Enabling the Marginalised to realise their Right to Food

Learning from the Food Rights Programme (2006-2012) of Dan Church Aid in India
Acknowledgements

Dear Friends at DCA

It must have been more than six years since I had the opportunity to be introduced to the work of Dan Church Aid on the Right to Food. As part of ActionAid in Rajasthan I had the privilege of closely observing the developments at the national level on the demands for the right to food. ActionAid and its partners tried to contribute to this process through awareness building, research and capacity building. One area of engagement was with the Rajasthan Advisor to Supreme Court and subsequently in supporting a sharing workshop (along with CARE and OXFAM) of the newly appointed State Advisors. It is around this latter engagement that I came to be introduced to DCA. Since then I have come across beautiful actions supported by DCA and its partner organisations, especially around the implementation of the several entitlements that came out of Supreme Court’s orders in the Right to Food Case, the MGNREGA, and issues such as the Faulty Poverty Estimates and Faulty Identification of the Poor.

It was a pleasure and a privilege, therefore, when ActionAid was assigned the responsibility of Documenting the Learnings from DCA’s Food Security Programme. Over the three months of engagement around this I came to learn much more about the work of DCA and its partners at the grassroots as well as national levels. I came to learn that the scope of such work was far wider than what I had seen from the outside – which was principally around food and related entitlements. The three principal aspects of work, Entitlements, Resource Rights and Sustainable Livelihoods are quite well balanced and constitute a continuum that moves from food entitlements to food sovereignty.

I am thankful to the staff of DCA, especially Deepak Singh who was the principal contact person for me, for having supported me throughout the process. I am deeply indebted to DCA’s partner organisations, SURE, CASA (and IDEA), Sahanivasa, LWSIT, and SPREAD for having welcomed me in to their midst and introduced me to their work and the difficult places and beautiful communities they work with. Centre for Equity Studies and Centre for Science and Environment helped me understand the larger issues around the Right to Food at the National level. Conversations with two earlier team members of DCA in India, Nina Elinger and Ravi Behera were very useful in understanding the programme. Discussions with Jerome and Mani about two other programmes of DCA were helpful in understanding current and potential synergies between the Food Right work with the Social Justice and DRR Programme. Review comments from Steffen Erik Mey Rasmussen, DCA’s Advisor, Organisational Development & Right to Food were useful and encouraging.

My line manager Sehjo Singh (Programme & Policy Director at ActionAid India) allowed me a long rope throughout this period which is why I could devote the kind of time that was required for the work. Sandeep Chachra (Country Director, ActionAid India) considered me to be capable enough to do justice to this assignment. I do not know if I have been able to live up to his expectations from me. What I do know, however, is that this assignment provided me a great opportunity to learn and contribute. Hope I have been able to deliver something useful. Thanks a lot.

With warm regards

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Main Message

The fulfilment of The Right to Food is fundamental to the right to a life with dignity. The increasing volatility of food prices in recent years has made the right to food more critical than ever before. While the Western model of Corporate led economies, is under severe crisis, the model is being globalised and is spreading rapidly to the poorest regions of the world. This is leading to not only a crisis in terms of food prices but a larger crisis in the way food is produced, marketed and consumed. In this context, Dan Church Aid’s programme on Food Security has rightly transformed from a focus on ‘Food Security’ to a focus on the ‘Right to Food’. This latter approach combines a focus on Food Entitlements with focus on Food Sovereignty (protecting / expanding community control over food production, marketing and consumption) as well as sustainable livelihoods.

Like many others DCA too has previously focussed on Entitlements and now wants to deepen its work related to livelihoods and sustainable agriculture. It’s quite understandable that organisations want to move on to newer and more critical areas of work. But might it be a little premature to move away from the work initiated around the entitlements approach?

The greatest successes of DCA’s partners in the Food Security / Right to Food Programme, actually lie in the domain of ensuring entitlements to Food, Pensions and Wage Employment. This work is at a critical take off stage and has led to both concrete benefits to the people as well as catalysed the formation of people’s organisations around asserting their right to such entitlements. The second most successful area of work has been around demanding resource rights. In some ways the work around demanding resource rights take after the approach used for demanding entitlements: awareness building, catalysing/strengthening people’s organisations, and support in paper work. But the ultimate success of resource rights work depends not only on obtaining rights over resources but also the capability to engage in sustainable and remunerative use of such resources. So in a way the work on resource rights connects the other two areas of work.

In the next few years, the current mix of Entitlements, Resource Rights and Sustainable Livelihoods would continue to be relevant. Entitlements related work will continue to be significant because there is lot of work on building new entitlements as well as lot of work still needed around asserting right to entitlements that are already there as legal provisions. The upcoming Food Security Act and the crystallisation of the people’s movement for universal old age pension will be among the most important new areas of entitlement. Expanding and strengthening the demand for work and wages under the MGNREGA will be critical in terms of ensuring entitlements that are currently available.

Resource Rights under the provisions of the Forest Rights Act will continue to be the key areas for people in India for obtaining resource rights starting from individual land entitlements to community entitlements to forest and forest produce.

Climate Resilient Organic agriculture on land and collection, processing, and marketing of forest produce would continue to be the core of people’s actions towards food sovereignty and sustainable livelihoods.

Engaging on all these three areas of work will ensure that DCA’s work continues to be of great value to the marginalised people in India.
Executive Summary

Dan Church Aid’s work on Food Security from a Right to Food Perspective has been a significant contributor to civil society action on Right to Food in India. Beginning 2006 and initially planned to be continued till 2010, it has already been extended till 2012. A Mid Term Review of the programme was carried out in September 2008. The MTR Report made many suggestions on revising, enhancing and augmenting work on the Right to Food. The recommendations influenced the agenda for work in the years since then. A significant change was the addition of an Immediate objective around building the capacities of the partner communities and partner organisations to take forward the issues of Right to Food. The Programme is now referred inside DCA more as Right to Food Programme (and less as Food security Programme).

The Right to Food / Food Security Programme was developed from 2005 in consultation with widespread consultations that began with a team comprising of Harsh Mander, Nina, and representatives of LWF and CASA. The programme that was developed focussed on three distinct components of Right to Food with Entitlements, Resource Rights as well as Sustainable Agriculture. Given the differential capacities of the partners and the overall context of the situation of right to food in India, it was anticipated that the first phase will focus more on Entitlements with the second and third phase adding focus on Resource Rights and Sustainable Agriculture. The programme was located in both the grassroots as well as the national /state contexts. Grassroots and state level work was concentrated in the three states of Rajasthan, Odisha and Andhra Pradesh. The National work comprised of working on Policy Analysis and Influencing through the use of Research, Publications, and engaging with the Commissioner Advisor system set up by the Supreme Court of India on the Right to Food. The national work also included building capacities of the partners doing grassroots work.

In less than six years, the RTF/FS programme has contributed significantly towards

1. The achievement of the Right to Food among the communities it has worked with at the grassroots level.
2. The bringing together of partner NGOs with national and state level actors on the Right to Food, especially from the entitlements perspective.
3. Contributing to the national level advocacy towards better entitlements around the Right to Food as well as their better implementation on the ground.

It has also contributed significantly to the achievements of Land Rights through

1. Preventing land alienation (of marginalised communities)
2. Getting legal documents for land that marginalised people have been cultivating for years through the implementation of the Forest Rights Act.

It has initiated action on moving from Food Security to Food Sovereignty issues by

1. Working on Sustainable Agriculture
2. Strengthening and Augmenting Natural Resource based Livelihoods

If we look at the objectives of the RTF/FS programme as following a sequential focus moving from grounding of Entitlements, Assertion of Resource Rights and Development of Sustainable Livelihoods, the programme seems to have more or less conformed to that path. The success of Entitlements work has been fantastic, especially so for the most marginalised people who were systematically identified through the Baseline process. Apart from grassroots engagement on the grounding of entitlements, DCA partners have also contributed greatly to the demand for and the conceptualisation of new entitlements as well as used the commissioner advisor system to improve the actual delivery of such entitlements. A most significant continuing engagement is around the issue of the National Food Security Bill which is in the process of formulation. DCA’s partners have engaged in policy influencing and suggesting alternatives for this proposed legislation.
Resource Rights work has begun in earnest with focus on both the prevention of land alienation, getting rights over government land available for agriculture and most importantly getting legal rights over land that marginalised groups (especially indigenous people) had cultivated over years. A key engagement has been the Forest Rights Act that was being demanded at the time of the inception of the programme and was passed and notified within two years of the beginning of the programme. This engagement has opened up not only possibilities in terms of getting individual rights over land but also getting community rights over forests including rights over collection, processing and marketing of forest produce, especially Non Timber Forest Produce. This will provide new opportunities for strengthening and augmenting forest resource based livelihoods. DCA partners have already begun to work on these possibilities, especially through facilitating women’s collectives around asserting rights over such produce as well as processing and marketing them.

Sustainable Agriculture has been a third major area of work that has comprised of improved (but organic) agricultural and horticultural practices from developing community capacities for production and management of inputs especially Traditional Seeds and Organic Manure and Pesticides. Associated livelihoods like livestock have been strengthened through getting rights over grazing land as well as through direct provisioning of goats to the most vulnerable households.

In the coming years DCA can build on the successes, experiences and learning from its work over the last six years. Given the outstanding success of its partner organisations in ensuring entitlements, it seems that DCA should continue to focus on this as a core area of work. As Nina so succinctly put it, “If an Organisation has to work in India. It has to work on Entitlements”. It will perhaps do well to continue its focus on the most marginalised groups. All this can be done by expanding in to new areas of work in terms of communities, geographies as well as new entitlements.

Resource Rights Work picked up greatly after the passage of the Forest Rights Act and its still work in progress. Over the next few years continuing work on resource rights, especially around Community and Individual Rights under the Forest Rights Act has the potential to obtain large successes. This is an area which needs continuing support at least over the next five years. Work around developing livelihoods based on this expansion of people’s rights over forests and forest produce has the scope of lifting large numbers of people from hunger and poverty.

Sustainable Agriculture seems to be the least successful area of DCA’s work over the last six years. It’s an area which does require long term work – especially in the context of the impacts of climate change that are already being experienced and are likely to worsen further.

It’d be great if DCA could find adequate resources to do significant work on all three areas. But in case it has to make a choice it will have to chose between expanding on work that it has been highly successful on (that is entitlements), work that can lead to great potential success over the coming half a decade (Forest and Land Rights), and work that it’s just venturing in to (sustainable agriculture). If it chooses to continue work with the same geographies and communities, it’s appropriate that it build on the current successes by moving more in to sustainable livelihoods. If its willing, desirous, to replicate its success in entitlements, it may want to move to new geographies and communities. If it wants to focus on Resource Rights it’d perhaps need to move in to new areas as well as continue its engagement with current partner communities so that the work is taken to a logical conclusion.
The Right to Food is among the most important constituents of the Right to Live. Work on the Right to Food is therefore a key area of focus for a large number of organisations working with a rights based approach in India. But given the extent and intensity of the violations of this right, there is need for even greater work. Given the overall objective of DCA India’s Country Programme to contribute to the improvement of the quality of life among people living with hunger, the Right to Food Programme Programme, is clearly at the centre of its work. Over the last 6 years, DCA’s work on Right to food has covered hundreds of villages across three states of India. This learning exercise sought to understand the way the work of partners supported by DCA has made differences to lives of people living with hunger.

So how did DCA understand about the nature and extent of Food Insecurity in India and what did it plan to do? In 2006, DCA India selected three programmes: Access to Social Justice, Food Security and Tsunami Programme with Disaster preparedness, conflict - and gender sensitive programming selected as cross cutting issues. The Food Security Programme was taken up with a Rights Based Approach and this is what influenced the formulation and implementation of the programme. This led to the programme being generally referred to as RTF Programme.

The DCA Right to Food/Food security Programme was prepared in consultation with partner organisations as well as resource organisations and institutions with experiences on food rights and social exclusion. To develop the strategy part of the programme, DCA team visited selected partners activities in vulnerable districts of Orissa to understand the field based work related to food security in February and March 2006. Discussions were held with staff members of partner organizations and the respective communities. The community discussions gave an impression of the level of grassroots awareness and methods and challenges of mobilising marginalised people to claim their food rights from the State. The Problem Analysis identified issues ranging from State Attitude towards Starvation and Destitution to Agrarian Crisis and Food Insecurity. This effectively straddled both ends of the Food Security Paradigm. That is it focussed on the issue of State Responsibility for direct provisioning and also focussed on the ability of communities to produce their own food in a sustainable manner. Given the cross-cutting foci, it also looked at the ability of women to access food inside households (intra household inequality). But it also looked specifically at the food insecurity particular to Dalits and the Tribals and even if it did not discuss about the food insecurity faced by minorities (especially Muslims), it did make a passing mention about the poverty and food insecurity of Muslims. Another cross cutting focus, Disaster Preparedness and Gender Sensitive Programming also received the attention of the strategy makers of the DCA Food Security Programme. The only cross-cutting focus that did not receive much attention was the issue of Conflict. Given the issues that the Programme identified, the overall Objective was identified as follows:

**Development Objective**

*Progressive fulfilment of the Right to food based on food sovereignty for the most vulnerable and food insecure people among Dalits, Tribals and other minorities (with focus on women, children, elderly, disabled and distress migrants) in the operational areas by 2010.*

The Development objective sort of sets the core agenda of the RTF/FS Programme. Thus the distillation of the extensive background analysis in to the Development Objective becomes a critical agenda setter as regards the work done under the programme. The issues and communities that were specifically identified received specific mention in the Objective Statement. Communities like

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1 The DCA Team as well as many partners prefer to call the Food Security Programme, RTF Programme, underlining the Right Based focus of DCA in its Food security Programme.
2 Disaster preparedness, conflict - and gender sensitive programming have been selected as cross cutting issues under the India Country Programme. Page 4, DCA India Food Security Programme
the Muslims who received only passing mention found no space in the Objective and the issue of Conflict which also received only a passing mention also found no space in the objective. A more specific identification of the Geographical Focus Area as well as a less clearly mentioned but obvious decision to do grassroots work only in rural areas, must also have contributed to the lack of focus on the Muslim community as well as the Conflict Affected, but more about this latter. The Development Objective, while it did not address certain important issues identified in the situation analysis, was quite comprehensive by using the beautiful (and catch all) phrase Food Sovereignty. The Impact indicators too sought to look at the work more comprehensively by picking up indicators that measured progress in terms of Food Production, Availability and Nutritional Outcomes. The indicators are as follows:

**The (Overall) Impact indicators**

1. Reduced hunger period (months of food shortage)
2. Improved nutritional status (in particular of women, children, distress migrants, old and disabled)
3. Decreased number of starvation deaths

However, the paragraph on overall Justification and Interventions lost some of the comprehensiveness of the Objective statement as well as the list of indicators.

**Justification and Interventions**

As discussed in the context analysis there are provisions in the constitution of India well as a number of national schemes in place relating to food security and livelihood. However, the targeted right holders do not have the necessary basis on which to claim their entitlements from the different duty bearers: awareness, information, capacity and empowerment. Overall, it is vital to focus on empowerment of people living with hunger as an end in itself and not just a strategy. The specific areas are addressed under the immediate objectives below, however building the capacity of the targeted right holders to claim their entitlements and rights is the centre piece for the success of the Programme and in all effect of the reduction of hunger. Special focus is given to support activities increasing state accountability and changed social practises within the family.

It is here that the first signs of the prioritisation of Food and Livelihood related entitlements over other aspects of Food Security come out clearly. This is something that continued over the project period and over much of the work that was done at the grassroots level. But the glimpses of this focus did not continue in to the identification of the Immediate Objectives. If at all, the Immediate Objectives taken together presented a far more comprehensive agenda for action on food security. In addition the identified indicators and the “Justification and Interventions” sections added to the comprehensiveness of the agenda.

**Immediate objective 1**

Food and employment rights from state run schemes are realised by the targeted right holders.

**Immediate objective 2**

Targeted right holders have increased access to and control over productive resources (land, water, forest and capital)

**Immediate objective 3**

Targeted right holders practicing low risk sustainable, equitable and diversified use of productive resources and accessing agricultural extension services.

**Immediate objective 4**

Food Security programme brings added value into the food security programme partnerships and DCA global – gradual learning, quality of work, coordination and linkages to wider “circles”, ensured
While these four objectives were part of the original Programme Document, after the Mid Term Review, a new objective was added to the list of immediate objectives which is part of the TOR for the current evaluation.

**Immediate Objective 5**
Facilitate Strengthening and empowerment processes of targeted rights holders and their associations to take forward issues of right to food.

Reading through the list of Immediate objectives and the longer list of indicators its apparent that DCA in association with its partner organisations set out to change the food security status of local communities with which it has direct work and also sought to make a difference to the national international context of food security. It sought address issues of production, of marketing, of displacement, of bonding, of land rights, sustainable agriculture, of local procurement of grains, of trade, disaster preparedness and response, and of Food Entitlements from the Government. Each of these issue, of course, comprises of many sub-issues. If an organisation was able to achieve even a couple of these indicators, it’d be a great achievement. If an organisation was to try to achieve significant result on each of these indicators, it’d be more or less guaranteed to overstretch its resources and energies and may either achieve nothing or have significant achievements in only a few areas of work. As a Resource Organisation DCA of course would have the opportunity chose partnerships in a manner such that there were significant achievements in many areas without any single partnership overstretching its resources, commitments and mandate. So how did DCA seek to focus on all these areas through selection and facilitation of partner organisations:

Let us take a look at some of the indicators that are based on grassroots action and classify those which were achieved to a great extent, those which were achieved to some extent and those which were almost not achieved:

**Indicators on which there is great work built through concerted engagement**

The indicators around claiming of food related entitlements is something that has seen a lot of success. The indicators around land ownership and water rights (though not so much the latter) has also seen major successes. Increased income of women from Minor Forest Produce has also seen significant success wherever the work is with forest neighbouring communities. The indicator on increased control over common property resources has also seen significant achievements. The indicator on increased incomes from alternative livelihoods has also seen significant achievements.

1. **Increased capacity and empowerment of right holders in claiming entitlement to food related state run schemes**
2. **Increased number of targeted right holders with landownership and water rights (joint, women, men) and tenants with tenant security**
3. **Increased incomes of the women right holders from Minor Forest Produce**
4. **Increased number of men and women right holders with access and control over the common property resources**
5. **Increased incomes from alternative livelihood activities of the target right holders**
6. **Reduced discrimination against target right holders at the community level**

What were the principal reasons behind the successful achievements on these indicators? The 1st indicator was perhaps the indicator on which maximum efforts of DCA were concentrated. At the grassroots level there were strong commitments to the achievement of this objective, especially among the staff and the local volunteers. The ability to see results of one’s work in relatively less
time was perhaps a big draw. It’d be easy to see why committed local workers would feel for this programme from their heart. The Baseline Study, while it was quite comprehensive in terms of issues covered, seems to have had the maximum impact on the identification of marginalised households and individuals who were found to be eligible for receiving benefits from food related schemes of the government and not being currently covered under the same. The initial mobilisations of people (such as the Thar Jagruk Manch) also picked up issues that were more about discrimination against individuals and households by the state as compared to issues that had to do with challenging the community power structure.

This also seems to have been the area of work that received maximum support from national level partnerships of DCA. Support to the Centre for Equity Studies which has been working closely with the Right to Food Commissioner-Advisor system provided regular and effective support to the grassroots work in terms of inspirational leadership, capacity building, networking with senior right to food activists and organisations from across the country and the ability to connect issues to the administration and to influence state and national policies and working of the administration.

For many, entitlements related work also provided the easier first step towards rights based work as it was easy to understand and communicate. For instance in SURE this work received the highest priority and during my field visits it was only with great difficulty that I was able to identify any one who did not receive the entitlements due to her/him. During my field visits in SPREAD as well as LWSIT also, very high levels of achievements in this regard were clearly visible.

An interesting area that was not part of the formal set of indicators but also saw significant work was that around ensuring safe deliveries. In almost all the places that I visited (though I had specific discussions around this only in SURE and SPREAD) it was evident that the food entitlements work also covered the issue of Safe Delivery. I believe this is due to the entitlement built around safe delivery. Entitlements under the Janani Surkasha Yojana, although not exclusively around food & nutrition, were easy to comprehend in the same manner as food and employment entitlements. As JSY ensured a higher entitlement in case of Institutional Delivery, the work on ensuring JSY also led to work on ensuring Institutional Deliveries. May be there was also a genuine element of concern for safe delivery. But whichever way it might have been, it was a welcome achievement that went beyond the originally identified indicators.

The exceptional national and state level support on Food Entitlements had two limitations though. One of them was on the issue of MGNREGA. This was one area in which concerted and planned efforts at the national or state level were not visible. This is of course not to say that work on MGNREGA did not happen in the projects. But compared to the successes on food entitlements, employment under MGNREGA was quite limited. The national reports prepared by DCA for years 2006 to 2010, used “Job Cards issued” as the principal indicator of success. Given the capacities developed among partners on claiming entitlements, concerted national effort to facilitate employment under MGNREGA might have led to major successes. It would also have contributed to success under another indicator – women and men getting increased and equal agricultural wages.

The 2nd indicator benefited from the existing experience of organisations like Sahanivasa which had decades of experience and committed action on Dalit Land Rights and of ASTHA which had similar experience from a Tribals perspective. But perhaps the most critical contribution to success on this indicator came from the Forest Rights Act which was passed a year after the launch of the Food Security Programme and notified exactly two years after the launch. However many of DCA’s partner organisations were at the centre of the advocacy and assertion campaigns to demand for the Act to be passed and subsequently for its notification. While Dalit Land Rights remained more or less the domain of Sahanivasa, work on Forest Land Rights was taken up by all the DCA partners working with forest neighbouring communities. However, compared to the work on Food Entitlements, for FRA related work there was far less structured national level support facilitated by DCA. Still DCA’s contribution to supporting this was significant given its support to ASTHA which
played a key role at the national level. It also helped that many other partners, e.g. SPREAD and DISHA were part of the national and state level campaigns on the issue. Already there are significant skills among the partners which would be useful to harness at the national level. For instance the skills on Dalit Land Rights with Sahanivasa, the skills on Land Measurement and Demarcation with SPREAD, can be used to build the capacities of other DCA partners and perhaps other organisations which are not DCA partners but are working on similar issues.

Significant success has also been achieved under the 3rd indicator, i.e. increased income from Minor Forest Produce. There are at least three areas in which there have been major interventions. First one is to claim rights over Minor Forest Produce, the second is to form cooperative institutions to procure and sell Minor Forest Produce at higher prices, and the third is to initiate value addition through processing. The campaign around Forest Rights has also addressed the issue of rights over forest produce. The recent successes in Mendhalekha around ownership rights over bamboo has led to many more such struggles coming in to the open and more still being inspired.

The struggle for Cashew Plantations in Koraput has been strengthened further through the support from the Food Security Programme. In fact the work on Cashew contains all three aspects of work on Minor Forest Produce. The large areas of previously forested land that was planted with cashew was being leased out to private businesses. The women dominated Dangar Adhikaar Samiti supported by SPREAD has struggled to get access and control over these plantations. It has already achieved rights over Cashew Trees for hundreds of women through which they have go effective control over the Cashew produced on the trees. Women’s groups are also collecting and selling cashew higher in the value chain by joining together. The third aspect of work, i.e., processing of Cashew nuts to produce edible cashew kernels is something that’s already being worked upon. However this is going to be an extremely difficult area of work. Even for a very small processing unit with a capacity of 250 kilos per day, and 200 working days per year, the initial investment is likely to be somewhere between 20 lakh to 40 lakh rupees. Of course all Minor Forest Produce processing is not as expensive and leaf plate making in LWSIT’s project villages is one such example.

The 4th indicator of access and control over common property resources is another area where substantial progress has been made. So whether it’s about Dalits in Sahanivasa’s project area reclaiming their rights over CPRs encroached upon by the upper castes, or the struggle for reclaiming

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4 The Village in Maharashtra that has pioneered community control over bamboo produced on their forest and claiming ownership and sale rights. DCA’s partner Centre for Science and Environment has made tremendous contributions to bringing Mendhalekha and the issue it stands for before a national audience and influenced other media to do so.
common grazing lands in CASA’s project areas, access and control over common property resources is high on the agenda of the DCA partners. A major new area on which work has intensified recently is the use of FRA to seek access and control over community forest resources. The 4th indicator is thereby strongly linked to the 3rd indicator on income from minor forest produce. A clear area of conflict remains on the issue of reclaiming rights over common forest resources from the forest department initiated Joint Forest Management committees which very often discriminate against the very people whose lives and livelihoods depend on the continued existence of forests as source of subsistence. Second generation (post allotment) issues on forest rights regarding demarcation and management are other issues that are emerging as new sources of conflict and hence demand interventions.

A fifth highly successful indicator is that of the increase in income from alternative sources. Of course the idea of alternative sources is not very clearly defined. One way of looking at alternatives is those that enhance the current livelihoods through moving up the value chain. Another way of looking at them is as strengthening existing – so called - secondary livelihood sources. A third way is to seek entirely new alternatives that could also imply moving away from the current livelihood sources. As this is not explained in the Documents, I had assumed that the objective is to stay within the first two approaches. The third approach – skill building for urban employment for instance- is quite complicated and has often been used to displace people from their communities whether permanently or through long term migration. In my discussion with Nina it became clear that this indeed was the objective. That is the idea of Alternative Livelihoods was essentially around the strengthening or the extension (value addition) in existing livelihoods.

Of course it would be too simplistic to say that progress should necessarily come within the village. An example that might clarify this a little is our ideas about education. When we look at the right to education of the child of a poor rural household, we certainly do not want to restrict her to education that will allow her to only grow within the village boundaries. But if we avoid this aspect of alternatives to concentrate the first two kinds, there has been significant work on the ground. Value addition to existing livelihoods such as those based on Minor Forest Produce has provided alternatives. Asserting ownership and control over new common property resources has strengthened alternative livelihoods. But the principal push on this has come for the major intervention on providing goats to poor households, especially single women Work on food and livelihoods from organic farming has of course been towards strengthening the existing farm based livelihoods and the new farm based livelihoods that have become even more possible based on the land obtained through challenging land alienation (e.g. in Sahaniwas and IDEA/CASA) and land obtained through demands made under the FRA.

The sixth key area in which there was considerable success was the issue of discrimination against marginalised communities, especially Dalits. In almost all the places that I visited there has been substantial work on ensuring that Dalits get linked to Food Entitlements. There is also shared work on ensuring that there is no discrimination against Dalit children in the Mid Day Meal Programme. It’d probably be true to say that in all the schools where DCA Food Security partners have intervened, now there is no actual practice of discrimination against Dalit children in the way they are asked to sit during the serving of mid day meal or in the way they are served Mid Day Meal. In some cases, such as in Rajasthan partners, where the schools have provided plates for all children there is one further step. That is the plates are interchangeably used by Dalit and non-Dalit children (and also minority – especially Muslim children). Everyday children pick up their plates from the stack and put it back there and a plate picked one day by a Dalit/Muslim child could be picked up the next day by a non-Dalit child. The practice of putting marks on plates to identify plates used by Dalit children from those used by other children is also not practiced. Given the extent of practice of untouchability against Dalit children in schools, what has been achieved on the ground is definitely significant.
Even more intensive work on challenging discrimination has happened in two of the projects I visited, the first being the CASA-IDEA project in Barmer and the second Sahanivasa project in Chittoor. While in the former work has been around challenging caste based violence and caste based discrimination in drinking water sources and provisioning, in the latter there is much more comprehensive and coordinated action on all forms of discrimination. While addressing the issue of discrimination against Dalit children in AWCs as well as addressing the issue of designated burial ground for Dalits, Sahanivasa is seeking to build dignity from childhood to old age and even after death. Another intervention that does not immediately look like something that is towards challenging discrimination against Dalits and towards greater Dalit rights is the operation of a tractor by Sahanivasa. The tractor helps the Dalits to cultivate land that has been recently occupied, for which the upper caste tractor owners would not allow the hiring of their tractors. This way the tractor contributes to both Dalit assertion as well as dignity. But, even in the limited area of school meals programme (and AWCs), the work on discrimination against Dalits has remained there and hasn’t gone beyond. Let’s look at two things, one of which should have been tackled from an entitlement based approach and another through social mobilisation.

In almost all the places I visited, something that is corroborated by the situation outside DCA’s project areas, the Dalit cooks are almost never appointed unless the school comprises of only Dalit (and Tribal/Muslim) children. None among DCA’s partners seems to have bothered much about this aspect. Simple RTI applications, for instance, would have easily revealed to DCA and its partners about the extent of this practice in the districts and states they work in. The SC Order on MDM says that Dalits should be given preference in the appointment of cooks. It’d be possible to intimate the court if there are any violations of the order. Had there been coordinated work this could have certainly become a key contribution of the DCA Partners to both Right to Food as well as Dalit Dignity related work in the country. Another aspect that should have received attention is the issue of upper caste children being forced by their families to boycott MDM – something that was encountered during the field visits. Of course this might be something that cannot possibly be addressed by appealing to the government. But grassroots level work on social transformation, though extremely difficult, should at least be attempted.

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5 Supreme Court Order dated 20th April, 2004.
Like any successful programme, the different aspects of work around these six highly successful areas of work contributed to one another. For instance, the baseline survey which was principally directed (de facto if not by design) for claiming food and related entitlements resulted in easy identification of the recipients of goats. Work on Pastures must have strengthened livelihoods based on goats that were provided as part of the programme. Work on Minor Forest Produce must have strengthened the work on claiming community rights over forests. Work on MGNREGA would have contributed to increase in wages and development and strengthening of alternate livelihoods and so on.

**Indicators on which there is good progress but lack of concerted engagement**

DCA’s partners worked on some areas in a collaborative and concerted manner. In these areas there were very good results which were true for the entire Food Security Programme (even if to a varying extent). But there were also other issues on which Food Security Programme had significant success in some projects which was not replicated across all partners. Lack of concerted work also limited the work on these issues to what was immediately visible to the partner.

1. **Bonded labour reported to the district administration**
2. **Increased number of community initiatives during emergencies**
3. **Increased number of right holders practicing sustainable agriculture**
4. **Increased number of targeted right holders accessing government services (agricultural extension service)**

Work on Bonded labour has happened in many places. This has ranged from supporting release of inter-state bonded labourers (Advisor’s Office Bhubaneswar) to release of Dalits working as bonded labour in the lands of rich farmers. Here again the work that has happened, even if there has been some success, is sporadic and unplanned. The increasing migration of poorer communities, often as entire families including children, is leading to bondage like conditions of work. On this there has been important struggles and victories, especially around the issue of brick kiln workers. All the three states in which the Food Security Programme has grassroots work, is connected to the issue either as a source of such bonded labour or as the destination or as both. There has been tremendous progress in the understanding of Bonded labour in the last two decades. For instance caste based bondage enforced on washing and barber communities has seen civil society opposition and some very progressive engagement from the courts and the NHRC. This is an area in which more concerted action might have led to widespread action and achievements in DCA’s grassroots work.

There has been work around community initiatives towards emergency preparedness in almost all grassroots action programmes (I saw it in SURE, Sahanivasa, LWSIT, and SPREAD). Almost every community in which grassroots action has happened as part of the Right to Food Project, community grain banks and seed banks have been instituted. In many places, the grain banks are playing an effective role in helping poor people avoid expensive borrowing of grain from richer households in the village or from local traders. The grain loans from local landlords and traders have an interest rate of 50% grain over a period of about 6 months. The interest rate in borrowing from community grain banks is as low as 10% over the same period. Besides there is no extra payment in case of delay in repayment. While the interest rate of 10% for 6 months may seem high, in terms of its monetary value, the 10% grain interest might actually be a negative rate of interest. For instance if the price of paddy in June (a typical month when grain may be borrowed) is likely to be 25% higher than what it’d be six months later in December. In different places the grain banks have grown in size on account of good repayment coupled with the additional grain as interest component. There the grain banks are now playing larger roles in preventing food scarcity – especially in the monsoon season.

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6 National Human Rights Commission
Along with grain banks seed banks have also been started in many places. But the seed banks do not seem to be so well thought out as the grain banks. While there are examples of good practices around seed banks, there is not much shared vision or programme around them. The way there is shared vision around entitlements related work. Grain banks are fairly simple in terms of logistics. Seed banks on the other hand are complicated. For instance unlike grain banks, seed banks cannot pool together produce from different fields or of marginally different varieties of the same crop. There have been innovations around this. For instance community organisations around seed banks have picked up the best produce from one persons field and kept it as seed. But this is not a practice that has been widely shared or propagated as a model. Nor have any alternative models been propagated widely as a basket of choice approach. Of course the seed banks are a dual purpose initiative. They contribute to preparedness against seed scarcity after emergencies. But more importantly they contribute to the preservation and sustenance of local crops and seed varieties. Seed banks thus need a dual focus in terms of emergency preparedness as well as sustainable agriculture. But unfortunately the sustainable agriculture component has been rather weak and to that extent seed banks too have had limited success, especially as compared to grain banks. More of this we discuss in the section on what did not really take off.

It’s clear of course that Grain Banks and Seed Banks have been quite successful. ‘Community initiatives in emergencies’, however, does not only mean grain banks and seed banks and beyond these there have been little real preparedness for emergencies. While the identification of the areas has been made on the basis of drought as a key emergency, it is not the only emergency affecting these areas. Grain Banks and Seed Banks are also not the only ways to approach even drought preparedness. May be the indicator itself was rather ambitiously coined.

In fact one of the ways to look at disaster preparedness in the larger sense of climate change preparedness is the approach to sustainable agriculture. Sustainable agriculture did form a major component of the programme as envisaged under the food sovereignty framework. But on the ground it formed comprised of only disparate activities that are part of sustainable agriculture rather than any integrated and planned programme. As it has already been mentioned, seed banks were attempted in almost all areas, even if without any comprehensive approach. Local production of bio-fertilisers is another area which has been attempted in many places. Among the places I visited, the only place where I saw an approach close to integrated sustainable agriculture was LWSIT’s programme in Kalahandi. There was work on bio-fertilisers, there was work on traditional drip irrigation, emphasis on mixed farming, and SRI approach for Paddy. The seed banks were also run more professionally with emphasis on proper selection of seed from the fields with the best production and that too from the central part of the field to ensure greater genetic purity. In fact had there been adequate understanding built around issues such as seed replacement rate, hybrid seeds and so on. Unfortunately as LWSIT was seeking to push towards sustainable agriculture, the local government extension services were pushing for a move towards green revolution technologies. This was happening especially around the push towards hybrid maize.

In the places I visited in Odisha and Andhra Pradesh, there was also a definite push towards plantations. Sometimes it was of the agro-horticulture variety. But oftener than that, it was pure horticultural plantations with may be the possibility of a little agriculture in the interspaces during the first few years. In every place such plantations were promoted with the perspective of increasing profits for the small and marginal farmers the partners work with. But if we look at it from the overall food sovereignty perspective this was essentially moving away from the possibility of local food security. Usually this is the one place where significant amount of government support was leveraged. The seedlings cam either free or were subsidised. MGNREGA could be leveraged to set up the plantations. Government support could also be mobilised for local pitcher based irrigation and

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During the Partners’ Platform meeting around the review, Disha shared about the work it has been engaged in on sustainable agriculture. Sahanivasa has also shared about its work on sustainable agriculture.
so on. In a way this was providing people both long term income promise from the produce of the plantations as well as with employment during the setting up. So it’s easy to see why such plantations might have been promoted.

The plantations were typically coming up on land that was previously used for growing millets or which could potentially be used for the same. While often the land was previously used for growing millets and pulses before the land was shifted to cotton cultivation in the first place. The promises of long term income are also not reliable. N Chittoor is the one place from among the partnership areas which has had a long history of plantation based livelihood. Chittoor is famous for its mangoes and now almost every major manufacturer of mango juice (or rather reconstituted mango juice) has pulp production plants in the district or sources its pulp from factories in the district. But the plethora of factories has actually made the mango farmers even more vulnerable. Mango farmers have shifted to varieties that are used for pulp making and in years of better production prices crash as there is no other market for such mangoes apart from the pulp factories.

Mango farming also curtails down local employment generation as field crops require more labour than mango orchards. Thus, the move towards plantations creates at least three major challenges that need to be addressed.

a) Loss of local food production (especially grains and pulses)

b) Loss of employment for agricultural labourers

c) Increased vulnerability to price volatility

These challenges are either not being addressed even if they are being appreciated. The second sort of response comes from the Agricultural Workers’ Unions in Chittoor itself. The unions have opposed the use of MGNREGA funds to transform land use from field crops to plantations. But in terms of overall opposition to the creation of such plantations, there has been little effort if any.

While Mango orchards can be seen as bringing in a different kind of food, the creation of large scale eucalyptus plantations promoted by paper companies, does not even have that fig leaf of an excuse. Eucalyptus plantations reduce food production, reduce employment of agricultural labourers, use up too much of precious ground water (the grassroots work is in drought prone areas), allow almost no
intercropping, and make it very difficult for the farmer to change the cropping pattern if prices collapse or land quality deteriorates. This is one key area where the move away from sustainable agriculture and towards loss of food sovereignty has either been promoted by grassroots action under the Food Security Programme or at least been ignored by it.

Another major area which has not had real interventions on the ground is the rapid spread of hybrid seeds. The extent of the spread of such seeds has not been adequately appreciated to addressed. Much of this push for adopting new hybrid seeds comes from the government extension system. Among the places I visited, SURE was the other place where I saw a definite approach towards accessing government agricultural extension services. There was major success in terms of the close coordination with the local Krishi Vigyan Kendra (it of course helps that SURE also runs the KVK) and other parts of the government extension system. Here the team actually faced a dilemma between the goal of increased access to government services and the goal of increasing practice of sustainable agriculture. Government extension services came accompanied with traditional green revolution technologies. Typically even the Bajra being pushed by the government extension system was principally of the hybrid variety. Hybrid Maize and Bajra seeds are also not being pushed as single items. They are part of a package that includes chemical fertilisers, chemical insecticides and pesticides, and in places even herbicides. In fact the two indicators of sustainable agriculture and accessing agricultural extension services seemed to many grassroots workers rather contradictory as the government extension system mostly brought green revolution and hybrid technologies with a little organic stuff thrown in here and there.

Apart from the above indicators on which there have been significant achievements, whether or not it was through concerted action in all areas where the Food Rights project was operational, there were some indicators where progress was either insignificant or not made at all. As expected these were some of the most difficult areas of work. But it’s not the lack of success that is worrying but the lack of concerted efforts. However, it must also be said here that some of these are issues on which, the lack of concerted efforts is not unique to DCA’s Food Security Programme but is rather common across much of NGO work in the country.

**Indicators on which there is low / sporadic progress**

1. Enhanced local procurement of food by state
2. Increased number of men and women agricultural labourers receiving minimum and equal wages
3. Increased number of social actions by right holders partner organizations and social movements on displacement due to privatization
4. Enhanced capacity to conduct training in sustainable agriculture among government agricultural extension workers
5. Increased involvement of govt extension workers in capacity building for sustainable agriculture

Let’s look at one of the most difficult areas where work is not only difficult but perhaps also not desirable in the manner it has been conceived – i.e. the ambition to ensure increased number of social actions by right holders partner organizations and social movements on displacement due to privatization. How does funded NGO work contribute in such an area? The question becomes even more significant in the context of NGOs which work with support that falls under the ambit of the FCRA. Also given the nature of grassroots work supported by DCA, it’s difficult to see how these social actions address the issue of displacement. The way displacement is defined in the Food Security Programme Document it’s principally about the physical displacement of people due to large industrial-mining-hydroelectric projects. While such displacement is becoming ever more frequent and ever larger in its spread, a particular DCA supported grassroots programme may or may not have any such displacement in its project area. One way the programme can actually intervene on such displacement is by identifying communities which are facing displacement and
work with them. As of now the selection of partners does not seem to have had this as a major
criterion. Another way is to seek the existing partners to extend their work to such areas. But this
does not seem to be part of the understanding of partnership.

The key area around this indicator, however, is not that regarding identification of partners or
building this as part of the partnership agreement. Rather it’s about the legitimacy of funded work
on this and even more so the desirability of it becoming an indicator of achievement. Engaging on
such work will make both DCA as well as the partner organisations vulnerable to governmental
action under the FCRA. Are DCA and its funded partners willing to jeopardise their entire work on
account of the desire to claim this as an indicator of achievement? This is a question that should
ideally have been discussed even before this was taken up as an indicator. Are there other aspects of
placement that call for engagement? Perhaps livelihood displacement such as the declining
livelihoods of artisans could be taken up. Perhaps studies and analysis of even physical displacement
can be taken up. But in those cases the indicator will probably have to be defined differently.

The two points around the ambition to get increased involvement of government extension workers
in capacity building for sustainable agriculture is perhaps the second most difficult area. Naturally
there has been little work on this – SURE which runs an institution of government agricultural
extension, a Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK, or Agricultural Science Centre) has of course been able to do
this very well, but that’s an exception. Rather, as pointed out earlier, engagement with the
government extension system and promotion of sustainable agriculture was often perceived by the
grassroots teams to be at cross purposes to each other. This is of course not to say that it’s
impossible or undesirable. But it definitely needs more focussed action than is currently the case. It
requires both increased understanding and practical skills at the grassroots team level as well as
greater legitimacy at the state / national level to influence training designs for government extension
workers as well as influencing their agenda as regard sustainable agriculture.

For DCA alone it’s perhaps a rather gigantic challenge to achieve it. But may be an alliance of like-
minded organisations could achieve this if they were to work in a consortium / network approach.
Even then it’s obvious that such work will have to face up to the influencing might of the corporate
agricultural interests who also seek to influence the same group of people – that too through both
local benefits as well as pressures from the top. Even within the government, there may be those
who genuinely believe in the supposed merits of green revolution agriculture as well as what many
are calling gene revolution agriculture. Of course action on this will have to be very different from
the rights and entitlement based approach in which the Food Security Programme has its principal
achievements. Are DCA and its partners ready for the kind of constructive action (in Gandhian terms
civil society action comprised of Sangharsh, Seva and Nirman- this roughly translates as Struggle,
Service and Constructive Programme)? Whatever the answer to that question may be, its apparent
of course that the achievement of Food Security will require going beyond demanding rights from
the government. More on this later when we look at the potential areas for future work.

The points on Enhanced procurement by State and
Increased number of men and women agricultural labourers
receiving minimum and equal wages are the other two areas
where there has been very little work. The second point
has already been touched
upon in a way while covering the lack of concerted action on
MGNREGA. While MGNREGA is not the only way through which wages of agricultural labourers can
be bargained upwards, it is probably the single most important factor today. Information from the

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Local wage rates in all the four districts visited have remained substantially below minimum wages along with a large men-women differential. While there are some successes in Chittoor and Barmer, that can be apportioned between the work of Sahanivasa over the last two decades – including the DCA supported interventions, as well as the general success of Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan in getting MGNREGA work to the people. Also in both districts there are other local factors that have influenced wage rates. In both Koraput as well as Kalahandi, the wage rates for women remained at about 50 rupees or lower for agricultural work. The comparable wage rates for men was about 70, still far below minimum wages but nevertheless signifying a large discrimination against women. There were even extreme cases where wage for one day of work in agriculture included only a meal and 20 rupees of cash. The equivalent situation in Barmer district was the imposition of ‘Laasiya’ or free labour with free food and no wages or token wages – especially in harvesting of Bajra.

It’s apparent that the ability of DCA’s partners to push the wages upwards is far more difficult than say ensuring that people get PDS in time or are not cheated in quantity. But would more concerted work on MGNREGA have pushed the wages upwards? Would organising workers around their identity as workers allowed them to bargain for higher wages? The answer to this question can be both Yes and No depending on the nature of the employer. To the extent that people are working in each others’ field in a sort of cooperative labour sharing, it’s hard to see how higher wages can be worked towards as the employer is as poor as the employed. But to the extent that larger land owners employ the labourers (something that seems much more applicable for places like Chittoor and Kalahandi than Koraput and Barmer) there seem to be possibilities in organised bargaining, something that can be even more possible if there is concerted work on MGNREGA.

In a village in Chittoor (Gunduluru) Dalits thanked both MGNREGA as well as the workers’

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8 Information from Wage Rates in Rural India, Labour Bureau, Government of India
organisation for the increase in wage rates. Between 2006 and now the wage rates in agricultural fields have gone up from a minimum of 30 rupees to the current rate of 100 to 150 rupees. Compared to the other three districts visited during the review Chittoor had a much higher number of days per worker. So in 2011-12, while Chittoor had an average of 64 days of work per household, it was 56 in case of Barmer and 31 and 30 respectively in Kalahandi and Koraput respectively. In Chittoor the Dalits have also been able to obtain about 40% of the overall persondays generated while their share in the job cards in only 27%. The lessons from Chittoor could be of significant value to DCA’s work elsewhere.

Agricultural wages, the principal wages available especially to women, are strongly linked to both bargaining power of the labourers as well as the ability to pay of the farmers. In fact in most parts of India, farmers have complained that MGNREGA employment has led to increase in wage rates and to labour shortage. While the farmers should probably not grudge the labourers the little higher wages (still below minimum wages in most places) it’s also important to take note of the fact that the farmer is also undergoing perhaps the most serious agrarian crisis since India’s independence. There is increasing dependence on external inputs. The use of chemical fertilisers, chemical pesticides, expensive ground water based irrigation and so on, have pushed up the costs. This is one of the key reasons why DCA and other likeminded organisations have also ventured in to promoting sustainable agriculture. At the same time the minimum support prices have remained low as well as difficult to access. While those producing paddy and wheat are at least theoretically offered MSP based procurement, those producing millets are entirely at the mercy of the market. In all the districts that I visited procurement was either non-existent or inaccessible for most.

While getting minimum support price is difficult for all farmers, it’s even more so for small farmers and most difficult for tenant (sharecropper) farmers. Thus in villages in Kesinga while some farmers had got 1080 rupees per quintal of paddy, there were others who got only 800 rupees per quintal. In the same village the typical price received by anyone for maize was about 800 rupees per quintal while the minimum support price for the year was 980 rupees. For a small farmer in Khamari, the loss due to selling of 20 quintals of paddy at 800 rupees per quintal amounted to 5,600 rupees. A comparison with the PDS subsidy received by this farmer shows that while the household effectively received about 4000 rupees worth of subsidy on the rice it got from PDS, what it lost through loss due to distress sale of paddy was about 40% higher. Why were people not able to get minimum support price for their agricultural produce? Some of the reasons identified were as follows:

1. The quantities were too small to be carried to the nearest procurement centre.
2. Sharecroppers did not have the land records that are required for selling at the procurement centre.
3. The grains were rejected on the basis on quality norms
4. The payments at the procurement centre were expected to be delayed as has been the case for many years.

Some of these issues can be addressed through organised action.

Apart from indicators that reflect the success (or lack of it) in case of grassroots action, the Food Security Programme also identified indicators that required national level work. Here again the work around entitlements has been fantastic while the work around MGNREGA and food sovereignty issues rather limited or even absent. Over the last six years, the national level and state level work supported by DCA has contributed to increasing the accountability of the state towards entitlement holders. The work of the commissioners’ secretariat in Chhattisgarh and the successful promotion of the near universal and low priced grain under PDS has contributed to the idea getting beyond the south Indian states where these schemes have had a long history. Its national work and also work of the state advisors supported by DCA has led to better state level accountability measures. For instance, in Odisha there has been a major change in terms of discontinuation of private storage agents as part of the PDS. Studies and reports on MDM, ICDS and other nutrition programmes have influenced the national and state governments towards better provisioning and greater
transparency. In Odisha where I visited the Advisors’ office as part of the review process, the Advisor’s secretariat has played a key role in exposing the malpractices in procurement of pulses for the ICDS programme leading subsequently to a procurement system that is decentralised up to the AWC level.

Frequent training programmes and close coordinated working with the national partners such as CES and CSE has enhanced the understanding of partners and partner staff on different issues around the right to food – especially around entitlements other than MGNREGA. There has been extensive media coverage on entitlement related right to food issues while CES has taken the right to food related coverage beyond the entitlement focus that seems to permeate the overall programme.

A very important indicator that was identified in the programme was around ensuring ‘Increased number of social actions by right holders, partner organizations and social movements on agricultural trade related issues’. This is something on which there has been very little action. Apart from this there has been very little work at the national level on indicators around sustainable agriculture. The large scale promotion of Hybrid Maize that is impacting almost all the villages in which DCA works has not been addressed. The promotion of herbicides as part of the SRI (System of Rice Intensification) package supported under the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) was not addressed even though DCA partners engaged with RKVY for SRI related work. SRI has also been used as a vehicle for hybrid paddy (e.g. in Kesinga) as the lower seed requirement in SRI is being used to push expensive hybrid paddy seeds. This was neither appreciated nor addressed. The issue of declining government support to small scale and sustainable agriculture did not find space.

In spite of the field areas being selected on the criterion of drought, lack of irrigation and drought proofing measures by the government was not an area of analysis or advocacy. The case with sustainable incomes from forest and common property resources is also similar. Actions on all these issues might have had far greater grassroots success and some definite national international achievements in case national work was initiated on these. That this was not done is surprising considering the fact that there was such positive experience of raising the quality and quantity of work on food entitlements through having national and state level partnerships with CES and the Commissioner-Adviser system. It’s important however, to take note of the media support in terms of the work of CSE on both issues around sustainable agriculture as well as forest produce.
Inter Programme Learning

Food Security Programme is one among the different programmes that DCA engages on in India. Of these two areas have very strong complementarities as well as commonalities with the Food Security Programme, namely the DRR Programme and the Access to Social Justice Programme. Disaster Response and Preparedness is an integral activity of the Food Security Programme. Social Justice is also an integral running theme of the programme. Unsurprisingly, issues such as challenging discrimination against Dalits and creating community grain banks have become core parts of the Food Security Programme. Food Security programme has much to learn from these two programmes and vice versa. So how has the Food Security Programme interfaced with these two programmes?

Both DRR and Social Justice programmes have interacted with the Food Security Programme through joint partner meetings as well by the DCA staff responsible for the other two programmes participating in the Food Security Platform Meetings. There have been common partners, i.e. partners who are supported for Food Security Programmes and one of the other two programmes either at the same time or in succession. But it does seem that apart from the initial influence on the Food Security Programme these two programmes have hardly had any ongoing and dynamic influence on each other. For instance even as Climate Change became a core part of thinking on Disaster Preparedness, issues around climate change did not become part of the Food Security Programme.

On the other hand the successful model of ‘Give a Goat’ campaign did not influence the programme of giving goats under disaster response programmes. Had that happened, the large scale mortality of goats provided in disaster response programme might have been averted. The Food Security Programme did not reach out to Muslims in spite of initially identifying them as one of the most marginalised groups. Had there been enough coordination between Food Security and Social Justice programme, this might have been avoided. The use of office spaces for display of images of Gods and Goddesses that one saw in some of the grassroots programmes might have been avoided had there been continuous interaction between these two programmes. The deep communalisation that seems to be spreading among the tribal populations in the project areas visited in Odisha might have been recognised and addressed.

Some time in to the learning process, I learnt about the thinking on a possible merger of the DRR and the Food security Programmes. This is an interesting possibility. But another possibility could be the bringing together of the Social Justice Programme with the Food Security Programme. More on this in the suggestions section.

Why Entitlement Work was so successful and other aspects of work not so

Before looking at future possibilities, it’s important to try identifying some of the reasons which made the programme so successful on Entitlements Work while Food Sovereignty work was far less successful. To make things simpler to compare, it’s useful to divide the entire work on the ground into three areas with aspects of discrimination (Caste/Gender/Religion) as cross-cutting themes.

1. Food Entitlement related work
2. Resource (Land and Forest) Rights related work
3. Sustainable Livelihoods related work

As has been mentioned earlier, the grassroots programme have led to some villages being almost completely covered under Food Entitlements. There were project villages in Barmer, Kalahandi, Chittoor and Koraput where coverage under such entitlement was almost 100%. It was difficult to find a old woman or man who was not already receiving pension or whose applications were already
being processed. In some villages where I discussed about the claims under maternity benefits, coverage under the same was almost 100% and, almost as a corollary, the percentage of institutional deliveries had gone up very substantially. Even in MGNREGA, where interventions and successes were rather limited, there were significant successes in getting job cards, especially for women. Identifying the reasons behind such success can help DCA replicate similar success in the food sovereignty aspect. The following are some of the reasons identified during the discussions during the field visits and in a more structured manner in the Partners’ Meeting.

1. The impact of the Baseline Survey
2. The approach to Rights Based Work as demanding from the Government
3. The continuous support to the programme from the Advisor-Commissioner system
4. The linkages to RTF and RTI Campaigns
5. The way grassroots workers took to entitlements related work
6. The growing impact of RTI, Social Audit and Public Hearing
7. The focus on entitlements in the Programme Document

When we look at the Resource (Land and Forest) Rights related work we find that here also there was a clear Rights focus and here also the rights were being demanded predominantly (although not exclusively) from the government. There was a strong linkage to the Campaign for Survival and Dignity. Grassroots workers were also strongly mobilised on the issue – at least so far as the claims under Forest Land Rights were concerned. But as discussed earlier there was much less coordinated support built in to the DCA programme and its the strong work of ASTHA and other CSD members from among the partners which led to inter-linked work. On Dalit Land Rights the presence of Sahanivasa (or the presence of a CASA alliance partner like IDEA) provided the momentum. On right to agricultural land in general, the work benefited from the actions led by the Ekta Parishad. But the Programme Document itself did not accord the same priority to such work as compared to the Entitlements Work.

When we look at Sustainable Livelihoods related work, it seems as though each partner was on its own and there was no coordinated support of any kind. There was some kind of support to alternative livelihoods through the common decisions to provide goats and there was some kind of central push for grain banks and seed banks. But beyond these rather discrete actions there was hardly any coordinated action. But the critical difference between this area and the other two areas is perhaps the difference in terms of how they could be conceived within the Rights Based Approach. The first two area were clearly rights based, sustainable livelihoods was not as much about rights as the other two. May be the following were the key reasons why this work did not take off:

1. Not having Rights based focus in the same way as Entitlements or Resource Rights Work
2. Not having national / state level support
3. Not connected to National Networks, Campaigns and Movements on the issue
4. Lack of focus in the Programme Document

One perspective on the differential emphasis laid by the Food Security Programme on these three broad areas of work can be drawn from the way Duty Bearers have been identified. Duty Bearers have been identified at different levels from the Community Level to the National Level through the District and State Levels.
Duty Bearers Identified at various Levels

Community level
Gram Sabha (assembly of village adults, that have many legal powers); Gram Panchayat representatives, traditional community leaders, school teachers, Anganwadi workers who are responsible for implementation of the Integrated Child Development programme at the village level, Auxiliary Nurse Midwife (ANM), Village Agricultural Extension worker, Public Distribution System dealers and middlemen, Self Help Groups, Family Breadwinners, Women, Youth. All duty bearers shall be targeted as individuals as well as being part of their organisations.

District level
The District Collectors (responsible for the monitoring and implementation of all government schemes), District (and sub-district) Panchayats, Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS), Railway authorities (on inter-state distress migration), Police, Labour, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Forestry, Soil and Water Conservation, Food and Civil Supplies, Revenue, District Primary Education Programme (responsible for the Mid Day Meals schemes)

State level
Chief Secretary of State, Relief Commissioner, Women and Child Development, Social Welfare, Food and Civil Supplies, Rural and Urban Development departments, State Human Rights Commission (Starvation deaths), state authorities responsible for land lease and issuing licences to private companies, State Food Advisors

National level

At the Community level Agricultural Extension Worker is identified as a duty bearer. At the district level also Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Forestry, Soil and Water Conservation departments are identified as duty bearers. But by the State level all these departments vanish from the list leaving behind the departments and institutions that are responsible for either implementation or monitoring of entitlements programmes. Same is the case at the national level. So the way state and national level work is conceptualised, there is no space for either rights based work or sustainable livelihoods related work. This has to a great extent been reflected in the way work has progressed in the Food Security Programme. The identification of agriculture and animal husbandry department, the Forest & Environment Department, the Water Resources Department, The Labour Department etc. would probably have provided far greater focus on state and national action on issues related to these departments/ministries. But there is another aspect to the programme design itself which prioritises entitlements work and resource rights work over work related to sustainable livelihoods.

The core of the focus of the programme itself is the Progressive fulfilment of the Right to food based on food sovereignty for the most vulnerable and food insecure people among Dalits, Tribals and other minorities (with focus on women, children, elderly, disabled and distress migrants) in the operational areas by 2010. Is a purely rights based approach adequate for supporting work around sustainable livelihoods? Also important is the typical definition of rights in the context of people’s relationship with the state. Can all rights be identified and approached from a State-Individual perspective? The Programme document realises the limitations of this approach and identifies even the household bread winner (although there is a certain gender bias inherent in the way bread winner is defined) as a duty bearer as are community leaders and the Gram Sabha. But on the ground the way the rights-duty interface has been conceived has been principally around the Individual-State interface. Its Right based work and that too in the context of Individual-State
interface that has received maximum focus in the work. This has had the maximum impact on the grassroots worker who is ultimately the driver of work on the ground.

For the grassroots worker the work that has gained greater prestige is work around Rights. So while sharing in the field the typical response of the grassroots workers was to share what they have achieved in the Rights Based approach while information on other work had to be elicited through more specific questions. But even within rights based work there seemed to be greater priority to entitlements work. Except for Sahaniwasa where the land struggle of the Dalits against the upper castes has acquired the prestige value, the principal focus of sharing was around successes in claiming entitlements. The second place went to the rights claimed from the government, especially around forest rights and FRA. Sharing on enhancing or initiating sustainable livelihoods on the other hand came much lower down. The only place where it seemed to be receiving significant mind-space among the grassroots staff was LWSIT’s programme in Kesinga. But it’d be useful to explore whether its due to slower movement of LWSIT towards the rights based approach or due to a conscious decision to give sufficient priority to the work on sustainable livelihoods.

It is no one’s case that work around sustainable livelihoods does not have strong rights connotations. In a way, the rights based understanding of sustainable livelihoods could be held to be far more critical and communitarian an approach than entitlement based work. Challenging the transition to corporate take-over of peasant agriculture has as much, if not more, rights content than, say, claiming two rupee rice under PDS. But unlike the individual nature of entitlements – although the process of claiming it is communitarian – rights to sustainable livelihoods is more at the level of communities and occupational groups. But mostly the focus of facilitating people’s organisation has generally been geographical (village, Panchayat and so on) or ethnic (Dalit, tribal and so on) or poor in general and based around demanding rights from the government. Here again there are grassroots practices that have not resulted in coordinated action. For instance the project with Sahaniwasa has continued to strengthen Agricultural Workers Union and that with SPREAD and LWSIT have strengthened organisations of women dependent on minor forest produce based livelihoods.

Looking Forward

The DCA Food Security Programme has had great success in all its grassroots action in helping poor people claim their food entitlements from the government. It has had great success in working to enhance these entitlements at the state and national level. It has had significant success in claiming the right to forest land and forest resources and in some of the projects right to agricultural land other than under FRA. Its partners have also made significant contributions to the national level work FRA and Land Rights in general. But it has had only occasional success in enhancing sustainable livelihoods and had very little engagement at the national level on the issues related to sustainable livelihoods. While preparing for its future Food Security Work DCA could move in some of these directions:

1. **Specialise on Food Entitlements work:** While work on food entitlements has been very successful, there is a need to expand it to new areas. There is also potential for deepening work on MGNREGA which has been one of the less successful areas in DCA’s work around entitlements. The partners have the skill, the national level work is in place, and there is great networking and connecting with most important civil society formations engaged on these issues. The planned Food Security Bill, the faulty Poverty Identification System that continues in spite of widespread opposition, the continued attempts to corporatize ICDS and MDM and replace PDS with cash transfers, all these require strong grassroots and national work. If DCA would have made a difference over the next programme strategy period to the state of food entitlements in India and replicated such work in its other South Asian engagements, it would be a an extremely important contribution. The key issues on which work might need to be strengthened could be:
a. Rights of Migrants and Nomads to Food Security Entitlements especially ICDS for migrant children
b. Ensuring Food Entitlements of specific Vulnerable Groups
c. Universalisation of PDS and challenging replacement of PDS by Cash Transfers
d. Elimination of Discrimination against Dalits and Muslims in Mid Day Meal and ICDS Programmes in terms of both treatment of children as well as in employment.
e. Challenging Privatisation / Corporatisation of ICDS / MDM / PDS
f. Claim work and wages under MGNREGA through providing facilitation for application process and as well as facilitating formation of Workers’ Unions.
g. Coverage of Millets under PDS as a support to sustainable agriculture. Working for building Right to Procurement as an Entitlement
h. Working towards Right to Old Age Pensions and Maternity Benefits

2. **Focus on traditional Rights Based Work** and apart from Entitlements work strengthen the resource rights work on which there has been significant success on the ground. Building coordinated action can enhance work on the ground while national partnerships with organisations working on Forest Rights, PESA and Dalit Land Rights can provide support to grassroots work and also enhance national level advocacy work.
   a. RevisitingRejected and Partly accepted claims
   b. Community Rights under FRA
c. Claiming Rights to Non Timber Forest Produce as well as Grazing & Fodder Rights
d. Challenging JFM and diversion of Forest Land for non-forest use as well as for compulsory plantation of industrial species. Claiming Right to Choice of Trees in Community Forests.
e. Working for Progressive Land Reforms and challenging alienation of Dalit and Tribal Land
f. Women’s Rights on Land Ownership
g. Rights of Sharecroppers to tenure, and public support for inputs, marketing, and compensation in case of disasters.
h. Working on rights over water and water bodies
   i. Developing Sustainable Livelihoods based on Land, Forest, and Water. Leveraging MGNREGA for such initiatives.

3. **Continue to have the three pronged approach to Food Security** with Entitlements, Resource Rights and development of Sustainable Livelihoods. Grassroots work on Sustainable Livelihoods may not entirely fit in to the traditional Rights Based Approach. This will need to be acknowledged and addressed. At the same time national and international work around the issue of promoting and protecting sustainable livelihoods will require rights based focus. Thus enhancing and strengthening work around sustainable livelihoods will require a mix of both the rights based approach as well as a capacity building approach. A key challenge that needs to be addressed is gaining the mind space of the grassroots worker who has over the last few years found greater encouragement and recognition for rights based work while capacity / model building work around sustainable / alternate livelihoods has remained less acknowledged and less encouraged.
   a. Connecting to National level networks and campaigns on Sustainable Livelihoods
   b. Capacity Building of Grassroots Workers in Technical Aspects of Sustainable Livelihoods: e.g. on issues such as management of Seed Banks
c. Critical Collaboration with Government Extension System to influence it towards Sustainable Livelihoods
d. Work on Budget Analysis and influencing towards greater public investment supporting sustainable livelihoods: e.g. small scale irrigation as opposed to large dams, cash subsidies
e. Facilitating formation of Cooperatives towards strengthening marketing and value addition
f. Work towards integration of Millets in to PDS and the procurement system.
g. National and International Work to challenge the negative impact of pro-corporate trade laws that impact local and sustainable livelihoods by exposing them to unfair competition.
h. Integrate work on Climate Change with work on Food Rights and Sustainable livelihoods.

Cross-cutting Action

Whichever way DCA shapes its Food Security Programme, there are some issues that will need to be addressed better in the next phase. Some of those are as follows:

1. Strengthening Gram Sabhas in PESA and non-PESA areas: Whether it’s the issue of entitlements, or resource rights or sustainable agriculture the Gram Sabha will need to play a critical role to ensure that the changes are pro-people. In many places the grassroots work has thrown up leaders from among the marginalised communities who have become PRI members and PRI Leaders at various levels. Once elected they are almost completely on their own and receive very little support from the grassroots interventions. Continued support on issues such as how they can improve the Entitlements (especially MGNREGS) and how they can wrest greater control over commons.

2. Women’s Rights: There is already significant work on this in terms of working towards women’s right to land. Key experiences from among the partners (e.g. Disha’s work on supporting women who are branded as witches, SPREAD’s work on women’s organisations that have taken control of cashew plantations and improved marketing of cashew and minor forest produce, LWSIT’s support to women’s movements against alcohol shops, SURE’s work with ICDS workers) can be used as the base to build coordinated action at the grassroots level.

3. Coverage of Muslims: While the Food Security Programme did identify Muslims as a marginalised community, it took almost no grassroots action on the food rights of Muslims. One reason behind this was the exclusive choice of Odisha and Rajasthan with the former having negligible Muslim population. Another important factor was the exclusive focus on rural areas where Muslims seem to be better off on the average compared to Dalits and Tribals while in urban areas they are at the same level and in fact often even more marginalised. Like the Dalits, Muslim children and women suffer from discrimination in MDM and ICDS programmes. Muslims are much more dependent on artisanal livelihoods that are under serious threat due to changes in trade laws and tariffs. However at the National level significant work has been done on studying and analysing the state of deprivation of Muslims (especially on the basis of reviewing the programmes initiated under recommendation of the Sachar Committee.)

4. Coverage of Dalits in Tribal Areas: Another group which is often being marginalised is Dalits in Tribal areas. This is extremely significant in areas of intervention in Odisha where there is increasing communalisation of tribals. Typically the forces of communalisation seek to create rift and discord between tribals and dalits. They exaggerate the grievances of Tribals against Dalits while trying to cover up more serious expropriation that Tribals face at the hands of Non-Dalits. This is a critical area not only in terms of the possibility of leaving out many extremely poor and marginalised people, but also in terms of not being able to address the growing probability of violence against Dalits, fostered by the upper castes but using the tribals as medium.
5. Grassroots Workers not only implementers but also influencers of national work: In the current work on entitlements as well as resource rights grassroots level workers typically work as implementer of ideas rather than initiators. This has limited identification of issues from grassroots experiences. For instance even within entitlements work, issues around reduction in kerosene quota, higher quotas for APL households as compared to BPL households, loss due to elderly people having Annapurna card instead of BPL card etc. were identified by the grassroots staff but remained unaddressed at the national level as they did not feel empowered for initiating advocacy work. But at their own level they could facilitate elderly Annapurna entitlement holders to give up their Annapurna cards and obtain BPL /APL Cards instead which gave them more benefit. Second generation issues in FRA such as actual demarcation of land, what to do about the commercial plantations already on community forest land were also identified at the grassroots level but did not become nationally recognised issues. The spread of hybrid maize and chemical herbicides being promoted under SRI were also recognised by grassroots staff but not at the national level. Providing grassroots workers an opportunity to influence overall work and overall agenda would make the programme more dynamic.

6. Urban Presence: Given the changing nature of poverty in India, it’s important to engage with the urban poor. This becomes even more vital as it provides better opportunities to work with the poorest and most vulnerable Muslim communities. While entitlement work is immediately useful in the urban context, the issue of sustainable artisanal livelihoods is also a possible area of action. Of course there is the issue of whether or not there are adequate resources to open two fronts (both rural as well as urban) of work.

7. Budget and Policy – Analysis & Influencing: The most successful areas of action in the Food Security Programme have been around Food entitlements. That is also the area on which there was maximum support to national level policy analysis and influencing work. Given that learning its apparent that other aspects of the Food Security Programme can gain a lot from national and international level budget and policy analysis. One way towards this is to partner with professional budget analysis groups. But increasingly there is more and more need for specialised analysis from the perspective of specific issues and communities. For instance mainstream budget analysis groups may just look at overall budget on Agriculture, while a budget and policy analysis group working dedicatedly on the issue of agriculture would look at whether more money is being allocated to mechanised-chemical intensive-corporate agriculture or to traditional-sustainable-small scale agriculture. Identifying and strengthening such groups to enhance their analysis and influencing work as well as connecting them to grassroots partners could be a major contribution to the overall progress of food security issues in India.

**Inter-Programme and Inter-Partner Collaborations**

DCA has different programmes in India. There are separate staff for separate programmes and the partners are also mostly different. But these different programmes have large areas of complementarities and intersections. Given this there is much greater need for greater interaction between partners across different programmes. In the current system, the only way partners are expected to come together is through the national platform meetings which are programme specific. Collaborative work could be initiated and enhanced through partners in the same geographies meeting more frequently. As of now there is no periodic interaction between DCA partners in a given state or even a given district. This has restricted possibilities of collaboration. It’s clear that if partners in the same programme and within the same district and state meet frequently and formally, it will lead to improvement in programme quality.
But even when the partners are from different programmes, such meetings can lead to solidarity action as well as mutual learning. For instance interactions between partners working on peace and secularism and partners working on food security would have led to greater reach of the food rights programme to the minority communities. It would also have helped the food security partners to identify the communalisation of the communities they are working with – something that was so clearly visible in Odisha - and collaborate to challenge such communalisation. It would have built understanding on the necessity of maintaining secular character of office spaces, in terms of which there was great variation among different Food Security Partners – with some partner offices being rather full of religious imagery from a single religion.

Careful scheduling of partners platforms could create opportunities for partners from different programmes to meet together for some time while coming to take part in their respective programme platform meetings. For instance, if all the programme platform meetings are located in one venue and at the same time, at least once a year, there could be a lot of inter-programme learning.

**Learning and Collaborating at the South Asia Level**

The DCA Office in Delhi is responsible for DCA’s work in South Asia. This provides definite opportunities for inter-country learning. In the past decade or so entitlement related work has taken a quantum jump in India. At the same time in terms of actual improvement in nutrition levels and reduction in incidence of infant mortality and percentage of underweight children Bangladesh has made much more rapid progress. There are significant experiences in Nepal on Community Forestry while India has had a path-breaking legislation in the shape of the Forest Rights Act. Free Trade agreements and changes in trade laws and tariff rates have impacted farmers and artisans in all countries in South Asia. Minority religious identity of one country is the majority religious identity of another country and civil society activists in all South Asian countries are grappling with growing communalisation of society and polity. Climate Change threatens natural resource based livelihoods in all these countries. Paddy cultivation, common to both India and Bangladesh, is coming under serious challenge from climate change as well as those seeking to lay disproportionate blame for methane emissions on paddy cultivation in South Asia. The methods promoted to reduce emissions range from SRI that can be practiced through organic methods to chemical intensive SRI method to attempts to promote Hybrid and GM Rice. Bio-fuel plantations are taking over common lands in all South Asian countries. All this and more require greater collaboration among organisations and activists working for food security based on people’s rights over natural resources and through the promotion and strengthening of sustainable livelihoods. DCA could play a significant role in bringing this about.

**Recommendations**

**Partner Communities**

1. DCA’s work has been principally with ST and SC Communities. It could seek to address Muslims as well.
2. Within Partner communities focus on the most marginalised should continue.

**Geographies**

1. DCA’s work in the three states that it is currently working on has achieved synergies and critical mass. Continuing in these areas will provide greater success in the coming phase of work.
2. To address the issue of Muslims it may need to move in to new regions, either within these three states or in a new state.
3. Some amount of grassroots work with Urban communities will help in replicating the success of DCA’s work, especially in entitlements and build understanding on the Rural-Urban connections.
Work

1. Given its widespread success on Entitlements, it’s something that DCA should probably continue in to the next phase both in terms of strengthening work in old geographies/communities as well as reaching out to new geographies/communities. New entitlements such as entitlement to Universal Old Age Pension and rights to Minimum Support Prices for Agricultural as well as Forest Produce should probably be added to the entitlement work.

2. Resource Rights Work, especially Forest Rights Work, seems to be on the verge of a great leap forward. DCA should probably continue its engagement to be part of this action as well as to strengthen it through both rights assertion.

3. Sustainable Livelihoods is a weak area of work and should probably be worked on only in case DCA wants it to be a major area of work and is able to allocate large resources around Agriculture, Forest and Livestock based livelihoods.

4. Cross-cutting issues should incorporate, apart from other themes that are already part of the current programme, addressing the continuing right wing attempts at communalisation of Tribal Communities.

Approach

1. The current partnership model with strong networking among partners who are part of one programme is already giving rich dividends. This should be continued.

2. Networking among partners working in the same geographies, but in different programmes, seems to be rather weak. Creating Geographical Partner Meetings/Processes in addition to Programme Platform Meetings/Processes will be able to unleash the powers of collaborative action between programmes. This will help strengthen work of cross-cutting focus as well as help in getting greater leverage and influence over state and national level processes.
Annexure I: Field Visits and Partner Interactions

- Society to Uplift Rural economy (SURE): Barmer District, Rajasthan
- Church’s Auxiliary for Social Action (CASA) and IDEA: Barmer District Rajasthan
- Sahanivasa: Chittoor District, Andhra Pradesh
- Lutheran World Service India Trust (LWSIT): Kalahandi District, Odisha
- Society for Promoting Rural Education and Development (SPREAD): Koraput District, Odisha
- Meeting with Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) Team
- Meeting with Centre for Equity Studies (CES) Representative
- Meeting with RTF Advisor, Odisha

Annexure II: Participants at Platform Meeting

- ASTHA
- LWSIT
- Advisor’s Secretariat Andhra Pradesh
- Advisor’s Secretariat Odisha
- DISHA
- RCDC
- MGSA
- Sahanivasa
- SPREAD
- CASA (along with IDEA)
- SURE
### Annexure III: Partner Feedback on Financial System

The following questionnaire was used to elicit feedback on financial system

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback on Financial Systems and Accountability</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) The Organization received allocated DCA Funds</td>
<td>6) The Funds received from DCA were designed to be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) On Time</td>
<td>a) Focused in too small an area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) After Negligible Delay</td>
<td>b) Spread over a reasonable area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) After Significant Delay</td>
<td>c) Spread too thin over a very large area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) After Long Delay</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2) The Financial Systems were</td>
<td>7) The Funding Ratios (between Staff / Overheads / Programmes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Easy to follow and comply</td>
<td>a) Was designed to provide adequate person-power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Difficult to follow and Comply</td>
<td>b) Was not designed to provide adequate person-power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Training and handholding support on DCA’s Financial Systems</td>
<td>8) The Funding Ratios (between Staff / Overheads / Programmes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Was provided adequately to Partner Finance Staff</td>
<td>a) Was designed to provide adequate Overheads Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Was not provided adequately to Partner Finance Staff</td>
<td>b) Was not designed to provide adequate Overhead Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) In case of need for quick changes to budget, amendments were:</td>
<td>9) For any financial Clarification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Simple and Quick</td>
<td>a) DCA Team was easily available and prompt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Simple but Time Consuming</td>
<td>b) DCA Team was easily available but not prompt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Difficult and Time Consuming</td>
<td>c) DCA Team was not easily available and not prompt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Financial Accounts of the Organisation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Is regularly audited by DCA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Is seldom audited by DCA</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Based on the feedback received it can be said that most partners were satisfied with the financial systems of DCA. The system allowed flexibility to partners and required changes in the budget could be made without much difficulty even if it took some time. There were of course issues about overall budget cuts, but that is something that is more an issue of resource availability rather than an issue of financial systems. However there were also some suggestions for improvement.

- In case of two separate initiatives being part of one funding agreement, lack of success in one affected the continuance of the other even if it was highly successful.
- The Procurement policy is not geared towards small town / rural settings and assumes metropolitan markets to be available at such locations.
- Funding ratios was not designed to provide adequate overheads support. This is something that is increasingly becoming an issue as rights based work requires relatively higher level of staff and overhead costs. *(italics mine)*
- Financial Training required for Partner Staff
Annexure IV: Sharing with DCA Team

Achievements
- Committed Service Delivery Workers have turned in to Passionate Entitlements Workers
- Committed Social Rights Activists have also taken an interest in grounding Entitlements
- Focus on Marginalised Groups and Women
- High Level of Food Entitlements Grounding
- As a network made National Contribution to Entitlements related understanding and Work at both grassroots and policy level
- Land Rights and Forest Rights Work Taken up
- Individual Land Claims Realised – but mostly as a result of group action and in groups
- Sustainable Livelihoods work Initiated

Key Points on RTF
- Food Entitlement related work seemed to be meticulously base-lined and documented in most places. Team members had a good understanding.
- Resource (Land and Forest) Rights related work was meticulously base-lined in some projects. Team members also had good understanding in some projects.
- Sustainable Livelihoods related work mostly did not get base-lined and team members’ understanding was typically less than adequate
- Food Entitlement related work received extensive support in terms of state level and national networking from within the DCA Network
- Land and Forest Rights related work received support from state and national campaigns.
- Sustainable Livelihoods related work did not get connected to larger state /national networking. Strength of Partners not identified.

Key Points on related Social Justice
- Meticulous Identification of Socially Marginalised Groups
- Most work with Socially Marginalised Groups
- Focus on Women’s Rights including Land Rights
- Issues such as Alcohol addressed due to and through women’s Agency and Initiative
- Untouchability in Meals Programmes
- Increasing Communalisation of Societies and deepening Conflicts ignored
- Loss of Tribal and Dalit Cultures due to creeping expansion of mainstream dominant religions
- Religious Minority identified but not addressed
- Occupational Groups not addressed due to Ethnicity Focus
- The Communalisation of Office Spaces

Dilemmas
- The FCRA Dilemma
- The Organic versus Extension Dilemma
- Market versus Local (Market or Corporate)
- The Plantation Dilemma
- The Labour – Farmer (NREGA) Dilemma (e.g. Farmers’ Suicides)
- Defining The Right Holder
- Defining the Duty Bearer

Second Generation Issues in Entitlements
- Procurement as a Right - MSP
- Local PDS
- Identifying and addressing Local / State Level Issues (e.g. Kerosene, Wheat, Annapurna)
- Old Age and other Pensions
- Untouchability
Second Generation Issues in FRA
- Demarcation, especially of Community Forests
- Claiming and making use of Rights to NTFPs
- Role of Government in NTFP Markets
- Claiming Rights to Harvest Trees and Plant new Trees
- Value Addition

Critical Areas for future Work
- PRI Members emerging from our work (Staff / CBOs)
- Dalit Cooks / ICDS Workers
- Work on NTFP / MFP
- New Anganwadi Centres
- Challenging Entitlement Patterns
- Eggs in MDM
- MGNREGS Grounding: 30 new Works / Distance / Payment
- Soil Nutrients
- Improved Variety of Seeds
- Hybrid Maize
- BPL Survey – SECC 2011
- Tree Rights
- Corporate Onslaughts on rural Livelihoods
- Markets and Price Support
- Cooperatives
**Annexure V: Acronyms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AWC</td>
<td>Angan Wadi Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASA</td>
<td>Churches Auxiliary for Social Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCA</td>
<td>Dan Church Aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FCRA</td>
<td>Foreign Contribution regulation Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRA</td>
<td>Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GM</td>
<td>Genetically Modified</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICDS</td>
<td>Integrated Child Development Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LWSIT</td>
<td>Lutheran World Service India Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDM</td>
<td>Mid Day Meal Scheme (for primary school children)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGNREGA</td>
<td>Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTR</td>
<td>Mid Term Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDS</td>
<td>Public Distribution System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PESA</td>
<td>Panchayatiraj, Extension to Scheduled Areas Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RKVY</td>
<td>Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RTF</td>
<td>Right to Food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPREAD</td>
<td>Society for Promoting Rural Education and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRI</td>
<td>System of Rice Intensification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SURE</td>
<td>Society to Uplift Rural Economy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Agricultural Workers Unions in Chittoor have fought both Economic as well as Social Discrimination against the Dalits

Grain Banks, Seed Banks and Vermin Composting are strengthening the Small & Marginal Farmers against Exploitative Agribusiness

Ensuring MGNREGA and PDS helps increase bargaining power of Agricultural Workers while Women’s Enterprises and Small Livestock enhance the Food and Livelihood Security of Poor Households

Learning from the Food Rights Programme (2006-2012) PT3 Programme Evaluation Report, of Dan Church Aid by ActionAid India, R-7, Hauz Khas Enclave, New Delhi 110016