



REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON
SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT

"TWO DECADES OF IMPACT AND LEARNING"

21-23 APRIL 2010, DELHI, INDIA

Orissa Watershed Development Mission (OWDM), in collaboration with the Department for International Development (DFID) UK and NR International, is organising a three-day Regional Conference on Sustainable Livelihoods and Rural Development – “Two Decades of Impact and Learning” from 21-23 April 2010 in Delhi, India.

Since the beginning of the 1990s, there has been a huge investment in the rural sector by the Government of India and State Governments, and by donors. For DFID and its government partners, early investment was directed at a number of forestry projects, in particular in the Western Ghats and Himachal Pradesh. The next generation of effort included the Eastern and Western India Rainfed Farming Projects which formed the backbone of the programme, with a watershed project in Karnataka which bridged the gap between these and the more recent large rural livelihoods projects in Orissa (WORLP), Andhra Pradesh (APRLP) and Madhya Pradesh (MPRLP). The process can be characterised as a continuous innovation and learning cycle, where many ideas, technologies and personnel have moved freely among the projects, and where final products of the learning have accumulated.

This regional conference aims to:

1. Collect cumulative learning from rural development projects over the past two decades and to share this with government and other development partners, in particular the impact of the three major sustainable livelihoods projects in Orissa, AP and MP;
2. Share a wide range of experiences through contributions and participation from development stakeholders from other countries and programmes;
3. Synthesise thinking within selected sustainable livelihoods and rural development themes, and make proposals for action which will influence policy and action at both government and donor levels, shaping future programmes.

We hope you will be interested in attending this conference. We will send you the conference programme soon. The Conference Managers are Rajyashree Dutt and Indira Bharadwaj of Write-Arm. Please contact them to confirm your participation.

For more information, contact
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CONFERENCE THEMES

A number of presentations in a variety of modes and media will be invited from individuals or organisations that are recognised leaders and have practical experience in particular themes. The presentations will include findings from in-depth research on each identified theme across DFID projects over the past two decades. These will be complemented with wider perspectives across the region and across projects.

1. IMPACT ON POVERTY

- How effective have sustainable livelihoods and rural development projects been in reducing poverty, and how has it happened?
- Are there clear pathways out of poverty?

2. HUMAN CAPITAL

(such as health, nutrition, education, knowledge and skills, capacity to work, capacity to plan – micro-plans, capacity to adapt). Increasing the overall capability and well-being of poor people through:

- Creating awareness and building human capacity through education and training; Developing skills and generating employment opportunities
- Improved quality of life – better health and well-being

3. SOCIAL CAPITAL

(such as formal and informal groups, community based organisations - self-help and user groups, networks and connections, patronage, kinship, trust, mutual support, common rules and sanctions, collective representation, leadership). Empowering people through collective action, and building sustainable institutions of poor people through:

- Creating awareness about gender and equity; leadership of women
- Fostering and sustaining empowerment and 'voice'
- Building community groups (self-help groups); effectiveness of different community institutions, and higher level federation processes

4. NATURAL CAPITAL

(such as land, produce, water resources, climate, plantations/trees, NWFP, wildlife and biodiversity). Managing, protecting and enhancing the natural resources base, promoting livelihoods and increasing land-based productivity through:

- Increased pro-poor agricultural productivity – crops and livestock
- Increased access to forests, non-timber forest produce, and Common Property Resources
- Improved crop, livestock, and fish technologies

5. PHYSICAL CAPITAL

(such as infrastructure, water harvesting structures, roads, vehicles, secure shelter, Watsan, energy, communications, tools/technology, seed, fertiliser, grain banks). Improving resource productivity, mitigating risks and enabling opportunities by improving physical infrastructure such as:

- Improvement of watersheds, reduced run-off through water harvesting structures
- Improved food storage structures, wells, tube-wells, farm ponds, other water bodies, roads, bridges, and buildings

6. FINANCIAL CAPITALISATION

(such as savings, credit/debt – formal and informal, remittances, pensions, wages, insurance). Increasing the livelihood stability of poor people and their institutions through improved access to finance, including:

- More effective utilisation of funds
- Increased use of savings and credit, and insurance
- Access to finance, bank loans and other sources of finance

7. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Poor people are increasingly better informed and aware. Enhancing their capacity to make informed decisions, based on an increased access to, and understanding of appropriate information, including:

- Enhanced knowledge networks
- Improved information sharing
- Communications and IT

8. ACCESS TO MARKETS

Poor people are better able to reap the benefits of the marketplace, through:

- More diversified income-generating activities (livelihood opportunities)
- Better information about markets and prices
- Increased awareness about value addition and value chains, and how to capitalise on these

9. REDUCING VULNERABILITY

Poor people become less vulnerable through a number of mechanisms, including government schemes, resulting in:

- Better access to entitlements through increased awareness of government schemes, and better access to safety nets
- Increased capacity to adapt to climate change shocks
- Livelihoods which are better protected through improved food security, an increased asset base, greater diversification and reduced distress migration

10. CONVERGENCE

The effectiveness of community and support institutions to create demand for, and provide linkages between, government programmes. This may have been facilitated through:

- Improved communications and interaction between government schemes, programmes, projects and departments, such as guaranteed employment, woman and child welfare, agriculture, livestock, forestry, soil and water conservation
- Increasing people's access to government schemes, through increased awareness and better access to information

