

**AGRICULTURE IN ORISSA:
ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN THE CONTEXT OF
GLOBALISATION AND TRADE: ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY (GRANITE
LAUNCH)**

October 12, 2007

Proceeding Report



Centre for Policy Research and Advocacy (CEPRA)
Bhubaneswar, Orissa

Introduction

Centre for Youth and Social Development (CYSD) organised a meeting on "*Agriculture in Orissa: Issues and Challenges in the Context of Globalisation and Trade*" in Bhubaneswar, on October 12, 2007. This meeting was held to discuss about the inception of GRANITE Phase-II programme and seek feedback from key stakeholders on the possible areas of the work of GRANITE programme. In this event, finding of a mapping study to understand the role of critical stakeholder in agricultural sectors in addressing the gaps was also shared. The workshop brought together nearly 30 participants from different fields on a common platform, like members of state-level farmers' federations, NGO representatives, government officials and corporate houses.

Objectives of the Workshop

The objectives of the workshop were to:

- share the initiatives on GRANITE in the state;
- ensure the coordination between different civil society actors on the Phase-II activities; and
- seek feedback from government officials, NGO representatives, academicians and media people for further enriching the draft report of Agriculture Stakeholder Mapping study.

Proceedings of the Workshop

The workshop began with a welcome note by **Gitanjali Jena**. Followed by the welcome note, she shared the objectives of the workshop and briefly informed the participants about GRANITE project and the mandates of CYSD.

The meeting progressed in three sequential sessions: (1) Amiya Behera, State Reference Group of GRANITE, sharing the findings of Agriculture Stakeholder Mapping Study; (2) Presentation on gap analysis in the Five-Year plan; targets and achievement in agriculture sector by Research team-CYSD; and (3) Insights and learning from GRANITE Phase 1 and future focus – Gitanjali Jena. These speakers set the stage, pointing the progress and gaps existing in the current agricultural scenario of the state.

At the outset, Amiya Behera was asked to give an overview of the role of key Stakeholder for Agricultural Programmes in Orissa in which he spoke about the mapping study and discussed following issues:

- The issues related to the agricultural scenario in Orissa as well as the reason of low productivity in the state were discussed.
- The thrust areas as well as the positive and negative implications of the State Agricultural Policy, 1996, and the National Agricultural Policy, 2000, were touched upon.



- The issues addressed were: Vision 2020, National Seed Policy 2002, National Horticultural Mission, Comprehensive Marine Fishery Policy 2004, State Reservoir Fishery Policy 2003, Orissa Livestock Sector Policy 2002 and the APMC Act 2005.
- Excluding the Government, other stakeholders have been playing very insignificant roles.
- Farmers' organisation has very little role in influencing the policy arena and play an insignificant role in marketing and other issues.

Inputs and Suggestions from the Participants

- Agriculture and issues of uneconomic holdings, Tenancy Act, etc.
- The farmers who have always been considered as beneficiaries should be treated as stakeholders. At the same time, though the enterprises have started, a huge challenge remains to facilitate leadership among the farmers.
- The study is deficient in exploring much on the marketing strategies, issues on land, crop insurance, credit facilities to the farmers and the dignity aspect of the farmers.
- Though farmers are the major stakeholders, still a lot of gaps are found in co-ordination and wages. Hence, it is quite essential to find out the means to bridge these gaps.
- Other problems faced by the farmers that need to be paid attention to are lack of proper processing units, lack of adequate storage facilities, lack of infrastructure in low developed districts and public-private partnership.

Reiterating the importance of agriculture in the State of Orissa, the budget team of CYSD made a presentation on the targets and achievement in the agriculture sector during the Five-Year Plan. The key findings shared are:

- There has been significant decline in the expenditure on agriculture and allied sector, from 3rd (17.80 percent) to 10th plan (1.97 percent).
- Across the plan periods, crop husbandry has been given the top most priority, whereas dairy development and food storage and warehousing has got least attention.
- Export potential: Total export value of agriculture and forest produce in the State was Rs 2758.75 lakhs in 1996-97, which declined to Rs 195 lakhs in 2004-05.
- Doubling the production of food grains: There has been an increment in the overall production of food grains from 8th plan (4777.83 thousand tonnes) to 9th plan (7536.19 thousand tonnes), but it could not be doubled as per the policy objectives. In the 10th plan period, it again fell to 7023 thousand tonnes.
- Following this informative presentation, Gitanjali Jena shared the initiative of GRANITE that has been taken by CYSD, both at its Phase I and Phase II in the State. In her deliberations, she explained the insights of Phase I and spoke about the focus area, objectives, strategies, proposed activity and expected outcome of the GRANITE Phase II (Annexure 1).



She also briefly highlighted how the GRANITE Phase II is different from Phase I in its policy focus approach. She said that the objective of GRANITE Phase II is not only to generate a more coherent civil society voice on economic governance in Orissa in the context of globalisation and its effect on the livelihood of the poor but also to ensure better economic literacy, particularly at the grass roots. In this direction, GRANITE is a significant step towards mainstreaming trade into the process of development. She also clarified that proper research on different agricultural products needs to be done to be included in the National Foreign Trade Policy.

In the meeting, Amiya Behera also discussed the role of the State in the trade policy formulation and the limitation of Orissa.

Suggestions

- The participants also agreed with the idea of undertaking product-specific research such as aromatic rice and spices like turmeric and ginger, as many of the tribal small and marginal farmers would benefit out of it.
- Disclosure of information on export potential product may be hijacked by corporate houses and they will start exploiting the primary producer.
- A number of IEC material needs to be generated on Foreign Trade and globalisation issues in agriculture.
- With this, the meeting came to an end and vote of thanks was delivered to all the participants present in the meeting and they were assured that the issues and concerns raised would be taken up in GRANITE Phase II.

