

Strengthening Grass-root process through capacity building of farmers

Annual Report of SANSAD - 2014-15



South Asian Network for Social & Agricultural Development (SANSAD)
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Context:

Year 2014-15 was a period for SANSAD to strengthen its capacity of empowering farmers through promotion of organic farming in India especially in Western part belonging to Green revolution belt. SANSAD organized number of training programmes in Saharanpur district of Uttar Pradesh and gave theoretical as well as practical training to hundreds of farmers. Also this year SANSAD builds close relationships with many Governmental agencies like Krishi Vigyan Kendra, local agricultural college and many Gram Panchayats of the area including local Nagar Panchayat (Municipality) and collaborated with them in organizing training programmes and farmer's conventions. Due to more involvement at grass root level work, SANSAD could not participate in many national and international level advocacy work but this happens due to our past experience of national and international level advocacy where we found that national and international level advocacy is having its importance but unless its fruits and benefits reaching to the grass root, having no meaning, therefore SANSAD decided to move to the grass root level activities in 2012 and build a small training cum demonstration centre in Saharanpur. SANSAD was fortunate that RKK a funding agency from Japan agreed to support our intervention specially to build ground for grass root level activities. This support came at a time when voluntary sector in India was facing a big financial crisis. Another agency from Japan known as ShaplaNeer has agreed to become our collaborative partner in securing financial support from Japan Fund for Global Environment (JFGE). Since July 2013 SANSAD is getting regular support from these three Japanese agencies.

SANSAD'S Vision

To make South Asia free from hunger and poverty

SANSAD's Mission

To take global and regional initiatives for sustainable agriculture, rural development and human dignity aimed at putting collective pressure on policy makers.

SANSAD's Board Objectives

- ✦ To catalyzed, support and strengthen civil society in promoting sustainable livelihood, ecological agriculture, food sovereignty, and equitable trade with a focus on the human dignity of poor and marginalized people in South Asia.
- ✦ To undertake training, research, publication and build capacities to promote economic, social and gender justice.
- ✦ To promote a democratic, accountable and transparent system of governance and create an enabling and supportive environment for development initiatives in South Asian countries.

- ✦ To build alliances and network at national and international levels in order to campaign and Advocate policies for the marginalized in agriculture, agricultural trade, farming systems, natural resources ecological balance and human welfare

SANSAD's Interventions for Change

SANSAD creates knowledge that contributes to both the speed and quality of poverty reduction, with a focus on assisting those who are trapped in poverty and ecological degradation.

SANSAD organizes mass campaigns, public debates, advocacy work shop, builds alliances, and Forges partnerships between civil society of South Asia and Northern NGO's with similar objectives, on issues of agriculture, poverty, hunger, food sovereignty and social development.

SANSAD attempts to go beyond activism to analyze policies and advocates at decision-making and implementation levels for policies and programmes in favor of the poor in South Asia.

SANSAD brings together farmers and trade associations, academic institutions, like-minded voluntary organization on common platform to strengthen advocacy campaigns for policy changes with respect to hunger, poverty, agriculture and trade. SANSAD makes all efforts to involve the rural communities in all advocacy efforts.

SANSAD is continuously developing strategies to defend the livelihood of South Asia's poor and hungry. SANSAD is developing a resource centre that will function as nodal agency for research, documentation, collection, analysis and dissemination of information and reference materials.

Performance Area

In continuation to the Annual Report 2013-14, SANSAD is pleased in furnishing the Annual Report of the Organization for the year 2014-15. Here it is worth noting that SANSAD, established in the year 2004 is working for ensuring Advocacy and action for making South Asia free from hunger and poverty. The strategy for this goal is set to land these objectives to the ground reality through a collective process of different likeminded Groups, Networks, Foundations, Forums and NGOs.

The thematic areas for effective intervention on the issues are:

- ✦ **Information collection, Analysis and Dissemination**
- ✦ **Education, Sensitizing Motivating and Mobilizing Different Stake holders**
- ✦ **Advocacy with Policy Makers, at the National, Regional and Global level**

Name of Project: Strengthening Food Security of the Marginalized Communities through adoption of Climate friendly Sustainable Agriculture Practices

The main purpose of the project is to ensure livelihood and food security of the farmer households and other agricultural labour households. As we have seen, due to use of excessive chemical fertilizers and nontraditional (genetically modified) seeds, fertility of land and productivity of soil has fallen. On the other hand, costs of agriculture have increased in the target region of Saharanpur. This has resulted in loss of income of the farmer households and agricultural labourers. In some recent years, the gap between cost and income has been rising rapidly. As an instrument of achieving the broad objective of food security, we have planned to sensitize, mobilize and train farmers to practice organic farming by using traditional seeds, fertilizers (fossils, cow dung etc.) and traditionally known farming practices so that soil fertility increases and costs are less. Thus, use of organic farming will not only ensure food security, but will also help in maintaining environmental balance and soil fertility.

With this broad project goal, SANSAD got initial support from RKK to prepare well in advance to implement bigger project proposal getting awarded from Japan Fund for Global Environment which we have got successfully. We were supposed to do benchmark survey in selected 50 villages, construct animal sheds, set up office at our project site with basic infrastructures, purchasing of a motorbike for local travel, identifying and requiring staff of the project etc. which we have done successfully.

Schedule of Activities:

i). Identification of 20 villages: Based on our benchmark survey which was done in 50 villages with 1000 households in January and February 2014, a total of 20 villages was selected to work in 2014-15.

ii). Identification of farmers for training: From each selected villages mentioned above, 10 farmers were identified ($20 \times 10 = 200$ farmers) to give them training on organic farming. They were also oriented that for this 10 days training, all selected farmers must attend full training otherwise they may miss some of the important aspects of organic farming.

iii). Training of Trainers (ToT):



A three day Training of Trainers (ToT) was organized on June 26th to 28th, 2014 in hotel Rajmahal, Saharanpur in which 40 participants along with number of experts from the different parts of the Country participated. Basically this ToT was to prepare 25-30 local trainers who can impart training to the local farmers of the selected villages. A draft training manual was also discussed and finalized in this meeting.

iv) Training of farmers:



SANSAD during this financial year organized 40 days of training of farmers in different phases at 4 locations- Chalakpur, Samaspur, Chilkana, and SANSAD Farm. Altogether more than 300 farmers got training and build their capacity in organic farming which includes various techniques and methods of organic farming and also how to make organic fertilizers and pesticides. Each selected farmers received 10 days of training

Apart from that field level practical training was also conducted to expose farmers how to plant paddy crop through SRI methods in June 2014, wheat plantation as mixed cropping methods in November 2014 and vegetable plantation in the month of September and October 2014.

v). Farmers Conventions:



After several round of training of farmers, it was thought to bring all participants of training to a common platform and expose them to a bigger audience. Participants were also excited to meet all participants and based on that need it was decided to organized a big FARMER'S CONVENTION in Chilkana, Saharanpur. SANSAD approached local Agricultural Collage known as Gochar Mahavidyalaya, Krishi Vigyan Kendra of Saharanpur and Chilkana sultanpur Nagar Panchayat to become Co-host of this event and all of them readily agreed. Later on 8 other organizations and some Gram Panchayats also gave their consent to become co-host of this event.

On January 11th 2015 a big farmer's convention was organized in Jain Bagh, Chilkana, Saharanpur in which around six hundred farmers and more than 20 experts in the agriculture field from different parts of the Country participated as resource persons.

Those experts participated in this farmers convention are Dr. Devinder Sharma(Chandigarh), Dr. Krishna Bir Chaudhary(New Delhi), Com. Atul Kumar Anjaan(New Delhi), Shri Gopal Bhai(Chitrakoot), Shri Datta Patil(Nagpur), Shri Narender Kumar(New Delhi), Shri Madukar (Ranchi), Shri A K Singh(Jharkhand), Dr. Jasphool Singh(Rohtak), Smt Salini Samvedna(Ranchi), Shri Laxmi Narayan(Jaipur), Shri Subrat Das(New Delhi), Dr. Ramesh Dahiya (Saharanpur) and Mrs. H Fujime from Japan were the main speakers. Smt Suraiya Jamal and Shri Chand Mohammad, Chairman of Chilkana Sultanpur Nagar Panchayat jointly chaired the Convention. Shri Rajesh Panday, SSP of Saharanpur was the Chief Guest.

In this Farmer's convention 20 people who have helped SANSAD in promotion of organic farming in this area was also facilitated with mementos.

vi). Publication of Training Manual: Based on literature collected like literature, booklets, manuals on organic farming and based on that a "Training Manual" was prepared in Hindi for future use by farmers during our capacity building programmes and printed which was released in our farmers convention held in Chilkana on January 11th 2015.

Other Publications: SANSAD prepared 4 folders on different methods of vegetables plantation and how to make vermin compost which was distributed to the trainees as well as to other farmers.

SANSAD also published a new book entitled “Organic farming: without loan, without poison”(In Hindi) and it was released during Farmers Convention which will be distributed widely to encourage farmers to adopt organic farming.

In the initial stage of this project a two page leaflet was published and distributed widely to inform local communities about SANSAD, objective of the project and plan of action in coming months. This small leaflet helped SANSAD to reach widely amongst targeted communities of the area.

vii). Land preparation and cropping with new methods:





SANSAD is having two Acres of land in its position on which Animal Sheds, Biogas plant, Hand pump, submersible pump was installed. Also shed for animal rearing was made. This land was twice prepared-once in December 2014 and again in April end 2015. For Kharif and Rabi Agricultural session, a new type of plantation has be done in the end of April known as SRI method of Paddy and Wheat plantation in March 2015 to expose farmers on new techniques of organic farming which will include preparation of organic manure, vermy compost, and energy consumption and also help them in reducing input costs in agriculture and increasing productivity of the yields.

viii). Participation and putting up SANSAD Stall:



SANSAD participated in Farmers exhibition organized by Gochar Mahavidyalaya (An local Agricultural Collage) and put up its stall to show case organic products of farmers produced after getting training from SANSAD.

IX) Wall writings:



SANSAD organized wall writings of different slogans related with promotion of organic farming in different selected villages to make people aware about it and also know SANSAD. It was a awareness building exercise which helped a lot as many people came to know about SANSAD in the area and started asking different question about organic farming and its benefits.

X) Promotion of Bio gas:



SANSAD has already put up a bio gas plant on its farm and regularly bringing farmers from different village to show its utility. Bio gas plant put up at SANSAD farm producing sufficient gas to light two lamps, cooking gas for 6-7 people for twice a day as well as producing ready made organic fertilizer which is sufficient for 3-4 acres of land. After seeing functionality of bio gas plant people are more excited as their earlier experience was not positive and they have lost hope but now that confidence is more or less back on their thinking and approach due to SANSAD intervention. Many of farmers has said that they will also like to build similar biogas plant on their own land. They themselves told us that they can save a lot of money which they are putting in purchase of cooking gas and for lighting.

XI) Farmers School: SANSAD linked with more than 26 existing Farmers clubs in the villages and provided additional literatures, films, books and booklets so that these farmers club can work as learning centre for farmers and become a real farmers schools. These farmers club are providing regular information to the farming communities of their respective villages. Some more such learning materials will be provided to them in a phase manner so that they can learn and implement these new techniques of farming in their speed.

XII) Training and exposure of effective use of Animals and its product:: During training courses, special session was also organized to educate and sensitize effective use of animals and its product. It has been noticed that farmers are virtually cheated by local middle man and therefore they are not getting proper returns to their product. SANSAD encouraged farmers to form their cooperative and sell milk in collective manner so that they can get proper remunerations. Farmers are also trained how to make organic manures and pesticides at their house hold level to reduce input cost of agriculture and make land healthy with increasing use of organic manure and decreasing use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides. People were encouraged to rear local breed of cow and use cow dung and urine for increasing farm productivity.

XIII) Revamping of SANSAD Website: SANSAD Website was revamped in this financial year with putting all required information for public use to maintain transparency and accountability of the organization. It is a healthy sign that more than 50,000 people has visited website since October 2013 with an average of 90 people daily.

Participated in meetings/ seminars:

1. Secretary General participated in training programme of NIPCCD as Resource person on April 9th at its headquarter in New Delhi. Trainees were from 8 States of India.
2. Secretary General of SANSAD participated in the meeting organised by Helpage India on rules/ regulation affecting voluntary sector in India held on April 26th.

3. Anil K Singh, Secretary General of SANSAD participated in training programme of NIPCCD as Resource person on July 27th. Topic for his presentation was good governance in voluntary sector in India.
4. As a Board member of Center for Budget and Governance Accountability (CBGA), Anil K Singh participated in its Board meeting held on November 24th in New Delhi. He missed another Board meeting held on June 29th due to his foreign tour at that time.
5. During this financial year, number of preparatory meeting held on Peoples SAARC and Anil K Sing as one of the core group member participated in all meetings held on April 25th, May 15th and September 25th.
6. As one of the Steering Group member of Wada Na Todo Abhiyan, Anil K Sing participated in its Steering Group meetings held on April 27th and Campaign Coordination Group meeting held on August 27-28.
7. As one of the Board member of CARES- Center for Agrarian Research and Equity Studies, Anil K Singh participated in its Board meeting held on September 29th at Action Aid office.
8. Anil K Singh as one of the Trustee of Centre for World Solidarity, participated in its Board meeting held on July 31st in Hyderabad.

Organizational Matters

SANSAD has held two board meetings in this year and one advisory committee meetings thus ensuring that it meets all the legal requirements. SANSAD had also filled IT Returns, FCRA Returns and completed all legal formalities well before time.

SANSAD Board and Advisory Committee meetings were held as follows:

- ◆ Board Meetings: August 12th 2014 and January 16th, 2015
- ◆ Advisory Committee Meetings: January 17th, 2015

Governing Board of SANSAD

The Governing Board of SANSAD comprises of eight persons, including the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary General and four members. At present, the Vice President's position is vacant. It will be filled by a woman member in near future. The present Board Members with their positions are as follows:

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| 1. President | K S Gopal | Centre for Environment Concern,
Hyderabad |
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2. Vice President	Vacant	
3. Treasurer	Dr. Sanjay Bhatt	Delhi School of Social Work, Delhi
4. Secretary General	Anil K. Singh	SANSAD, Delhi
5. Member	Sheelu Francis	Women's Collective, Chennai
6. Member	Sharad Joshi	CECOEDECON, Jaipur
7. Member	Biplab Halim	IMSE, Kolkata
8. Member	Rita Sarin	The Hunger Project, New Delhi

Advisory Committee of SANSAD

The advisory group has two representatives from each of the major countries of South Asia:

Afghanistan

- ✦ Mr. Roz Mohammad Dalili, Executive Director, Sanayee Development Foundation
- ✦ Ms. Hangama Anwari, Vice Chair, Women and Children Legal Research Foundation

India

- ✦ Dr. Devinder Sharma, Chair, Forum for Biotechnology & Food Security, Delhi
- ✦ Mr. Atul Kumar Anjan, General Secretary, All India Kisan Sabha, Delhi

Nepal

- ✦ Dr. Rohit Nepali, Executive Director, South Asia Partnership International (SAP-I), Nepal
- ✦ Dr. Nani Ram Subedi, Coordinator, Culture, Equity, Gender and Governance, International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)

Pakistan

- ✦ Mr. Mohammad Tahseen, Executive Director, South Asia Partnership, Pakistan
- ✦ Ms. Najma Sadeque, Project Director, The Green Economics and Globalisation Initiatives, Pakistan

Sri Lanka

- ✦ Dr. Harsha Kumar Navaratne, President, Sewalanka Foundation, Sri Lanka
- ✦ Dr. Deshpriya S. Wijetunge, Director-General, Sri Lanka United Nations Friendship Organisation (SUNFO), Sri Lanka

Bangladesh

- ✦ Ms. Farida Akhter, Executive Director, Policy Research for Development Alternative (UBINIG), Bangladesh
- ✦ Ms. Rokeya Kabir, Director, Bangladesh Nari Pragoti Sangha (BNPS), Bangladesh

Maldives

- ✦ Ms. Jennifer Latheef, Council Member. Human Right Activist

Staff Members of SANSAD

Secretary General	: Mr. Anil K. Singh
Programme Coordinator	: Raghvendra Singh
Agronomist:	: Mr. Arvind Sharma
Assistant Agronomist	: Ms. Bimla Singh
Account Assistant	: Mr. Anand Yadav
Care Taker	: Mr. Noor Hassan
Helper	: Mr. Abdul Sakur
Watchman	: Mr. Manish Pal

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