada and Mayurbhanj, Odisha was conducted. This study focused on health and livelihood of Mankadia community in 9 villages of Mayurbhanj district of Odisha. The
objective was to study the reality of the socio-economic conditions of Mankadia tribals, access to government facilities and to suggest future action. This research study based on collection of baseline data on the economic conditions of inhabitants, their community structure and infrastructure, demographic conditions and livelihood strategies assesses the prevailing socio-economic conditions of Mankadia community.
Orientation programs with the tribal leaders and with displaced tribals in Koraput district were also conducted in the last phase. Additionally, several awareness sessions were conducted and advocacy efforts with regards to FRA and PESA have been made in Odisha.

4. Strengthening Communities and Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs) for Democratic Decentralisation and Governance Accountability on Nutrition
Duration: September 2017 – December 2018 (Currently in its second phase)
Donor: National Foundation for India

In the first phase of this project, Work was undertaken to build a sound understanding of the local needs and working of schemes like mid-day meal (MDM), Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) and public distribution system (PDS) at the village level. Pilot citizens’ scorecards and social audits were planned in the second half of this phase. Capacities of the team (NCAS team and field activists) were built in various partner meetings, scheme specific trainings and piloting of surveys among others. Village level accountability indicators were identified for each of the schemes. Baseline survey was done and data was analysed. Accordingly, village specific intervention strategies were designed. While the process of citizen’s scorecards has been initiated, pilot social audits will follow an updated timeline matching the community calendars and will incorporate observations and insights gained from the baseline survey and score cards.

Women, members of PVTG group and Antyodaya and BPL card holders have been the primary target group for all the village level discussions, trainings and interventions. To ensure greater participation by the villagers especially those belonging to the above-mentioned groups, awareness sessions and trainings of village level committees are planned. Additionally, engaging the private entity which has been providing mid-day meals in Palghar area is another distinct feature of this project. ISKON foundation provides mid-day meal to 447 schools in Palghar block. Ensuring accountability in the MDM scheme would require a strategy to deal with private entities like ISKON. The team has
designed detailed village level strategies, timelines, accountability indicators and village wise data analysis for the three schemes in the all the 10 villages. The field partners are now entering into a more detailed phase of using accountability tools in the village. In the village Falode of Ambegaon block, issuing receipts for rations that was distributed was not practiced. The locals started demanding receipts, made calls to the helpline and registered their grievance which resulted in receiving of receipts.

5. **Building skills of 100 CSOs in advocacy and policy dialogue on issues related to water energy and climate change from a livelihood perspective**
   Duration: October 2018 to September 2020, Donor: Bharat Rural Livelihoods Foundation

   The objective of this project is capacity building of 100 CSOs, from Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand on advocacy and policy change dialogue from a livelihoods perspective concerning issues related to water, energy and climate change. In the first phase of the project, a needs and context analysis exercise was done in Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh. NCAS designed the FGDs and the framework of the needs and context analysis. The report and a manual on basis of people’s centered advocacy was submitted to BRLF. As a continuation to the project, training on tools of advocacy will be taken up in the future.

6. **A scoping study on agrarian situation in the country and mapping out possible alternatives.**
   Duration: 2 phases up to July 2018, Donor: American Jewish World Service

   This project had two objectives. One to understand and document the contemporary agrarian situation in the country and two to identify possible alternatives such as collective farming. We focused on state of Maharashtra and state of Bihar. Consultants were appointed for field visits and research work. Consultative meetings were organized in Pune and Patna. In the consultative meeting held at secondary teacher union hall at Patna on 8th April 2018, 45 participants representing sectors like NGOs, CSOs, academics, political parties, and Youth federations of Bihar were part of this meeting. The objective was to discuss the agrarian crisis in Bihar and alternatives to fight it. A follow up consultation was held in May 2018 in which ideas which in which several ways of collective agricultural production were explored and future plan was discussed. The crisis is acute and there is an urgent need to address the issue. Through this project it is expected that more and more stakeholders will actively get involved and collectively arrive at solutions. The project aimed at building a network of organizations and individuals working on issues pertaining to agriculture.
2. CAMPAIGN SUPPORT

1. Campaign for Business and Human Rights: A network ‘Human Rights and Business Network-India (HRBN India) was formed with an objective to harness the collective power of organizations, people and social movements and to create an environment of business accountability for human rights. It is a platform to learn, share and strengthen each other’s work on business and human rights issues.

2. Pro-active participation of Governors in Scheduled Advocacy areas: The Governors of the states with Schedule-V areas have been endowed with certain special powers which they can exercise for proper policy formulation and implementation with regards adivasis. However, as experience shows, these powers have hardly been used by the Governors. NCAS in Odisha coordinated with other organizations like Indigenous people’s forum, Vasundhara, RCDC, CWS, CYSD, NIRMAN and others in the state in divasing series of consultations with divasi leaders. A memorandum demanding constitution of a tribal cell relating to the rights of the STs in the scheduled areas was submitted to the Hon. Governor of Odisha. In Feb 2019, a tribal cell was opened in the Governor’s office of Odisha government.

3. Campaign against the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act 2016: NCAS along with different civil society organisations has campaigned against the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act 2016. The act has major implications on rights of tribal and forest dwelling communities. The CAF Act has widely been opposed by Adivasis and forest dwellers. The major concern raised about the CAF Act is that it undermines the provisions of Forest Rights Act particularly a) the rights of Adivasis, other traditional forest dwellers, PVTGs and pre-agricultural communities, pastoralist and nomadic, women etc, b) rights and authority of gram sabhas to protect, conserve, manage and regenerate community forest resources, c) the requirement of gram sabha consent for using/diverting forest land which is now a legal requirement under FRA, PESA. Series of meetings were held with the legislatures and civil society organisations in Koraput, Kalahandi, Mayurbhanj district of Odisha demanding that any government program on forestlands, including with CAMPA funds has to be based on the framework of governance under FRA.
3. SEMINARS AND CONSULTATIONS

1. Seminar on “Future of Social Media and Advocacy”: NCAS held a national seminar on 19th January 2019 to understand how social media has affected politics around the world and the future of advocacy. Associate Professor (Dept. of Pol Science) SPPU Shriranjan Awate spoke about increasing role of social media in political campaigns and Senior Inspector Santosh Barge gave details of cybercrimes and how new technology can be used to fight these crimes. Mr. Pushkar Ekbote spoke to us about the role of social media in LGBTQI movements in India and also pointed that while social media helped LGBTQI community express their views freely, it also led to friction due to difference in opinions. John Samuel (NCAS President) moderated the sessions. Mr. Jagadanana (CYSD), Mr. Pravin Mahajan (Jannarth) and Mr. Anil Singh (SANSAD) joined us for this event in their personal capacity.

2. Panel Discussion on Direct Benefit Transfer in Public Distribution System: A Panel Discussion on Direct Benefit Transfer in Public Distribution System was held at Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics. We witnessed a bright and diverse crowd at our panel discussion on Direct Benefit Transfer in Public Distribution System at Gokhale Institute, Pune. Mr Abhay Tilak and Ms Ulka Mahajan enlightened the audience with their perspectives on the issue and the audience interacted with the speakers with their queries.

3. Advocacy efforts to influence district level committees: NCAS Odisha collaborated with Shramajibi Chetana Sanghatan at Banigocha, Nayagarh to prepare advocacy efforts in detail to influence the District Level Committee (SLMC) on assertion of community rights on forest within framework of FRA-2006. The tribal representatives shared their experiences in protecting the forest in their areas. Despite continuous efforts by the tribal community to claim their forest rights under FRA, forest department through different programs continues to violate the provisions of FRA and deprives the community from their customary rights in this district. For instance, forest department often books cases against villagers and seizes timber from villagers that they collected for their own use.
4. NCAS networked with NIRMAN and Seva Bharati at Tumudibandh on 12th May 2018 to support the Kutia Kondh, a PVTG group of Kandhamal district, Odisha. The support included writing memorandum with evidence and submitting to the SC & ST Development Department and National Schedule Tribe Commission with a copy to District Collector. The District Collector has responded back and sent a team to the affected tribal villages.

5. On 4th February 2018, NCAS team interacted with SPREAD organizations in Koraput to bring Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) Legislation in Odisha. The objective of the meeting was to discuss and decide a plan of action for working on legislation on TSP Act for Odisha. It was decided in the meeting to work on a campaign mode with collective effort of NCAS, CYSD, Vasundhara, FARR, RCDC and other interested leading organizations and legislatures in the state. It was also decided that before any action, it should review the past actions taken by the MLAs for the effective implementation of TSP in the state.
4 CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMS

1. Foundation Course on Public Policy and Advocacy
In May 2018, 8 participants participated in foundation course on public policy and advocacy. The foundation course is very popular among students. The course offers interactions with faculties from various disciplines like Law, Sociology, Social Work and Political science. In this month-long course, 25 experts interacted with students. Overall it has been an enriching experience for your students and professionals. This year, however NCAS team fell short in efforts to garner more students participation in the curse. The same have been noted corrective actions will be taken in the next course.

2. Advocacy Capacity Building workshops

1. NCAS team members visited and facilitated advocacy capacity building lectures in several colleges in Pune (Bharati Vidyapeeth- Department of Social work, Karve institute of social studies, MIT School of Government, Tilak Maharashtra University – Department of Social work)
2. NCAS also conducted 4 workshops in Pune and 1 in Goa on ‘Understanding Budget’ for students and CSO members. Workshop in Goa witnessed participation of students from 4 educational institutions.

3. In December 2018, NCAS facilitated a two-day workshop on Policy and Budget Analysis in Hyderabad. The workshop was organized by Girls Advocacy Alliance. NCAS conducted sessions on advocacy, public policy analysis and budget analysis. The participants were from 6 different CSOs working on child marriage and child trafficking issues in the states of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.
Pradesh. We look forward to conducting more such workshops.

4. NCAS team members were also invited to facilitate sessions on Understanding Budgets by various Maharashtra based networks such as RTE forum Maharashtra, Jan Arogya Abhiyan Maharashtra, Jagnya Hakkacha Andolan Maharashtra, Dalit Adivasi Adhikar Andolan etc.

5. NCAS conducted a three-day long workshop on tools of advocacy in Jhansi, U.P. The workshop was organized by Parmarth Samaj Sevi Sansthan along with European Union and Welthungerhilfe. NCAS conducted sessions on advocacy, Community Report Cards, and budgets among others. The participants were from the states of Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Jharkhand. The sessions were highly participatory with insightful inputs from several participants and exciting discussions on topics of transparency.

6. NCAS facilitated an orientation programme with the displaced tribals of undivided Koraput district on April 15-16, 2018. About 100 people displaced by different projects of undivided Koraput district such as Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), Upper Kolab Dam, Indravati Dam, Machhakund Dam, Balimela Dam, Nalco mining and industry, mining and industry at Kashipur, Telengiri Dam etc. participated in the programme. The objective of the programme was to hear grievances of people who are victims of forced displacement in the undivided Koraput district of Odisha. This has helped in building a common understanding on status of rehabilitation and resettlement and develop a common strategy for proper rehabilitation and resettlement. After the programme, the displaced people submitted a memorandum addressed to the Chief Minister of Odisha.

7. NCAS is collaborating with the Gram Swaraj, a grassroots organization based at Baripada in Mayurbhanj district of Odisha, for working towards implementing government programs for Mankadia community, a PVTG group inhabiting in nine villages of Mayurbhanj district. Among adivasis, the PVTGs are most marginalized and their vulnerabilities are getting acute with time. This historical process of marginalization is further perpetuated by increased displacement, land alienation, decreasing access and control over forests, food insecurity, poor health and education and political insignificance.

8. Since partnership with NCAS, Gram Swaraj has undertaken efforts to enable Mankadia get entitlements under Forest Right Act and Food security Act. Major emphasis has been given on selection of the potential candidates as community leaders who have confidence, are dedicated to learn, and eager to stand up with the community for social cause. The young cadres from the villages have taken up the responsibility to make people aware about the Acts.

9. A workshop was organised on 21-23 April 2018 at Baripada which had 25 participants from nine Mankadia villages. The two-day program helped them understand the provisions of National Food Security Act and the Forest Rights Act. It also helped them go deeper into the reasons of
hunger and malnutrition. As a part of follow up of the programme, the community leaders supported their fellow villagers in applying benefits of different government social security programs. Efforts have been made to link Mankadias with food entitlements and claim individual and community land rights.