

## **Minimizing the adverse of impact of distress migration**

### **District study of Nayagarh in western Odisha by Madhyam Foundation**

Mr. Subrat Kumar Singhdeo, Executive Director,

Madhyam Foundation, N-3 / 202, IRC village,



Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar, Odisha

#### **District Profile**

Nayagarh district was carved as a separate district in 1992 from the erstwhile Puri in western Odisha. Out of the total geographical area of 3,491 sq. kilometers, about 46% is covered with forests. These forests are a natural habitat for tribal populations. Forest areas also tend to be backward and beyond reach of the administration. One such area is the Ranpur block which happens to be the most backward community block. Madhyam Foundation has focused its synergies in addressing the impacts of distress migration from this area. The region is inhabited by Scheduled castes and Scheduled tribes comprising 8.85% and 5.4% of the total (Census 2011 figures).

The main economic activity of Nayagarh remains to be agriculture. However, the share of irrigated land out of the total cultivable area of 18,336 hectares is only 32% (Agricultural census 2010-11). Irrigation facilities are negligible, mostly in the form of lift irrigation. Lack of farm productivity and low agricultural income has caused people to migrate to distant locations. Degradation of forests along with loss of entitlement is the major push factors for internal migration.

The region (Ranpur block) poses a healthy literacy rate of 74.51% (85.18% for male; 63.79% for female) according to Census 2011 although the literacy levels among the tribals are very low. Farming communities are relocating in search of better livelihood opportunities driven by distress at the place of origin. This distress migration phenomenon has become common in western Odisha where, even though cultivable area holds the potential, lack of irrigation and other facilities have led to out-migration, to escape out of poverty. The urge to undertake migration has been the important source of income generation along with traditional activities like agriculture, animal husbandry, daily wages and services.

## **About the organization**

The Madhyam Foundation, based in Bhubaneswar, the capital of the Indian State of Orissa (in eastern India), was established in July 2004.

The Foundation aims for a a society where economic development is truly people centered, sustainable and equitable so that no citizen however deprived is oriented and sensitized to assert his/her economic rights and entitlements on an empowered mode. The organisation provides quality capacity building services to MFI's and Self Help Promoting Institutions through participatory training, participatory action research, organizational development interventions and civic engagements in a research-oriented and focused manner.

It has achieved livelihood enhancement through the promotion of farm based & non-farm based activities. The organization has been actively involved in community empowerment through the promotion of micro enterprises. As a part of its implementation strategies, it has worked actively in empowerment of most marginalized sections of the society. Providing capacity building services to Micro-finance institutions and other Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) is a part of its allied activities in strengthening the network of development initiative.

## **Dealing with the issue of migration**

In addressing migration related problems, three major issues come to the fore. Firstly, there is a serious paucity of information about the movement and contribution of the migrants, Secondly, there is a need to provide variety of support services to migrants to minimize adverse impact of migration flow at the destination places and turn this into a viable economic opportunity. Thirdly, migrants go invisible from all enumeration and thus the problems faced by migrants go unnoticed at all policy levels. There is a need to identify their requirements and address them with proper mitigation strategies. Thus, there is a need to curb the negative externalities associated with the migration phenomena in the project localities through delivering an array of support services.

- Geographical coverage of the program: Madhyam Foundation works in total 35 gram panchayats in Ranpur block of Nayagarh district, with special focus on fourteen gram panchayats covering 101 villages.

- Population coverage : The following table outlines the migrant population profile as of 2010-11

**Gram Panchayat wise Migrant population in Ranpur Block, Dist- Nayagarh**

Sl. no.	G.P Name	Total Household	Migrant Households	Percent of migrants	Total nos. of Migrants
1	Balabhadrapur	1423	492	34.57	521
2	Bandhamunda	537	228	42.46	228
3	Baunsgada	998	450	45.09	511
4	Brajarajpur	949	382	40.25	475
5	Brundabanpur	580	332	57.24	347
6	Champagada	534	257	48.13	268
7	Champapedi	846	462	54.61	463
8	Chandpur	564	155	27.48	156
9	Damasahi	1021	295	28.89	311
10	Darpanarayanapur	1013	353	34.85	376
11	Gopalpur	1104	369	33.42	370
12	Gourangapur	748	482	26.44	517
13	Jankia	514	315	61.28	324
14	Kandapada	959	558	58.19	558
15	Kandhanayagarh	631	249	39.46	254
16	Kasanda	733	435	59.35	547
17	Kerandatangi	1018	367	36.05	373
18	Khairapalli	990	515	52.02	680
19	Khatia	820	460	56.10	506
20	Kulasar	535	225	42.06	330
21	Lodhachua	1100	550	50.00	682
22	Mahatpalla	805	457	56.77	471
23	Majhikhand	1072	503	46.92	529

24	Mayurjhalia	1270	498	39.21	506
25	Narasinghpur	946	297	31.40	328
26	Narendrapur	741	214	28.88	280
27	Patia	986	644	65.31	648
28	Pimpal	395	276	69.87	328
29	Raipada	497	223	44.87	280
30	RajRanpur	2040	325	15.93	648
31	Rajsunaskhala	2295	275	11.98	432
32	Rankadeuli	857	252	29.40	289
33	Surukabadi	505	287	56.83	414
34	Talakani	423	245	57.92	331
	<b>Total</b>	<b>30449</b>	<b>12427</b>	<b>40.81</b>	<b>13892</b>

**Activities undertaken under the migration project:**

This includes registration and issuing photo identity cards to migrant families, skill building initiatives for the migrant workers. The organization has also undertaken advocacy and engaging in policy dialogue with local government, district and state officials on highlighting the needs of the migrants, providing health services and linkages with Primary health centres (PHCs) at the destination sites, organizing a collective voice of the migrant communities and linking the migrant families with social welfare programs.

**Future activities to be undertaken from March 2012 to February 2014 as a part of this project-**

- ⌚ Registration of 6000 migrants
- ⌚ Issue of identity cards to those migrants
- ⌚ Conducting a study on incidence and nature of legal disputes arising in the due course of migration
- ⌚ Conducting a study on developing occupational profile of construction labourers, a major work activity of the migrants
- ⌚ Generating awareness on social security measures
- ⌚ Linking migrants with various social security schemes like, Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojna (RSBY), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNRES), Construction workers' Welfare Scheme, Kerala government labour welfare scheme, opening of 'no frill' saving accounts for migrants, linking with National Pension Scheme (NPS) etc.
- ⌚ Organizing State level Advocacy Workshop with other organizations for promoting a common voice for the migrants
- ⌚ Organizing employment counseling for migrant workers to focus on skill building
- ⌚ Conducting field visit to work sites at the destination sites in order to understand the grievances of the labourers
- ⌚ Legal clinics are organized to address the legal issues of migrant workers relating employment and welfare
- ⌚ Training on developing capacity building of migrant committee
- ⌚ Connecting with partner organizations at the destination states
- ⌚ Organizing health awareness camps at source and destinations
- ⌚ Capacity building and cross learning visit of project team
- ⌚ Skill up gradation training on different trades (plumbing and masonry) for migrants
- ⌚ Training on Financial Literacy along with financial inclusion

## Migration ID card-A Case study

Name of the Migrant : **Sri Dharanidhar Pradhan**

S/o : Narasingha

Pradhan

Age : 26 years

Education : 7th

Village : Jiripada,

Gram Panchayat : Patia

P.S. / Block : Ranpur

District :

Nayagarh

State : Odisha,

PIN no : 752026

MADHYAM FOUNDATION BHUBANESWAR, ODISHA	
<b>Identity Card</b>	
Registration No. : NGRP04696	
Name : <b>Dharanidhar Pradhan</b>	
Father's Name : Narasingh Pradhan	
Skill : Mason	
Education : 7th	
Date of Birth : 1988	
Work Place : Chennai (Tamil Nac )	
Vill : Jiripada	Panchayat : Patia
P.Samiti : Ranpur	District : Nayagarh
State : Odisha	Contact Number :
Issue Date : 21/05/2013	
<i>Subrat Kumar Singh</i> Executive Director Madhyam Foundation	
<b>In Case of emergency please contact :</b> Shramik Sahayata & Suchana Kendra At-Rajranpur(Samukasahi),Po-Rajranpur,Nayagarh-752026 0674-2557029,email:-madhyamfoundation@gmail.com	

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Dharanidhar Pradhan used to live with his nine other members of his family in Jiripada village and belongs to Scheduled Tribes. Agriculture is one of the main sources of livelihood for many families of the ST community. After completing education till secondary (7<sup>th</sup> Standard), he discontinued studies in favour of employment due to lack of financial assets in his household. To supplement his family income, which till then was managed by their father's meager earnings, he took up a job as unskilled labour in a construction site in the local area. After some initial days of working, he decided to migrate to Kerala through the network of labour contractor.

Dharanidhar Pradhan was issued the migrant ID card as a proof of his work status in the destination location. The major problem faced by migrants at the destination is the absence of any identity document that will ensure them access to legal help and/or ensure their dignity in foreign land. Language being the biggest barrier to overcome, there have been cases of migrant workers languishing in prisons on failing to produce proof of identity. The administration at the destination often rounds up migrants like Dharanidhar on suspicion and they, having no official proof of their identity find themselves without help at the destination places. Dharanidhar was also made to go through the experience. During a routine check of Identity of passengers, the RPF police held him in custody for inability to produce any ID. However, Madhyam

organization, as a part of migration project, had issued a work identity card to migrant workers like Dharanidhar. Upon verification of the same by the local police officials with the organization, he was released. There are scores of other stories where migrant workers, driven by financial distress end up in police custody with no help. Organizations like Madham, have on their part, been trying to connect with the concerned labour welfare board (Construction workers' welfare Board in this case), provide with legal counsel and ensure the rights of the migrants are secured.

Madhyam organization has been working extensively with the poor and the tribal population of western Odisha, specifically in Nayagarh district where the economic factors has led to large flows of young individuals to other distant locations. Distress migration can be defined as movement from one's usual place of residence which is undertaken in conditions where the individual and/or the family perceive that there are no options open to them to survive with dignity, except to migrate. Such distress is usually associated with extreme paucity of alternate economic options. As understood from the area profile of the district (Nayagarh), earning opportunities are limited due to low farm productivity, a result of limited irrigation facilities in the district (32% of the total cultivable area). A major proportion of the population belongs to the ST/SC section, further aggravating the poor economic condition.

Migration, whatever it may be caused by (push/pull) should be viewed and accepted as mean of economic opportunities and an accepted process of development. In order to reduce the adverse impacts of migration, the organization has acted upon strategies-rehabilitation, legal counseling, advocacy, enumeration to name a few. The above case study above illustrated one of the few success of such civil society organizations in their work on the issue of internal migration.