

# Communitizing Development

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AN OVERVIEW OF 25 YEARS OF  
UNENDING JOURNEY

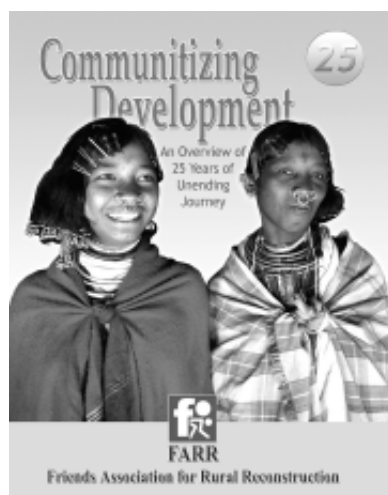
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UNENDING JOURNEY

Published by

**FARR**

**Friends Association for  
Rural Reconstruction**

AT-PO: BISWONATHPUR,  
KALAHANDI 766 020,  
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## ROUNDING UP ...

**T**he inception of FARR was caused by an interaction graduating into inspiration, and experience growing into commitment, by a group of well-qualified friends in the early nineteen eighties. It wanted to set a living example by deliberately choosing such interior and tribal pockets of Orissa, as were literally dreaded for entry by even the most robust of dare-devil social activists of the state. The élan of its commitment still shines like a steady flame.

From awareness building, community mobilization, food security, fighting starvation and hunger, health and informal education taken up on a 'developmental mode' to a paradigm shift on to a 'right based' approach in the context of human rights, marks only its true coming of age in a span of 25 years of passionate involvement on issues and events encompassing all elemental aspects of lives of the tribal, dalit, the poorest of the poor, women, child labour and their social system.

When the knowledgeable themselves spare no harsh words in deprecating the relative failure of government -- the principal service provider -- in its failure at addressing even rudimentary problems like food, potable water, shelter, primary education, health and security for more than 60% of its populace, I would be less than fare in commenting on a purely physical and quantitative profile of FARR. Lest memory or trickery play with the facts, it must be acknowledged and recorded for the worth it is, that FARR's pioneering activities in the field of food security, land rights; women's empowerment through anti liquor campaign and leadership building, micro-finance through SHGs, innovative child labour rehabilitation, migration and promoting tribal women's mobilization, doubtless stand out as sign-posts in the history of social movement in Orissa. As a friend and critical observer who has stayed the course with them, I only can say, bravo. But there are promises to keep and miles to go before indulging in any facile self-felicitation. Let this occasion be a moment of self-renewal.

**Jatindra Kumar Mund**  
PRESIDENT

# An unending journey ...



A sense of pride prevails on me when I recall the days 25 years back, that made a difficult journey quite adventurous. Those were the days when FARR was little concerned about the difficulties that sometimes stood as barriers in our traverse through the hinterlands devoid of any kind of development in true sense of the term. We looked far(r) ahead; a distant horizon looked 'not-so-far'; a dream for success hunted every now and then, day and night. The zeal for success, bound by commitment, and shaped by belongingness – the other name for team work, pushed us ahead through various and varieties of issue-based actions, day in and day after.

The **philosophy** of FARR, that we still follow with diligence, that the **poor people are able to solve their problems by themselves through their organization**, was the **mantra** for us to work with them, and for their strength. That was the spirit to fuel our drive with smile and gratification.

Year after year we have taken up programs and projects, many times as movements, on education, health, livelihood, management of natural resources, women's empowerment, human rights and so on, with full support of the community, from planning to implementation, a glimpse of which you would find in this document. This document may not be telling you the full story of success, but certainly it will give you feeling that our **mantra** works. And the journey continues ...

While it is very gratifying to share the success, may be an ounce of it, with friends, guides, partners and promoters, it is never complete without thanking them from the core of our hearts, and offering them tons of love. A very big THANK YOU!

*Pramila Swain*

**Pramila Swain**  
SECRETARY

# About Us

## GENESIS

A dedicated team of social workers having rich experience of the OXFAM West Orissa Program, where they worked together, decided in 1983 to form an association, and it was named as **F**riends **A**ssociation for **R**ural **R**econstruction, FARR in short.

The regions, the nature of work and the mode of application of FARR contains within it the inspiration of its founding friends which they had garnered in course of their debuts as volunteers in various organizations working in the most remote pockets and with the worst marginalized people like the tribal, dalits, and the poorest of the poor of Orissa. This explains why it chose to base itself at Biswonathpur in Kalahandi, Muniguda in Koraput and Hindol in Dhenkanal districts, in its initial foray into social service. The issues that it took up included meeting hunger and fighting starvation, providing food security, mobilizing community on their rights, informal and primary education, and primary health.

The array of activities being carried out today range from community mobilization, food security, education, human resource development, micro-finance, women's empowerment, HIV-AIDS education, and Natural Resource Management.

Today, FARR is a rural development organization, working with poor and marginalized communities of Orissa, in 12 districts of Orissa towards making sustainable improvements in the quality of life of the rural poor.



## VISION

**FARR visualizes a society of material fulfillment with highest intellectual attainment and peace.**

## MISSION

**To provide equal opportunity and to empower the women and poor people in particular, in order to initiate and strengthen a value-based, people-centered developmental process which will be ecologically, socially and economically sustainable.**

## OBJECTIVES

- To facilitate people's movement and enable them to fight against social injustice, exploitation and all forms of oppression prevailing in the society for their socio-economic development, and build a healthy and just society.
- To organize poor people to be aware of government schemes and privileges meant for them; to ascertain their rights and assist the people and government for effective implementation of these schemes.



- To build capacities of workers, CBOs, and development organizations working in rural areas.
- To take up relief activities at the time of natural calamities, disaster and emergency situations with the help of government and non-governmental organizations.
- To network with various social action groups, NGOs, and individuals at local, regional, national and international levels to protect and promote human rights and women's rights.
- To lobby and advocate on issues affecting to the poor and influence policies, programs and interpretation of legislations at various levels.
- To promote and conduct research study and documentation of various problems and issues for the benefit of planners, development activist and all other concerns.
- To protect and promote human rights and women's rights.

## LEGAL STATUS

FARR has been registered under the Societies Registration Act of 1860.

Also registered under Income Tax Act, Section 12A; and Foreign Contribution Regulation Act in the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.

## GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE

Six project offices of FARR look after developmental activities of the organization spread over nine most backward districts of Orissa in the South and Western regions, viz., Kalahandi, Nawapara, Rayagada, Kandhamal, Nayagarh, Dhenkanal, Angul, Sundargarh, Bolangir; and after the Super Cyclone of 1999, it extended its activities to three more districts: Keonjhar, Kendrapara and Jagatsinghpur.

During past 25 years of development interventions in the project areas FARR has built up strong rapport with the community in more than 2,000 neglected and outreach villages. In these villages, the main issues addressed by FARR correspond to hunger and livelihood, human rights, rights of the indigenous people over natural resources, rights of women, marketing of forest and agricultural produces; rights of children, labour migration and trafficking.



## INFRASTRUCTURE AND ASSETS

FARR is equipped with assets and infrastructure in five of its permanent project offices up to a minimum required level. All project offices have office buildings, training halls, jeeps (in four places), motor cycles, and computers. All branches have staffs varying from 15 to 50 in the organizational management level. They carry with

them a substantial period of work experience corresponding to project management, training and capacity development, finance management, community mobilization, monitoring and evaluation, and advocacy. Majority of the FARR's human resource have completed more than 12 years of continuous service with full commitment and dedication. Frequently organized staff development programs has helped not only building capacity but retaining them.

## POLICY OF FARR

<b>Gender</b>	Equal rights for women and men, political empowerment of women, elimination of violence against women.
<b>Environment</b>	Sustainable programs for regeneration and preservation of nature from pollution and destruction.
<b>Poor people</b>	Programs are designed to benefit the poorest and marginalized more on long term basis.
<b>Tribal</b>	Rights of tribal people over natural resources like forest, water and land.
<b>Dalits and Minorities</b>	Promoting dalits and minorities for organizational work for their own development.
<b>Advocacy</b>	Issue-based networking for human rights and public advocacy.
<b>Health</b>	Alternative health care for benefiting the rural mass.
<b>Education</b>	Awareness, non-formal, child labour, girl child education, women's literacy.
<b>Agriculture</b>	Promotion of natural farming practices.

## GOVERNANCE

FARR is self-governed by its seven member Governing Body, as per the provisos made in its Memorandum and Articles of the Association. The Secretary of the organization functions as the chief functionary. The General Body is the apex body and it elects members to the Governing Body (GB) from among its members.

Policy decisions are taken in a participatory style. Based on the information and responses received from the grassroot, the GB provides policy guidelines to Project

Coordinators who are functional heads of the project branches. A Project Coordinator with a team of core staff plans, implements and monitors each project. However, all project coordinators are answerable to the GB.

Each Project Branch independently plans and acts accordingly to the needs and demands of the people of its region. The GB, however, approves and finalizes the plan of action of the projects.

Projects keep relation with the donor agencies and take approval of the GB for mobilizing grants/funding. Project Branches play vital roles for implementation of the

programs. The project coordinators are solely responsible for the smooth operation and management of the planned actions. They recruit project staff and equip them with necessary training on the basic approach of FARR to work with the community.

Village level plans are made with the consultation and participation of respective group, in order to ensure their own initiatives, capabilities for management, and providing benefits to the poorest of the poor; and establishing a base for group action for further growth of people's organization, and enabling them to fight against exploitation.



## APPROACH & STRATEGY

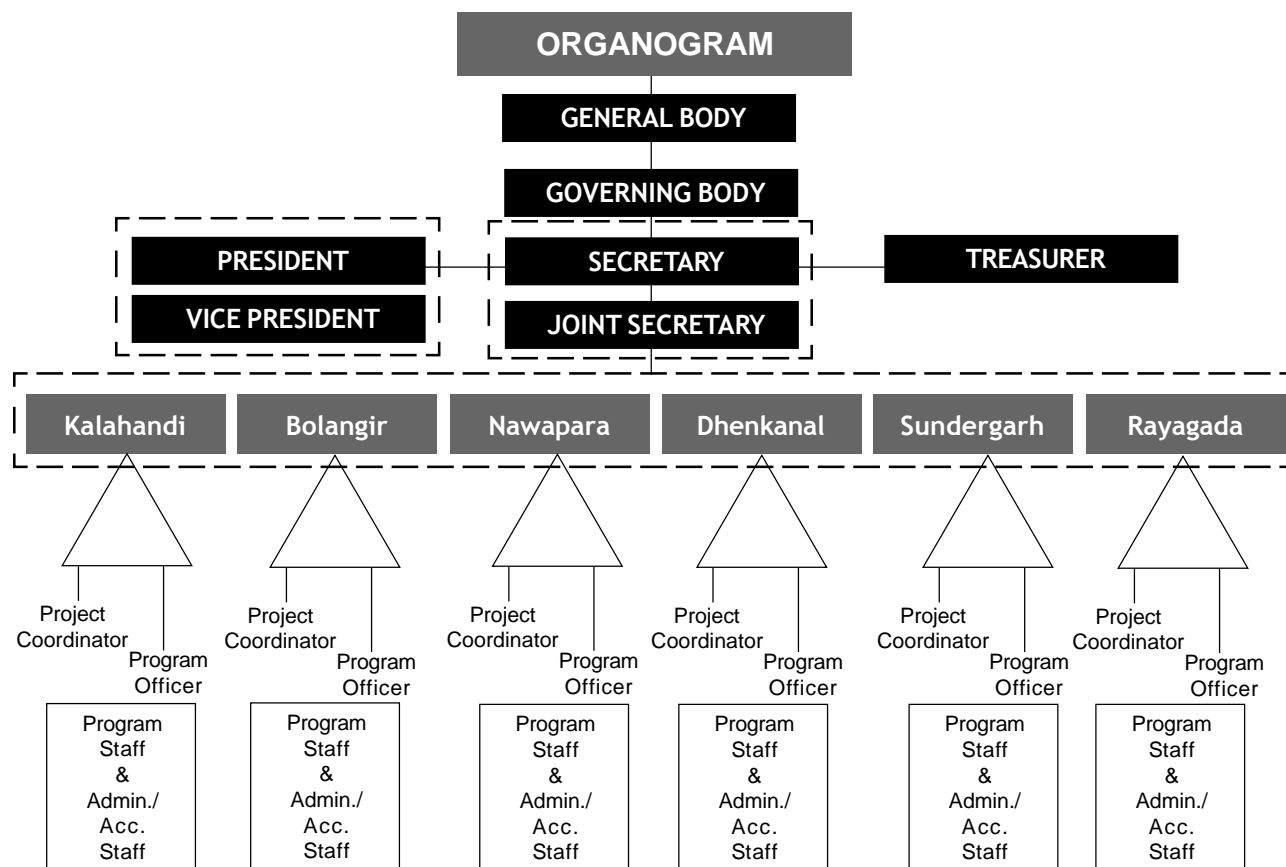
To bring about a liberation movement as a paradigm for change, a **four point criteria** has been envisaged.

1. FARR will initiate its action in and around poorest of the poor in a village.
2. Identify community initiatives so as to solve their own problems; strengthen and consolidate them to lead community development programs.
3. The intervention of FARR should be meticulously planned to have no permanent dependency of the community on the organization or outside agencies.
4. Any project or program through which FARR renders support need to be well within the comprehension and competence of the people.



## COMPOSITION OF PRESENT GOVERNING BODY

Sl. No	Name	Position	Education	Experience in Development work	Other Experience
1	Mr. Jatindra Kumar Munda	President	Post graduate	15 Year	Educationist
2	Mr Kartikeswar Samal	Vice-President	Graduate	30 Years	Worked with National Institute of Bank Management
3	Mrs. Pramila Swain	Secretary	Graduate	40 Years	Training at Netherlands on Human right and USA on advocacy issues several other training at national and international levels.
4	Miss Geetarani Sahu	Joint- secretary	Post graduate	15 Years	Working on women's issues
5	Mr Bimal Panda	Treasurer	Post Graduate	20 Years	Working on HIV/AIDS issues
6	Miss Rojalin Bhuian	Member	Graduate	12 Years	Micro Finance, Entrepreneurship
7	Mr Bibhuti Bhusan Samal	Member	Graduate	18 Years	Water & Sanitation



# Each project branch has a Project Management Committee, comprising senior project staff, headed by Project Coordinator.



# Focal Areas of Action

FARR's major actions have been grouped under **six focal areas**: Livelihood and Food Security, Natural Resource Management, Women's Empowerment, Human Resource Development, Human Rights, Health and Sanitation, and Awareness and Education.

## LIVELIHOOD AND FOOD SECURITY

- Support for agricultural development, such as land development, small water-body construction...
- Support for land-based activities like vegetable cultivation, natural farming...
- Support for small business, grain bank, animal husbandry...



## NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

- Forest protection and preservation...
- Backyard plantation...
- Environment Awareness and Advocacy
- Community forest management...
- Promotion of NTFP collection, value addition and marketing...

## WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT



- Strengthening women's organizations...
- Promotion of Self Help Groups...
- Micro-financing...
- Gender Sensitization...
- Campaigning to end violence against women...

## HEALTH AND SANITATION



- Promotion of indigenous system of health care and herbal medicines...
- Health, Hygiene and Sanitation awareness and education...
- Promotion of herbal gardens
- Mother and Child Care...
- Household latrines...

## EDUCATION AND AWARENESS



- Organized awareness program on various issues and through need-based strategies...
- Nonformal education for school dropouts and adults...
- Child Labour Schools...
- Women's Literacy...
- Residential school for girls...

## HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

- Perspective building...
- Training and capacity building at village and panchayat levels...
- Strengthening PRIs...
- Entrepreneurship development...
- Leadership development...



## HUMAN RIGHTS

- Human Rights Education and Training ...
- Investigation and Fact Finding ...
- Legal Aid and Litigation ...
- Monitoring and Documentation of Human Rights Violations ...
- Working on thematic areas ...

# LIVELIHOOD AND FOOD SECURITY

Livelihood and Food Security programs of FARR essentially promote appropriate and ecologically conducive mechanisms for increasing food production and ensure food security. The organization facilitates community efforts towards generation of surplus from farm, off-farm, and non-farm activities through sustainable use of resources; and develops their capacities to deal with markets. It also facilitates processes for enhancing capacity of natural and human resources to enable livelihood security.

## Land Development

Development of cultivable land through levelling, bunding and digging of farm ponds have been promoted by FARR in all the covered districts since the beginning of its operation. The tribal and dalits in remote villages have been traditionally practising slash and burn cultivation. Diverting them to good agricultural and food production practices, required a priority attention on land preparation. Over the years, more than 950 villages have been assisted to take up land development work to improve agricultural productivity.

## Water Harvesting Structures

In past 20 years, FARR has guided and supported villagers in all project locations to plan and implement watershed projects through community action. More than



100,000 farmers in these districts have been encouraged to undertake multiple cropping due to availability of water for irrigation. The water bodies have also motivated villagers at several places to carry out highly profitable pisciculture, to supplement their income. In places FARR has also supported farmers with Diesel Pump Sets to irrigate their lands. In each of the places a group of farmers have taken up the



responsibility to help the entire village cultivable land to enjoy the facility. It is most satisfying for FARR to have helped the community to construct water bodies at 255 villages.

## Promotion of Natural Farming

Even though the tribal people were successfully diverted away from traditional slash and burn cultivation practice, FARR has very carefully instilled in them the practice of natural farming, not the so called modern farming practices using chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

Promotion of natural farming required providing the farmers with the knowledge and skill for **Biomass Compost** preparation, preparation of **Biopesticide**, and creation of **Seed/Grain Bank** in villages. **Hands-on-training**, exposure visits and monetary assistance under various programs have achieved visible success in making people adopt natural farming practices by informed choice.

FARR also supported communities in agricultural activities including cultivation of **vegetables**, **kitchen garden** promotion, growing of **fruit bearing trees** such as orange, mango, papaya and



banana through field training, credit support and accessing appropriate seeds, etc. In villages where settled agriculture and horticulture have been successful, there is reduced dependence on slash and burn cultivation for food requirements and improvement in the quality of the environment. Similarly, **Seed**

**Banks** have been opened in 700 villages.



## MARKET PROMOTION

Making an improvement in people's capacity to produce rice, pulses, vegetables and cash crops like sugarcane, the need for marketing of surplus raised a problem. To resolve, training on entrepreneurship, provision of working capital for trading, opening of Hat Counters, and establishment of 'Commerce House' were some of the ideas successfully tried out. Local entrepreneurs from the villages were encouraged to promote marketing of agricultural and horticultural produces.



## Livestock Promotion

For landless families, livestock such as goats and cows have been provided to get rid of hunger and starvation. More than 1700 number of families across six project branches of FARR have been assisted with livestock during past 20 years.

## Other Complimentary Actions

Creation of **Thrift & Credit Societies** in large number of villages have been a silver line of success in respect of livelihood promotion. This has very effectively

promoted small business, home-based production of garments, khalileaf plates, and rearing of livestock.

Similarly, **micro-finance** through SHGs has also encouraged and enabled many families to undertake IG activities of their own choice, which has significantly helped reduction in incidences of hunger and starvation.

FARR also has implemented a few other specific need-based action (e.g, Cash for Work) to complement other broad-based livelihood and food security programs of its own, or implemented by others, including the government. And the process continues to resolve livelihood issues of people as per their specific needs.

### Livelihood Support in Coastal Orissa

Post Super Cyclone of 1999, FARR decided to work for the people in the coastal Orissa (Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur, and Keonjhar) as a humanitarian response to the devastation caused by the natural disaster of very high magnitude. Initially it engaged itself in relief operation for 21870 families in these three districts. Soon it initiated rehabilitation activities. Using its expertise in agricultural promotion, it opened 12 Agricultural Support Centers that assisted people with information and resources to recover land-based activities – 93 water pumps, 73 harvesting machines were provided. Seed support was given to 127 village (more than 15,000 families).

FARR Distributed coconut saplings to 9,060 families, small livestock to around 1,540 landless families, and fishnets to over 513 families whose main stake was fishing. Similarly 47 marginal farmers were supplied with manually operated pedal pumps to start vegetable cultivation. Seed Banks were established in 117 villages, and seeds and saplings were distributed to the needy to start farming immediately in 127 villages (14,500 families).

Water body construction, tank, canal, well, etc. were done through cash for work in 125 villages. Construction of tube well and platforms was also done. House construction support to 572 families in Keonjhar was provided. During 2002 flood 2,500 families were supported for food and temporary shelter in Kendrapara district. In 2006 flood 2,000 families were supported with warm cloth, temporary shelter and mosquitoes net, and seed for winter crop.

### PREPARATION OF “PEOPLE’S PLAN”

To enable demand side articulation by the poor to ensure effective implementation of various development schemes of the government, FARR has completed micro planning in more than 200 villages through people’s participation. Recently it undertook micro-planning in 30 villages of Rayagada district, particularly in respect of effective implementation of NREG scheme.



With the objectives of preparing village development plans for these 30 villages (for 1,524 families), improving learning, management system and processes for NREGA, and to advocate for including the village plans in the district plan, the process of micro-planning was completed in four and half months time.

The process focused on collective actions involving the community groups, SHGs, PRIs, and CBOs towards:

- Improved learning and knowledge management systems and processes for service delivery sectors, specifically on NREGA,
- Organizing discussions on People's Planning and dialogue between government and community on NREGA.
- Reviewing and improving communication and information products with an explicit aim to build capacity of PRIs, Women's Groups and local CBOs and to influence district, state and national policy processes.

# NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Land, water and forests are the three most important resources for the people living in rural and tribal areas. Intensive work has been carried out by FARR towards improving environmental resistance to drought through effective land, water and forest management practices. Communities have been made aware to recognize the fact that sustainability of natural resources will also determine food security and sustainable livelihoods for themselves.

## Awareness on Biodiversity

Biodiversity is a measure of the relative diversity among organisms present in different ecosystems. Southern and Western Orissa regions in particular carry a great wealth of biological diversity in their

forests. FARR has been making concerted efforts to the communities aware about the significance of forest for their livelihood.

Through awareness camps and campaigns, using cultural troupes (e.g., street plays), FARR has been able to mobilize communities in undertaking sustainable management of natural resources through a variety of interventions in promoting community forestry and horticulture, land and water conservation and development.

FARR motivates people to collectively manage their forests (Community Forest Management). **Bana Suraksha Samities** have also been formed in almost every village of its operational area across all six project branches.



Advocacy initiatives have been taken up by the organization at the state level to influence conducive policy framework for the development of people living inside and close to the forest.

## Preservation and Protection of Forest

All project branches of FARR have taken initiatives to preserve and protect the forest. For example, in Dhenkanal district, thousands of cashew and tamrind species have been planted on the barren lands close to depleted forest. Similarly 100,000 seedlings have been distributed to villagers for plantation in forests. Soil and Water conservation works have also been successfully undertake in



Sundergarh district with community participation.

Communities have been motivated to regenerate common and private wastelands by growing trees for fuel, fruit, fodder and timber and also develop horticulture patches.

A massive **pada yatra** from Dandakaranya to Gandhamardan by 40 persons was organized in 1992 on forest, land and environment issues, covering Koraput, Rayagada, Kalahandi, Bolangir, Sambalpur and Baragarh districts. People in large number participated in this march on their own, in their respective districts.

## Herbal Plantation

Yet another successful program of FARR is promotion of Herbal Plantation and preparation of herbal medicines to promote indigenous health care practices. Villagers have not only been motivated to plant herbs, shrubs and creepers of medicinal plants, but have been guided to use compost, vermi-compost, bio-fertilizers, and bio-pesticides.

## Baidya Sangh

In Rayagada district a special effort was made to organize a collective of traditional healers (Baidyas) and encourage them to revive their age-old herbal medicine practice. Nearly 100 baidyas are smoothly running their "Sangh" with proper harmony and carrying out herbal practice.



## Collection and Marketing of NTFPs

Tribal people largely depend upon minor forest produces. Even though they have the rights over non timber forest produces, they often do not have access to proper marketing of the items they collect from forest. Taking a need-salient approach, FARR has organized a number of workshops to improve upon market access. As a result, more than 1,000 families and 250 SHGs are currently engaged in marketing of forest produces to sustain their livelihood.



## Participation of the Young People

In the pursuits of natural resource management, the involvement of young people is praiseworthy. Influenced by FARR's awareness building efforts, a large number of village youth, particularly school and college students have taken initiatives to organize campaigns on environmental protection. For

example, in Bolangir district, young people have organized a cycle rally; and school students of all project locations have led the national environmental campaign year after year.

Women's SHGs too have taken up the issue and have organized village meetings for past several years.



# WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

Women's rights and issues have always been a subject of serious concern to development practitioners. Women's concerns have received tremendous attention in the planning circle and in wide intellectual discussions and forums at national and global platforms. Traditional patriarchal norms in Indian society have relegated women to secondary status within the household and workplace. This drastically affects women's health, financial status, education, and political involvement. Women are frequently malnourished since women typically are the last member of a household to eat and the last to receive medical attention. Additionally, only 54% of Indian women are literate as compared to 76% of men. Women also suffer from unfair and biased inheritance and divorce laws. These laws prevent women from accumulating substantial financial assets, making it difficult for women to establish their own security and autonomy. The situation of women in rural and tribal communities much precarious than what was described above.



FARR is highly gender sensitive; and from its very inception 25 years back, it has been planning and implementing a variety of need-salient programs for Empowerment of rural and tribal Women.

## Promotion of Women's Self Help Groups

As a starting point in the journey towards women's empowerment, a situational analysis of women's concern was carried out through structured household surveys; and thorough need analysis is done to prepare an effective operational strategy. The strategy adopts a sequence of actions as essential steps to actualize a comprehensive plan. These chain of actions include Awareness Generation, formation of Self Help Groups (SHGs),

Leadership Training, Capacity Building for undertaking IG activities, formation of Mahila Mahasangh and Women's Cooperatives, and the process continues to strengthen these groups, in order that they not only achieve economic empowerment, but also become social leaders/change agents through resolving lot many issues including violence against women and trafficking.





## Skill Training on IG Activities

All WSHGs have been exposed to skill training on several avocations like tailoring, low-cost nutritive food production, processing of NTFPs, Management of Livestock, Garment Making and managing Small Business. The content of the training included management of their micro enterprises, thrift and credit aspects, accounts keeping, and so on. At times hands on training was given for a longer period based on the level of acquisition of competency required to run the chosen IG activity.



## Leadership Building

To build leadership and capacity of women's groups, cooperatives, and especially the key actors in the field of women's rights and economic justice FARR has been organizing leadership training programs since past 12 years. The focus of the training lies on 'equality', 'inclusion'. More than 10,000 women have also participated in both structured and unstructured leadership training camps across all project locations of the organization.

FARR's strategy lies in the conversion of indifferent social bystanders into active citizens with control over their own governance. By engaging community powers and through participatory group assessment exercises, FARR has succeeded empowering women to take leadership in preparing their



own development plans and conduct social audits in the villages.

Another remarkable aspect of "women's Leadership Building" is the women representatives in the local self governance. Quite a large number of women have got elected to PRI bodies, winning from both reserved and unreserved seats.

The process of leadership building has enabled the PRI women leaders to raise voice and take action towards resolving issues of their sisters in particular, and making

them participate actively in development planning and decision making (e.g. Palli Sabha and Gram Sabha).



## FARR as MEMBER CONVENOR OF NAWO

The National Alliance of Women (NAWO) was established in 1995 to carry forward the 'Beijing Commitments' in India through networking with grassroot women's organizations. The Orissa Chapter of NAWO started from 1996 with FARR becoming its member convenor.



The Orissa Chapter engages itself in conducting lobby and advocacy works mainly through campaigns, capacity building, perspective building, information dissemination, research studies, networking, and handling hard cases of violation of women's rights.



## Micro Finance and Women's Cooperatives

In the background of FARR's experience, the task of making the women the focal point of the process of change of their family and their community has been seriously taken up. In the context of the above, specific activity like micro finance through women's Cooperatives and Mahashakti Foundation have been given thrust with an objective to make the women financially self reliant. Micro-finance activities particularly for the marginalized women sections of the society has been taken up by FARR as one of the core sectors. The drive aims to organize

poor women of the village through formation of SHGs to evolve a mechanism for economic self-reliance. It also tries to address other larger issues, which have a vital and collateral bearing on their social life. Under this drive, various initiatives like group formation, savings mobilization, capacity building of the members, cluster formation, cooperatives (federation) building, loan disbursement, and linkage with other financial institution as well as networking are usually taken up. As of date we have formed 1,116 SHGs, 20 clusters, 5 cooperatives, 1 federation with a membership of 11,740 at M. Rampur, Narla, Karlamunda and Lanjigarh blocks of Kalahandi. The

clusters and the federation have been regularly taking up various issues concerning the women's issues like the evil of liquor, lower wages, problems of drinking water, bigamy, and development works by the government.

Some of the roles of special financial features introduced in the functioning of the federation have helped in making it function as something of an alternative banking system for the poor women. This strong step towards poverty alleviation will no doubt have a good impact in their life and livelihood. It is hoped that women will be able to establish a "gender just society" through their empowerment.

## Combating Social Issues

Besides women's literacy programs FARR has conducted Legal Literacy Camps to enable women to combat social issues like negligence, violence, and trafficking. Women themselves have organized village level meetings to make the community sensitive to women's issues; block and district level workshop to voice concerns and demand for governmental interventions to stop trafficking and exclusion of women from developmental schemes and programs. Lobby and advocacy tools have proved effective and are a part of the continuing process to give women their rights.

In the recent past many women have been saved from trafficking through group action.

### INNOVATIVE 'HAT' COUNTER

The Jamuli and Desuli area of M. Rampur is one of the most inaccessible pockets covering 26 tribal villages with a population of 2491 in 554 households, all of whom belong to BPL category and happen to be the poorest of the poor. For the people of this area where bare survival itself is at stake, it is preposterous to think of any savings on their part. However, against such a daunting odd, FARR ventured through a unique method to raise savings among these people. In April 2001, an instant Saving and Credit SHG Counter was floated at MOHONGIRI weekly market place. The weekly market (Hat) is the very hub of all forms of economic even some social activities and a circuit for information exchange as well as a joint for building relation.

The selling and buying of various products and commodities necessitate exchange of money. The members of SHGs are instantaneously approached at the very centre of their commercial transaction to part with a very small portion of their earnings towards saving. This opportunity of interaction with people is also utilized for enlightening them with fresh information and mobilizing them on many social issues like anti liquor, remunerative price for their merchandise, just price for NTFP and agro produce, along with proper maintenance of record. This unique "HAT " SHG counter has offered an alternative for the poorest of the poor to avail benefits of micro-finance and this bring about a breakthrough life style .



## HEALTH AND SANITATION

Despite India's several growth-orientated policies, the widening economic, regional and gender disparities are posing challenges for the health sector. About 75% of health infrastructure, medical manpower and other health resources are concentrated in urban areas where 27% of the population live. Contagious, infectious and waterborne diseases such as diarrhoea, amoebiasis, typhoid, infectious hepatitis, worm infestations, measles, malaria, tuberculosis, whooping cough, respiratory infections, pneumonia and reproductive tract infections dominate the morbidity pattern, especially in rural and tribal areas.

While FARR's interest lies with rural and tribal communities, it has to assume increasingly significant role in providing health care and bringing about positive changes in health seeking behaviour of the people, especially women and adolescent girls.

### Health Camps

Year after year, in all its operational areas, FARR has been organizing frequent health check-up camps in order to provide basic services at the community level, and also to make people aware about good health practices. More than 900 health camps in the past has provided free check-up of illness, and free medicines for cure; but the focus was always on "preventive and promotive" aspects rather than simple curative care. Majority of



health camps have focused on special population segments such as mother and child. Special Camps have also been organized to check spread of diseases like malaria and diarrhoea. There were also special 'eye camps' to help the aged persons. However, in most of the health camps, hygiene, sanitation and nutrition education has been imparted to the participants. Health camps have been opportunities to refer chronic patients to hospitals.

### Campaigns and Training

Massive campaigns have been organized villages during past 15 years not only to make people aware about the cause and effect of diseases but also to sensitize them on their own responsibility in prevention and control of diseases. Campaigns included wall writing of health messages, cultural shows, and rallies made by villagers, especially youth and children.

Special health related training programs have also been organized



for children and youth, such as yoga nutrition, herbal medicine, and nature cure. In a few training programs, village women have been exposed to the goodness of Ayurveda and indigenous practices. Eligible couples have also been trained on birth spacing aspects, and use of contraceptives. Skills of Traditional Birth Attendants have been upgraded through special training on safe delivery using five cleans.

**A notable feature of health intervention is involvement of father in early child health care.**



### **Naturopathy and Solar Therapy**

FARR has taken initiatives to promote naturopathy and Solar therapy in communities by involving experts, and encouraging villagers to adopt the practice.

### **Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion**

Water, sanitation and personal hygiene are the most troublesome and neglected aspects in rural and tribal communities. Water contamination remains as the main cause for diarrhoea in children. In order to ensure that villagers get safe drinking water, FARR has undertaken renovation of dug wells and tube wells, by cleaning, disinfecting, and building concrete platforms and drains.

Special training programs have been organized to educate people on water handling, personal hygiene and sanitation habits.

In more than 300 villages in Rayagada district village health plans have already been prepared.

### **Campaign on School Health and Sanitation**

FARR has given priority attention to children so far as its health and sanitation programs are concerned. It has organized a number of campaigns for and by school children. School campaigns typically

include a rally, debate/essay and painting competition events; and expert advises are made available to students during the campaign days. In past nine years more than 20,000 school children have participated in their own campaigns. These campaigns have also attracted other children of the villages, and indirectly have helped in enrolment drive.

### **Panchayat Health Committee**

It is basically a committee of all stakeholders whose main objective is to make the village in particular and the Panchayat in general feel responsible about the issue of health for its people. The other members like the local health

department personnel, ICDS, the CBOs, TBAs the SHG leaders, Peer educators along with the Sarpanch, are there to extend all necessary practical services, technical knowledge and up-to-date information to raise people's awareness on the importance of health, prevention and cure of diseases.

The committee serves as the link between people and service providers, especially the primary health care system of the government.



## Programs on HIV-AIDS

India has the second largest HIV positive population after South Africa. Without appropriate action and given the risk factors in India, some predict the infection levels will rise as high as 20 to 25 million by 2010, or equal to the combined population of London, New York and Tokyo. This is the time to act!

Over one-third of all reported AIDS cases in our country occur among young people in the age group of 15 to 24 years. At the same time, they are also our greatest hope for changing the course of the AIDS epidemic. To do so, young people need to have the competencies to navigate daily life situations and engage in productive activities.

FARR has adopted a peer-based approach to educate the young on sexual health and HIV prevention programs for youth. Engaging them in the awareness campaigns, and simulating peer interactions on sexual health, STI, HIV-AIDS, encouraging results have been achieved.

## Research on Intergenerational Gap

Some recent projects have shown that working on changing the norms and beliefs of adults in the community facilitates work with youth. However, program strategies remain 'ad-hoc' possibly because of a lack of clear and agreed upon set of conditions to suggest the need for as well as inform the design and implementation of an intergenerational approach.

Therefore FARR conducted a research study to address this gap by documenting existing pattern of and barriers to intergenerational communication on sexuality and HIV/AIDS, as well as to determine the felt needs of both parents and young people.



## PEER EDUCATION AND YOUTH RESOURCE CENTER

FARR has prepared a cadre of 1200 peer educators in the age group of 13 - 25 in Kalahandi and Nawapara districts. The objective behind targeting the youth group are in the backdrop of the findings of the survey (UNFPA-2004) that 50% HIV/AIDS affected people belong to this category and if adequate awareness and preventive drive is not targeted at them, then it is estimated that by the end of 2010, their number may increase to 21.5 million.

Some of the factual indicators like a popular misconception on AIDS is mostly confined to free society and not found among conservative communities, that 20% of the youth indulge in sexual relations before marriage, physical changes during adolescence and the resultant mental instability leading to loss of reliance on parents for guidance in this regard and seeking wrong advice from equals and indulging in sex as a diversion, have made us concentrate on 3 aspects of their life, such as: deficiency in information and service to the youth; their financial condition; and gender discrimination in the society.

FARR started the peer educators drive by forming and strengthening Balaka/Balika mandals and Youth Resource Centre to provide right information on sex and sexuality, HIV/AIDS, care and support, reproductive health care, general hygiene and adolescent period, counselling, health facilities for the youth, skill development through vocational training and extending employment generation for the youth who were likely to migrate away.



## EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

One of the most effective places to ensure a child's right to education is the school. All children need the intellectual development, motivation and skills that equip them for successful work and lifelong learning; but unfortunately in remote villages in India, as elsewhere, as high as 50% of children don't have access to schools; and often poverty has pushed them out of school. In regions where FARR works, this has been happening for very many other compelling reasons.

### Child Right Promotion

To build an enabling environment children, community awareness building has been considered as the first step for FARR. Having understood that the low figures of children's enrolment in schools, high rate of dropout, and poor quality of education are the products of lack of community involvement, parental negligence, and children being forced to work, a process of community sensitization and building parental motivation was planned and carried out using cultural shows as the best-suited tools. In every project branches of FARR Cultural Troupes have been organized (many members of such troupes are children) to stage shows like street plays, dance and ballet, to make the community aware about the rights of the child. At present there are three such troupes active and every year each troupe carries out 3 to 4 campaigns to reach out to parents.



### Special Schools

To attract and pull children to education, 17 special schools have been created by FARR, especially for those children who have been pushed to work. These schools adopt innovative teaching-learning practices to make it joyful for the children who have been deprived an early start in formal schools, run by government. The teachers/facilitators of these schools are

periodically exposed to training and capacity improvement programs, organized on specific themes like preparation of low-cost teaching aids, joyful learning practices, rights of children, and so on, so as to help them retain the enrolled children for a longer period and mainstream them easily. These special schools also provide education on environment and ecology, as this bears greater significance to the lives of tribal children in particular.



### Fares and Conventions

As a part of FARR's continuous effort on Child Right Promotion, it organizes Fares and Conventions each year, where children in large numbers gather to express their inner talents through participation in creative competitions (painting, debate, song, dance, etc.) and interact among themselves their joys and agonies. These are the events that help FARR to understand the needs and plights of children, besides promoting their rights.



### Child Labour Schools

To bring back children from work to study FARR has been running child labour schools at 15 different places.

These children are provided with basis education and are prepared to be mainstreamed as soon as possible. School Commi-ttees, including parents and community leaders, have been organized to oversee the manage-ment of these institutions.

So far as large as 1700 children have been mainstreamed. Those children who are found to be ineligible to get in to formal schools, for overage or other reasons are motivated to undergo vocational education organized by FARR.

### Library Facilities and Learning Resources

Library facilities and Learning Resource Centers have been created to facilitate children and adolescents to have better access to learning resources.

The libraries have good number of books, periodicals and other learning materials relevant for children.

The learning resource centers provide visual aids to both teachers and students. Most of these visual materials have been created by teachers and students; innovatively prepared using locally available materials.

*Ms. Babita receiving exceptional achievement award from His Excellency the Vice President of India. She was a child labour, and with help of FARR she was mainstreamed at Navodaya Vidyalay.*

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## Vocational Education

For children and adolescents, who are unable to continue their studies longer in formal schools, vocational education is an alternative means to acquire skills and competencies to be productive citizens.

Vocational training programs have been organized by FARR on the basis of the feasibility on self-employment after completion of the course. The past training programs have imparted skills for preparation of bamboo baskets, palm mats, and other items of handicraft.

## Residential Schools for Girls

Many children, especially girls, would not be free from household work and find time to attend schools. Their parents are not even in position to feed them properly. For these compelling reasons, FARR has opened residential schools for girls in its operational areas. Here, enrolled girls get proper food, clothing, health care, and proper environment to study well. These schools, besides nurturing young minds, prepare them for direct enrolment in formal schools later.

## Special Literacy Campaign

Eradication of illiteracy has been one of the major national concerns of India. Literacy is an effective instrument for social and economic development and national integration. But unfortunately, in rural and tribal regions the level of literacy of the population is yet to cross 50% level; the level of female literacy at places as minimum as 10% or less.

The Total Literacy Campaigns (TLC) model is now accepted as the dominant strategy for eradication of adult illiteracy. These campaigns are area-specific, time-bound, volunteer-based, cost-effective and outcome-oriented. The thrust is on attainment of functional literacy through prescribed norms of literacy and numeracy. The learner is the focal point in the entire process and measurement of learning outcome is continuous, informal, participative and non-threatening.



FARR's focus in its TLC process has been women's literacy; and the best aspect of it is that the process is carried forward in campaign mode by the women themselves. In all its project branches, and also in Jagatsinghpur district, FARR has successfully undertaken special literacy campaign to make 65,000 adult women (15-35 years of age) literate in 42 gram panchayats. These literate women have also been supported to organize large number of campaigns to motivate their sisters to become literate and join the campaign.

# HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

NGOs contribute a lot towards the development of people finding philosophical and pragmatic answers to issues about human development in and through their operations. In contrast to 'charity' the concept of 'development' has helped NGOs achieve their developmental objectives. And this philosophy of development has worked only when it has encompassed the recipients, development workers and the stakeholders.

Thus for FARR human resource development is a critical area, and it believes in capacity building of its field functionaries and the stakeholders of all its field operations on a continuous basis.

## Staff Capacity Building

Projects vary in nature, therefore thorough understanding of the concepts of the project and its components becomes an essential first step for the project staff responsible to implement it. As a matter of policy, FARR ensures through orientation and structured capacity building trainings that all concerned staff are equipped with understanding and skill to run the program in the field. For example, when a group of field functionaries are assigned to implement a watershed project, their expertise of organizing SHGs earlier do not help them much. Therefore, a set of new training needs arise corresponding to organizing stakeholders, mobilizing community



support, undertaking bund construction work, book keeping, arranging technical support, and managing the project work. Eventually a need-based training program is designed and conducted. To name a few such training

program, FARR has organized a number of structured events for its functionaries on SHG formation, rehabilitation and relief work, health and sanitation work, management information system, micro planning, networking, advocacy, etc..





and training events, which are organized for the capacity improvement stakeholders.

## Training and Exposure of Stakeholders

An effective process of implementation of community programs depends the capacity of stakeholders to participate and take action. Contextually the HRD concept here assumes high significance.

FARR's action in this regard for its own staff, community leaders, and other social activists includes training on 'enabling men and women to tackle their own problems', skill improvement on management natural resources, SHG management, accessing credit from Banks, etc.

Besides, Mass Meetings on various socio-economic issues, Workshops, Conventions, Rallies, Campaigns and exposure trips have been organized for community leaders and groups to achieve greater awareness, knowledge and skill. Community groups are also involved in the advocacy initiatives of FARR so as to assume a sense of "inclusion".

## Exposures

To promote efficiency in the program staff FARR always encourages them to participate in meetings, seminars and workshops conducted at different project locations of its own, and by others at state and national levels. Many of the staff members of FARR have had opportunities to visit project sites across the country and participate at international levels. To name a few, staff exposure has been given to Beijing World March 2000, Asia Social Forum, World Social Forum, Asia General Assembly Forum, Global Convention on Peace and Non-violence, CEDAW, etc.



process of interactive learning has reinforced greater skill acquisition that it was otherwise gained.

This type of experience also comes from the community level meetings

## Interactive Learning

To further build capacities of the staff, monthly meetings and periodical review meetings are organized by FARR as a self help exercise to learn from each others. It is mandatory for each project manager, or coordinator, to call for such meetings not only for appraisal of progress but for sharing experiences and learning innovative ideas which are frequently applied to resolve field level issues. Experience has shown that the



# HUMAN RIGHTS

The role and instrumentality of **Human Rights** being used as a task for ensuring greater social justice cannot be overemphasized. Following this realization, the government of India also constituted its own NHRC and state level HRCs to provide more content to it. It is not a mere coincidence that FARR, in course of its engagement on various issues and activities with the people taking up on a developmental mode, could comprehend that in spite of best of its application also the quantity of social justice and its reach to the people remained far from satisfactory. This experience compelled it to embody the ethos of human rights planked on a right-based approach to people's issues. Right to life and livelihood apart, the concept of socio-economic and cultural rights took the centrestage. Members of the PRI, civil societies, school and college students and all comers were enlightened on this aspect through workshops, campaign, seminars, rallies, meetings, conferences and campaigns.

## Human Rights Education and Training

FARR is taking a lead role in popularizing human right issue in schools and collages. Regular discussions and workshops are organized for students. By this the students find the way to change themselves and realize the social responsibility early. The universal declaration of human right was discussed and analyzed. Paralegal



training of youth club members, collage students, and the mass are organized where the issues of the area and responsibility of the people are discussed.

## Investigation and Fact Finding

Fact finding team visit internally displaced person in different development project areas and try to highlight the issues after proper

investigation. When ever they get any news of violation of rights they support men and women to get justice. Regular counseling at district level and area level with the support of local civil society organizations are being organized.

## Holding Issues

Some of the pressing issues like land rights of the tribal, atrocities on women, internal displacement of





people in general and the tribal in particular, are highlighted. Para-legal training, legal support and counseling are extended to selected and needy parties and individuals. Land scam in Rayagada district is one of the examples. More than 12,000 acres of land was *benami* transfer to Andhra people for tobacco cultivation. FARR mobilized local people, civil society members, Media and political leaders on the issue and could be able to restore back the land to the tribals. Several women's rights violation cases have been identified and fought to get justice.

### Legal Aid and Litigation

FARR has organized Legal aid camps for people on land rights, forest rights at the grassroot and supported the people to get their right over land.

Ms Sabita Majhi, a tribal girl, was gang raped by the CRPF at Chandrapur block, and the issue was handled by FARR with other NGOs and networks. The lady got support from Govt. Likewise, many women cases have been handled and support provided for legal justice. FARR with support of women's Cell of Kalahandi has handled many other cases and supported them.

## Monitoring and Documentation of Human Rights Violations

FARR has been documenting through its fact finding team cases of human rights violation at different place on displacement, trafficking, women atrocity, tribal killing and child right, and monitoring the cases.

### Working on thematic areas

Issues such as: Right to land, ESCR rights of people, Right to Food and water, Gender, Corruption and Governance, Migration, Trafficking, Women's Rights, Rights of a child, and Dalits Rights, HIV/AIDS, Bonded

Child Labour, are some of thematic areas which FARR focuses on. It adopts need based strategies to fight issues with the people across areas.

### Campaigning

FARR has organized and joined other networks for an effective campaign for rights of the people. FARR is also a member in several State and National level networks campaigning for tribal people and forest dwellers' rights -- one of the initiators and leading members on anti liquor campaign since 1996; two child norm and women joint-patta rights campaign is still continuing. FARR works with Jainaseni, one of the networks of Orissa working on Trafficking and migration issue, and campaigning



## SESSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

APRIL 2, 1997

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for marriage registration, WeCan Orissa to end violence against women, which has organized several programs on violence and trafficking. FARR is one of the National EC members of World March of Women and campaigning to reduce poverty and eliminate violence on women. Also campaigning on tribal, land, forest and eviction issue.

### Networking

FARR launched a network called HURINEO to provide substance to its drive. Training, conference and fact finding work were done through this. FARR is the founder member



of NAWO. From 1993 FARR took the lead role to take the women right issue to the international agenda. More than 12 workshops and conferences on women's issue were organized to take the issues to Beijing. Eastern region tribal conference was also organized to take the tribal women issue to

Beijing and put the agenda in BFA. It also happens to be one of the founding members of a national organization called PLD (Partners for Law in Development) of New Delhi, to take up several issues of human rights violation and support to lawyers to work for people.

FARR is closely working on human right issue with National Center for Advocacy study and Forum Asia as a GB member. It is also a member and founder of many district and state level networks; some of them are: Lokadhikar Samukhya, Sangram, Orissa Adibasi Munch, Sahati, ODM, etc. FARR is member and working with Janavikas Andolan on people's right. South Asia tribal conference was organized at Toronto, Bihar and FARR was one of the organizers to take the tribal agenda forward.

### Linkage building

FARR, being a member of several district and state level committees formed by the government, is trying its best to sensitize and mobilize the most of the existing governmental supports for the people in this regard. FARR is also raising people's awareness on their rights and demand services and benefits provided by the government.



# Key Achievements

- **Community ownership:** 22 Community based organizations promoted by FARR at grassroot level.
- **Mobilized tribal people:** 12,000 acres of land given back to tribal people, which was illegally taken from them.
- **Established market linkages:** Formation of Dongaria Kondh Women's Cooperatives.
- **Promotion of Bhungia tribal:** (A primitive tribe in Sunabeda plateau of Kalahandi) Education of Girl Children, and mainstreaming them .
- **Committed cadre of volunteers** at all levels, and staffs to work for the poorest community in remote pockets.
- More than **2000 villages** in the process of development and have prepared themselves to be **self reliant** with the support of FARR.
- More than **2500 child labour** have left the job, and regularly going for study.
- More than **1200 youth** at the age group of 13 -25 have been trained as **peer educators** to work as change makers on health trend for **HIV-AIDS** awareness.
- Sixteen **youth resources centers** established at village level for information sharing .
- Reaching poorest of the poor through **SHG hat counter** in remote area of Kalahandi district (Mohangiri).
- **Grain and seed bank** established in more than **714 village** to reduce starvation and hunger.
- Five **SHG cooperatives** at various places.
- **Mahasakti Foundation** was established as a micro-finance institution.
- **Panchayat Health Committee** as the link for promoting primary health services of the government.
- **Household latrine** promoted for 7109 families.
- Total of **24,774** members organized through **2,276** SHGs who are managing their own **fund of Rs,1,80,86000/** and building contact with outside world on social issues too.
- **Watershed** activities like land development in **450 villages** and **water body** construction in **175 villages**, and **agro forestry** and plantation in **560 villages** done to improve food security.
- **Relief and rehabilitation** support provided to more than **24,000 families**.
- **Micro planning** document available at **200 villages** for future perspective plan.
- Established as a **network organization** and moving forward joining hands with other like-minded organization
- As large as **58,000 women** were made **literate** through a special literacy program and **3,300 volunteers** trained on women literacy..