



I-CONCEPT INITIATIVES

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

by: **I-CONCEPT
INITIATIVES**

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From the Desk of MD

We entered into the activities with lots of enthusiasm to glorify our endeavours in the Year 2022-23. Being a 3rd Millennium Support Service Organization i-CI undertook diversified activities for the benefit of small and marginal farmers of the operational areas. Addressing the agriculture issues of small and marginal farmers was a herculean task for us. But successfully we accomplished the task by motivating them to use Pedal Pump (PEP) along with Agroecological Farming. We educated them, discussed with them from time to time and motivated them to opt for Agroecological farming. That apart we assured them to sell their farm products at our disposal. Hence, we focussed on the formation of Producers Groups (PG) and Farmers Producers Organisation (FPO). The experience of working with multitude strings of issues & individuals further enriched our ideas, knowledge and perception.

This Annual Report is the fleeting instant of our activities. Our endeavours in fact made us closer to the community. We could able to reach to the community only because of their strong faith and belief on us. Without the guidance of our Mentors, Advisors as well as Trustee Members it could not have been possible. I owe my gratitude to them. My colleagues and Co-riders are equally important for us. Their relentless efforts to bring the organisation to this level are praiseworthy. They deserve a big round of cheer. Last but not least the supports of the community members are striking. Their wholehearted acceptance completed our work easy and comfortable. We are sincerely beholden them.

My wishes are also due the External Consultants who are vital in extending their valuable time & support as and when prerequisite. They certainly deserve the biggest pie of the cake called "Success".

I wish this document a great success.

Mr. Prabodha Kumar Mohanty

Managing Director,

i-Concept Initiatives

Bhubaneswar.

With the following Vision and Mission, we at i-Concept Initiatives strived to accomplish our Goal to provide poison free food to the people and enrich them with alternatives to lead a healthy & disease-free life along with augment the livelihoods of small and marginal farmers.

Our Vision

Excel as a support service institution for creating learning atmosphere and healthy environment among the civil society organizations, enable them for imparting quality service to communities as well.

Our Mission

Develop model villages in the areas of Natural Resource Management in both coastal and hinterland, Disaster Management, Water & Sanitation, Child Centered Community Development, Education and Geriatric care etc., keeping in view the ambitious Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

Organization

i-Concept Initiatives is a 3rd millennium consultative development effort by a group of progress staffs, who have decades of experience at the grassroots as well as at the management and policy framing levels. They have had the distinctions of working both independently and as a part of a team, with many transnational and national potential grantees, in Project identification, Appraisal, Proposal Development, Evaluation and Analysis of Project Progress, Documentation, Reporting & Monitoring in various development programs.

The organization levies special priority on capacity building of key stakeholders engaged in the process, mentoring and handholding of community and Community Based Organizations (CBO) apart from ensuring leveraging technology, human resource and expertise for upliftment of vulnerable, marginalized, deprived and excluded.

The Organization strives to provide context specific and localized quality solutions to emerging problems in project management in a cost effective and timely manner. Strict adherence to the cliental needs, perception, demand and timely submission of the assignment remained as the hallmark of the Iconian's since its inception, timely submission of the assignment remained as the hallmark of the Iconian's since its inception.

Approach

The Organization follows twin pronged approach while being engaged with the partners and community. While it extends technical support to the partner agencies in number of domains at the same time it also undertakes action-based research and direct development initiatives by getting associated with like minded agencies/organizations/institutions working in the field of grassroots development.

Broad Objectives of the Organization

- To develop model on Land, water and forest management for wider replication inside as well as outside the state;
- To develop the capacity of the civil society organization so that they can feel and act empowered;
- To undertake area and issue specific social research to decode the causes that lie beneath many social issues;
- Advocacy with different stakeholders for enactment and enforcement of pro-poor policies in different socio-economic regimes;
- Promote indigenous, easy to use and low-cost technology for bringing lasting change in the lives of millions who are marginalized either because of birth or social position;

- To Promote pro-poor and pro people natural resource management initiatives through participatory process;
- Support for the protection and promotion of Child Rights for creating an enabling environment where the child can grow and perform;

Strength of the Organization

The organization draws its strength from years' long experience of professionals who are associated with i-Concept Initiatives. These professionals have worked with different National and International agencies on various thematic areas and contributed significantly to the areas of forest management, water resource management, livelihood, disaster management, community participation in WATSAN, e-governance, early childhood and mother tongue-based education etc. The organization also supports young professionals to learn and master skills required to excel in development world. Thus, a very professional bonding with personal touch develops in the team.

Structure of the organization

Keeping in view its Vision, Mission and Objectives, organization has set up four broad units to achieve its objectives. These units are Research & Documentation, Training & Capacity Building, IEC Material Development and Field Based Programs. Each unit is lead by a Director from Board. For internal control management of the organization, one Director looks after the day-to-day activities to facilitate these units to work efficiently.

Geographical Areas of Operation

Our Regional office is located in Bhubaneswar while five district Project Offices are situated in Pipili (Puri), Ranapur and Nuagaon (Nayagarh), Tureikela (Bolangir), Kankahad (Dhenkanal) and Gupti and Boulakani (Kendrapara) districts, Odisha. That apart its area of operation spans a number of Indian states. The team has delivered assignments in Chhatisgarh, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, West Bengal, Jharkhanda, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala and Assam in India.

Broad contours of our work

- We conceive ideas and translate it into concepts, provide solution depending on the location and topography with latest available scientific practices and linking it with traditional know-how on land, water and environment management programs;
- It is a potential support group to organizations, civil society entities and action groups in Orissa and outside in Organizational Development and Change Management, Land and Water Management, Natural Resource Management (NRM), Organic Farming, Forestry, Wasteland Development, Disaster Management, Child Right, Climate Change, Early Childhood, Women Empowerment and Primary education;
- The Organization is a technical support unit to many organizations on issues like water, sanitation, education, organic farming, health and disaster management;
- Facilitate the micro planning process to develop the comprehensive village development plan with collaboration of local bodies/institutions and community;
- Develop cost effective, easy to understand and easy to monitor management systems and procedures for organizational growth and program quality;
- Adoption of village as a model unit for practice of Conventional / Appropriate Technology in rural management;

- Develop Training module, Guidelines, Materials for organizing training programs on different domains of development;
- Facilitate and undertake Research & Documentation, Evaluation, and Impact Assignments as per the organization strength.

Key Values

While pursuing the mission and executing the activities, it is guided by values which strongly determine the quality and process of its interventions.

Transparency & Accountability

Enhancing the transparency and accountability in management practices in the organization and ensure the same among the communities of operational villages;

Gender Equity

Strongly advocate for the gender equity inside the organization as well as in the Community Based Organizations;

Secularism

The organization always strives to ensure religious tolerance in its own work and in those whom it supports. All religions and staff members irrespective of their religious beliefs and practiced value are treated with equal respect. This also includes respect for traditional institutions and indigenous knowledge that are in tandem with the values of the organization;

Learning

Consolidating and enhancing organizational learning's based on experience and incorporating such learning's as a major input for sustained organizational dynamism;

Participatory Action

Consolidating and enhancing organizational learning's based on experience and incorporating such learning's as a major input for sustained organizational dynamism;

Sustainability

The organization continues to foster improvement among the communities to initiate and sustain the process with the external help.

Experience & Expertise

The members of ICI have worked for various International Agencies, National Government and Non-Government Organizations successfully. They have proved their mettle in research, training, documentation, project evaluation, monitoring etc.

The Organizations who have been largely benefited with these band of professionals include DFID, Oxfam, Aqua Alimenta, CARE, Practical Action, PLAN International, CIDA, UN Agencies, DANIDA, European Commission, Child Fund India, Save The Children, CIF, CSIR (Centre for Scientific and Industrial Research), and different agencies of Govt. of India and Odisha.

Background

Agriculture in Odisha, with a 20% share in Gross State Domestic Product, still remains a priority sector in terms of employability, inclusiveness and sustainability. However, it ranks 21 among the 30 states of India in terms of economic development. Agricultural productivity is low due to limited access to irrigation and inputs, insufficient investments by small farmers, unsustainable agronomic practices and want of marketing facilities. Hence, sustainable farming methods and farmers collectivization can help in producing required crops in the small fragmented lands and backyards. The proposed project looks at possible opportunities of sustainable farming practices as an alternative for the small and marginal farmers in the targeted operational districts.

Objectives

The objective of the project is to create sustainable and environment friendly farming practices in the target villages and sustain it through farmer collectives fostering Agroecological farming, improving soil nutrition, foster technology penetration through PEP for uninterrupted irrigation facility, enabling improved access to inputs and services and increasing farmer incomes, thereby strengthening their livelihoods.

- To promote Agroecological farming and strengthen the farmers practices;
- To be at the doorsteps in 163 villages in all of the operational districts of Odisha;
- Support small and marginal farmers of operational villages to initiate assured organic vegetable gardens in their homestead and farm yard with uninterrupted irrigation facility;
- To develop a resource pool of model farmers (Bhala Chasi) to advocate the process of organic farming;
- To identify Bhala Chasi from each cluster and train them on all methods of organic farming to develop Farmer Field School (FFS) to teach as well as motivate others to adopt and apply it in their farm fields
- To ensure food and nutritional security among school children.
- To promote Producers Groups (PG) in the operational villages.
- To promote Farmers Producers organization (FPOs) in all operational districts.
- To trained and expose Project team members on organic farming, Value addition, Packaging & its marketing.

Operational Areas

The project got implemented in six districts (Puri, Nayagarh, Bolangir, Dhenkanal and Kendrapara) which are comprised of 163 villages of 10 blocks.

District	Block	No of Villages
Nayagarh	Ranpur	25
	Daspalla	11
	Nuagoan	12
Puri	Nimapara	23
	Pipil	13
Kendrapara	Rajnagar	12
	Mahakalpara	17
Bolangir	Bangamunda	16
	Tureikela	14
Dhenkanal	Kankadahad	20
Total		163

Activities

A. Training, Capacity Building and Exposer

The project has not only formed PG and FPOs, but also provided training programs on different themes to the PG and FPO members. The main objective was to empower women and make them self-sufficient and also all the members of FPOs must have enriched their knowledge on marketing and grading of their produces. In this regard project has trained both the groups on management, finance and record keeping and marketing.

Organization has organized training programs on different themes for PG members, BoDs, CEOs of FPO and Staffs separately for their better understanding and knowledge upliftment. Apart from that organization has also organized training programs on organic farming practices and preparation of different types of organic manure preparation centrally as well as village wise by which a farmer can understand the values and benefit of those products.

During this year organization has been organized training programs for School Management Committee, Parents, School Children on Nutritional value of Vegetables, Difference between Agroecological Farming and Conventional Farming. Apart from that Essay, Debate and Painting competition among school children organized and encourage all of them by giving prizes and certificates. Our main objective was to aware all parents and children about food value and encourage young children towards farming and want to be a

change maker of the society, encourage parents towards agroecological farming and make chemical free environment for better and prosperous future.

B. Research and Documentation

Solid and Liquid Waste Management

The organization has conducted a Baseline sample survey under UNICEF – funded research study Title **“Dhenkanal Pilot Project for Solid and Liquid Waste Management (SLWM)”**.

The organization has conducted an **End line Evaluation Resilient WASH, Resilient Children** in Bhadrak district, project was funded by Water Aid.

Sensor Based Irrigation Management in Odisha

In Collaboration with one of the leading university in Agriculture, Zurich Sensor Based Irrigation Management in Odisha (SIMO) has been installed in Maa Mati in a demonstration basis in tomato field, the objective of this experiment is to know the quantity of water required for this crop. First of all, total plot divided into 21 sub plots, out of that in plot sensor will not be placed but in rest 20 plot sensors has been installed, in this way we are able to make a comparison between manual and sensor-based irrigation. During the experiment two types of sensors has been installed one is 4 inches and another one is 6 inches, to know the moisture of the land in different depth accordingly farmer will irrigate his land.

C. Action and implementation

▪ Institutional Building

Formation of Producer Group

In the project adequate importance has been given to Women Empowerment, as without development of women it is not possible to achieve the objectives of the project. Hence, the project has formed Producer Groups by involving women only and capacitated them with various training programs.

Registration of FPOs

Prior to the implementation of the project, farmers were not getting the right price for their produce, because the farmers were not organized. For a better implementation and to achieve the project goals we focused on Community-Based Organizations rather than individuals. Hence, Organization has registered 11 Farmer Producer Organizations in our operational areas. Now farmers are willing to be a shareholder of the organization, because they are well aware about the benefits of FPO

▪ Agroecological Farming

Organic farming is an alternative agricultural system which involves conversion of land from conventional to organic with the use of alternative sources of nutrients for crop production such as organic manure and biological inputs. For showcase and better understanding of the organic process the project has set up Farmer Field Schools (FFS). During the project period 36 FFS have been established in all operational districts to demonstrate the production of organic manures, pesticides and plant supplements. Astral models (gravity-based irrigation system) were installed to disseminate organic practices and water management. In the FFS all practices are replicated that have been tested and demonstrated in the Maa Mati Campus. Apart from that project has given importance to set up individual demonstration sites and home gardens of the progressive farmers (Bhala Chassi).



The major practice of demonstration consists of the following basic components of organic farming such as seed treatment; preparation of liquid bio manure; preparation of liquid bio pesticides, liquid plant growth solutions and vermin-compost. Material supports were provided for vermin-pit, vermin for vermin compost and drums for the preparation of liquid manures. Season wise crop plans have initiated with selected Bhala Chassi which included crop rotation, residue management, weed and pest management and maintenance of livestock. Apart from this, exposure visits to other fields as well as to Maa Mati Campus have conducted for wider dissemination of organic practices.

- **Irrigation**

During this year total 220 numbers of small-scale irrigation (PEP) has been produced and installed in the field of small and marginal farmers. By using the PEP, a farmer can irrigate the land through out the year and able to produce vegetables without any interruption and make functional for the benefit of small and marginal farmers.

- **Lobby and advocacy**

NABARD is the main partner in the project and supports the promotion of 10 FPO in the operational districts. NABARD not only supported the registration of those companies, but also provided support for capacity building of Board of Directors and CEO. Additionally, FPO members and CEO could go for exposure within and outside the state of Odisha with support of NABARD. An awareness campaign and exhibition for promotion of FPO was organized.

Department of Agriculture and Horticulture is running various subsidy schemes for upliftment of small and marginal farmers and PG. During the project period resources were mobilized not only for individual farmers, but also for PG. Producers Group have been linked to develop nurseries, flowery culture and vermin unit in their locality. Through the department seeds and seedlings have been mobilized for individual farmers.

OUAT is the primary institution to certify and enlist the pedal pump as agriculture equipment and to include the pump into a Government subsidy program for small farmers. After an interface meeting with the technical scientist of OUAT the project team has submitted all relevant documents. OUAT has carried out experiments on the pedal pump's efficiency and technique in their laboratory. On the basis of that report the pedal pump was accepted for the subsidy project.

Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) is an extension agricultural centers found in all districts of Odisha. The project has installed irrigation systems in their campus for demonstration purpose. Trainings on agriculture and fishery were conducted and technical knowledge was given to the farmers.

International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) is the world's premier research organization dedicated to reducing poverty and hunger through rice science; improving the health and welfare of rice farmers and consumers; and protecting the rice-growing environment for future generations. IRRI provides a series of training on climate resilient crop varieties and seed support to farmers.

Centre of Horticulture and Experiment Station (CHES) is a regional branch of Indian Institute of Horticultural Research (ICAR). The Station has developed different varieties and technologies to suit the

agro-climatic conditions and propagates these varieties to different parts of the State of Odisha. The project has established a partnership with CHES for the production of good quality vegetable seed. CHES will provide seed and technical support to the farmers in regular intervals.

Odisha Millet Mission has an objective to revive millet cultivation in tribal areas and in low rain fed areas and to increase the household consumption and productivity through organic input. FPO will play a vital role for the marketing of their produce. Nowadays the Government includes millet in different schemes like PDS and ICDS as millet has high nutritional value.

Participation & involvement of other stakeholders During the project period both Government as well as international organizations were involved with the activities. The Odisha Millet Mission joined hand for demonstration of millet in Maa Mati Campus and its replication in Bolangir and Nayagarh. Apart from that PG and FPO may have business opportunities in the future, where they can set up processing units and seed distribution centers. An international organization like International Rice Research Institution (IRRI) has demonstrated climate resilient paddy (both flood and drought) in Maa Mati Campus and replicated these varieties in all of the operational districts. IRRI has given climate resilient paddy seed and technical support to the farmers.

Centre of Horticulture Experiment Station (CHES) a regional center of Indian Institute of Horticultural Research (ICAR) has demonstrated and trained our farmers on vegetable seed production. In experimental basis in Kharif and Rabi season CHES has given seed and technical support. It has arranged a back-buy agreement with the farmers. The plan is to scale up this activity in all operational areas.

D. The Center of Excellence Maa Mati.....

The concept behind the Maa Mati Campus is to form a demonstration and training center to revitalize the land, increase soil fertility and to serve as a model for the project. Its main purpose is to practice and demonstrate innovative ideas and knowledge and to bring individuals, NGOs and Governmental departments together to share perspectives and therefore create an added value. Other visitors like farmers, research scholars and students are now visiting frequently to learn and share ideas on organic farming methods.

Agroecological Farming Demonstration

During the period the project could season-wise demonstrated different varieties of crops in the Maa Mati demonstration field.

- In summer season the cultivation of vegetables like ivy gourd, ridge gourd, cucumber, green leaves, watermelon, zucchini, brinjal, long bean, arum and others were demonstrated.
- During rainy season paddy, okra, cucumber, ridge gourd, marigold, maize, papaya, bitter gourd was cultivated and demonstrated.
- During winter season different vegetables like cabbage, cauliflower, beans, okra, marigold, cluster bean, long bean, maize were cultivated at Maa Mati land.
- Additionally, some high value crops were demonstrated like parbal, capsicum and lettuces that are called “exotic” varieties which generate high market value.

Black Rice Demonstration

This year witnessed for the first time the demonstration of Black Rice in 1 acre of land. Then it has been replicated in farmer's field of Nayagarh and Kendrapara with input support of seed and bio fertilizer in 3 Ac of land of 6 farmers. They opined that production of black rice is good and they harvested in an average of 4.5 quintal from .5 acres of land. That shows a new path for our farmers to have an enterprise and diversify the farming practice

Paddy Cafeteria

With the support of CSISA we have developed a paddy cafeteria in Maa Mati Campus, where 38 varieties of paddy were demonstrated. Cafeteria means that in small patches of land different varieties of seed are grown and as a result it can be seen which variety is suitable for which climate. In that cafeteria both flood and drought resilient varieties were demonstrated. Along with the paddy cafeteria, CSISA also has organized six training programs on paddy cultivation for our farmers from all four districts. CSISA has also demonstrated three types of transplantation processes for paddy cultivation: Manual Transplantation, Drum Seedling and Broad Casting method, if we compare both the methods then mechanical is better than the conventional methods of farming.



Demonstration and replication of Climate Resilient paddy:

In collaboration with IRRI, the project has replicated flood resilient paddy variety in Puri and Kendrapara, drought variety paddy in Nayagarh and Bolangir. Both seeds and bio fertilizers as input support were provided to the farmers. In the coming year, this variety of paddy will be replicated with more farmers.



Millet Cafeteria

In collaboration with the Odisha Millet Mission a millet cafeteria has been developed, where 36 varieties of millet were demonstrated. Out of that four varieties of seeds have been procured by seed corporation of Odisha and replicated in 36 Blocks in western Odisha to know the yield, henceforth those seeds will be distributed and cultivated in large scale.



Workshop for the production of irrigation systems

A fully functional workshop for the production of the irrigation systems has been set up with experienced technicians by the organization. Our intention is to produce quality PEPs and provide service to farmers as and when require.



Demonstration of Direct Seeded Rice

This year in Maa Mati, project has been demonstrated Oil seeds, Green Gram and Black Gram and New High yield variety of Maize in One acre each in collaboration with Cereal Systems Initiative for South Asia (CSISA), machine transplanted has been done first time in Odisha, CSISA experimented the cost of production and quantity of harvest. Dr. Arbindo Padhi Principal secretary of Department of Agriculture visited Maa Mati, during his visit he has interacted with farmers those are doing DSR cultivation of Paddy under the guidance of CSISA. He expressed his happiness that Maa Mati is such a place where a farmer can learn integrated farming through organic methods of farming, also he said PEP can be medium of income for farmers by restrict them invest to irrigate their land.



Internship Program through Participatory Research

SoA and Sree Sree university sent their 3rd year agriculture students for three months internship program, students will involve in all the process of integrated organic farming. Total 10 days orientation program has been organized in Maa Mati, after completion of orientation team has been divided in to five groups, each group consists of 2 member and sent them to Nayagarh, Puri and Dhenkanal to involve themselves in farmers field and record their experience about the application on Soil health, Seed treatment, Plant and Fruit growth etc, and one team will stay in Maa Mati to make an experiment inside and outside of Maa Mati in farmers' field. Lastly a two days program has been organised to share their experience and develop a consolidate report on integrated organic farming in odia for farmer's benefit.



Participation in State Agri Fair

i- Concept Initiatives participated in State Agri Fair where organization has been demonstrated a model based on Integrated organic farming System. That model was a show case for small and marginal farmers where they got the information and knowledge on the model and in a small patch of land a farmer can earn more than the conventional farming, also farmers got the information on utilization of farm waste and naturally available resource as well.



Appreciation

I -Concept Initiatives has been awarded by Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology (OUAT) and ANANYA one of the civil society Organization for an excellent contribution for promotion of Organic Integrated Farming System and encourage youth mass to build their career in the field of Agriculture in Odisha.





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