

# **WEALTH AND POWER AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PYRAMID**

**Programme Implementation Report of SAMPARK 2009 – 11**



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# WEALTH AND POWER AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PYRAMID

## Programme Implementation Report of SAMPARK 2009 – 11

### 1. Introduction

"We now have women's rule in our village", say Tejudibai and Nanibai who are ward members of Gamdi Panchayat in Petlawad Block of Jhabua district. They are elated over the fact that they were able to mobilise the other members of their women's mass organisation Saajha Manch (SM) to be present in large numbers in the Gram Sabha and pass a proposal, strengthening the woman Sarpanch Dhankibai's hand, for the construction of a village pond under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS). This has solved a long standing problem of water scarcity in their village by raising the water levels of the dug wells. This is something the men had not been able to do anything about. Lakshman Singh Munia the General Secretary of the Lok Jagriti Manch (LJM) which is the general mass organisation of the Bhil tribals of the area explains – "Petlawad comes under the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution and so the Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas (PESA) Act 1996 applies to this area. The Gram Sabha is supreme under the PESA Act and with 50% reservation for them in all elected posts, women can now easily govern the village if they organise themselves." This epitomises the work of SAMPARK the NGO that is providing direction and support to both the SM of the women and the LJM of the Bhil tribal community as a whole in Jhabua district.

### 2. Organisational Profile

SAMPARK was started in 1987 by a few social workers in Petlawad tehsil of Jhabua district and was formally registered in 1990 as a society under the Madhya Pradesh Society Registration Act 1973. The area was chosen because of the nature and intensity of exploitation of the Bhil adivasis, negligible developmental intervention and the limited presence of voluntary groups. Work was started by addressing the survival needs and developmental aspirations of the people. SAMPARK has gradually evolved into a many faceted organisation tackling the varied problems of the area. Two decisions were made about the target and mode of work –

- i. All work would be done only with the weaker sections of society.
- ii. Programme design and implementation would be done with people's participation.

Consequently the programmes of the organisation have been substantive learning opportunities for both the staff and the participant communities for the development of appropriate solutions to problems rather than a blind implementation of centralised schemes. The activities have been related to awareness of rights and socio-economic development. The organisation laid stress on forming local youth groups and training them in street theatre and puppetry. The groups used these media to generate discussion among the people about the problems of the area and the importance of organised political and community action for finding solutions to them. Men's and women's organisations were formed in villages and *gram koshes* or village funds were constituted. People began to collectively talk about social evils like high bride price and expensive rites of passage and find solutions to them.

The people also built up a mass organisation to tackle the many rights violations called the "Lok Jagriti Manch". The Manch has developed into a fullfledged community organisation running self-help groups, village watershed development committees, agricultural sourcing and marketing groups, village health and education committees, forest management committees and conflict resolution groups. The organisation has also conducted advocacy

campaigns for promoting organic agriculture and for the banning of genetically modified seeds. A major successful campaign resulted in the unjust debt of the adivasis arising from faulty implementation of the community lift irrigation schemes being cancelled. The "Saajha Manch" was set up to separately address the issues faced by women arising out of the patriarchal nature of Bhil society.

The issue of sustainable agriculture and the campaign against genetically modified seeds has now assumed tremendous significance and so SAMPARK has initiated a separate network at the state level to carry forward this work named Beej Swaraj Abhiyan (BSA). This network undertakes policy advocacy as well as mass mobilisation work to secure the future of agriculture and food availability locally and globally.

The operational framework and goal of SAMPARK, LJM, SM and BSA are shown in the schematic diagram in Fig. 1 below. The goal is the empowerment of the Gram Sabha so that it can fulfil its potential as a local government institution as envisaged in the PESA Act. Given the very weak economic status of the Bhil tribals and their unfamiliarity with and lack of skills to negotiate the modern economic and political systems there is a need for both economic development and socio-political action. Since the Bhil tribals cannot fund such action from their own resources due to their poverty, these have to be supplemented with external support. SAMPARK facilitates this external support. All developmental activities are undertaken by the staff of SAMPARK. The socio-political action is undertaken by the LJM, SM and BSA which are people's organisations whose operational expenses are met by the people themselves. Presently SAMPARK is operating in Petlawad and Rama Janpad Panchayats and has its main campus in village Raipuria. This campus is equipped with solar energy and the storm water and waste water is treated and reused or recharged.

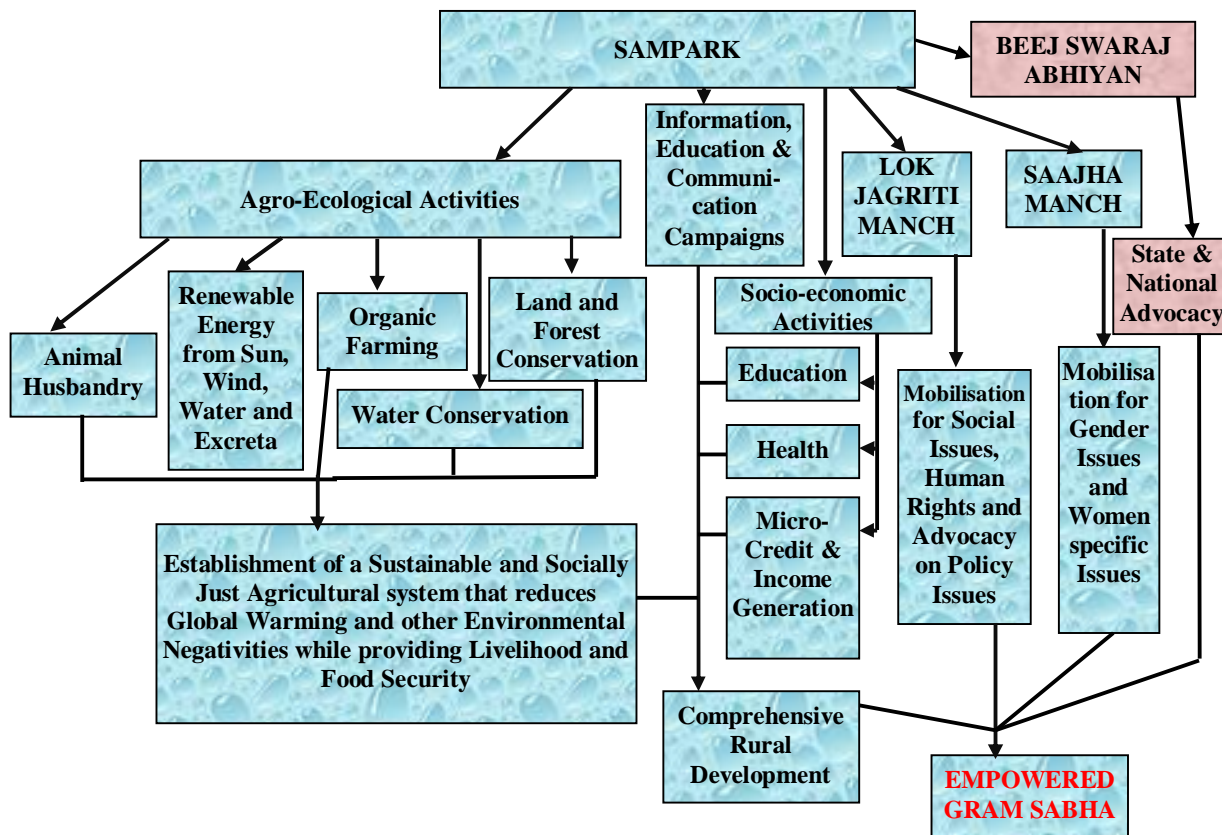


Fig. 1 Operational Framework of SAMPARK



The thrust of the developmental activities are three fold. The first is a programme of sustainable agriculture and natural resource management. The second is the provision of quality education and primary health care as well as credit support and income generation through micro-credit programmes. The third is a well thought out information, education and communication campaign in the local dialect to mobilise people for the development effort. SAMPARK has been partnered by reputed national and international funding agencies and also the state and central governments for the implementation of various development programmes. The rights based actions are geared towards securing the various rights guaranteed in the Constitution of India and several United Nations Conventions. Especially those that give a special status to the tribals. The LJM is active in all such rights based actions and policy advocacy campaigns. The SM plays a critical role in making women aware of the tremendous opportunities that have been provided them in the Panchayati Raj system as also various other government schemes. The larger issue of gender justice is also addressed by the SM. The LJM and SM are both networked with the leading campaign groups in India on the issues on which they are conducting advocacy.

### **3. Operational Paradigm**

The Bhil tribals have traditionally led a communitarian life in small groups and so they find it difficult to be part of the vast centralised system that is the modern economy, society and polity in India. This dichotomy between the traditional tribal lifestyle and a centralised modern society was recognised by the British colonialists and their anthropologist administrators like Verrier Elwin and Grierson. Later the members of the Constituent Assembly who framed the Constitution of independent India made special provisions in the Fifth Schedule of the Indian Constitution for appropriate governance in tribal areas in central India in accordance with their traditions. These provisions have been hailed by Dr B.D. Sharma as a "Constitution within the Constitution" specifically for tribals. However, the biggest tragedy of independent India is that these provisions were not implemented and instead not only have the tribals been displaced wantonly from their habitats in pursuit of modern development but they have also been deprived of the fruits of this development in the form of better economic, educational and health opportunities.

Not surprisingly there is a great deal of resentment among the tribals and they do not have a very good opinion of the state machinery and in many instances they do not baulk at revolting spontaneously against this injustice meted out to them. There is thus a "trust deficit" among the tribals with regard to the state. The uniqueness of SAMPARK's operational paradigm lies in its synergising the traditional communitarian living of the Bhils with the provisions of the modern Indian Constitution that are in their favour by a combination of developmental interventions, rights based actions and policy advocacy. Thus, SAMPARK has always used legal and constitutional avenues to push for justice for the tribals and has been able to make its tribal members understand the complexities of the modern political system and the ways in which they can gainfully participate in it for their benefit. Simultaneously SAMPARK has sourced funds to implement development projects in the form of pilots so as to establish a replicable model of sustainable development for Bhil tribal areas.

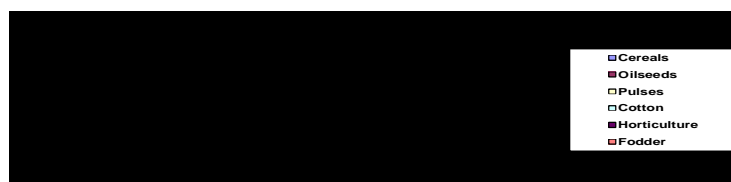
Consequently, the most important strategy of SAMPARK is to petition the government and local administration for redressal of grievances in accordance with the various laws, policies and rules. Today laws like the Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas Act, National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Rights) Act, the Right to Education Act and the Right to Information Act, all support the paramountcy of the Gram Sabha or the village general body in deciding the path of local development. SAMPARK ensures the rights and sustainable development of the

Bhils in an effective manner by stressing on the implementation of these laws and various development policies of the government and international development agencies. Simultaneously, SAMPARK is well aware that given the very small individual resource bases of the people and the reluctance on the part of the Government to initiate development policies that have local tribal needs as their focus, rights based work alone will not be able to bring about sustainability. Consequently, the organisation has also launched its own pilot initiatives in economic and social development to enhance the resource base and capabilities of the people through externally funded development projects.

#### 4. Situational Analysis

The district of Jhabua situated in the south-western corner of Madhya Pradesh is home to the Bhil adivasi or indigenous people with the various sub-tribes like Bhil, Bhilala, Patelia and Mankar together constituting 86.8 % of the total population (Census, 2011). The district lies in the Vindhya hill ranges to the south of the Malwa plateau and the land is hilly without much tree cover and prone to heavy erosion. Petlawad tehsil is drained by the Mahi river which forms the northern boundary of the district. The top soils are lateritic with some fertile patches of the medium black variety. The underlying rock structure is mostly archaean igneous with some hard rock, deccan trap basaltic and sedimentary formations in patches. The first two formations have low primary porosity and permeability and so the groundwater aquifers have poor water retention capacity. While the deccan trap and sedimentary formations are better aquifers they are few and far between. Thus the terrain and the underlying geological structure together result in most of the average annual rainfall of 829 mm running off during the monsoons and consequently the net groundwater availability is only 519 million cubic meters per year. The area falls in the Malwa plateau agroclimatic zone having some patches of medium to black medium soils in the plains areas with medium levels of the three main nutrients of Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Potassium. Most of the top soils in the wider hilly areas are light and lateritic.

The better quality lands in the tehsil are held mostly by the non-adivasis while the 76 % majority adivasis have the lower quality lands which are mostly unirrigated and lie in the upper watershed regions. Thus the break up of crop production for the whole Petlawad tehsil shown in Fig. 2 does not adequately reflect the crop mix of the adivasis which has a higher proportion of cereals and pulses and less of cotton, oilseeds and fodder. Unfortunately disaggregated data showing this difference is not available in collated form with the government.



**Fig. 2: Cropping Pattern of Petlawad Tehsil in %**

Source : District Statistical Handbook 2010, Department of Economics and Statistics, GOMP

The major problem in the area is that there is extreme fragmentation of land, as is evident from the data given in Table 1 below. This data in fact does not reflect the actual reality

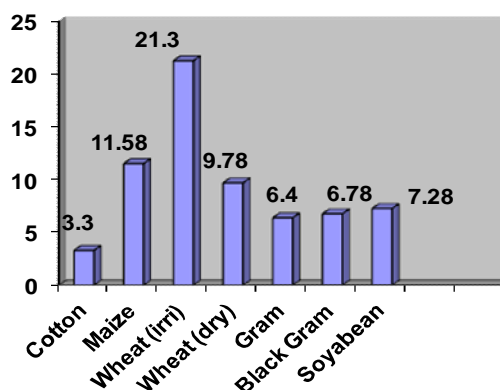
because the landholdings are in the name of old people and the ground situation is that the sons have divided the land of their father among themselves.

**Table 1: Landuse Pattern in Petlawad Tehsil**

Arable Land Per Household (Ha)	Arable Land (%)	Revenue Common Land (%)	Forest Land (%)	Irrigated Land (%)
1.14	55	40	5	30

Source: District Statistical Handbook 2010, Department of Economics and Statistics, GOMP

The land hunger that has resulted has led to the encroachment of government common lands and so the actual proportion of such lands is much less than shown on government records. So only the absolutely barren land is left and is grazed by cattle. The forest area is very small. The irrigated area is about 30% mostly through small pump irrigation. The yields of crops in the tehsil are shown in Fig. 3 below and as is evident these are below the national average. The yields are even lower for the adivasis who have the lower quality lands and also less capital investments in them.



**Fig 3: Crop Yields in Petlawad Tehsil in Qu./Ha**

Source : District Statistical Handbook 2006. Department of Economics and Statistics. GOMP

Some Human Development Indicators for Jhabua district along with its rank among the forty five districts of Madhya Pradesh are given below in Table 2 below.

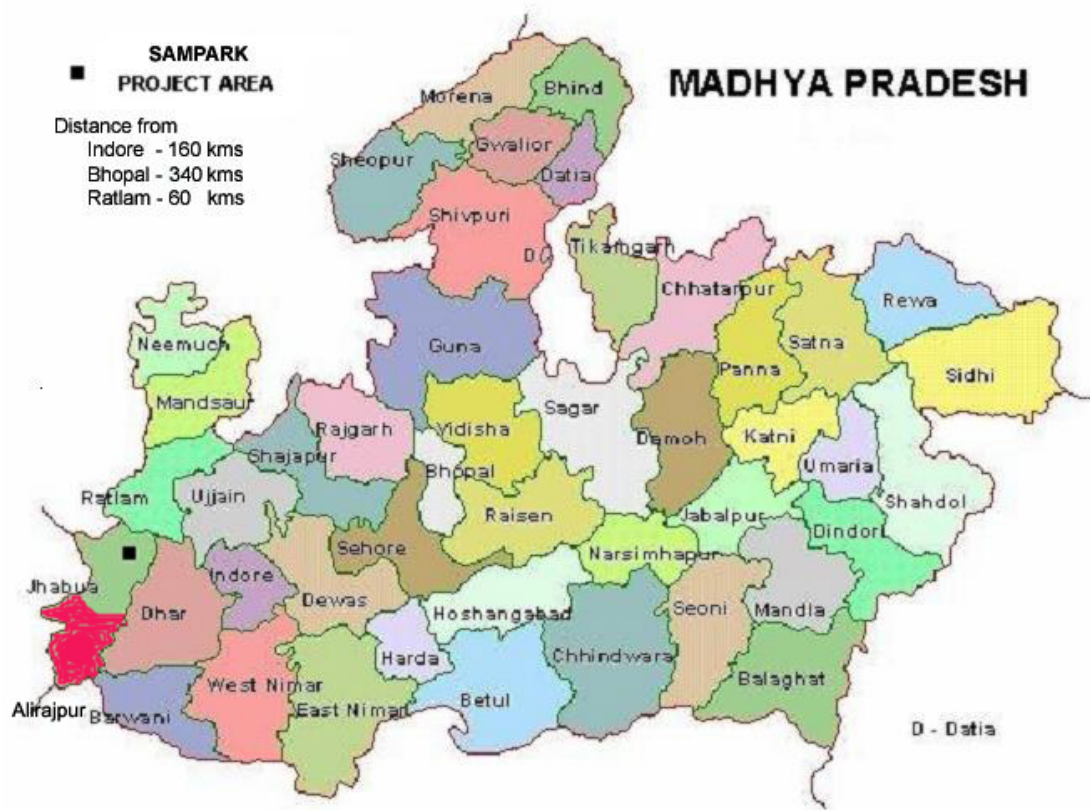
**Table 2: Selected Human Development Indicators for Jhabua District**

No.	Indicator	Value	Rank Among 45 Districts
1.	Human Development Index	0.372	45
2.	Gender Development Index	0.450	43
3.	Population Dependent on Agriculture (%)	90.6	2
4.	Infant Mortality Rate	130	42
5.	Life Expectancy (2011)	55.8	30
6.	Total Fertility Rate	7.0	45
7.	Below Poverty Line (%)	31.2	20
8.	Annual Per Capita Food Production (kgs)	268.22	21

Source: Fourth Human Development Report Madhya Pradesh 2007, GOMP.

Clearly the district is backward as it has the worst Human Development Index among all the districts. The poverty ranking is not that bad because the people migrate to nearby developed areas and earn supplementary incomes. However, since the status of education and health are very poor and get aggravated further due to migration, the overall human development situation is a cause for concern. The per capita food production ranking is high because the proportion of rural population is as high as 91% mostly engaged in agriculture. The high total fertility rate is an indicator of the high levels of patriarchy suffered by women in the district which is also confirmed by the low Gender Development Index.

The location of the area of work of Sampark in the northern part of Jhabua district is shown in the map of Madhya Pradesh given in Fig 4 below. It is quite evident that geographically the area is remote from the centres of administration and political power in the state and this has been a major factor in its neglect leading to its low development performance in comparison to other areas. The connectivity by road too is poor. Even though the main Delhi to Mumbai rail line grazes the northern part of the district there has not been any significant economic development along it.



**Fig. 4 : Map of Madhya Pradesh showing location of Sampark.**

## 5. Stakeholder Analysis

The analysis of the relationships between the various stakeholders in Jhabua district has been carried out in two phases. First a brief history of the western Madhya Pradesh region has been detailed to underline the historical development of these social relations. After that the

current situation in the region has been analysed so as to be able to draw the local stakeholder tree showing the prevailing socio-economic and political relationships.

### **5.1 History of Western Madhya Pradesh**

Traditionally the Bhils lived by practising shifting cultivation, hunting and gathering in the dense forests that used to cover the terrain. A combination of the reduction of the fertility of their farms and epidemics would cause them to move every few years to new locations. Living at subsistence levels and being heavily dependent on physical labour they had no alternative to being integrated into tightly knit communities by customs of labour pooling in most aspects of their material and cultural life. The egalitarianism of the Bhils, apart from the usual patriarchal aberration, was further ensured by customs that decreed that surpluses accumulated beyond a certain limit be spent on communal merrymaking and feasting. This also did away with the possibility of these surpluses being used to develop agricultural and artisanal production and engage in trade and further accumulation and so protected the environment from over exploitation. This aversion to trade also meant that they eschewed the abstractions of literacy and numeracy and remained firmly down to earth and developed a rich oral animistic culture with nature at its centre. Thus there was no commercial value attached to natural resources and especially water. The terrain and the kind of agriculture they practised discouraged the development of irrigation. Nevertheless using their own ingenuity the Bhils developed an unique irrigation system that involved the construction of temporary weirs on the hilly streams and then the diversion of water into channels with lesser gradients that over a distance of a few kilometres brought the water into their small farms by gravity.

The destruction of the Bhils' agricultural base and their loss of control over the crucial natural resources of land, water and forests in the western Madhya Pradesh region in fact, have a long history. Under pressure from the Mughals and the Rajputs from the sixteenth century onwards they had first to give up the more fertile lands of the Malwa plateau and Nimar plains bordering the lower Narmada river valley and recede into the forested hills to cultivate sub-optimal lands. This process gained in momentum with the increase in trade and settled agriculture as more and more forests on the plains were cleared and brought under the plough. The British accelerated this transformation by laying railway lines from the decade of the 1860s and thus opening up these areas further to trade and the penetration by sahuikars or moneylender traders who also doubled as tax collectors into the remotest regions. The loss of access to forests and agricultural lands, the burden of heavy taxes and the exploitation of the sahuikars had destituted the Bhils even prior to independence.

Unfortunately this colonial insensitiveness towards the adivasis persisted even after independence leading to massive displacement and immiserisation of the adivasis. A fairly well established fact today is that the institutions set up under the provisions of the Constitution of India for the protection of the adivasis have not functioned properly. The most powerful such institution is the Tribal Advisory Council to be set up in each state under the provisions of the Fifth Schedule of the constitution. This council, which is to be constituted from the adivasi members of the legislative assembly of the state can advise the Governor to institute policies for the protection and development of the adivasis. Another institution is that of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Commission. Additionally enabling laws and policies enacted from time to time like the statute to prevent misappropriation of adivasi land by non-adivasis too have not been implemented in an effective manner. This has been primarily due to the wrong development policies adopted by the state, which have tended to strengthen rather than weaken the political and economic power of the non-adivasis vis-à-vis the adivasis. For example the policy of rapid modern

industrial development has meant that adivasi habitats have been acquired for mining, commercial forestry and big dam building without adequate compensation or alternative livelihood sources being provided to those displaced.

Madhya Pradesh is itself part of the central Indian **Bimaru** group of poor states consisting of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. It is generally acknowledged that considering all aspects of social, economic and human development the four southern Indian states of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala are ahead of the rest of India and especially the Bimaru states. The economic and human development indices of the Bhil adivasis of western Madhya Pradesh being the lowest in a state that is itself in very bad shape in comparison to the more developed states of the country bodes ill for their development.

## 5.2 Current Situation

Following on the national policy in this regard the concentration of government finances after independence on industrialisation and the promotion of green revolution agriculture on the more fertile lands belonging to non-adivasi farmers in the river valleys to the neglect of the much wider dryland areas of the Bhils in the upper watersheds has further skewed the resource access pattern of the region against them. The benefits of the green revolution were cornered by the sahuikars, who traded in the inputs and the increased output and also made super profits from lending at usurious interest rates. The large farmers too benefited immensely by earning huge surpluses from low production costs due to state subsidised supply of inputs and the use of their extra-economic powers over the adivasis to keep wage levels depressed. The lack of state support for research and development of indigenous crops suitable to the harsh topographies of the Bhil homelands has further weakened their economic base. Thus the Bhil adivasis have remained in the clutches of sahuikars who dominate the rural markets of the region exploiting the former through un-remunerative prices for their produce, exorbitant prices for the agricultural inputs and usurious interest rates on loans advanced to them. Consequently most of the Bhil adivasi peasants have to rely on migration either permanent or seasonal to make ends meet. This in turn means that their labour which is the only asset that they have and which was previously being used on their farms is now being expended in building the assets of other people in other areas which are already better developed adding to the injustice to the Bhils.

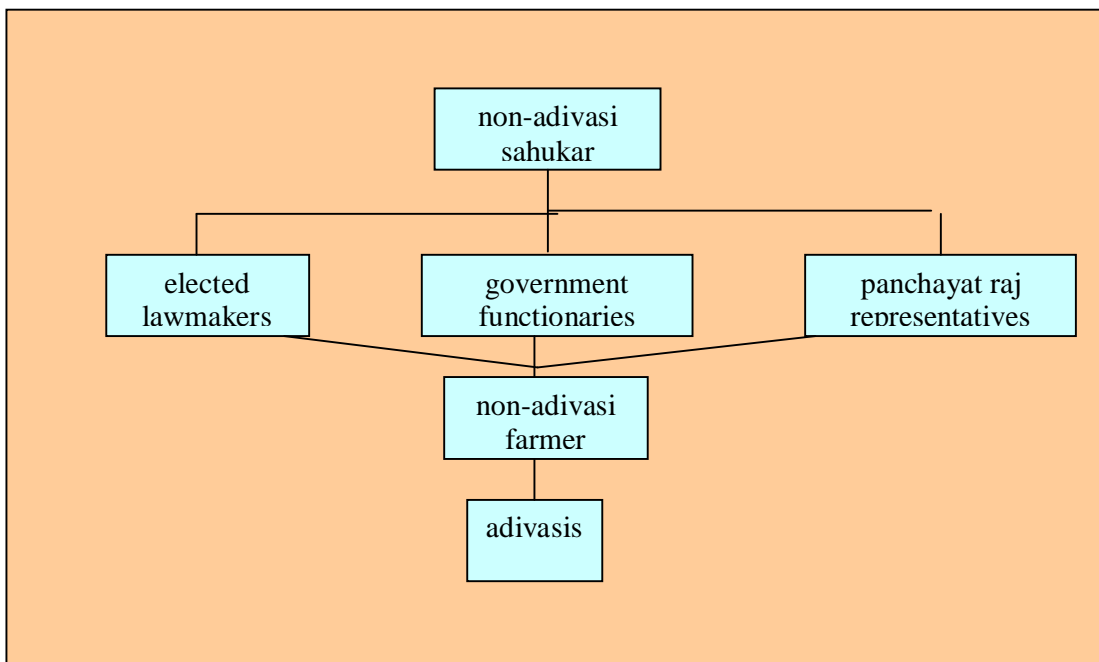
Matters have been compounded by the state having also failed to provide good and adequate education services resulting in the Bhil adivasis remaining unequipped to negotiate the complexities of the modern system of governance into which they have been forcefully integrated. The poverty induced by these wrong development policies has adversely affected the nutritional levels of the food intake of the adivasis and combined with the lack of good and cheap health services has led to a decline in their health. Moreover the even greater lack of both education and health services for the women has meant that they have not been able to smash age-old patriarchal structures and their consequent lack of reproductive rights has led to a population explosion putting further pressure on scarce resources. All these factors have combined to produce a scenario wherein adivasis are being continually exploited by the improper functioning of the modern market system, which has increasingly penetrated into their subsistence lifestyles and being forced to live in bondage to non-adivasi sahuikars who have become economically very powerful over the years.

Thus, even though there are reservations for the adivasis which ensure that all the electoral positions for government from the village up to the central level in a Fifth Schedule district like Jhabua are reserved for them, the apparatus of the political parties which fight these elections is dominated by the non-adivasi sahuikars. In the prevailing situation in which elections for the post of a sarpanch too require a successful candidate to spend around



twentyfive thousand rupees on an average it can well be imagined that the adivasi candidates for the elections of members of the Vidhan Sabha and Lok Sabha have to rely heavily on the party apparatus dominated by these sahumars. It is not surprising therefore that the elected adivasi representatives of all hues and at all levels subsequently act to further the interests of these sahumars at the cost of the poor common adivasis and the condition of the latter continues to deteriorate.

The Bhils have not only lost their natural resource bases but with the undermining of their subsistence agriculture based lifestyle that this has led to, they have lost confidence in their own culture too. Poverty has led to community links breaking down and there has been a continuous downgrading of their culture by non-adivasi oppressors.. The local stakeholder tree showing the power hierarchy has been pictured in Fig. 5 below. Even though over the past two decades some adivasi political leaders have gained in stature vis-a-vis the non-adivasis, overall the economy and polity of the region is still dominated by the non-adivasi sahumars both at the local level and at the national and global level.

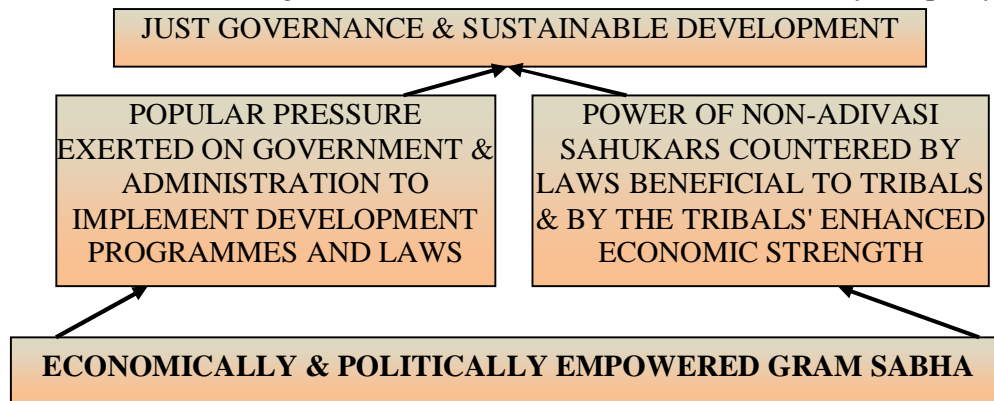


**Fig. 5: Local Stakeholder Tree for the Project Area**

## 6. Wealth and Power at the Bottom of the Pyramid

The famous management expert C. K. Prahalad came up with the slogan "Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid" in 2004. His thesis was that in a situation in which the demand from the rich was stagnating companies should target the poor at the bottom of the pyramid and extend the market there. He claimed that by doing so the companies while earning profits could also create employment for the poor and eradicate poverty. This is of course a myth because as long as the power equation at the bottom of the pyramid is skewed in favour of the non-adivasi sahumars there is no possibility of poverty being eradicated just by extending the market. In fact the entry of newer goods into the rural market will only speed up the extraction of surpluses from the poor. Consequently, SAMPARK has devised a strategy to reverse this exploitation and injustice that the tribals have faced and it is named "Wealth and Power at the Bottom of the Pyramid". As mentioned earlier the implementation of socio-economic development programmes at the grassroots and the empowerment of the Gram

Sabha in accordance with the various legal provisions ensures that the tribals can reverse the power equations of the stakeholder tree shown above and create a new bottom up power structure as shown below in Fig 6. This fulfils the constitutional mandate for decentralised tribal self rule within the larger framework of a centralised modern economy and polity.



**Fig 6: Wealth and Power at the Bottom of the Pyramid**

## 7. Livelihoods

The most important development intervention is in the sphere of livelihoods as this provides the beneficiaries with the economic security to pursue other higher human goals. SAMPARK has a multifarious approach to ensuring livelihood security. These include the proper implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), promotion of sustainable agriculture, skill training for income generation and provision of credit support through micro-credit groups. These are detailed below.

### 7.1 MGNREGS

The implementation of the MGNREGS is the most important livelihood activity of SAMPARK in both Petlawad and Rama blocks where it is active. Ideally many of the problems that beset the tribal population can be solved if the MGNREGS is implemented fully for natural resource conservation and sustainable agriculture. Grassroots mobilisation was done for better implementation in the villages. People were empowered to avail work in the village by demanding it and then getting the total wage payment timely. The people were encouraged to submit their demands in the Gram Sabha. People were empowered to apply for job cards in the Gram Sabha. The status of implementation in the two blocks generally and in the villages in which SAMPARK is working are given in Table 3 below.

An analysis of the data clearly shows that the implementation of MGNREGS in the district is well below the norm of 100 days for each household and a substantial proportion of households have not got work at all. The proportion of households with 100 days of work is less than 10% in both Petlawad and Rama blocks in both the years under review. In fact it was even poorer before the organisation began mobilisation around MGNREGS from 2007-08 onwards. Due to the campaigns conducted by the organisation, the project villages recorded higher proportion of families with work and more number of days worked per job card. In 2010-11 in the project villages the proportion of households receiving 100 days of work went up to almost 10%. The work under the scheme was done mainly for the construction of water retaining structures. Women have been at the forefront of the mobilisation around MGNREGS. They have first got work proposals passed in the Gram Sabha and then pressurised the administration to provide work in accordance with these.

**Table 3 MGNREGS Performance** (Collated from the MGNREGS website)

Sl. No.	Area	Year	Total Job cards	Work Received Jobcards	Proportion of Working Households (%)	Male Work days	Female Work days	Total Work days	Avg. Work days/ Total Jobcards	Proportion of Households with 100 days of work (%)
1	Petlawad Block	2009-10	41346	18159	43.91	350841	268555	619396	15	2.47
		2010-11	41614	28316	68.04	795164	606618	1401782	34	9.82
2	Sampark Villages	2009-10	10065	6288	62.47	154758	115166	269924	27	17.78
		2010-11	14815	11982	80.88	406509	320621	727130	49	6.03
3	Rama Block	2009-10	23311	11513	49.4	263450	238007	501457	22	4.90
		2010-11	23354	15198	65.08	405233	333185	738418	32	9.66
4	Sampark Villages	2009-10	4731	3239	68.46	96108	86319	182427	38	18.15
		2010-11	6768	5325	78.68	176941	142438	319372	47	25.46

#### Making MGNREGS Work

Panchpipla village is a typical Bhil tribal village. Road building work had been done under the MGNREGS in 2008-09 and some households had got work in it. However even after one year no payment had been made. The women of Panchpipla village under the leadership of Dhapubai got together and told the Sarpanch that he would have to make the pending payments. They also insisted that instead of road building work a percolation tank should be built so as to improve the water availability in the village. The women also went to Petlawad and submitted a memorandum to the Janpad CEO in this regard. The pending payments were made and work on the percolation tank was begun. This panchayat has one of the best performances with regard to employment made available under the MGNREGS.

Given the obduracy of the bureaucracy in not implementing the MGNREGS properly there is a constant need for public action. On numerous occasions the people have submitted memoranda to the administration. There are continuous complaints of non-implementation of MGNREGS from all over Jhabua district. The bureaucracy is reluctant to open works that are labour intensive because that limits the scope for corruption. Moreover, due to the lack of adequate technical and administrative staff at the Janpad level there is a big bottleneck with regard to implementation of projects, their evaluation and the making of payments. The Sarpanch

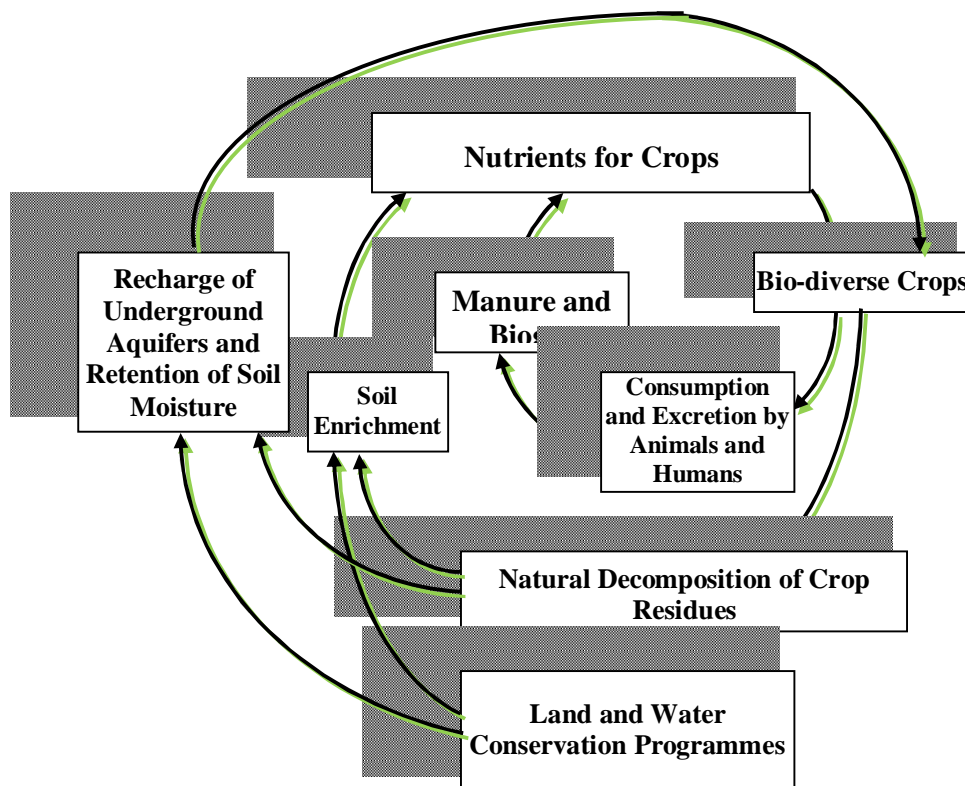
and the Panchayat secretary in most cases have to run from pillar to post to get works sanctioned, evaluated and payments made. Despite several mass mobilisations by the villagers at the block level to put pressure on the administration, the situation remains bad.

Consequently, given these serious problems in getting work and payment from MGNREGS, there is a tendency among the villagers to migrate to Gujarat instead for work. A family of two workers can earn a net income of Rs 3000 per month by working in Gujarat in the construction industry and also as sharecroppers in agriculture after deducting all their travel and living expenses. Moreover, there are no delays in payments.

## 7.2 Sustainable Agriculture

Agriculture is dependent on proper soil and water conservation on the farms, husbanding of contiguous natural resources in the forests, common lands and water sources and the proper selection of seeds and farming practices. All this together results in both livelihood augmentation on a sustainable basis and the mitigation of climate change which is a looming threat to small holder agriculture. The Bhil adivasis already have a traditional organic and eco-friendly system that has fallen into disuse due to the inroads of commercial agriculture.

Research has shown that organic arable production is about 35% more energy efficient, and organic dairy production about 74% more efficient per unit of output than non-organic production. Organic farming, by definition, prohibits the use of synthetic fertilizer, using instead a limited amount per hectare of organic matter and knowledge of soil biology. Since the pH of the soil is not disrupted by organic farming techniques, the use of energy-intensive lime is also minimal or non-existent; again contributing to lower CH<sub>4</sub> and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions compared to modern external input farming techniques. The use of organic matter also increases carbon content in the soil, storing up to 75 kgs of carbon per hectare per year. Organic farming uses nitrogen-fixing plants as cover crops and during crop rotation, which help to fix nitrogen in the soil rather than releasing it into the atmosphere. And finally, organic farming techniques maintain soil micro-organisms and so help in oxidizing atmospheric methane. The combined effect of all the different benefits of organic farming produces a Global Warming Potential of 36% that of modern external input farming. Simultaneously this sustainable system being labour intensive and respectful of nature will take care of the problems of livelihood creation and conservation of natural resources and create an “economy of permanence” as outlined by the Gandhian economist J. C. Kumarappa. The traditional Bhil agriculture thus needs to be revived. The inherent sustainability of organic agriculture is illustrated in Fig. 7 below –



**Fig. 7 : Schematic Diagram of Organic Agriculture**

SAMPARK has over the past two years undertaken the following work towards establishing a sustainable agriculture regime in its area of work –

1. Diversification of crops and use of organic varieties whose seeds had been collected and preserved initially through in situ cultivation in the farms of a few farmers. Later these seeds were distributed to other farmers. Primarily work was done on indigenous cotton and wheat seeds.
2. Organic manure manufacture through the use of the NADEP and vermicompost method has been promoted. In NADEP method crop and forest residue is mulched in a special pit with cow dung and aerated for three months to produce fortified manure that is very rich in soil nutrients obviating the need for applying chemical fertilisers.
3. Fertile soil was excavated from tanks and deposited on farm plots to increase soil fertility and give a push to switching to organic agriculture.
4. Promotion of natural pest management and the use of natural insecticides such as the Amrut Jal.
5. An exposure tour for farmers was organised and they were taken to see the organic farming practices of farmers in Yavatmal in Maharashtra.
6. Market support has been provided to farmers who opted for organic agriculture.
7. Promotion of local breeds of livestock and poultry and provision of drinking water and breeding facilities in villages for livestock.
8. Immunisation and health camps for livestock to ensure healthy risk free breeding.
9. Fodder cultivation to improve availability of livestock feed.

The organic agriculture movement has taken root in the project area but has not been able to bring within its ambit a large enough group of farmers for the following reasons –

- The advertisement and marketing muscle of the multinational agri-business companies in the promotion of genetically modified crops and the associated chemical inputs is too strong to be countered by a small NGO like SAMPARK.
- The use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides has made the land so unfertile that it is not possible to immediately switch to organic farming without sustaining substantial losses. Small and marginal farmers cannot afford to shoulder these losses in the absence of any subsidy from the government.
- Considerable amount of hard work is required in organic farming, whereas the modern trend is for farmers to do less work. There is instead a tendency among farmers to sow cash crops to reap quick profits.
- Farmers are dependent on the sahkars for the money to buy seeds, insecticides and other inputs for cultivation and so have to accept the products of agri-business companies.
- The lack of a strong nationwide farmers' organisation committed to promoting sustainable agriculture has resulted in a situation in which the government is influenced by the powerful agri-business multinational companies.

The organisation has chalked out and implemented an elaborate advocacy strategy to counter this which has been described in a later section.

### 7.3 Skill Training for Income Generation

Non farm self employment is a must for improving the economic condition of small holder agriculturists especially in a situation in which the average landholding is about 1 hectare only. SAMPARK has an extensive programme of providing trainings to beneficiaries in various small enterprises including exposure tours to familiarise them with the running of successful enterprises. The various enterprises in which beneficiaries have been inducted are as follows –

1. Grocery Shop – There is greater cash with the tribals due to the MGNREGS and also the income from migration and so there is good scope for grocery and other consumer goods shops.
2. Flour Mill – the practice of hand milling by women has given way to machine milling of flour from grains such as maize and wheat. This has created a scope for setting up small flour mills run by diesel or electric motors.
3. Cycle Repair Shop – The cycle is a very common mode of transport in the villages and so there is considerable scope for cycle repair shops.
4. Concrete Shuttering – With the increase in construction of pucca buildings by both the government and private persons in villages there is an increasing demand for steel shuttering plates for casting of concrete beams, columns and slabs. The support has been given to groups rather than individuals. Thus cooperative endeavour has been promoted so as to ensure that the benefits are shared by a group.
5. Brick Kilns – The same reason as in the case of concrete shuttering has led to the increase in demand for bricks.
6. Carpentry – This is a traditional occupation whose demand has increased with increase in construction activity and a change in lifestyle wherein more wooden furniture is required.
7. Fisheries – There are a number of water tanks in the area built under various development schemes and these are given out on contract for fisheries development thus providing avenues for self employment.



**Fig. 8 : Concrete Shuttering Enterprise**



### **Brick making as a Panacea for Migration.**

Jamsingh Tetia of Bhuradabra village in Rama Block used to migrate to Gujarat the whole year round as the family agricultural land was not enough to support his father and his brothers. He was told by the staff of the organisation that under the Swarojgar scheme he could get a loan to start some enterprise. He prepared a proposal for starting a brick kiln. His proposal was sanctioned in the Gram Sabha and he was given a loan of Rs 35000. He made a contribution of his own of Rs 5000 and began making Bricks. In the first year itself Jamsingh made 50000 bricks and earned a net income of Rs 25000. Currently he makes 600000 bricks a year and earns a net income of Rs 300000. Thus, not only has he stopped migrating but he has also created an enterprise that provides employment to ten other people and has stopped their migration also.



### **Overcoming Physical Disability**

Ramesh Fatia of village Rachwa in Rama block is physically disabled due to having suffered from polio immediately after birth. He used to run a very small general store with a few items and earn a net income of Rs 20 per day. This was insufficient to sustain his family and so he applied for a loan from the Gram Kosh to augment his store. His proposal was sanctioned in the Gram Sabha and he was given a loan of Rs 5000. Ramesh used this to increase the items of sale in his shop and now he earns a net income of Rs 80 per day which is enough for his needs.



## **7.4 Provision of Credit Support**

The rural economy in Jhabua district is controlled by the sahukars or the moneylender traders. There is an unholy nexus between these sahukars and the bank and administration officials whereby they are able to divert the resources of the formal financial system also into the informal rural financial market. Consequently the tribals not only do not have access to the formal financial institutions but also as a result have to depend on the usurious sahukars for their credit needs.

This sorry situation prevails because the administration does not take any action as it is bound to do by law. The Madhya Pradesh Scheduled Tribe Sahukar Act, 1972 is a powerful legal instrument for the regulation of the activities of the sahukars in areas that have been notified as adivasi areas under the provisions of the fifth schedule of the Constitution of India. According to the provisions of this act sahukars practising in these areas have to get licenses from the subdivisional magistrates (SDM) to ply their business and display this fact prominently on a board in front of their premises. The sahukars must maintain proper records of their debtors including the amount and term of the loan, the rate of interest and dates and amounts of repayment. A copy of these records has to be furnished to the debtor as well as the inspector appointed by the SDM. The rate of interest cannot exceed 12% annually on unsecured loans and 6% annually for secured loans and detailed records must be kept of the objects kept as security and these cannot include objects, land or animals required for agricultural purposes. The maximum amount realisable in the form of interest on a loan has been pegged as being equal to the principal.

The SDM has been empowered to carry out raids on the premises of the sahukars and seize their records, either suo moto on being informed by the inspector appointed by him or on the complaint of a debtor, if these provisions are not being followed by the sahukars. There is a provision for imprisonment up to one year and fine up to Rs 2000 for violation of these provisions. In the absence of proper records as decreed in this act the sahukars cannot press civil suits in courts of law for recovery of the money they have disbursed. In addition there is the Madhya Pradesh Sahukari Act 1934 as amended in 2000 which too is quite stringent and is applicable in areas which do not fall within the purview of the fifth schedule. Invariably the sahukars violate all of these provisions and most of them practise without a license and the administration turns a blind eye.

This failure of the elaborate network of commercial banks, regional rural banks and the rural credit cooperatives to address the credit needs of those living below the poverty line has led to the search for alternatives resulting in the micro-finance initiative. The initial success of some NGO initiatives in providing easy access to credit to the poor in Bangladesh and Indonesia and a consequent reduction in their economic vulnerability, was picked up and modified by the World Bank and formalised into a model to be replicated worldwide. In India too the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has developed a special model called the Self Help Group Bank Linkage model wherein SHGs are linked to banks and are given leveraged loans as multiples of their own savings. A variant of this introduced by some funding agencies and also the Madhya Pradesh Rural Livelihoods Project is to create a revolving fund for a federation of SHGs from which to loan to the individual SHGs in proportion to their own savings.

SAMPARK has adopted this latter model and has an extensive micro-credit operation with a revolving fund that has increased to Rs 18 Lakhs in its operational areas. The model adopted by SAMPARK is unique in its introduction of a grading system of SHGs. The SHGs are graded into three categories based on the history of their loan repayment performance. The SHGs in the highest category get more money from the revolving fund as compared to

those in the lower categories. This puts pressure on the SHGs to better their repayment performance in order to get more loans. The better performing SHGs are also given loans and training in launching micro-enterprises like concrete shuttering and fishing as mentioned earlier. This also provides an incentive to SHGs to improve their loan repayment ratings.

### **An Emergency Fund Set Up to Gain Freedom from the Sahukar**



The women of Navapada village in Rama Block have set up an emergency fund. Twenty eight women are members of the emergency fund society and two of them have been entrusted with the key to the box in which the fund is kept. When a member submits a request for help in emergency situations like a disease requiring hospitalisation or a failure of the crop then all the members of the society take a decision on the validity of the claim and if found to be genuine then help is given. This has helped the women to become free of the clutches of moneylenders who otherwise take advantage of such situations to advance money to them at exorbitant interest rates.

The SHGs mostly have women members. This provides a forum for women's mobilisation and economic independence. Women have been able to use the power gained from their participation in the operation of the SHGs to battle the inherent patriarchy of the traditional Bhil society as will be detailed later in the section on gender.

## **7.5 Horticulture**

A major new thrust of the organisation has been in the promotion of horticulture. Many beneficiaries have been trained and initiated into the cultivation of medicinal plants, flowering plants, fruits and vegetables. This has been combined with the use of drip irrigation which economises on the use of water and nutrients. Normally horticulture is done only by the more wealthy and landed farmers because only they can afford the initial investments. However, with funding support from the MPRLP it has been possible to introduce this high value activity into small holder agriculture also thus considerably increasing its productivity.

### **Extra Income from Vegetable Farming**

Vesta Kukji of Jambukundi village of Rama block has only half an acre of irrigated land. He used to sow a wheat crop on it in the Rabi season and get an output of ten to twelve quintals for a net income of Rupees twelve thousand or so. Then, he learnt that under the MPRLP loans were being given to start small enterprises and so he submitted a proposal for farming vegetables along with the wheat. His proposal was cleared in the Gram Sabha meeting and he was given a loan to start cultivating vegetables on an additional half acre of land. He grew onions, garlic, chickpea and radish and began selling the output in the weekly markets at Umarkot, Jhaknavda, Dattigaon and Rajgarh. Thus, he now earns an extra net income of Rupees five thousand and is very happy.

## 7.6 Management of Natural Resources

Community management of natural resources has been the bedrock of SAMPARK's work in this area. There are many villages where watershed development and forest regeneration activities have been done earlier through project funding where the village committees are actively taking care of the structures and also ensuring that the regenerated forests are protected. A new activity introduced by the organisation is that of deepening of previously built percolation tanks and irrigation dams by clearing the deposited silt and distributing it on the fields of the farmers. This has a double benefit of increasing the water holding and recharging capacity of these structures while at the same time increasing the fertility of the farms. SAMPARK has taken up this activity in three ways. First it has sourced funds from funding agencies for this work. Second it has motivated Gram Sabhas to pass resolutions for getting this work done under MGNREGS. However, the bureaucracy has stopped sanctioning this activity under MGNREGS citing the need for constructing new structures and the interpretation that such an activity deviates from the norms. Thirdly people of the villages have been encouraged to put in Shramdan or community labour to do this work. Given the huge number of such tanks in the area this is one activity that can provide both employment and long term environmental and livelihood benefits to the people of the area. So the organisation is pursuing this activity energetically.



**Fig. 9: Woman Operating a Treadle Pump**

The deepening of dug wells has been taken up along with the supply of treadle pumps, soil and water conservation and plantation work as a comprehensive water availability enhancement package. The need for water has gone up while the per household availability of water and power have gone down due to higher demand. The higher costs of electricity and diesel affect the profitability of agriculture. The recharging works done have raised the water table and thus the wells now

have more water at a lower depth. This makes it feasible to use treadle pumps and human power for irrigation and so these have been promoted in a big way.

## 8. Education and Child Development

SAMPARK has always stressed that education is one of the most important pillars of development. Especially in the current context in Jhabua where the per capita availability of farmland and common lands has become so low that agricultural and livestock related operations alone cannot provide sustainable livelihood options to the Bhil tribals. There is thus an urgent need to develop off farm activities to supplement agriculture. The development of off farm activities in a modern economy invariably requires formal education and so the need for the provision of quality and appropriate education to all has become paramount.

However, the problem is that the government has a school system in place in this region that is woefully inappropriate and inadequate. The syllabi and teaching methods of the education system are totally alien to the culture of the Bhils. There is insufficient staff in these schools, which are mostly multi-grade single teacher schools. The teachers prefer to stay in the towns and market villages and only visit the schools occasionally. Very few Bhil

children get educated as a result of this mismatch. Those that do get some education, end up treating their own culture as something primitive and sub-human in accordance with the prevailing modernist assumptions and distance themselves from it and their own community. This has resulted in the vast majority of Bhils remaining unequipped to participate effectively in the modern economy into which state policies are relentlessly pushing them. This lack of a modern education has also meant that the awareness of their rights and enabling laws has been low among the adivasis. Moreover, the lack of modern non-farm skills have meant that instead of earning supplementary incomes from non-farm enterprises, the Bhils have been doomed to migrating to do more physical labour.

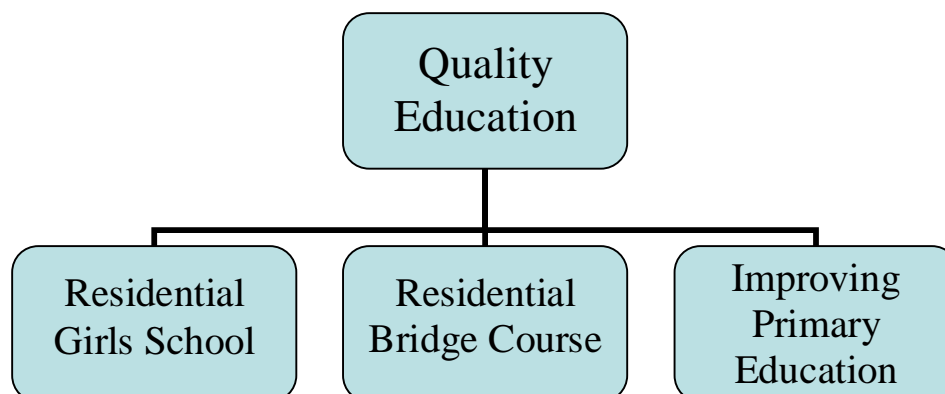
So SAMPARK decided to intervene to improve matters. Initially it started off with a night school programme which was later augmented with a residential primary school, Sampark Buniyadi Shala, in the SAMPARK campus in 2004 to supplement the government school system. A unique educational research hub was specially created in the campus to develop locally relevant syllabi and provide training to school teachers. The basic thrust of the alternative syllabi is to develop teaching material in the local dialect dealing with local issues. Teaching and learning material kits have been developed for different grades consisting of flash cards, educational games, abacus and the like which is called "Bhanva no Kandia". The students are divided into groups according to their learning levels and taught separately to target competencies. Another important aspect of the alternative pedagogy is the inclusion of vocational work. Thus, activities like candle making, soap making, hair oil making tailoring and the like are taught and then the products are sold by the students in the weekly markets thus developing their marketing skills. The students also conduct campaigns for reduction of polythene usage, reduction of alcohol sale and during the Gandhi Saptah every year they clean their villages to spread the habits of good hygiene. They also participate in school level governance through a Bal Sansad. The pedagogy developed by SAMPARK has been inspired by Gandhi's concept of "Nai Talim" which focuses on a synergy between useful social work and value based education. Keeping pace with the modern era the school provides computer education also. Sports and cultural activities have become a major part of life promoted as they are by television. However, as a result of modern media promotion the local sports and culture of adivasis is being marginalised. Therefore, SAMPARK has instituted a programme for the promotion of local sports and cultural activities and every year a sports and culture week is conducted in all schools.

Simultaneously a people's campaign was initiated to increase awareness in the community regarding the importance of education. The working of the Parent Teacher Associations (PTA) was improved and the people have now begun voicing their opinions regarding ways to ensure the provision of quality education. This intensive engagement has resulted in a deep understanding of the problems that beset education in the area –

1. The lack of quality teaching and infrastructure in the Government schools.
2. The inappropriateness of the syllabus to the needs of the people and also the mismatch between the language of instruction which is Hindi and the Bhili mother tongue.
3. The lack of suitable and adequate hostel facilities for children of migrant labourers.
4. The high dropout rate of children after the primary level due to even worse condition of teachers and infrastructure at the middle level.
5. The reluctance of parents to educate their girl children in general and particularly beyond the primary level if it involves the girls having to commute to a village or town other than their own.



This prompted SAMPARK to initiate a comprehensive quality education programme from 2009 onwards, the components of which have been shown schematically in Fig. 10 below.



**Fig. 10: Quality Education Programme**

The residential girls secondary school addresses the reluctance of parents to send girls to school. If the girls remain at home, then invariably they are made to work and so they cannot give time to studies even if they are enrolled in school. There are 155 girls studying in the school. The residential bridge course ensures that children who have dropped out of school are brought up to par in a short time so that they can continue their schooling. There are 80 children in the bridge course. The night school programme has also been modified slightly. Earlier it used to cater to the children who did not attend regular schools. However, since now most children are formally enrolled in regular schools, the night schools are providing teaching support to the weaker performing children. There are ten night schools in which 183 boys and 160 girls are enrolled. The net result of these initiatives is that the number of children going with their parents for migration has gone down from 505 in 2010 to 355 in 2011. The number of dropout girl students enrolled in middle schools in the project area has gone up from 154 in 2010 to 291 in 2011. The number of irregular students in classes one and two regularised in schools is given in Table 4 below:

**Table 4: Regularisation of Irregular Students in Schools**

Sl. No.	Year	Number of Schools	Irregular Students			Students Regularised in Schools		
			Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1	2009-10	30	241	193	434	129	123	252
2	2010-11	29	129	124	253	62	77	139
	Total		370	317	687	191	200	391

The situation with regard to the enrolment of children who have never gone to school or are dropouts is given in Table 5 below. The statistics show that it is easier to enroll boys than girls and in fact the enrollment of girls has gone down in 2010 as compared to 2009. Overall in 2009 only 36.3% of the out of school children in the project area could be brought back to school. In 2010 this proportion has increased slightly and become 40.1%. This shows how difficult it is to get these out of school children back to studies primarily because of the tendency of parents to put the children to work and also because of the phenomenon of migration which disrupts schooling. This further underlines the importance of the quality education programme undertaken by SAMPARK. Developing appropriate quality curriculum and pedagogy and then ensuring that the teachers in the government schools do indeed teach the children in a way that can hold their interest is the most important strategy for increasing student enrollment and ensuring that they attend school regularly. After all if the students find studies to be useless then they will naturally vote with their feet and leave school.



**Table 5: Status of Out of School Children in Project Area 2009-11**

Category			2009-10		2010-11	
			Number	Proportion of Total Out of School (%)	Number	Proportion of Total Out of School (%)
Total Children Initially Out of School	Never Gone to School	Boys	88		55	
		Girls	136		67	
		Total	224		122	
	Dropouts	Boys	88		79	
		Girls	98		95	
		Total	186		174	
	Grand Total		<b>410</b>		<b>296</b>	
Children Enrolled due to efforts of SAMPARK	Never Gone to School	Boys	40	45.5	35	63.6
		Girls	46	33.8	14	20.9
		Total	86	38.4	49	40.2
	Dropouts	Boys	39	44.3	44	55.7
		Girls	24	24.5	28	29.5
		Total	63	33.9	72	41.4
	Grand Total		<b>149</b>	<b>36.3</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>40.9</b>
Children still Out of School	Never Gone to School	Boys	48	54.5	20	36.4
		Girls	90	66.2	53	79.1
		Total	138	61.6	73	59.8
	Dropouts	Boys	49	55.7	35	44.3
		Girls	74	75.5	67	70.5
		Total	123	66.1	102	58.6
	Grand Total		<b>261</b>	<b>63.7</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>59.1</b>

The most important intervention, therefore, is that of improving the quality of primary education in government schools. An additional teacher named "Shala Mitra" or school friend is provided with each school to augment the teaching staff. The government teachers are also trained and motivated to teach better. The Shala Mitras also conduct meetings of the parents and organise "Bal Sabhas" or children's assemblies to increase the awareness in their villages regarding education. Presently there are 3777 children in 49 government schools in 43 villages benefiting from this programme. The Shala Mitras have also played a very significant role in motivating parents to send girls to the residential school. There are night schools in ten villages with a total of 158 boy and 166 girl students. The students of all the different types of schools are educated in line with the pedagogy developed by SAMPARK. Teachers are given an intensive initial training and regular workshops are conducted by resource persons invited from other institutes to improve their capacities.

#### Seeing is Believing

Twelve year old Lalita Khadia of Hathnipada village wanted to continue her studies after passing the fifth class from her village primary school. However, there were a lack of teachers in the nearby middle school which was overcrowded and so her mother did not want to enrol her there. When the Shala Mitra of her village told her of the residential school at the SAMPARK campus she agreed initially to send Lalita there. But then suddenly she refused to do so. She complained that she had heard that the food was not good at the hostel and it was not safe for girls to stay there. Obviously some people in the village had scared her. The Shala Mitra then took both Lalita and her mother to see the SAMPARK campus and this turned the scales as they were convinced that this was the place for Lalitha. She is now happily studying there.

While the residential girls school, night school and bridge school initiatives are common in many places throughout the country the improvement of quality of education in government schools is an innovative step taken by SAMPARK and since it is going to have a much more far reaching impact it will be discussed in a little more detail here. A baseline survey of the status of schools in the project area brought out the following data as shown in Table 6.

**Table 6: Students Enrollment and Teacher Availability in Project Area Schools 2009**

No. of Schools	Number of Enrolled Students			Number of Teachers			Schools Requiring additional Teachers	Number of additional Teachers Required
	Boys	Girls	Total	Male	Female	Total		
<b>44</b>	1935	1786	3872	50	5	55	35	<b>48</b>

SAMPARK decided to provide additional Shala Mitras and associated teaching and learning materials in 30 schools along with on the job training for all teachers to improve teaching. A one day workshop is held in the schools in which child centred and activity based methods of science, mathematics and language teaching are taught to the teachers. The teachers develop relevant teaching and learning materials hands on at these workshops.

**From Pasturing Cattle to Grazing in Intellectual Pastures**

Shanti Gangaram is a thirteen year old girl from Garwada village of Petlawad Tehsil who had given up her studies in class three. Her father had died when she was young and she was staying with her elder brother who forced her to give up her studies in class three so that she could graze the livestock. When the night school teacher met her and asked her why she was not going to school she said nothing initially. The teacher tried to inspire her saying that she would be put through a bridge course and eventually admitted to a higher class in accordance with her age and so there was no need to feel ashamed. Finally Shanti said that her brother would not allow her to study during the day and she could only study at night after doing all the work during the day. The teacher then enrolled the support of the Bal Panchayat in the village and the Village Education Committee and they convinced Shanti's brother to allow her to attend the bridge course being conducted at the SAMPARK campus and she is now happily studying there.

The learning levels of the students in the thirty Shala Mitra schools are tested every month. Special evaluations are carried out in September and March every year and these provide a rigorous check on the progress of the initiative. Grades are given to the students depending on their level of learning of skills. The detailed description of the learning levels and the corresponding grades are as shown in Table 7 below.

**Table 7: Learning Ability and Corresponding Grades for Class I and II**

	Grade	Class I Learning Ability	Class II Learning Ability
Maths	A+	Addition, Subtraction, Place Value and Extended Form	Geometry, Mensuration
	A	Addition and Subtraction with carry over & Count and recognise up to 100	Addition and Subtraction with carry over and Multiplication
	B	Count and recognise up to 50, addition and subtraction without carryover, place value and extended form and Two digit addition	Count and recognise up to 100, addition and subtraction without carryover, place value and extended form

	C	Count and recognise up to 20 and add and subtract two digit numbers	Count and recognise up to 100 and add and subtract two digit numbers
	D	Recognition of numbers up to 9	1 to 20 even and odd numbers, 1 to 50 ascending and descending order
	E	Understanding of size and distance	1 to 50 counting and recognition & writing in words
Hindi	A+	Reading and Comprehension	Reading and Comprehension
	A	Writing simple sentences	Writing simple sentences
	B	Reading and writing Matras	Reading and writing Matras
	C	Reading and writing more than half the alphabet.	Reading and writing of all letters and words without Matras
	D	Reading and writing five to ten alphabets.	Reading and writing more than half the alphabet.
	E	Picture reading and speaking about family.	Reading and writing of a few alphabets

### Perseverance Pays

The village of Hindolabavdi in Petlawad Block had a primary school with one teacher. The building of the primary school had two rooms but one was in bad shape and used to leak during the monsoons. So all the students would have to sit cramped up in one room. Another building had been constructed but it was not complete as it had not been plastered and the flooring had not been done. The Shala Mitra tried to convince the government teacher to get the building completed. However, he said that the funds for the rest of the work had been transferred to the Panchayat and it was the Sarpanch's responsibility to get the work completed. SAMPARK then organised a parent teacher's meeting and passed a resolution asking the Sarpanch to complete the work. When this had no effect then the PTA met again and went together to complain to the Block Education Officer. Only after this was the building completed and now the children have enough covered classrooms in which to study.

The first cohort of students of the Shala Mitra initiative who were in class I in 2009-10 progressed to class II in 2010-11 and so their learning achievements will reveal the impact of the Shala Mitra intervention in more detail. The proportion of students of the first cohort achieving various grades in class I and II are shown in Table 8 below.

**Table 8: Grades Achieved in Class I and II by the first Cohort of Shala Mitra Children**

Grade		Proportion of Students Getting Particular Grades (%)							
		Mathematics				Hindi			
		Sep-09	Mar-10	Sep-10	Mar-11	Sep-09	Mar-10	Sep-10	Mar-11
A+	Boys	0.00	2.90	0.00	9.28	0.00	3.99	0.00	7.47
	Girls	0.00	2.81	0.00	14.40	0.00	3.52	0.00	10.11
	Total	0.00	2.86	0.00	11.94	0.00	3.75	0.00	8.86
A	Boys	0.00	12.16	0.00	20.68	0.00	12.68	0.00	14.52
	Girls	0.00	12.13	0.00	20.62	0.00	12.68	0.00	14.23
	Total	0.00	12.14	0.00	20.65	0.00	12.68	0.00	14.37

B	Boys	0.00	24.32	0.82	19.83	0.00	21.56	2.88	19.92
	Girls	0.00	20.21	0.00	18.29	0.00	20.95	0.75	20.22
	Total	0.00	22.23	0.39	19.03	0.00	21.25	1.77	20.08
C	Boys	5.44	26.13	6.17	18.14	10.91	24.82	15.23	20.33
	Girls	6.50	25.31	4.12	20.62	10.90	23.42	12.83	24.72
	Total	5.98	25.71	5.10	19.43	10.90	24.11	13.98	22.64
D	Boys	25.59	20.51	29.22	21.94	21.09	23.19	27.98	23.24
	Girls	23.02	25.48	25.84	16.34	21.27	22.71	35.85	20.22
	Total	24.29	23.04	27.45	19.03	21.18	22.95	32.09	21.65
E	Boys	68.97	13.97	63.79	10.13	68.00	13.77	53.91	14.52
	Girls	70.47	14.06	70.04	9.73	67.84	16.73	50.57	10.49
	Total	69.73	14.02	66.67	9.92	67.92	15.27	52.17	12.40

There is a clear improvement in the academic performance of the first cohort of students over the two years. In the first examination of September 2009 none of the students could secure the top grades of B, A and A+ but by the examination of March 2011, the proportion of students who had together got these top grades was a very impressive 51.6% in mathematics and 43.3% in Hindi. The performance of boys and girls were more or less equal. Even though there is still scope for improvement as there are around 30% students getting the bottom two grades in both subjects, the indications are that the Shala Mitra innovation has been a success.

Overall child development is the larger goal of SAMPARK's child centred interventions. Accordingly a programme has been drawn up involving the following -

- Balpanchayats of children have been formed and they are regularly trained to improve their competencies in various extra curricular and societal fields.
- The rights of the children and their protection is a major area of concern and so special trainings are conducted to sensitise the parents and teachers in schools.
- Various activities are conducted for children to get them involved in social issues.
- Capacity building is done of children in self-esteem, communication, negotiation and leadership skills.
- Local community organizations like SHGs, PTAs and PRIs have been sensitised to child rights and children protection.
- The scientific temper is inculcated in children and adults alike. There is a Science Centre on the campus where special science workshops are conducted.
- Bal Melas are conducted at the cluster level to further enhance the educational environment and attract children to school.



**Fig 10. Bal Mela in Progress**

Earlier one Bal Mela used to be held at the SAMPARK campus in Raipuria. However, with the beginning of the Shala Mitra programme covering thirty schools it was decided to hold the Bal Melas at each of the five school clusters. The Bal Melas are designed to provide the school going children with an entertaining educational experience and to inspire in the out of school children a desire to study. Thus, the event is organised like a fair with stalls and these stalls provide various kinds of educative inputs. There is one stall that provides linear and areal measurement exercises, then a

second one that introduces the participants into the intricacies of volume measurement. A third stall provides entertaining examples of weighing while a fourth one fascinates the children with mathematical puzzles. There are two stalls associated with geometry and currency notes. Two stalls are concerned with language, stories, fables, proverbs and spelling. Two stalls entertain the participants with plays, songs and dance and drawing and painting while another deals with the mysteries of science and technology. Finally there is one stall which displays and sells the many publications and media creations of SAMPARK. While the morning is spent in playing in these stalls after lunch there are skits, puppet shows and magic shows which show how it is possible to hoodwink people by using tricks that are based on scientific principles. These children's fairs were very successful and have now become much awaited events in the local calendar.

Another major innovation by SAMPARK is the creation of Child Resource Centres. The area being hilly children coming from long distances to school. They can not play games and enjoy other extra curricular activities because there aren't play grounds and playing materials in their schools or at their homes. There are no facilities to play cricket or foot ball and various mental games which are necessary for the children's mental and physical growth. Consequently this initiative of SAMPARK has been a hit with the children and they also provide vocational skills training for adolescents.



**Fig. 11: Child Resource Centre**

## **9. Health**

Malnourishment is the most worrisome health issue. Due to the poverty of the people there is a serious lack of nutrition in the whole population. However, the most affected are the pregnant women and children. Due to malnutrition the immune systems of the body become weak and so people suffer more from diseases. Thus nutrition is the first area of intervention for SAMPARK. The organisation has put in place a comprehensive programme for nutrition enhancement involving the following measures -

- 1- Promotion of local food supplements for the malnourished children because these can be easily prepared.
- 2- Promotion of kitchen gardens in each family so as to increase the availability of vegetables and fruits.
- 3- Conduct of community meetings to sensitise the community on the malnutrition issue and its severe effects on the future of children.
- 4- Familiarisation of the people with vaccination programmes and the facility of the Nutrition Rehabilitation Centre.

Adolescents are another group who are vulnerable to serious health problems due to their lack of knowledge and understanding about the changes they are going through. SAMPARK has formed Adolescent Groups to raise their awareness about health and other relevant issues as follows –

1. To prepare adolescent leaders from each phalia (hamlets) of the village.
2. To sensitise them regarding the harm of child marriage.
3. To sensitise the adolescents about the sexuality related health issues.

4. To make the adolescents aware of the physical and mental changes that they are going through.
5. To make the girl adolescents aware about taking proper food and maintaining hygiene at the time of their monthly periods through reproductive health workshops.
6. To teach gender equality.

### **Making the Most of Government Services**

The government data on malnutrition in Jhabua district grossly underestimates the prevailing reality. Payal, daughter of Sambhu Solanki and Sajan Bai of village Bada Salunia was 17 months old. She is in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade of malnourishment. Once an awareness campaign on nutrition was organised in the village of Bada Salunia, where discussions were held for mothers of 0 to 5 year old children. They were told about the precautions to be taken at the local level. Ms. Rekha Dangi the staff of SAMPARK made the care giver mothers understand that if the child is malnourished then first it should be admitted to the ICDS centre. Then enough food to eat should be provided along with milk, daliya, potato and fruits like banana. Mothers should then keep in mind that all the vaccinations of the mother and the child are done and they are well protected from diseases. The health worker of the government said that there are two malnourished children in this village. When Rekha asked the child's name, her grand mother Jogdi Bai said that due to lack of time and work in the field they are not able to give more attention to the child's health. The health worker said that the child should be admitted in the nutritional rehabilitation centre at Petlawad. The child is admitted for 14 days and during this time she was treated and taken care of fully on government expense. Sajan Bai admitted the child on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2010. The day Payal was admitted in the centre her weight was 6 kgs. After 14 days in the centre her weight had increased by 500 grams. Sajan bai received 1100 rupees at 65 rupees per day. Now the condition of the child is very good.

Stress is also laid on the proper implementation of the Government Reproductive health services for women. Especial attention is paid to see that the pregnant women receive proper pre-natal care and eventually go through institutional deliveries under the Janani Suraksha Yojana so as to reduce the risk of maternal and natal mortality.

### **Hands On Training**

An adolescent girl Ritu Arad from the village of Badlipada came to a reproductive health workshop for the first time. She faced the advent of her menstrual circle during the workshop. She told her friend Sakudi who mentioned this to the coordinator Rekha Dangi – "Didi apne jo bataya masik dharm ke bare me wo Ritu ko ho gaya." She was given hands on training about taking care of herself during the period. Ritu was given a piece of red cotton cloth to keep in the place of bleeding and she was told that now she was growing up and these things would happen and so she need not worry. She was also given advice that she should consume good and sufficient food. Ritu went back assured.



**Fig. 12: Reproductive Health Workshop**



SAMPARK has a general health programme based on ayurvedic medicine also. The programme tries to respect the tribal outlook on health also. The Bhil adivasis have traditionally relied on medicine men for the solution of their health problems. Traditional adivasi aetiology has it that a variety of evil spirits are responsible for various diseases and so it is necessary to exorcise them by the chanting of mantras. The medicine men know these mantras and the ways in which evil spirits can be exorcised. Herbs too are prescribed as a supplement to these mantras. Even today this view of disease persists among the adivasis and because its administration is cheap it is normally the first option for them. There is little understanding of the fact that disease is caused by germs and bacteria of various kinds. The only difference is that now along with the medicine men the people go to doctors also who give them injections and pills or intravenous drips. These things are as arcane to illiterate adivasis as the mantras chanted by the medicine men but appear at times to be more effective. However, in most cases these doctors are unqualified quacks who prescribe irrational medicines and aggravate the situation even further. The adivasis do not take any chances, however, and go to both quacks and medicine men either simultaneously or alternately when seriously ill. SAMPARK has a medical team that works on the principles of ayurveda and simple allopathic treatment to provide immediate relief. Serious cases are referred to primary health centres and hospitals. SAMPARK has also built up awareness among the people about the National Rural Health Mission and the Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY). Many poor people have been in cases of illness so that they have been treated free of charge in hospitals taking advantage of the RSBY.

## **10. Information, Education, Communication, Research and Documentation**

SAMPARK has a very impressive IEC and R&D track record. The start of the organisation process in the 1980s was done with street plays and puppet shows among the people to familiarise them with the ideas of people centred development. Since then every major new initiative of the organisation has begun with street plays and puppet shows. The Quality Education programme relied heavily on such people's media to spread the word regarding the new initiative to improve government school education. Later capabilities have been developed in film making and the organisation now has a long list of short educational films on various aspects of rural development that are available on its website ([www.samparkmp.in](http://www.samparkmp.in)). Apart from this the organisation has conducted detailed research on various aspects of development and mass organisational work and these have been published as booklets which are in great demand. The booklet in Hindi on genetically modified seeds, "Bharatiya Krishi par Jeevantarit Beej ka Khatra", has gone into a second edition because of widespread demand from all over the Hindi speaking states because there is a dearth of simple literature on this difficult subject. All this output has also been digitised and put up on its website on the Internet. SAMPARK is also very good at media advocacy and its work is regularly covered by electronic and print media. Some of the press clippings have been given in the annexure.

The strongest work of SAMPARK is in film making and it has produced some very good films on development issues which are used for grassroots mobilisation. The film "Jeeti Jang Zindagi Ki" is about the great victory won by the LJM in getting the debt of the tribal farmers due to a wrongly implemented group Lift Irrigation Scheme waived. The film vividly picturises the way the organisation used both mass mobilisation at the grassroots and policy, legal and media advocacy at higher levels to ensure the implementation of the rule of law in favour of the tribals. This film has been screened throughout the state and country and is frequently used as a training aid in farmer's training workshops. The film "Phasal Bachane Ki Rah Par" deals with the problems of modern chemical agriculture and their solution through

the adoption of organic agricultural techniques, especially organic pesticides. As many as five hundred farmers have been inspired by the film to adopt organic techniques on their farms. A related film is "Jang Khamosh Khatre ke Khilaf" on the dangers posed by the introduction of genetically modified crops. The film details the various problems associated with the spread of genetically engineered crops and the successful national campaign that prevented the introduction of the BT Brinjal seed. This film has been able to explain to the farmers the very difficult subject of genetically engineered seeds and their possible negative effects and has contributed to their mobilisation against GM crops.

## 11. Sajha Manch

There is a clear gender division of labour in Bhil society with the women having to do the domestic work and also take on the responsibilities of child bearing and rearing in addition to agricultural work. Socially too the women have an inferior status with little say in community affairs and are considered as commodities to be sold off for a bride-price at the time of marriage. Married women have to submit to polygamy and witchhunting and also have to veil their faces in front of elder male relatives on their husband's side. Women have no right of inheritance or to property. This patriarchy and the lack of education and proper reproductive health services had resulted in the birth rate remaining uncontrolled further adding to the miseries of the women in particular and the Bhils as a whole through a population explosion.

The Sajha Manch has been formed to address patriarchy and gender inequity within and without the home. Through an intensive programme of workshops, exposure tours and interactions with the bureaucracy and politicians the women are trained to act publicly on the following issues –

1. The proper holding of Gram Sabhas.
2. The proper functioning of the elected representatives of the Panchayat especially the women members.
3. The proper functioning of the Integrated Child Development Scheme and its accompanying women's and adolescent girls' schemes.
4. The proper functioning of the Janani Suraksha Yojana for pregnant women.
5. The proper functioning of the Right to Education Act.
6. The proper functioning of the MGNREGS.



**Fig.13: Women being Briefed by Police Staff in the Police Station**

The SM conducted a series of evaluation workshops across various panchayats to determine the main problems that were being faced by women in particular and the people in general. A workshop was then organised at the Block level and after further deliberations the following five main demands came to the fore –

1. Resolutions passed by the Gram Sabha are not heeded to by the Panchayat bureaucracy at the Block level and sometimes also at the Gram Panchayat level leading to a severe dilution of the authority of the Gram Sabha and its members. Thus, for effective local self governance to materialise it was asserted that the resolutions of the Gram Sabha should be made mandatory on the Panchayat staff and also the government at the state level.
2. Heavy rains had led to the crops of many farmers being destroyed and yet the government had done nothing to compensate them for the losses arising out of this natural calamity. The second demand, therefore, was that the losses sustained by the farmers should be evaluated and they should be adequately compensated.
3. Farmers were being made to pay arbitrary electricity bills which were inflated much more than the actual consumption. The third demand was that proper metering of electricity should be done and then the farmers should be charged according to their actual usage. Presently the electricity distribution company was trying to make up for its own losses arising from inefficient operations by over charging farmers and this should stop.
4. A new poverty line survey should be carried out based on an appropriate poverty line basket for the area. Those ineligible but still holding a special BPL ration card should be forthwith reprimanded and their illegal ration cards should be confiscated.
5. The Public Distribution System outlets are not running properly and there is black marketing of cereals and sugar going on. This should be stopped.

The assembly chose five women Panches from among themselves to put these demands to the administration – Jaswanti Disor, Bijli Pooja, Hetudi Mota, Madi Vesya and Ganga. These women went to the weekly Jan Sunwai that is held by the District Collector in Jhabua. The Collector, a lady, listened patiently to all the demands placed by the women and then said that she too had something to say. The Collector told the women about the various schemes of the government for the uplift of the poor like Indira Awaas Yojana, Janani Suraksha Yojana and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme and asked them how these could be better implemented. The women immediately told her that empowering the Gram Sabha and ensuring that women took part in it in large numbers was the best way to ensure transparency and efficiency in administration. The Collector said that she would appoint a special officer at the Block level to monitor the resolutions passed by the Gram Sabhas to ensure that they were honoured by the administration.



**Fig.14 Women interacting with the District Collector in Jhabua**

The fifty percent reservation for women in the PRIs has provided a great impetus to the women to participate in public affairs. The SM has gone one step further and mobilised its members to participate in the Gram Sabhas and so exert pressure on the elected representatives of the PRIs to perform their duties better.

## 12. Lok Jagriti Manch and Beej Swaraj Abhiyan

The LJM has over the years emerged as a very potent mass organisational force with actions at all levels from the village to the national. Whether it has been in the sphere of mobilising the people to correct bad customs like the taking of huge bride price or expending large amounts during the rites of passage or in countering the malpractices of the traders and moneylenders the LJM has always received tremendous mass support. The campaign for the reduction of expenses on bride price and rites of passage has led to a cumulative saving of about Rupees Three crores in 2010-11 in 150 villages in the Petlawad and Rama blocks. In fact it is through this mass mobilisation over local issues that SAMPARK has been able to actualise its goal of empowering the Gram Sabha. As mentioned earlier considerable mobilisation has also been done to ensure the proper implementation of the MGNREGS. The LJM has also taken up the issue of forest rights under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest dwellers (Recognition of Rights) Act or Forest Rights Act (FRA) as it is popularly known. Despite the active opposition of the forest department the tribals have continued to cultivate the forest land they have cultivated for years together and their struggle for registering their rights is continuing.

While all these traditional local campaigns continued, the major new campaign in the two year period under review was that against the introduction of genetically modified or GM seeds and specifically GM brinjal conducted under the auspices of the Beej Swaraj Abhiyan (BSA). This campaign against the machinations of Multinational Corporations (MNC) like Monsanto which are trying to manipulate the central and state governments into allowing them to further capture the Indian agriculture sector, raised the LJM's visibility at the national and international levels. Moreover, this engagement with global forces has led to an increase in the sophistication of the advocacy techniques adopted by SAMPARK. The BSA mobilised the urban middle and upper classes, students in colleges also in addition to the farmers in the villages to put pressure on the government. A concerted campaign was carried out to enlighten the media about the dangers of GM crops and this led to greater media coverage of the activities and programmes of the BSA. The movement succeeded not only in stopping the introduction of BT Brinjal but also by getting the Government of Madhya Pradesh to remove the use of GM crops from its agricultural policy. The LJM and BSA also participated in the Kisan Swaraj Yatra taken out between 2.10.2010 and 10.12.2010 all over India to focus the country's attention on the various problems being faced by farmers.



Fig. 15: Participating in the Kisan Swaraj Rally

The various activities of the LJM in the period under review were as follows –

1. A meeting of the LJM was held in Samli on 3.4.09 to review the progress of the various campaigns regarding MGNREGS, FRA, waiver of electricity bills, inclusion of more families in the BPL list and GM seeds. The cluster convenors of the organisation were nominated.
2. A delegation of 70 members of LJM submitted a memorandum of demands to the Subdivisional Magistrate in Petlawad on 25.5.09.
3. A meeting was held in Mohankot village on 26.6.09 and it was decided to start the process for applying for forest rights under the FRA.
4. A meeting of the LJM was held on 31.7.09 at Mandan Bheruji to review the progress of various campaigns and decide on a strategy to increase the membership and participation of the organisation.
5. A meeting of the LJM was held on 13.8.09 in Junawada village in which it was decided to carry out a campaign to increase the membership and participation of women in the organisation and an agenda for the Gram Sabhas to be held on the forthcoming independence day was drawn up.
6. A meeting was held in Mohankot village on 17.8.09 to review the process of application for forest rights under the FRA.
7. A meeting of the LJM was held in Nandarmata village to review the action taken by the administration regarding the resolutions passed on education and health issues in the Gram Sabhas conducted on independence day. A follow up strategy was chalked out and convenors were given the responsibility for its implementation.
8. A hundred members of the LJM participated in a rally and public meeting of the BSA in Jabalpur on 1.10.09 against the research and trials being conducted by the Agricultural university there on GM seeds.
9. A ten member team of the LJM participated in a Dharna organised by the Right to Food Campaign in Delhi on 26.11.09 against the wrong policies of the government.
10. A meeting of the LJM was held on 1.12.09 in Gothania Talab on the strategy for furthering the various campaigns of the organisation and increasing participation in them.
11. A meeting of the LJM was held on 12.12.09 in Rama Block on the strategy for furthering the various campaigns of the organisation and increasing participation in them.
12. A meeting of the LJM was held on 14.12.09 in Petlawad Block on the strategy for furthering the various campaigns of the organisation and increasing participation in them.
13. A hundred members of the LJM attended a Jan Sunwai with Shri Jairam Ramesh the Union Minister for Environment and Forests in Ahmedabad on 19.1.10. They were in the forefront of the protest put up by civil society organisations against the introduction of GM food crops which would poison both the environment and the food being eaten by people. The minister promised to place the concerns expressed by LJM members before parliament.

14. LJM members were present at the Jan Sunwai held in New Delhi on 28.1.10 also and presented a detailed report on the anti- GM campaign being conducted at the village level in Madhya Pradesh.
15. A hunger strike was organised in Bhopal on 30.1.10 in which 300 people participated and expressed their opposition to GM crops. Subsequently they travelled without ticket in the train to Bhopal to further express their opposition.
16. The LJM representatives presented their demands to the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh in Bhopal on 5.2.10. The demands included the proper implementation of the Forest Rights Act, a moratorium on the collection of inflated electricity bills, inclusion of BPL families in the official list and the provision of no-objection certificates from banks to adivasis whose loans had been waived. The Chief Minister announced that the government officials would search out each and every adivasi cultivating forest land and give them the rights certificates.
17. A meeting of the LJM was held in Gothaniya Talab on 26.3.10 to review the progress of the anti-GM movement and decide on future strategy. A plan was chalked out to put pressure on the Madhya Pradesh government to declare it as an organic state. A decision was taken to meet the agriculture minister on 9.4.10.
18. Four hundred members of the LJM went without ticket by train to Bhopal on 10.4.10 to participate in a rally to thank the Chief Minister and Agriculture Minister for having officially refused to allow the introduction of GM crops into the state.
19. Fifty members of the LJM participated in a dharna organised by the Right to Food Campaign in Delhi on 18th and 19th April 2010 to protest against the government's apathy towards the starvation and malnutrition of the poor in this country. They demanded that the grain stored in the government warehouses should not be allowed to rot and instead be distributed to the poor.
20. A team from LJM participated in the May Day celebrations organised by Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan in Rajasthan on 1.5.10 and learnt about the ways in which the latter had gone about achieving its goals.
21. A team from LJM participated in a national workshop of the Right to Food campaign in Rourkela in Orissa from 6th to 8th August 2010 to evaluate the hunger status of the nation and chalk out future strategies.
22. A workshop was held over three days from 27th to 29th August 2010 in Rama Block in which youth were sensitised regarding the ill effects of the expenditures on bride price, alcoholism and rites of passage. This led to the launch of a campaign to reduce these expenses which has resulted in a 50 percent reduction in wasteful expenditures.
23. LJM members participated in the Right to Food Campaign meeting held in Bhopal on 18.9.10. It was decided to carry out mass demonstrations outside government warehouses demanding the distribution of grains to the poor. This campaign was carried out from 22nd to 28th September 2010 and it started from Hatyadeli village in Petlawad Block.
24. Two hundred members of the LJM participated in the Kisan Swaraj Yatra in Bhopal on 10.10.10 which had been taken out to raise awareness of people all over the country about the harmful effects of GM agriculture.
25. A strategy meeting of the LJM was organised on 16.11.10 at Junakhera Talab where the work of the organisation was reviewed and a future work plan was finalised.

26. A strategy meeting of the LJM was organised on 3.12.10 at Singdevi Mataji Mandir where the work of the organisation was reviewed and the programme for the Kisan Swaraj Yatra final meeting in Delhi to be held on 11.12.10 was finalised.
27. The final ending programme of the Kisan Samvad Yatra in Delhi on 11.12.10 was attended by 100 members of the LJM. A public declaration to save traditional sustainable agriculture was adopted. Delegates from 23 states and union territories participated.
28. A strategy meeting of the LJM was organised on 23.1.11 at Gothania Talab where the work of the organisation was reviewed and a programme chalked out for the passing of Gram Sabha resolutions on 26th January 2011 regarding the problems being faced.
29. The LJM made a presentation in a meeting organised by the State Government at the Prashasan Academy, Bhopal advocating protection of farmer's rights in the new Seed Bill being formulated by the Government.
30. The LJM members participated in the rally taken out on 8th March 2011 on the occasion of Women's day in Bhopal.
31. The LJM members participated in a meeting in Bhopal held from 2nd to 4th July 2011 to discuss the impacts on the poor of the new health security bill being formulated by the government.
32. The LJM members participated in a demonstration in Bhopal on 9.8.2011 registering opposition to the anti-farmer policies of the government which were being promoted to favour the MNCs.
33. The LJM participated in the demonstration in Delhi organised by the India Against Corruption movement on 24th and 25th August 2011 and introduced a new point regarding the corruption in the trade of agricultural inputs and outputs.

The LJM frequently conducts village meetings and awareness camps to keep the members abreast of the latest developments regarding the various rights campaigns being conducted by it. These meetings are a potent instrument for gaining new members. In one such meeting held at Mathmath on 21.9.11, the Patel of Hanumanthaya village was inspired to initiate a campaign to stop the sale of illegal liquor in his village. Such is the liveliness of the organisation and the main reason why it has been able to successfully launch the campaign to empower the Gram Sabhas against the bureaucracy, mainstream political parties and the traders and moneylenders.

#### **Fighting for Right to the Forest**

The villagers of Rasodi village in Rama Block have been cultivating forest land for generations. They learnt from members of the LJM that under the provisions of the FRA they could apply for rights to their land individually and also as a community. The Gram Sabha recommended the applications of 105 villagers and forwarded it to the Subdivisional Committee. However, the Subdivisional Committee has not taken any action on the applications and instead the forest department staff are threatening the villagers with dire consequences if they do not give up their demand for rights. The people of the village have remained adamant and strong and are conducting a campaign to highlight the highhandedness and of the forest department and administration. The villagers have taken their complaints to Bhopal and Delhi and thus have ensured that they will not be dispossessed of their land.



### 13. Quantification of Impact

The quantification of the impact of development programmes is always a difficult exercise due to the paucity of data and the huge effort involved in collecting reliable data. Thus, instead of undertaking the extensive work of quantifying total impact what has been attempted here is a comparison of the economic value of the time given by the people mobilised for various programmes with the grant expenditure on overheads and salaries incurred for the two years 2009-11 by SAMPARK. The principle on which this comparison is based is that the people give up a day's work in their fields or other occupations to attend the various meetings, workshops and demonstrations and this is their voluntary contribution that has been mobilised by SAMPARK. The value of this contribution of time by the people is worked out by multiplying the total number of persondays thus expended by the people with the MGNREGS wage rate of Rs 125 per day. This is compared to the total budget of the organisation on overheads and salaries to see the efficiency ratio. These results are given in Table 9 below.

**Table 9: Comparison of People's Contribution with Programme Budget**

Year	Organisation	No of Workshops/Exposures/Tours/Meetings/Rallies/Dharna	No of Participants	No of Person days	Rs 125 x No of Person days = Amount of people's contribution (Rs)	Total People's Contribution (Rs)	Programme Overall Overhead Budget (Rs)	Programme Overall Salary Budget (Rs)	Efficiency Ratio of People's Contribution to Salary Budget (%)	Efficiency Ratio of People's Contribution to (Salary + Overhead) Budget (%)
09-10	Sam	958	19515	20259	2532375	2936750	1460173	4025581	73.0	53.5
	LJM	18	1054	3235	404375					
10-11	Sam	1054	21531	26933	3366625	3867750	1123776	3915336	128.0	76.8
	LJM	15	1375	4009	501125					

Considering only the salary budget of SAMPARK, the efficiency ratio was a high 73% in 2009-10 and it rose to a very impressive 128% in 2010-11. This means that the value of the people's participation in various programmes mustered by the staff of the organisation was more than the salaries that they took home in 2010-11. Even though the number of events of LJM went down from 18 in 2009-10 to 15 in 2010-11, the number of participants increased substantially. This was due to the stress laid on holding review meetings in which strategies for mass mobilisation were chalked out regularly. The higher efficiency ratios with respect to mobilisation of people are an indication that the programme implementation is on track as higher mobilisation leads to better project outcomes. The inclusion of overhead expenses leads to much lower efficiency ratio but given the fact that the target beneficiaries are extremely poor people administrative and travel related overhead expenses have to be borne by the organisation. The performance of the LJM is particularly notable in this regard as its mass events are totally supported by the people as opposed to those of SAMPARK in which participants are provided with travel support and food. The mobilisation of the urban middle class and students in the case of the BSA and of women in the case of SM has not been taken into account in this analysis and thus the actual efficiency ratio is even higher.

## 14. The Way Forward

Gandhi in his seminal book on local self governance "Hind Swaraj" published in 1909 put forward the concept of a village centred society which he named "Oceanic Circles". In the same way as the waves radiate out from a central point in an ocean so also Gandhi envisaged an economic and political system that would have the villages at its centre and the higher tiers of governance and economy would be the intersection of concentric circles emanating from the villages. These higher tiers would have only those powers that were delegated to them by the villages. However, after independence the pyramidal structure inherited from the British was retained instead of constructing a new structure based on the Oceanic Circles concept of Gandhi. Therefore, the task now is to migrate from the pyramidal structure to an Oceanic Circles based structure. The first step in this is to invert the power structure by empowering those who are at the bottom.

This is why SAMPARK has chosen to implement a programme for garnering wealth and power at the bottom. All programmes of the organisation in future will be geared towards increasing wealth and power at the bottom and usher in true local self governance. The legal framework for this now exists with laws like PESA, FRA, MGNREGA and RTI. The challenge is to get this legal framework working on the ground. The strategy of SAMPARK will be to make this possible and for this it has indentified the following thrust areas of work for the future –

1. Alternative Education
2. Alternative Agriculture
3. Sustainable Natural Resource Management
4. Gender Rights
5. Alternative Medicine
6. Panchayati Raj
7. Alternative Livelihoods
8. Alternative IEC and R&D.

The mix of development and rights based work that has been adopted so far with a fair amount of success will be continued into the future also. The work of moulding the LJM, SM and BSA into a well coordinated network of people's organisations will continue apace.