



# BIDESIA

A THREE-YEAR PROJECT ON MIGRANT LABOUR

## Project Completion Report

Period: From August 2011 to July-2014

supported by

JAMSETJI TATA TRUST, Mumbai



implemented by:

DARABAR SAHITYA SANSAD (DSS)

At Sodhua, PO Dalakasoti, Via Balipatna 752102

District Khordha, ODISHA, India

# **BIDESIA**

## **(A PROJECT ON MIGRANT LABOUR)**

### **A. Introduction**

Migration from the poor, rural areas of Odisha in search of work opportunities and livelihood has been going on for long. How the migrant workers fared in their respective areas of work and the impact, positive or adverse, on their families the migrants leave behind in their native villages has not been studied by in detail and in the proper perspective by researchers and social scientists. Heart-rending tales of misery being faced by the migrant workers seem endless, many of them detailing inhuman episodes and treatment. Just a few months ago, the labourer of a house in Nuapada was set afire by the labour contractor (sardar) because he had not paid the interest on the advance he had returned to the sardar for being unable to go to another state as his wife had fallen ill. Migrant workers have died because of inadequate safety measures at their places of work in distant places and except for the few cases, their families have not compensated for the negligence of the employer resulted in the death, in many cases, of the sole breadwinner of the family.

On December 15, 2013, the Odisha State Assembly was rocked by the incident of two migrant workers of Kalahandi whose hands were chopped off because to tried to escape from the clutches of the labour sardar. Cases of human trafficking are regularly reported in the press with the police apprehending the migrants and the labour contractor at bus stands and railway stations just when they are about to be taken to distant destinations.

Stories like these are galore in many districts of Odisha where migration has become a way of life. With most of the people being either landless or holding small tracts of land unworthy of irrigation, the males migrate to other parts of the state and also to other states during the lean season in agricultural operations and return ahead of the monsoon to work in their villages.

According to figures quoted in the State Assembly, over one lakh (1,00,000) persons have sent out of the State by middlemen to work as migrant labourers. Researchers and social activists however dispute this figure as being grossly understated and claim that over 3 lakh labourers (3,00,000) labourers, including minor children have gone to work in brick kilns in States like Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Goa. Many of them have become bonded labour in their destinations having been lured by advance payments made to the left behind families in the villages.

### **B. Background**

Darabar Sahitya Sansad (DSS) took up developmental activities in 1982 concentrating initially in the coastal area of undivided Puri district. The area is plain and has a high density population in the rural areas. Falling in the deltaic plain of the Mahanadi river, Odisha's largest river system, the land is fertile and with the help of canal irrigation farmers in the area succeed in harvesting two crops a year. However, canal irrigation is available for only 50 per cent of the area limiting the production to just one crop here. Besides, annual recurring floods affect quite a significant portion of the main (kharif) crop.

About 25 percent of the population belong to the Scheduled Castes and are landless depending on work on other people's land to earn a living. In the absence of any industry and not much of a service sector, such people have to depend largely on work in agriculture. Following the 1999 supercyclone that wreaked widespread havoc and misery in the State, floods have begun afflicting the area regularly adding to the misery of the people. Besides causing an adverse impact on the food security situation, overall employment opportunities for youth have diminished considerably.

In addition to the overwhelming pressure of earning a livelihood, the people of the area also face a high incidence of diseases like malaria, TB, cancer, RTI, diarrhoea and gastroenteritis. Recently, Chikunguiea took on an epidemic form. This is a type of fever that makes a patient unable to work for months together.

Among the other factors that mark the profile of the area is that some villages do not have electricity and many are cut off from the rest of the area because of lack of all-weather roads. Though the level of education is better than that of tribal districts, the level of female literacy especially among the dalits is poor.

### **B.1. Darabar Sahitya Sansad (DSS)**

DSS has been working in the districts of Khurda, Puri, Jagatsinghpur and Balasore for the last 28 years to promote livelihood for women and youth in these disaster-prone areas. Its major focus has been on:

1. Livelihood promotion for poor women and youth.
2. Promotion of micro-finance among women SHGs and their federations.
3. Preparing the community to face disasters and spread awareness about adopting environment-friendly practices to combat weather and climate deterioration.
4. Promote adoption of safe drinking water processes and healthy and hygienic sanitation measures.

In keeping with its avowed focus on women and youth, DSS has promoted self help groups and federations to mobilise cooperation among communities,, build solidarity and develop financial security at the grassroot level. To ensure security of life and property and income-earning assets to decrease their vulnerability to socio-economic pressures, DSS has initiated and implements various programmes and projects. DSS believes that the building of rural livelihood and reinforcing the capacity to endure disasters would discourage youth from migrating to urban centres in and outside the State. Indirectly, this endeavour would reduce the over-crowding of urban centres and treat the problem at the source itself.

DSS's networks extends at present to 162 villages in 4 blocks of the three coastal districts of Puri, Khurda and Balasore. It has mobilised women into self help groups at the block level. It has also formed farmers' groups and village-level disaster management committees to ensure the participation of the entire population for its own benefit. It has also promoted climate and weather monitoring and forecasting in schools.

Organisation-wise, DSS has situated its head office in Sodhua in Khurda district in the heart of the area of operations with branch offices in Bamanal in Puri district and in Jaleswar in Balasore district. It has a minimal presence in Jagatsinghpur and Kendrapara districts. Its manpower comprises 16 full-time workers and 8 volunteers whose number increases with specific projects. Most of its activities are implemented with the cooperation and support of women SHGs and village level committees.

## **B.2. Migration**

As mentioned earlier, the area of operation of DSS is chronically prone to floods leading to different forms of migration like short-term, long-term, seasonal, permanent and with or without the family. It begins with a seasonal form after the floods when the youth and breadwinners migrate in search of daily labour to sustain their families. With the frequency of the floods having increased following global climate changes, migration has taken on a permanent form at a specific destination where regular work is available. Another reason for migration is that high density of the population in the target area necessitates an income in addition to agricultural labour. As this is not available in the target area, youths migrate to other destinations.

DSS has taken these factors into consideration and has been working on promoting local livelihood sources with the help of women self help groups and village disaster committees. Yet, the number of migrants keeps increasing every year leading to two sets of problems—the appalling conditions in which the migrants work and live in their destinations and the difficulties the women and family left behind face in their absence of their male members. Some of these issues which have been generally neglected in the past have been identified and studied in the present project. However, considerable study is still required to understand and study the health and other hazards faced by the families of migrants who are left behind in their native villages.

The present study has not dealt with the issue of migration in isolation by concentrating on the single-minded approach of only ensuring livelihood in the villages to discourage migration. It has not only dealt with the conditions of the migrations through destination studies but also made a detailed and elaborate investigation of the situation of the left behind women. It was a major challenge, but DSS endeavoured its best to come up with an informative and rights-based comprehensive report that will help planners and social activists to improve the socio-economic status of poor Oriya migrant workers and their families.

## **B.3. Profile of the blocks where project was implemented.**

The present study on Migration was confined to two blocks—Balipatana on the eastern side of Khurda district bordering Puri district and Nimapara on the north-western end of Puri district bordering Khordha district—two contiguous blocks. Statistics about the blocks are as under:

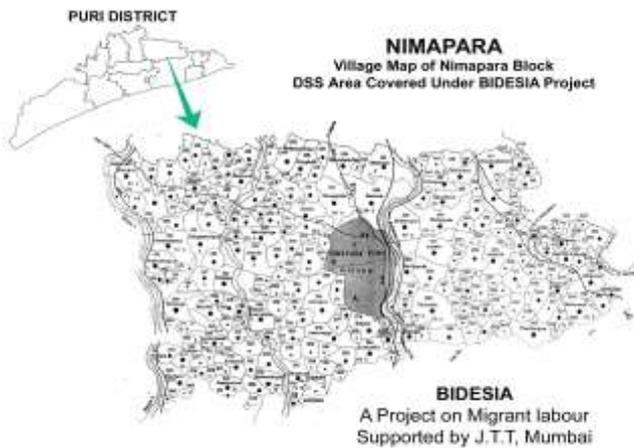


**INDIA**

## ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ମାନଚିତ୍ର



**ODISHA**



**NIMAPARA (PURI dist.)**



**BALIPTANA (KHORDHA dist.)**

	<i>Nimapara(Puri)</i>	<i>Balipatana(Khordha)</i>
Area	299.55 sq km	140.79 sq km
Number of GPs	28	14
Number of villages	242	93
Number of households	34,356	21,000
Population	173,813	104,197
Literacy rate(%)	78%	72%
Agricultural land area	24,400 hectares	10,908 hectares
Irrigated land area	19,620 hectares	9,818 hectares
Annual rainfall	14.49 mm	23.52 mm
Villages electrified (source: block office)	90 %	80 %

### **C. Project Goal & Objectives:**

#### **Goal:**

To reduce the socio-economic vulnerability of migrant workers and their households and plan for an intensive study and long-term intervention in the Balipatana block of Khurda district and Nimapara block of Puri district,

#### **Objectives**

- a) To ensure formalization of the migration through registration and identity cards( 3000) involving local and dist. Administration.
- b) To organize/ collectivise the migrants in association at source ( 2) and make them aware about the legal provisions, migration laws, their rights and environment at the destinations.
- c) To conduct study on the migration patterns, trends through migration data collection in both these blocks.
- d) To make the migrants, important stakeholders and community aware about problems of migrants.
- e) To enhance the skill of the potential migrant youths( 220), prepare them for jobs in nearby towns as well as rural areas.
- f) To promote health awareness among the migrant households especially among women(600).
- g) To promote financial and social inclusion of migrant families( credit, insurance linkage of 500 families)
- h) To identify and nurture 16 young volunteers( one per GP) as “Shramik Mitras” for proper tracking of migration.
- i) To enhance organizational capacity/staff capacity in the subject of labour migration.
- j) To strengthen destination linkages through visits and establishing linkmen at major destinations.
- k) To generate knowledge on migrants occupations through conducting a study at destination.

### **D. Detailed Activities Undertaken:**

A team was formed for the project which, under the guidance of the Chief Executive of DSS, implemented it by conducting the following activities: The services were provided from two centres( Shramik Sahayata O soochana Kendras), one being at Balipatana( Khordha) and other being at Nimapara( Puri). Each Kendra was manned by three people( Kendra coordinator, supervisor and MIS assistant). They were supported by GP level volunteers called “Shramik Mitras”.

1. Formalization of the migration through registration and issuing identity cards involving local and dist. administration.

The project tried formalising the migration under two kendras( centres) one at Balipatana in Khordha district and one at Nimapara in Puri district. The migrant service activities were undertaken through these block level centres in both the districts.

The kendras organised 53 panchayat level special camps to create awareness among migrant families and register them in kendras and panchayats. The migrant workers were issued with an identity card with the signature of sarpanch, which help them a lot at their work place. During the period 4303 migrant youth have been registered and issued identity cards. They were issued labour diaries to keep record of their daily work and wages. Apart from being registered, 4383 migrants have visited the kendras and panchayat level camps and got awareness about the issues and problems of migrant labour.

Secondly a migrant data base is created at GP level ( with sarpanch) as well as at block level( at Kendra and with BDO).The yearly data base is shared with district Labour officer regularly. Apart from this the yearly data base is shared with Aazeevika Bureau and Shram( designated by Tata Trust) for all India compilation, dissemination and advocacy activities.

2. organizing/ collectivising the migrants in association at source ( 2) and make them aware about the legal provisions, migration laws, their rights and environment at the destinations.

With an aim to unite the migrant workers at source, DSS formed 2 collectives of construction workers in two districts. The two collectives are” Jayadev’ in Balipatana, khordha and “Basudev” in Nimapara, Puri. These two collectives have a membership base over 250 and it is growing. Monthly meetings are organised regularly, the leaders have been provided leadership trainings(5) to run the collective properly, visioning exercises(4) have been done for a shared vision etc. Their application for registration as trade union, is pending with the registration authorities. The main activity has been facilitation of their linkage to “Construction Workers’ Welfare Board”, where they will get number of social security measures like pension, cycle, helmet, loan, education subsidy etc.

The second aspect of the migrants strengthening through collective is to creating legal awareness among the migrants. DSS through the collectives have tried number of steps like legal clinics, legal aid camps and legal awareness through linking with other legal service providers. The monthly legal clinics were held where a lawyer come and deliberations are made on legal matters. The Kendra also try to mediate between workers and contractors on legal cases. During the project period 54 legal clinics, 5 legal aid camps have been held. 1245 migrants have participated in these events thereby making aware of themselves on various labour laws and migrant labour acts. 72 legal disputes have been registered with kendras out of which 14 legal disputes have been finalised through mediation and compensation worth Rs. 68,910 have been paid to complainants.

3. Conducting study/survey on the migration patterns, trends through migration data collection in both these blocks.

While implementing the safe migration services as well as migrant strengthening activities DSS put more emphasis on the continuous surveying of the migration trends of these two blocks. Being enthused with the results from the pilot phase, DSS continue surveying the rest of the villages and covered

	Nimapara	Balipatana
• No of G.P.	: 28	14
• Surveyed GP	:18	14
• No of Village	: 242	93
• Surveyed Villages	:148	93
• Total Population	:1,73,813	1,04,197
• No of Households	: 34,356	21,000
• Survey HH	: 21,030	6,111
• Survey P.P.	: 1,02,275	81,870
• Migrant HH	: 8,897	6,506
• Migrant P.P.	: 10,886	7,139
• Percentage of Migrant	: 42.30%	40.38%

The staff of both the kendras with the help of Shramik Mitra conducted the door to door survey and the filled up questionnaires were put to the computer for analysis. The survey took one and half year to complete and produced enormous insight to the migrant problem.

### **Survey findings**

#### *Cause of migration:*

The survey revealed that the number of migrants seeking livelihoods in other parts of Odisha and also in other States is increasing over the years as frequent floods in the target area leading to failure of crops means less availability of work and consequently fall in income. In such a situation, young and semi-educated males are migrating in search of jobs/employment. Once they find the means of livelihood away from their native villages, they tend to hesitate to return and work in the agriculture sector when labour is needed.

#### *Nature of migration:*

It is mostly young, unmarried males who migrate in groups after hearing about job opportunities in distant places from migrants who are already working there. Most of the migrants also go through unregistered labour contractors and middlemen. They have to depend on such persons as they are generally unskilled, are semi-educated and poor in communication in languages other than their mother tongue, Odia. However, many of the migrants are married and leave their families in their native villages leaving the left behind women with their own set of problems. It starts with a seasonal trend and gradually ends

in a permanent kind of trend. After the age of 35-45, when their physical strength go down and they are unable to earn properly, they tend to return from destinations permanently and again become job less at source.

*Migration cycle:*

The general cycle is 6 months to a year. Although many of the migrants work permanently in distant places, there is also a large number who are married and have left their wives/families in their native villages. Such persons do return home at regular intervals. This movement of people, inter-State and inter-area, could, in all likelihood lead to the spread of STDs and even HIV,AIDS. Though none of the respondents to the questionnaire admitted to be suffering from such diseases, the likelihood remains and only more detailed and in-depth personal interviews at the workplace would reveal the true position.

While the out going in groups continue over the year, their incoming mostly happens during festivals like Dussehra, Raja festival and village fairs( Gaan melana). Their stay at village ranges from one week to one month. During their short duration stay, they enjoy the village life, spend their earnings and care for their families and houses.

The entire migration span of a migrant starts at the age of 16-18 and ends at the average age of 40-45 when they permanently return.

*Number:*

In Balipatana block, around 40.38 percent of the households surveyed had one or two members of the family working as migrants elsewhere. In some villages, the percentage of such households was around 55%.

**Migrants in Balipatana( Khordha dist.)**

Sl No	Panchayat	No of Villages	No of Total Households	Migrant Households	Percentage
1	Kuranjipur	16	1431	651	45.49
2	Turintira	5	1108	264	23.82
3	Pampalo	9	1482	615	41.49
4	Rajas	8	1279	542	42.37
5	Somana	11	1368	570	41.66
6	Majjihara	3	1043	516	49.47
7	Bhakar Sahi	3	980	328	33.46
8	Garedi Panchana	6	1211	395	32.61
9	Guapur	7	766	304	39.68
10	Marthapur	4	1253	542	43.25
11	Nariso	8	1182	649	54.90
12	Amanakud	6	872	351	40.25
13	Bhapur	2	792	233	29.41
14	Deulidharpur	5	1264	546	43.19
	<b>Total-14</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>16111</b>	<b>6506</b>	<b>40.38</b>

In Nimapara block, the percentage of households with one or two migrant workers was around 42.30% with the figure rising to 63.5% in some villages.

In both the blocks of the target area, the respondents said that the rate of migration in search of livelihood had increased following the super-cyclone of 1999 and the recurring floods in the area.

#### Migrants in Nimapara( Puri dist)

SI No	Panchayat	No of Villages	No of Surveyed Households	Migrant Households	Percentage
1	Arisandha	7	911	317	34.79
2	Terundia	9	1015	412	40.59
3	Nuasantha	4	850	282	33.17
4	Alanda	10	905	459	50.71
5	Dhaleswar	10	904	403	44.57
6	Dhanua	8	663	305	46.00
7	Uchhupur	11	1357	761	56.07
8	Antuar	7	666	233	34.98
9	Denua	8	996	410	41.16
10	Badasiribila	5	714	292	40.89
11	Kothakosanga	10	1075	403	37.48
12	Salanga	8	859	396	46.10
13	Bamanal	12	1365	485	35.53
14	Chanrapada	8	1335	330	24.71
15	Sagada	11	1295	612	47.25
16.	Villigram	4	2274	1445	63.51
17.	Miteipur	9	1210	530	43.80
18.	Balanga	7	2636	822	31.18
	<b>Total-18</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>21030</b>	<b>8897</b>	<b>42.30%</b>

#### *Destinations:*

The pattern in this aspect of the project is varied. South India (Kerala,Tamil Nadu and undivided Andhra Pradesh) are the most preferred destinations with Maharashtra and Gujarat in second place. The southward migration accounts for 45 percent of the total migration. In addition, about 35 percent migrants go to different districts of Odisha, mainly in the mining and industrial belts of northern Odisha.

#### Destination data(Balipatana in Khordha dist))

(% of migrants out of total migrants)

Kerla	T.Nadu	AP	Gujurat	MS	K.Taka	WB	C.Garh	Pondicherry	Delhi
22.25	13.68	7.53	5.78	3.62	2.74	4.07	0.37	0.08	2.40
MP	Haryana	Goa	UP	Punjab	MP	Rajasthan	Jammu	Odisha- Internal	
0.56	0.64	0.12	0.02	0.18	0.56	0.47	0.05	35.24	

### Destination data ( Nimapara in Puri dist)

% of migrants to different states.

Kerla	T.Nadu	AP	MS	K.Taka	Gujurat	C.Garh	WB	Delhi	Jammu
18.52	10	4.96	5.49	3.05	8.69	0.75	3.68	2.16	0.48
MP	Haryana	Goa	UP	Punjab	Rajasthan	Bihar	Himachal	Odisha- Internal	International
0.47	1.09	0.25	0.06	0.66	0.39	0.21	0.14	38.62	0.17

### Vocations:

Most of the migrants and unskilled and have not been trained for any kind of vocational trade. They work as daily labourers in small industrial units and plants. Results of the present project reveal that 63.54 percent of them work as industrial labourers in industries, textile units and at construction sites. Because of their lack of skill they are forced to work as daily labourers earning small wages. This not only decreases their income but exposes them to health hazards working in industries, textiles units, flour mills, etc., and they frequently develop diseases like TB, jaundice and malaria. A good number of the respondents admitted that they had been afflicted with diseases at some point of time or the other.

### Vocation(Balipatana in Khordha dist.)

Driving	Electrician	Company Labor	Cnst.Labor	Text.Labor	Hotel Boy	Plumber	Mechine man
8.41	1.61	31.81	20.26	6.9	5.88	0.5	4.67
Sec.Guard	Salesman(Mkt)	Automobile	Mason	Head loader	Office assistant	Supervisor	Others
1.09	2.05	1.31	6.47	5.22	3.3	1.08	0.92

### Vocation( Nimapara in Puri dist.)

Comp. Labour	Const. Labour	Head loader	Textile Labour	Machine man	Hotel Boy	Electricia n	Supervi sor	Driver	Mason
20.40	12.27	4.27	12.04	7.31	5.91	4.73	1.24	8.75	7.05
Security. Guard	Sales man	Auto mobile	Plumb ing	Barber	Busi ness	Office asst.	Market ing	Thikad ar	
2.87	6.13	1.24	1.06	0.18	0.16	2.97	0.02	0.51	

### Earnings:

The migrants stated that they earn an average of Rs. 4,500 to Rs. 6,000 a month. A few who are older and are more experienced earn a little more. They have to pay for their food and lodging out of their earnings. As they stay in groups, they are able to share their expenses and thus are able to save about Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 3,000 a month which they either send to their families or carry with them when they return home.

### Problem they face:

- Most of the left behind families in the native villages could not give the addresses of the places where the migrants were working.

- Communication between the migrants and their families is minimal, sometimes non-existent. A few telephone calls via mobiles and friends returning home bring news of the welfare of the migrants. Only a few of the migrants own mobile phones that can enable their families to get in touch with them.
- Since most of the migrants have gone through unlicensed contractors, there is no record of their registration either at the block level or at the district level. In the absence of such documentation the district labour officials are unable to help in times of emergency or exploitation.
- Many of the migrants complained about the poor wages they earned and the contractors/employers unwilling to meet their medical expenses.
- Unauthorised and unlicensed contractors, many of them from their own village or their own community, exploit the migrants in various ways. They hold up wages, make short payments, forcibly keep their luggage and other possessions of the migrants, issue threats and use many other methods to keep the migrants subdued and under their thumb.
- The migrants are harassed by the police who raid them at least three times a year demanding to see registration or voter identity cards which most of the migrants do not have.
- As most of the families of the migrants do not have bank accounts in nationalised banks, it is difficult for them to receive money from the migrants regularly. Many of the migrants too do not have their own bank accounts rendering it impossible to deposit their savings. In such a situation, they are subject to incidents like theft and loss and also sometimes become victims of looting while travelling in trains.
- The migrants do not enjoy any securing of either service or place. It is the contractors who draw their wages from employers on their behalf and make the payments to the migrants, sometimes withholding it or making short payments. The contractors always have the upper hand. Workers in a certain factory may find themselves shifted to another at any time. Thus they are constantly suffering from the ill-effects of the security syndrome.
- Because of poor and insanitary conditions both at work and at their places of stay, the migrants keep contracting diseases like TB, malaria and jaundice.
- Most of the migrants are young and unmarried therefore susceptible to develop sexually transmitted diseases like HIV and AIDS. Though none of the respondents admitted to be suffering in this manner, an in-depth study at the place of work (destination) may reveal different findings.
- The migrants miss getting themselves enrolled in various government social security programmes and anti-poverty schemes like the PDS, Indira Awas Yojana and MNREGA as they are away from their villages during enrolment camps. Many of the young migrants do not even have voter ID cards which sometimes creates problems for them in various ways.
- Legal service and complaint redressal avenues are rare for the migrants. In many cases, the migrants are not paid for months or having sustained injuries are unable to get official help or compensation. In fatal cases, the family back home is more or less helpless. Such cases of exploitation at the destinations are frequently reported in the press. The migrants, lacking knowledge about the legal aspects of their employment and rights and privileges are unable to do anything to get their grievances addressed.

#### 4. Making the migrants, important stakeholders and community aware about problems of migrants.

With an aim to creating community, migrant and stakeholder's awareness on the issues and problems of migrants, DSS undertook several measures during the project period.

4.1: Community awareness Camp: Both the kendras conducted 16 community awareness camps at village level where the team deliberated on the issues and problems of migrants and the services, both the kendras are offering. In the meantime also the migration project team members seek the support of village level leaders, workers, panchayat functionaries and women self help group members to cooperate in acting as link between migration service centre( kendras) on one hand and the migrants in the village on the other. They could disseminate the information among community, help registering the migrants, inform to kendras about migrants' movement, their stay etc. 766 people attended the programme in 16 GPs.

4.2: PRI awareness programmes: These one day events were organised in Panchayat headquarters, where all village ward members along with sarpanch and Nominee attended the programme. The deliberations were mainly to sensitise the Panchayati raj institutions and the members on migration issue and their role to make the migration safe and informed. 414 PRI functionaries participated from 13 panchayats in 13 number of events.

4.3: Stakeholders' awareness workshop: 3 programmes were conducted in both the blocks, where stakeholders like Govt officials, PRI functionaries, NGOs, Press, Migrants' collectives participated. 110 people participated in 3 block level programmes. The objective was to bring synergy among all the stakeholders, in order to facilitate the safe, legal and informed migration from the area. Several positive points came out of these programmes. One positive thing happened in Balipatana block of Khordha dist is that, the BDO started signing the ID cards, which was previously signed by Sarpanch of the GP. So getting signature of a Govt official on the ID card, was very important for migrants.

4.4: Wall paintings: To create community awareness, DSS painted 32 wall paintings at prominent locations. The community in general and the migrants in particular have been informed about the problems and services provided.

4.5: Legal awareness camps: The kendras conducted 16 legal awareness camps, where mainly the migrants and their family members attended (788). The team members with the help of local lawyer deliberated on different labour laws, migrant workers' acts as well as different schemes for migrant workers. Many a times the district legal cell was also invited to deliberate on laws related to migrant workers. Printed hand outs on laws and schemes were distributed among the participants for reference. Besides the benefit of knowledge gathering, a number of legal cases and complains have come out in the camps which have been addressed in monthly legal clinics.

5. Enhancing the vocational education and skill development of the potential and returnee migrant youths and prepare them for jobs in nearby towns as well as rural areas.

DSS started skill and vocational education for potential as well as returnee migrants, keeping their poor skill, income vulnerability and poor employability situation. The objective was to make them market led skilled and employable in the market. During the period 220 youth have been skilled and educated in vocational skill like basic computers, mobile repairing, driving and Mason training. The trainings were designed especially for migrant youth with very short duration( one month) and imparted by subject experts. Secondly besides the skill training soft skills like spoken and work place English was imparted. Thirdly the technical support like license for driving, tool kits and credit linkage for masons and mobile trainees etc were provided. Regular employed ( past trainees) were invited to interact with the trainees to share their experience in getting the first job and the present demands of the working environment etc.

Another aspect of the successful skill building programme was regular counselling activities. DSS conducted mega counselling camp in each panchayat(8). Here applications were collected interview was conducted , focus group discussions were conducted and finally trade choosing exercises were conducted. Then the semi selected youth were asked to meet the Kendra coordinator at the Kendra at block head quarters for rounds of consultation, after which a candidate was finally selected passing through various criteria.

This approach has helped the trainees a lot, as a result there is 90% of employability created by both placement and self-employment.

6. Promoting health awareness among the migrants and their family members:

Kendras conducted 16 health awareness camps at 16 villages covering 736 participants which covered both migrants and their family members. Generally a doctor is invited to each camp who provided health awareness and education to the participants, focussing on the occupational health, sexual health, women & child health etc. These three areas are most needed by the migrants and their family members. Health check-ups were conducted, blood grouping was done and referral services were provided. It was found from the camps that around 80% of the migrants and around 92% of the women attended the camps have some kind of health problems. While TB and jaundice is common in migrants, anaemia, blood pressure, poor reproductive health is common among women. When the health camps have helped immensely to the migrant community and their family to become more about their occupational and general health, still there is a need to provide medicine and clinical assistance to the migrant families, especially to the left behind women.

7. Promoting financial and social inclusion of migrant families(credit, insurance linkage):

The project tried to include the migrant families as well as migrants in the mainstream financial and insurance cover. For that the team stressed more on opening the bank accounts, extending credit service and cover the families with insurance. During the project period

- 193 bank accounts have been opened by the migrant families in local bank branches.
- 775 families have been linked to bank and other financial institutions with a credit support of Rs 6376000.00. The families( including the vocational trainees) have furthered their livelihood locally.
- 992 families have been covered under insurance( life and non life).
- 826 families have been facilitated to be covered under RSBY( Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana), a central sponsored health insurance scheme.
- 309 construction workers have been linked to CWWB( Construction Workers' Welfare Board) thereby covering them under number of social security measures like family pension, tools assistance, education assistance, credit etc.

#### 8. Strengthening destination linkages through visits and awareness generation at major destinations.

With an aim to create awareness among the migrants at major destinations, the project team conducted two visits to Kerla( Aloha) and Tamilnadu( Chennai). The team met the migrants at their work place( plywood, bottling, flour mill, automobile, food processing etc) as well as at their living place. Most of them live away from their work place, in groups of 20-30, mostly the mess managed by the labour contractors. Their living condition was found to be quite unhygienic, the term of their employment being quite exploitative, mainly controlled by contractors etc.

The team conducted number of awareness camps where they interacted with over 900 migrant youth on occupational health, migrant labour acts, their legal rights, social security schemes etc. At the same time the team also deliberated on various services provided by Kendras run by DSS at the source. The migrants also narrated the stories that how they have been benefitted out of the service of the kendras and benefits of registration and ID card.

A strong linkage between source and destination was felt.

#### 9. Enhancing organizational capacity/staff capacity in the subject of labour migration.

In order to enhance the organisation's capacity to address the migration problems more efficiently, DSS tried to boost the staff capacity by ensuring their participation in different aspects of migration problem. A team was sent to Aazeevika bureau, Udaipur to gather knowledge on kendra's functions and skill training programme. Another team was sent to PEPUS, Allahabad to gather the experience in working with brick kiln workers and effective functioning of collectives. The third team was sent to experience the health clinic of Aazeevika bureau at Salumber, Udaipur and

Delhi mobile crèche at Delhi. Above all the whole migration project team visited the migration programme of Gram Utthan, a local partner agency of Tata Trust in Odisha.

Apart from the the teammembers of DSS also participated in different workshops and training programmes conducted by Aazeevika Bureau and other partner agencies of Tata trust.

All these visits and participation has given the team members more knowledge and skill to address the different dimensions of migration problem more efficiently.

#### A study on Impact of Migration on Left behind women:

As part of this project, a separate study on the impact of migration on left behind women was conducted in 25 villages of Nimapara block in 2013. (A report on this aspect of the study has been prepared separately. Its summary is given here)

Two groups were identified for the sampling—Test Group and Control Group. The test group comprised 100 women who were wives of migrants and the Control Group was made up of 100 women whose husbands had not migrated and they were living together in their respective villages, either as a joint family or as a nuclear family. A structured questionnaire was developed to elicit the required information from the two groups.

The study was undertaken with a spontaneous attempt by project team with the background of that not many studies had been conducted on how the women left behind in their native villages by their migrant spouses coped with the daily nitty gritty of life on their own. The study concentrated on three specific impacts on their lives in terms of social, health and economic.

#### *Social impact*

The study revealed the wives of migrants had a different status than that of non-migrant wives. The workload of 70 percent of migrant wives had increased while 69 percent found the social environment difficult to cope with. Among the migrant wives 77 percent worked in their own households or on their own agricultural land and 22 percent worked for others. While non-migrant wives were fairly independent on taking decisions on purchase of household needs the situation was not the same for migrant wives. For example, 46 non-migrant wives could do so on their own while only 24 percent left behind women would act independently. Similarly, in decisions relating to the purchase of valuables, 45 percent non-migrant wives could do so on their own in comparison to only 1 percent migrant wives. Similar disparities exist between migrant and non-migrant wives in matters relating to visiting relatives and attending village meetings. If living with in-laws, the migrant wife has to abide by their decisions in such matters.

This sort of stifling atmosphere, compounded by the constant and long absences of the spouse leads to emotional disorders. Many of the migrant wives admitted experiencing bouts of depressing, irritation, loss of interest, incompetency, suicidal tendencies and loneliness. They also reported experiencing tiredness, nervousness, hopelessness, restlessness, depression and a feeling of worthlessness.

### *Health impact*

The study on left-behind women revealed that migrant wives not only have to cope with adverse social and psychological impacts but also face health impacts because of the absence of their husbands. Some statistics will bear this out. Nearly 24 percent migrant wives reported vision difficulty in comparison with 1 percent non-migrant wives. This indicates that absence of a husband to take care of them they tend to be prone to malnutrition and vitamin deficiency. Similarly, 16 percent migrant wives reported night blindness compared to 4 percent of non-migrant wives. Swelling of the legs, face and other parts of the body was reported by 51 percent migrant wives while only 11 percent non-migrant wives reported such symptoms. The migrant wives (68 percent) also said they experienced a high level of fatigue and tiredness. As for vaginal bleeding during pregnancy, 19 percent left behind women stated they had suffered it, as against 5 percent non-migrant wives.

Symptoms of RTI/STI were reported more by migrant wives. These included burning during urination, itching vagina, genital sores, menstruation problems and abnormal vaginal discharge. Likewise, the general health condition was poorer and more acute among migrant wives in comparison to non-migrant wives. It was found that among the migrant wives, 21 percent had diabetes, 23 percent had asthma, 34 percent had high blood pressure, 26 percent had low blood pressure, 6 percent had tuberculosis and 76 percent suffered from severe headaches.

One reason that can be deduced from is that non-migrant wives avail health services more than migrant wives. The study revealed that 67 percent of non-migrant wives take their children to the health centre for check-ups, 52 percent seek disease prevention advice and guidance and 50 percent of them go for their own check-ups. In contrast, not many wives of migrants avail of health services because of factors like obtaining permission from in-laws, getting money for treatment, distance from health facilities, lack of transport, absence of an escort to accompany them and non-availability of health service providers.

### *Economic impact*

The motivation of the male bread-winner of the family is mainly to earn more money to meet the family needs. However, it does not always provide the expected results or benefits. The study investigated the financial status of the left-behind women and found that most of the migrant wives do not have savings bank accounts and thus cannot receive money regularly from their migrant spouses. Besides, only 55 percent migrant wives are members of self help groups as against 71 percent non-migrant wives. Such SHGs at the village level help women to meet their day-to-day financial needs and the fact that only a little more than half of migrant wives have joined such SHGs indicates that they lack financial preparedness. Moreover, it was found that 21 migrant wives take loans from bank while 42 percent non-migrant wives obtain loans from banks. This shows that as far as banks are concerned, the credibility of non-migrant wives is more than that of migrant wives. The migrant wives usually take loans for medical treatment while non-migrant wives avail of agriculture and livestock related loans.

That the benefits of migration do not accrue as envisaged is evident from the fact that 25 percent of migrant wives have not repaid their loans while the relative figure for non-migrant wives is much lower. The incidence of child dropouts is 24 percent among migrant families and only 4 percent among non-migrant families. Also, more non-migrant wives than migrant wives avail of PDS facilities regularly and are aware about local governance.

In brief, it may be concluded that the families of migrants do enjoy minimal economic benefits, the heavy toll it takes on the left behind women in terms of economic, social and health aspects is devastating.

#### *Conclusion of the study:*

In conclusion, it may be mentioned that even though migration brings some amount of economic relief to the family, it takes a heavy toll on the health and social well being of the woman left behind. She has to bear the brunt of excessive physical and mental stress. At the same time, societal pressure keeps dragging her from taking independent decisions and avail many services such as seeking medical treatment from a far-off health centre.

However, even if the analysis of the data can shed some light on the issues raised, these findings should not be extrapolated. The figures presented herein describe the status within the small chosen sample. Therefore, this study should be seen as exploratory and will require in-depth follow-up to assure sound correlations, conclusions, and recommendations.

#### *Programme Recommendations:*

Besides recommending Govt to put emphasis in including the left behind wives category in main stream, the studt team also recommended DSS to take up following activities in their future interventions.

- Assertive community treatment( preventive health care, a cadre of local volunteer, developing pictorial training materials, counselling)
- Reproductive child health.
- Help line for left behind women.
- Routine sharing sessions with peers.
- Involving adolescents( college students).
- Increase SHG membership
- Opening bank accounts
- Increase Insurance coverage
- Arrange seed money for household enterprises

#### 10. Assessment of Conservancy workers' problem in Khordha dist:

Upon informed by SD Tata trust about the death of 3 conservancy workers in Mumbai, who hail from Banpur block of khordha dist., DSS took immediate action to go to the field and assess the situation. Upon investigating it was found that workers from particular villages in Banpur block go seasonally( for 4 months during summer) to Mumbai to do conservancy work, when the BMC starts cleaning the under ground sewerage lines.

A team from Trust's Mumbai office comprising Ms. Rukmani Dutta and Ms. Sneha Dicholkar along with Mr. Pradyut bag visited the villages in Banpur alongwith the DSS migration team and found that there need to be preliminary survey to assess the gravity of the situation. Latter in a meeting it was decided to take up the survey and DSS would prepare the proposal and integrate with the next phase proposal.

### **E. Capacity Building:**

- Capacity building of Migrants- The programme aimed at enhancing the bargaining capacity of the migrants through it's various approaches. By the help of counselling, awareness, registration and Identity cards issue etc, they feel empowered not only at the source, but also at their work place. Secondly the legal awareness, health awareness, workshops and training programmes were aimed at building their informed capacity. The leadership training was an eye opener for them which they enjoyed a lot. Their knowledge on labour laws, occupational health, employment terms and conditions etc have been increased.
- Capacity building of Community/ leaders- The project targeted 3 types of community leaders in the process viz SHG federation leaders, PRIs and village level workers like AWWs, ASHA workers etc. The awareness level of these workers and representatives have been increased through the meetings and consultations. They have gathered the knowledge and information about the migration happening from their villages/ families. Now they have become more active in sharing the information with the Kendras, Panchayats and Resource centre at DSS. The Kendras use to get telephone calls from ward members/ Sarpanches/ SHG leaders that a group is migrating or a group has returned back etc. This has been reflected in their increased participation in sharing and informing.
- Capacity building of organization- The organization has got exposure to Aazeevika's programme at Udaipur thereby getting an insight to the management aspects of the services offered by centres. Secondly the organisation's staff were exposed to PEPUS at Allahabad and learned a lot from their collective's role in solving the legal problems. Project team also visited the "Amrit clinic" of azeevika, Mobile crèche in delhi and "Gram Uthhan" migration project in Odisha, thereby gathering knowledge on diferent aspects of migration services. Working closely with Panchayats, Block, district labour offices were also the collaborative experience gathered. The technical support visits by CLMS, the partner review programmes at Bhubaneswar, the visit by Tata Trust etc have also built the confidence of the staff members on migration issues. Above all the organization was also involved in the study programmes thereby gaining the experience of field research.

### **F. Project management:**

- The project Team- The project was managed by a team of 9 staff members of DSS with one project officer, one project associate , one accounts officer and 3 kendra staffs in each Kendra( total 6). The staff were quite experienced and capable of implementing the

community based programmes. Besides the staff members the Shramik Mitras( volunteers) helped the team at the field.

- Planning, monitoring and reporting- The project team operated full time from DSS head office and at 2 Kendras, one being at Balipatana in Khordha dist. and another was at Nimapara of Puri dist. The staff met once a month to reflect and report on the progress and plan for the next month. Monthly plans were prepared and shared / integrated with DSS monthly plans. The project officer and the project associate visited the field regularly to guide the field officers and Shramik Mitras. They also kept the external relations and accounts keeping regularly. The Chief functionary of DSS reviewed the progress on a monthly basis at DSS main review meeting where all the projects of DSS were reviewed. Other programme staff also got to know about the project in the monthly meeting and activity convergence could be facilitated there among all the programmes.
- Aazeevika monitoring: Teams from Aazeevika bureau( Ms. Zaineb, Ms. Rupal, Mr. Sanjay) visited DSS office and a kendras and interacted with project team. The visits were quite fruitful in the sense that bringing clarity in implementation, providing inputs and suggesting ideas for better documentation etc. Mr. Sanjay Chittora who was placed in one Kendra( Nimapara) of DSS for about a month, was quite helpful to the Kendra staff in day to day implementation. He also visited the field and interacted with number of stakeholders, which enhanced the capacity of the Kendra staff.  
During their last technical support visit, the Aazeevika team stressed more on capacity assessment of the Kendra staff, where all the staff participated and self-evaluated their strength. This exercise was quite useful for them.  
Besides this both the kendras managed by DSS shared the monthly MIS of their activities to CLMS. Apart from that DSS also shared events and case studies to the E-news letter “Labor Intel” published by CLMS. Thirdly DSS also shared the registration data to CLMS who in turn compiled the “Odisha Migration Status Report”
- SHRAM visit: SHRAM being a Mumbai based organisation was in process of doing web based information sharing and advocacy, also visited DSS. Dr. Chandrasekhar visited DSS and interacted with staff on the issue of sharing regular information, happening, case studies etc with SHRAM.  
It was good that DSS shared the required information with SHRAM and expected that it would help the over all advocacy process. But practically DSS team felt that it was a duplication of the activities already done by CLMS. CLMS was not only sharing the information, but also helping partners technically. Thus Shram needed to work intensely since it was introduced to strengthen advocacy.
- Trust’s visit: Mr. Pradyut Bag from SD Tata Trust visited DSS and both kendras twice during the project and provided valuable inputs to the team, both at programming as well as accounting aspect.
- Funds utilization- DSS could utilize around 100% of the earmarked funds during the period.
- Programme staff: All the 9 programme staff continued till the end of the project term thereby making a positive impact on project management.
- The flood: A severe flood in the programme area distracted the planned programme activities for a month, which was covered up by the team in subsequent months.

## **G. Impact:**

In general, almost all the objectives set by the project were achieved.

- The project has succeeded in creating community level awareness about the issues and problems of migrant workers, which was evident from the outside team's interaction with community and leaders.
- The PRIs and village level leaders have been sensitized and have become the medium of two way information flow among Kendras, GPs on one hand and migrant on other.
- The Panchayats and the functionaries have become active in registering the migrants and sending them to kendras( more than 50%)
- Women Self Help Groups have become the source of information, guidance to migrants at village level as well as are helping the project staff..
- The migrant workers who have been registered are spreading the message of registration among their fellow migrants.
- The local Sarpanches and ward members( PRI functionaries) have now become more active, not only in registration process, but also in taking up the migration issue in different Panchayat level programmes like MGNREGS, RSBY, BK KY etc.
- There has been 80% employment generation through skill trainings. 178 out of 220 youths trained have either been placed / employed by DSS team or have been facilitated for self employment. However DSS has been trying for 100% achievement in this.
- In number of cases the migrants have expressed their satisfaction over the utilization of the ID- cards, be it used for taking a room on rent at Jaipur, or purchasing a gas cylinder in Chennai. Besides that the card was of immense use during their travel in trains.
- The result of legal awareness became visible when the legal disputes started registered at kendras.
- Health awareness, not only among migrants, but also among the family members, especially among women became high. The awareness level on occupational health among migrants have been increased. The reproductive and sexual health awareness among women have been increased as the health seeking behaviour has been increased.
- Social & Financial inclusion of the migrants and their families have certainly increased the socio financial security as well as enhanced livelihood options for the families. The employment security for potential migrants have been ensured where as the livelihood security for returnee migrants have been established. Bank linkage, insurance linkages, health insurance linkage, CWWB linkage etc have strengthened the social security base of the migrants.
- The study on “ impact of male migration on left behind women” has proved to be crucial in throwing light on the negative implication of the migration on women and showed the way to deal with he aspect under programmatic approach.The project have also

become successful in creating local level advocacy on the issue of migration and facilitated the way forward to bring synergy among stakeholders to look into the issue from broader perspective.

#### *Acknowledgements:*

- DSS received the “ South Asia Education Summit award” under the category of “Skill and Vocational Education for Migrant Youth” at New Delhi, commissioned by ICT post an E- newsletter from Delhi in collaboration with UNESCO regional office at Delhi. This was for innovative design and successful employment generation effort for migrant youth under migration programme.
- The regular involvement of the BDO and block staff in our programme yielded result that the BDO, Balipatana has started signing the ID cards along with Sarpanches. BDO signing ID card is a rare event not only in Odisha , but also in India. Except Rajasthan, in no state, the govt officials sign the ID card issued by any organisation. This could happen due to the local level advocacy by DSS team.

#### **H. Overall assessment:**

- The project have been able to create social and financial impact on core issue and problems of migration. The core challenges like enhancing employment security, income augmentation, social security, financial inclusion, occupational health, Identity of migrants, safe migration process, legal rights etc. have been addressed positively by the project.
- There are areas where the project team need more skill to tackle the issue of legal aid, field research, advocacy, govt. coordination etc.

#### **I. Recommendations:**

- Another phase of 3 year programme to be designed , based on the learnings of this phase.
- Emphasis should be given on registration of the rest of the migrants( since only 40% of the total migrants surveyed could be registered)
- DSS should institutionalise the skill training / vocational education and health care services for community especially migrant youth and left behind women. Community based assertive health services need to be integrated.
- Financial literacy and enterprise promotion effort, which has been a strong area of intervention by DSS in the past need to be fully integrated with migration programme.
- Programme staff need constant training and exposure in providing both source end service as well as destination end services. Especially the staff need training and exposure in handling legal issues, placement services, health care provision etc.

- Destination Linkages / arrangements need to be established with organizations at Destinations in order to act promptly.
- Organisation's capacity need to be developed for a continuous skill and career guidance to rural youth who can fetch jobs in nearby urban centres.
- Full-fledged resource centres at block level need to be planned and made functional during coming phase.
- District level coordination with Labour and other departments need to be strengthened.
- State level coordination and advocacy need to be strengthened.

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## Acronyms

- ASHA-Accredited Social Health Activist( village level health worker)
- AWW- Anganwadi worker( village level child development worker)
- BDO- Block Development Officer
- BKKY- Biju Krushak Kalyan Yojana( A state sponsored health insurance scheme for farmer families)
- CLMS- Centre for Labour & Migration Studies
- CWWB- Construction Workers' Welfare Board
- DSS- Darabar Sahitya Sansad
- GP- Gram Panchayat ( The second tier from bottom of the PRIs)
- ICDS- Integrated Child Development Services( a central sponsored child development scheme)
- I- Card- Identity Card
- MGNREGS- Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme)
- MIS- Management Information System
- PRI- Panchayati Raj Institutions ( Rural Local Self Government)
- RSBY- Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana( a centre sponsored Health Insurance scheme for below poverty line families)
- SDTT- Sir Dorabji Tata Trust
- SHG- Self Help Group

## Glossary

- Aazeevika- Aazeevika Bureau( A social organisation in Udaipur(SDTT partner)
- Amrit Clinic- Health clinic
- Anganwadi- Village level unit of ICDS programme.
- Dalit- Scheduled Caste
- Gram Utthan- A local social organisation in Odisha ( SDTT partner)
- Kendra: Shramik sahayata O soochana Kendra( migration service centre)
- Khariff- The rainfed crop
- Mahanadi- The largest river of Odisha
- Organisation- Here means DSS
- Panchayat- Gram Panchayat ( The second tier from bottom of the PRIs)
- PEPUS- A social organisation( SDTT partner) in Uttar Pradesh.
- Ravi- The winter crop( second crop in the year)
- Sarpanch- The elected head of the Gram Panchayat
- Shramik Mitra- Volunteers in migration programme
- Ward member- The elected representative of the village to the Gram Panchayat.