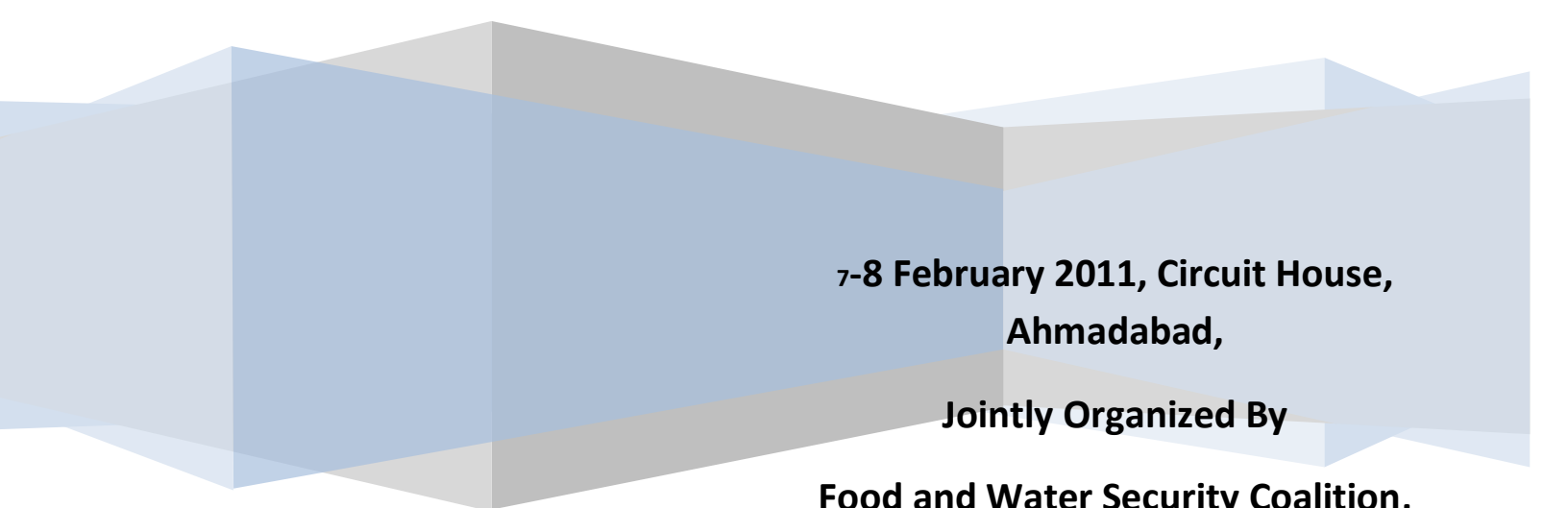


Report of the Western Regional Consultation on National Food Security Bill: Right to Food for ALL



**7-8 February 2011, Circuit House,
Ahmadabad,**

Jointly Organized By

**Food and Water Security Coalition,
Wada Na Todo Abhiyan and
SANSAD**

(Astha, Disha, Samarth and Yuva)

Background

In June 2009, the Government of India announced for a comprehensive legislation to be enacted as “The National Food Security Act (NFSA)” which will focus on the right to food. Currently the act is in the process of discussions in the parliament. The Bill has been drafted without wide consultation and suffers from a number of shortcomings including minimal reach, reduced entitlements, lack of commitment to vulnerable groups, and intends to do away with double subsidy provided on the TDPS by various states. In fact, the Bill manifests flawed and non-serious approach on issues of food security, which is highly vulnerable today due to rising prices in general and rising food prices in particular. The civil society and farmers groups have been raising these concerns; however, it is not sure whether these concerns are under consideration of the NAC. Finally The National Food Security Bill is introduced in the Parliament on 22nd December 2011 by the Government of India. On 5th January 2012, the bill was referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Food, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution for examination and at present the bill is open for examinations, suggestions and feedback from public.

In this back drop Food and Water Security Coalition of India in collaboration with WNTA proposes to bring CSOs, various campaigns and experts on the above-mentioned subjects to discuss the issues in details and develop a common understanding so that a collective Civil Society response must emerge for advocacy with government. five regional consultations across four zones- East, West, South and North- as well as one National Consultation will be carried out. Consultations are being organized on four broad themes- Right to Education, Right to Health, Social Exclusion and Livelihoods. The Western Regional Consultation - focusing on Livelihoods- saw participation from representatives from more than 30 organizations across four states – Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Gujarat- including academicians, leader of political parties, elected representative and media, is an important milestone in seeking Civil Society feedback on the National Food Security Bill.



Session 1: Inaugural Session, 7th February 2012 10:30 -12:00 AM

Inaugural Plenary

Moderators: Paulomi Mistry, Disha and Mahesh Pandya, Paryavan Mitra

Key Speakers: Chief Guests- Sh. Madhusudan Mistry, General Secretary – AICC and Member CWC and Sh. Shakti Singh Goyil, Leader of the Opposition in the Gujarat State Assembly and Mr. Anil Singh from SANSAD, New Delhi

Anil Singh from SANSAD New Delhi shared the background and rational of the entire process in addition to providing a brief introduction of bill. He said that the main objective of five zonal consultations and national consultations is to inform people about the provisions of the bill and give suggestions to government on the gaps of the bill. This is going to be the one of the world's largest schemes with 75% of India's rural population and 50% of urban population covered. In terms of population approximately 80-85 Crores of India's population being affected. Further Anil Singh spoke on the key provisions of the Bill and its shortcomings

**Key Note Address by Sh. Madhusudan Mistry,
Member, Congress Working Committee and
General Secretary**

Sh. Mistry said coming from a background of activism, tribal rights and development, he understood Civil Society has a purist view point, - Civil Society's view points are the only valid view points and needs of the sections it represent are supreme - while governance has its own constraints and challenges as it has to accommodate many diverse view points. For example, Civil Society views MGNREGA as a medium of revolution, while the ministry is only concerned with its proper implementation. He said for example, Tribal form just 15% of India's populations and rests are other sections of society who have genuine needs too. All are citizens of this country and have needs and aspiration which state has to deal with. Therefore the State attempts to look things in totality and within larger framework.



He suggested that constructive criticism and positive suggestions based on sound rational in favor of people will be helpful for ministry. Else government is used to criticism and sometime it discards such criticisms which do not have sound logic. He also said that it is time to expedite the process since the Spring Session of the Parliament will begin on 12th March and the bill can come anytime thereafter.

Mr. Mistry said every bill must mention a likely expenditure to be incurred while making that bill into a law and that must have President's assent. So every bill which involves a financial responsibility has to go through Ministry of finance which approves it and then the bill goes to concerned ministry and Parliamentary Affairs Ministry and further listed for the introduction in the Parliament.

Referring to a study exercise he did as a member of the Standing Committee of the Ministry of Finance, Sh. Mistry said, it came out that Government does not have enough money for this law. Many a times the State is not able to secure its planned income and this ultimately affects the development projects. There are certain committed expenses that cannot be cut for example interest payments, defense expenses and civil servants salaries. Therefore, how to raise the money for the act is a big question for the government.

Sh. Mistry also spoke on the subject of Tax Evasion. Touching upon the issue of cases in Income Tax Tribunal, Tax Raids, Service Tax and other offences by companies and individuals related to tax, Sh. Mistry pointed out several challenges in Tax collection in the country. Though, he clearly emphasized on the need for strengthening such a system towards 100% tax collection. He said Rs 40,000 Crores is required for MGNREGA every year and Rs 184,000 Crores for Food Security Act will be required each year. Keeping this money aside is very difficult and huge responsibility on the part of the State. India needs 8-9% growth which means more tax which in turn will provide more resources for development. However the challenge remains as to how the State deals with issues of Growth, distribution of income, Equity and Social Justice together. And according to him, Civil Society must demand a fairer and equitable share in the growth rather than shunning it completely. He said that laws such as Food Security bill are an effort to put things in an overall framework keeping in view many diverse competing interests in a very complex socio-political economy.

Mr. Mistry said Agriculture is state Subject and different states are performing differently. Poor people too want to increase his/her purchasing power because they too want to have good food and a better quality of life. A poor person also asks this question that why is my purchasing power not increasing. To increase purchasing power one needs regular income and a job guarantee. He said PDS should not be the main system but a fall back system. Main system should be the increasing purchasing capacity to buy grain from the open market on whatever may be the current price. The government should provide its people enough income through jobs and employment opportunities. PDS can be understood if the number of people dependent on it goes on decreasing. If the governments show that the number is increasing, it means poverty is increasing and purchasing power is declining. And it should be completely other way around. Number of people who are coming out of PDS and increasing their purchasing power should be seen as development.

Sh. Mistry said civil society actors have to choose their role keeping in view the interests of the constituency of poor and marginalized. He suggested keeping the discussions in the Consultation focused and giving concrete suggestions to get more benefit for the poor people, more inclusive beneficiaries' groups, strong grievance redress system and inclusion of independent viewpoints in such a way that it is also helpful for the concerned ministry. He emphasized that recommendations should be direct and relevant to the concerned ministries and though he cannot say which recommendation will be accepted, he would surely ensure that necessary audience is given by the Minister to Wada Na Todo Abhiyan's recommendation. In response to a question on public and private partnership, Sh. Mistry said that no public-private partnership is perfect and there is an element of exploitation and profit in it. That is why there is a need for protective laws and monitoring by the state. The government will not have the money itself to fulfill the kind of needs that this country has therefore one has to encourage the private capital putting in place a system of effective checks and balances.

Address of the Shakti Singh Goyil, Leader of Opposition, State Assembly, Gujarat



Mr. Goyil appreciated that a non partisan and healthy critique by NGOs and campaigns like Wada Na Todo Abhiyan comes out as very helpful for democratic process and even political parties. He said, in Gujarat, it is very difficult to even criticize the government in a healthy way, however despite such an environment; Civil Society groups are doing exemplary work in raising the voice and aspirations of the people of Gujarat. He said opinion of civil society has a greater value compared to critiques of political parties often considered as biased and politically motivated.

Mr. Goyil said, in Gujarat, going by the evidences on the ground, the Act on Right to Education is not being implemented. The government is very slow in implementing the provisions of the Act. School functionaries say that this is an act, given by the

Centre. Citing examples of the gaps in the RTE implementation, he appealed to Civil Society to help in the effective implementation of the RTE.

He elaborated that in Gujarat; more than 10,000 applications are pending under RTI. However appointment of the RTI Commissioner is being delayed. Citing example, Sh. Goyil said that the state government has issued many Circulars which are in conflict with the provisions of Right To information Act.

Sh. Goyil said that under Article 16 and 17 of MGNREGA, Gram Sabha has to be empowered to plan for the works to be undertaken and Gram Panchayat will have to do the Social Audit. But in Gujarat, the Chief Minister decides in the Cabinet meetings about the planned expenses in different heads. The 6 % contingency grant given in MGNREGA – one of the highest in any Schemes - is not being spent properly in Gujarat. Sh. Goyil also gave examples of how NRHM funds are being diverted by official machinery for the political meetings and assemblies in favor of ruling party. According to Mr. Goyil, Right to Education, Right to Information and MGNREGA are three very important legislations in the interests of the people of this country but one states where these acts are not being implemented, it is Gujarat.

He appreciated the efforts of Wada Na Todo Abhiyan, saying the campaign is a constructive effort as the official note by the campaigns not only highlights gap of the proposed bill but also underlines positive aspects of the same. He said that there is an in-depth analysis of the bill in the document by the Wada Na Todo Abhiyan, though few MLAs, MPs and people within media are aware about the details of bill. He promised his support to the campaign and assured to write to governments both in Centre and in Gujarat whenever required. He also said he will raise questions in State Assembly on any issues raised by the Wada Na Todo Campaign.

Session 2: 7th February 2012 12:30-13:30 PM

Food Security: State Perspectives



Chair: Datta Rao Patil, Yuva, Mumbai

Key Speakers: Shyam Lal Singh from Astha, Rajasthan, Hemant Shah, Disha Gujarat, Dr Sayed Mahewal, United Reformers, MP and Awil R Borkar from Gramin Yuva Pragati Mandal, Maharashtra.

Deliberations

Mr. Shyam Bhai updated about Astha's experience and learning on participating Right To Food Campaign in last 6 months in Rajasthan. According to him, PDS should be universalized as a matter of right to food for all and there should be no categorization such APL or BPL. Citing examples he said, the process of selection of APL or BPL or as per the bill, General or Priority Category is full of flaws. Referring to Rajasthan experience, Shyam bhai said the entire process of the Socio Economic and Caste Census survey is very dicey. He said, the questions asked in the survey are shocking- for example for the issue of single women, destitute women, women headed households, disabled persons, there is only one column and the questions in the survey are very misleading for

example if there is one male member in the age group of 16-59, that women will not get the ranking and will not be placed in Priority category.

Shyam Bhai said that Astha has done a study in 7 districts of Rajasthan with 1276 Households (HHs) to assess number and types of HHs covered under General and Priority Category. The study showed that if such criteria applied, the current BPL percentage of 37% will come down to 27% in Rajasthan. Secondly out of the 1276 HH, 50 are women headed households and most of these are destitute; however only 5% of these are being covered under priority category.

Mr. Shyam Bhai listed out other key demands coming out food right campaign from Rajasthan. He said as per the government data, 14 kg per person is required for a month, however only 50% of this amount for the Priority and 25% for the General Category are proposed to be being given under the Act. According to him this can not be called food security. He said, without the nutritional security, the food security will not be secured. And to ensure nutritional security, oil, other kind of pulses, vegetables must be included within PDS. He questioned that how merely a system of ration distribution through PDS can be called food security. Instead according to him food security is linked with the issues of sufficient production, procurement, storage and upkeep, minimums support price, sustainable agriculture, land distribution and issues of farmers He said without addressing these issues, food security cant be achieved.

He stressed the need for strengthening the PDS at Panchayat level and at micro level. With issue of cash transfer, one cannot secure food security since there is no surety of use of cash for food purposes. According to Shyam Bhai any law or schemes can't be implemented unless there is an effective and strong grievance redress system in place. He said, in line of MGNREA, as a complaint mechanism, a stringent penalty for guilty should be there in the food security bill also. In the bill, grievance redress system at district level has been provisioned; he argued that it should be taken down to Panchayat or Block level, clearly specifying its details.

Hemant Shah from Gujarat said Gujarat is highly industrialized State in India. The State Domestic Product is very high. However the agricultural product in GDP is around 16 % in India but in Gujarat, it is only 11.59 percent. He also said Gujarat is a State of Cash Crops- Sugarcane, Ground nut, Isabgol, Tobacco, Cotton and few others are known for high production in Gujarat. In Gujarat, Cotton is produced 17% of the total production in country; Gujarat is second largest producer of Tobacco after Andhra Pradesh, 4th largest in Sugarcane production. He said that other side is that Gujarat is importing wheat and rice from Punjab and Haryana to feed its people.

Mr. Shah said, in Gujarat the number of registered farmers is 47 Lakhs in 1991 and 50 Lakhs in 2001. Number of agricultural labor is 32 Lakhs in 1991 and 52 Lakhs in 2001. So there is a significant population dependent on Agricultural even though its contribution in State GDP is low (less than 12%). Therefore, according to him, it can be inferred that as far as employment is concerned, Gujarat is still agricultural based despite being highly industrialized.

Mr. Shah said that per capita income of Gujarat is Rs 45773- 4th highest in India (2007). But so far as rural poverty is concerned it is 18.8 % as per the data submitted by Gujarat Government to Planning commission. Though as per Planning Commission it is just 12 percent. It means as per Planning Commission there are only 12% of people living below poverty line. (In comparison through but Gujarat Government says it is almost 19%)

Mr. Shah said, according to World Bank survey, Gujarat is one of the fourth states which have number of BPL card holders exceeding the official poverty line. While the rural poverty is 18.8 percent, the percentage of BPL card holders is 38.8 percent in rural Gujarat. It means the Government of Gujarat has given BPL cards to more people than the number of people living below Poverty Line. Citing various data sources, Mr. Shah said that greater numbers of people in Gujarat are dependent on PDS as compared to overall India (42.3 % in Gujarat compared to national average of 39.3 percent).

Mr Shah said looking at five major anti poverty programs, per capita expenditure for anti poverty programs in Gujarat is around Rs 7700 per year in 2007-08, whereas national figure is Rs 9500 per year. Thus per capita expenditure is also less in Gujarat. Mr. Shah said that there are approximately 18500 villages, 13869 Gram Panchayats, 159 Nagar Palikas and 8 Municipal Corporations, whereas the total number of Fair Price Shops (FPS) is only 16557 including all FPS in urban areas including Nagar Palikas and Municipal Corporations. It clearly shows there is not even one FPS per Village Panchayat in Gujarat.

Further giving data, Mr. Shah said that as per the 11th Schedule in the 73rd Amendment, 39 functions have been defined for Panchayats and running and managing the PDS is one of them. However in Gujarat, out of 16557 FPSs, only 6 FPSs are being run by Panchayat, rests are run by private shop owners. Hence Public Distribution System is actually private distribution system in Gujarat. Panchayats are not being involved in the management of PDS despite constitutional and legal provisions. Under Gujarat, Panchayati Raj Act, 1993, out of 110 functions, PDS is one function to be discharged by Village Panchayat. In last 5 years, some 40 to 50 applications have been given by Panchayats to run the PDS but none of them has been sanctioned.

Quoting a website www.counterview.org, Mr. Shah said that state government officials themselves have reported that how Gujarat's Hunger Index is equal to that of Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Haiti. The cultivated land under Wheat, Rice, Juwar, Bajra and Maize is almost stagnant, though it is growing for Cotton under Cash crops. The Agriculture Cash Crop Pattern in Gujarat is highly subsidized in terms of water and energy and clearly this benefit is going to big farmers who are mainly growing cash crops. He also said that According to Multiple Poverty Index (MPI), given in the Human Development Report of 2011, in Gujarat, 41.5% people are living below the poverty line and Gujarat ranks 11th within all States in terms of overall human development.

Mr. Shah argued that these statistics show that there is lot of poverty already and the various processes are actually increasing poverty. Therefore there is a greater need to strengthen the PDS as the issues of poor people just can't be left solely on the market. Citing examples, he said that BPL and APL list is full of flaws and the off-take for all the three categories are not more than 50 percent in Gujarat.

Dr Sayed Mahewal said the functioning of PDS is very poor in MP. On the one hand well off people are listed in BPL, whereas deserving and poor people are given APL cards. This is a gross violation of rights. The condition of nutrition among women and children is very poor and is evident of national media reporting on the same. The agricultural activities are being discouraged in the State. There is no power /electricity for farmers due to poor management of water and natural resources. In case of crop failure, there is no compensation to farmers. Farmers are suffering as is evident from cases of farmers' suicide.

He said there are no monitoring systems in place for the monitoring of quality and functioning of PDS. PDS owners do not pay heed to complaints by Gram Panchayat and there is complete rule of Inspector Raj. There is

no ways people can ensure accountability of FPS owner. Therefore, if the grievance redress cell is strengthened at GP level in the proposed bill, it will be very effective.

Dr Sayed Mahewal, MP is also known for Tribals but the situation of tribal is also very poor as they constantly face the threat of displacement from their homeland. They do not know at all what this bill is all about. And actually there is greater need to create awareness about this bill at the grass root so that people are able to demand their rights from the government.

He also said that in the context of MP Soya bean if added in the distribution can be helpful as there are various options to use Soybean. In MP context, sex Workers, people affected by disasters and people with disability should also be identified and included in the Act. There is also problem for food storage and safe upkeep which needs to be looked at. He said strengthening of PDS, agriculture, energy and power sector is very crucial for the food security for MP.

Mr. Awil R Borkar from Maharashtra gave an overview of different food security and pension schemes including PDS, MDM, ICDS, SGRY and Maternity benefit schemes in the states. He also highlighted various gaps and shortcomings in the implementation of the same.

According to him, grains are not given as per the quality and quantity. Regular and full quota under PDS is not given. There was a provision for bulk distribution for 3-6 months to tribal family but it was of no help, because tribal persons did not have enough money to purchase in bulk and those who purchased did not have proper storage. The shops open for three days in a month as against three days per week of norm. Nowadays only rice and wheat is being distributed and local foods are not being included. Lack of local food availability has resulted in anemia and other health problems in women and children. Local pulses like Khesari despite high protein and easy availability is not distributed under PDS. Therefore there should be provision for procurement and distribution of local foods under PDS. There is need to analyze the nutritional value of items of food that is being distributed as against local food options. Anganwadi centers are not working. Out of the six services mentioned, in actual distribution, only dalia/khichadi is given. In a local survey, it was found out that only 60% children are benefitting under the Anganwadi. Needier sections of population such as migrant population or differently able children not taken care of and are out of its ambit in practical purposes. Apart from the schemes there is also a need to integrate components on how to increase purchasing power of people within the bill.

Inputs from Open House

- Experience from Cloud burst in Ladakh has shown that ICDS centers could be used to provide food to children affected in disasters. It can also be used for safe storage and upkeep of food in disaster affected areas.
- In disasters situation like flood, people lose their ration cards and other identity proofs and thus are unable to get relief as seen in Thane Cyclone in Tamil Nadu. Hence such situation should be kept in mind.
- In Orissa cyclone, only two days food was provided which was inadequate. For rest of days the quantity of the food was not sufficient; especially women did not eat since they gave food to other members of the family.
- The model of Community kitchen in disaster situations as a best practice could give learning for the bill.

- MDM should not be stopped in the schools in disaster situation and in the right to food bill linkage could be established with MGNREGA in creating livelihood options for the poor people.
- There must be effective convergence in District Disaster Management Plan and Public Distribution System
- Like natural disaster, concerns coming from man-made disaster should also be included within the bill.
- Instead of centralized cooking and distribution, locally cooked hot meals made out of local food will be more acceptable.
- In the supply chain from the food godowns to the child (in case of Anganwadi), there are several gaps, which needs to be identified and plugged in order to ensure that quality food is reaching to its end user. Especially in case of 0-3 years of children, provision should be there to ensure food is supplied on a regular basis and systematically and proper monitoring mechanism must be put in place
- Adequate training, social security and job security, motivation and fixing the accountability of Anganwadi workers are required for the effective implementation of services.
- Livelihood and food security in times of disaster is also very pertinent for Rajasthan as the state is constantly reeling under drought.
- Nutritional security for most vulnerable population including women and children in Rajasthan.
- Consumer Protection Committee meant to monitor the PDS at Gram Panchayat levels needs to be strengthened and made accountable.
- Displaying at the Fair Price Shop, a toll-free helpline number for complaint.

Session 3: 7th February 2012 2:30-3:30 PM**Food Security and Question of Livelihood- I: Industrial Labor-organized and unorganized and Traditional Artisans and Craftsman**

Chair: Harinesh Pandya, Janpath

Key Speakers: Vipul Pandya from Bandhkam Mazdoor Sangthan, Vinod Chavan from VSP Mumbai and Rehana Ben Riyawala from SEWA Ahmadabad

Deliberations

Vipul Pandya highlighted the situation of migrant laborers in Gujarat. He said that in India's total population, approximately 48 Crores are workforce population. He said that out of the total workforce, 93%, i.e. more than 40 Crores are unorganized laborers. In Gujarat, out of 2.5 Crores of total workforces, 86% is unorganized laborers. Out of 2 Crores of unorganized laborers, almost 75 Lakhs are Agricultural laborers; more than 20 Lakhs

are Construction laborer. Others are self employed, rag-pickers, contract laborers and laborers employed in fisheries and other small jobs.

He said that within the debates of Food Security, implementation of Minimum Wages Act is very crucial as it can address the problems of food insecurity. However it is unfortunate that around 93% of people are not getting minimum wages in the country. According to him it is a case of failure of state to monitor the implementation of the laws. Citing examples from migrant families from Dahod, Gujarat, he shared that on demand by unorganized laborers, government of Gujarat issued the roaming ration cards in three districts. However, in absence of information dissemination and relevant notifications to the Fair Price Shops in Ahmadabad, the migrant families did not receive grains of the same in proper way. He also shared the example of distribution of ration through mobile Van and demanded similar arrangement under the current food security bill.

He argued that in case of migrant workers and families whose number is increasing everyday, the cash transfer will be helpful and thus can be considered especially for them. He argued that workers usually get free from work very late in the evening, but by this time they are left with no options but to purchase food grains from the open market since FPS are closed. However the migrants still have little money to purchase food. He said in this case, cash received will help them in securing food security for the workers and the family. He said we will have to trust the migrant that she/he will use the money on food and not on alcohol.

Vipul Bhai also said that poor people want food security as a matter of right and not charity. According to him, charity approach compromises persons' dignity. In that sense people need rights on natural resources, minimum wages, rights of livelihood security and a strong public distribution system. Vipul Bhai demanded that there are large tract of waste land in the state and country and people should be given rights to develop it as farm land and grow food on the same.

Sh. Vinod Chavan, from Maharashtra, while speaking for un-organized sector workers, gave a detailed analysis of different types of ration cards under Public Distribution System, criterion of selection and benefit/ grain entitlements under each type of cards. He described several challenges under each type of ration card and put strong emphasis on the need to review the criteria of selection, target group and entitlements under each card. On the basis of a survey in Vasai block, he said that though people have ration cards for migrant families but the fair price shop owner never informed the card holder of such provisions at the place of destination.

He said, in Mumbai and suburbs, there are more than 65,000 Shops but many of them remain closed mostly. The shop owner put a notice of 'No Grains' and keep the shop closed for several days. The notice and complaint book kept at the shop is not given to people. Similarly, he said, pregnant women, adolescent girls and young children do not receive complimentary nutrition under ICDS.

Rehana Ben Riyawala from Sewa shared that SEWA is a membership based organization and over the years it has According to her it has organized more than 1.4 million women from unorganized sectors including manual laborers, daily wage earners, vendors and small producer in Gujarat. She said that over the years, small surveys and direct experience with women from unorganized sectors show the worsening condition of food security especially for women. Earlier, while the families used to have pulses and vegetables once or twice in the week, now they have it once in month. According to her, 80% of India's poor are agriculture workers, whose major part of the income goes in securing two squares a meal for the family. Poor people here do not have sufficient

income security to meet their needs. Moreover they face and suffer in case of disaster and emergencies. In fact poor section of the population is the worst affected in disasters since they have lesser resources to cope. In such situation they compromise their food and nutritional security more often. Cases of suicide have come up and it is an irony that farmers, who produce grains for others, do not have their own food security. Ms Rehana Ben, drawing from SEWA leaning in Banaskantha, said that Mobile Ration Van operated by the women was an innovation for taking ration to families of unorganized sector in remote and inaccessible areas. She said PDS should be strengthened keeping women food security and nutritional needs in mind.

She said there is greater need to strengthen the agriculture system. In this direction community based grain banks could be an effective mechanism to ensure food security in distress periods or disaster situations. Also farmers' training and education, linkages with market and access to credit for meeting the cost of agriculture inputs and crop insurance are required. She said it is very critical to meet growing demands of agriculture. Else agriculture production will not be able to fulfill growing consumption needs of the country.

Ms Rehana Ben also touched upon issues of depletion of land and natural resources; preservation of the scarce resources, local procurement and local distribution, minimizing risks in agriculture, cash cropping vs. subsistence farming and need of community control on PDS to be in-built and strengthened.

Inputs from Open House

- In the urban migrant context fuel (kerosene oil) must be included in the items of ration.
- Water is closely linked with food security. There is need to integrate the issue of access to water in overall food security bill.
- Role of Health and Sanitation Committee members in Monitoring of the nutrition
- In PDS, MDM and ICDS the participation of people- women, children, and adolescents - in planning, monitoring and management is very crucial- for example people at local level will have say in the choice of food to be distributed instead of a top down centralized decision making on the local food habits of the people.
- Options of local food purchase and procurement and food chain analysis at district level must be integrated.
- Based on the field experiences, sufficient quantity and regular supply of the food is very important for food security. Many a times, it has been observed that kerosene oil and other good grains are not distributed as per the allotted amount. The shop-owners say that there is less supply. Similarly regular supply of the food is also very important as sometime only rice is given and not wheat and vice-versa
- A system of social audit of PDS should be put in place as it will help manage the system well. Based on Maharashtra experience, the running of PDS shop should be handed over to Women SHGs. Instead of one person there will be involvement of women collectives and it will root out the problems of Contractors and corruptions.

While summarizing the session Sh. Harinash Pandya highlighted the key points made by speakers. He also added the issue of De-notified and Nomadic Tribes to be included in the most prioritized category. He said they do not have even the ration cards on the first place. He also added to make Ration Cards in the Name of the mother as it will be helpful for women involved in flesh trade and sex work.

Session 4: 7th February 2012 3:30-4:00 PM**Food Security and Question of Livelihood- II: Agriculture-farmers and landless agriculture laborers**

Chair: Anil Singh, SANSAD

Key Speakers: Indu Kumar Jani, Social Activist, Ahmadabad and Datta Rao Patil from Yuva Maharashtra

Deliberations:

Datta Rao Patil said that is not Food Security Bill because food Security means availability and storage of food for the entire years for the family which obviously will not be achieved through this bill. Secondly the bill speaks the language of charity and welfare and not food security as a matter of rights. In this sense it should be called right to food bill and not food security bill. He said the word security should be unpacked for the greater understanding

The bill, instead of food distribution only, should provide for necessary system and livelihoods, which enables agriculture, farming and which allows sustainable agricultural production towards securing sustainable food and

livelihood security. In the last section of the bill it is mentioned that in times of natural calamities, if the government is unable to deliver the food as mentioned earlier in the bill, nobody will claim rights. In that sense, Mr. Patil said the basic approach of the bill must be questioned as to strengthen that food security is matter of rights.

In India, nearly 70% of the population is dependent on agriculture and allied activities for livelihoods. However in the current economic order and globalization farmers' autonomy is hugely undermined. Touching upon the issues of GM crops, Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) and biodiversity regulation, Mr. Patil stressed on the point that farmer's independence and self reliance to use seeds is in danger which in turn puts seed dependent agriculture also in danger. Citing examples from Seed Bill, Mr. Patil said, if farmers are selling uncertified seeds, they will be penalized as proposed in the Seed Bill. According to him, such policies will have adverse impacts on agriculture. And poor people who are dependent on agriculture for their livelihood will lose control of their farming. According to Mr. Patil, from year 1950 to 2008, close to 170, 000 hectares of agricultural land has been turned into non agricultural land on the account of development work. Thus people dependent on this chunk of land have lost their livelihoods somehow. Sharing his experience of working with farmers in Vidarbha, Mr. Patil said that farmers are selling their agricultural land because of increase in price. And government is promoting Corporatization of agriculture and Contract Farming in line of what has happened in Europe earlier. However after selling his land the farmers won't be able to work as laborers on the same fields because corporate will do mechanized farming. He put a big question mark on the livelihoods of 70% of population dependent on agriculture in the current policy environments. While speaking of Minimum Support Price (MSP), he said the price of the land is not taken into consideration while determining MSP. In the bill revitalization of agriculture is mentioned only in schedule III and the question is, he said, why it is not mentioned in the main part.

Mr. Datta, rejecting the idea of higher production through Bt Brinjal, said, the farmers already produce enough Brinjal so much so that they have to sell Brinjal at a very low price in the market. There are already more than 3000 species of Brinjal seeds then why this Bt Brinjal is being promoted. It is obvious that our policy makers are promoting these policies in the interest if companies like Monsanto.

He said MGNREGA should be amended to include work on the individual land so that a farmer can work on his own field and get paid as well. Secondly, sustainable or organic agriculture need to be promoted. There should be incentive for mix cropping and agro-allied activities. Crop insurance; for entire projected production in the given farmland needs to be brought in for ensuring livelihood security. Ready to eat food is unfeasible since in a particular geo- climatic scenario what is produced locally defines the food habits. In nut shell, if the bill protects the interest of 70 % population of farmers and agricultural laborers with a livelihood security approach then only it will be helpful for this country.

Sh. Indu Kumar Jani further spoke with view point of landless agriculture laborers in Gujarat context. He began by saying that Gujarat is one of the states with highest rate of urbanization. In Gujarat, in last



10 years, large chunk of lands has been given to industrial houses and it is a case of open land-grab. There are five or six industrial houses benefitting out of it and in turn willing to do anything to please the State government and its leadership. The entire model of industrial development is based on the destruction of agriculture in the state.

Referring to Census surveys Sh. Jani said that number of agriculture laborers is constantly increasing from 1215,000 in 1951 to 6500,000 in 2011. However despite that whatever policies are being made are all made to promote the industrial growth. He pointed out the GR by Government of Gujarat dated 17 May 2005, in which it is mentioned that 19.84 Lakhs hectare of agriculture land on which agricultural activities are not taking place and 25.99 Lakhs hectare of non agricultural land will be allotted to industrial houses. Ms Jani said no initiative is taken for the agriculture by the government. Even the implementation of MGNREGA is one the poorest in Gujarat. He said MGNREGA titles should be changed to Right to Work or Livelihood. Mr. Jani said that Food Security or Right to Food will be achieved only when you have purchasing power.

Mr. Jani said, currently in Gujarat 75% of agricultural land is being used for cash crops and its only 25% of land subsistence farming is done. The cost of Agriculture is increasing. It's true that farmers are selling off their land because they are getting good money but in the long term they are loosing control over their livelihoods. Mr. Jani said that issues of Food Security must be seen with multiple angle such as purchasing power, availability of land and production cost etc. There is a trend of debt economy which runs on easy loan. Of all the unorganized sector laborers, landless agricultural laborers are most in numbers but they live in very critical conditions. Surat is one of the fastest growing cities in India, but landless laborers get as little as Rs 50-60 per day. Therefore we need to have complete picture while thinking about the food security Bill.

Inputs in the Open House:

- After the bill is passed, it looks like it will be very difficult for small farmers to do subsistence farming. So there is a possibility of large scale dispossession of land from small and marginal farmers.
- When BPL survey is organized, people living in slums who deserve to be in the BPL category, tend to be left out due to survey methods. The Surveyors arrive in the noon time while people leave for work early in the morning. Also the Surveyors sit comfortably in a building and do the survey for entire habitation in a day. As a result people living in buildings are included in BPL while poor slum dwellers are not. So the rightful people are denied the entitlement.
- For ration shop, it was suggested that people who have their own shops, should not be allotted PDS shop. There should be monitoring about the timing of shop opening and quality of food grains. It can be done through proper display of information, maintenance of register and sample of food. Also The PDS grains given for marriages must be stopped as poor people go without ration due to such practices. Grains should be distributed throughout the entire month as people can buy whenever they have money.
- There must be protective measure for Landless farmers so as to ensure their job or income security. Especially when the land is taken away for industries, protective measures should be there for people.
- There are growing evidences of Climate Change affecting agriculture therefore there is greater need of promoting sustainable agriculture and using alternate source of energy
- Various government schemes/services and programs are not reaching the most needy sections like small and marginal farmers and hence need to address gaps in delivery of service by government.

- Agricultural land must not be used or transferred for non agricultural purposes or industry development. There is need for adopting sustainable development practices. Ways and means to sustain the village level resources towards building local economy must be discussed.
- Black marketing of PDS grains needs to be checked. PDS shops to be open regularly and timely for the entire month as per the norm.
- Agricultural laborers across different parts of the country do not get minimum wages despite the legal arrangements. This is particularly a crisis for landless agricultural laborers who depends on the daily wage for the survival. Unable to meet their expenses from the actual wage received, they take loans for food and other consumption needs from the local moneylender and fall pray into a vicious cycle of poverty. Therefore implementation of Minimum Wage Act should be strongly put across in the current food security Bill.

Concluding the session, **Mr. Anil Singh**, referred to the 12th Five Year Perspective Plan document and said that the current government is not serious about agriculture and the policies are being made as if only 3-4% of people are engaged in agriculture similar to Europe. He said that Agriculture Minister is least bothered about the state of agriculture and more interested in Cricket. Likewise Ministry of Finance and Planning Commission too are not in favor of pro agriculture policies. He said that propaganda is being created that Agriculture is no longer profitable, however he questioned, that if this is true then why are corporate taking so much interests in agriculture and investing in agribusiness enterprises. It is just a move to kick poor, small and marginal farmers out of the agriculture and capture the land and other natural resources.



Mr. Singh said, that world over, it is a crisis time – global financial crisis, food crisis and fuel crisis – but instead of looking genuinely at the root causes, cynical explanations such as extra food and fuel consumptions by people with growing purchasing power in fast growing economies such as India, China, Brazil and South Africa are being put forth by American President and even Indian Agriculture Minister. He said nobody has any answer why and how has American and European Financial crisis surfaced. Mr. Singh, quoting the UN Secretary General' statement that last year approximately 20 Trillion worth of financial package has been given to

banks and industrial houses, questioned the logic behind the bailout packages to Indian companies which went broke during recession. It is official that last year Rs 516,000 Crores worth of tax could not be collected from businesses and individuals in custom and excise duties. So, he said, what kind of priority is this that while business and companies are not giving taxes and government says that there is not enough money for education, health and agriculture.

Mr. Singh said, countries where people have been deprived of food security have also lost their independence and sovereignty subsequently. India has the technology to increase productivity keeping the Inputs cost low and using the technology. He said with this approach India not only can feed its own people but can supply surplus to other countries. He said India has the capacity and technology but no political will towards this end.

Session 5: 7th February 2012 5:00-5:30 PM

Food Security and Social Exclusion: Special Focus on Women and Children from Marginalized Communities and Groups-I: Dalit and People Living with HIV and AIDS



Chair: Paulomi Mistry, Disha Ahmadabad

Key Speakers: Mr. Joseph Patelia from Behavioral Science Centre, Ahmadabad and Mr. Amar Vyas, Department of Social and Preventive Medicines, BJ Medical College, Gujarat University, Ahmedabad.

Deliberations:

Mr. Joseph spoke about situation of food security issues in the context of Dalits in Gujarat and western region. He said Dalit population constitutes around & 7 % of total 6 Crores of population, living mainly in rural areas and in slums in cities. He said one of the moot questions for Dalits is question for BPL. Well- off people are in the BPL list while poor people are excluded. So most of Dalit populations are actually unable to take ration from the PDS and face such type of discrimination and exclusion. Further Mr. Joseph put forth following issues about Dalit and PDS

- Family members of the BPL families, when start to live separate after marriage, are not given same status of BPL

- Ration cards of Dalits are mortgaged against small amount of loan they take from local moneylenders.
- As per the law, in the Vigilance and Monitoring Committee, there should be one person from Scheduled Caste community. But actually there is no member from SC community in the Vigilance Committee at many places.
- Many a times when Dalits have demanded their rightful quotas of ration, they have met with violence and atrocities because generally the FPS owners are from upper caste dominant communities.
- Many educated Dalits have given applications to become Fair Price Shop owners as per the law. However the applications have been rejected because if they are selected, upper caste people will have to go to Dalit habitations to get the ration which is not acceptable to them.

He also said there have been cases that if the MDM cook is a Scheduled Caste woman or man, parents of the upper caste do not want their children to eat the food. In some schools, it has been observed that Dalit children are made to sit little separately. And jobs like cleaning, dishwashing in the MDM is given to Children from Dalit community. Similarly at Aganwadi centers, children of SC or ST community are discriminated and not given adequate ration as per the norm. That's why Dalits in the village go in groups; raise their voice to get the ration. When Dalits report the atrocity cases, their social boycott is imposed on them. Many a times Dalit complain that ration in the PDS reaches in the villages and without informing them, gets distributed in the night. There have been cases wherein people have taken ration on mortgaged ration cards and fed their cattle while Dalit family was unable to take ration for their children. These aspects also are to be taken into considerations in the Food Security bill.

Amar Vyas shared learning and findings out of his research on HIV in Mehsana. The subject of his research was to understand the knowledge, attitude and behavior of social, political and religious leaders towards HIV positive people. A total of 150 leaders – 50 from each fields -social, political and religious- and from Panchayat to parliament level were included in the study. The findings clearly showed that the knowledge level is very low among leaders and there are lots of gaps, though political leaders have slightly higher level of knowledge about HIV and related issues as compared to social and religious leaders so much so that it is affecting the program interventions.

Sh. Amar said, for 31 years in India and in the world, HIV infection has posed a challenge. Globally 33.5 million positive people are affected by HIV. In India also the situation is grim and in Gujarat it is worse, though Gujarat is considered as medium prevalence state. Among people living with HIV and AIDS, women and children are worst affected. Sh. Amar, citing findings from his action research, informed several cases of children both infected and affected were contacted and dialogue and discussions were organized with them. The big question is what kind solutions are there for the food security of such children. Citing a case study of 65 years old HIV infected mother, Sh. Amar described the challenges by both affected and infected mothers and children – the mother unable to work and with responsibility of two children, faced the basic question of survival.

Due to HIV and related opportunistic infections and deteriorating physical condition, the capacity to work is affected. As soon as HIV status is disclosed, various kinds of discrimination start resulting in immediate job loss. All these situations push many a times, women into sex work. Constantly faced with such difficult cases, Sh. Amar said, he organized an interface dialogue between HIV infected and affected persons and political leaders. Members of Zilla Panchayat, MLAs and leaders from each type participated in the interface and assured that

whatever is required to help HIV infected and affected population, will be done. Religious leaders from diverse communities said that they will also help. So during the research a great deal of support from civil society was garnered though it remained a small example. There is a need for larger systemic response. Therefore in the bill it should be clearly mentioned that HIV affected and infected people should get free ration from the PDS.

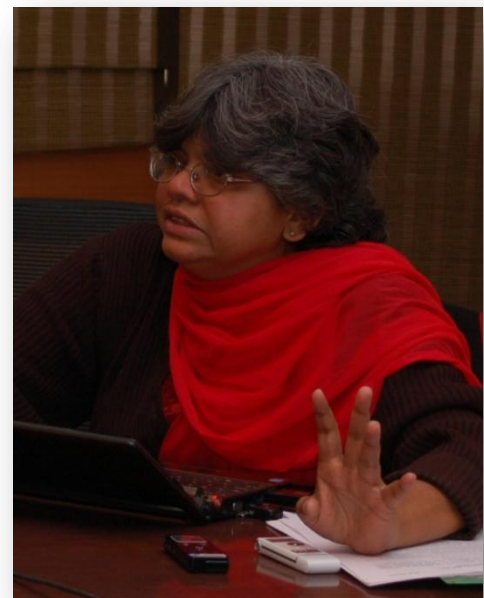
Further Sh. Amar also mentioned some of the special provisions and benefits given to HIV affected and infected population by the government including the issuance of BPL cards to HIV positive people by the District Collector of Mehsana. He said that, key focus could be Care and Support – Under Prevention there are lots of programs being run by NACO and other agencies. However under Care and Support different things could be designed for HIV infected and affected people. In response to a question, he said that HIV affected and infected population could be categorized as Priority category. Though he also accepted that due to associated stigma and discrimination, identification of HIV infected and an affected person in villages is a big challenge.

Subsequently in the open session there were further discussions on various kinds of marginalization and vulnerabilities that people living with HIV and AIDS and Dalit face. The house demanded to include both of them in Priority category.

Summarizing the sessions' proceeding, Paulomi Mistry said that both Dalits and people living with HIV/AIDS are such excluded groups that face social stigma and discrimination. Thus to identify the special needs of these excluded groups and including them in the Priority category would be a demand of the campaign. She said, however that even if these groups are included as Priority groups there will be a greater challenge to actually secure food security on ground for them.

Day 2: Kavita Srivastava, Right to Food Campaign, India

Kavita Srivastava began by saying that issue of Food Security is a vast subject and at present discussions will be centered on Food Security Bill and legal provisions contained therein. She gave a detailed background of Right to Food campaign, which according to her is the prelude to the current Food Security Bill. Starting from the drought in Rajasthan in 2001, subsequent hunger deaths despite availability of large amount food grains in government warehouses, she gave a detailed overview of petition by PUCL in Supreme Court of India in 2001. Kavita informed the house about Central government's affidavit in the Supreme Court; different orders given by Supreme Courts for effective monitoring of nine safety net schemes including PDS, ICDS, and MDM. Kavita said the Supreme Court orders are in fact acknowledgment of the food and social security schemes as a matter of rights. Sharing the popular political mandate behind PDS and MDM particularly in south Indian Politics, Kavita said the PDS is one of the biggest food distribution systems in the world in terms of purchase, procurement, storage and distribution. Kavita also spoke about appointment of Commissioners of Supreme Court and State advisors to



Supreme Court – a system for monitoring and control of safety net schemes put in place by Supreme Court. She informed the politics and gaps in APL and BPL giving examples from different states

According to her the present Food Security Bill is so weak that Civil Society has to watch whether or not it is taking some of the progressive orders issued by Supreme Court in the right to Food case forward. Kavita said the criterion of BPL is Rs 32 per person a day in urban areas and Rs 26 per person a day in rural areas is itself grossly inadequate. She also said it was pressure from the RTF campaign that UPA Government passed the MGNREGA in 2005. Further the government's commitment for the food security bill can be traced back to 4th June 2009, when Indian President Ms Pratibha Patil in her address to joint session of the 13th LS, said that everyone will get 25 kg grain at the rate of Rs 2 per kg and a National Food Security Mission will be established. She said that RtF campaign started a legislation process in 2009 and the draft of National Food Security Mission prepared by RtF Campaign takes a comprehensive look at food security. Government can't just talk of distribution; instead it has to start from production and rights of people on natural resources. It has to be looked at from supply side of it - agriculture, land, water, rate of food and grains, procurement and storage, distribution. Kavita said, if we want to talk about food security, we have to talk about farmers. She said according to NSSO, still 65% of the population engages in farming and out of this, 73% purchase grain from market. Thus we have to address issues in the agriculture Inputs s. Further she said following point as core issues while considering food security for the people.

1. The first decision/ call for use of land, water and forest will be for food security and this must go as non-negotiable in the food security bill. Only after ensuring food security other things such as mining and industrialization will be considered.
2. Calculation of Minimum Support Price (for the last off-take it was Rs 11.60 per Kg) in agriculture, the government is not calculating the family labor in deciding the cost of the grain.
 - a. Announcement of the FSP in advance, will encourage more people to grow grains and discourage selling of grains at throw away prices.
3. Keeping the warehouse nearest to the place of purchase –
 - a. Why can't Kerala procure ration from adjoining states rather than far off state such as Punjab.
 - b. State like Chhattisgarh is doing some good experiments under PDS such as local cluster based purchase and procurement (collection) of food grains and daily payment of wages. It has minimized the role of middlemen. There is no reason why other states can't learn out of it.
4. According to Planning Commission, 55% of Indian population who should be in BPL category is out of it. There are a lot of exclusion errors in the current BPL list and the way it is determined. Need to completely end the targeted system of APL and BPL and universalize the PDS
5. Food, work, education, health and social security are universal and fundamental rights and these can't be compromise. If the universalization is done, automatically some 20-25% people will opt out at its own.
6. Outright rejection of Socio- Economic Caste Census (SECC. Kavita spoke strongly about the SECC and urged the Abhiyan to discuss and reject it.)
 - a. She explained, how for example the survey has defined Single Women that if a household has a male person between 16 to 59 years, it looses on the deprivation score. Likewise there are grossly wrong way of defining people with disability.

7. Any methodology for APL and BPL, poor people will be excluded. In response to demand of Universalization of PDS, the government has identified four categories of exclusion which will not include even 1% of the people of the country- primitive tribes, homeless, manual scavengers and legitimately released Bonded Laborers.
8. 1/3 of the world's malnourished children live in India – rate of growth of malnutrition is one of the highest in Gujarat. 54% children born in MP and 47% born in Gujarat are malnourished. Like wise in every three women two women are anemic. In that sense without talking of nutrition security, no food security can be established - oil and vegetable should be distributed under PDS. Campaign is also demanding for locally and hot cooked meals for destitute, elderly and children.
9. 97% of pensions' amount is used for food consumptions and Supreme Court of India has treated pensions under Food Security, therefore pensions should be part of the bill.
10. Children in age group of 0-6 months require utmost care and attention. Therefore campaign is demanding maternal entitlements for 6 months to mothers, at per day of the Minimum wage rate.
11. A strong grievance redress system at block and Panchayat level is required for fixing accountability.

Next, Kavita spoke on specific sections of the bill which was introduced on 22 April 2011 in Parliament and now is referred to Standing Committee. She said the campaign should contact members of Standing Committee for putting forth the key recommendations. Kavita went on giving section wise critique of the food security bill developed by Right to Food Campaign. Reading from the copy of the bill, Kavita said the definition of food security given in the bill itself is very flawed dicey. She also said that schedule III should be included in main part and she also rejected the cash transfer component. Kavita said that government wants market based and not control based agriculture and this legislation is an effort to end PDS and push market based agriculture to the fore.

Session 5: 8th February 2012 10:015-11:15 AM**Food Security and Social Exclusion: Special Focus on Women and Children from Marginalized Communities and Groups-II: Children, People living in conflict and De-notified Tribes**

Chair: Paulomi Mistry, Disha Ahmadabad

Key Speakers: Meenakshi Shukla from Chetna Ahmadabad, Ms Mittal Patel, VSSM Ahmadabad and Mahesh Pandya from Paryavaran Mitra

Deliberations:

Meenakshi Shukla said in any kind of debate and discussion on food insecurity or poverty, the poorest of poor under all groups/categories whether Dalits, Tribals or people living with HIV and others are women and children. She said that women and children have differentiated needs at different stages of their lives which are crucial to address. She elaborated emotional physical and nutritional needs of children in 0-6 months, 6 months to 3 years and 3 to 6 years and also that of adolescent and mothers. She said that Aganwadi do not cater to differentiated



needs of the children and malnutrition set in early in the children. She said pre adolescent and adolescents' girls are also found to be anemic in large number also because of social and family level gender discrimination. This results in the malnourished child birth in future. Meenakshiben also said that malnutrition in adolescent also results in low educational attainment of the child subsequently. Further she gave examples from her experience and said that without considering issues of water, hygiene and sanitation in the village level, malnutrition can't be tackled. She also strongly pointed out the need for effective monitoring of the food related programs so as to deliver on ensuring accessibility and absorption of food.

Ms Mittal spoke about Nomadic and De- notified Tribes. According to her these groups have been largely invisible. Various kinds of development programs by governments have not really addressed their problems while nomadic and De-notified tribal are dealing with erosion of traditional occupation and livelihoods. She said in their population in Gujarat is more than 40 Lakhs. Nationally they are roughly 8-9% but despite that they are not included in the government schemes. Due to their nomadic lifestyles, it is very difficult for them to find a settlement. If they do find a settlement they generally live on the outskirts of the villages. As a result schools, health services, MDM and ICDS services are not accessible to them. Due to fear of eviction they do not voice their concerns and demand food. Even they have crisis of identity and do not have valid voter id cards. Most of the households of these groups have no ration cards and apparently they live in extremely poor conditions- mostly they live in open or those better off among them have temporary plastics tents only they have been given APL cards. Government of Gujarat has placed them in OBC Category and surveys in different districts tell us that most of the government schemes are not reaching up to them. Anganwadi are open in those habitations where well off people live and quite far from the settlements of Nomadic and De-Notified tribes. Moreover the Anganwadi workers complain that poor children do not come to the centers. So this group is left out groups in the debates of food security while they are the neediest section.

Citing example from Dapher Community, who were considered to be the criminal tribes before 1952, Mittal said that in monsoon, their conditions become worst as they have no work, no social security and nothing to eat. Police still harass them and treat them in inhuman way. She said that such groups have been left out even from the NGO sector. She said each state has made a list of most backward communities in which nomadic and De-notified communities must be included.

The next speaker spoke about the Ahgoria community which have around 15, 000 of population. They also come under de-notified tribes. She said that for four months, this tribe lives in village but for eight months they go in deserts and live in interior desert. Government services of health, nutrition, education PDS have no reach to such population. Even roaming ration cards are not working for them. As a result this community comes out as a community with high level of malnutrition. She said that in line with RTI, some provisions like proactive disclosures must be built in the bill to ensure transparency and accountability.

Maresh Pandya spoke from the perspective of minorities and people living in conflict. He said that right to food basically stems out of right to life guaranteed under constitution. Giving example of Sabarmati riverfront, compensation and rehabilitation of riot victims, industrial and infrastructural development in so called vibrant Gujarat, Mr. Pandya made a point that members of minorities and other marginalized community are faced with continued displacement and survival crisis. Despite the intervention by High Court and Supreme Court, their very existence is in danger, leave about the question of food security. He also said in such a scenario the situation of women and children is worst affected.

Mr. Pandya said, in Kutchh more than 30,000 fisher folk's communities are marginalized because they are from minority community. Government is not doing anything for their development. He said one of the most dangerous trends is that there is no popular or media support in favor of rights of minorities in Gujarat. Recently government allotted 1 lakh acres of land to a big politician at the rate of Rs 37 per acre. On the other hand, government says that there is no land for Indira Awas Yojna. Mr. Pandya ended by saying that for some people Gujarat is fast developing but for people of marginalized community and specially minorities it is very dangerous situation and a crisis of survival. He said many people of minority community do not have Voter Id cards and hence they are unable to vote. So people who want any change of governance are out of electoral process.

Inputs from Open House

- Issues of Adhaar UID and question of Abhiyan's position on the same
- Identification of Trans-genders as most vulnerable communities
- Devlibai, from Rajasthan from Adivasi Mahila Jagrirti Sangthan shared her experience of working in Girva Tehsil in Rajasthan. She said that there is a great need for monitoring by the communities of the quality of food in school. Even if there are no children in schools, ration distribution is shown in records and grains are being lifted. She asked where the ration is going. She also shared her experience of fighting with district authorities on the issue of water, forest and land.
- MDM is given only to registered children in schools- lot of children who are drop out due to various reasons are left out. So out of school children should be included under MDM.
- Any kind of corporatization of food distribution- PDS, MDM or ICDS is rejected
- Notified and de-notified tribes in Maharashtra- Kokana, Vidarbha and Marathwada -have no ration cards
- APL and BPL should be scrapped- PDS should be universalized.
- Currently only rice and wheat is being distributed under PDS. However to strengthen PDS there is a need to strengthen the production- we need to grow sufficient quantity and types of food to meet the nutritional needs – pulses, oil, vegetables, fruits are also important and be given under PDS.
- Waste land such as wet land along side riverbeds and extra land along the highways remained unused since there is no rights of people/tribes to grow vegetables or local foods. Therefore there should be laws to give farming rights not the ownership rights to people/tribes so that there is sufficient production for PDS.
- Grievances redress system on the lines of MGNREGA is required in the bill. Right to education is not being implemented because of very poor monitoring. Learning from such experience, for the food right bill there should be one person recruited for effective monitoring at Panchayat level. There should be mandatory

provision for public awareness by the government. State should be responsible for information dissemination and public education.

- There should be special committee including members of civil society representatives for monitoring of MDM and Aganwadi food for ensuring quality and checking the corruption.
- Nutritional security will lead to food security – therefore eggs, milk and fruits should be part of the food distribution under PDS.
- Time bound and fast track redress of complaint and security of complainants is required.
- Easy and user friendly complaint mechanism should be put in place – like toll free number or SMS
- Linkage with Panchayat on planning and implementation of food security and awareness creation.
- Bagia Shramik community – migrant laborers from South Rajasthan to North Gujarat- their Ration cards, education and health is compromised.
- Democratic rule and rule of law is coming up as major hurdle from the state side in Gujarat. On many instances there is open contempt of court order is seen and despite efforts by civil society, nothing much is moving on the ground. There is effort to control civil society through laws like Trust Acts and even media is not free. This context has to be taken cognizance of.
- The context of Gujarat can be called as Democracy with dictatorship at all level. There is divisive and politics of polarization is at play. Middle class lives in constant insecurities and minorities in fear.
- Muslims within nomadic and de-notified tribes face problem in securing ration cards and voter ids
- Banni and fisher community in Kutchh and salt pan workers (Aghoria) community also come under de-notified community. Such community have lived with nature for ages and never claimed ownership. But now they are facing the dangers of displacements.
- The government doesn't want to show that there are drop out children.

Further Kavita spoke about identity issues and tried to link it universalization. About Aadhar she said, it can be one identity card but can't be made mandatory. Countries like UK, Germany and Australia have rejected such moves. Therefore Aadhaar could be another way of exclusion and it is obvious that who will be excluded –NT and DNT communities and marginalized communities. Kavita said to end such exclusion issues the demand for PDS should be to universalize it. It will give rights in theory to all the diverse communities who face different types of discrimination and are marginalized. She said Supreme Court has given orders to universalize ICDS with six types of services while the proposed law just speaks of nutrition. This law is fragmenting the orders already given by Supreme Court. On the issues of Community Kitchen, there should be clear position of the Abhiyan before any recommendation to Standing Committee. Kavita also made following points, on the agriculture productions side

- The first call on land water and forest should be food
- Pulses to be distributed the PDS- how to include it in the demand is to be thought through
- Egg and Milk in the MDM to be given - already Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry are doing it
- Supreme Court of India Has instructed government not to bring in any laws without financial memorandum therefore in the bill must come in with the financial memorandum
- Citizen Grievance Redress Bill has to be brought in by the government
- Resolution from Gram Sabha to standing committee
- All FPS are online in Chhattisgarh, GPS in Trucks- Other states can do similarly.

State Wise Recommendations

A. Rajasthan

1. All residents of this country wherever they be residing including Nomadic and de-notified tribes, migrant laborers, trans-genders, people living with HIV and AIDS should have the tight to food security.
2. Universalize the Public Distribution System putting an end to APL, PBL and any other type of Categorization.
3. Women Self Help Groups at local level to be given full charge of management of government run food related scheme for children below 18 years.
4. A local person to be appointed at Gram Panchayat level for the monitoring of National Food Security Schemes and complaint redress
5. Tribal and desert population should be given more food throughout the year and limited to the time of drought.

B. Gujarat

1. Universalization of food security entitlements and Public Distribution System with a clear focus on with a focus on inclusion of most excluded communities – Nomadic and De –notified Tribes, Migrant, Displaced, Primitive Tribes. Refugees and People Living with HIV and AIDS
2. Grievance Redress System to be decentralized up-to the block and Gram Panchayat level. Fixing of clear cut accountability is required. Preparation and presentation of Annual report in Gram Sabha and State Assembly to be replicated from Right to information to take these constitutional bodies in loop.
3. In Gujarat an industry and market led growth approach is leading to large scale displacement of people, erosions of peoples' livelihood, gross violation of human rights and multiple marginalization of communities. Therefore it is demand that state policies should be in line with the requirement of food security first - land, water, agriculture, health and education and industrial policies must converge to integrate the greater concerns of food security.
4. Monitoring of the laws to be taken at Panchayat level.
5. Panchayat level Health and Sanitation Committee to be given the nutrition component and it can be termed as Health, Nutrition and Sanitation Committee.
6. All provisions to be back up with adequate financial and HR issues.
7. All information to be disseminated up-to the grass root level by the government similar to Article 26 of RTI Act towards ensuring full transparency.
8. Specially for migrant laborers cash transfer to be considered
9. Increase financial penalty for increasing accountability in line with RTI Act

C. Madhya Pradesh

1. Universalization provisions of PDS - remove categorization
2. Warehouse to be built at GS level so that to reduce transportation and safe upkeep and proper monitoring.

3. Protection of agriculture produce for farmers - water, electricity and seeds to be made available on subsidized price and
4. MSP must be decided to ensure farmers interests first.
5. Coarse grain, pulses, sugar, oil and other local foods to be made available
6. Localized purchase and distribution of foods under PDS

D. Maharashtra

1. Agriculture based Food Security law is demanded - promoting local food, pulses and vegetables under PDS
2. Universalization of rationing and Public Distribution System.
3. Local system of purchase, storage and sale of grain to be introduced and strengthened within PDS
4. Sampurna Gramin Rojgar Yojna (SGRY) should be strengthened and expanded at large scale with component of 50% cash and 50% food and other essential items- grains, oils, clothes as wage.
5. For Migrant and displaced communities such Notified and De- notified NT regular and continued provision of ration throughout the year service- Provision for mobile ration van to reach out to marginalized communities in remote areas.
6. Ready to eat food is not to be introduced at all
7. Inclusion of financial resources memorandum for the bill- ensuring provision for financial resource allocation within the bill.
8. Stringent penalty for curbing corruption- increase the penalty amount minimum Rs25, 000 and maximum Rs 100,000, provisions of FIR and suspended increment for 5 years.
9. Fixing accountability of local level monitoring committee members.
10. Provision for compensation and security of the complainant.

Action Points

As a collective alliance, the member organizations made following commitments towards engaging with different stakeholders for advocating for strong right to food bill.

1. A delegation by WNTA will meet Chairperson of the Standing Committee and put for the recommendation and demand of the Abhiyan.
2. Other members of the Standing Committee will also be contacted by Abhiyan members in respective constituencies.
3. Signature campaigns will be organized- Post cards will be sent to Prime Minister and Members of the Standing Committee
4. Gram Sabha resolutions will be sent to Prime Minister and Standing Committee members
5. Media advocacy and use of mass media for public awareness
6. Activities for public education at local level by the members organizations of the Abhiyan.

Key Recommendation by Western Regional Consultation on Right to Food Bill

Consolidation of State Wise Recommendations

1. Food security is to be seen as a matter of right to food and nutrition and not a charity.
2. Food Security Rights for all without any sorts of categorization and division ensuring inclusion of most excluded and vulnerable groups such as Notified and De-notified Tribes, Primitive tribes, People living with HIV, Minorities, Adolescent girls and other marginalized and excluded communities.
3. Bill provisions not to roll back or cut on entitlements already made under previous services/programs/schemes and Supreme Court orders on food and social security schemes.
4. Universalization of Public Distribution System.
5. Minimum quantity of food Rs 14 Kg per adult and half for a child to be provisioned.
6. Developing and introducing a local procurement, storage and distribution system and structure for PDS. Already there are several example and best practices available.
7. Other than wheat, rice and coarse grains, pulses, milk, egg, vegetable and fruits to be included in PDS
8. Provisions to build/ construct warehouse at village level for all the villages under a cluster of 5-10 km.
9. Complete rejection of readymade or ready to eat food or packaged food at all cost in ICDS or MDM.
10. Local Women Self Help Group to be given charge of managing MDM and Aganwadi.
11. A strong, Gram Panchayat level grievance redress system which ensures effective, time bound redress of complaints and
12. protection and compensation to complainants to ensure rule of law
13. Minimum Rs 25,000 and maximum of Rs 100, 000 as penalty for guilty.
14. Put in place strong monitoring of the provisions at Gram Panchayat level
15. Health and Nutrition, Water and Sanitation and land rights to be seen in an integrated manner within the bill.
16. Provide incentives to farmers and promotion of organic and sustainable agriculture.
17. Agriculture revitalization in Schedule III- Agricultural infrastructure development, provision for seed, electricity, irrigation and the likes to be made.
18. Include Schedule III as one of the main chapters instead of Annexure.
19. Decision of Minimum Support Prices to consider, price of land, profit motifs of the farmers and family labor.
20. Include financial memorandum for the bill
21. Provision for Government to build public awareness on the provisions of the law
22. Special provisions for Tribal, dessert area population in Rajasthan and migrant laborers in Gujarat to supply ration

Additional recommendations

- A. Nutritional standard mentioned in Schedule II is not sufficient and needs revision
- B. In disaster situation everybody must be given free grains for three months
- C. Member of apolitical organizations to be included and involved in monitoring committees

***Press Conference:***

Soon after the deliberation was over on the second day of the Consultation, a press conference was organized with a purpose to brief the media about the consultation proceedings, background processes and key recommendations. Anil Sing from SANSAD, Datta Rao Patil from Yuva Mumbai, Shyam Lal from Astha, Paulomi Mistry from Disha and Mr. Hemant Shah from Gujarat University addressed the press conference.

Conclusion

There is growing consensus that globalization has increased inequality the world over. In India, there is growing evidences that incidences of poverty, hunger and malnutrition are on the rise. In Human Development Report 2011, India is placed 126th Country. India is home to maximum number of malnourished children and anemic women in the world. In such a backdrop Government has introduced the Food Security Bill. This move by government whether to fulfill international commitments towards MDG or a response to domestic compulsions is welcomed. However as a larger civil society alliance of four states Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra in western India, Wada Na Todo Abhiyan in western region would like a food security bill which is based on sustainable agricultural and development policies and reject the piece meal and fragmented approach adopted by the government. As articulated in Article 21 of Indian Constitution- Right to life- the Wada Na Todo Abhiyan would demand that food security to be seen as basic and fundamental right to food as all the resident of this country without any discrimination and with special provisions to ensure food security of most excluded and marginalized communities. On its part and as member organizations, Wada Na Todo Abhiyan is committed to create public education on the provisions of Food Security bill and engage with government, parliamentarian and other key stakeholders for advocating the demands and recommendations in favor of a strong law guaranteeing universal right to food to all the citizen of this country.

Annexure (S)

1. List of Participants
2. Agenda of the consultation
3. Press Clippings

Annexure -1**Western Regional Consultation on Right To Food Bill****7-8 February 2012****List of Participants**

No.	Name	Organization Name.	Mobile No.
1	Mr. Amit Singh	SSUS Jhabua M.P.	9425102775
2	Mrs. Shiny Singh	SSUS Jhabua M.P.	
3	Mausmi Chetria	Cecoydecon Jaipur	
4	Ramesh Dwivedi	SMTA	09993489947
5	Ashish Rai	Srijan Sanathan M.P	09424659814
6	Mr.Sunil Narkhede	Yuva Nagpur	9325671806
7	Vilas Shinde	Yuva Naghpur	9850215553
8	Vipul Pandya	Bandhkam Mazdoor Sanghathan	9427263563
9	Joel Christian	Swastik Chambers, Ahmadabad	9227672730
10	Dr.Syed Mahewal	United Reformer, Bhopal	09300381061
11	Datta RaoPatil	Yuva Rural Naghpur	09967024249
12	Pandor Suresh M	Disha Himmatnagar	9909999203
13	Sensingh Damor	Gujarat Forest Work Union	9574408736
14	Awil Borkar	Yuva Badmer	9011942822
15	Shobha Dhagone	M V P Naghpur	9545026681
16	Kirti N Ganvir	M V P Naghpur	8007513230
17	Vinod Chauhan	V S P Mumbai	9967684794
18	Asha Cheterjee	Kiran Mahila Mandal	9822935935
19	Joseph Patelia	B S C Ahmadabad	942899890
20	Hadiyal Nanjibhai S	B S C Ahmadabad	9824922794

21	Anil K Singh	SANSAD	9810015250
22	Pravin Vyas	GFPGFU	9898434061
23	Pankti Jog	Mahiti Adhikar Guj,	09909006791
24	Harinesh Pandya	Janpath	09824048842
25	Rehana	SEWA, Gujarat	09429619335
26	Pinaben Jevabhai	SEWA, Gujarat	
27	Anuj Saxena	Seoni (M P)	9425843331
28	Mittal Patel	V S S M Ahmadabad	9099936011
29	Shyamlal	Astha Udaipur	9413318705
30	Ilesh	Astha Udaipur	
31	Nosat	Astha Udaipur	
32	Devi	Astha Udaipur	
33	Bharmaram	Astha Udaipur	
34	Shantilal	V M K S Dungharpur	9413947165
35	Chanduram Garasiya	A V M Udaipur	9783998035
36	Prabhat Bhai	Janpath	9714012612
37	Amar Vyas	B J Medical Colledge Ahmadabad	9825438600
38	Piyush Tiwari	Seva Mandir, Rajasthan	9784192292
39	Naraesh	S C B R	9925032828
40	Hemantkumar Shah	Gujarat University	9898025990
41	Sanjay	Charkha	9825724608
42	Chandrakanta	Janchetna Sangthan Abu Road	8107939602
43	Pushpa	Janchetna Sangthan Abu Road	978466391
44	Minaxi Shukla	Chetna, Ahmadabad	09898021057

45	Kanu Trivedi	Chetna, Ahmadabad	9925569215
46	Vandna Chauhan	AIDMI, Ahmadabad	9909925893
47	Manoj Chivhane	Maharashtra	9423266176
48	Ashwini K Pratap	Disha, Ahmadabad	
49	Binoy Acharya	Unnati – Ahmadabad	
50	Saroj Sharma	Disha, Ahmadabad	09662144605
51	Chandrashekhar Yadati	Disha, Ahmadabad	09824564757
52	Ruchika	WNTA consultant, New Delhi	9818911909
53	Kavita Srivastava	PUCL, Rajasthan	
54	Mr M D Mistry	General Secretary, AICC and Member, CWC, New Delhi	
55	Mr Shaknar Singh Goyil	Leader of Opposition, State Assembly, Gujarat	
56	Paulomi Mistry	Disha, Ahmadabad	
58	Rajan Mohanty	SCF, Gujarat	
59	Indu Kumar Jani	Well known Social Activists and Journalist – Nayamarg, Ahmadabad	
60	Sameer Pandey	Ahmadabad	8469244156

Annexure- 2**Western Regional Consultation on the Right to Food Bill****7th, 8th February 2012 in Ahmadabad.**

Jointly organized by:

Wada Na Todo Abhiyan, South Asian Network for Social & Agricultural Development (SANSAD)

Food and Water Security Coalition, India

(Asta, Disha, Samarthan, Yuva)

Session	Tentative schedule- Topic
10:00 .10.30 am	Registration
Session 1 10:30-12:00 am	Plenary Session
	<p>Welcome and Introduction</p> <p>Keynote Address by Chief Guest</p> <p>(Shri Madhusudan Mistry and Shri Shaktisinh Goyil)</p> <p>Overview of the Food Security Bill and its critique (Shri Anil Singh- SANSAD)</p> <p>Discussion</p>
TEA BREAK 12:00-12:30	
Session 2 12:30-1:30 pm	Food Security: State Perspectives
	<p>State 1- One person from Rajasthan- Sh Shyam Lal</p> <p>State 2- One person from Gujarat – Shri Hamant Shah- Prof Economics</p> <p>State 3- One person from Maharastra- Shri Anil Bodkar</p> <p>State 4- One person from Madhya Pradesh- Dr Sayed Mahewal</p> <p>Discussion</p>
LUNCH	

1:30-2:30 pm	
Session 3 2:30-3:30 pm	Food Security and the Question of Livelihoods-I
	<p>Industrial Labor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organized – Shri Vinod Chavan Unorganized- Shri Vipul Pandya and Rehanaben Riyawala <p>Traditional Artisans and Craftsman</p> <p>Discussion</p>
TEA BREAK 3:30 -4: pm	
Session 4 4-00 to 5:00 pm	Food Security and the Question of Livelihoods-II
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agriculture – Datta Rao Patil Farmers – Datta Rao Patil Agricultural Laborers –Landless Laborers - Shri Indu Kumar Jani <p>Discussion</p>
Session 5 5-00: 5.30 pm	<p>Food Security and Social Exclusion: Special Focus on Women and Children from Marginalized Communities and Groups-I</p> <p>Dalit, -Shri Joseph Patelia</p> <p>People Living With HIV/AIDS- Mr Amar Vyas</p> <p>Discussion</p>
5:30-5:45 pm	Concluding Remarks for Day 1
Day 2	
10-10:15 am	Recap of Day 1 and Overview of Agenda for Day 2

Session5 10:15-11:15 am	Food Security and Social Exclusion: Special Focus on Women and Children from Marginalized Communities and Groups-I
11:15-11:45 am Tea Break	
Session6 11:45-12:45	Food Security and Social Exclusion: Special Focus on Women and Children from Marginalized Communities and Groups-II
	Children- Meenakshi Shukla People Living in Conflict- Mahesh Pandya Notified and de-notified Tribes – Ms Mittal Patel
12:45-1:30	Conclusion of Consultation and Way Forward- State wise
Lunch	

[illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible]