
DROUGHT 2015-16

**LESSONS
FROM
DESOLATION**

**a citizen's report on
impact of drought and
learnings for future**



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This report is prepared based on the ground level assessment of drought and ActionAid India's response to drought which has been supplemented by ActionAid International Humanitarian and Resilience team's (IHART's) Disaster Preparedness and Response fund (DPRF).

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Prepared by P. Raghu and Byomkesh Kumar Lall

With inputs from Bihar & Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan & Gujarat, Telengana & Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh & Uttarakhand Regional Offices of ActionAid India.

The list of allied organisations that worked on this report is given as Annexure C

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Cover Photograph: Parched land in Pimpri village, Khultabad taluk, Aurangabad district of Maharashtra.

This photograph taken on April 2, 2013 shows how drought is a chronic problem in Marathwada. Photo: Manoj Patil / ActionAid

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Foreword

At this point of time, many locations in the country are facing floods and heavy rains. In a tragic irony, ground reports speak about floods affecting some communities that were already struggling to cope with the devastation of drought. A month or two back nearly 300 districts in 11 states were reeling under extreme drought conditions. The cycles of extreme weather seem to have got tighter and more intense. With these seeming futures of ecological stress and climate change, we need a paradigm shift in our thinking, planning and practice in dealing with the twin headed monster of drought and flood.

As ActionAid India is present in many areas that are chronically affected by drought and were facing impact of the recent drought, we tried to respond to the crisis quickly. In Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan, Telangana and Uttar Pradesh we extended quick relief, and in a few areas we tried to build drought resilience working together with affected communities. We also organized consultations, public meetings, public hearings and mobilization around entitlements, raising the issue of the structural reasons behind drought, as also the impact of the crisis on the most vulnerable. We also captured solutions from the people affected. Some of us travelled across the most affected areas of Marathwada, Bundelkhand, Telangana and Odisha to understand the impact of drought and also to campaign on the progressive Supreme Court orders on the public interest litigation on drought. The damage and distress we witnessed were immense and had a deep impact especially on lives of poor and excluded, and we realized that communities might take years to recover. We came across several locked homes, where households had left their villages. Distress drove millions of rural labour and small farmers to urban centers in search of work and livelihood options where they found only precarious conditions.

There has been a large gap between the impact of the drought and the response of delivering relief, helping recovery and building resilience. There were many lapses in implementation of even the existing entitlements. Functioning of public distribution system, mid day meals, Integrated Child Development Services, the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act and other social security schemes are critical in times of emergency, and the lapses have been brought out glaringly by civil society, social movements and the media. In rural areas, water bodies, the commons and other natural resources are depleting fast and the traditional knowledge and practices of local communities in protecting these sources are neglected. Focus is on mega investment projects – big dams are prioritized over minor irrigation and alternative energy options.

Drought 2015-16 – Lessons From Desolation: A citizen's report on impact of drought and learnings for future is an attempt to understand and share the situation faced by the vulnerable communities in the drought affected areas. The report also seeks to explore lasting solutions to build drought resilience. It highlights and gives to us several agendas to pursue. We need to create a robust system of preparedness, response and recovery. We need to popularize the rights discourse on relief and rehabilitation. As the basic foundation of drought resilience we need to ask for a legal framework on governance of water for the common good of humankind. We need to build the argument for a shift from current market-driven extractive development models to ecologically sustainable, socially just and economically equitable approaches. When we work with nature we may not be as vulnerable to the cycles of extreme of weather.

This report is a collaborative effort, in which many allied organizations and friends have contributed. We hope it will help in the search for positive agendas of change. I request readers to please share thoughts and suggestions to this discourse.

in solidarity

Sandeep Chachra

Executive Director

ActionAid India

Executive Summary

Drought 2015-16 has affected more than 330 million people in more than 2.5 lakh villages of 266 districts from 11 states. It has had a devastating impact on people's lives as it affected water availability, agriculture, livelihoods, food production and food security, natural resources and also put a huge burden on exchequer.

ActionAid India, along with many other civil society organisations and social movements responded to the drought this year. Bihar & Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan & Gujarat, Telangana & Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh & Uttarakhand regional offices of ActionAid India initiated ground work in seven states reaching out to the most marginalised and in solidarity with them advocated for relief and other support from the state. As part of the advocacy work, we conducted public consultations and hearings in Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan with solidarities. To complement our work on drought, we also conducted a multistate study to capture the crises, the response to the crisis. Village surveys covering 279 villages in 30 districts and seven states were part of the process. ActionAid India regional offices come up with respective state level briefs. The current report is a compilation of all these efforts.

Public Consultations and Hearings

Public hearings and consultations were held in Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan with more than 2000 agriculturists – small farmers and workers, including women farmers, participating. People shared their experiences and articulated their demands. People wanted to have a right to relief and protection, the wanted efforts towards revival and development of water sources, land, forests and commons.

Food Security

Proper functioning of public distribution system, mid-day meals in schools, and Integrated Child Development Scheme centers would have met the food and nutritional requirement of families. But the implementation of these programmes on the ground is not satisfactory. Across the states surveyed significant proportions of households were excluded from lists despite their eligibility under National Food Security Act -- about 43% in Madhya Pradesh and 10% in Jharkhand and 2% in both Odisha and Telangana. In Jharkhand despite having NFSA cards another 14% were not getting ration because of various reasons.

Issues in relation to regularity were also reported. In Madhya Pradesh 33% families had reported that they were not getting the ration on regular basis. Shops were open only for 2 to 3 days in a month. In Madhya Pradesh 48% of villages reported that ration shops were open only for 3 days in a month and 33% villages reported shops were open for only 2 days and 19% villages said only one day. In Rajasthan out of a total of 75 villages, 20 villages reported that they were not getting food grains on regular basis.

Aadhar linking has also aggravated the issue. Aadhar linkage issues have been reported from Telangana, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh due to which families are not getting ration. Many districts have not appointed the grievance offices to address the issues.

Though the Supreme Court order mandated provision of mid day meals during the summer vacation, it was found that the orders were partially implemented in Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan while it was implemented better in Jharkhand and Telangana states. However, it was not all implemented in Odisha. In case of Maharashtra, the field reports contradicted the information provided by the official sources.

Food intake has also been affected because of severe drought and women are at the receiving end in this context. In Odisha field observations revealed that in case of 70% households there has been significant change in food consumption and 71% females had reported decreased food intake due to the prevailing drought situation. The small and marginal farmers could barely meet 30% of the food requirement for the whole family.

Water Crisis

Consecutive years of deficit rainfall coupled with the mismanagement of water resources have made almost all water bodies including drinking water sources dry in many locations of the drought affected areas. The field discussions and visits revealed that people had faced severe water crisis in drought-affected areas. In significant proportions hand pumps were found to be defunct, in Uttar Pradesh 25%, in Jharkhand 27% and Telangana 42%. Even among the functional hand-pumps, two thirds are partially functional and with insufficiently safe water. Water tankers were arranged by the district administration, but it was not sufficient to cater to the demands of the drought affected population. The proportions of dysfunctional hand-pumps were higher in the case of Odisha 53%, Rajasthan 56% and Maharashtra 90%. The response of the concerned water department in taking up either repair of existing pumps or digging new bore wells was scanty and not seen in villages. Acute scarcity of drinking water was reported in Sundergarh district of Odisha. The scarcity of water burdened the women more and also brought to the fore the issues of discrimination against Dalits and their access to water sources and water. Odisha reported the neglect of traditional water bodies. Upto 93% of traditional water bodies have not been renovated for the last 10 years and 57% of water bodies created under MGNREGS have dried up without proper inlet and outlet arrangements.

Crop Loss and Compensation, Indebtedness and Migration

Broadly the state surveys revealed that the scale of damage was huge, proportions of farmers who reported crop loss ranged from 60% to 94%. In some cases the land had been left fallow due to the past years of erratic and scanty rainfall. In Telangana where village level discussions were held in 19 villages it was found that 5562 acres of land was left fallow.

Compensation for crop loss had not been received by all farmers, in Uttar Pradesh in 11 villages it was reported that only 420 farmers (18.4%) out of 2275 farmers got crop compensation for crop loss pertaining to the 2014-15 kharif season and 1834 farmers (74%) got compensation out of 2454 farmers for the 2014-15 rabi season. Madhya Pradesh had interesting findings in relation to crop compensation. It was found that 24% did not receive any compensation and among those who received compensation, 69% received less than Rs.1000/-. These findings have also highlighted the fact that majority of tenants and sharecroppers (88%) were excluded from compensation framework. Other major issues came to light was that non timber forest produce (NTFP) losses that impacted tribal families were not counted as part of losses.

It was reported that 40-65% of the farmers were indebted and facing extreme depressing conditions due to the burden of loan. In the villages of Uttar Pradesh this proportion was as high as 87.5%. The accessibility of bank loans to many small and marginal farmers, especially tenants and sharecroppers is almost remote and they have no other option but approaching private lenders who charge exorbitant interest rates. Instances of mortgaging of lands was reported in Uttar Pradesh and also serving notices to the farmers for repayment of loans from the banks, was reported by Jharkhand.

It was found that migration, a common phenomenon in these regions, especially in Marathwada, Bundelkhand and Telangana, has increased significantly. There was more than 20% population migration from affected villages. Along with young population, a significant number of children and women also accompanied their families to cities. In Uttar Pradesh 896 children (12.3%) in the age group 0-6 years and 945 children (13.1%) in the age group 6-14 years joined their parents migrating to uncertain and unsafe locations to live in precarious conditions.

Work Under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act

In the absence of agriculture work and other land/water dependent works, work under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is the only alternative for survival and livelihood for millions of wage seekers. It is evident that specific efforts were not made to activate wage work under MGNREGA. Moreover delayed payments had severely impacted the interests of the workers and crippled its implementation. In Madhya Pradesh 17%, in Telangana 9.3% and in Jharkhand 20% had no job cards despite their interest in securing MGNREGA work. In Uttar Pradesh also such problems were found in 15 villages. Further despite their need and willingness to work, a significant proportion of workers/villages did not get work under MGNREGA -- this percentage ranges between 5% and 30%. Delayed payments were reported across all the villages studied. There was delay (almost six months) in releasing funds from the Central government to the State governments. This was corroborated by Madhya Pradesh study in 43 villages where only in case of 20% villages wages were paid on time and in 80% of the villages the payments were delayed for a period ranging from one to six months.

Livestock Issues

Field reports revealed that thousands of cattle were left abandoned due to prevailing conditions in the villages. In the study villages of Madhya Pradesh 91% of the cattle was abandoned, while Jharkhand reported 3008 cattle as abandoned and Uttar Pradesh reported 22% loss in cattle population when compared to the last year. Further, Uttar Pradesh also reported 1543 cattle deaths while villages from Rajasthan reported death of 1391 cattle due to scarcity of water and shortage of fodder. It has further reported that out of 77 villages, 73 reported scarcity of fodder. Distress sale of cattle was reported from all villages.

Alternatives That Demonstrate Drought Resilience

Alternatives that build drought resilience are available as local success stories. These include stories of water harvesting in tribal village of Odisha and Uttar Pradesh, the cultivating of drought resistant paddy in Odisha, alternate models of water harvesting structures in Maharashtra, de-siltation of lakes in Karnataka, rain harvesting in Laporiya village in Rajasthan. In order to enriching learning, we have also added two cases from organizations having rich experience on water conservation.

Recommendations

Recommendations include the establishing relief as a right for communities affected by emergencies including drought, ensuring community access and control over natural resources especially water, to create a comprehensive law for equitable distribution and just governance of water and a critical review of current market-driven extractive development paradigm to build sustainable and equitable futures for all.

Acknowledgements

Several community based groups, social organisations, social workers, government officials and media personnel from various States have contributed to this report. Without these solidarities this report would not have been possible. We take the opportunity to thank all for their valuable support and contribution.

Drought 2015-16 – Lessons From Desolation covers seven states namely Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan, Telangana and Uttar Pradesh. We acknowledge and thank the Regional Offices of ActionAid India who steered this study with immensely valuable engagement of social organisations and individuals in their respective States.

ActionAid India is happy to join hands with all like-minded organizations to bring the issue of drought to the centre stage of national debate, policy reform and action. The full list of organisations is given in Annexure C. We look forward to all the support we can get to build wider solidarities around this issue with vulnerable populations.

We acknowledge the valuable support of ActionAid International Humanitarian and Resilience team's (IHART's) Disaster Preparedness and Response fund (DPRF) for supplementing ActionAid India's drought response in the states and in coming up with this National Citizen's Report.

We also acknowledge European Commission and International Food Security Network (IFSN) for their support to publish this report.

I. Introduction

The unprecedented crisis of the recent drought has affected more than 330 million people in more than 2.5 lakh villages of 266 districts from 11 states. (See Table 1 for details of 11 states) It has had a devastating impact on water, agriculture, livelihoods, food production and food security, natural resources and also on exchequer.

Consistent rainfall deficit for two years and failure of four agriculture seasons has worsened the situation. But there is a broad consensus that more than rainfall deficit, the policies and practices in relation to surface and ground water use, cropping patterns, neglect of rain-fed areas and micro-irrigation, skewed investment priorities, dwindling efficiency of big dams, prioritizing big solutions over local peoples knowledge and experience and the failure to ensure timely relief and mitigation measures, has collectively led to the present crisis.

Central and State Governments' response to the crisis were insufficient to address the scale and extent of the emergency situation. Parched lands with not a drop of water, millions of people migrating in search of water and work, distress sales of livestock and other assets, reservoirs and water bodies becoming bone dry, tankers and railway wagons

Table 1: Districts, Blocks/Talukas and Villages declared as drought affected by State Governments*

State	Total Districts	Districts declared as drought affected	Blocks/Talukas declared as drought affected	Villages declared as drought affected
Jharkhand	24	22	238	29639
Madhya Pradesh	51	46	289	42829
Maharashtra	36	21	160	15747
Odisha	30	27	235	29077
Rajasthan	33	19	120	14487
Telangana	10	7	231	5519
Uttar Pradesh	75	50	224	72014
Karnataka	30	27, 12 (Rabi)	137	22759
Chhattisgarh	27	25	117	16878
Andhra Pradesh	13	10	359	6974
Total	329	266	2110	255923

* Gujarat initially had declared 526 villages and another 468 villages (994 villages) as scarcity affected due to scanty rains in the first week of April 2016 on pursuance of Supreme Court

supplying water, the need for issuing prohibitory orders under Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code to avert conflict among people queuing up for water at water sources – together present a grim picture across the country. Rural communities across the spectrum was affected by Drought 2015-16, but emergency situations like this have a differential impact on people, thus the landless poor, small and marginal farmers, women and children and most vulnerable population (old, single women, persons with disability etc.) were the worst affected ones.

Drought 2015-16 opened debates that give us the chance to question and challenge our understanding and strategies from different perspectives. The failure of many welfare schemes in providing access to entitlements, the dilution of rights of the communities over food entitlements and right to work, lack of enough relief measures and preparedness in response to drought, lack of long term mitigation plans and machinery in place have been under serious scrutiny of civil society, communities and even by judiciary. The Supreme Court spent 40 hours hearing the public interest litigation filed on Drought 2015-16 and issued orders (*see Annexure A: Synopsis of Supreme Court Orders on Drought Public Interest Litigation*) for the implementation of existing schemes, entitlements, and parameters considered for drought declaration and for reviewing the drought manual etc. Moving beyond the issue of the Supreme Court orders we realized that considering the chronic nature of drought the terms of discourse around drought response should be around the wider questions of the right to food, the right to water for life, the right to work and also to bring back to the agenda of policy making the obligations of a welfare state.

For long policymaking has favoured resource-heavy interventions and projects including building mega dams, interlinking rivers, investing into industrial technologies including biotechnologies controlled by private IPR regimes that favour extractive production processes that convert agricultural practices into industrial processes. Experts have argued that Drought 2015-16 emerged as a crisis not because of inadequate rainfall but because of the relentless pursuit of market focused industrial agriculture. Moving further on the path of promoting private ownership and commoditization of the natural resources (water, forests, fossil energies and minerals) would only further aggravate the situation.

As an episode in an ongoing story Drought 2015-16 may be over with the onset of monsoon rains, but the deeper crisis calls long term sustainable solutions. We need to ensure food security, food sovereignty and a life of dignity for rural communities especially small farmers and the landless. We need to rebuild agriculture as a sustainable, inclusive and dignified livelihood option running on agro-ecological practices. We need to build up water as commons by reclaiming and rejuvenating river systems and water bodies, recharging groundwater. We need to urge the Government to create a policy and necessary legal instruments to advance the right to water.

Community-based and civil society organizations have tried to respond to the crisis by activating the existing public provisioning entitlements like Public Distribution System, Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS), Mid Day Meals and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). There are also islands of hope that have emerged from peoples' initiatives that have constructively promoted rainwater harvesting models and drought resilient farming systems using traditional knowledge and appropriate technologies across the country.

Drought 2015-16 – Lessons From Desolation: A citizen’s report on impact of drought and learnings for future has emerged from consultations and surveys held with people and communities at the village, district and state levels held across October 2015 to July 2016. Regions and states severely affected by Drought 2015-16 including Marathwada and Vidarbha areas of Maharashtra, Bundelkhand areas of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Telangana, Rajasthan and Jharkhand were covered as part of these consultations and other people-led processes. (See Table 2: Villages covered under survey) Civil society organizations, social movements, farmers and labourers’ organizations, peoples’ organizations and platforms, activists, human rights groups and government representatives are part of this process. (See Annexure C: Organisations Contributing to Report) These consultations involved interactions with various rights holders including wage seekers under MGNREGA, members of School Monitoring Committees, farmers, tenants and share croppers, Dalits, women and children. District and state-level officials in concerned departments were engaged in the public consultations and public hearings. These consultations sought mobilize communities to represent issues to the state through mass gatherings and petitioning. Field level activists led these processes with the support of civil society organizations.

This process was informed by a National Consultation on Drought organised by Action-Aid India in Delhi on May 2016 where leading experts on water management, environment, agriculture discussed the issue with representatives of peasant organisations and civil society groups.

Drought 2015-16 – Lessons From Desolation: A citizen’s report on impact of drought and learnings for future is an attempt to capture the voices of the people in affected areas of drought in terms of the issues they face, their perceptions about the state’s response and also their experiences of alternatives and solutions.

Table 2: Villages covered under survey*

State	Districts	Blocks	Villages
Jharkhand	5	7	26
Madhya Pradesh	3	6	66
Maharashtra	4	8	30
Odisha	5	6	30
Rajasthan	7	18	82
Telangana	3	10	19
Uttar Pradesh	3	9	26
Total	30	64	279

* Detailed state wise list of villages provided in Annexure B: Villages covered under surveys.

II. Drought 2015-16

A Cumulative Result of Many Factors

Rainfall deficit alone may not be blamed for the recent crisis of water shortage, crop losses and resultant plight of wage seekers, farmers, women and children who suffered either in villages or while migrating to urban centers under distress and in search of work and water. It has been the cumulative result of major lapses in our policy and practices for the past few decades, in relation to neglect and encroachment of water bodies and commons, exploitation of ground water, water governance, land use patterns, cropping choices, priority for mega dams and negligence of minor irrigation, use and production models of power sector, management and conservation of forests, environment and bio diversity...all these factors had contributed to the recent predicament of the drought. “At least 10 states in India are in the grip of a drought, will not be relieved by a good monsoon. For this “mega water crisis” is at least twenty years in the making”, says P. Sainath, a renowned journalist and policy analyst.¹

Further the timeliness and the quality of the response of the state in relation to accuracy of weather forecasting, preparedness to face drought, methods of declaration of drought, reluctance to declare drought, delay in release of funds and insufficiency of funds released, failure of ensuring the entitlements and other relief measures etc., have been brought to the fore and challenged in the public discourse.

The inadequacy of State response does not arise from a failure to understand the roots of the crisis. The National Disaster Management Authority, the specialized agency of the government on dealing with disasters displays the correct perspective when it states in its National Disaster Management Guidelines: Management of Drought (2010) that “drought is no longer mere scarcity or the absence of rainfall, but related to inefficient water resource management.” Perhaps the question of political will and commitment needs to be addressed.

What follows is a brief analysis of the major reasons that lead to the current plight of drought-affected areas in the country.

Water Resources

Over-exploitation, mismanagement and commoditization of water resources have led to crisis of availability of potable and safe drinking water today. As succinctly stated by Rajen-

1. <http://video.scroll.in/808080/is-water-a-fundamental-right-watch-p-sainath-explain-how-indias-thirst-economy-makes-profits>

dra Singh, known as waterman of India, “...there is no system to check wastage, misuse and distribution of water. Over the years, two sections of people have emerged, one who doesn't get safe drinking water and the other who misuses water from private borewells and other sources. Nobody thinks of saving water. This has to be checked by introducing a water security law so that every drop of water is used judiciously.”²

Policy needed to regulate urban water use

Even our priorities between urban and rural areas are changing. The increasing demand of water from urban centres is making the state to discriminate against rural areas of their due share of water for drinking and irrigation purposes. There is an increasing trend to prioritize urban centres' water needs over that of rural needs, even at the cost of huge budget allocations and environmental costs. Mumbai wants water from 12 new dams, displacing 1,00,000 tribals and submerging 22,000 hectares of Western Ghats. Delhi is looking to the Renuka Dam in Himachal Pradesh, unmindful of the impact on forests, lands of tribals and Ramsar wetlands. It could be argued that the water crisis spreading to urban centres was a contributing factor in addition of the intervention of the Supreme Court, to the state being forced to attend to the drought crisis. The media attention focused inordinately on the shift of venue for cricket matches and on the Jal Doots – trains with tankers of water (on occasion empty) delivering water to affected areas. There is urgent need for a policy framework to regulate urban water use.³

Robust implementation of rules of ground water usage

Indiscriminate exploitation of ground water and encroachment and poor maintenance of water bodies have seriously affected water resources. In the past four decades the changing patterns of cropping, commoditization of water, unregulated use of ground water has led overexploitation of aquifers. The recharge of ground water is far less than what we consume and use, as a result water tables are dropping fast.

As per existing rules only five bore wells are permitted in every square kilometer with a depth of not more than 200 feet. Keeping this in mind the number of borewells in Latur district with an area of 715 sq km should ideally not cross 3575. Yet there are 90000 borewells and people have dug borewells as deep as 1300 feet. In Marathwada, it is estimated that 10000 new borewells are sunk every month.⁴ The current legal or policy framework is failing to regulate ground water exploitation.

Disappearing traditional water bodies.

India has a rich tradition of water conservation methods. As rightly pointed out by eminent researcher on water, Anupam Mishra, “...since time immemorial our society, from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, designed a range of water harvesting systems to capture rain whether it was copious or scarce. This has been our tradition.”⁵ However over period of time, we neglected, encroached, and exploited these water bodies. It was reported that encroachment

2. Time for Water Law, May 5, 2016, <http://www.governancenow.com/>

3. “Consume more, Pollute more, Pay less, Ask for more Dams: Pune City's water policy”, June 4, 2016, SANDRP, <https://sandrp.wordpress.com/2016/06/04/consume-more-pollute-more-pay-less-ask-for-more-dams-pune-citys-water-supply>

4. Drilling for their lives, The Hindu, May 4, 2016 <http://www.thehindu.com/data/last-droppart-1-villagers-digging-borewells-to-escape-drought/article8551235.ece>

of hundreds of Chandela-era ponds and the overall degradation of the forest cover are to be blamed for the sustained crisis in Bundelkhand. Sanjay Singh of the Jal Jan Jodo Campaign says, “Out of the 12,000 odd Chandeli and Bundeli era traditional ponds — known for their engineering brilliance — which dotted the Bundelkhand landscape, only 2,000 remained.” Sanjay Singh blames rampant encroachment, settlements and dismantling of the ponds’ outlet system for their demise. In addition, in the last decade, 4,020 ponds have “vanished” in Bundelkhand, primarily due to encroachments by land sharks, environment activist Ashish Sagar found through an RTI.⁶

Hydrological Unsound Cropping Patterns

Changes in cropping patterns over period of time, shifting to water intensive crops and promoting such water intensive crops in unsuitable geo climatic conditions have also lead to the crisis of water. Sugarcane cultivation in Marathwada areas has been criticized as a wrong choice for the region. Sugarcane covers 4% of cropped area but draws 71% of water in Marathwada. Sugarcane farmers are spending up to rupees one lakh for 1000 feet borewells and two lakhs for pump sets.

Ignoring minor irrigation projects

We constructed big dams to provide irrigation, generate power and water supply for industries and drinking purposes. Though these purposes are served to some extent our current understanding and research on big dams informs us a different picture. We neglected minor irrigation and dry land areas. The total “net irrigated area in the country is 63 million hectares which is 45% of the total area sown with huge investment on big dams. There has been massive increase in real public investment in major, medium and minor irrigation from Rs. 235 billion in 2004-05 to Rs.309 billion in 2013-14. While the capital expenditure in major projects increased by 3.5 times, the investment in minor irrigation increased by 2.5 times only. A virtually stagnancy in irrigated area, especially of the area under canal irrigation – raises concerns about the efficiency of the ongoing investments and the quantum of investment that is further required to scale up area under irrigation. The ratio of irrigation potential created from public expenditure is higher for minor irrigation projects than larger projects.”⁷

The promises of the benefit of big dams were exposed during the course of the drought period. Marathwada has 11 major dams – with the promise that 20% of agricultural land would be provided with irrigation. But it has provided water for only 8% of the land. Further the efficiency of these dams is also questioned by many researchers and experts in the field. “Between 1992 and 2004 for example 200 large and medium sized irrigation works were constructed yet the area irrigated by such schemes shrank by 3.2 mn hectares. Unless sizeable investments are undertaken to de-silt reservoirs and repair damaged canals, dams and irrigation works, some estimate that by 2050, India may well run short of water.”⁸ The

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5. ‘Let this be the last photo-op for drought’, Interview with Anupam Mishra, India’s most respected thinker and researcher on water, Civil Society News, New Delhi, <http://www.civilsocietyonline.com/interviews/the-monsoon-has-the-last-laugh-it-gives-us-rain-we-dont-capture-it>
 6. Ponds go bone dry in Bundelkhand villages, The Hindu, April 30, 2016), <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/ponds-go-bonedry-in-bundelkhand-villages/article8537963.ece>
 7. ‘Water will continue to be scarce’, *The Hindu*, 26 April 2016
 8. *Scarcity in Mettur’s vicinity*, May 6, 2016, *The Hindu*, <http://www.thehindu.com/data/last-drop-scarcity-in-metturs-viceinity/article8562522.ece>

current efficiency of big dams in Maharashtra is just 23%, according to Vijay Deevan, a civic activist and former member of the Marathwada Development Board.⁹ The politics of big dams in Maharashtra has kept a large majority of farmers outside the coverage of irrigation, as testified by Parineeta Dandekar, an activist of the South Asian Network of Dams, Rivers and People.¹⁰

Resource Intensive Power Generation

Our priority and investment on coal-based power generation also contributes to water resource crisis. “India had a total installed power capacity of 288700 MW of which 201400 MW was thermal power (coal, natural gas and diesel). Such a high percentage (70%) of thermal power capacity means that the country requires a lot of freshwater for generating electricity. Keeping in view the high probability of climate change exacerbating fresh water availability across the country and a growing population (1.7 billion by 2050) the overreliance on thermal power (including nuclear power) spells disaster,” says Shankar Sarma.¹¹ The amount of freshwater required by the 7 lakh MW of additional coal and gas power plants (being planned in 2011) could provide for the drinking water needs of 7% of the country’s population or irrigate more than 9 lakh hectares of land states a survey report by Prayas Group, and mentioned in Shankar Sarma article quoted above.

Climate Change

Our preoccupation with growth centric development model not only in India but across the world, will eventually lead to overexploitation of natural resources which will also lead to the extreme climate variability’s that forces us into a crisis. Many locations in the country are facing the threat land degradation, desertification and salinization due to deforestation, encroachment of water bodies, lack of soil and water conservation practices, water intensive and chemical farming, overexploitation of ground water etc. According to the *Fifth National Report on Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought*, 68% of the country is prone to drought, and this will be further heightened because of the impact of climate change, particularly in dry lands. Twenty-five percentage of India’s total land is undergoing desertification while 32% is facing degradation that has affected productivity, critically impacting the livelihood and food security of millions across the country. Climate change will further challenge the livelihood of those living in these sensitive ecosystems and may result in higher levels of resource scarcity,” the report warns.¹²

The recent experiences of Marathwada and Bundelkhand are harsh indicators of this reality. “A rapid process of desertification has been happening in Marathwada which is a direct fallout of climate change. The immediate crisis is the outcome of our failure to read well in time the signals the climate change phenomenon has been giving,” says Latur-based climate change activist and author Atul Deulgaonkar.¹³ This cautions us to be awake to the grim reality of ecological crisis leading economic, social and cultural crisis in the country.

9. <http://www.firstpost.com/india/marathwada-drought-maha-has-the-most-dams-in-the-country-but-the-least-effective-irrigation-network-leaving-lakhs-in-the-lurch-2721434.html>

10. The great dry, Livemint, Friday, May 13 2016. <http://www.livemint.com/Politics/e6pt7nDBPaTgUMMRTi61oJ/Thegreatdry.html>

11. Shankar Sarma, *India’s water and power crisis*, EPW, Vol.51 Issue No.19, 7 May 2016,

12. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/indiahome/indianews/article-2660560/Desertification-land-degradation-affects-quarter-Indias-land.html>

13. The great dry, Livemint, Fri, May 13 2016, <http://www.livemint.com/Politics/e6pt7nDBPaTgUMMRTi61oJ/Thegreatdry.html>

Late Response by State and Administration

Another major reason that aggravated the intensity of plight of the poor and marginalised in these drought-affected areas is the extremely deficient response of the state(s) in time, scale and outreach. Starting from sensing the crisis, preparedness, declaration of drought, to ensuring entitlements and relief the failure of the states to meet the demand has been brought to light and challenged by the media, civil society, parliament and the Supreme Court.

The delay in drought declaration has both technical as well as political dimensions. On the technical front our efficiency and methods of forecasting are under critique. Though we are not competent to comment on this, there are arguments on this important component by the experts. Why do the rain forecasts by the IMD rarely prove to be accurate? It is the variable factors and unpredictable nature of weather that is blamed for this state of affairs. Jagadish Shukla, head of the Climate Dynamics Department in George Mason University points out, “We have proved that in spite of its chaotic nature, it is possible to improve on our predictability of weather and climate.” Shukla is critical of the statistical model used by the IMD that is based on the statistical information of organizations in Europe and America. He has consistently suggested that thorough research on the weather patterns in the Indian Subcontinent and preparation of a customized model that considers climate dynamics is needed, in the absence of which short term predictions for very small regions are unreliable.”¹⁴

On the other hand, the reluctance of the States to declare is so deplorable. This tardiness even forced Supreme Court to come up with very harsh comments on the delay on the part of the States. In a series of judgements, it directed the centre to create a rules-based framework of declaring a drought, as several states like Jharkhand, Rajasthan and Gujarat delayed notifying a drought, or as in the case of Bihar and Haryana, they continued to deny the reality of drought. Bihar and Haryana governments contended that rainfall in their states had been normal and they cannot be declared drought-hit.¹⁵

The blame game between the Centre and States has also made the situation worse. The Centre said that it had done all it could for drought mitigation and that drought relief and mitigation was the responsibility of the State governments. On the other hand State governments submit the reports of loss and request for funds and blame the Centre for not allocating enough funds in time. Intervening on this the Drought PIL, Supreme Court commented: “The elbow room available to each State enabling it to decline declaring a drought (even though it exists) should be minimized. This would certainly be in the interest of the people who face distress because of a drought or a drought-like situation.”

14. <http://www.epw.in/journal/2016/18/reports-states/agriculture-injurious-health.html>

15. <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Over-25-of-Indias-population-hit-by-drought-Centre-tells-Supreme-Court/articleshow/51901956.cms>

16. Swaraj Abhiyan Vs Union of India Supreme Court of India (WP No.857 of 2015)

III. Public Consultations and Hearings

As part of the ActionAid India response to the Drought 2015-16 we held public consultations at the National level, at the state and district levels. The National Level Consultation was held in Delhi on 20 May 2016. State and District level consultations were held in Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan. Given below is a synopsis of the proceedings in these consultations.

National Level Consultation in Delhi

“Our response to the unprecedented drought situation is woefully inadequate,” was the sentiment expressed by participants at the national level consultation on drought organized today in Delhi. The consultation aimed at bringing together various peoples organisations, activists, civil society, research institutes, corporates and concerned government bodies to share their perspectives and work experiences around drought preparedness, relief and mitigation so as to develop our short term and long term strategies for a durable solutions for drought.

Mr. Rajendra Singh, Chairman, Tarun Bharat Sangh saw the current drought as, “A man made disaster.” He called for, “A community driven decentralized water policy as the only solution. Before offering solutions we first need to listen to the knowledge of the farmers who have dealt with drought.”

Mr. Richard Mahapatra, managing editor, of Down to Earth magazine claimed: “There is no connection between monsoon and drought, the dire situation has been caused mismanagement of water.” He argued that, “the time has come to demand for community rights over water as the only solution to solving drought.” Peoples’ organizations and civil society also have been struggling to respond to the crisis by activating the existing public provisioning entitlements like PDS, ICDS, MDM and MGNREGA. Despite these dismal conditions, there are islands of hope that have emerged from peoples’ initiatives who have constructively promoted water harvesting models and drought resilient farming systems with their traditional knowledge and wisdom across the country.

Mr. Ramesh Sharma of Ekta Parishad said: “Government response to drought has been inadequate. There is no clarity who is supposed to respond to drought. We have many agricultural institutions but our basic education system is lacking sensitivity about doing agriculture in chronically drought prone areas.”

Devinder Sharma, agriculture policy analyst, spoke about the need to, “make agriculture drought resistant and change the skewed cropping pattern followed in India. He argued that changes in the cropping pattern would only be possible with a proper price policy and

trade policy.” He argued that “policy makes focus too much on GDP and the conditions that create drought are ignored as they do not feature in these calculations. We need to do an evaluation of ecosystem services.”

The national consultation on drought was held to bring together various peoples’ organisations, activists, civil society, research institutes, and corporates to share perspectives, work experiences and possible solutions around the question of drought relief, mitigation and preparedness so as to develop short term and long term strategies for durable solutions for drought.

Public Consultations Organised in Madhya Pradesh

State-level Consultation in Bhopal

A “Jan Samvad” or public consultation was organised in Bhopal on 5 June 2016 by Jan Pahel, Narmada Bachao Andolan, Kisan Sabha and Madhya Pradesh Apda Niwaran Manch. Nearly 750 participants from 20 districts of the state attended the consultation and shared the issues they faced due to the drought. A panel comprising Harsh Mander, the Special Commissioner to the Supreme Court, Yogendra Yadev, Convenor of Swaraj Abhiyan and Swati Bhatkal of Satyamev Jayate attended and addressed the Jan Samvad. Distress migration, poor implementation of drought relief work, NREGS, water scarcity, cattle deaths due to hunger and water scarcity, and indebtedness of farmers were discussed in the consultation. *Bin Paani Sab Soon* (Without Water all Desolate) a report on drought in Madhya Pradesh prepared by Jan Pahel, Madhya Pradesh Apda Niwaran Manch and ActionAid India was also released in the consultation

Public Consultations Organised in Odisha

State-level Consultation in Bhubaneswar

ActionAid India in collaboration with the Dalit Adhikar Sangathan, Adivasi Ekta Sangathan, Jagarana, Center for Child and Women Development (CCWD), Centre for Integrated Research and Tribal Development (CIRTD), Jivan Vikas, Antarang, Jana Jagarana Dadana Shramika Sangha, Odisha Anasangathita Shramika Sangha, Patang, Sehedra, and Nirman organised a day-long consultation on the drought situation in Odisha on 10 June 2016. About 230 people from 7 districts of Odisha like Bargarh, Kandhamal, Sundergarh, Ganjam, Bolangir, Koraput and Nuapada joined this meeting held at Bhubaneswar shared the drought scenario in their respective districts. During the consultation, the findings of the State’s citizen’s report in drought were shared. The Citizen’s report was based on the primary assessment of drought in 5 districts namely Sundargarh, Kandhamal, Bargarh, Koraput and Balangir. The consultation was attended by social activists who shared their views and came with a set of recommendations including Rajendra Singh Magsaysay Award Winner, Richard Mahapatra, Managing Editor, Down to Earth, Saroj Mohanty, Paschim Odisha Krushak Sangathan, and Rukmini Rao, agriculture expert.

At the end of the consultation it was agreed that drought mitigation requires political will and long-term water harvesting measures. The themes underlined during the proceedings were the need to:

- to prioritize issues of disadvantaged communities
- support the small and marginal farmers

- promote water harvesting measures
- strengthen innovative practices in practicing climate resilient sustainable agriculture
- strengthen collective farming and ensure land to landless.

District-level Consultation in Bargarh

A district level consultation was organised in Bargarh district Odisha by Samuhik Marudi Pratikar Udyam Pdamapur (SMPUP), Paschim Odisha Krushak Bikash Manch, Zilla Lok Adhikar Sangathan and other like-minded organizations in Padampur on 7 June 2016. The objective of the consultation was to discuss the drought situation of the district Bargarh, and generate people's perspective and solutions to mitigate drought.

Drought, agriculture policy, excessive use of water and chemical inputs in agriculture, drought package announced by the state government, indebtedness, migration and crisis because of drought, etc. were the main themes discussed in the consultation. The consultation also demanded for input support subsidy, provision of additional incentive of Rs. 100 for selling each quintal of paddy, exemption from land cess, exemption from school fees for children, inclusion of all the affected families under National Food Security Act, renovation of ponds, tanks and other traditional water bodies, deepening of existing bore-wells, development of more and more irrigation facilities for agriculture, timely seed support for Rabi cultivation and promotion of drought resilient agriculture.

Social activists, government officials, civil society organisations, leaders of lok sangathans (people's organisation), and MLAs from Padampur and Bijepur attended the meeting and listened to the plight of the farmers. Approximately 350 farmers from the district participated in this program and shared their experiences and concerns.

Participants in the consultation felt that there is a need of strong political willingness and support of the State Government to mitigate the drought situation in Odisha. There were suggestions for Government to undertake short term and long term drought mitigation measures such as provision of fodder, food assistance and drinking water, development of minor irrigation projects in Ong river, renovation of traditional water bodies, timely agricultural input subsidy support. The recommendations of the consultation were also shared with the district administration for needful action.

District-level Consultation in Sundargarh

A district level consultation at Sundargarh was organised by Centre for Integrated Research and Tribal Development (CIRTD) and Jivan Vikas on 8 June 2016. Approximately 90 people from Balisankara and Lahunipada blocks of Sundargarh attended the consultation and shared the situation of drought and its impact in their respective villages. District level officials including the Chief Veterinary Officer, Assistant Fishery Officer, and Officer in charge of NABARD for Sundargarh and Jharsuguda district, and Assistant Director Horticulture attended the consultation, listened and responded to the peoples' concerns. The findings of the assessment report were shared in the consultation, which was followed by the presentation of case studies and testimonies. Issues related to exclusion of farmers cultivating crops in forestland without patta (title) from getting crop loss compensation, non payment of increased wage under MGNREGA work as announced by the State government, delay in getting input support for Rabi crops, non-implementation of Supreme Court directions on

providing mid-day meals in schools during summer vacation and additional provision of milk and eggs in anganwadi centres were discussed at length by the participants.

Main suggestions from the consultation were conversion of forest villages into revenue villages, undertake planning exercise for long term drought mitigation measures, undertake soil and water conservation measures, support allied productive activities such as, animal husbandry, fishery and plantation of fruit bearing trees through MGNREGA.

District-level Consultation in Koraput

Adivasi Ekta Sashaktikaran Sammanway (AESS) organized a district level consultation on the drought situation in Koraput on 7 June 2016. Fifty-two participants from various gram panchayats joined and shared issues related to the drought situation in their areas and their thoughts about alternative solutions to build drought resilience. Water scarcity, crop loss and impact of drought on the lives of the people, drought relief package were discussed by the participants. It was also discussed that the loss of forest produce was not considered by the government in its drought package announcement. Job creation under MGNREGA and delay in enforcing additional wage provision under MGNREGA as announced by the government were also the areas of discussion and sharing by the people who had come from different panchayats of the district. The consultation also discussed the major findings of the drought assessment study carried out in Kermeti Gram Panchayat which revealed that there was considerable loss of crop and scarcity of water, indebtedness increased and distress migration was on rise. There was lack of efforts on the part of the government to create water-harvesting structures. The district level officials who were present in the consultation shared the government drought package and other provisions pertaining to waiving of school fees, etc.

District-level Consultation in Balangir

Jan Jagaran Dadan Sangathan organized a day-long consultation on drought in Tikrapada of Saintala block in Bolangir district on 9 June 2016. Fifty people, mainly farmers and Panchayat Raj Institution members from three village panchayats attended the consultation. The findings of the drought assessment study done in 5 villages were shared in the consultation. Loss of paddy, cotton and green gram crop, loss of non-timber forest produce, indebtedness and distress migration, delay in disbursement of input subsidy, MGNREGA, etc. were the main points of discussion. It was also shared by the participants that many families migrated for first time to survive their family members. During discussion in the consultation, it clearly came that Government should make provisions for immediate support to provide crop insurance support, exemption from school fees, provision of mid day meal support, inclusion of all the affected families under National Food Security Act, creation of irrigation facilities, renovation of traditional water bodies etc.

A memorandum was developed to be submitted to the Collector of Balangir. These demands included resuming Kudasingha canal work, creating more irrigation facilities, timely seed support to the farmers, increasing the wage rate of agricultural workers, marketing facility for agricultural produce, land development work in MGNREGA for marginal and small farmers, exemption of water tax and electric tax, timely agricultural loan, crop insurance and drought package support to be provided to the affected farmers.

Public Consultations Organised in Uttar Pradesh

District-level Consultation in Hamirpur

ActionAid India and Samarth Foundation organised a public consultation on drought in Hamirpur district of Bundelkhand on 28 June 2016. Approximately 500 people participated shared about issues related to drinking water scarcity, fodder and water for cattle, crop loss and compensation, distribution of relief materials, free food grain distribution, irrigation, and non implementation of Supreme Court’s directions on drought were at the centre of discussion. Twenty testimonies on the poor implementation of government schemes National Food Security Act, MGNREGS, Integrated Child Development Services, mid-day meals, crop failure compensation, fodder camps, insurance and bank loan were presented before the government officials and activists in the public hearing. The District Collector who attended the hearing reaffirmed commitment towards providing relief to the drought affected mass. He assured that the issues raised in the hearing will be paid attention to and will be resolved.

District-level Consultation in Lalitpur

A public consultation on “Effects of Drought on Sahariya Community” was organized in Lalitpur on 13 July 2016 by Sahariya Jan Adhikar Manch and Sai Jyoti Sanstha. Approximately 1000 people belonging to the Sahariya community from various villages of three blocks of the district attended the public hearing. Issues such as delay in wage payment under MGNREGA, opening of new work under MGNREGA, distribution of ration and Samajwadi ration kits, drinking water and water for cattle were raised by the participants. The Deputy Commissioner and the Sub-Divisional Magistrate assured that immediate steps will be taken of the complaints and problems shared during the public hearing. The SDM also appreciated the public action efforts of Sahariya community of Kalyanpur village for exposing the issue of missing names in the list of NFSA beneficiaries.

Rajendra Singh, the renowned water rights activist and the Magsaysay Award Winner was one of the panel members in the hearing. He emphasized on the need of rain water harvesting, equal rights for water for everyone including animals and plants, mapping and identification of water resources such as ponds, wells and the need to notify these sources so that encroachment could be restricted over the water units.

District-level Consultation in Mahoba

ActionAid India ally Grammonati and Arunodaya, another civil society organisation working in Mahoba district organised a public hearing on June 30, 2016 at Mahoba. It was attended by nearly 500 people from 48 villages of the district. Participants expressed their dissatisfaction so far as implementation of drought relief work by the government is concerned. Irregularity in implementation of MGNREGA, National Food Security Act, distribution of fodder for cattle, and drinking water for the drought-affected villages were shared by the participants. Government Officials including the Divisional Commissioner, the District Collector, the Assistant District Collector and the MGNREGA Commissioner responded to people’s queries and problems and assured them to resolve them as soon as possible especially delay in payment of wages under MGNREGA, food grain distribution under NFSA and timely provisioning of relief materials. Project Director, District Panchayati Raj Officer, District Supply Officer, Chief Veterinary Officer were also present in the hearing to listen

and respond to people's problems. The summary demands of the consultation were around regular and timely supply of food grains under NFSA, timely compensation for crop loss, supply of drinking water and fodder for cattle, distribution of food packets, and transparency in government schemes.

Public Action and Mobilisation in Rajasthan

A people's campaign was launched in Rajasthan on the drought issue. Rojgar Evam Suchna ka Adhikar Abhiyan, Akal Sangharsh Samity, Majdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS), Mehnat Kash Adhikar Abhiyan, PUCL, Kisan Bharti Vikas, Sansthan, NFIW, Prayas, Dalit Adhikar Network, NEED, Valmiki Adhikar Abhiyan, IJPHD, Prayantna Samittee, Vividha, CULP, BGVS, Budget Analysis Rajasthan Centre (BARC) together organised a 22 day-long public action backed up by public mobilisation. The public action started off on June 1 and culminated on June 22, 2016. Assessment of drought and its impact in terms of water and fodder availability, implementation of food schemes namely public distribution systems, mid day meals, Integrated Child Development Scheme, status of drinking water sources was done in 83 villages from seven drought affected districts of the State. The observations of the assessment report was presented in the public hearings and demand for immediate drought relief, proper implementation of food schemes and NREGA, access to drinking water and provisioning of fodder were made.

IV. Impact of Drought 2015-16

The process of consultations and public hearings helped us focus on the central issues faced by drought-affected populations. These are:

1. Food Security
2. Water Crisis
3. Work Under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
4. Crop Loss and Compensation, Indebtedness and Migration
5. Livestock issues

Armed with these insights we undertook a wider survey that covered 7 states, 30 districts, 64 blocks and 279 villages. We administered a semi-structured questionnaire broadly covering the points mentioned above. We also held community meetings and discussions around these themes. What follows below is a rough compilation of the information gathered through these processes, supplemented by boxes detailing specific aspects and case studies focusing on specific incidents. The purpose is to convey ground level impact of drought amongst the vulnerable populations living in drought-affected areas.

Food Security

Public Distribution System, provision of mid-day meals in schools and supplementary food in anganwadis for children (0-6 years), adolescent girls and mothers are expected to meet the food and nutritional requirement of families. In times of emergency and severe drought conditions, proper functioning of these becomes critical to rescue them from hunger and starvation.

The National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) aims to expand its coverage beyond BPL lists to ensure food security to the millions. The act promises subsidised food-grains to 75% of the rural and 50% of the urban population of our country. Its purpose is to meet the food security of the families by making available sufficient food grains to meet the domestic demand at affordable prices. Despite making law at national level many states still could not make efforts to implement NFSA on the ground. Swaraj Abhiyan,¹ in its petition in Supreme Court,² informed the court that many states have not implemented the act. Except for Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, states had stuck to the previous public distribution system (PDS) schemes that fell short of the NFSA obligations, the petitioner complained.³

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1. Swaraj Abhiyan is a Socio-political movement started by former Aam Admi Party functionaries, Yogendra Yadav, Prashant Bhushan, Ajit Jha and Anand Kumar
 2. Swaraj Abhiyan filed a Public Interest Litigation in Supreme Court on lack of proper action of the government in response to severe drought in the country. Refer Writ Petition (Civil) No.857 of 2015
 3. Supreme Court steps in, again, The Supreme Court goads Central and State governments to respond to drought seriously, V. Venkatesan, Frontline, February 17, 2016

Similarly provision of cooked mid day meals even in summer was mandated by the Supreme Court. The human resource development (HRD) ministry informed that it had already approved the holiday meals for 228 districts in nine states.⁴ It had approved a budget of Rs726 crore for the purpose. The central government's move is expected to benefit some 25.5 million schoolchildren, or nearly 25% of all midday meal beneficiaries, usually school-going children from poor families.⁵

However activists were critical on the implementation of this on the ground. Dipa Sinha, a right to food campaigner, said that "in most places the governments wasted a lot of time just deliberating on the issue and the meals were never served." She added that in February every year, states are required to prepare an annual work plan in which they can mention if they want meals to be served in drought prone areas for longer durations. "But this year, Bihar, Jharkhand and Haryana did not ask for such meals in their plan and as a result malnutrition and diarrhoea in these states has only increased. In Madhya Pradesh, people were not even aware of the scheme and in Uttar Pradesh, while it was on in some places till May, due to protests by teachers it was abandoned midway. There has also been a lot of paperwork on the issue but no delivery on the court orders."⁶

Field reports from media also reported non-functioning of Anganwadi centres and lack of enough food to eat in some locations of Uttar Pradesh. "...Food stocks have run low and nutrition levels, not the best even in normal times, have plummeted. As we reported, the very poor have taken recourse to eating rotis of weed. Children - especially infants - are the most vulnerable."⁷

Summary of Supreme Court Orders and Findings From Survey Villages on National Food Security Act and Mid Day Meal

Supreme Court orders in relation to NFSA

- Instructed State Governments to: guarantee monthly food grain entitlements to all households (regardless of whether households fall under the category of priority or not) as per the National Food Security Act.
- Waived off the requirement of possessing a ration card to get monthly entitlement of food grains under NFSA. Rather, any appropriate identification and proof of residence can substitute the ration card to access food grains.
- Each of the States to establish an internal grievance mechanism and appoint or designate for each district a District Grievance Redressal Officer as postulated by Section 14 and Section 15 respectively of the NFS Act within one month from today.
- Each of the States shall constitute a State Food Commission for the purpose of monitoring and reviewing the implementation of the NFS Act as postulated by Section 16 thereof within two months of date of orders, unless a State Food Commission has already been constituted.

4. The states are: Karnataka (27 districts), Madhya Pradesh (41), Chhattisgarh (25), Maharashtra (22), Rajasthan (19), Uttar Pradesh (50), Odisha (27), Andhra Pradesh (10) and Telangana (7).

5. Live Mint, 29 July 2016, <http://www.livemint.com/Politics/EbLa7eGhfkJ5PnkAa635PK/Schoolchildren%ADin%ADDroughthit%ADareas%ADto%ADget%ADmidday%ADmeals%ADduri.html>

6. (<http://thewire.in/43386/states-have-ignored-sc-orders-on-drought-say-activists/>)

7. (<http://www.ndtv.com/india-news/in-drought-hit-uttar-pradesh-worms-infest-a-lifeline-for-children-1252887>) (Seenivasan Jain and Manas Roshan, 9 Dec 2015)

Summary of Survey Findings

Village Level

Except Maharashtra, information was elicited from villages in 6 states on implementation of NFSA. About 43% in Madhya Pradesh and 10% in Jharkhand and 2% families in Odisha and Telangana are excluded from lists despite their eligibility. In Jharkhand, another 14% despite having NFSA cards are not getting ration because of various reasons. Issues in relation to regularity have also been reported.

This number is quite high in villages from Madhya Pradesh where 33% had reported that they were not getting the ration on regular basis. There were huge errors in inclusion and exclusion of beneficiaries under NFSA. And not having food coupons and irregular functioning of ration shops were some of the major reasons. Shops are open only for 2 to 3 days in a month and this is the reason for many people not getting the ration. This issue was quite prominent in many states, especially in Madhya Pradesh. In its second survey of 43 villages, it was found that 48% of villages reported that Ration shops were open only for 3 days in a month and in case of 33% of the villages shops were open for 2 days and in case of 19% villages it was only for one day.

In Rajasthan also 20 villages out of a total of 75 villages reported that they were not getting food grains on regular basis. The Point of Sale machines were reported not working and was cited as one of the reasons of irregular functioning of PDS.

As mentioned above, Uttar Pradesh has not made efforts to implement NFSA till 2016. After the declaration of drought, and intervention of Supreme Court, the government started the implementation of National Food Security Act from 1st January 2016 in all the districts of Bundelkhand. However, many issues were reported from even by other studies. “NFSA ration cards are yet to be distributed, many people are not even aware of the Act, and the same flawed system continues much as before”⁸

Issuing of PDS cards is not streamlined on regular basis, which would have ensured regular inclusion of families like newly married couples, cases of grievances and excluded families etc. Issuing of PDS becomes a major political decision of the state and does not happen automatically on just eligibility. Further Aadhar linking has aggravated the issue. Such Aadhar linkage issues have been reported from Telangana, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh due to which families are not getting ration. Eligible families in many other states also are facing problem due to Aadhar linkage. “...making things worse by pushing for Aadhaar based biometric authentication of PDS beneficiaries. This wholly inappropriate technology has already caused havoc in Rajasthan, and is all set to disrupt the PDS across the country if the Central government has its way”.⁹ There are also issues of not getting full quantity of ration according to the quota, as reported from Madhya Pradesh. (*see Case Study-1: Corruption in the Distribution of Ration*)

8. (A drought of Action, Jean Dreze, The Hindu, Opinion comment, April 27, 2016) (<http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/oped/commentarticlebyjeandrezondroughtconditionsadroughtofaction/article8524623.ece>)

9. A drought of Action, Jean Dreze, The Hindu, Opinion comment, April 27, 2016

Case Study-1

Corruption in the Distribution of Ration

Inaccessibility of Ration and Arbitrariness of the Ration Shopkeeper (Kabrai Block, Mahoba)

In Kali Pahadi village of Kabrai block in Mahoba district, there are many issues related to the Public Distribution System. The PDS dealer is not cooperating with the people and the villagers had various issues with him. As there are about 20 families who do not have Ration Cards despite being eligible, they approached the District Magistrate and other authorities they thought could resolve the issue including the Member of Parliament.

Ration cards were still not issued to them. The PDS dealer is not listening to anyone. He is providing ration to them. He was also not providing rations to the family members of those who had migrated. He did not record the date and month of the distribution of the ration on the card of those families who received ration. He only mentioned the amount of ration so no one could claim which month the ration was provided for.

Summary of Survey Findings

District Level

Information was also collected at district level by consulting the concerned officials from civil supplies, DRDA, MGNREGA, Animal Husbandry, and education department. In case of Uttar Pradesh, since the implementation of NFSA has just started in 2016, there are many issues of discrepancies in terms of identification of beneficiaries and distribution of cards/computer slips, appointment of grievance redressal officers at district level etc. In case of Odisha, it was reported that there were many complaints around identification of beneficiaries and distribution of provisions.

We got information from 14 districts of 5 states (Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Jharkhand and Telangana) on whether grievance officers were appointed at district level or not. 5 districts have not appointed (Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, Madhya Pradesh, and Jharkhand) while 7 districts have appointed GROs. However, in the recent compliance report submitted to Supreme Court, all the State Governments informed that they had appointed district grievance redressal officers in all the districts and it was mostly the district collectors who were designated with this role.

Summary of Survey Findings

State Level

It is interesting to note that there is a policy in place for allocation of additional food grains in case of special circumstances arising from natural calamities including drought. Central government can make allocations of additional food grains upon the requests of the states. It was informed to the Supreme court that during 2015-16 only Maharashtra came up with such request and got additional food grains of 1.63 lakh tons of rice and 2.44 lakh tons of wheat (WP 857 of 2015 affidavit filed on behalf of Union of India). However, State Governments woke up to the SC orders late and requested for additional allocations during 2016-17. Accordingly 19.73 lakh tons additional food grains were allocated to 9

states (Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh). But states also did not make enough effort to publicize the SC orders to ensure the implementation of the orders at village level. In second survey of 43 villages in Madhya Pradesh, it was found that the Supreme Court orders have reached only 5% of the villages, which means there was no sufficient effort from the State Governments to build awareness on the SC orders in villages.

Supreme Court orders in relation to mid day meals

On one hand mid day meals (MDM) takes care of the food/nutritional requirements of the children in schools and also would relieve the families in distress to some extent from the responsibilities of taking care of the children and feeding them and also enable parents to go for work. The Supreme Court order mandated provision of mid day meals during summer vacation. The Court directed States to make provision for the supply of eggs or milk or any other nutritional substitute preferably 5 days in a week or at least 3 days in a week.

Summary of Survey Findings

Despite the Supreme Court order mandating provision of mid day meals during summer vacation, it was found that the orders were partially implemented in Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan while it was implemented better in Jharkhand and Telangana states. However, it was not all implemented in Odisha. In case of Maharashtra, the field reports contradicted the information provided by the official sources. In many cases there was huge delay in responding to the court orders and implementing in schools. States also tried to find excuse by saying that non-cooperation from teachers unions and school management committees are the reasons for non compliance to the court orders.

In Telangana eggs were provided twice a week and the provision of third egg was under examination. The state has provided MDM for 40+ days during summer holidays. However, field reports mentioned that the attendance of the children was about 25% to 30% in schools due to various reasons like migration, heat waves, no proper information to children and parents etc. As the teachers could not show much interest to provide MDM during summer, the local organizations demanded that the scheme could be implemented through ICDS or Gram Panchayat during summer. Otherwise, state would have distributed additional dry ration to families, the activists suggested.

Uttar Pradesh state is providing milk for children in schools once a week and soya bean bari twice a week. Instructions were also issued to provide fresh seasonal fruit once a week after reopening of the schools (4th July 2016). It has informed the Supreme Court that MDM was provided for 29 days during summer. Madhya Pradesh state is providing milk for 3 days and during summer it has provided children MDM for 49 days. However, field observations revealed that out of 66 surveyed villages MDM continued in 19 villages during summer holidays, it was irregular in 22 villages and it was non functional in 25 villages. Jharkhand could implement the provision of MDM for 11 working days only during summer vacation. It was found that 61% of the children attended schools to benefit from mid day meal during summer for 11 days.

As mentioned above, Maharashtra has informed that it has not provided egg and milk. However it has provided other food items like fruits, biscuits, chikki, ragi and jaggery. 35 working days are reported; however field reports have completely contradicted this information. Almost in all surveyed villages schools were closed and Mid-day meal (MDM)

scheme was stopped by school administration during the period from 1st April to June 15, 2016. The order of Supreme Court in this regard was not followed in any of the surveyed villages. It was found that Rajasthan could succeed partially as it was found that 40% of its schools have not provided MDM to children during summer vacation.

Odisha, did not take any interest in implementing the orders, instead it sought the opinion of the school management committees (SMCs) and acted accordingly. Of the total 36552 SMCs in 27 districts, only 2097 SMCs (5.7%) agreed however, implementation even by these 2097 SMCs are not clear (till the preparation of this report). State has informed that since SMCs have not agreed due to heatwave conditions, the MDM was not provided during summer. Field observations also confirmed this. It was found that not a single school in 38 villages had provided Mid-Day-Meal during the summer vacation. All the schools in the seven study districts were closed during the summer vacation depriving 7,35,011 children enrolled in 15,276 primary, upper primary and high schools.

The village interactions in Odisha also brought out some field realities in relation to food security of the families. Food intake has also been affected because of severe drought and women are at the receiving end in this context. In 70% households there has been significant change in food consumption and 71% females had reported decreased food intake due to the prevailing drought situation. The small and marginal farmers could barely meet 30% of the food requirement for the whole family.

State-wise Survey Findings on Food Security

Jharkhand

- Ration cards: families eligible for ration cards are: 3533 (89.19%); however, families received ration during February were 3235; on average 3027 families were getting ration (out of 3533 who eligible for ration cards. 85.5% are getting and 14.5% are not getting)
- Total children in villages covered under study: 4814 and of these 2950 are attending MDM which is 61%

Madhya Pradesh

- PDS: the survey reveals that 43% households are not getting food grains at all despite their eligibility; 33% of the total households are not getting food grains on regular basis. However, 76% of the households have reported that they do not get full quota of their entitlements of food grains.
- Food coupons are basis for PDS. 53% villages (of 43 villages in second survey) reported that there instances of denial of PDS because of lack of food coupons. This is in violation of SC order.
- MDM: 88% villages reported that they are getting MDM in schools; 83% reported it is of good quality; Out of 66 surveyed villages MDM continued in 19 villages during summer holidays; it was irregular in 22 villages and it was non functional in 25 villages;
- Out of 21 districts, only in 9 districts children got MDM in summer vacation. In Madhya Pradesh, wherever MDM is implemented milk is provided 3 days a month.
- 1% - Severely malnourished; 8% are moderately malnourished; total 9% are malnourished; Extra support for drought affected people was not served in any of the ICDS centres of the surveyed villages. Most of them did their regular works and 11 were not opening regularly.

- Community Kitchens for the most vulnerable: In 52% of surveyed villages (43 villages), there were no arrangements to provide food to most vulnerable, elderly, disabled, single women, and destitutes; So 48% of villages provided lunch through AWCs. This is state exclusive prog. It announced provision of all the vulnerable groups through community kitchen. This is unique to Madhya Pradesh.

Maharashtra

- MDM: Almost in 100% surveyed villages schools were closed and Mid-day meal (MDM) scheme was stopped by school administration during summer holidays. The order of Supreme Court in this regard was not followed in any one of the surveyed villages.

Odisha

- PDS: 12% households have not received food grains through PDS since February 2016 in Ganjam and April 2016 in Kandhmal respectively; 2% households have not received the PDS since they don't have a ration card
- MDM: Not a single school in 38 villages had provided Mid-Day-Meal during the summer vacation. All the schools in the 7 study districts were closed during the summer vacation; deprivation of food would have been faced by 7,35,011 children in 15,276 primary, upper primary and high schools of six districts
- ICDS: The addition supply of eggs or milk or any other nutritional substitute has not been provided in any Anganwadi Centers in 7 study districts of Odisha; In 34% villages the Anganwadi Centre is located within the distance of about 1-3 Kms and it was impossible in the part of children to walk 1-3 Km distance in the hot summer
- 40 % decline in harvesting forest produces like tubers, leafs due to the drought situation; 60% decline - Mahua, Char, Kendu, Kusum fruits;
- In 70% households there has been significant change in food consumption; 71% female were found having decreased food intake due to the prevailing drought situation;

Rajasthan

- PDS: On proper functioning of PDS, 20 villages out of a total of 75 villages reported that they were not getting food grains on regular basis. The Point of Sale machines were reported not working and was cited as one of the reasons of irregular functioning of PDS.
- MDM: On the implementation of Mid Day Meal Scheme during summer vacation, out of a total of 10 schools of Barmer and Jaipur, 4 reported that no mid day meal was served to school children in summer vacation.

Telangana

- PDS: Total 10128 PDS cards were there in these villages, almost all families have received ration through this except 2 to 5%; All the villages reported that PDS shops will be open for 3-7 days in a month;
- PDS: each person having PDS card (with no contradictions with Adhaar and smoothly linked to it) will get 6 kg and maximum limit per family is 30 kg. And other than rice they will get 1kg of daal, 1 kg of sugar and 1 ltr kerosene but the other than rice items will be supplied twice or thrice in a year., which is defeating basket of food through PDS
- MDM with 1 egg, weekly twice made available to the children during summer vacations also; out of 2953 children enrolled in 25 schools, 2518 children are accessing this facility

in the schools. Rest are not interested to have food at schools

- Regarding midday meals, actually, this has accessed by 30-40% of children (this information we got from villagers during our campaign on drought, as per survey 80-90% are having food) and there is every chance of submitting bills for 100% of children hence possibility of corruption, this we came to know during our campaign visit to many villages
- During interaction with children, 8 villages out of 19 said that the provided food is good, can increase the quantity a bit more. Children from 5 villages said that the food is not good, quality need to be increased, rest of the villages not said anything.

Uttar Pradesh

- PDS: After the declaration of drought, the government have started the implementation of National Food Security Act from 1st January 2016 in all the districts of Bundelkhand.
- Mid-Day Meal was being provided only in 16 out of 26 villages which had been studied.

Water Crisis

Consecutive deficit rainfall coupled with the mismanagement of water resources made all water bodies including drinking water sources bone dry in many locations of the drought affected areas. In her reply to the members of Rajya Sabha, Water Resources Minister Uma Bharti, said that almost 30 crore people were facing drinking water shortage. The problem has aggravated due to consecutive droughts in the past two years, which brought down the water level in 91 reservoirs, she said.¹⁰ Many people had died of heat waves. (*See Box: Heat Waves*) In fact water crisis reached its peak in April-May months where water is being transported in rail wagons to Latur (in Maharashtra). District magistrates gave instructions to protect drinking water sources in Bundelkhand (which consists of 13 districts in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh). In 91 nationally monitored large lakes and basins critical for power water levels fell by a third. The crisis got the attention when the Bombay High Court asked the national and regional cricket administrative bodies to shift the venue for cricket matches out of Maharashtra to save 6 million litres of water in the light of acute water crisis in Maharashtra. Commenting on the situation, Sri Rajender Singh, water man of India, said, "Eleven states are facing a water emergency. It is a crisis. And we should consider ourselves lucky if we survive till 2050. It is a terrifying situation. All aquifers are overdrawn and there is no recharge. That is the simple reason. Police keep reserve force for safety, but for water we have no reserve bank. Earlier our aquifers were full. People used to get water from a shallow depth, but today the ground water levels are going lower and lower."¹¹

However, experts and policy analysts made it very clear that more than the failure of the monsoon, "...It's about how water is utilised, particularly in a country with only 4% of the world's water resources and 16% of the global population."¹² Sunita Narain is upfront on

10. <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/rajya-sabha-govt-faces-heat-from-opposition-over-drought-relief-2773433/>

11. <http://www.governancenow.com/views/interview/there-a-water-emergency-now-rajendra-singh>

12. "In times of drought: Overuse of water behind India's dry days", Zia Haq, Hindustan Times, New Delhi, Apr 24, 2016

Box: Heat Waves

In May 2015 a devastating heat wave struck India killing over 2,300 people. It was one of the world's deadliest to date and temperatures hit highs of 49°C in the worst affected states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. For India, 2015 was the third hottest year on record (since 1901)*

This high casualty rate has led to India's National Disaster Management Authority coordinating with states on heat wave action plans to spread awareness and establish preventative measures.**

Heat waves, again in 2016, hit many states like Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Jharkhand, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal. India recorded its highest-ever temperature on Thursday 19th May, 2016 when the heat in the town of Phalodi, in the western state of Rajasthan, shot up to a burning 51 degrees Celsius (123.8 degrees Fahrenheit). Many areas experienced severe heat waves and State Governments estimate more than 370 people killed. But according to media reports, "over 600 people have died in Telangana, Delhi, and Odisha due to the punishing heat wave (since April) out of which few have not been accounted by the government. In India, the month of May is typically one of the hottest and driest. In the last four years, 4,204 people have died due to heat waves – 1,433 people died in 2013, the number fell to 549 a year later but went up again last year to 2,135, according to India's Ministry of Earth Sciences."***

India has recorded higher than normal temperatures throughout 2016. In some of these states, government schools were also closed on account of heat waves. Odisha state gave the reason of heat wave for non compliance to the Supreme Court orders for provision of mid day meals in summer holidays. "A drought has left many villages and towns without regular water. Schools have closed, some hospitals have stopped performing surgery, and in some regions daytime cooking has been banned due to the fire risk."****

Climate change would impact on frequency and intensity of heatwaves. Findings from the first Global Climate Change Risk Assessment (a joint study by CEEW, Harvard University, Tsinghua University and the U.K. Foreign and Commonwealth Office) highlight that, hotter summers make it extremely unsafe for citizens, especially labourers, to undertake heavy outdoor work. Of course, there remain associated impacts such as higher risks of crop failure. Concomitant consequences of farmer financial distress, poverty traps and, in extreme cases, suicides cannot be overstated.*****

* [Hotter, longer, deadlier summers, Apr 24, 2016. <http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/oped/howtotacklehotter-longerdeadliersummers/article8500083.ece>]

** [<http://edition.cnn.com/2016/05/20/asia/india-record-temperature/>]

*** [<http://www.skymetweather.com/content/weather-news-and-analysis/may-temperature-breaks-all-time-weather-record/> 2016 Indian Heatwave: May Smashes Heat Records in India, 25 May, 2016]

**** [<https://www.theguardian.com/world/gallery/2016/may/23/indias-record-breaking-heatwave-in-pictures>]

***** [Hotter, longer, deadlier summers, Apr 24, 2016, <http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/oped/howtotacklehotter-longerdeadliersummers/article8500083.ece>]

this, says “the fact is that the severity and intensity of drought is not about lack of rainfall, it is about the lack of planning, foresight and criminal neglect. Drought is manmade. Let’s be clear about this.”¹³

Summary of Survey Findings on Water Crisis

The field discussions and visits revealed that people had faced severe water crisis in drought affected areas. Their dependence is mostly on hand-pumps followed by other sources like wells, and ponds/tanks. The availability of potable water became a cause of concern in the villages with people drinking contaminated water, inviting diseases and women walking long distances to fetch water. Marathwada areas of Maharashtra and Bundelkhand areas of both Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh states have faced severe water problem. In Maharashtra, it was reported that almost 90% of the water sources were dried up and all the villages were provided water through water tankers. (See Case Study-2 *Drinking Water Crisis at Dahanipalli, Ganjam, Odisha*)

Summary of Survey Findings on Water Crisis

Hand-pumps

Hand-pumps are dysfunction, in case of Uttar Pradesh 25%, Jharkhand 27% and Telangana 42%. Even among the functional hand-pumps, two thirds are partially functional and with unsafe water. Water scarcity was reported to be worst in villages Bakcha, Kapsa, Gusiari, Nayak Purva, Ratva and Raath of Maudha block of Hamirpur district in Uttar Pradesh.

Case Study-2

Drinking Water Crisis at Dahanipalli, Ganjam, Odisha

Women Walk Long To Fetch Water

Dahanapalli, a small village in Golia Gram Panchayat of Buguda block of Ganjam district, tells a poignant story of drinking water crisis intensified by the recent drought in the area. Surrounded by forests the village is inhabited by 23 households of the Kondh tribe. For these households making a living on agriculture and allied activities is very difficult Total six households are share croppers. Other households also work as share croppers in the fields of other villages.

All the agricultural land in the village is rain-fed and therefore a good harvest depends largely on good monsoon. Failure of monsoon means failure of crops. In the last Kharif season a severe drought hit the district and the area causing a heavy loss to crops and economy of the community along with acute food and water crisis.

The availability of potable water became a cause of concern in the village with people drinking contaminated water, inviting diseases and women walking long distances to fetch water.

There are two tube-wells in the village, but except in the rainy season the water level has been low throughout the year for the last 5 years. So they fail to supply the

13. “Permanently fighting drought”, Sunita Narain, Business Standard, April 24, 2016 www.businessstandard.com/article/printerfriendlyversion?article_id=116042400687_1

Villagers had to travel 2 km to fetch water. Water tankers were arranged by the district administration, but it was not sufficient to cater to the demands of the drought affected population.

In Latehar district of Jharkhand, water scarcity was reported as one-third of the districts' hand-pumps were non-functional. Government did not make any alternative arrangement to provide drinking water, though it made efforts to repair the non-functional hand-pumps. The percentage of defunct hand-pumps In case of Odisha was 53%, Rajasthan 56% and Maharashtra 90%. The response of the concerned water department in taking up either repair or digging new borewells is scanty and not seen in villages. Acute scarcity of drinking water was reported in Sundergarh district of Odisha. The government supplied water through tankers but only 5 villages have been covered water tanker supply. Only 16 mobile vans were engaged in repairing of tube wells. There are 12,000 tube wells and 266 pipe water connections in the district. Thus the arrangement made by the government was neither satisfactory nor sufficient. The scarcity of water brought out the issues of discrimination against dalits and their access to water sources and water. There are instances of violence against dalits on such occasions. (*Case Study-3 Discrimination Against Dalits at Public Water Source Sagar district, Madhya Pradesh*)

Summary of Survey Findings on Water Crisis

Wells and water bodies

Still many villages are dependent on wells and water tanks to meet their drinking and domestic water needs. Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh reported 62-74% dried up wells. Even

required water to all the households. This year due to drought, the water sank to low level at an earlier date and the tube-wells became non-usable with water flowing only occasionally. It is learnt that the water level in the area has sunk to at least 50 feet lower in the last five years.

There is a pond in the village, but the water is unsuitable for drinking, more so following the drought. So, in order to fetch water the women folk walk to Kalabhut river flowing 0.5 km away from the village. They often go to the river to fetch water at least 4 times a day, even in scorching sun. But with the drought even the river became dry compelling them to collect water by digging ditches in the sand in the dry bed of the river.

There is a pond 4 kms away where clean water is available. But that would mean too much physical labor for women. Moreover, because they also go to the forest to collect edible roots as there is the shortage of food grains to consume. Men from these families have migrated in search of work opportunities.

According to the community members the potable water problem in the village could be solved if a check dam is constructed on river Kalabhut and a deep bore well is dug by the district authorities.

Case Study-3

Discrimination Against Dalits at Public Water Source Sagar district, Madhya Pradesh

Molestation of Mira Bai while she was fetching water in Chakeri Village

Due to drought, there is acute drinking water scarcity in many villages of Sagar district including Chakeri village where Mira Bai, a Dalit woman hails from. There are 9 public hand-pumps out of which 2 are non-functional and 5 have dried up. Only 2 hand-pumps are functional and are unable to meet the requirement of 293 households of Chakeri village, whose total population is approximately 1400. There are 3 public wells out of which 2 have dried up. The only functional well is within the habitation of the dominant community who practices untouchability with the Dalit community of the village which comprise 20 percent of the total village population.

On 20 May 2016 Mira Bai went to the public well in the dominant community's habitation to fetch drinking water. She was stopped and asked to wait by Kamal Singh Lodhi. After a long wait, when Mira tried to fetch water from the well, Kamal Singh Lodhi snatched the water utensil and threw it away and also molested her by pulling her hair and using with caste-specific slang when Mira opposed her. Mira went to complain this to the father of Kamal who also scolded her and challenged her to file police case against him. Mira then went to Karrapur Police Chowki along with her husband Nirpat Singh Ahirwar to file a complaint under SC/ST Atrocities Act. But the police officials filed a case under Section 155. Then she went to SP office in Sagar to explain the incidence of atrocity on her and file a case under the SC/ST Atrocities Act. However, since she does not have a caste certificate another struggle she is facing is to get the certificate from Panchayat. On the other hand, members of the Lodhi community are threatening the Dalit community in the village. Police also has not visited the site of incidence to investigate the complaint. Discrimination and atrocities on Dalits is an increasing trend due to confrontation with dominant community for fetching drinking water which is growing scarce.

in case of little water availability the quality of water was reported as poor and not safe to be consumed. In Uttar Pradesh, 12 villages reported 100% dried up water sources. Other sources of drinking water are tanks, ponds and traditional water bodies. It was reported that 90% in Rajasthan, 40% in Uttar Pradesh and 75% tanks in Jharkhand are completely dried. Even the rest of the tanks had very little water insufficient for the requirements of the villagers. Odisha reported the negligence of traditional water bodies. 93% traditional water bodies have not been renovated for the last 10 years and 57% of water bodies created under MGNREGS have been dried up without proper inlet and outlet arrangements.

It was reported that water levels are dwindling inch by inch. In some locations it has gone down by a further 15 -20 feet. Most of the burden of fetching water has been on women and they are forced to walk for 2 -5 kms and in some cases up to 10 km to get water by spending more than 5- 6 hrs a day. The distress coupled with patriarchal practices even takes the shape of water wives phenomenon. (See Box: Water Wives)

Box: Water Wives

A short film made by Actionaid depicts the water wives phenomenon in five minutes and thirty seconds long visual, *The Wives*.

“The video shines an unforgiving light on the patriarchy, polygamy, gender bias and inequality that pervade Indian society. ‘Water Wives’ ends with a message that reads: “They exist everywhere, in our homes, our workplaces, in our minds. Where a woman is unpaid, unheard and unrecognised. Fight inequality and injustice wherever you see it.” -- NDTV

Denganmal is located in a part of western India that routinely experiences drought. In the summer months, the heat is so severe that wells run dry and cattle die. There is no water connection in this village. It is in a remote, hilly area, isolated from other villages. The only solution is to walk to a well or to river, carrying vessels to fill up with water. Neither are close by. It can take up to 12 hours to go there and return home. Though bigamy is illegal in India unless you're Muslim, Sakharam Bhagat, a Hindu, has three wives. His second and third wives play a crucial role in helping to collect water for the family. Sakharam Bhagat, 66, now has three wives, two of whom he married solely to ensure that his household has water to drink and cook. “I had to have someone to bring us water, and marrying again was the only option,” said Bhagat, who works as a day labourer on a farm in a nearby village. “My first wife was busy with the kids. When my second wife fell sick and was unable to fetch water, I married a third.” In Denganmal, in a cluster of about 100 thatched houses set on an expanse of barren land, most men work as farm labourers, barely earning the minimum wage. Marrying for water has been the norm here for many years, villagers said.

State-wise Survey Findings on Water Crisis***Madhya Pradesh***

- In the survey conducted in 43 villages, it was found that only 28% of the population is getting sufficient drinking water. In case of Bundelkhand it is 10%.
- 30% of the surveyed population still fetches water for drinking from wells, ponds and rivers. Only 70% population has access to hand pumps for safe drinking water.
- 40% of the total handpumps were non functional – either due to repair or dried up
- In 37% villages, 1 hand pump is available for a population of 150 people, while in 17% villages there is one hand pump available for every 300 population. There were 13% villages where one hand pump was available for a population of 500-700.
- The survey also reveals that in 41% villages, women have to travel 2-3 kilometres to fetch drinking water;
- Water table is going down by 3 to 6 inches every day; in some places the ground water has gone down to 400 ft.

Maharashtra

- Almost 90% of the water sources were dried up and all the villages were provided water through water tankers by Tahsil office.

Odisha

- Only 47% tube wells were found functional; people said they were getting only 2/3rd of the drinking water required for the households;
- Women members walk about ½ km to 1.5 Km of distance (3 to 6 time a day);
- The ground water level has been decreased to 35 to 50 feet; 93% traditional water bodies have not been renovated for the last 10 years; 57% of water bodies created under MGN-REGS have been dried up without proper inlet and outlet;

Uttar Pradesh

- 25% hand pumps were dysfunctional. While about 75% hand pumps were found working but not properly as 30% of the working hand pumps were giving less water and rest of the hand pumps are not sufficient for the population in all those particular villages.
- Only 16 out of 26 villages reported to have installation of new hand pumps and 12 out of 26 had re-bore.
- Water tanks were found built in 5 villages but only 3 are functional but that is also not sufficient in proportionate to the population of the village.
- Only 38% of the total wells found to have water while rest of the 62% have dried up. In 12 villages all the wells have dried up and there is no any well which is having water.
- The chlorination of all the water resources was also found negligible, out of 27 only 5 villages have been chlorinated but not on regular basis. In 1 village they have chlorinated only 1 well and left the other available water resources.

Rajasthan

- Out of a total of 1067 wells in the surveyed villages, only 277 wells were found to be functional and had some water. It is only 26% of the total wells. Out of these 277 wells, only 56% wells have water which may be used for drinking purpose. Remaining 44% wells have saline water which cannot be used for drinking purpose.
- Out of a total of 558 hand-pumps in the surveyed villages, 246 hand-pumps were reported to be functional which is 44% of the total hand-pumps. The assessment report also revealed that 32% of the functional hand-pumps do not have safe drinking water. So, only 68% hand-pumps provide safe drinking water
- Out of 23 Baavdi (water wells with steps), only 9 were found functional. Only 4 such sources were reported to have safe drinking water.
- As regards, water ponds (talaab), only 10% of the total 41 ponds in the surveyed villages were reported to be functional.
- In 83 villages, 19 villages, there are 62 public bore wells out of which only 38 wells are functional. More so, out of 19 villages having bore wells, only 12 villages have safe drinking water available through these bore wells, which is 63% of the total bore wells.
- Out of responses from 58 villages, 19 villages reported that they have to travel in the range of 2 to 5 km. 8 villages reported to travel in the range of 5 to 10 km to fetch drinking water
- 9 villages reported about violence due to water scarcity. Most of the victims of violence were from Dalit, Muslim and Adivasi communities.

Telangana

- The study reported that 119 hand pumps are there in 16 villages out of these 50 hand pumps are not in use.
- Because of dried hand pumps 1124 families affected and mostly these families are belongs to Schedule caste. Common wells , tanks canals are there for nominal, but most of them have dried up due to continuous drought
- Women have burdened and pressurised due to this severe drought. However, Gram Panchayts are supplying water through tankers, which are not sufficient, so women and children are walking 2-3 kms to fetch the water by keeping on their heads and spending almost 2-3 hours in a day.

Jharkhand

- In case of 26.7% hand pumps are defunct; 36.2% of public wells are dried up. In case of ponds 75% are completely dried up.

Work under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act

In the absence of agriculture work and other land/water dependent works, work under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is the only alternative for survival and livelihood for the millions of wage seekers. The Central government had declared that the provision of work under MGNREGA would be extended from 100 to 150 days in all drought-affected areas, which in reality has not happened.

“...as for the distribution of MGNREGA wages, the funds have been choked from the top.” Yogendra Yadav of Swaraj Abhiyan said, “While Rs 2,500 crore in old payments were still due under NREGA, the government has done nothing to release the Rs 17,000 crore which the court had asked it to do.”¹⁴ In response to the PIL filed by Swaraj Abhiyan, Supreme Court directed the central government to ensure the proper implementation of the act with timely fund release and payment of compensation for delayed wage payments and set up mandatory employment councils at central and state levels. It is only after court’s intervention, central government released Rs.12230 crores to states for pending wage payments for the workers.

The information collected from 14 districts from five states -- Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Telangana, Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand states regarding status of implementation of MGNREGA in terms of wage payments, awareness generation among workers, and other performance indicators is given in Table 1. It is evident that specific efforts were not made to activate wage work under MGNREGA. Moreover delayed payments had severely impacted the interests of the workers and crippled its implementation. (see Case Study-4: Status of MGNREGA Work in Madhya Pradesh)

Summary of Survey Findings on Work under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act

Though it is demand driven, still many wage seekers are found in villages without job cards. 17% in Madhya Pradesh, 9.3% in Telangana and 20% in Jharkhand have no job cards

14. <http://thewire.in/43386/states-have-ignored-sc-orders-on-drought-say-activists/>

Table 1: District level information on MGNREGA collected from official sources, media and civil society organizations

S. No	District	Analysis
1	Mahoba, Uttar Pradesh	Outstanding wage payment was not done. No campaign was launched for awareness and demand creation. MGNREGA use for drought relief was unsatisfactory in the district. Not all needy were provided employment under MGNREGA.
2	Hamirpur, Uttar Pradesh	Payments got delayed due to delay in entry in muster roll and entry at Bank. There was no campaign launched by the district administration to create job demands in the months of May and June. The overall performance has been unsatisfactory as it has demotivated job seekers due to the delay in wage payments.
3	Lalitpur, Uttar Pradesh	As per government report, outstanding wages were paid but in reality, workers still have outstanding wages to be paid. There was no information on campaign launched by the administration but government reports that lot of work for irrigation, wells, tanks, etc were undertaken during that period of May-June. Performance was not satisfactory in providing relief during drought.
4	Bargarh, Odisha	Outstanding payments under MGNREGA were not paid. There was no campaign launched by the state for job creation in the months of May-June. MGNREGA performance was unsatisfactory in providing relief during drought.
5	Kandhamal, Odisha	Yes, outstanding wage payments were done. Campaign was launched by the district administration. There was positive outcome of the campaign with increased participation of workers. Some needy workers could not be covered in terms of providing work opportunities. MGNREGA performance was satisfactory in providing relief during drought.
6	Sundargarh, Odisha	A large numbers of labours have not been paid wages even after 6 months to few years after they worked under MGNREGA. Before March 2016, there was an announcement in the newspaper about additional 50 days of work and additional wage (30% increase in wage rate – from Rs. 174 to Rs. 226 per day per labour). But, only very few labourers received increased wage and that to for a maximum of 15 days up to March. After March 2016, the increased wage is not being given. The programme has been unsatisfactory in providing relief during drought. The programme has not engaged all the labourers as very few works were undertaken by the panchayats. Labourers including small and marginal farmers were compelled to migrate in search of work opportunities.

despite their interest. In Uttar Pradesh also such problems were found in 15 villages. Further despite their need and willingness to work, many workers/villages did not get work under MGNREGA. This percentage ranges between 5% to 30%. Delay in payments were reported across all the sample villages. This is quite evident from the fact that there was huge delay (almost six months) in releasing funds from Central government to the State Governments. This was corroborated by Madhya Pradesh study in 43 villages quite recently. It was reported that only in case of 20% of the villages (out of 43 villages), wages were paid on time and in 80% of the villages the payments were delayed for a period ranging

S. No	District	Analysis
7	Medak, Telengana	MGNREGA outstanding wage payments were not paid. Approximately Rs 3 crore of wage payment was due. There was no awareness drive done by the government to create job demands in drought. MGNREGA performance was unsatisfactory in providing relief during drought. Only few labour groups have received work under MGNREGA. Those groups and labourers, who have worked in the past, have not received wages for last 6 months. No worksite facilities (water, shade and medical kit) were provided. Few labourers have got sunstroke and approximately 22- 25 labourers died, but no ex-gratia was paid to their families.
8	Chhattarpur, Madhya Pradesh	Wages up to May were paid. Wells were deepened and ponds were renovated which generated employment for 37457 families. But these were unsatisfactory in providing relief from drought.
9	Sagar, Madhya Pradesh	Outstanding wages have been paid. Only those cases where there are issues related to wrong bank account details, wages are not paid. Such cases are also being addressed. There is contradictory response where it says that MGNREGA has not performed well and many labourers have not received work in time.
10	Tikamgarh, Madhya Pradesh	Outstanding wages have been paid. No campaign was launched to create job demand during drought. Labourers have not received wages in time and therefore are migrating for work. Also, wages under MGNREGA is low.
11	Latehar, Jharkhand	Outstanding wages were paid. The performance of MGNREGA was utterly unsatisfactory and there was no campaign by the government to create demand for work during drought season.
12	Garhwa, Jharkhand	Delay in wage payment due to wrong Bank account details. No campaign by launched by the government. However, CSOs launched a campaign Kaam Mango Kaam Kholo Abhiyan. Due to CSO campaign, people got work.
13	Khunti, Jharkhand	Those labourers whose bank account details have some problem had outstanding wage. No information on government efforts to create job demand during drought.
14	Giridih, Jharkhand	No information on outstanding wages. MGNREGA has not performed satisfactorily during drought to provide any relief to the labourers.

from one month to six months. (see Case Study-5 Delay in Wage Payment in MGNREGA Work in Uttar Pradesh)

Another major issue is number of working days provided under MGNREGA. The average working days in non-drought years were around 50 and it was assumed that there would be more demand in a severe drought year. But the average number of days provided in the sample villages as well as the national/state averages are around 50 to 55 days. This reflects the apathy of state machinery in ensuring the entitlement of work under this act. People who got work up to 100 days and beyond 100 days are between 2 to 10% of the total

Case Study-4

Status of MGNREGA Work in Madhya Pradesh

No work under MGNREGA in Tejgarh habitation, Bandopahar village, Kulua Village Panchayat, Tendukheda block, Damoh district.

Bandopahar, a village situated at about 55 km from the district headquarters, is inhabited by 100 families belonging to Scheduled Caste, 2 families from Scheduled Tribes and 20 families from the socially dominant and influential Lodhi Community. The Sarpanch is also from the Lodhi community.

As there is no work opportunity available at local level, families of SC community migrate to other places like Delhi to seek earning opportunities. The accidental death of Hallu Ahirwar at a worksite at Delhi recently has saddened others from the same community. Still, families migrate as they have to continue their life, find out a living. There has been no work undertaken under MGNREGA for last 3 years which further adds to their miseries. Duliram, Jagdish and Kashiram of Bandopahar village in a village-level meeting expressed their willingness to work under MGNREGA at a wage of Rs. 167 per day. "We get Rs. 250-275 when we migrate and work in Delhi. We would prefer to work at a lesser wage in our village rather than going to Delhi where the cost of living is too high and risk to life and security is high," Duliram says.

Villagers complain that the panchayat is not starting any work under MGNREGA while the Sarpanch says that it cannot start off any work until there is technical approval from the concerned engineer either from block or district headquarters. The Sarpanch said that technical approval of works approved by Gram Sabha on 14 April, 2016 had not been given approval by the concerned engineers. "Where lies the accountability of officials at higher level?," villagers question. The Sarpanch too

surveyed population. In this context, even if the number of working days provision has been extended from 100 to 150 days, there is no benefit for the workers. Average wage also comes to around Rs.110 to 140/- despite that the minimum wage is around Rs.190/-+

State-wise Survey Findings on Work under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act <B level heading>

Jharkhand

- 3149 (80%) have job cards and 812 (20%) have no job cards
- 1659 person receiving any work during the year, (52.7% out of 3149)
- 1209 persons got up to 50 days and less than 50 days of work (out of 1659 - 72.87%); only 2.6% have got more than 90 and up to 100 days of work;
- Type of work: Total works are 122. Out of this, 92 works are directly related to water conservation (farm pond; well; farm bunding; ponds). 11 are related to roads; and 8 in relation livestock.

Madhya Pradesh

- Survey in 43 villages found that works were started in 63% of the villages.
- Of the surveyed 3346 families, 2762 families were registered and had received job cards.

expresses his concern that opening of MGNREGA work amidst drought would have provided huge relief to the villagers.

Villagers also unfold one common corrupt practice in getting technical approval from the engineer. Such Sarpanch who can bribe the engineer gets approval in no time whereas the bribed money is recovered from labourers by adjusting from their wages.

Duliram, Kashiram and Jagdish need immediate opening of work under MGNREGA so that people get some wages and do not have to migrate to places like Delhi which is insecure and also does not fetch more wages.

There is a similar case from Deori Liladhar village of Tendukheda Block of Damoh District where there are long pending wages of 15 MGNREGA workers from the SC community. Uma Shankar Ahirwar of Deori Liladhar village says that he and other 15 people from SC and ST community had worked under MGNREGA last year and their wages are still pending. The Sarpanch of the panchayat says that this delay is due to the introduction of Electronic Fund Management System (EFMS), last year under which the wage payment directly gets transferred to the workers' bank/post office account. Though details of the bank accounts of all MGNREGA workers had been shared with the Block Office, payments are still pending for works undertaken last year as previous entries of pending wages have yet not been done.

Shankar, Pillu, Kirath, Bharath, Neelesh, Ashok and other workers along with Umashankar are running pillar to post at panchayat and janpad (block) level but they are still struggling to get their pending wages.

Case Study- 5

Delay in Wage Payment in MGNREGA Work in Uttar Pradesh

Troubled Getting Paid For MGNREGA Work in Bet village, Lalitpur district

Bet Gram Panchayat of Birgha development block of Lalitpur district is 32 kilometers away from the district head quarter. The village is dominated by marginalized community. Seventy families belong to Scheduled Tribe. In the month of December 2015, 35 members from the Sahariya (ST) community had worked for 10 days under MGNREGA. They worked for construction of village road (Kutchha Rasta) from the village pond to Chuban temple. On 13 January 2016 the work was stopped. Till date the labourers of Bet Gram Panchayat have not received their wages.

It means nearly 17% of the surveyed families did not have even job cards. It was found that only 8% of the total workers who worked under MGNREGA in last one year got 100 days of employment. 6% workers got work for 81-90 days, 11% got work in the range of 71-80 days, while 58% got work for less than 50 days. (only 42% got more than 50 days of work)

- Approximately 43% of the total works undertaken in 2015-16 were not related to land development and water conservation and or agriculture. Seven per cent public ponds and 33% Kapildhara wells were the only schemes related to water conservation and irrigation.
- Major issue is of delayed payments. It was reported that only in case of 20% of the villages, wages were paid on time and in 80% of the villages the payments were delayed for a period ranging from one month to six months.

Maharashtra

- The ratio of work under MGNREGA was very less in surveyed villages. Among 35 villages it was noticed that work was actually started only at 63% of the villages. Labourers have received extremely less wages. It varies between Rs. 40/- to Rs. 110/- almost in all the villages despite of the minimum wages of Rs. 190/-. Upon inquiry by interviewer people have responded the problems related to measurements and non-timely follow up Rojgar Sevak and Jr. Engineers of Panchayat. This also includes the huge delay in receiving payments. Workers have received payments almost after 3 to 5 months of work completion
- In 20% villages plantation work was created under MGNREGA, 35% of the work was related to farm bunding, 25% was related to well diggings and approximately 20% of the work was related construction of village approach roads, Nallah construction and other soil conservation and water harvesting works.

Odisha

- Out of total 130 families, only 60 families of Balisankara Block of Sundergarh district have completed 100 days of work; 50 families of Balisankara Block of Sundergarh district have completed 50 days of MGNREGA work; 24 families of Balisankara Block of Sundergarh district have completed 50 to 100 days of work; Less than 1% households have completed 150 days of MGNREGS work;
- Government had sanctioned Rs. 75,000/- for construction of house under Indira Awas Yojna and linked it further with MGNREGA. Each individual household was supposed to get Rs.15000/- from MGNREGA. Only first installment (Rs. 15,000/-) was released to the people. Many of them had taken loan from moneylenders, sold their bullocks, sold goats to meet the construction cost but measurement of work was not done for which 2nd and 3rd installment was not released

Rajasthan

- Out of 81 villages 37 villages reported that no work under MGNREGA was going on in the month of April-May. In Bara district, MGNREGA work was going on in only 40% of the villages, while Barmer reported that only 33% of villages had some MGNREGA work.

Telangana

- Out of total 9547 families, 8296 families are having job cards and still 889 families (9.3%) do not have job cards
- 5833 families (70%) got job, out of them 638 (11%) worked for 100 days
- Particularly villages where the study conducted the average wage not exceeded Rs.142.6/ per day

- Average days of these villages are 55.64, which is not reached 100 days as per the act provision, the lowest working days are 23 days in one of the village in Nalgonda and highest days are 88 in Medak District. Out of 19 villages 10 villages have completed more than state average i.e.53.93

Uttar Pradesh

- The total number of job card holders: 7389; out of this, 373 job card holders did not get work despite their interest to work;
- Out of 26, there were 3 villages where no work had been done while there are 6 villages which provided work for more than 50 days in which 4 provided for more than 75 days of which 1 village had provided for 90 days work but not to all workers; 15 villages people were interested to work but did not have Job cards;
- In 14 villages people did not get all the payments, having issues of getting payment
- The government data of April, 2016 shows that about Rs 18 crore wages of MGNREGA worker were pending in Bundelkhand region of Uttar Pradesh, in which Rs. 3.62 crore of Hamirpur, Rs. 1.44 crore of Mahoba district were outstanding; There is delay of (6-7 weeks) in the payment of most of the villages;

Crop Loss and Compensation, Indebtedness and Migration

Crop Loss and Compensation

Agriculture sector employs about 60% of the population. Consecutive dry spells for almost four agriculture seasons coupled with hailstorms and unseasonal rains in between in many part of the country had hit the farming sector very badly. The unseasonal rains and hailstorms during early months of 2015 also caused severe damage to Rabi crop. The total loss was reported as 181 lakh hectares across 13 states which accounts almost one third of total cultivable area in rabi season in 13 states. Worst affected are Rajasthan, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. Rainfall deficit during 2014 and 2015 lead to severe drought and further deepened the agrarian crisis in the country. With more than 60 percent of India's agriculture reliant on monsoon rains, farmers are highly vulnerable to changes in rainfall patterns and rising global temperatures. With no water for irrigation, the drought has been devastating for farmers. It has been labeled as "the worst agricultural crisis in India in two decades."¹⁵

Agriculture which is reeling under extreme distress due to various reasons has been seriously impacted by the drought. Marathwada and Bundelkhand regions are worst affected, along with 8 other states across the country. Since 2014 and 2015 saw a nearly 40% drop in rains, thousands of Marathwada farmers lost four to five crops one after the other.¹⁶ For Bundelkhand, it is the 13th drought in the past 15 years, and it is 15th consecutive crop failure due to drought and unseasonal rain. According to the Uttar Pradesh government, its Bundelkhand districts lost 70% of Rabi crop due to the drought this year.¹⁷

15. Drought—a resource management challenge, Livemint, Fri, May 13 2016 <http://www.livemint.com/Opinion/AZtBWG2OdU9FCcfHgVyy2O/Droughtaresourcemanagementchallenge.html>

16. Atul Deulgaonkar, Anjali Joshi, Agriculture is injurious to health, EPW, vol.51, Issue no.18, 30 April 2016 http://www.epw.in/journal/2016/18/reports-states/agriculture_injurious_health.html

17. Penny unwise, pond foolish, Down To Earth, 1-15 May 2016

When the crops are lost for more than 3 to 4 seasons, the impact of such crisis on farmers would be beyond our imagination. They face acute stress in terms of food, water, and fodder for livestock and would also impact the education and health of the children and families. One of the provisions and entitlements that could rescue them to some extent is crop compensation. However the experience of farmers for decades in getting reasonable and timely crop compensation has been very negative. "The crop loss compensation is running way behind the schedule and the compensation for last year's hailstorm damage was still being distributed in some places. [As for crop insurance] ... it is a big fraud under which premiums were being taken without people's knowledge and the payments never arrived," was stated by Yogendra Yadav of Swaraj Abhiyan. He further alleged that: "the governments had overlooked the Supreme Court's directions on giving loans to needy farmers. To the contrary, old dues are being recovered and farmers are being charged and levied electricity bills on the basis of average consumption even where their borewells have dried up. Old electricity bills are being forcibly collected and they are being put in jail if they are unable to pay."¹⁸

The distress also made many farmers to commit suicides. Farmers from Maharashtra's drought-prone Marathwada region have been committing suicide since 2010 but the numbers have gone up from 2014 onwards. In 2015 nearly 1,200 farmers killed themselves and in the first 90 days of 2016, 273 had ended their lives in a bid to get relief from severe distress.¹⁹

As many as 116 farmers have committed suicide due to agrarian reasons so far in 2016, with maximum cases reported in Maharashtra, followed by Punjab and Telangana, Parliament was informed on Tuesday. More than 2,000 farmers' suicide cases were reported due to agrarian reasons in 2015 with highest number of 1,841 cases in Maharashtra alone, as per the data placed before Lok Sabha by minister of state for agriculture Mohanbhai Kundariya.²⁰

Summary of Survey Findings on Crop Loss and Compensation

In order to understand the impact of drought on agriculture field discussions were held around the issues of crop damage, crop loss compensation, status of tenants and share croppers, indebtedness, and migration. Broadly, the observations revealed that the scale of damage is huge and it was reported that 60% to 94% of the farmers in villages had lost their crops. In some cases, due to erratic/scanty rainfall, lands were left fallow. In 19 villages of Telangana where village level discussions were held, it was found that 5562 acres of land was left fallow.

Further there were many discrepancies in terms of who got the compensation and who were excluded. Since there have been calamities for the past 4 seasons it had become difficult to ascertain the compensation details. In Uttar Pradesh only 420 farmers (18.4%) out of 2275 farmers who lost their crop during 2014-15 Kharif season got crop compensation and 1834 farmers (74%) got compensation out of 2454 during rabi season of 2014-15 in 11 villages.

18. <http://thewire.in/43386/states-have-ignored-sc-orders-on-drought-say-activists/>

19. Atul Deulgaonkar, Anjali Joshi, Agriculture is injurious to health, EPW, vol.51, Issue no.18, 30 April 2016
http://www.epw.in/journal/2016/18/reports-states/agriculture_injurious_health.html

20. Hindustan Times, 116 farmers committed suicide in 2016; 10 states reeling under drought, Apr 28, 2016

It was found that the average investment on cultivation ranges from 8000 to 35000/- depending on the type of crop, but the compensation is hardly match this investment. Madhya Pradesh has brought out very interesting findings in relation to crop compensation. It was found 24% did not receive any compensation and among those who received compensation, 69% received less than Rs.1000/-, 24% got less than Rs.2000/- and only 7% got compensation to the tune of Rs.2000-Rs.2500/-. The average compensation amount a farmer received was less than Rs.1000/-. It also highlighted the fact majority of tenants and sharecroppers (88%) are excluded from compensation framework. The people are also facing issues with the local authorities who are involved in the compensation process as they are doing arbitrary conduct of their own. Some have reported that corruption is also involved in the process.

Issues of declining levels of water tables were also discussed during the consultations. In Telangana farmers invested on multiple numbers of borewells and incurred losses. It works out to be almost one borewell per acre. However, due to severe drought, the water table has gone further down and majority of the borewells were defunct. It was found 84% to 90% of the borewells are defunct and 10% to 16% of the borewells are functioning a little bit which is sufficient for family use, and not even for irrigation. In one of the villages out 600 borewells, only one bore is functional.

Other major issues came to light were: the NTFP losses that impacted tribal families were not counted as part of losses, which was brought out significantly by Odisha report. While Telangana highlights the fact that the state had very minimal efforts to support the agriculture activities of next season. The awareness on RBI guidelines on agriculture loans readjustment is very low in the villages. Most vulnerable population who lose their livelihood and are excluded in the process of getting any benefit are: dalit landless, single women, tenants and sharecroppers and those who are dependent on commons.

State-wise Survey Findings on Crop Loss and Compensation

Madhya Pradesh

- Crop loss and compensation: In second survey of 43 villages, out of a total of 6942 farmers in 43 villages, 1959 (28%) farmers received full crop loss compensation, 3669 (53%) farmers received less compensation compared to loss and 1314 (19%) farmers did not receive any compensation.
- Compensation amount varies from Rs. 1250 to Rs. 6250 per hectare. 16% of the farmers received Rs. 500 per acre, while 53% received in the range of Rs. 501 to Rs. 1000 per acre. (we can say - 69% of the farmers received less than Rs.1000/- as compensation); 24% of farmers received compensation in the range of Rs. 1001 to 2000 per acre while 7% reported to have received in the range of Rs. 2001 to Rs. 2500 per acre.
- Farmers had lost their Rabi crop in 2014 due to hail storm and unreason rain. For this loss they had received some compensation from the state; In our surveyed area Kharif was cultivated in 23674 acre land and Rabi was on 7519 acre. However compensation was given for only Kharif loss of 2015.
- Tenants and sharecroppers are worst hit; only 10% of the share croppers received com-

pensation from the concerned landowners while 2% share croppers reported that they receive 50% of the compensation amount from their landowners. Rest 88% did not receive any compensation from their landowners.

Odisha

- Loss of crops: 94% farmers of 38 villages in 7 districts of Odisha have been badly affected ; 40% to 70% paddy has been lost due to drought situation; 60% of millets especially ragi has been badly affected in western Odisha;
- Seed: 20% Dalit landless families including single women who depend on share cropping are unable to take land for sharecropping because they do not have seeds;
- Crop loss estimate: Administration is using “eye estimation” method . No action has been taken towards using technology in estimation of crop loss;
- The State Government had declared to provide agriculture input to the small and marginal famers but the study findings reveals that only 19% farmers out of 94% affected have been provided with agriculture inputs under the Drought Package.
- Input subsidy: District Administration of Sundergarh Rs. 36, 57, 48,000 was sanctioned for agriculture input subsidy for the farmers out of which Rs.1, 32, 21,000/ was sanctioned for Balisankara Block. But the farmer of Balisankara shared that they had not received in any input subsidy by the Government
- NTFP: Loss of forest produces due to drought is not taken in to accounts as loss. Whereas 22.1% tribal population depends upon forest produces for their livelihood. The Non Timber Forest Produces are also affected in the drought condition whereas it has been left out from the loss calculation

Uttar Pradesh

- Huge disparities have been found in the distribution of compensation. In most of the villages there are some numbers of eligible farmers whose crop had been lost but did not get the compensation. Those who were tenant, farming on lease basis are not getting any compensation from the government. Those who have migrated for work or other purposes and were not available in the village had left out from getting the compensation. Farmers are not aware of the compensation process that of which season they are getting the compensation or the rate by which compensation has been calculated.
- The data of 11 villages comprising of 3399 farmers shows that in the financial year 2014-15, 2329 farmers had sowed the crop of Kharif season in which crops of 2275 farmers were destroyed due to the natural calamity and only 420 farmers were got the relief compensation of that crop. In the same financial year 2014-15, 2485 farmers of the same villages had sowed the crop of Rabi season of which the crop of 2454 farmers had been also destroyed due to hailstorm and the compensation were given to only 1834 farmers rest 555 farmers still had to get the compensation of that loss.

Telangana

- 6509 farmers have sown cotton, rice, groundnut, Maize, Jower, Vegetables, Chillies, Pearl millet, castor and red gram in their 17792 acres of land. From this, they have expected to take 5257 quintals yield, but they got only 487.4 quintals (9.3%).

- Each of them had lost from Rs.8000 to Rs.35000/ in last year. Due to continuous drought bore wells have dried up, no water in it, no rainfalls, insects were the reason for loss of the crops. In these particular villages, 5562.76 acres of land kept fallow because of low rains.
- Over a period of 15 years the depth of the bore wells have gone to 100 ft to 600 ft. Roughly it has become 1 bore-well to 1 acre of agriculture land and among the bore-wells 10 to 16% bores are in a position to give some water which described as sufficient for a family use; In one village it has 600 bores but only one bore has plenty of water
- As per the study 2304 farmers, have bore wells in their lands which supplies water for 4629 acrs of land. 254 farmers have open wells and gives water for 356 acrs of land. 6 farmers have ponds in their land which is sufficient to provide water to 181 acrs of land. 61 farmers are using canal water to cultivate their 180 acrs of land. In Mahaboobnagar through river water 28 acrs of land is under cultivation.
- Successive crop loss reported in 1 village for 4 seasons; and in another village it is for 5 years now
- They haven't heard of agriculture loans readjustment for the present prevalent drought and subsequent declaration (in Nov 2015);
- No preparations for coming agriculture season from government side is visible; neither reported by the villagers

Maharashtra

- Among the surveyed villages it has been observed that no farmers have received any compensations separately during the drought declared period except the crop insurance opted by Farmers with Tahsil office.
- Almost 65 percent farmers were found in distress due to crop loss and burden of debts.
- Around 35 percent of the farmers were found to have debt of Rs. 5000/- to Rs. 40000/- from private money lenders. The interest rate in some cases was found 2 percent, 3 percent and 5 percent.

Indebtedness

Another primary reason for extreme distress in farming is indebtedness and this problem is further aggravated by the consecutive failure of crops due to drought. It was reported that 40 -65% of the farmers are indebted and facing extreme depressing conditions due to the burden of loan. It is as high as 87.5% in the villages of Uttar Pradesh. The accessibility of bank loans to many small and marginal farmers, especially tenants and sharecroppers is almost remote and they have no other option but approaching private lenders who charge exorbitant interest rates. Field discussions revealed that the interest rates range from 24-60%. There were instructions from the RBI to banks to reschedule the loans. In a response to the question in Lok Sabha on 4th December 2015, the ministry of Finance informed the members that Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has issued guidelines to banks for relief measures to be provided in areas affected by natural calamities including drought. The relief measures, inter alia, include identification of beneficiaries, restructuring of existing loans, extending fresh loans, relaxed security and margin norms. Interest free agricultural loans

are not covered by the guidelines. The benchmark for initiating relief measures by banks has also been reduced to 33% crop loss (Lok Sabha Starred Question No.*81). Despite this, there are instances of mortgaging of lands as reported by Uttar Pradesh and also serving notices to the farmers for repayment of loans from the banks, as reported by Jharkhand.

State-wise Survey Findings on Indebtedness

Madhya Pradesh

- Out of surveyed 26291 farmers, 16432 farmers (62.5%) had a loan of more than INR 50000 and 19000 farmers (72.2%) had taken loans from both bank as well as from private money lenders.

Odisha

- 70% families have obtained loan from money lender at the interest rate that ranges from 36 to 40% to meet the food need and other essentials;

Uttar Pradesh

- Of the 8216 farmers in 26 villages 3780 had land less than 2 acres, 3446 had more than 2 acres of land and 1217 were landless. 7189 farmers (87.5) have taken loan from various sources whether from banks or from landlords or private money-lenders. 5902 farmers have taken loan from banks while 1616 have taken from landlords or money-lenders; some farmers have taken from both the sources.
- In 26 villages the number of Kisan Credit Card is 5587 of which 2674 (48%) is the number of cards having limits less than Rs.1 Lakh. Out of 26 villages only in 5 villages the lands have not been kept on mortgage while in rest of the 21 villages lands have been kept on mortgage. In 2 villages people also got notice from the banks for their repayment.

Telangana

- Debts: 5743 farmers reported as having the burden of loans both from private as well as banks. The loans have varied from Rs.30000/ to 50000/ each and interests rate on private loans are ranging from 24 to 60%.

Jharkhand

- More than 44% of the families are indebted by taking loans from private lenders and banks. Number of families under moneylender's debt - 492; No. of families under Bank's debt 885; No. of families having debt of both moneylenders and banks 384; farmers are there who are extremely upset or in stress because of debt 491. In some cases banks issued notices to the farmers for repayment of loans.

Maharashtra

- Almost 65 percent farmers were found in distress due to crop loss and burden of debts. Around 35 percent of the farmers were found to have debt up to Rs. 40000/- from private money lenders. The interest rate in some cases was found 24 percent to 60 percent.

21. Harsh Mander, the wire, 16 June 2016 <http://thewire.in/43386/states-have-ignored-sc-orders-on-drought-say-activists/>

Migration

The lack of work and income in drought affected areas, people migrated in huge numbers to nearby towns and cities in search of work and livelihood. “Migration from the affected districts has increased two to three times as people suffering due to drought are leaving their habitations for survival.”²¹ Sphere India’s situation report, indicated that due to lack of livelihood opportunity, 60 % young population migrated to other cities and states in Bundelkhand areas of Madhya Pradesh.²² In Telangana, according to farmers’ organisations, nearly 1.4 million people have migrated from the worst affected districts of Mahabubnagar, Ranga Reddy, Medak, Nizamabad and Adilabad. “The migration is indicative of how terrible the situation is,” A.S. Malla Reddy, vice president of All India Kisan Sabha, told IANS.²³ (see Case Study-6 Distress Migration in Odisha)

It was found that migration, which has been a common phenomenon in these regions, especially Marathwada, Bundelkhand and Telangana regions, has increased significantly. There is more than 20% population migration from affected villages. Along with young population, a significant number of children and women also accompanied their families to cities. In Uttar Pradesh, 896 children (12.3%) were of age group 0-6 years, 945 children of age group 6-14 years joined their parents migrating to uncertain and unsafe locations to live in a precarious conditions (See “Box: Drought refugees in cities in search of work and water”). One of the important observations is that there are good number of people who are going to nearby towns for wage work and come back by late evening after work. It was found that this number has increased in the past 3 to 5 years.

State-wise Survey Findings on Migration

Madhya Pradesh

- In surveyed villages, 19746 persons (out of a total population of 91742 i.e., 21.5%) have migrated since January 2016 in search of livelihood. 45% of these migrants are women. The survey also revealed that persons in the age group 0-5 years constituted 15% of the total migrant population. As evident, women and children become more vulnerable to abuse and violence in terms of safety and security during migration to cities. 17% of the total migrants are in the age group 6-17 years; Out of total SC population in surveyed villages 79% have migrated; of those who migrated 67% are SCs and STs.

Odisha

- Migration has increased almost 2 times on the average; Families going to distant places like Chennai, Hyderabad and cities in Gujarat; Instead of 3 months they have been away for the last 6 or 7 months; 20% people have already migrated from the villages due to drought situation; 40% of the people of the study areas migrated for the first time.

Telangana

- 961 persons have migrated to different places in India and outside India also. Out of these 536 (10.4% of total families) members have migrated along with their families.

22. <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/sitrep-bundelkhand-maharashtra-30-march-2016.pdf>

23. Telangana: India’s youngest state faces worst ever drought, water crisis, Hindustantimes, Hyderabad, Apr 25, 2016
<http://www.hindustantimes.com/india/telangana-sees-harshest-drought-in-living-memory/storytpGJwr842isUxTZJrmMoOI.html>

Case Study-6 Distress Migration in Odisha

Youth in Balangir in Distress Migration

Balangir district is one of the KBK districts in western Odisha, popularly known for its recurring drought and distress migration. Saintala block is one of the drought prone blocks of Bolangir. It has been observed that due to huge crop loss and loan taken from various sources, people of this area migrate to other states by taking an advance from the middle men, under high risk of exploitation at their destinations. Several cases have been reported that these distress migrants who work at bricks kilns are facing gross violation of human rights and entangled in a bondage system. From Bolangir district, every year many families including women and children experiences torture, exploitation, harassment and brutality, even many death cases are reported at worksites. Poor sharecroppers, landless, small and marginal farmers from Dalits, Adivasi and OBC communities migrates to work at bricks kiln and construction sites of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamilnadu, Kerala after regular crop failure due to drought. However, the workers from this region are well known for their expertise in brick making. This has been a regular phenomenon and a new trend has been developed of youth migration. This case study is basically about 17-year-old Bhagirathi who was forced to discontinue his studies, migrated to Kerala to get an employment to support his family.

Bhagirathi resides in Nuamunda village, Bolangir District with his parents and 3 sisters. They belong to OBC (gouda) community.

“We possess approximately 3 acres of agricultural land. The main crops we cultivate are paddy, cotton and green gram. The other sources of income are daily wages and collection of non-timber-forest-products like chara , mahula, harida, sal leaves from the nearby forest. This year the drought has hit very badly, significantly affecting our food production and ways of living. We have lost all these crops due to crippling shortage of water and rainfall. My father also works as daily wage labourer but this year he did not get enough employment under MGNREGA. This year drought has also affected in such a way that we are getting very low quantity of the forest produces “ says Bhagirathi.

No doubt, this year almost all the villagers have faced the drought badly but like Bhagirathi’s father, there are more than 20 small farmers in this village whom the drought affected the most. Bhagirathi is the third child in the family. For first time,

Mostly these people are migrated Mumbai, Hyderabad, Nellore, Guntur, Dubai, and Kurnool. (the time period is 2 months to 50 yrs);

- In last six months 712 families have migrated to Hyderabad and Guntur for work among them 440 members have migrated along with their families. This is 7.7% out of total families and if we compare SC families only with total SC families it is 11.6%.
- Apart from this, nearly 60-70 persons from each village are going for construction work, daily wage work in nearby towns and villages.

because of drought, he had migrated to Kerala in search of some work (labour work) after completion of 10th standard, to support his family financially. During discussion it was clear that he is still interested in studying and wish for a good career. Due to no financial support, he sold the cycle provided by government to purchase the books for the board exam. His mother is a tuberculosis patient who is under the medical treatment.

Bhagirathi adds: “We have no financial support and one more elder sister is there, her marriage is my responsibility now, and the younger one’s career is my duty. I have to support my family now. Also I need to earn to meet the expenses for my mother’s treatment. My father is desperately waiting for the rain to make some miracle to this cropland. Due to this drought, I went to Kerala for first time. I have come here to attend a marriage ceremony, and then I will go back. I am getting Rs 400 per day as daily wages in Kerala. I would not have migrated if we would have not faced the crop loss. Like me there are many youths who are choosing the migration as an alternative option to survive their families.”

The drought situation has an adverse effect on the family and the situation can be clearly inferred from the condition of the family mentioned above. This drought has changed the life of Bhagirathi who wanted to continue his studies further but he was forced to take the responsibility of his family, and had to migrate to Kerala.

There are no actions have been taken up by the Government, community or any other agencies to respond to the drought situation till date. The government has declared to provide crop loss compensation as input subsidy to the farmers Rs 6,800/- per hectare to each farmer’s family but no one from this village have received the input subsidy. It’s no doubt that small, marginal farmers and sharecroppers have been affected most and waiting to get some assistance from Government. They do not have the food grains in their houses, totally depending on the PDS food grains. Many families have been migrated to other states by taking huge amount as advance from the sardar/ middlemen.

There are 3 ponds in the village which are dried up now. The boring well is not functioning properly. People are going 2 km away from the village to get water. And the community is completely dependent on the rain water for irrigation. There is no other alternative . Neither seeds nor any fodders are available for the community and livestock. No action so far is being taken up by community, Government or any other actor.

Uttar Pradesh

- In 26 villages of the study, members of 2751 families have migrated due to the impact of drought. A total of 7248 persons have migrated in which 3319 were male, 2088 female and 1841 children. 896 children (12.3%) were of age group 0-6 years, 945 children of age group 6-14 years and 39 people were of age above 60 years.

Box: Drought refugees in cities in search of work and water

Severe drought had forced many farmers and wage seekers to search for livelihood and work in urban centres like never before. The influx of migrants even attracted the media and public attention in cities like Delhi, Pune, Mumbai and Bengaluru.

Mumbai High court had taken up the case suo motu in April (2016) following media reports on the plight of drought refugees who had migrated from Nanded to Mumbai and had no access to food drinking water and shelter. The court sought details from the State Governments on the exact number of persons who have migrated to Mumbai and its neighbouring districts from drought hit areas, and what steps it has taken to help and rehabilitate such 'drought refugees' ('What steps have been taken for drought refugees, asks Bombay HC', The Indian Express, Mumbai, June 9, 2016) These migrants are living in urban centres under very precarious conditions. "The drought migrants have no homes in the city and some have made makeshift shelters on construction sites, footpaths and park benches. The villagers have no work and no cash, and many are forced to beg." ('India's drought migrants head to cities in desperate search for water', Vidhi Doshi in Mumbai, Wednesday 27 April 2016, The Guardian)

Even Thane had reported the presence of number of migrants who came from Nanded, Latur, Osmanabad, Hingoli and Buldhana districts in search of work. ('A Shelter Near Mumbai Provides Temporary Relief to Refugees Escaping Drought in Latur', by Rahi Gaikwad The Wire, 23/05 /2016)

Some 2,500 villagers from the parched Devadurga, Lingsugur and Surpur taluks of Raichur and Yadgir districts migrated to Bengaluru, which is 14 hrs road journey. It was reported that every week on Wednesday and Saturday nights the mini buses take migrants , (bringing over 5,000 desperate wage seekers) to Karnataka's capital. ('Drought forces farmers into Bengaluru slums', by Dipanjan Roy Chaudhury, ET Bureau, 26/04/2016)

Jharkhand

- Migration reported by 902 persons (out of 3961 families?), which is about 25% of the surveyed population. Among them, SCs and STs are in majority (more than two third). 158 of them are taking their children along with them.

Livestock Issues

Farming partly meets the requirements of the rural families in terms of their income and food security. Livestock contributes significantly to the livelihoods of the rural families and any calamity affects this asset, would impact these families severely. Drought affected the water sources and pasture lands and livestock deprived of fodder and drinking water, making the farmers/rural families, who are already facing stress in terms of water and food have been forced either abandoning, or selling them off for throw away prices, incurring huge losses. Media has widely reported the death of livestock. This impacts immediate income, and also future options of income/produce are severely crippled. This loss has not been considered as loss, and for any compensation.

Delhi also witnessed migrants mainly from Bundelkhand areas of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. An interaction with 65 migrant families in different locations of Delhi by ActionAid India and local civil society groups had revealed that 66% of the respondents are first-time migrants. This indicates the severity of the drought this year. The rest of them have been migrating to Delhi from last few years during this season in search of work. However all of them, without any single exception, mentioned “drought” as the reason for their migration. They mentioned that there was no work available in the villages due to drought and NREGA was not functional.

Most people get work as construction labourers. The middlemen or the real estate agents reach the source destination or labour chowk and hire these migrants. Communication is often an issue in negotiation and Bundelkhandi dialect is different from Northern dialect, so most people are not able to negotiate on wages. These migrants are unorganized and come to Delhi on referral by someone from their village who had earlier migrated to the city. The distant relatives or friends support in initial arrangements of finding work and place of stay. None of them are aware of any benefits or entitlements available to them in Delhi as migrant workers. The migrants are left without any basic services like shelter, sanitation (especially lack of toilets at worksites for women) or medical aid (distance public hospitals from worksites force them to seek private health services which are expensive; they lack information about the location of health centres and shelter spaces). Often they have to cough up their earnings to meet medical expenses of family members as they are not able to reach out to public health services. The wages earned by these workers for construction work range from Rs 250-Rs 300 per day. It is noteworthy that this amount is lesser than the minimum wage of the construction worker in Delhi (It is Rs 368/day for unskilled work). However the work is not available throughout the month, but hardly for 10 to 15 days a month. Women safety and security have emerged as another key issues these migrants in Delhi are facing.

Summary of Survey Findings on Livestock Issues

One of the major responses, as claimed by the government, is setting up of cattle camps. Only sample villages from Maharashtra reported the presence of cattle camps, and other state did not report this. Cattle camps were set up by the government, but they could hardly meet the demand for provision of shelter, water and fodder for millions of cattle. In Maharashtra, it was informed that 12 camps were found in the villages covered under study consultations in Beed, Osmanabad and Latur districts. Each cattle camp was serving approximately 300 to 500 big animals. Most of the cattle camps it was observed that small animals were not kept.

Field reports revealed that, thousands of cattle were left abandoned due to prevailing conditions in the villages. 91% of the cattle was abandoned in study villages of Madhya Pradesh while Jharkhand reported 3008 cattle as abandoned and Uttar Pradesh reported 22% loss in cattle population when compared to the last year. Further, Uttar Pradesh also reported 1543 cattle deaths while villages from Rajasthan reported death of 1391 cattle due to scarcity of water and shortage of fodder. It has further reported that out 77 villages, 73 reported scarcity of fodder.

Another issue, as mentioned above, distress sale of cattle. In sample villages of Odisha, it was reported that cattle were sold off at 65% to 70% less than the normal prices. This number for Telangana villages was 3016 and in Maharashtra distress cattle sale was reported in 9 villages where people belonging to Schedule Caste and Nomadic Tribes have sold off their goats and buffaloes at low prices in weekly market. For example in normal situation good condition goat prize is between Rs. 8 thousand to Rs. 15 thousand however during this crisis period people have sold their goats for Rs. 3 thousand to 5 thousand.

State-wise Survey Findings on Livestock Issues

Madhya Pradesh

- In 56% villages (37 villages out of a total of 66 villages) there was scarcity of drinking water for cattle. A total of 12804 cattle have been let free/abandoned by the villagers who constitute nearly 91% of the total cattle population in these 37 villages which constitute 56% of the total surveyed villages;
- It was found that 864 cattle were suffering from diseases and 381 cattle died.
- Fodder camps were set up in only 12% of the villages

Odisha

- Farmers of Nuapada are selling their valuable resources like bullock; 65% to 70% decline in the original price; 8 farmers of Pethiapalli village in Nuapada have sold 16 bullocks and 30 goats in a distress price;

Uttar Pradesh

- Number of the cattles last year was 34910 cattle in these villages and the current number is 27210, which is 22% less than the last year. In past three months about 1543 cattle have died in these villages. Out of 26, only 1 village is there where no any death has been recorded in past 3 months
- Out of 26 villages, only 8 do not have problem of water scarcity for drinking purpose of cattle while rest of the 19 is having water scarcity or crisis of drinking water for cattle.
- Fodder: out of 26 villages, 21 did not get fodder, only 5 villages got distributed fodder but only once and a little in amount and not to even all people having cattle. (more data is available)

Rajasthan

- Out of 83 villages, 77 villages responded on the availability of fodder. 73 villages reported shortage of fodder. This shortage of fodder coupled with drinking water scarcity has compelled farmers to abandon their cattle. 72% of villages reported cattle deaths. A total of 1391 cattle had died due to scarcity of water and shortage of fodder. It comes to 17 cattle per village.

Telangana

- 2210 families have cattle, but due to shortage of water and fodder, 3016 (Rs.5000 to Rs.10000/ and most of them have sent to slaughter houses) cattle have sold off by 466 farmers.

Jharkhand

- Number of families who have livestock: 2473; Livestock discarded: 3008; number of farmers discarded their livestock: 369

Maharashtra

- In Marathwada total 342 cattle camps were started by State Government however 12 cattle camps were found near to surveyed villages in Beed, Osmanabad and Latur district. Each cattle camp was serving approximately 300 to 500 big animals.
- Most of the cattle camps it was observed that small animals were not kept. Though there was no restriction found from Government however it is required to stay at least one family person for taking care of families on regular basis.
- Distress cattle sale was found in 9 villages where people belonging to Schedule Caste and Nomadic Tribes have sold their goats and buffalo's in very less prices in weekly market. For example in normal situation good condition goat prize is between Rs. 8 thousand to Rs. 15 thousand however during this crisis period it has been noticed that people have sold their goats for Rs. 3 thousand to 5 thousand. No example was found for livestock's death due to drought crisis.

V. Alternatives That Demonstrate Drought Resilience: Experiences from the Ground

Collective Efforts for Conservation of Water in Sundargarh district, Odisha

Kiri is a revenue village situated 215 kilometers far from Sundargarh district head quarters. It comes under Lahunipara block. The village is surrounded by hills and forests, the Bardhi stream flows to the east of the village, Derula village is in the west, there is a forest in south and Garami Bahi hill to north to the village. There are 18 households in the village with a total population of village of 98, of which 51 are male, 47 are female. There are also eight adolescent girls and seven children between the age group of 7 months to 3 years.

People of Kiri village primarily depend on uncultivated forest produce, cultivation of biringa (mixed cropping in forest land) to meet their daily food needs and maintenance of their livelihood. While they were living in the old location, they did not have access to get information related to existing laws, government schemes and programmes. The area was almost neglected by the Government.

In 2011, Jivan Vikas started working with the Paudi Bhuyan community by creating awareness program on different laws, schemes and programmes of Government. Later on, Jivan Vikas shifted the focus of the program to revive the identity of the community, revive their traditional farming system for achieving food sovereignty and facilitate access to forest rights.

Four years ago the village Kiri was situated seven kilometers away from the current location into the forest. The community took a decision to shift the village to a better place within the territory of the larger habitat so that they would have increased access to water, health and education facilities. In the earlier location, people were facing a lot of difficulty in accessing the health facility as the location of the village was in a hilly terrain without having connectivity of road. They were facing difficulty in accessing entitlements since Gram Panchayat office was located in 12 kilometres away from the earlier site of the village.

On January 2012 they shifted the village to the present location. They kept Kiri as the name. When the Forest department learnt of the shift they burnt all the huts of Kiri village on 14 April, 2012. Villagers lost their paddy, rice and other food items. A day after this incident, media persons visited the area after being mobilized by Jivan Vikas. News of the incident was published in The Samaj an Oriya newspaper on 18 April 2012. The community people and representatives of Jivan Vikas met with the district collector of Sundargarh and

asked for rehabilitation and resettlement of their villagers. After few days of the meeting, the sub-collector of Bonai subdivision enquired the matter and assured them of the transfer agricultural land for sustaining their livelihood. is immoral activity of forest department created a great fear among the villagers to the government employees.

The community started working collectively to prepare cultivable land for itself. Working together the community prepared 36 acres of land. The land is owned by the community collectively. They share their labour, knowledge and skill to do agricultural cultivation. The community had also mobilized Rs. 6.46 lakh from MGNREGS and constructed an approach road to the village from Derula, the nearest Gram Panchayat. The community is in the process of getting recognition for their rights over this land. They have submitted their claims of community rights over forestland under Forest Rights Act.

After preparing land for all the households, the community together took decision to construct water-harvesting structures so that the water need for the agriculture and other domestic purpose can be met. The community took collective efforts through labour contribution to construct two check dams on the stream locally called "Kanshal Dara". The check dams were constructed using the local resources and based on their indigenous knowledge and technology. The structure is 3 feet tall and 60 feet wide. Eighteen people worked for four days to complete it. As a result of the structure water is now available for the community. The community is quite happy with this collective effort.

They first started using the water for domestic purpose and for domestic animals. The community planned on making use of this water for agriculture purpose. They have planned the construction of water channels to divert the available water to agriculture land. Again 18 households worked for 6 days to construct an irrigation canal with the length of 400 meters and breadth of 2.5 feet. This was also constructed using the local resources like stone and clay.

Now a complete water harvesting and irrigation structure is available for the community. This structure caters the water need to do agriculture farming in 36 acres of land twice in a year.

The community has adopted ecological farming process that includes very low input costs. They have begun conserving seeds of their own and are engaged in preparation of manure, compost, herbicides and insecticides through organic processes. Besides that they have been taking efforts in revival of the traditional seeds that is climate resilient and having the potential to meet the drought situation. In this process they have revived 17 varieties of paddy, 13 varieties of millets, 6 varieties of pulses, and 9 varieties of vegetables. The efforts of revival of traditional seeds have been strengthened with the efforts of local level seeds festivals that create platform for the communities to exchange the seeds and share their knowledge, skills and experience related to ecological farming. In this process the food diversity has been increased in the village. The community has been cultivating paddy, millets, pulses and vegetables in a mixed farming system. Also due to this food intake of the household has been increased.

The food availability has been immense help to the children, lactating and pregnant women. The malnourishment of the children has been reduced significantly due to this. Each household gets 320 kg of paddy, 35 kg of pulses and vegetables for consumption

for the whole year. The present year of drought had a mild effect on the community. The community realized that the water harvesting structure were quite useful in mitigating the drought situation. The available water was quite useful for using in the upland and meets the domestic water need in the hot summer season. While the nearby communities were facing the drastic water scarcity, the Paudi Bhuyan of Kiri village had most assured water for the use of the community. However the crops in the upland were affected due to the drought situation. But the millet based mixed farming was relatively less affected.

The construction of community well in Lalitpur district, Uttar Pradesh

Village Dudhai is situated at a distance of about 46 kilometers from the district headquarter and is surrounded by forests. The Sahariya families of Dudhai village were facing discrimination from upper caste villagers. In 2012, 35 Sahariya families decided to move out from the village and settled on the forestland of the village. Forest officials kept harassing them by asking them to move out because they settled in the forestland, but villagers refused to move out and they constructed their Kuccha Houses without electricity and water facility.

Villagers had to walk for two kilometres each way to fetch a pot of drinking water. The situation became worse during drought because the drinking water source was drying up rapidly. Meanwhile villagers spotted wet patches in nearby forestland, and started digging well with bare hands. Sai Jyoti Sansthan came to know about this and provided support to the community in the form of tools and implements. The community decided to dig the well collectively. All the families worked collectively and Kastoori Sahariya, Babu Sahariya and Pappu Sahariya led the process. The families worked in the shifts with the adjustment of their regular works. After digging 5 feet they found water but continued digging the well for 14 feet so that they have enough water for coming months.

It took around 45 days to complete the construction. After completion of the construction work, a meeting was organized in the village in which members of local partner organisation Sai Jyoti, Sahariya Jan Adhikar Manch leaders, the Gram pradhan and community members were present. The gram pradhan had given a letter to the community that this well is for the Sahariya community and no one can claim the ownership of this well in the future. This well will provide water to 35 families belonging to the Sahariya tribe.

Drought Resistant Paddy in Bargarh district, Odisha

Sindhulata Sahu from Bandhupali village in Bargarh district, Odisha shares on how her traditional drought resilient varieties of crops, that were produced without chemical inputs survived the wrath of drought in the year 2015. This was in a situation where crops produced by farmers using high yielding varieties of seeds and using external chemical-based inputs were severely affected by the drought.

“I live in a joint family that consists of my two sons, two daughter-in-laws and one granddaughter. I grow food for my own in the three acres of cultivable land that I own which is entirely rain fed. Like other farmers, I depend upon rains for agricultural activities in my land. There has been no significant effort by the government to provide irrigation facility in my village. Earlier, I used to cultivate high-yielding varieties of paddy, black gram, and green gram. The high yielding varieties crops require timely rainfall and chemical fertilisers

and pesticides which was becoming unaffordable year by year due to high input cost. I had to invest a Rs 7,000/-per acre for farming of high yielding varieties of paddy other than my own labor. The total return from this investment in three acres of land was Rs. 25,000/- to Rs 27,000/-. In 2013, for the first time I transplanted indigenous varieties of paddy like Kadlikenda and Kamalshankari in two acres of land and through organic process using organic manures like jibamruta, ghanajibamruta, compost, vermin compost, neem oil and Brhmashttra. The total input cost in this system of production was Rs 5,000/- for two acres excluding my labor. However, in return I got 18 quintals of paddy,” says Sindhulata Sahu.

2014 was another good year for her as she cultivated indigenous paddy like Kadlikenda and Kamalshankari in two acres of land with homemade organic manures costing Rs 4,000/- except the labor cost involved. She says, “In return I got 21 quintals of paddy. In 2015, for third time I cultivated indigenous paddy like Kadlikenda, Bhulu and Kamalshankari in two acres of land in traditional method investing Rs. 4,000/- and in return I got 15 quintals of paddy. “

This year the drought hit very badly. The farmers who had cultivated high yielding varieties of paddy have lost their crops due to drought. But she didn't lose her entire yield as Bhulu, Kamalshankari and Kadlikenda are indigenous paddy and are capable of withstanding drought. She had also cultivated green gram and black gram in one acre of land and earned worth Rs 900/- from it.”

There are 171 families who cultivated paddy in 400 acres of land. Those who had cultivated high yielding and hybrid varieties of paddy, they have lost about 70% of its production. However 38 farmers who had cultivated indigenous varieties of paddy in an average of half acre to 1 acre of their land, they have got 6 to 7 quintals of paddy per acre on an average.

Sindhulata adds that, “In my village, people are in need of paddy seeds for the next kharif season, whereas I have paddy seeds and food grains enough to survive as I have cultivated the traditional variety of seed. 10 women farmers like me had cultivated 3 acres of land in collective effort in one patch of land and have got 22 quintal of paddy. We had cultivated Bhulu variety of indigenous paddy in it. We are happy that our effort has not gone in vain due to drought; we are able to survive in the drought condition. We have yet not received any input subsidy from the government including the mini kits, pump sets etc”the government should promote organic farming with indigenous varieties of seeds in drought prone villages. Subsidy should also be provided to those who are preparing and using organic manures in their crop fields.”

Traditional Structures for Recharging Ground Water and Collective Action for Maintaining Water Bodies in Jalna district Maharashtra

Traditional structures of irrigation were tried out in Maharashtra to avail water for cultivation. The structure was created near a lake or in the river. In this model, the water percolates into the ground and this increases the water level of wells and availability of water for cultivation or for animals. In Nandkheda and Shirgaon village of Jalna district, it was realized was the farmers that the rain water goes waste and there is need to conserve it by creating these traditional structures near or in water bodies. The loss due to water wastage through run off was discussed with the villagers in small meetings. The details of tradition-

al water structures and their success in other parts of the Maharashtra were shared in the meetings with farmers and it was decided to opt for this model.

The creation of traditional water structures benefitted 20 farmers and the water level area was found to have increased.

Vasant Bhanudas Shejul and Devidas Rangnath Shejul expressed their happiness because the water level of their wells had increased due to traditional water structures. Vasant has three acres of non-irrigated land. Desilting of reservoir has helped in increasing the water level of their well and now they have adequate water available for complete season. They are cultivating jawar, vegetables, tur. Prior to this, his family was only growing single crop and was completely dependent on monsoon rain. Now, the increased water level of wells has helped him to cultivate other alternative crops also.

The percolation tank on the west side of Shirasgaon had not been de-silted for last 20 years and had accumulated lots of silt. As a result of siltation, the water storage capacity of the tank had reduced to approximately to half. Also, due to un-decomposable waste stored in the tank, the percolation of water had also reduced. The fertile soil of the farmers near-by tank had been washed out and had affected the fertility of the land. In several rounds of meetings with the community on the loss to farming due to siltation, it was collectively decided to clean and de-silt the tanks and remove waste materials from it.

The affected community contributed in terms of meeting the cost of machine used to remove the silt and waste. The work of de-siltation was inaugurated by the Collector and the Deputy Collector, of Jalna. Silt upto 500 tractor trips was spread on the farm lands of six farmers resulting in improvement in fertility of the soil. The crops on these lands are sustained even during the severe drought. Water-holding capacity of the land is also increased. The water storage capacity of the tank along with the water availability to the community has increased and has benefitted the wells in surrounding areas by increase in water level in these wells.

The cotton crop was bumper in the farms of Santosh Preamsingh Bamnavat, Radhabai Lalchand Kamlal even during the drought and they said that for the first time they got such high production of cotton.

Saving Raindrops in Laporiya village, Jaipur district, Rajasthan

Long queues for government-supplied water tankers are a common summer sight in most parts of Rajasthan. But in Laporiya, a village 80 km from Jaipur, a collective effort to harvest water by 350 families has been defying drought for the past 30 years. While ground water has gone down to 500 feet in nearby areas, it is found at 15-40 feet in this village. Not only does lush Laporiya have enough water for its population of nearly 2,000, it even supplies water to some 10-15 surrounding villages.

This journey from scarcity to self-sufficiency started in 1977 when as an 18-year-old Laxman Singh returned to his village only to find that it gripped by poverty, caste conflicts and malnourishment. The school dropout realized that the only way to stop this vicious cycle of misfortune was to make the area agriculturally prosperous. But water was a big problem — it was available at a depth of 100 feet. “Back then, there were hardly any means to pump

out water at such a depth. I decided that if we cannot go down, the water has to come up,” said Singh. He then devised the chowka system based on a traditional method of water harvesting in Rajasthan and founded the non-profit organization Gram Vikas Navyuvak Mandal Laporiya (GVNML). Under the chowka system, small, interconnected, sloping rectangular pits, nine inches deep, are made in pasture land. The pits are bordered with bunds (mud embankment). As water assembles in one chowka it flows into an adjacent chowka and then spreads evenly because of the bunds. After crossing several such chowkas, water finally moves into a pond. This method of preserving rainwater makes the top layer of soil moist, recharges ground water, and also enables growth of native grasses and shrubs.

Over 15 years, the chowka system was developed on about 400 bighas of pasture land. The villagers came together and contributed money and labour to make the bunds. With the soil gaining moisture, villagers were able to harvest their rabi crop without irrigating their fields. “As there is no withdrawal of ground water for the rabi crop, it gets recharged and is used during summers,” said Chotu Singh, a farmer. There has been some smart crop planning too. Villagers stay away from water-intensive crops. During summer, cultivation of only green fodder and vegetables is allowed and that too in fields that are close to the well.

The discipline reaped some additional benefits. As the pastureland got green, animals started getting enough fodder. An indigenous breed of cow (Gir) was brought from Gujarat and dairy farming was promoted. Gir produces 8-10 litres of milk in a day and each house now has at least two of them. “Each household makes about Rs 30,000 – 45,000 a month by selling milk. It’s more for those who have over five cows,” said Arjun Singh, a volunteer of GVNML. The example has now been followed by 58 neighboring villages and is now spreading to other districts.

It was made possible by resorting to adopting traditional water harvesting system and staying away from water-intensive crops.

VI. Recommendations

Immediate Relief

Gratuitous support

As rural livelihoods are severely impacted and migration has increased, aged, pregnant women, destitute, the sick, persons with disability, and children are left behind in villages to fend for themselves. Further there are significant numbers of such population in urban centres as the homeless and destitute. Emergency food provision through community kitchens or any other form needs to be ensured. Additional provision under public distribution system and inclusion of other necessities like pulses and oil could be provided at least for a period of six months or till the end of drought, whichever is later. Similarly families of farmers who committed suicide should be given attention with proper exgratia and rehabilitation support.

Heat waves

Heat wave deaths are increasing year by year. In order to prevent morbidity and deaths and protect people's exposure to extreme heat conditions, some proactive measures like improving and activating health warning systems and health institutions, provision of sufficient drinking water and shade at work sites and other locations and also special attention and provisions for the homeless, destitute, old people, the sick and also wage labourers to avoid exposure to heat. Heat wave deaths need to be compensated sufficiently to rescue the families from distress and help them to continue a decent living.

Entitlements to Food and Work

National Food Security Act, Mid Day Meals, Integrated Child Development Services

Food-grains as prescribed for "priority households" in the National Food Security Act (5 kg per person per month) should be provided for all households irrespective of their category. The households that do not have a ration card or family members left out from existing ration cards should be issued special and temporary coupons for this purpose on production of ADHAR or Election Photo Identity Card or any other proof of residence accepted by the Government.

Additional 2 kg of dal (pulses) per household (or 400 gm per person) per month and 1 litre of edible oil per household (or 200 ml per person) per month should be made available through the Public Distribution System.

Additional one egg (or, failing that, 200 ml of milk) per day (six days a week) in the Mid-Day Meal (MDM) scheme in the rural schools should be provided; also, Cooked meals should be provided to school children even during summer vacation.

Mother committees of Anganwadi centres and concerned monitoring committees should be activated and empowered to ensure full functioning of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS).

Provisions should also be made for families that have migrated to ensure that they get the adequate nutrition for their families. Data for this can be maintained through migration tracking registers at the panchayat level and shared with the district magistrates of the cities where migrants have arrived. There also needs to be central guidance over inter-state migration.

It has been found that many migrants as well as residents have come under debt bondage and become bonded labour due to the drought. The state should, proactively, make provisions for their rescue, relief, compensation and rehabilitation.

Right to Work and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act

To bind implementation of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) it is imperative for the State to effectively use MNREGA for employment generation in drought affected areas.

Since this is a demand driven programme and employment of 100 days is a statutory right, there cannot be any budgetary limits to expenditure under this programme. Extra allocation of days and a system of stringent monitoring needs to be developed to see that most excluded families not only get work but payments are also made immediately so that families do not have to stay without food. Moreover, the panchayat needs to be involved in the process.

Average number of persondays of employment is around 50 and average wage is far behind the minimum wage prescribed by the respective states. States need to ensure that all wage seekers who demand work should get 100 days work by ensuring minimum wage and ensuring vulnerable families to get 150 days of work and also make special provisions for disabled, uncared aged, single women and other vulnerable people and give them work accordingly. Provisions for crèche and rest for lactating and pregnant mothers should also be taken into account.

The state government should also make adequate budgetary provisions in this regard to ensure that enhanced days of work and wage seekers are accommodated.

The works undertaken during MNREGA should primarily be towards the restoration of water resources. Watershed, traditional water harvesting structures, minor irrigation projects, check dams, farm ponds and rain water harvesting should be given importance rather than concrete road construction and other similar work. The Gram Sabha needs to take onus of this work and delay should not happen once the people have asked for work to begin under MNREGA.

People can be given choices about transfer of payments under MNREGA in their accounts, as cash or as food coupons. This has to be done within a stipulated timeline.

As a part of the works under MNREGA, the government can also run labour camps with community kitchen and adequate sanitary provisions to prevent people from migrating.

Water Resources

An equitable distribution of water resources between rural and urban areas and prioritising domestic and irrigation needs of the communities is needed. A comprehensive legal framework for fair distribution and just governance of water, surface and ground water and rainwater harvesting is the need of the hour.

Water harvesting and recharge of ground water, protection, reclaiming and developing water bodies should be given highest priority and integrated in all related works. This has to happen with the participation and leadership of the communities by integrating their traditional knowledge.

As there is no regulation on ground water at present, a legal framework is necessary on regulation of ground water in the interests of the communities rather than corporates. For every district, the state should collect data about drinking water and supply sources and estimate the amount of water required. Priority should be given to repair, augmentation and restoration of existing water supply schemes which would include hand pumps, wells and restoration of piped water and electrical pumps. Desilting, deepening and restoration of traditional water harvesting structures also should be given a priority. All the inlet and outlet channels and water bodies and commons need to be revived, and stringent steps need to be taken to restoration of such lands from encroachments.

The state should ensure that every district has a panchayat level plan for the water supply in every village with priority to drinking water. A contingency plan should be prepared at regular interval. Water consumption in all the sectors need to be judiciously prescribed and regulated with clear benchmarking and targets.

Agriculture and Livestock

Agriculture

The declaration of drought, as it should have been done in October 2015, should involve directions from the Agriculture Department about crop diversification and alternative crops which can be cultivated in less rainfall. This should be widely circulated and shared at the panchayat level and adequate support for procurement of alternative seeds (conducive to the local environment) and other required inputs should be ensured.

The Central/State governments should ensure adequate funds with timely availability and disbursement to the affected districts.

The Reserve Bank of India and the States should ensure that the Scheduled Banks as well as the non-Scheduled Banks restructure the crop loans and other outstanding loans of drought affected farmers.

There is a moratorium on recovery of all outstanding dues of farmers, including those which are overdue at the time of occurrence of drought, in the drought affected areas for the drought period. This should be implemented in true sense of words.

The principle amount of the short-term loan as well as the interest due for repayment in the drought year should be converted to term-loan; in case of more than one consecutive droughts or crop-loss, this should be converted into long-term loan.

Drought affected farmers should be given benefit of simple interest for the entire period, from day one of loan till the last day of deferment period, and interest concessions applicable to that loan should continue during deferred period.

Fresh loan eligibility of drought-affected farmers should be calculated as per latest eligibility and the scale of finance, without adjusting for the amount of deferred outstanding loan; fresh credit should not be denied for want of personal guarantees.

For farmers who have committed suicide, it needs to be acknowledged by the state and the entire loan amount should be written off. Provisions should also be made for the rehabilitation of the bereaved family.

The State should conduct an assessment of non-institutional loans (from money-lenders), usurpation of resources, bondage and if required also engage in punitive action against the perpetrators.

Priority should be given to research and fund allocations for dry land areas and to promote suitable crops that consume less water, chemical inputs and give good yields. Minor irrigation needs attention and more fund allocations. All necessary steps should be taken up for judicious use of water, and protection and promotion of soil health and bio diversity. Community participation and their leadership in all these processes should be non negotiable to make the impacts sustainable.

Livestock

State Governments should establish Fodder Banks as per the revised guidelines of the Centrally Sponsored Fodder and Feed Development Scheme, and follow the Union government's Advisory on measures to be taken to increase the availability of fodder. Union of India may be directed not to put financial cap on support for Fodder Bank component. Fodder camps can also be organised at village/cluster of villages level. The state should procure fodder from farmers, Forest department and other sources to ensure that cattle do not die.

The state should also run fodder camps for animals for a cluster of villages and make adequate provisions for their drinking water under MNREGA or other schemes. Death of cattle needs to be compensated sufficiently as it is huge loss for poor rural communities.

Drought Declaration and other Accountabilities of the States

Centre and state governments need to be proactive in quick assessment of onset of drought by improving their forecasting and technical machinery so that drought declaration and release of funds and following actions are timely and efficient. Timelines for assessment and declaration of drought and other actions should be mandated as per Supreme Court orders. While declaring drought, many other factors like surface and ground water levels, distress in agriculture and farmer suicides, migration, and soil status, plight of women and children etc., should also be considered.

The Central Government should make sufficient provision in the National Disaster Relief Fund to provide for this amount to the states as per the latter's assessment and demands.

Supreme Court order in relation to disaster mitigation fund and disaster response force and allocation of sufficient funds should be complied with.

Revision the drought code should be taken up with engagement of civil society organisations and independent experts and agencies and with the participation of affected communities.

It is the primary responsibility of the central government to respond to the disasters and it has to act in coordination with the states. States should also be proactive in responding to the crisis and also taking up long term initiatives on sustainable manner.

Way Forward

A long term sustainable development plan and governance of natural resources with most marginalised communities at the core focus with a rights frame work over relief, rehabilitation and development would provide lasting solution for overcoming drought. Drought is not yet over and will come back, may be with more frequency and intensity if we do not learn lessons from a very bitter experience.

DROUGHT 2015-16

LESSONS FROM DESOLATION

a citizen's report on impact of drought and learnings for future

Annexure A: Synopsis of Supreme Court Orders in Drought Public Interest Litigation

Subject	Order
Declaration of drought	<p>While revising and updating the Manual, the Ministry of Agriculture in the Union of India should take into consideration the following factors apart from others: Weightage to be given to each of the four key indicators W.P. (C) No. 857 of 2015 Page 49 of 53 should be determined to the extent possible. Although the Manual states that rainfall deficit is the most important indicator, State Governments seem to be giving greater weightage to the area of crop sown out of the cultivable area and not to rainfall deficit. For this reason, necessary weightage is required to be given to each key indicator.</p> <p>The time limit for declaring a drought should be mandated in the Manual. Although it is stated in the Manual that the best time to declare a drought, if necessary, is October, we find that some States have declared a drought in November and December and in the case of Gujarat in April of the following year. Obviously this is far too late. The impact and effect of a late declaration of drought has already been mentioned in the Manual and it is not necessary to repeat it. Hence the necessity of a timely declaration.</p> <p>The revised and updated Manual should liberally delineate the possible factors to be taken into consideration for declaration of a drought and their respective weightage. Haryana has added several factors as has been mentioned above. Similarly, Bihar has added some other factors such as perennial rivers while Gujarat has added factors such as the nature of the soil etc. While we appreciate that it may be W.P. (C) No. 857 of 2015 Page 50 of 53 difficult to lay down specific parameters and mathematical formulae, the elbow room available to each State enabling it to decline declaring a drought (even though it exists) should be minimized. This would certainly be in the interest of the people who face distress because of a drought or a drought-like situation.</p> <p>The nomenclature should be standardized as also the methodology to be taken into consideration for declaring a drought or not declaring a drought</p> <p>The Government of India must insist on the use of modern technology to make an early determination of a drought or a drought-like situation. There is no need to continue with colonial methods and manuals that follow a colonial legacy. It is high time that State Governments realize the vast potential of technology and the Government of India should insist on the use of such technology in preparing uniform State Management Plans for a disaster..</p>
Drought Manual	<p>The Drought Management Manual is undoubtedly a meaningful and well-researched document. However, in view of the submissions made before us by learned counsel for the parties, we are of the opinion that since the Manual was published in 2009 several new developments have taken place and there is a need to revise the contents of the Manual. We direct that the Manual be revised and updated on or before 31st December, 2016. In the proposed revised and updated Manual as well as in the National Plan, the Union of India must provide for the future in terms of prevention, preparedness and mitigation. Innovative methods of water conservation, saving and utilization (including ground water) should be seriously considered and the experts in the field should be associated in the exercise. Illustratively, dry land farming, water harvesting, drip irrigation etc. could be considered amongst other techniques.</p> <p>Humanitarian factors such as migrations from affected areas, suicides, extreme distress, the plight of women and children are some of the factors that ought to be kept in mind by State Governments in matters pertaining to drought and the Government of India in updating and revising the Manual.</p>
DM Act Implementation	<p>Implement the provisions of Disaster Management Act</p>
National Plan on risk assessment and risk management	<p>Section 11 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 requires the formulation of a National Plan relating to risk assessment, risk management and crisis management in respect of a disaster. Such a National Plan has not been formulated over the last ten years, although a policy document has been prepared. We can appreciate that the formulation of a National Plan will take some time but surely ten years is far too long for such an exercise. Accordingly we direct the Union of India to formulate a National Plan in terms of Section 11 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 at the very earliest and with immediate concern.</p>

Subject	Order
Disaster mitigation fund	As mandated by Section 47 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 a National Disaster Mitigation Fund is required to be established. Unfortunately, no such Fund has been constituted till date. Accordingly, we direct the Union of India to establish a National W.P. (C) No. 857 of 2015 Page 48 of 53 Disaster Mitigation Fund within a period of three months from today.
Disaster Response Force	As mandated by Section 44 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 a National Disaster Response Force with its own regular specialist cadre is required to be constituted. Unfortunately, no such force has been constituted till date. Accordingly, we direct the Union of India to constitute a National Disaster Response Force within a period of six months from today with an appropriate and regular cadre strength. Train the National Disaster Response Force and equip it to tackle the drought-like situation
National Food Security Act (NFSA)	Instructed state governments to: guarantee monthly food grain entitlements to all households (regardless of whether households fall under the category of priority or not) as per the National Food Security Act. It also waives off the requirement of possessing a ration card to get monthly entitlement of food grains under NFSA. Rather, any appropriate identification and proof of residence can substitute the ration card to access food grains. Each of the States shall establish an internal grievance mechanism and appoint or designate for each district a District Grievance Redressal Officer as postulated by Section 14 and Section 15 respectively of the NFS Act within one month from today. Each of the States shall constitute a State Food Commission for the purpose of monitoring and reviewing the implementation of the NFS Act as postulated by Section 16 thereof within two months from today, unless a State Food Commission has already been constituted.
Mid Day Meals	On Mid Day Meal Scheme, the Court directed the States to extend the Mid-Day Meal Scheme for the benefit of children during the summer vacation period in schools within a week from the issuance of direction i.e. May 13. The Court directed States to make provision for the supply of eggs or milk or any other nutritional substitute preferably 5 days in a week or at least 3 days in a week.
MGNREGA	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The State Governments ought to present a realistic budget which should then be pragmatically considered by the Empowered Committee. This procedure will avoid any unnecessary controversy between the State Governments and the Government of India about the release of funds under the Scheme. 2. The Government of India is directed to release to the State Governments adequate funds under the Scheme in a timely manner so that the 'workforce' is paid its wages well in time. It is regrettable that the pending wage bill for 2015-16 was cleared only during the pendency of this petition. The Government of India must shape up in this regard. 3. The Government of India is directed to ensure that compensation for delayed payment is made over to the workers whose wages have been delayed beyond 15 days as postulated by paragraph 29 of Schedule II of the MGNREG Act and the Guidelines for Compensation formulated pursuant thereto. 4. Both the State Governments and the Government of India are directed to make all efforts to encourage needy persons to come forward and take advantage of the Scheme. A success rate below 50% is nothing to be proud of. 5. The Government of India is directed to ensure that the Central Employment Guarantee Council is immediately constituted under Section 10 of the MGNREG Act. In any event, the Central Employment Guarantee Council should be constituted within a maximum of 60 days from today. 6. The Government of India is directed to proactively request the State Governments to establish the State Employment Guarantee Council under Section 12 of the Act within a period of 45 days from today. The effective implementation of the MGNREG Act will certainly not be possible unless these monitoring and reviewing authorities faithfully and urgently established by the Government of India and the State Governments. 7. Since the MGNREG Act is a social welfare and social justice legislation the Government of India must ensure that its provisions are faithfully implemented by all concerned.

Annexure B: Villages Covered in Survey**Jharkhand**

Five districts, seven blocks and 26 villages

S. No	Name of Village	Block	District
1	Bhirkhibad	Madhupur	Deoghar
2	Chechali	Madhupur	Deoghar
3	Sagarbhanga	Karon	Deoghar
4	Baskupi	Karon	Deoghar
5	Baghshila	Margomunda	Deoghar
6	Hulsam	Chhattarpur	Palamu
7	Hutudag	Chhattarpur	Palamu
8	Jaura	Chhattarpur	Palamu
9	Salaiya	Chhattarpur	Palamu
10	Tenpa	Chhattarpur	Palamu
11	Barhamoria	Giridih	Giridih
12	Bedmukha	Giridih	Giridih
13	Kusmatand	Giridih	Giridih
14	Parsatand	Giridih	Giridih
15	Tilayatand	Giridih	Giridih
16	Dasdih	Manika	Latehar
17	Jamuna	Manika	Latehar
18	Korid	Manika	Latehar
19	Patna	Manika	Latehar
20	Rakikalan	Manika	Latehar
21	Belsiagarh	Rania	Khunti
22	Gorsod	Rania	Khunti
23	Kishunpur	Rania	Khunti
24	Sonpur	Rania	Khunti
25	Jarakel	Rania	Khunti
26	Tangerkela	Rania	Khunti

Madhya Pradesh

Three districts, six blocks and 66 villages

S. No	Name of Village	Block	District
1	karmoura	Jatara	Tikamgarh
2	Kandwa	Jatara	Tikamgarh
3	Hirdaynagar	Jatara	Tikamgarh
4	Pathara	Jatara	Tikamgarh
5	Macchi	Jatara	Tikamgarh
6	Tanga	Jatara	Tikamgarh
7	Baharutal	Jatara	Tikamgarh
8	Kuvarpura	Jatara	Tikamgarh
9	Vikrampura	Jatara	Tikamgarh
10	Berwa Jangal	Jatara	Tikamgarh
11	Shaah	Jatara	Tikamgarh
12	Babai	Niwadi	Tikamgarh
13	Biharipura	Niwadi	Tikamgarh
14	Urdaura	Niwadi	Tikamgarh
15	Churara	Niwadi	Tikamgarh
16	Pajanpura	Niwadi	Tikamgarh
17	Umari	Niwadi	Tikamgarh
18	Kuluva	Niwadi	Tikamgarh
19	Naiguwa	Niwadi	Tikamgarh
20	Asati	Niwadi	Tikamgarh
21	Devendrapura	Niwadi	Tikamgarh
22	Pai	Rajnagar	Chattarpur
23	Jamuniya	Rajnagar	Chattarpur
24	Gora	Rajnagar	Chattarpur
25	Bhilguwa	Rajnagar	Chattarpur
26	Ghoguva	Rajnagar	Chattarpur
27	udhyapur	Rajnagar	Chattarpur
28	singru	Rajnagar	Chattarpur
29	barae	Rajnagar	Chattarpur
30	phrapura	Rajnagar	Chattarpur
31	akouna	Rajnagar	Chattarpur
32	Nimani	Baxuwaha	Chattarpur
33	Padriya	Baxuwaha	Chattarpur
34	Tilae	Baxuwaha	Chattarpur
35	Birampura	Baxuwaha	Chattarpur

S. No	Name of Village	Block	District
36	Kisanpura	Baxuwaha	Chattarpur
37	Gehulari	Baxuwaha	Chattarpur
38	Juzarpura	Baxuwaha	Chattarpur
39	Bamhori	Baxuwaha	Chattarpur
40	Modiya	Baxuwaha	Chattarpur
41	Gigvara	Baxuwaha	Chattarpur
42	Gudhakala	Lavkush Nagar	Chattarpur
43	Gudhakhurda	Lavkush Nagar	Chattarpur
44	Bedi	Lavkush Nagar	Chattarpur
45	Shahpur	Lavkush Nagar	Chattarpur
46	Gudhaura	Lavkush Nagar	Chattarpur
47	Devpur	Lavkush Nagar	Chattarpur
48	Madhawa	Lavkush Nagar	Chattarpur
49	Ratanpara	Lavkush Nagar	Chattarpur
50	Ktehara	Lavkush Nagar	Chattarpur
51	Bigpur	Lavkush Nagar	Chattarpur
52	Dharampur	Lavkush Nagar	Chattarpur
53	Adhiyaribari	Lavkush Nagar	Chattarpur
54	Bhadrana	Banda	Sagar
55	Patauwa	Banda	Sagar
56	Gondaee	Banda	Sagar
57	Chakeri	Banda	Sagar
58	Ganiyari	Banda	Sagar
59	Hinauti	Banda	Sagar
60	Chauka	Banda	Sagar
61	Patari	Banda	Sagar
62	Semara	Banda	Sagar
63	Pipriya	Banda	Sagar
64	Saurai	Banda	Sagar
65	Richaee	Banda	Sagar
66	Hanauta, Patkui	Banda	Sagar

Maharashtra

Four districts, eight blocks and 30 villages

S. No	Name of Village	Block	District
1	Takli	Kaij	Beed
2	Chincholi	Kaij	Beed
3	Wadgaon	Kaij	Beed
4	Hasegaon	Kaij	Beed
5	Maindwadi	Dharur	Beed
6	Gopalpur	Dharur	Beed
7	Brahmgaon	Patoda	Beed
8	Bhalavani	Patoda	Beed
9	Pagulgavan	Patoda	Beed
10	Kasewadi	Patoda	Beed
11	Nagzarwadi	Kalamb	Osmanabad
12	Shingoli	Kalamb	Osmanabad
13	Khondla	Kalamb	Osmanabad
14	Ramkund	Bhoom	Osmanabad
15	Anterwali	Bhoom	Osmanabad
16	Selu	Washi	Osmanabad
17	Kavdewadi	Washi	Osmanabad
18	Tandulwadi	Washi	Osmanabad
19	Ganegaon	Washi	Osmanabad
20	Nali Wadgaon	Washi	Osmanabad
21	Sirsgaon	Badanapur	Jalana
22	Ramwadi	Badanapur	Jalana
23	Lalwadi	Badanapur	Jalana
24	Nankheda	Badanapur	Jalana
25	Ghansangavi	Badanapur	Jalana
26	Soygaon	Latur	Latur
27	Shelu	Latur	Latur
28	Lakhanpur	Latur	Latur
29	Bitergaon	Latur	Latur
30	Divegaon	Latur	Latur

Odisha

Five districts, six blocks and 30 villages

S. No	Name of Village	Block	District
1	Budajharan	Balisankara	Sundargarh
2	Goelsukha	Balisankara	Sundargarh
3	Nalapada	Balisankara	Sundargarh
4	Parnajore	Balisankara	Sundargarh
5	Sunapada	Balisankara	Sundargarh
6	Daleisara	Luhanipara	Sundargarh
7	Dhokamunda	Luhanipara	Sundargarh
8	Kumundi	Luhanipara	Sundargarh
9	Kunu	Luhanipara	Sundargarh
10	Mahulpada	Luhanipara	Sundargarh
11	Dahani Palli	Buguda	Ganjam
12	Bada Taila	Buguda	Ganjam
13	Andhari	Buguda	Ganjam
14	Talasara	Buguda	Ganjam
15	Brahmandei	Buguda	Ganjam
16	Bandhanpadar	Kundra	Koraput
17	Dudumaguda	Kundra	Koraput
18	Gamkapadar	Kundra	Koraput
19	Kenduput	Kundra	Koraput
20	Pandrimati	Kundra	Koraput
21	Kenduguda	Saintala	Bolangir
22	Kadalimunda	Saintala	Bolangir
23	Dukechachara	Saintala	Bolangir
24	Nuamaunda	Saintala	Bolangir
25	Kudasingha	Saintala	Bolangir
26	Barabhata	Padampur	Bargarh
27	Biripali	Padampur	Bargarh
28	Sadanandpur	Padampur	Bargarh
29	Banjhapali	Padampur	Bargarh
30	Ramedag	Padampur	Bargarh

Rajasthan

Seven districts, 18 blocks and 82 villages

S. No	Name of Village	Block	District
1	Buthiya	Barmer	Barmar
2	Kharia Rat	Barmer	Barmar
3	Ratasa	Barmer	Barmar
4	Uparla	Barmer	Barmar
5	Bajrangpur	Barmer	Barmar
6	Jaisar	Barmer	Barmar
7	Khuti narj	Barmer	Barmar
8	Ummet gadi	Nava	Nagour
9	Kharia	Nava	Nagour
10	Haripur	Nava	Nagour
11	Lilvani	Nava	Nagour
12	Poshval	Ramsar	Barmar
13	Bodhiya Ja	Ramsar	Barmar
14	Adarsh dud	Chohtan	Barmar
15	Sarnpa	Chohtan	Barmar
16	Bhojaria	Chohtan	Barmar
17	Devari	Chohtan	Barmar
18	Manpur	Bagidora	Banswara
19	Odhar	Bagidora	Banswara
20	Sanwara	Bagidora	Banswara
21	Kamal kher	Bagidora	Banswara
22	Bijawal	Bagidora	Banswara
23	Dagari	Kherwara	Udaipur
24	Moduri	Kherwara	Udaipur
25	Trimohi	Gardra Road	Barmar
26	Patela	Gardra Road	Barmar
27	Chindniya	Gardra Road	Barmar
28	Heerpur	Gardra Road	Barmar
29	Utarba	Gardra Road	Barmar
30	Devlakhurd	Gardra Road	Barmar
31	Jijani khu	Saulmbar	Udaipur
32	Bhando ka	Saulmbar	Udaipur
33	Bara	Shahbad	Bara
34	Budel	Shahbad	Bara
35	Pavati	Shahbad	Bara

S. No	Name of Village	Block	District
36	Vago ka gu	Shahbad	Bara
37	Dhai Khera	Shahbad	Bara
38	Bambala	Saulmbar	Udaipur
39	Nagal kala	Chomu	Jaipur
40	Shigod kal	Chomu	Jaipur
41	Dodsar	Chomu	Jaipur
42	Khandel	Fulera	Jaipur
43	Jaisinghpu	Fulera	Jaipur
44	Jaisinghpu	Fulera	Jaipur
45	Tiyod	Fulera	Jaipur
46	Govindi	Sanganer	Jaipur
47	Rajash	Sanganer	Jaipur
48	Narshingpu	Sanganer	Jaipur
49	Dabasi	Sanganer	Jaipur
50	Rawatpura	Sanganer	Jaipur
51	Phutela	Bhupalsagar	Chittorgarh
52	Nichla sam	Bhupalsagar	Chittorgarh
53	Khanatalab	Bhupalsagar	Chittorgarh
54	Aambatalai	Bhupalsagar	Chittorgarh
55	Sadhamanpu	Bhupalsagar	Chittorgarh
56	Sarvni	Badesar	Chittorgarh
57	Pawthi	Badesar	Chittorgarh
58	Bra	Badesar	Chittorgarh
59	Daikhera	Badesar	Chittorgarh
60	Ghgari	Lasadiya	Udaipur
61	Aakiya	Lasadiya	Udaipur
62	Aakiya	Lasadiya	Udaipur
63	Npaniya	Lasadiya	Udaipur
64	Kuthna	Lasadiya	Udaipur
65	Jhasana	Lasadiya	Udaipur
66	Bari	Vallabh Nagar	Udaipur
67	Kanarkhera	Vallabh Nagar	Udaipur
68	Rampuriya	Girva	Udaipur
69	Maliyao ki	Girva	Udaipur
70	Bagru	Phagi	Jaipur
71	Bagru(Jhad	Phagi	Jaipur
72	Bagru	Phagi	Jaipur

S. No	Name of Village	Block	District
73	Bagru Kurd	Phagi	Jaipur
74	Shosinghpu	Phagi	Jaipur
75	Swaijaisin	Saulmbar	Udaipur
76	Sherpura	Saulmbar	Udaipur
77	Rhatakera	Saulmbar	Udaipur
78	Ven	Saulmbar	Udaipur
79	Sarvani	Saulmbar	Udaipur
80	Handi kala	Saulmbar	Udaipur
81	Holi kala	Saulmbar	Udaipur
82	Gohandi	Lasadiya	Udaipur

Telangana

Three districts, 10 blocks and 19 villages

S. No	Name of Village	Block	District
1	Dacharam	Gajewal	Medak
2	Rudraram	Mirdoddi	Medak
3	Kasulabad	Mirdoddi	Medak
4	Aakaram	Dubbaka	Medak
5	Peddakodur	Chinnakodur	Medak
6	Malkapur	M.Turkapalli	Nalgonda
7	Rusthapur	M.Turkapalli	Nalgonda
8	M.Turkapalli	M.Turkapalli	Nalgonda
9	Ibrahimpur	M.Turkapalli	Nalgonda
10	Bhuvanagiri	Wadaparthi	Nalgonda
11	Jangamreddipalli	Amrabad	Mahaboobnagar
12	Madhavanipalli	Amrabad	Mahaboobnagar
13	Petalcheru	Amrabad	Mahaboobnagar
14	Ekalasapur	Aiza	Mahaboobnagar
15	Teegalapalli	Kodair	Mahaboobnagar
16	Janampalli	Kodair	Mahaboobnagar
17	Jonnalabogada	Peddakothapalli	Mahaboobnagar
18	Devaltirmalpur	Peddakothapalli	Mahaboobnagar
19	Chinnakothapalli	Peddakothapalli	Mahaboobnagar

Uttar Pradesh

Three districts, nine blocks and 26 villages

S. No	Name of Village	Block	District
1	Bila Dakshin	Kabrai	Mahoba
2	Ratauli	Kabrai	Mahoba
3	Negwan	Kabrai	Mahoba
4	Palka	Kabrai	Mahoba
5	Kali Pahari	Kabrai	Mahoba
6	Kaimaha	Kabrai	Mahoba
7	Udaypur	Kabrai	Mahoba
8	Luhari	Charkhari	Mahoba
9	Bamhauri Beldaran	Charkhari	Mahoba
10	Balchaur	Charkhari	Mahoba
11	Jakha	Panwadi	Mahoba
12	Fadna	Panwadi	Mahoba
13	Naipura	Panwadi	Mahoba
14	Kaithora	Jaitpur	Mahoba
15	Kamalpura	Jaitpur	Mahoba
16	Vihar	Jaitpur	Mahoba
17	Sirmaur	Jaitpur	Mahoba
18	Bahpur	Gohand	Hamirpur
19	Baksha	Maudaha	Hamirpur
20	Galhia	Raath	Hamirpur
21	Kyotara	Sarila	Hamirpur
22	Bant	Virdha	Lalitpur
23	Vijauri	Virdha	Lalitpur
24	Badyawara	Virdha	Lalitpur
25	Dudhai	Virdha	Lalitpur
26	Saipura	Virdha	Lalitpur

Annexure C: Organisations Contributing to Report

State	Organisation
Jharkhand	Ambedkar Social Institute, Giridih Vikas Sahayog Kendra, Palamu Samvad, Madhupur, Deoghar Sinduartola Gramodaya Vikas Vidyalaya, Khunti
Madhya Pradesh	Jan Pahal, Madhya Pradesh Narmada Bachao Andolan Kisan Sabha Madhya Pradesh Apda Niwaran Manch Bundelkhand Majdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan, Poshan Abhiyan, Panna, Satna Shahriya Jangathbandhan Manav Adhikar Forum, Shivpuri Land Right Campaign, Madhya Pradesh Child Right Resource Center, Madhya Pradesh Vasudha, Jhabuwa Synergy, Harda Parivartan Campaign, Betul Adivasi Mukti Sangathan, Badwani Dalit Adhikar Abhiyan, Harda, Hoshangabad, Betul Rashtriya Garima Abhiyan Sajha Janpahal, Jabalpur 'Aashana' women Right Resources Center Dhai Aakar, Madhya Pradesh Ambedkar Social Justice Center, Madhya Pradesh Gram Sudhar Samiti, Sidhi
Maharashtra	Paryay Kalapandhari Samajik Sanstha Janvikas Samajik Sanstha Jagar Foundation Sarth Kisan Mitra Mahatma Phule Samajik Sanshodhan Mandal (MPSSM)
Odisha	Dalit Adhikar Sangathan Adivasi Ekta Sangathan Jagarana CCWD CIRTD Jivan Vikas Antaranga Jana Jagarana Dadana Sangha Odisha Anasangathita Shramika Sangha Patang Seheda Nirman Samuhik Marudi Pratikar Udyam Padamour (SMPUP)

State	Organisation
Rajasthan	Rojgar Evam Suchna ka Adhikar Abhiyan Akal Sangharsh Samity Majdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS) Mehnat Kash Adhikar Abhiyan PUCL Kisan Bharti Vikas Sansthan NFIW Prayas Dalit Adhikar Network NEED Valmiki Adhikar Abhiyan IJPHD Prayantna Samittee Vividha CULP BGVS BARC (Budget Analysis Rajasthan Centre)
Telangana	Caring Citizen's Collective Dalit Bahujan Front MV Foundation PILUPU
Uttar Pradesh	Samarth Foundation Gramonnati Sansthan Arunodaya Sansthan Sahariya Jan Adhikar Manch Sai Jyoti Sansthan

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