

Panel (CSOL-GI): Community Solidarity and Grassroots Institutions

Total Papers: 5

Chair:

Catherine A. Odora Hoppers

DST/NRF South African Research Chair in Development Education
University of South Africa

Co-Chair:

Astad Pastakia

Development Consultant

Time: 09:00-11:00

Venue: CR, RJMCEI

1.

Bio-tourism: A Community Based Endeavour for Promotion of Ecotourism and Local Resource Based Employment Generation in Himalaya

J P Maithani

(AAGAAS Federation)

Why Biotourism – The definition of Ecotourism is more centric towards Economy, Ecology & Environmental Conservation and we reflect Biotourism as a soul concern of an individual human being towards nature and its element which provide space to human existence on the earth. Biotourism is just above the materialistic life of human being which are affecting the nature, biodiversity, culture and ecosystem which weaves the intervention of an individual by providing need based to all but cannot fulfill the greed.

Our Project

AAGAAS is running a Biotourism Park Chamoli which linked with the 75 SHGs and more than 400 members those are working for hill bamboo craft, Natural fibre promotion of Himalayan Nettle, Ecotourism, Trekking & Tours, Nursery, fruit and vegetable processing, Conservation and medicinal and Aromatic Plants, Organic farming.

Apart from this popularization & promotion of lesser and unknown trekking routes in and around Chamoli and Pipalkoti town in particular. Organization provides internship for the students of IICD Jaipur, IBS Hyderabad and Symbiosis Institute of Designing, Pune. The aim of project is to explore and promote the Ecotourism base Livelihood in Uttarakhand by supporting nature conservation efforts.

The project aims to long term strategy with noble thought of sustainable development efforts at the ground level by the local youth and community of Central Himalaya. This project is for the specific area- The sacred Himalayan region which is very rich in Biodiversity , Agro Ecosystem, Cultural Diversity and its diverse community or Human Population. The Himalaya is such a huge that its environment and atmosphere effects are global. In this manner it is enough good to take care of its sustainability through various channel whether it

is cultural diversity or sustainability of existing community based cultural practices linked with human and natural resources.

2.

Limits to Innovation in Indian Handicrafts: Issues in Exclusion in Two Rural Clusters

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Rural clusters in India have been estimated to account for a whopping 94 per cent of all clusters in the country suggesting their significance and spread. These contribute to local income and employment generation in a substantive manner and being often local craft and material based these have served as workshops of innovation. In a manner, these rural enterprises have played a role in dissuading distress-driven rural to urban migration. The severely inadequate policy attention to various constraints facing rural clusters has serious implications in terms of their growth and survival. The promotion of clusters of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), particularly the policy emphasis on linking local production to the global markets, has implied a serious undermining of some of the arduous constraints facing the ‘moving-up’ of the enterprises located in and/or based upon resources – both human and natural - from the rural regions. Proposing an intervention in building up an innovative ethos in the rural enterprise sphere would also, quite imminently, involve raising questions about the ‘preparedness’ of the cluster ‘stakeholders’ and limits faced by rural clusters functioning within the framework of sub-national market imperatives and imperfections of a resource-technology-business support institution.

Almost as a contradiction in terms, the claims and efforts towards achieving inclusive growth as *the* policy objective have been upset by facts on ground those confirm a growing syndrome of exclusion in terms of both options in and rights to livelihood, particularly in rural areas and small towns. An increasing incidence of casualisation and informalisation in the sphere of work and livelihood pursuits has been alarming. With a conceptual identification of forms of exclusion in the rural enterprise clusters (*Spatial, Sectoral and Systemic*), this presentation attempts to locate the driving forces and to understand functional dynamics of innovation systems in rural clusters to critically assess if these have been inclusive/pro-poor, mainly in terms of access to available options in progress in innovation be that technological, organizational, market-related and institutional.

With primary survey based findings in two handicraft clusters, namely, clay-terracotta in Rajasthan and bamboo crafts in Assam forming the empirical core of this presentation, issues in limits to innovation and the dynamics of perpetuation of what we have termed *subsistence industrialization* have been looked into. The presentation observes that beyond celebrating the craft *per se*, it needs to be treated as a business that supports a livelihood option. State’s role in creating relevant infrastructure is as crucial in activating the innovation systems as exercising vigilance over implementation of strategies as, for instance, policy-sensitive database, geographical indications and IPRs at the cluster level. The study makes a case for ‘empowering’ rural clusters (ensuring access to affordable and reliable supply of electricity to enterprises) and holds that looking for newer markets (especially, within the domestic and

regional space) would act as a catalyst not only to innovations in methods, materials and applications but potentially develop useful networks in learning.

3.

Innovations – drive and driver: journey to develop a unique system of plant moisture application through System of Water for Agricultural Innovation (SWAR)

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Background

In 1983 a group of hundred young people Andhra Pradesh from different voluntary movement involvement and mostly with left leanings cycled from different parts of the state to New Delhi to demand a Right to Employment. The inspiration came from the work of V S Page in Maharashtra whose struggle led to its State Rural Employment Guarantee Act providing employment to every able bodied rural person with an all around year guarantee offer. Being the richest state in India, Maharashtra could enact such legislation by levying octroi and professional taxes and placed this money as a separate fund and thus not dependent on government largesse every year in its budget. The compulsion for volunteers to seek a national legislation was many regions in Andhra Pradesh faced recurring drought and farmers had huge and recurring losses while farm workers either had to starve or migrate in distress to urban areas and to towns. Development and poverty alleviation investments could not deliver any value in such areas. We went to Delhi as it alone had finances an employment guarantee scheme in Andhra Pradesh.

Motivation: So when the UPA I alliance promised an employment guarantee legislation in its manifesto and had an alliance with the communist party, one felt that this was the time to full fill a dream opportunity to the poor in drought areas. One had seen and studied how the Maharashtra employment legislation was diluted and defeated by the bureaucracy and political lobbies, how the employment assurance schemes were half hearted and failed to offer succor, how the food for work schemes were riddled with delayed and denied employment offer and huge diversion of food. So one had broadly known aspects to be tackled and take the employment guarantee to its full potential.

While the NREGA was being developed by the UPA, we decided to the use the National Food For Work (NFFW) to understand and test crucial aspects needed to the workers well being. NFFW was a scheme having food and cash component and piloted in 180m districts by the UPA, before NREGA was legislated. The Centre for Environment Concerns (CEC), an NGO with which the author works, entered into a voluntary services offer agreement with the AP state department of rural development in 2005-06 to implement the NFFW in select

villages of one Mandal in Ananthapur in Rayalaseema region and the other in Medak in Telangana region. This provided many insights on the issues and how to address them.

4.

Traditional Governments and the natural resources management in Manipur: A case study of Sekmai village

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In Manipur the traditional governments continue to control and management the larger area of natural resources even after the implementation of three tiers governments such as central State and Local governments of India. The area where this system is in vogue is among all the recognised Scheduled Tribes (ST) and the eight Scheduled Caste (SC) Loi inhabited areas. The ST is predominantly inhabited in all the five hills districts and the SC Lois are predominantly inhabited in the foothills in Manipur. Sekmai is one of the SC Loi villages which has been controlling and managing all the Khuman Ningthou Ching (community forest), Turen (rivers), streams and land since the time immemorial. The Phamneiba (traditional government) used to control and manage almost all the community natural resources for centuries. But recently forest and largest river has been transferred to indigenous parliament. The paper will study the natural resources management system prevalent during the Phamneiba period. It will also explore the present resource management system of the Sekmai Indigenous parliament.

Methodology: A qualitative would be adopted for the study. Socio Economic Household survey, In-depth interview, Focus group discussion and Observation would be the multiple tools and techniques of data collection.

Keywords: Phamneiba, Sekmai Indigenous Parliament, Natural resources management, Khuman ningthou ching and Turen.

5.

A community operated compensation scheme for crop damage by wild herbivores

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Damage to agricultural crops by protected species in the vicinity of wildlife parks is an important but underestimated problem. Since measures to protect crops is generally met with limited success in areas with high animal density, some form of compensation for the damage is necessary to avoid resentment of local farmers. Currently in India compensation is paid following a panchnama and deciding the extent of damage visually. Since objective and realistic assessment of damage is difficult, farmers have large scale resentment for being undercompensated. We suggest here an alternative model of compensation which is community operated. It is based on a novel method of recording the net loss in produce which ensures honesty in self reporting. The data collection and compensation calculation is based on principles of game theory in human economic behavior in such a way that it would facilitate good agricultural inputs and honesty in reporting the produce. The realistic data collected this way can be used for many purposes. Beyond compensation for wild herbivore damage the concept highlights management principles in which there is built in reward for honesty and therefore a community can run a programme for its own benefit with minimum organizational help from government.

Keywords: Crop damage compensation, community data collection, community operated system, game theory, economic behaviour.