

HELPING THE MEEK TO INHERIT THE EARTH

IMPACT ANALYSIS OF RIGHTS BASED ORGANISATIONAL WORK DONE BY PRAYAS FROM 1998 - 2007

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1. Introduction

The tribals and dalits of the Vijaypur area of Chittorgarh district were caught in a peculiar feudal trap. The "Rao" of Vijaypur, the traditional Rajput jagirdar of the Mewar kingdom, claimed that he was the owner of 619 Mahua trees in the forests spread over 60 villages and so had the right to levy half the produce of flowers and oilseeds of these trees from the actual collectors who were poor adivasis. The activists of Prayas, which had been working in this area since 1998, explained to the adivasis that the jagirdari system had come to an end and the trees were now common property and anyone could go and collect their produce without having to pay any levy. The terror of the Rao was so much that nobody was prepared to defy him. Finally after considerable mobilisation the people of 18 villages, 120 women and 330 men, went in a delegation to the District Collector on 23rd March 2004 and submitted a memorandum demanding that the administration take action against the Rao and stop him from his taking an illegal levy of the produce of Mahua trees from them. Given the fact that the Rao was an influential politician of the ruling party and also a very rich man running a heritage hotel in Vijaypur and a three star hotel in Chittorgarh the administration took no action. When the adivasis went again on the 28th of March and cornered the Collector at his residence he made the astounding false statement that under the provisions of the Jagirdari Abolition Act 1959 the ownership of all the fruit trees coming in the area of the erstwhile jagir were to remain with the jagirdar and that the complainants should approach the police instead for action against the jagirdar for using force.

The Rao then sent his armed henchmen to the villages to threaten people to deposit the levy and this considerably unnerved the adivasis. Prayas then arranged for some media persons to visit the area and the story of the Rao's illegal extortion hit the news headlines. Finally a petition was filed in the High Court of Rajasthan against the inaction of the administration. The High Court taking a very critical view of the administration's support of an ex-feudal lord ordered that the state should see to it that the Rao's illegal levy should be stopped and the adivasis should be provided with protection against his strongarm tactics. Thereafter the elated adivasis under the aegis of Prayas have distributed the right to protect and collect the fruits of the mahua trees among themselves amicably and in this way have collectively increased their earnings by Rs 15 lakhs a year. This is only the most dramatic of many such actions undertaken by Prayas and its mass organisations for securing the rights of adivasis, dalits and other deprived sections in Chittorgarh district. It displays the judicious way in which Prayas has combined grassroots organisational work with media and legal advocacy within an overall rights based approach to development of the poor. An impact analysis of this highly effective rights based project approach has been carried out here to bring out the learnings and systematise them for future replication on a larger scale.

1.1 Organisational Profile

Prayas is a voluntary organization working for social, political and economic development of the mainly Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe marginalized population in Chittorgarh district of Rajasthan. It was founded in 1979 and it started work in Devgarh - a remote and backward tehsil of Pratapgarh subdivision in Chittorgarh district with the establishment of a dispensary. Soon it was realised that health problems were secondary compared to the basic problems of livelihoods and rights and so over the years a broadbased developmental rights based approach has come to be adopted by the organisation. At present Prayas covers almost the entire district of Chittorgarh and some adjoining villages of Udaipur and Banswara districts in its interventions. The stress has always been on people centered action in its three decades of diversification and expansion.

Prayas believes that social and economic inequalities in society are the root cause of mal-development and lack of rights and entitlements of the marginalised populace. Therefore it endeavours to mitigate this inequality by adopting the following strategies:

- Provide opportunities for the social and economic development of the poor and disadvantaged classes.
- Develop an alternative concept of participatory community development.
- Work to secure social, economic and political rights for all.
- Stress on the eradication of gender inequality in society.
- Act against social discrimination of dalits.
- Engage in legal and media advocacy to buttress grassroots rights actions.

Right from the beginning, the organization has believed in the importance of Peoples Organization (POs) in achieving and sustaining the desired changes. Since the marginalized communities can assert their constitutional rights on a continuous basis only through POs, Prayas has given primacy to the formation and strengthening of various organizations of socially and economically disempowered people.

1.2 Methodology of Impact Analysis

The essentials of the impact analysis consisted of a thorough analysis of power relationships of different actors and how these impinged upon the rights of the poor and excluded people. The impact of the work of Prayas on shifting power relations was assessed in five crucial areas as follows:

1. **Improvement in the material conditions of poor and excluded people**
2. **Increase in their rights consciousness**
3. **Strengthening of the process of organisation and mobilisation of rights holders**
4. **Changes to policies and practices of duty bearers**
5. **In particular the power and rights of women.**

Apart from this the impact of the work in terms of **institution building** of the deprived sections for sustainability of the work, building up of broad based **alliances of the marginalised** sections and the establishment of **citizen's rights** was also assessed. The format of the impact assessment report is as follows -

1.2.1 Situation Analysis - this detailed description and analysis provides

- i. an overview of the socio-economic characteristics of the project area.
- ii. an analysis of the various stakeholders and their inter-relationship in the project area both historically and at present.
- iii. an analysis of the various problems that have been addressed by the project.
- iv. an objectives analysis that sets out the goals of the project and the means by which it has tried to achieve them.

1.2.2 Strategy Analysis - This analysis follows the problems and objectives analysis and sets out the strategy that has been adopted to achieve the desired results. In addition to examining the logic of the interventions planned this analysis also looks at their practical feasibility.

1.2.3 Measurement of Impact - This sets out the impact of the project measured in terms of various indicators of performance.

1.2.4 Future Plans - This sets out the future plans of Prayas and its associated People's Organisations to expand the work that has been done under the project.

1.2.5 Procedure for Collection of Data on Impact - The impact analysis presented here is based on a rigorous data collection exercise. An evaluation team consisting of independent reviewers used a bouquet of different methods to garner primary and secondary information regarding the impact of the project in accordance with its goals and objectives as described in the LFA that included the following -

1. Review of secondary documents in Prayas, Chittor and Action Aid Office in Jaipur
2. Meeting with senior staff as well as with the field workers at Prayas office
3. Meeting with government officials in Chittor
4. Field Visits to Selected villages in the Development Area
5. Interviews with villagers
6. Focus Group Discussions with the villagers

2. Situation Analysis

Situation Analysis consists of Area Characteristics Analysis, Stakeholder Analysis, Problem Analysis and Objectives Analysis in that order so as to arrive at a thorough understanding of the parameters of the intervention programme.

2.1 Area Characteristics Analysis

Chittorgarh district is situated in south western Rajasthan between 23° 32'' and 25° 13'' northern latitude and 74° 12'' and 75° 49'' eastern longitude. It is flanked by Bhilwara and Bundi districts in the north, Kota in the east, Madhya Pradesh in the south and Udaipur and Banswara in the west. This district was formed by the amalgamation of a number of erstwhile princely states and their parts such as:

- a) Some part of Mewar state
- b) Pratapgarh state
- c) 79 villages of Nimbahera district of Tonk state
- d) Some part of the erstwhile Central province
- e) Villages of five forests of Jhalawad.

The district is subdivided into 6 subdivisions, 13 Tehsils and 14 Panchayat Samitis. The land structure of the district is generally undulated. It has mountains and hills falling under Aravali Mountain Range. Except the eastern part which is plain the rest of the district is hilly. The district is little sloped towards north from the south and its height ranges between 317 m. to 617 m. Most parts of the district are covered by forests.

2.1.1 Climate

Monsoon timings in Chittorgarh district is from July to September and heavy rains occur in August. Average annual rainfall is 85.21 cm but the southern part is faced with irregular rain. Winters fall between December and February and summers between March and June. The recorded minimum and maximum temperature respectively is 1.0°C and 48.0°C. The district also faces famines on a regular basis and at times continuously for a few years.

2.1.2 Landuse Pattern

The entire geographical area of the district is 1,044,613 hectares and total land available for utilization is 1,035,733 hectare. The land classification is as given in Table 1 below -

Type of land	Total area (hectare)	Percent
Forest	148196	14.31
Land Unfit for Cultivation	40272	3.89
Unusable land	151260	14.60
Other Uncultivable Land	79649	7.69
Cultivable Waste Land	207300	20.02
Waste land	49424	4.77
Agricultural land	359628	34.72

The better quality agricultural land which produces high value crops and with good yields is mostly in the control of the upper castes and the OBCs who are mainly Jats. The Jats in fact were initially upper castes but later they used their political power to get themselves listed as OBC once reservation for OBCs in government jobs and educational facilities began to be implemented. The dalits are mostly landless and have to depend on daily labour either in mines and industries or on the fields of the upper and other backward classes to make a living. The adivasis have land but the holdings are small and the soil quality too is poor and so their poverty level too is high.

2.1.3 Flora and Fauna

14.31 per cent of the area of the district is covered by forests. Mainly two types of forests are found here:

1. Teak forest: Found in southern part of the district ie Pratapgarh, Deogarh, Chotisadri, and Bassi.
2. Dhokda Forest: Mainly found in Northern part i.e. Bhainsrorgarh, Vijaypur and Begun

The flora of the district mainly include Kher, Khejari, bamboo, Gular, Mango, Banyan, Bhera, Mahua, Balam, Shireesh, Peepal, Karanj, Dhak, Tendu and Navpatri etc. There are two reserved forests in the district:

1. Bassi Forest area
2. Seetamata Forest area

Leopard, bear, hyena, sambhar, deer, neelgay etc. are found in both forest areas. Smaller animals like fox, hare, jackal, squirrels, wild mouse and wild dogs are also found here. Though nothing is done to conserve birds in the district, several types of the birds are seen here. Crocodile and alligators are also found in the rivers and ponds of the district. The forests provide considerable sustenance to the Tribal forest dwellers through Non-timber forest produce and also through grazing for cattle. This is the cause for confrontation between the tribals and the forest department staff because the latter do not allow the tribals to use the forests. There is considerable amount of forest area in the southern part of the district and this is where the work of Prayas started with trying to ensure access of the adivasis to these forests from which they had been systematically deprived by the forest department. A major grouse of the adivasis is that they have been prevented from cultivating their ancestral lands which were fenced off once reserved forests were notified thus severely affecting their livelihoods.

2.1.4 Minerals

Chittorgarh district is mostly covered by the Arawali mountain range and in some parts by the Vindhyaachal mountain range. Several mineral resources are found in these mountain ranges and their production in 1999-2000 is given in Table 2 below. The mining and further processing of these minerals are a major economic activity in the district. The industry is totally controlled by big corporate houses and local upper castes and the dalits and tribals work as labourers often under conditions of bondage. There is also the problem of pollution resulting from the effluents of the mineral processing industry which is causing fertile farmland of the farmers to become barren. The setting up of a cement factory by one such local marble mining and processing company has become a major cause for confrontation between the government which is to acquire land for it and the farmers who will lose their land in Badi Sadri tehsil.

(Tonnes)	
Lime Stone (Cement Grade)	71,53,000
Kaolin	40,929
Laterite	88,811
Ochre	3,17,905
Silica Sand	27,445
Lime Stone	7,153
Silver	35

2.1.5 Agriculture

Chittorgarh is one of the most fertile districts of Rajasthan with deep clayey soils having good NPK content. The ground water in the district occurs predominantly in the bedrock where the water level is normally about 10 metres below the ground level and so it is easy to exploit this resource. Moreover surface water flows also have been harnessed for agriculture. The main rivers of the district are Chambal, Banas, Orai, Zakam and Gambhiri. Several major irrigation projects have been constructed by impounding the course of Gambhiri, Berach and Wagon rivers as also a dam on the Chambal at Rawatbhata. The main agricultural crops grown in the district are maize, jowar, paddy, wheat, barley, gram, pulses, groundnut, til, cotton and sugarcane. The major output, however, is that of cereals and oilseeds. The production of the various crops in 2004-05 is given in Table 3 below. However, it is to be noted that these figures are for the bigger upper caste and OBC landholders who have enough land and associated infrastructure, capital and implements to be able to get the best out of the land. The tribals and dalits not only do not have economical landholdings they are also deprived of other crucial inputs. Moreover since their land does not produce enough for their livelihoods they are perpetually in debt to the moneylenders who use this to buy the produce of the tribals and dalits at rock bottom prices as payment for the loans taken at the beginning of the agricultural season.

(Tonnes)	
Maize	276128
Wheat	266321
Rapeseed & Mustard	140750
Soyabeans	135094
Groundnuts	54843

Sugar cane	45636
Gram	34401
Fenugreek seed	12032
Jowar	8303
Barley	7625
Black gram (urad)	5095
Guarseed	2158
Rapeseed	2146
Masoor	1486
Coriander	1199
Rice	1048
Psyllium seeds	566
Field pea	351
Cumin seed	329
Green gram (Moong)	231
Linseed	179
Cowpea (Chowri)	59

2.1.6 Industry

There are many mining, processing and manufacturing industries in the district providing considerable employment and they are as follows - bidi, cement, chemical based units, cotton (in bales) textiles, electrical machinery and parts, general engineering workshops, ghee, oil and dal mills, lead, leather footwear, machine tools, marble slabs and tiles, paper and paper products, polished marble tiles, rubber and plastic units, solvent extraction plants, sugar, wood and wood products, zinc. The number of Large and Medium Scale Units is 10. There are also 3,882 Small Scale Units. These are all situated in 7 designated industrial areas which offer good infrastructural facilities. As mentioned earlier these industries are owned either by national and international corporations or local upper and other backward classes and the tribals and dalits only work in them as labourers. The non-payment of minimum wages, bondage and long hours of work are a major problem for the labourers.

2.2 Stakeholder Analysis

The Mewar region of Rajasthan where the project area is situated is famous for the bravery of its Rajput rulers who vied with the Muslim rulers of Delhi and Gujarat throughout the second millennium A. D. However, the reign of the Rajputs of Mewar who initially ruled from Chittorgarh and later shifted to Udaipur was based on the very severe feudal oppression of the common people of southern Rajasthan who were mainly tribals. Heavy taxes and free labour were extorted from the tribals and other labouring castes to fund the militarism and opulence of the Rajputs. The tribals frequently rose in revolt against this oppression only to be brutally crushed. Even during British rule which added some more to the oppression of the Rajputs there were major uprisings in the region led by Govind Guru, Motilal Tejawat and Kalibai which were all put down ruthlessly. The upper castes sided with the British to quell the adivasi uprisings and so when independence came they were able to occupy the new formally democratic governance structure that was set up. The lack of education of the tribals and dalits and their precarious livelihood situation precluded their playing any significant role in the development process that was initiated.

2.2.1 Stakeholder Hierarchy

Thus historically the major powerholders in the area are the Rajputs. The onset of independence led to the Jagirdari system being abolished but the Rajputs still managed to retain a considerable amount of their landholdings by various means. However, the major portion of the agricultural lands of the Rajputs was distributed among the backward caste peasants who had been cultivating them as tenants and these, mostly Jats, now became a new economic and political force in the region. Especially as these other backward classes constitute more than 50% of the population they have succeeded in challenging the hegemony of the Rajputs in electoral politics and been able to corner a fair share of the benefits of post independence development. The next set of powerful people in the area are the trader and moneylender castes. They have traditionally had a stranglehold on the rural economy through usury and trade and this has been strengthened in the post independence era as they have dominated the trade in agricultural products and also in mineral related industrial development in mining, processing and manufacturing. Some of the other backward classes have been able to enter trade and manufacture also and so there is some sort of a troika of exploiters in the area with some differentiation in power between them.

The people who have lost out in the development process after independence primarily due to a lack of economic and social opportunities have been the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. In the neighbouring districts of Banswara, Udaipur and Dungarpur where the Scheduled Tribes are in much larger numbers they have gained some status through electoral democracy but in Chittorgarh they are totally dominated by the Rajputs, the bania caste traders and moneylenders and the Other Backward Classes and the administration too acts on the directions of these oppressors to further deprive the tribals of the benefits of development. Eventhough both tribals and dalits are deprived in Chittorgarh the character of the denial of their rights and entitlements differ. The tribals mostly reside in the forest areas and so have a major problem with the forest department with regard to access to forest resources. The dalits on the other hand find the social oppression and exclusion by upper castes to be more of a problem.

An important aspect of the social scene in Rajasthan is the very low status of women and the various social customs in place to keep them inferior. This situation prevails in Chittorgarh also. Especially the male dominated Jati Panchayat system and the custom of Nata both oppress women and so irrespective of caste and class women suffer severe patriarchal oppression. This is even more so for the dalit and tribal women who have to bear the indignities of sexual harassment by upper caste men also in addition to the oppression of their own men. They are thus at the bottom of the stakeholder hierarchy in the area. The local stakeholder tree showing the power hierarchy has been pictured in Fig. 1 below -

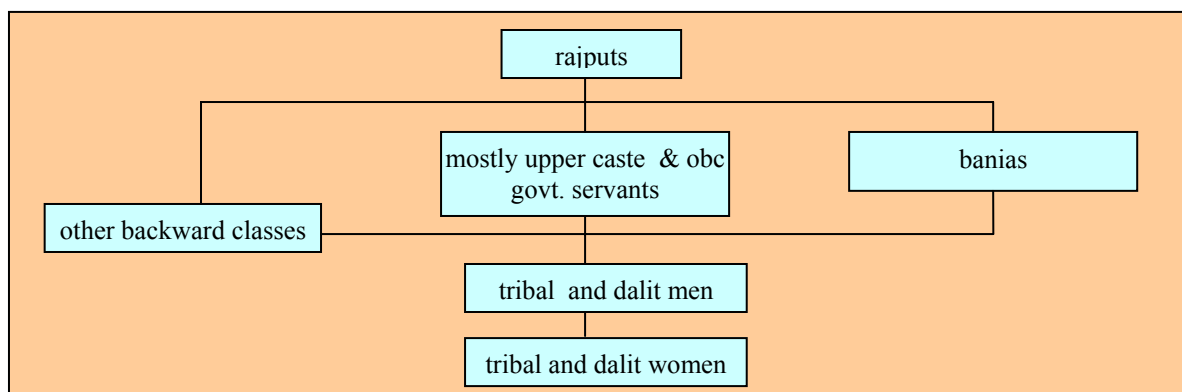


Fig. 1: Local Stakeholder Tree for the Project Area

2.2.2 Population Characteristics of the Project Area - The decennial growth rate of population in the district is 21.49% which is a little lower than the average growth rate for the state which is 28.29% for 1991-2001. However the same growth rate for Dalits is only 15.2% and that for tribals is 29.33%. The sex ratio in the district is 966. The main dalit castes are Chamars and Meghwals while the main tribal castes are Bhil, Meena and Garasiya. Some of the demographic details are as given in Table 4 below -

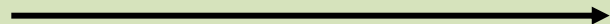
Description	Census 1991		Census 2001	
		Percentage [#]		Percentage [#]
Total Population	14.84 lacs		18.03 lacs	
Male in Total Population	7.61 lacs	51.28	9.17 lacs	50.89
Female in Total Population	7.23 lacs	48.72	8.85 lacs	49.11
Rural Population	12.52 lacs	84.36	15.13 lacs	83.96
Rural Male	6.29 lacs	42.38	7.66 lacs	43.06
Rural Female	6.13 lacs	41.30	7.46 lacs	41.40
Dalits in total population	2.17 lacs	14.63	2.50 lacs	13-90
Tribals in Total Population	3.00 lacs	20.28	3.88 lacs	21-53

2.3 Problem Analysis

The various problems that were identified by Prayas at the initiation of the People Centred Development Project have been categorised according to development sector and causative precedence in a tabular form in Table 5 below -

Table 5 : Development Sector wise Problem Chart for the Project Area

Development Sector	Cause → Effect		
	Basic Problem	Intermediary Effect	Overall Problem Statement for the Project
Livelihoods and Economic Empowerment	1. Lack of Access to Forests 2. Alienation of Land 3. Usurious Interest Rates 4. Non payment of Min. Wage and Bonded Labour 5. Degeneration of Natural Resource Base	Livelihood and Food Insecurity of Dalits and Tribals	Dalits and Tribals of the project area and especially the women are socially oppressed, politically powerless, economically exploited and
Social Justice	1. Dalits and Tribals not allowed to sit on cots in front of upper castes 2. D & T denied temple entry 3. D & T women sexually harassed by upper castes	Denial of social equality and justice to Dalits and Tribals	

Development Sector	Cause 		Effect
	Basic Problem	Intermediary Effect	Overall Problem Statement for the Project
Political and Legal Awareness	1. Lack of awareness regarding their fundamental rights under the Constitution of India especially the right to form organisations and associations. 2. Lack of information regarding various laws and policies enacted for the benefit and protection of Tribals and Dalits. 3. Corruption in delivery of various services by the administrative machinery.	Dalits and Tribals living in fear of the powerful upper and other backward castes and the administrative machinery dominated by them.	lacking in sustainable and dignified livelihood opportunities.
Education & Health	1. Inadequate provision by the government of free quality education and health services to Dalits and Tribals 2. Lack of services and opportunities for the specially abled.	High levels of illiteracy and ill health among Dalits and Tribals	
Harmful Social Customs	1. Harmful social customs like Mrityu Bhoj, Dowry and Bride Price.	Economic Burden on the poor pushing them further into debt and bondage.	
Gender Equality	1. Customs like Nata, Ghunghat, child marriage and the widespread prevalence of alcoholism and domestic violence.	Women are severely oppressed.	

2.4 Objectives Analysis

The preceding analysis has systematically identified and categorised the various problems and their relation to each other as well as to the overall problem for the project. Now an analysis of the objectives of the project will be carried out so as to ensure harmony between the goal to be achieved and the means that have been adopted in the planning and implementation of the project. The overall goal of the project is -

Establishment of a conscious and participatory process of societal revival through the organisation of the Dalits and Tribals into people's organisations for the creation of sustainable livelihood opportunities and the elimination of all kinds of discrimination and oppression with special regard to the improvement of the status of women.

The problem analysis done above has clearly revealed that the central problem is closely related to various other problems that beset the dalits and tribals and so this final goal can be achieved only by fulfilling lower level short and long term objectives as follows -

2.4.1 Short Term objectives

Livelihood and economic empowerment related objectives -

- ORGANISATION OF THE DALITS AND TRIBALS INTO PEOPLE'S ORGANISATIONS SO AS TO ENHANCE THEIR ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL BARGAINING POWER IN THE COMPETITIVE LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC SET UP PREVAILING UNDER THE CONSTITUTION.
- ENSURING PROPER WORKING AND REMUNERATION CONDITIONS FOR MINING AND AGRICULTURAL WAGE EARNERS
- ENSURING THE PAYMENT OF MINIMUM WAGES AND AGAINST BONDED LABOUR
- ENSURING RE-POSSESSION OF DALIT LANDS.
- ENSURING REHABILITATION OF PEOPLE DISPLACED DURING CONSTRUCTION OF *MAHI* AND *KADMA* DAMS
- NATURAL RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT ON A SUSTAINABLE BASIS

Social justice related objectives

- INITIATION OF ACTION AGAINST ATROCITIES ON DALITS
- ACHIEVEMENT OF EQUALITY AND SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE FOR *DALITS*.

Political and legal awareness related objectives

- ENSURING THAT THE "RULE OF LAW" AS ORDAINED IN THE CONSTITUTION AND VARIOUS OTHER STATUTES PREVAILS

Education and health related objectives

- ENSURING THE UNIVERSALISATION OF EDUCATION
- IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF AND ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

Harmful social customs related objectives

- FREEING OF DALITS FROM WIDESPREAD SOCIAL EVILS IN THE COMMUNITY.

Gender equality related objectives

- ESTABLISHMENT OF SELF HELP GROUPS OF WOMEN AS FORUMS TO PROVIDE BOTH ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE AND SOLIDARITY TO WOMEN AGAINST PATRIARCHAL OPPRESSION.
- GENERATING AWARENESS REGARDING THE HARMFUL EFFECTS FOR SOCIETY OF CHILD MARRIAGE, GHUNGHAT AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.
- PROVISION OF REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SERVICES.

2.4.2 Long Term Objectives

The first long term objective is to build up a broadbased rights movement of the oppressed sections in southern Rajasthan that can rise above the issue based approach adopted so far as described in the short term objectives and push for larger level policy changes that can usher in a participatory, sustainable and decentralised and gender neutral form of development in the region by strengthening the provisions of Panchayati Raj. This will require federation with the many other like minded NGOs and people's organisations working in the region on similar issues.

The second more long term objective is to align with other rights based movements across the country and the world to build up a national and global people's movement for sustainable and equitable development.

3. Strategy Analysis

Now that the goal of the project and the means of achieving them have been pinpointed it will be necessary to detail the strategies that have been adopted for the achievement of these objectives. The strategies that have been adopted for implementation are as follows -

1. As its main strategy whenever Prayas takes up an issue, it clearly discusses the consequences and possible fall-outs as well as the advantages in the beginning with the people. Only when the people become ready to take up the issue and are well aware of the consequences, is the movement on the issue started.
2. Another strategy which Prayas follows is that when people approach them with their problems, they ensure that at least 40 % people of the village support the issue, then only any meeting is held in the village.
3. Action taken both at the mass organisation and the legal and administrative lobbying levels for the reclamation of the alienated land of dalits and tribals. Rajasthan Land Tenancy Act 1955 provides for suo-moto cognizance of the issue but a study conducted by Prayas revealed that the administration was doing nothing in this regard because of pressure from the upper castes who had usurped the land. This action resulted in 279 families reclaiming about 555.63 bighas of land. Ranwa Kheda village in Kapasan is one of the beneficiary villages. Value of the reclaimed land is about 3 crore rupees. In Madhya Pradesh also which adjoins the project area, 52 bighas of land were reclaimed.
4. The village Gaddra has about 1500 bighas of land of which 80 % is owned by the Jats. The land of the village is irrigated by a canal. The higher classes of the village are well off. The village is divided into two parts, one of Jats and Gadrīs and others, while the other is occupied by the lower castes who are very poor. One Kayastha Sohan Lal had 12 bighas of land worth 12 lakh rupees. The land was given for cultivation to four families (one Bhil family) for the last 90 years. The Kayastha family did not turn up in the village during the last 60 years. This family had no heir and the land was being cultivated by the 4 families. The problem started when Nathu Singh borrowed a sum of Rs. 17500/- for the marriage of his son and mortgaged his 4 bighas of land with Kalu Jat. Apprehending that Kalu Jat had evil intentions, Nathu Singh got his land released and mortgaged it with Bhagu Gadri. This displeased Kalu Jat and he began conspiring to get the land. He found out Mahesh Mathur, a relative of Sohan Lal Kayastha who took over the land. Kalu Jat and Badhi Jat gave Rs. 35000 to Mahesh Mathur and got the land registered in the name of their mother at a cost of Rs. 485000/- with the connivance of the administration and threatened the former 4 occupant families to vacate the land. These families did not vacate, and started agitating under the banner of KKMS at the district level and filed a case in the court. Kalu Jat on 27th November 2005, at 12-30 p.m. reached the field with 2 tractors, 35 men with *Lathis*, to forcibly take over the land. At that

time 7 members, 3 men and 4 women, of the four families became alert and rushed to their land with swords and a gun. The men of Kalu Jat surrounded the field and started throwing stones. In turn the 7 men and women also paid them back in the same coin. The men of Kalu could not dare to enter the field in the face of the armed resistance of the 7 men and women and they took to their heels. A demonstration was held at the Akola Bus Stand by *the Village Land Sangharsh Samiti, and Khetihar Khan Mazdoor Union and Prayas* organization on 3rd January, 2006. The effigies of Kalu Jat, Badhi Jat and Nayab Tehsildar were hung on the road crossing and the people of the area were apprised of the evil deeds of these people. 500 to 600 people including Kavita Srivastava, (PUCL, Jaipur), Mr. Khem Raj, Mr Ashok from Delhi, Tara from Bhilwara, and Mr. Kanhiya Lal, Sanwaria and other workers of Prayas were present on this occasion. Every one termed the deeds of Kalu and Baddha Jat as atrocious and exploitative. The procession went to the Village Gaddra to the disputed land and the effigies were put on fire there. All the Jat community members rose against Kalu and Baddha. At present the land is in the possession of the 4 families.

5. Release of bonded labour in agriculture and in stone quarries and mines in the Badi Sadri area. As many as 350 bonded labourers have been released. The restriction of working hours and the improvement in the working conditions was achieved by the Khetihar Khan Mazdoor Sangh through a judicious mixture of mass organisation, legal action and media advocacy. However in village Rampuria among bonded labourers working on the land of big landholders the organisation has not met with much success as the people are not prepared to take the risk and unionise against the landlords. This is a persistent problem in many areas and the organisation has not been able to break the power of the landlords.
6. Organisation of the people into economic self help groups which supervised the disbursal of loans from a revolving fund, supply of agricultural inputs, implementation of natural resource development and management programmes and initiation of community and individual income generation programmes so as to improve their livelihood situation and free them from economic exploitation by upper castes and traders. The revolving fund running into lakhs of rupees has provided an effective buffer to the rural poor against the need to approach the sahkars in times of financial stress.
7. Organisation of relief works during the long spell of drought of four years from 2000 to 2004. Rallies, especially a padayatra from Chittorgarh to Jaipur in 2005, organised to put pressure on the government to open relief works and ensure that minimum wages were paid. This has resulted in the NREGA being implemented in the district with greater transparency and efficiency. A union of NREGA workers has been established to ensure Rs. 7300/- for 100 days of work to the poor and this has been successful in putting pressure on the administration to fulfill the NREGA goals.
8. Low cost housing techniques demonstrated and implemented so as to meet the housing needs of the poor. This has been a major intervention which has enabled households from poor communities to live in pucca houses for the first time in many generations.

9. Movement organized for the entry of Dalits in the village temple of Kiyakheda village. In 1998 the powerful Jat community in the village renovated this community temple and did not allow the dalits to contribute in this renovation either in cash or through labour. After this they began preventing the dalits from coming to the temple to worship. Things came to a head in 2001 when Ratanlal Jat and his group abused and pushed two dalits away from the temple when they had gone there to worship on the occasion of Janmashtami. This led to a major altercation between the Jats and the dalits which ended up in both complaining to the police. After this the Jats became very abusive and completely prevented the entry of the Dalits into the temple. In between the Thakurs of a nearby village beat up three dalit teachers for daring to sit on a cot in the open to watch a celebration in front of the Thakurs. All this provoked the dalits of the area to decide to raise the issue of social dignity and they planned a forcible entry into the temple at Kiyakheda. The administration and the press were informed as also human rights activists across Rajasthan that there would be a mass entry of dalits into the temple in Kiyakheda on 20th September. Activists from across Rajasthan and dalit men and women from 53 villages gathered there on the appointed day and in the presence of heavy police reinforcements successfully entered the temple. However, once the police camp was removed the powerful Jats once again gained control of the temple and prevented the Dalits from entering to worship. Thus this is a case of only a partial victory and exemplifies the extent to which caste prejudice still rules in the area.
10. Movement organised for Dalits to be able to sit on cots in front of upper castes and also to be able to sit on horses while going for marriage.
11. Action initiated against corruption to bring transparency and accountability in local government and administration particularly for the revision of the BPL list, against corruption in implementation of Indira Avas Yojna and against police atrocities against kanjar tribe. In a public hearing at *Karjali* in 2003 there was massive public participation of thousands of people despite the district administration prohibiting the assembly under section 144 of CrPc. This public hearing was organised in the teeth of opposition from the bureaucracy with the District Collector having thrown the application of the people when they went to invite him to be present. The issue was the massive corruption in the panchayat works which was taking place because of the connivance of the Sarpanch and the rural development bureaucracy. This was the first time that a social audit of panchayat accounts took place in Chittorgarh district. Public hearings have been used frequently as a means of organisation against and publicity of corruption issues.
12. Prayas took up a major campaign on BPL list formation in 2006. Visits were arranged to the various villages of Bhadesar Tehsil and to find out whether the government's survey of BPL had been conducted properly. Talking to various people of the villages and through observation, it was found out that the government's survey of BPL was not conducted properly. While enquiring about the survey the authorities failed to give the information regarding the basis of BPL determination. But after many petitions and complaints the Gram Panchayat decided to give the copy of the survey. Going through the survey a lot of contradictions were found. Prayas then

took up the BPL selection process in Chittorgarh district of Rajasthan as a case study. A survey was carried out in 9 tehsils - Bhadesar, Nimbaheda, Chittorgarh, Arnod, Pratapgarh, Begun, Kapasan, Doongla and Bari Sadri of district. It indicated that the poorer families were credited with more points, decided on the basis of the land holdings, food availability, clothes, sanitation facilities and worldly possessions than their comparatively well off neighbours. There were 8000 such cases that came to light. Many poor people did appeal with the help of the activists and other organisations but the local authorities initially rejected these appeals before they were taken up following a directive from Jaipur. Moreover 'Ward sabha' meetings did not take place in most places. Even if the ward sabha meeting was held but without much attendance. The authorities were in no mood to make corrections or include the names of the left out. Prayas then initiated a long campaign of dharnas and rallies. However, ultimately despite this the authorities did not relent and the poor Bhils and dalits were not included in the list.

13. Resource centres have been set up to provide information on rights and legal issues to the people. Trainings are also regularly organised to increase the level of awareness of the people. These resource centres act as rallying points for the start of campaigns around problems that the people face in the villages. All major campaigns have started out from discussions here.
14. Publication of printed and audio-visual material in simple Hindi as learning and training aids for the people and workers and activists.
15. Legal advocacy including the filing of court cases in the lower and High Courts for the rights of the poor like in the Vijaypur Mahua trees case mentioned at the beginning.
16. Media advocacy by lobbying with journalists to do special stories and also report on atrocities and public events.
17. Initially alternative schools were started in villages where there were no schools. However, later a movement was built up for putting pressure on the administration to establish and run schools and these schools were handed over to the government. The village committees are empowered to constantly monitor the quality of education being provided in government schools. Suresh Chandra age 15 , two sisters and one brothers. He belongs to a Bhil family wherein his father, Rama ji Bhil is a farmer and mother a housewife.
18. Suresh joined the Alternative School of Prayas in Titarda village near Mangalwar in 2002. At that time his father was excessively addicted to liquor and as such anything that was earned through modest farming was all squandered by him. As such the family passed its days in extreme poverty and sending children to school was never a consideration in the minds of the parents. Moreover, his parents being illiterate never understood the importance of sending their children to school. When Prayas approached Rama to send his children to school, he flatly refused. However it was Suresh who showed keenness for study. Despite his father's opposition, Suresh started coming to school on a regular basis. A number of times his father took him away from the middle of the class and even threatened Suresh and his teacher, Rama. Suresh was a sincere student and hardworking too. As

such Rama always encouraged him and was supportive towards Suresh pursuing his studies. Through Rama's incessant persuasion, Suresh's parents somehow later approved of his going to school. Within a period of two years Suresh got through the 5th standard examinations. Now he was later qualified to get admitted into a government school and go ahead with formal school education. Presently he is studying in 10th standard in the government school. This is an example of the kind of extra curricular and counselling support that is provided to children to ensure that they get educated.

19. A One day children's fair was organised on 14th November in Vijaypur and on 27th December in Bhadesar 2006 were organized which in addition to the children of the area, included the children of neighbouring areas also. 765 children from 17 villages took part in the fair in Vijaypur and in Bhadesar 204 boys and 35 girls took part. In this fair games and sports competition and preparation of useful articles from waste material were organised. Several sessions on education while playing and evil traditions in society were held to inform the children and make them conscious. Resource personnel took active part in these fairs. All children took part in these fairs at their own cost. Various aspects of maintaining health were explained. Pure drinking water, nutritious food and education were the main topics of discussion. The workers took the decision of keeping regular contact with the children. The girls of the area displayed some hand made articles. Children also presented interesting cultural programmes.
20. For conducting other activities related with children 40 boys and 17 girls children forums have been constituted and their meetings are held every month. One yearly two days' meeting is held for their office bearers to discuss topics of children's rights and their education.
21. A people's movement has been initiated to get the provisions of the National Rural Health Mission properly implemented in the region.
22. Campaigns conducted regularly against Mrityubhoj and dowry giving.
23. 365 cases of atrocities against women were taken up. In a public hearing organised in Chittorgarh in 2003 in collaboration with the Rajasthan Women's Commission as many as 16000 people participated. Local *dais* were trained to help during the deliveries.
24. Women have been encouraged to participate in Jati Panchayats which are traditionally the exclusive preserve of men.
25. A strong movement of Self Help Groups has been built up that provides economic security to women and also a forum in which they can discuss their own personal problems arising from patriarchal oppression.
26. A public hearing was organised in 2003 at Choti Sadri on the status of provision of reproductive health services in government health centres which revealed the extremely sorry state of affairs prevailing in this regard. Reproductive health is a taboo area where no public discussion is allowed and so rural women mostly suffer their serious problems in silence. Thus this public hearing was a sort of revolution in the highly patriarchal social structure that prevails in Rajasthan. Women openly discussed their reproductive health problems and demanded that the government provide proper clinical services for the proper diagnosis and treatment of these problems. 350 Dais have been trained in safe delivery practices.

4. Measurement of Impact

The consolidated impact assessment of the above process as evaluated by the independent review team is as given in Table 6 below -

Table 6 : Impact Assessment

Assessment Objective	Impact Status
I. Increase in the awareness of Tribals and Dalits in asserting their rights	
a) Reach of Prayas to the most excluded	The organisation closely works with <i>Meghawals</i> and <i>Bhils</i> in the Region. Besides they also work for the upliftment of other deprived castes like Kalbeliyaas, Kanjars and Raigar which are the most excluded sections amongst dalit and tribal caste in the Rajasthan state. There is enough recognition in the area among the deprived sections that PRAYAS is the appropriate agency for ensuring redressal of grievances.
b) Issues addressed	PRAYAS has succeeded in addressing issues like - Dalit Atrocities (Entry of Dalits in the temples, cot movement has helped dalits to sit with Rajputs on the cot, abolition of <i>Mrityu Bhoj</i> by the dalits (feast after the death of any villager), Bonded labour (assisted in liberation of child labourers and their rehabilitation). Land alienation and NREGA work are in the infancy stage in the area. PRAYAS's efforts have helped in acquiring 400 beeghas of Dalit land. Also, a <i>padyatra</i> from Chittorgarh to Jaipur was held in 2005 to generate awareness about the NREGA programme. Corruption and Upper Caste impunity have also been successfully addressed. The issue of rights implementation has been taken up in a holistic manner involving mass mobilisation, media advocacy and legal advocacy so as to be successful.
c) Rights Consciousness efforts	The <i>Meghawals</i> and <i>Bhils</i> are aware of claiming their rights. During the project period mass agitations against malpractices in BPL selection process, Rallies on Rights of SC & ST, Rallies on implementation of Forest Rights have been organised leading to a raised awareness on social security and rights.
d) Gender Equality	Gender Rights being a central area of the organisation's work has not been addressed intensively. Though initiatives have been taken but Prayas has not been successful in bringing the quality of changes in the lives of women that are required. Child marriage is still prevalent not only in the most marginalized communities but also among the Upper Castes in the region. The Veil System is still deeply rooted in the culture. During the meetings with the village community, women were not so vocal and were

Assessment Objective	Impact Status
	<p>speaking from behind the veils. Patriarchal power structure is deeply rooted in the culture. In one of the family in Karjali village, the daughter- in - law was standing in the presence of her in laws. Consciousness about women’s rights and attempts to change patriarchal norms which are excluding girls and women from development has to be made the focus of intervention. The specious excuse that this would set back the organisation process around general issues cannot be tolerated as women participate militantly in general mobilisation so if they get enough support from the organisation in their domestic battles there too they will be successful. The Self Help Groups too have remained mainly economic entities and have not been able to leverage the economic independence generated to make a dent in patriarchal power.</p>
<p>e) Sustainability Issue</p>	<p>During a discussion first with the people's organisation members and later with PRAYAS staff, every one admitted that they had been trained in asserting and claiming their rights and they intended to promote rights based work in newer unexplored villages. Youth Groups who were the part of some networks had decided to take up the work by holding regular meetings. There was also a suggestion to form a membership fees based union of network and staff members. They also acknowledged that “<i>we are now socio-economically empowered and we would like to see our community people like us</i>”. However, the actual active fees paying membership of the people's organisations is very small and so they cannot sustain themselves financially. These organisations are heavily dependent on the full time paid workers of Prayas and especially its charismatic leadership. Thus even though small organisation and advocacy work at the local level can be handled by the people themselves for larger campaigns the paid and trained staff of Prayas are indispensable.</p>
<p>II. Improvement in the status of <i>Bhils</i> and <i>Meghwals</i> in the Region</p>	
<p>a) Change in the attitude, behaviour and status of Community</p>	<p>The villages visited were dominated by Dalits (mainly <i>Meghwals</i>) and Tribals (mainly <i>Bhils</i>). Through the efforts of PRAYAS, the holistic development of the community is noticeable in terms of awareness generation, raising of voice against injustice and in bringing about tangible changes in some of the age old obscurantist and exploitative practices. These communities of Chittorgarh District are now more socio-economically empowered, motivated and self reliant. Even inferiority and insecurity in both the communities have been reduced and they have come out of the situation of fear.</p>

Assessment Objective	Impact Status
	<p>Formation of an SHG of Meghwals in village Umaid is a good instance of successfully revolving the funds. Through the annual members' contribution and some loan from PRAYAS, the community bought a loading carrier and started running it on a monthly basis. This is giving the members a regular income which is being shared equally amongst the members.</p>
<p>b) Relation of the community within the village</p>	<p>It has been observed that at some places the <i>Bhils</i> and <i>Meghwals</i> are able to stand as equals with the upper castes in the society and on the other hand in some places the conflict situation has increased owing to claiming for the rights. The example of Kiyakhera village mentioned earlier is notable. The Meghawals had good relations with the Jats (upper caste) six years back. All the villagers together donated for the renovation of a temple and everyone in the village used to visit and worship in the temple. But gradually, the upper caste people forced the Meghawal women to stop worshipping in the temple by putting false allegation of stealing of idol. Through the support from PRAYAS, Meghawals in the villages united and raised the voice against the upper castes and succeeded in reentering the temple in heavy police presence. But later the Jats once again prevented them from entering.</p> <p>The attitude of the leaders towards these excluded communities and PRAYAS staff has also changed in the villages. Even the relation of PRAYAS with villagers has been strengthened over the years. Initially PRAYAS staff had faced considerable difficulties in making themselves understood to the excluded community about rights. Communities primarily were keen in getting immediate benefits. However, when PRAYAS efforts helped them in obtaining BPL cards, awareness about health rights, awareness about SC/ST acts, then the ostracized community started approaching PRAYAS. On the contrary the village leadres now feel that the <i>Bhils</i> and <i>Meghawals</i> have become more empowered to fight for their rights.</p>
<p>III. Increase in Organization and Action of Civil Society</p>	
<p>a) Programme Coverage</p>	<p>During the project period the programme has expanded from 19 villages to 210 villages in five blocks of Chittorgarh and one block of Udaipur District. With the tremendous influence of PRAYAS in the project area in the various fields of development in which it has intervened, the organization has received recognition at state and national level for effective implementation and valuable contribution to rights based work. However, as noted earlier the people's organisations have not been able to set themselves up on their own and a vast majority of</p>

Assessment Objective	Impact Status
	the deprived people in the project area still rely on PRAYAS as a benevolent helper instead of trying to build up their own organisations.
b) Community Organisation	<p>Various non formal organisations like Khetihar Khan Mazdoor Sangathan (KKMS), NREGA Union and Bhil Vikash Parishad.(BVP) have been formed which have fees paying membership. KKMS has 1500 members with a membership fee of Rs 25. Likewise, the NREGA Union has 1800 members. Till date 6365 applications have been filed and the union has been successful in obtaining work for 3000 villagers. Similarly there are hundreds of SHGs which take up social issues in addition to micro-credit and income generation activities. The major people's organisations set up by Prayas are -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Adivasi Kashtkar Sangathan (AKS) In 1981, local forest guards tried to forcibly evict 600 families living for ages on forest land in Pratapgarh forest area. Prayas supported the movement of the affected families against the atrocities of forest workers and AKS was formed to sustain the effort. 3500 men and women of 47 villages of the area participated in the non-violent struggle against the local forest administration. Presently 1800 families are its member. ➤ Shramik Chetna Sangh The eastern part of Pratapgarh and Arnod subdivisions of Chittorgarh district are adjacent to the Malwa region of Madhya Pradesh and in this area tribal men and women used to work as bonded labourers for the rich peasants. In 1983, Prayas prepared a list of 114 bonded labourers through a survey and conscientization of the people. For the first time in the state of Rajasthan 83 bonded labourers were freed through the help of the state government. The released bonded labourers and other labourers who were not getting the minimum wage, formed a registered trade union called Shramik Chetna Sangh. The union helped the labourers to implement various labour laws. ➤ Khetihar Khan Majdoor Sangathan (KKMS) Prayas extended its working area to Nimbahera and Badisadari subdivisions in 1988 where there are a number of stone quarries employing thousands of workers. These workers used to work even at night in very unsafe conditions for half of the prescribed minimum wage. Some of the labourers were also bonded in a way through a deceitful system of advances and interest calculation. Two workers of Prayas organized these quarry workers and agriculturer labourers under KKMS. In 1996 it had a membership of about 2500 labourers. The organization

Assessment Objective	Impact Status
	<p>was able to get full remuneration for 500 quarry workers and release of about 250 bonded labourers. During this period, Prayas also worked towards the retrieval of SC's and ST's farm land alienated unscrupulously and illegally by the other castes. Such activities had a wider impact and the local politicians, dominant people and administration were annoyed with Prayas. Consequently, the SHO of Badisadari police station arrested two workers of Prayas unlawfully and tortured them in the lock-up. Prayas initiated a people's movement against this criminal act of the local police. About 1200 men and women participated in a public meeting and rally organized at Badisadari against police atrocities. This forced the police authorities to register a case against the SHO in the same police station. The first time anything like this took place.</p> <p>However, these are all issue based organisations that are restricted in reach. There is no all encompassing mass organisation with a clear cut ideology that can give direction to the mobilisation process and replace PRAYAS.</p>
<p>c) Community focus</p>	<p>The efforts of PRAYAS were with the men, women, children and people with disability. During the project period, women's issues and work with people with disability were weakly addressed. There is a need for deepening of work through gender- inclusive and disability sensitive participation. Even though there have been disjointed efforts at women's empowerment through health camps and formation of SHGs there has not been enough work on attacking patriarchal oppression which is at the root of all women related problems. Thus a proper analysis of the patriarchal power structure has to be undertaken and on the basis of the insights gained an effective programme of community based gender awareness building has to be implemented. Apart from this there is scope for better utilisation of the provisions of PESA with regard to control of natural resources by the Gram Sabha which is crucial to attaining sustainability of livelihoods in a situation in which natural resource bases have become degraded.</p>
<p>d) Networking and linkage</p>	<p>Bhil Vikas Parishad has organised an interstate alliance where the meeting of <i>Bhils</i> (Tribe) of Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh on tribal issues takes place. However, a lot more needs to be done to network with NGOs and people's organisations and campaigns at the regional, state and national levels to fulfil the longterm objectives of building up a broadbased movement for sustainable and equitable development. There is a need for integrating the interests of the tribals and the dalits into a common framework of analysis and action to provide greater relevance and stability to the organisation process.</p>

Assessment Objective	Impact Status
IV. Changes in the policies and Practices of state and non state institutions	
b) Organisation members constitution and approach	PRAYAS staff composition was mainly from <i>Bhils</i> and <i>Meghawals</i> with sufficient representation of women. One anomaly that was noticed during the meeting with the staff is that though they are addressing gender issues in the field, the culture within their own families is still highly patriarchal. Women in the family are still behind veils and they are not even being involved in household decisions. The leadership and ideological direction to the work of PRAYAS is being given by the senior level staff who are professionals with decades of experience in social and political activism and development work and without them it is not possible to think of the organisation performing as well as it has done so far.

6. Future Plans

The basic logic of intervention of Prayas and its associated people's organisations is sound the only major problem is that sustainability has not been achieved yet in both financial and operational terms. Even though the organisation has included women's empowerment through micro-credit groups in its project design this has not been followed up with robust implementation. Thus the equal participation of women in community affairs as also in the challenging of patriarchal social structures is still a distant dream. A ten year period of intervention is actually too short for achieving sustainability given the tremendous power of the upper castes in the region and the absolute poverty of the tribals and dalits.

Thus social capital which is relevant to some extent for solving rights based problems at the local level has been built up but political capital required to counter the larger political economy of modern development which is against the interests of the tribals and the dalits has not been built up in any significant manner. The local state and the local power centres have been successfully neutralised through the formation of social capital but for sustainability and replication on a larger scale across dryland tribal a larger mobilisation based on a sound ideological foundation is necessary. The empowering provisions of the Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas Act 1996 (PESA), The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 (NREGA) and the The Right to Information Act 2005 (RTIA) now provide a set of legal instruments to make possible a broadbased people's mobilisation for sustainable and equitable development. However, because of the lack of political empowerment of the tribals and dalits these statutes are not being availed of to their advantage. Thus the way forward is to build on the social capital already garnered and acquire political capital in the form of a strong all encompassing people's organisation that has gender equality as its centre piece.

Consequently further support for at least five years for a new programme built on these lines will be necessary to capitalise on the gains already made and produce some pathbreaking political mobilisation in the future.