

# The Role of Faith Based Organizations in post-communal violence Odisha

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**Abstract:-**Communal violence is a scar on society because it fosters disharmony and reinforces the cultural differences between different communities. Communal violence rips apart the very fabric of society and the result is displacement, intense trauma. Misconstrued interpretations of religion and the externalization of faith becomes a focal point for power groups to exercise politics and social power over people. Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) despite being the proponents' faiths are supposed to be secular in outlook which means that they have equal respect for other religions as well. These FBOs have a big role to play in influencing people and shaping their attitude towards other religions in the spirit of secularism. This Paper will address the role of the FBOs in post disaster communal violence (2008) in the state of Odisha. This paper aims at explaining the tools and strategies undertaken by the FBOs for the holistic rehabilitation of the victims of the violence. This study will elaborate the contribution, approach and processes, right from identifying needs, relief distribution, social reconciliation, psychosocial counseling to restoring the livelihood of the victims. Further, it will critically analyze the paradigm shifts of the FBOs, from charity and right based approach in translating the values and principles of the church. This study has used few case studies and limited to only two FBOs namely Society for Welfare, Animation and Development (SWAD) and Catholic Charity (CC) that are working in the affected regions of Odisha.

**Key Words:-** Communal Violence, FBOs, Rehabilitation, Disaster, Religion and Faith.

## 1. Introduction

The processes of globalization, the expansion of democratic governance, telecommunication and economic integration, have led a dramatic expansion in the size, scope, capacity and roles of the Faith Based Organization (FBOs) across the globe. FBOs have become imperative in delivering of social services and initiating the developmental activities and programs. In fact FBOs have been vital to responding to the disasters both man-made and natural. In addition,

FBOs have been helpful in introducing to the restructuring and reshaping the public policies through its advocacy and campaigning activities. In India, from South-tsunami to North-earthquake, from East-conflict to West-communal violence, the efforts and contributions of FBOs are innumerable and untold. This Paper aims to understand the involvement and contribution of FBOs in post communal violence that started in Kandhamal District and immediately it spread over to its neighboring districts of Odisha in the year 2008.

As mentioned, this study is limited to only two FBOs namely Society for Welfare, Animation and Development (SWAD) and Catholic Charity (CC). The CC is working in the Kandhamal district which is the epicenter of the violence and SWAD serves in the southern Odisha where the place is moderately affected and sensitive to violence as they are the neighbors of Kandhamal District. Both of these organizations are registered organizations under Society Registration Act. They are ecclesiastical with the values and principles of Church.

The year “2008” will always remain a memorable year for India as the year experienced two world class episodes, such as 26/11 Mumbai Terror Attack in the west and communal violence in the east. The government had to face many questions that one asks for upholding and protections of fundamental freedom, human rights, equality and justice. Now, after three years of the violence, Odisha strives to restore the peace and harmony and people belonging to different caste, religions, and ethnic, are in a process to understand the concept of peace and inclusion.

### 1.1 Communal violence in Odisha

On 23<sup>rd</sup> August, 2008, LaxmananandaSaraswati, a right wing Hindu religious leader and four other persons were shot dead in Jalespeta Ashram near Tumundibandha (Kandhamal District, Odisha). The government held the Maoists responsible for the killings; the VHP blamed Christians for the incident. Christian leaders condemned the killings but the VHP reacted predictably calling a dawn-to-dusk *Odishabandh*– strike. Odisha witnessed indescribable violence that pierced a dagger into the heart of communal harmony that existed among people of various faiths and ethnic groups. In a matter of few days’ religion, politics, caste and ethnicity blended themselves into a deadly cocktail and poisoned the good will, mutual respect and coexistence that were among the

various human groups in Odisha. More than 5000 homes destroyed and nearly 100 people lost their lives while 50,000 were made refugees in their own land (SWAD Annual Report, 2010).

The violence was mainly directed towards the institutional church and the Christians of scheduled caste and scheduled tribe community. The institutional capacity of the church that was at work to empower the poor and the excluded groups was debilitated. The socio-economically weaker SC and ST communities were made to fight each other. Though the epicenter of the violence was Kandhamal, 13 other districts also were affected in the communal violence of 2008 (CC Annual Report, 2010).

### 1.2 Peace Building Project

With the help of Caritas India, a funding partner for the project of “**Relief, Rehabilitation and Peace building program for the victims of the communal conflict in Odisha**”, CC and SWAD with its dedicated experts implemented the project in Kandhamal and Gajarati district (southern Odisha) with the following objectives (Consolidated Progress Report for Peace Building Project of Caritas India, 2010)

1. To meet the immediate and basic needs (food and utensils) of the conflict affected families
2. To prepare and mobilize communities to normalcy through rapport building and psychosocial counseling.
3. To restore normalcy and ensure peace and harmony by involving different communities and other stakeholders (religious groups) through dialogue, capacity building and establishment of local peace committees.
4. To help restore means of livelihood through support and linkages

## 2. Need assessment and identification of beneficiaries

The tools that SWAD and CC used for need assessment are as follows (Progress Report of SWAD and CC, 2010)

- Damage assessment
- Participatory Rural Appraisal
- Consultation meetings with different organizations including NGOs, FBOs, and other organizations working in the development sector
- Suggestion and opinions from Parish priests

Having made two criterions for selecting the target areas and beneficiaries for the project implementation, the first criterion was to select the village communities where people from two faiths and two ethnicities fought during the 2008 riot. The second criterion in selecting the target area was to see which villages and towns were sensitive spots and more prone to any eventual violence (Consolidated Progress Report for Peace Building Project of Caritas India, 2010)

Thus CC identified 82 violence affected Dalits and Tribal villages of 15GPs, 12 blocks of Kandhamal district whereas SWAD selected 32 villages of 4 Blocks of Gajapati District (Annual Progress Report of SWAD and CC, 2010). In the second year of the project CC implemented the project in the violence affected communities of 14 GPs of 3 Blocks of Kandhamal district of Cuttack-Bhubaneswar Diocese and SWAD implemented the peace building project in 19 villages of Rayagada and R.Udayagiri blocks of Gajapati district (Annual Progress Report of SWAD, 2010).

## 3. Distribution of Relief:-Food and Non-Food items

CC and SWAD, were able to reach out 9 thousands violence affected people who have received the food and non food items in order to meet the immediate needs during post violence situation. The riot affected families have received a set of Kitchen utensils, 25 kg of rice, 2 kg of Dal and 2 litres of vegetable oil and non food items such as Tin box, tarpaulin sheets and other hygienic materials shops and medicines. In addition, children of the violence affected families have received books, learning materials and school dresses such as uniform (Consolidated Progress Report for Peace Building Project of Caritas India, 2010).

The affected people stayed almost a year in the camp where all sorts of food items were distributed. As it is well documented that people belonging to Christian community have lost their property and lives during this man-made disaster and they did not have basic necessities like food, clothes and shelter. The Camps organized by CC in Bhubaneswar and Kandhamal have been a great help to offer them shelter, clothing and bread.

During FGDs in the villages of Kandhamal and Gajapati District, beneficiaries revealed that *“relief was not only to quench our thirst but a hope and trust to CC”* Further added, *“CC is the only god who listened to us when it mattered the most”*





#### 4. Social Reconciliation

The followings initiatives were taken up to bring affected-Christians and non-affected-Hindu communities on the issue of common interest.

##### 4.1 Peace Committees

With the aim of comprehensive rehabilitation both by physically and psychologically, SWAD and CC tried forming committees for ensuring peace and development. The name of the committees differs from place to place, in Gajapati they call Peace & Development Committee/Council (PDC), in Kandhamal, Village Development Committee (VDC) and in some places it is known as Peace Committee (PC). Such committees have been formed in each affected and sensitive village after a series of meetings with the local residents. The committee is comprised with adequate representation of men and women from both the affected and non-affected communities (Annual Progress Report of SWAD and SWAD, 2010). This committee is an instrument through which training, workshop and many other peace programs and activities have been conducted. Committee members were given the responsibility of deciding the beneficiaries list for the rehabilitation package, organize common festivals, and resolve domestic and local disputes.

Now, SWAD and CC are emphasizing on developmental issues in which *peace* could be a cross cutting issue. Therefore, through peace committees, they have been doing many software and animated activities such as advocacy and awareness building activities about Inclusive society, RTI, Land rights, NREGA, PRA, SHGs and other related developmental schemes. These activities of awareness and capacity building were implemented in the affected villages and it caters the beneficiaries of both from affected and non-affected community, which eventually helped unify and coalesce different religious and ethnic groups to be part of it. This has been helpful in restarting the peace, reconciliation and social interaction among them.



Further, despite having lots of threats and troubles, the SWAD and CC have formed the regional and block level peace committees where the government personnel and representatives from various castes and ethnic groups and the different religious leaders are the part of it. The committees have been responsible for initiating social interaction in the regional level. Special emphasis was given to sensitize religious leaders about peace, propagation of peace and culture and peaceful coexistence. Thus, replication of these insights in their respective communities was recognized as impetus in the process of restoring the peace (Annual Report of SWAD and CC, 2011).

Even to make more cohesive amongst the affected communities, SWAD and CC facilitated many interface and interdenominational meetings in the district and block level.

Furthermore, in SWAD *Information centers* have been set up at each Panchyat which provide information on various government schemes, provisions, RTI, NREGA etc. This information serves as a platform for all the Panchyat communities to come together to work for their development irrespective of caste, religions and ethnic (Annual Report of SWAD, 2011).

#### **4.2 Sports and games organized for school and college youths**

As it is well explained, on 23<sup>rd</sup> August, 2008, the Kandhamal violence has destroyed the human life, wealth and natural human ethics of the indigenous society (Annual Progress Report, 2010). Therefore to reorganize the fellow feeling, brotherhood, good relationship, understanding, faith and confidence among the different caste, creed and religion, CC and SWAD organized sports and games for the school and college youths. This event helped teachers and students belonging to

multi-religion and multi-ethnic, to come together and get united in a common platform. Furthermore, these activities opened the ways to share each other's experiences and build up the friendships among themselves. The school going children of 70 affected villages actively participated in the "sports for peace" (Annual Progress Report, 2010). Around 6 hundred students from local schools further participated at a block level sports event for peace in both Kandhamal and Gajapati district (ibid). School and college students further participated in essay writing, poetry writing and drawing competition on the theme of Peace and Harmony. Thus these activities eventually helped them reestablishing social interactions among students and college youth belonging to various communities. This has not only given them hope for living with their physical and social environments but also suppressed their emotions and stress that they had undergone during conflict.

#### **4.3 Cultural Activity**

Six numbers of cultural programs have been conducted in 3 blocks in Kandhamal district and the idea was to spread the awareness of the concept "peace and brotherhood" through various activities like drama and role play (Annual Progress Report of SWAD and CC, 2010). This has again helped bring to a common platform of both affected and non affected communities belonging to different class, caste, religion and ethnic. In addition, International Women's Day, New Year, Christmas Day, Shivaratri and many more festivals have been celebrated by both Hindu and Christian communities with the facilitation of CC and SWAD. In fact, nearly 1000 youth from all the program area gathered at Mohana and staged a cultural festival to celebrate the 'unity in diversity' of India on the 20<sup>th</sup> of February 2010 (ibid). Messages of peace and harmony were painted on the walls & rocks in 75 locations to

educate the people on the need to build an inclusive society (Annual Report of SWAD). Moreover, *Peace Marches* were held in the program area to promote messages of peace and harmony. Also twenty-five local NGOs of Gajapati were brought to one platform and an enriching discussion was held on how 'peace building' can be made a cross cutting issue in all the developmental initiatives (ibid).

### 5. Psychosocial counseling

Maintaining physical and mental trauma is an important issue in case of communal conflict. One can reduce the physical trauma but managing mental trauma is always challenging (Jeong, 2010). However SWAD and CC have made dramatic effort to skin over the wound of the victims that they have had during violence. With the aim of restoring peace and harmony in the indigenous community, many counseling sessions were conducted such as individual, group and community counseling. The group consists of 200 to 500 victims, held together, shared their experiences and felt the sense of oneness amongst themselves by the trained counselor (Annual Report of SWAD, 2011).

Furthermore, art and painting therapies were conducted where they (1) drew and painted the incident of trauma they had experienced during the communal conflict. *Fr. Augustine (Counselor) feels that by revisiting the experience one would be able to come out from the trauma which is one of the processes of getting healed.* Then (2) they were asked to draw the ideal or peace community. And finally (3) they came with plan of action in order to bring peace and harmony. This is how peace was built in the affected villages.

As it is well understood by beneficiaries that they ventilated their anger, emotions, fear, revenge and gradually each emotion was dealt by counselor. It helped them to cope up with the situation.

Psychosocial counseling has reached almost all the blocks and victims have been benefited in terms of strengthening psychosocial support and then deal with the situation. It is noted that, after the counseling sessions in the camps, most of the people went back to their villages to restart their life. And in the village level, they have been implementing their plan of action in terms of what role they should be playing in order to bring peace and development (Consolidated Progress Report for Peace Building Project of Caritas India, 2010).

*A victim reveals that "We have received psychosocial counseling for 3 times and it was really helpful for us to cope up with the situation post communal violence. We could deal with our anger and depression and eventually focused on the peace and development"*



### 6. Livelihood Rehabilitation

A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope up with and recover from stresses and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide net benefits to other livelihoods locally and more widely, both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base (Carswell, 1997). In the formulation of this strategy it was agreed to adopt the Sustainable Livelihood Framework (SLF), followings are the activities expected to fall in the same framework.

### 6.1 Financial assistant to the affected shopkeepers

Rs. 640,000/- have been released for 32 damaged shopkeepers of AnchalikaBikashSamittee in Brahimunigam(ABSB) GP of Daringbadi block as revolving fund. Further, for the better functioning of the ABSB, the new Shopkeepers Committee, consisting 7 members, was formed with certain rules and regulation (Annual Progress report of CC, 2010). This, then helped the shopkeepers in the following areas

1. Escalation of economic standard
2. Strengthen and build up cohesiveness and bonding among the affected shopkeepers
3. Commercializing the local resources with ideal price and increase the business output
4. Re-establishment of infrastructure in terms of livelihood and material support

### 6.2 Training on carpentry, brick making, tailoring and driving

Victims have received the training during their stay in camps on various trades such as tailoring, carpentry, brick making and driving. This has helped them to restart and regenerate the income source thereby supports their families. Again trainings were provided when some victims went back to their villages. 3 days of carpentry training program was organized in Sikermaha village of Daringbadi block where 100 numbers of local carpenter from 4 different affected villages were gathered together. The main aim of this activity was to re-construct their damaged houses with the skills and knowledge gained through training as they did not have adequate finance to afford all labor cost(Annual Progress report of CC, 2010).

A victim voices out that *“We stayed in the relief camp for about six months, we were trained on*

*various income generation activities such as tailoring, driving, brick making, carpentry etc. Most of the people went out for jobs after getting skilled on the same and some of them started their own business using those skills to generate income”.*



In addition, 2000 violence affected marginal

farmers have accessed seeds of brinjal, tomato, vendi in 4 blocks of Kandhamal district which has helped the victims to re-cultivate the vegetables thus they can support their family to an extent.(Annual Progress report of CC, 2010)

Furthermore, in Kandhamal, farmers and victims have been provided various seeds for cultivation of crops and vegetables through SEEDS program by CC which is again served both affected and non-affected communities and ensured peace and livelihood development among themselves (Annual Progress report of CC, 2010).

### 6.3 Supports for the SHG members

An amount of Rs.70,000 was released for the SHG federation of AnchalikMatrubikasSamitteeBrahimunigam. The 7 members committee was elected which constituted 39 SHGs and 438 members from 4 GPs of Daringbadi in Kandhamal district (Annual Progress Report of CC, 2011). This has helped the SHGs in the following aspects

- Reunited the SHG members
- Increased in economic standard
- Strengthened good relationship and a sense of bonding among victims

In addition, SWAD and CC have conducted many training and awareness sessions among the SHGs regarding formation and importance of SHG, roles and responsibility of SHG members and tangible and intangible benefits for business promotion and income generation.

Through this training program, SHG members have become regular in nature and it was in adequate support to enhance their skills and knowledge on various petty business, regular saving and transaction of loans as it was a platform for the entire SHG members to reunite and work together without any discrimination among all different categories of women belonging to various communities.

## CHALLENGES

Despite being proponents of particular faith in an area like Kandhamal, the FBOs face a lot of problems in working for the common good because of ascription to the Christian Faith. The expansion of identity, going beyond, religious sentiment and working for the development of the region for both affected and non affected (Christians and Hindus) is a major challenge faced by these FBOs. Being the epicenter of religious riots, Kandhamal is very sensitive area. The FBOs working in such a sensitive situation face threats to their life and often they have been hindered in doing their work in a secular manner because of the non cooperation of the villagers. Further, FBOs need continuous support of resources to persist and sustain their projects and programs where peace

has become a cross cutting issue of all the developmental activities undertaken by SWAD and CC.

## ROLE OF FBOs IN MICRO LEVEL A FEW CASE STUDIES

### Case Study 1:

#### Community Mobilization wins over the people opposed to Peace Building efforts of SWAD

It was 23<sup>rd</sup> of January 2011. Gouranga Behera, Lakshmi Karji, Udit Bhuyan and Prabhash Swalsingh, all four of them community mobilizers of SWAD, were very happy as almost after two years of the peace building efforts they were able to make an entry into Sanasarada and have the interface meeting with the community. But all of a sudden, a man called Biswanath Bhuyan from Sasung, a hamlet of Sanasarada aggressively charged against Prabhash Swalsingh. With a loud voice and a foul language he started hurling abuses against the community mobilizers of SWAD as missionary agents trying to proselytize the local people. For a moment it looked like the situation was out of hand and all the four community mobilizers did not know how to tackle the situation and escape from there.

Suddenly some voices were heard in favour of SWAD. Kora Bhunya, Maghu Bhunya, Dandapani Behera, Krushna Mandal, Madhu Mandal and Patra Bhunya unitedly reprimanded Biswanath Bhuyan for such behaviour. They told him that he was not the representative of the village and thus had no authority to speak on behalf of all. They also made it clear that the community mobilizers of SWAD were in the village at their invitation. They also collectively affirmed the secular and inclusive credential of the organization. Additionally, they made it very clear that the meeting will go on as per planned



and that he was not to interfere nor harass the peace workers.

The SWAD staff sighed in relief and felt so happy that after two years of 'peace building' their efforts were bearing fruits.

People from Engersing, Jallo, Sanasarada, Badasarada of Loba Gram Panchayat were found to be involved in the anti-Christian riot of 2008. Motivated by radical elements these people had carried out arson, looting, burning and murder in Mukundpur and in other Christian hamlets. After the riot criminal cases were filed against them and thus they were in no mood to restore friendly relationship with people in the neighbourhood.

In the first year of the 'Peace Building Program' SWAD staff could not make an entry into those villages as they were suspected as either working to proselytize them into Christianity or to find information about their involvement and implicate them. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> year SWAD recruited a few program staff from among the communities who were opposing the peace initiatives. One of these new staff, GourangaBehera from BeheraSahi of Sano Soroda, brought Kushanath Mandal, MarkandaBehera and Lima Sabara to RMC Campus, Mandala Sahi on the 19<sup>th</sup> of September 2010 to participate at a seminar on "RTI as a tool to increase accessibility to Government entitlements" which was organized by SWAD. Kushanath Mandal and his friends saw that SWAD was not only discussing religion but how people of the locality can promote their own development. Kushanath Mandal and his friends brought along two more people, namely, Kora Bhunya and MaghuBhunya on the 15<sup>th</sup> of November 2010 to attend a motivation camp for the youth organized by SWAD. The persistent and courteous invitation to the people involved in riot produced fruit. This group of young people got convinced that SWAD was indeed for their

welfare and by opposing its activities they themselves would be the losers.

These news friends of the 'Peace Program of SWAD' invited the staff to visit their village. In December 2010 SWAD staff visited Sano Sarada and met DandapaniBehera, Krushna Mandal, Madhu Mandal, and PatraBhunya and informally interacted with them and briefed them as to how given an opportunity SWAD will be happy to journey with them in their development journey. All the new nine friends of SWAD then decided that a formal meeting could be held in the village on 23<sup>rd</sup> of January 2011 and that was when BiswanathBhunya created the frightening scene.

Today the SWAD staff easily move into Sano Sarada and its satellite villages and hamlets. Thanks to the tactful, courteous, secular and inclusive approaches of community mobilizers. The development platform has been a symbol of serving as a neutral and non-intimidating issue to bring two conflicting groups to dialogue and co-exist.

## Case Study- 2

### *Dipti Chandra Digal, Victim of the violence, Tailor, K Nuagaon, Kandhamal:-*

*23<sup>rd</sup> August, 2008, around 7pm, we heard the news of SwamijiLakhannanda's assignation and the rumor "Christians killed Swamiji" that spread like wildfire through every place in Kandhamal and the surrounding districts. Soon in the night, roads were blocked, vehicles stopped moving, and the next day, the communal forces led by RSS and BHP leaders called for strike, stopped the transportation, and blocked the road with trees and huge stones. Within a few moments they started vandalizing the church and other missionary institutions, destroyed and burnt all the property and headed towards the Christians and their families and houses.*



*Some RRS leaders came to our village and started insisting all the Hindus to take revenge against Christians and finally they together vandalized the church and houses belonging to Christians. People were scattered here and there, some ran into the nearest forest. We were asked by our Hindu neighborhood to take rest. Next day we were asked by few villagers to get converted into Christians but I denied and argued that “You should have asked this question earlier, but you are asking after destroying our house and livestock, I wouldn’t...”. I felt that there is no point of living in the world after losing everything house, livestock and other income generation source.*

*After few hours, their neighborhood offered him Rs. 1000 and requested him to go away from the village for few days otherwise they would be killed by huge communal forces which entered the village after 4 hours. Finally I was convinced and went to Berhampur along with my wife. Yes it was very difficult to reach Berhampur, had to walk in the forest for 15kms, asked for lift many people, changed 3 vehicles and finally reached after 14 hours.*

*I called up one of my friends and we stayed there for about ten days. My friend ensured me that I don’t need to worry about food and clothes but I was feeling bad because I didn’t want to be a burden to them. Then I and my wife decided to*

*sale her necklace and soon we went to Bishop house in Bhubaneswar. Fortunately we got a place to stay in Jaanahala relief center, organized by Catholic Charity Bhubaneswar.*

*We stayed in the relief camp for about six months, I have received all food and non food items during our stay in the camp. Also victims were trained on various income generation activities such as tailoring, driving, brick making, carpentry etc. Most of the people went for jobs after getting skilled on the same and some of them started using those skills to generate income.*

*During our stay in the camp, the district collector visited thrice to take us back to our places but we have argued with him that in the presence of police everything happened and in what faith/hopes we can rely and ensure that police would provide us safety.*

*Finally we agreed with collector and returned back to our village. Government personnel were conducting the damage assessments and they put my name under half damage assessment despite I have lost everything. Victim of the half damage list have received Rs.20,000 and full damage list people received Rs.70,000. But if you really analyze we have lost 7 lakhs rupees of property but we have received only 20k. Most of the people who have severely lost everything have received only 20k and victims who have lost less property and their Kuchha houses have been burnt completely, have received 70k. This then made us feel more depressed and victims of injustice. However we made ourselves understand and we concentrated on how to make a good relationship with Hindu neighborhoods so that we could stay together as earlier it used to be. We told them that you are not the culprits but the situation made you do all that...now we should live together by forgetting past.....*

*We have received psychosocial counseling for 3 times and it was really helpful for us to cope up with the situation post communal violence. We could deal with our anger and depression and eventually focused on the peace and development.*

*In my areas, Catholic Charity has conducted various interface and interdenominational meetings in order to ensure peace and harmony in the region. Religious leaders, BDO and police officers were the part of it. Additionally CC also has built peace committees in local and block level, through which they have conducted workshop and training activities on issues related to peace and development.*

He feels that now people are living without having any adequate source and support and he believes that dying or committing suicide is not the solution. People have gone back to 30 years of their life and the need to have continuous support from the government and non government body could actually bring smiles in the faces of the victims.

## **BEYOND PEACE:-DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE IN LOCAL LEVEL & THE ROLE OF PEACE COMMITTEES**

### **Case Study**

#### **Kushnath Mandal from Sana Sarada regularizes his BPL Ration with the help of RTI**

Kushnath Mandal from Sana Sarada of Loba Panchayat has become an enthusiastic campaigner of RTF and RTI over night. He wants to support SWAD voluntarily to help people get their food related entitlements. Holder of BPL Card number 373089, Kushnath is a widower and hardly can make his both ends meet. The ration he has received from the PDS was a great source of support.

To his bad luck Kushnath lost his BPL Card in 2009. With great difficulty he managed to get a duplicate of his BPL card. However, even though he had got it validated and authenticated by the legitimate authority, during the verification survey of October 2010 his card was rejected. The poor man was completely distraught and for three months he could not receive any ration. As he was so desperate, he saw a ray of hope during a seminar on government entitlements conducted in his area by the Peace Building Staff of SWAD. Kushnath lost no time. Immediately after the seminar he applied through RTI what had happened to the provision meant for his BPL card. The same Gram Panchayat Executive Officer who had denied him ration from October to December 2010 immediately issued his ration and even promised to clear the arrear of the previous three months. Kushnath not only celebrated the New Year happily but also resolved to join hands with SWAD to help many others realize their entitlements.

### **Case Study:**

#### **PramilaSabara of Rangapathar gets her Medicare Expenses Reimbursed under MGNREGA**

PramilaSabara was totally confused and fearful. The injury on her head that she sustained on 23<sup>rd</sup> of November 2010 while participating in the construction of a road from the GP headquarter to her village Rangapathar was taking longer than usual to cure. She was at her wits end not knowing how she can find money to pay for her treatment.

All the 29 tribal families of her village were excited that at least a mud road was sanctioned for them under MGNREGA. They had to zig zag through the stony terrain and often it was difficult to walk with children and grocery. That is why Pramila had enthusiastically participated in the

work. They had been working for long not receiving any wage. The officials from the Gram Panchayats along with the ward member from their village kept saying that it was to be completed voluntarily.

Pramila attended a meeting of the 'Peace and Development Program of SWAD' and learnt about the provisions of the NREGA. She told her friends (SukumariSabar, DukhaSabar and PrafulaSabar) that she is supposed to get money for medical treatment if she gets injured while working on a MGNREGA work site. She and her friend brightened up with new hope. Initially, their request was turned down by Mr. SimadriSabar, the Gram Sathi. He told them that there was no provision. The aggrieved group teamed up with Mr. PrabhashSwalsingh, SWAD Campaigner on RTF (Right To Food) and lobbied together. Pramila is a happy woman today as not only their united effort helped her to get money for treatment but also wages for the days she spent in the hospital. What makes her happier is that her struggle made the Gram Panchayat people distribute the job cards to the card holders and regularized the wages of all the people of her village.

#### **Cast study:-**

#### **Immediate accessibility of 2 months PDS rice by 5 beneficiaries of Petapanga GP**

Mr. ProsantaProdhan, an animator was facilitating a village meeting in Petapanga which comes under the Raikia block. During the meeting, somebody raised the issue that 3 affected and 2 non affected BPL card holders have not yet received the PDS from the dealer for the last two months. In response to that Animator replied stating that they should raise this question in further interface meeting which would be organized in G.Udayagiri town about the government schemes and programs. As a result the beneficiaries revealed

the same in front of ZillaParishad, PRI members, Government officials and community leaders who were the part of it.

Then, on the following day, the RaikiaZillaParisadMember Mr.SatyanarayanProdhan went to meet the District Collector regarding that matter. After his meeting with the Collector, the next day the 5 BPL card holders received the two months rice by the same dealer without any difficulties.

This incident thereby not only helped the villagers to get their entitlements but strengthened the unity and bonding between affected and non-affected communities.

#### **Conclusion**

CC, SWAD and its peace building project has largely emphasizing on the role of facilitator, mediator and training people on various developmental activities related to their livelihood, education and well-functioning of the Panchayat. They have reached the marginalized through training on RTI, PRI, land right, NREGA and other capacity building activities. And eventually they have been able to bring smiles in the faces of the victims by distributing food and non food items. Victims have been grateful to Caritas India for being supported when it was mattered most. They call diocese(CC & SWAD) as Savior. From the FGDs and interview with core staff and field staff reveal that people do not migrate frequently as they used to be. It is because they take the ownership of being accountable as a member of peace and development committees/councils (PDC/VDCs). The project has formed SHGs, VDCs and PDCs and in many places they take the responsibility to solve their internal problems in terms of land conflict, peace building etc.

The project helped overcome the immediate and basic needs of the riot affected people (1st

objective). It did succeed in bringing two conflicting communities to the level of human interaction (2nd objective). It also succeeded in involving other stakeholders like the government bureaucrats, journalists, PRI members, religious leaders and so on in normalizing the situation (3rd objective). It has not succeeded in restoring the source of livelihood through government linkages satisfactorily (4th objective) till the end of 1st year of project, however in second year the project largely concentrated to promote the livelihood opportunities for the victims of the violence. The SWAD has achieved its objectives largely wherein CC is yet to make a long journey in terms of normalizing the situations and restoring the livelihood options.

Restoring normalcy into an area or between two communities after a riot is not possible within 2 years of intervention. It requires a lot of professionalism in giving psycho-social counseling to traumatized people who live in fear while improving socio-economic condition within the right-based framework. It further requires a lot of confidence building measures to remove suspicion and lack of trust. Repairing of damaged houses takes less time in case relief is available but repairing of social relationship will take a lot of time and needs multi prolonged approach. However, the CC and SWAD with its dedicated professional expertise have achieved the functional characteristics and framework of Faith Based Organization which can be categorized under the themes of protection, monitoring, social cohesion, facilitation, service delivery and building harmony and peace.

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