



# ENABLING FOOD FOR DEVELOPMENT

## Prelude:

As the “Annam Bramham”, stated in the prehistoric Granthas’ ‘VEDA’. The entire living creature need to foods as per their class and nature. As we need air to breath, water to drink, in the same way we need food to eat which is necessary for life; it is natural truth and phenomenon. Living with these truth, the question arises here is that, “**are all these things accessible to the common man in the society?**” Now, when we have crossed the threshold in civilized 21<sup>st</sup> century, still food security stuck as major issue against the intact development efforts to community. In spite of all the development and self-dependency it could not be assured, how a poor could be able to have ray of hope for “ROTI, KAPDA and MAKAN”. Till now, most of the remote parts of the eastern region of UP are facing same problem. There are no ways to make effort to encounter the basic day-today problems. The reason behind what the ground realities say are lack of skill, land lessen, lack of employment, over populace, improper implementation of government led food security schemes/programs and some other restricted causes are also directly responsible for these critical conditions. Our government led developmental schemes and social security programmes are not proficient to serve the needs of vulnerable section of the society. It is matter of general dialogue that *what are the barriers in implementing such welfare and developmental programmes?*

It is universally known that the eastern part of UP are more prone to disaster, like; flood, draught and fire. Disaster hit every year and they have taken the shape of routine reoccurrence in the life of the people in the area. When rainfall is high generally result in the flood and when it is low the area faces the severe draught problem. Fire is common phenomenon in summer season. Having such vulnerable exposures, how it can be possible for the larger section of the community to participate in the development cycle of the country and humanity.

A number of the food security programmes has been initiated by the state government and central government also. Many of the programmes has been terminated due to insufficient and improper implementation

## Agricultural scenario:

Agriculture in India, and specifically in Uttar Pradesh, holds the place of pride in terms of generating both income and employment for people. Agriculture is the base of Indian economy. 47% of the total area of the country is cultivable. More than seventy percent (70%) of population is living in villages out of which eighty percent (80%) is engaged in agriculture and allied activities, which contributes to 41.5% of the total state revenue. The state of Uttar Pradesh constitutes 12% of the country area and



16.17% of the population. Uttar Pradesh is predominantly a land of poor peasant surviving on marginal and uneconomical holding of less than 3 acres.

### Land Distribution Scenario

A study on selected vulnerable section of the community on livelihood pattern in eastern UP shows the trends of the ground realities. 70% of the rural poor are marginal farmers and agricultural labourers. 51% agricultural labourers and 24 % cultivators are BPL as per National Sample survey data shows.



The bottom 70% of the rural household constitutes to mostly marginal and sub marginal cultivators, own less than 20% of the total land under cultivation. According to 37th round of national sample survey, the bottom 50% of rural household in U.P. operates only on 12.7% of the total available land. Uttar Pradesh is the fourth largest state of the country after Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. The total area of the state is 2.36 Lac. sq.km. which is 7.3% of the total area of the country. Uttar Pradesh is contributing 21.55% to the total national production of food grains, vegetables, fruits and milk production and 40% to the total production of potato and sugarcane. Small marginal farmers are the backbone of the agriculture sector of the state- the poor and marginal farmers constituting close to three quarters of the farming population.

### The Impact:

Under these circumstances no one can survive with dignity and state of co-operation & co-existence. All the social relations and zip would scare to upset the societal cohesions. The psyche- social consequences would get hold of on the equity and equality. Already, migration to metro cities is going high day-by-day and repercussions are well known to us. Un- curable disease like HIV/AIDS, Jaundice, and Tuberculosis, and Hepatitis knowingly they bought there and spared to their belongings.



This constitutes the highest levels of child and maternal malnutrition co-existing with relatively high aggregate levels of food supply, even with adequate food consumption. Studies have shown that women suffer from substantial chronic energy deficiency (CED) and micro-nutrient malnutrition largely due to behavioural factors that determine women's access to household food as the last and least. Similarly, protein energy and micro-nutrient malnutrition is also dominant among children, particularly girls, due to behavioural factors which indicate that, despite their being able to feed themselves, girl children receive less food than boys and are conditioned to restrict their consumption in favour of males. Food alone cannot address these behaviour related aspects of malnutrition.

Given the recognition that a major index of poverty is inadequate food access due to low purchasing power, targeted interventions aimed at making it possible for poor families to gain and preserve assets. This aspect of assistance allows both accesses to food in the short run and prospects of sustainability through access to an asset in the long run.

Due to not existence of clear cut grain policy, broker and hoarder dominated the market and it impact on price fluctuation of grains. There is no control measure to insure the farmers could get proper price of their produces and sell to authorize counter. Because, the farmers' economy depend on their produces and he wants to gain cash immediately after harvesting. There are many causes' forces to farmers to sell their produces to local broker and hoarders.

Traditionally, when crops haven been harvested, (in both crops Ravi & Kharif) immediate after series of festivals and cultural activities overcome. And it prevails to drain out the grains from their storage in form of cash or grain too. Many times, it is seen they sell or repay their old debt obtained by the local money lender/broker, grains from field (Khalihan) and get very low price. Socially and religiously (festivals, marriages, dan-punya etc.), communities are bound to do.

Consequently, operating the interventions of developments with the community, YCK could able to learn more and analyze the ground situation. YCK have developmental orientation; having a foresighted view for coping the food inefficiency and community led food security mechanism. After a long interaction with the community, the factual need came up the surface. The area where YCK implementing the programme are the poorest of the poor, having less cultivable land, assets, livestock and other facilities. Concept of grain bank arbitrates in the field behavioural changes.

YCK have formed purposely some community based organizations those involved in process of their social and economic development and day-to-day life too. The groups formed by YCK are virtually Self-help groups and based on thrift and credit pattern. Based on discussion with organization member, they have initially organized a pool of grains for their emergency purpose.

At the time of crop harvesting they collect the grains from members and store in a locally made storage drum called **MANDILA** (figure reflected on cover page). It is very old technique of the area, they also used to storage for fodder. The materials require are locally available in their villages like; bamboo, rope, clay, kasha and little number of brick.



## The Grain bank:

Very simply it is only a bank of food grain, which could be proper storage of grains. The process of the grain bank is very like to bank for commercial purpose, where one can deposit their grains and withdraw either as mortgage or their own too if needed. Primarily, the members of group deposit grains equally to keep up capital for the bank. It is considered; initially only cereal would be store in the bank because community faces the crisis of basic grains like PADDY, PULSES and WHEAT. They have made some rules for distribution and recollection of the grains. The end of the particular season they sell grains at the most price, again at the time of harvesting collect the grains from members.

It is significant to mention that from 2003 **CASA**, a national level developmentally oriented supporting organization, is providing support to **YCK** and initiated a unique intervention for the betterment of the community. During inception of the concept on Grain Bank many intellectual supports seek and granted by the CASA team member. YCK an implementing organization is learning more with CASA and deliberately realizing in the project areas.

Having experience of almost three years, apparent it is CASA, who has provided learning and more favourable environment to plan and execute the project accordance with field diversification and need. Flexibility and foresightedness in the project made more fruitful and compatible to the targeted community.

## Mechanism:

When they need for grains, they request to groups and get as per need with condition that, one is to one and one fourth or in kind of money at same condition ( $1 = 1\frac{1}{4}$ ). Group members also analyze the borrower condition that "is he or she is able to repay at group's condition. If the member is not able to repay at the condition of the groups' they decide for any exemption.

Some times, food grains purchased from group members who have surplus to their need at the current rate. And the end of the crop season when grains rate go high, they sell and distribute the profit to all the members of the group. *Other important things what groups do in favor of their bank; they purchase grains from large producer at the time of low price to extent their bank capacity.*

## Practices:

In 1998 devastated floods assailed in the area and impact many of dilemmas like; agricultural problem, health and hygiene related problem, epidemics, starvation etc. on the basis of memory people had no food grains to eat. Some of home appliances were too poured in flood water. Having such experiences of the disastrous situation, community has change their perspective and ready to prepare a contingency plan to minimize the havoc. The Grain Bank is one of the parts of their contingency plan.



This Grain Bank started with area that was affected with natural disasters and their lives were disturbed. An initiative was taken for their economic-socio rehabilitation with women members and thrift and credit programme were launched for the affected families. Having crisis of food grains, women started saving grains daily and individually as pattern of thrift and credit programme so that they could able to minimize the crisis of food grains. Gradually, as they did get insight, they converted individual effort to community effort and made Grain Bank.

After having a long and rigorous discussion and exercises, community comes to the decision to make a plan for food grain storage, so that in case of any emergency community could not suffer with problem of food grains. In 2003 at Gazan Daharauli village, first Grain Bank was established with cooperation of community. Primarily, 47 members were contributed their grains for storage in Grain Bank.

#### **Operational committee:**

Conditionally, the Grain Bank is operated by the group members and those are female. A five (5) members committee is organized independently who has a president, a secretary, a treasurer and two additional members. Committee decides whom to provide and how much quantity has to provide. It depends on economical condition of the client and it also takes care of women headed families cautiously.

#### **System and conditions:**

Every members of the group deposit their grains (Wheat or Paddy) in each both crops (Ravi and Kharif). Initially they started with sixteen kg of grains and planned too, to increase quantity. It is not compulsory to those families who have no excess grains to spare in the Grain Bank.

Needy families are provided food grains for six months and with condition that he has to return grains with one and fourth times more.

If any families want to purchase food grains, they are provided little fewer prices comparatively market. Having assessment of need of the community, group sell surplus food grains in the market at higher price as group can get. Group members utilize capital in community works or to lease land for group farming. Some times they purchase grains again in crop season to store in The Grain Bank.

#### **Objective of the Grain Bank:**

The grain bank simply is storage of cereals and to ensure the food availability to the needy community so that leaning with the community no one could face starvation. Some of the important spots are identified rationally following the grain bank are:



- Ensuring round the clock availability food grains to vulnerable community;
- Encountering crisis of food grains at time of disaster;
- Making micro- entrepreneurial venture for self-help groups;
- Establishing process of socio-economic empowerment and security;
- Asset creation;
- Building confidence;
- Controlling over price hike to some extent; and
- Political empowerment.

Virtually, Grain Bank would be able to support those communities who are at threshold of socio-economic development or deprived section of the community and who have very small land of farming. They could not get enough food to fulfill their annual needs yet, they sell too as per their compulsion. The farmers sell their food grains on low price and purchase at high rate these disparities make more vulnerable to farmers. Principally, the concept of Grain Bank would be more fruitful to minimize the problems.

## The Realization:

### Locally available food grains:

It is perceived with this bank; access to food grains to the community would be local so that, they would have able to fulfill their needs. Generally, it is evidence for the poor community which have no money readily available to purchase the grains immediately from the shops. Such condition the grain bank would be very helpful for those communities; from they would get grains on credit with poise. Here, it is important to mention: *getting some less value things with respect is better than getting valuable things with disgrace.*

### Linking Disaster Mitigation with Development:

Both at the regional and national level there is an immediate need to link disaster mitigation with development. Without disaster preparedness, development itself is at risk. Increased attention is needed to find ways of mitigating the effects of natural disasters so that a single calamity does not push some people over the edge. An example of a mitigation activity is local level grain banks, which provide assistance at both the community and household level. Food Assistance is a powerful tool in tackling hunger at times of natural disasters: the challenge is to ensure that distributions are in accord with the demands of development, while at the same time safe-guarding the most vulnerable sections of society.

Where appropriate, additional food assistance should be targeted to disaster-prone areas that are home to much food insecure people. It should strengthen the ability of these households to cope



better with short term shocks. Food assistance should combine with other investments under the umbrella of a broad food security strategy.

### **Encountering crisis:**

Food assistance is most essential and accepted where it mitigates disaster induced food shortages. Disaster responsiveness is a distinct element of crisis management. In the case of random disasters, the role of grain bank will remain that of supporting rehabilitation. It is an important role and one where grain bank has shown time and again its ability to respond quickly and effectively, as for instance, in the case of numerous initiatives taken by the self-help groups in flood affected area in analogues region. It is the recurring theme of disasters and its impact on the poor where the rationale for grain bank's food aid for development can play a critical role. For areas with a susceptibility to recurring disasters, floods or droughts, the most effective method is by making the recurring incidence of such disasters a factor in the assessment of the vulnerability of the area and its population and therefore an area for grain bank operation. Having a broader perspective the role of grain bank could play a major role for managing crisis and shortage of food grains in the affected area.

It would seek a technical and capital involvement for serving the broader purpose of food security needs during any type of crisis.

### **Building confidence:**

It is not only a programme for supply of foods or management of crisis of food or disaster. It is a process of building confidence through vulnerable section of the society to maintain food grains for the needy and marginalized families, who have less option for having daily food grain's need. No one family can disquiet for food grains what they have today or tomorrow. If a family having no food for tomorrow they fell in to trauma and it causes for many of social evils and psychological tribulation. Locally available and accessible of food grains would make increases of confidence and moral. Because of it is their own venture, no one have proprietorship, it factually programme of community.

### **Political Empowerment:**

Being available of locally food grains to the community, they would get more empowered in context of freedom from debt in both terms as money and grains from money lenders and land lords. They would get themselves free from any type of pressure and obligation.

### **Socio-economic Empowerment & security:**

Basically, crisis of food grains faces by the women in the family; they ought to manage their families need by any circumstances or by any means. Many a cases have been exposed of exploitation in form of labour, physical and moral too. Some times they bound to give their jewelry to the money lender or land lord and did not get returned.



By initiating the Grain Bank such problems can be encountered easily ensuring the popular participation among the vulnerable section of the community.

Indeed, the members of the groups would get proper value of their produce and profit from selling of grains' storage in the bank. It depends how that particular group is managing and doing their system. It will need intellectual and comparative facilitation from the implementing organization.

### **Asset creation:**

An asset from that one can get some returns in form of kind or cash. Here, the discussion rounds around the initiatives taken by the group members.

It is a daring action taken by the group members what did see in the project areas. Getting income from grain bank, feeling more confident and trying to get farming land on lease. Some one group is practicing and getting much from that. During field visit to collect facts, it was observed members of the groups were more enthusiastic to do this venture at large and seeking for the opportunities. As per their discussion, they have plan to create some agricultural asset; e.g. small pumps, threshing machine etc.

YCK, already have organized a well established federation of the self-help groups, named LAXMI SAMOOH FOUNDATION. Foundation have own land and large capacity of storage and a building with RCC roof a rice mill is established there. Foundation also provide agricultural support to groups in form of capital, assets etc. Gradually, YCK has planned to link these groups to LAXMI SAMOOH FOUNDATION.

### **Control on price hike to some extent:**

Having initiation of the process of Grain Bank, it is perceived to some extent in local market and hoarders certainly are affected with this venture. Yet, it will be a very little effort to minimize the price hike of the grains at local level. Availability of food grains locally would affect the local businessmen and hoarders consequently; the price will not go high of consumable grains.

### **Making micro-entrepreneurial venture for self-help groups:**

Considering the future scope for enlargement of the Grain Bank programme it would be developed as profit making for the group members and could be generate capital for the groups. It will be a byproduct of the food security programme and to survive the other need of the vulnerable community. Groups can make it source of employment for the women and provide economical support to create ventures to others.



## **Involvement of community interest:**

The major stuck of the grain bank programme is getting popularity among the community providing their services easier and more accessible to deprived section. A necessary adjunct to a people focused approach for the future will be the imperative to ensure an active participation of the community in both design and implementation of the programmes. Decentralized management (including the participatory process) of the grain bank would include not only the adoption of greater responsibility by the community but also at the family level.

## **The proposed course of action:**

Making Grain Bank multi dimensional it needs to plan with participation of targeted community. Need to provide a plate form for discussion and management system. Rules and regulation should be finalized in the view of community perspective. Some of the core steps are identified for the course of further action:

### **a) Stakeholders**

Stake holder ought to be identified with the concern of the community. Community based organizations, local Panchayat, and other institutions made for community development can be the stake holder.

### **b) The community**

Here the term community defines one who belongs the vulnerable section of the community and very near to groups. It depends upon the discretion of the founder member of the Grain Bank.

### **c) The beneficiaries**

All the part of the community who belongs to poor and marginalized section can get benefits from the Grain Bank without having any prejudiced with race, cast and religion. It will also create social harmony among the diverse community.

### **d) The owner**

Certainly, the founder member or group member who will be the member of that particular Self-help Groups will be the owner of the Grain Bank. It depends on the growth of the Grain Bank and process; a small unit can be formed under the group. For proper management of the Grain Bank a working committee can be formed to serve routine work.

### **e) The policy**

A clear cut policy should be prepared individually on the basis of the group in the light of their geographical, socio-economical and cultural situation. The policy of every Grain Bank may be different and vary accordance with specification of the need of the area.



## Statistical description of Grain Bank initiated by YCK: An analysis

As per data provided by the YCK team, growth and progression is of the Grain Bank gradually increasing yearly. The membership in the each Grain Bank is much appreciable but, the contribution in the Grain Bank is very up & down. The ration on per member in Chapara Bujurg village as whole is 51 kg. of grain per member and in Nagwan Khas village 5 kg. of grain per member. Basically, as per data chart, there is no existence of Grain Bank in year 2004 and 2005.

According to data there is no picture on cost-benefit and forward course of action. Basically, what observed this is new concept for the community and it needs more focused and rigorous efforts for making a shape. Team should sit with the community and discuss to evolve a clear-cut policy for collection from group members, purchasing from outside, sales and distribution policy.

Policy for the Grain Bank should be pro-poor and flexible, so that the main objective of the Bank could be achieved. On the basis of discussion with Grain Bank member during field visit, felt low level of understanding of critical utilization of the Grain Bank. An open discussion should be invited of many groups who are initiated and ready to initiate Grain Bank activities at one platform for formulation of policy on Grain Bank viz uses pattern, disbursement, repayment, rate of interest etc.

*The major concern should be of Grain Bank is:*

- Provide food grains to needy family on low price or very simple and affordable condition;
- To break on daily selling of grains to local shops and broker;
- Vulnerability analysis of the families should be done under the catchment's;

Sl.	Name of	No. of	Year 2004		Year 2005		Year 2006		Total stored
No.	Village	members	Ravi	Kharif	Ravi	Kharif	Ravi	Kharif	Food Grains
1	Chapara bujurg & Gazan	47	0	0.5	8.7	7	7.99	0	24.19
2	Awasthi	15	0	0.3	2.55	2.25	2.55	0	7.65
3	Singhor Chack	30	0	1	5.27	4.2	5.1	0	15.57
4	Marachi Tola	27	0	0.4	1.3	4.68	4.49	0	10.87
5	Sachauli Patwani	21	0	0	3.7	3.15	3.57	0	10.42
6	Gazan Daharauli (South)	18	0	0	0	0	3.06	0	3.06
7	Bheewan	33	0	0	0	0	5.61	0	5.61
8	Nagwan Khas	20	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>211</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>21.52</b>	<b>21.28</b>	<b>33.37</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>78.37</b>

### Way forward:

Getting more popularity in the area the grain bank would be a hope of ray to the vulnerable community. The system of distribution and management of grains, collections and repayments need



more specific attention and proper documentation viz inventory. Entries of debit and credit of grains and cash will be pattern on cash book used in the banking system.

There should be a mechanism for collection of daily selling grains by the poor community. Yet, it is a complex process to avoid the daily selling grains but, not impossible. There is need to develop system for member families to ensure not to sell grains to local shops are broker. A system could be developed for daily needs assessing on week basis. So, they can get proper price/ vale of their grains and also obtain grains on reasonable price or condition.

The vision, with started to provide certain essential commodities, to the poor and vulnerable sections of the society for daily use at lower prices or flexible condition. This system, in turn, will bring about stability of market price of different commodities, availability of food grains and equity in distribution. The present working of this system has been a departure from the original idea. The rich and the urbanites have a major share from the present arrangement. Functioning of this system

Last but not the least; popular participation should be sought for successful functioning of Grain Bank. The popular participation need be institutionalized of Gram Panchayat or Citizen's committees with proper representative from different sections of the society. A vigilant and cooperative public will go a long way in making this system more viable and effective.

A special attention sought to make it more consistent and familiar in the community. It may be multidimensional intervention and groups can play role for. Some other areas can be explore for such intervention and need to be substantiate the feasibility of the intervention. The package should be replicable and adequate, so the community can possess the programme.





## An effort to make Grain Bank more viable:

### **Group Farming: An initiative-**

*Group: Laxmi Bachat Samooh (three in this village); total members- 45*

*Vill. Gazan Daharauli,  
Gram Panchayat: Bhirwan  
Development Block: Rudrapur, Deoria.*

*Three SHGs are running in this village, once, women of these groups determined that we ought to do some community effort to gain benefits. Now we have own 7000 of rupees in our group and if needed, can borrow from YCK. They decided to lease land and got from (Pandit Ji) with in the village in Rs. Fifteen thousands. Now they are farming in land and harvesting grains. Seven quintiles of grain are stored in their Grain Bank.*

*Nowadays they are confident that they would not have purchased food grains from local lender or land lords in high price or higher interest rate. However, they are illiterate, but the way they attempting is praiseworthy and creditable.*

### **A poor man: Escape from money lender-**

*Rudrapur development block is a Kachhar area of Deoria district. Having it fame for backwardness and remoteness too, there is village named "Awasthi". Mostly schedule cast families are lived and depend on daily/ agricultural labour. They used to borrow money from money lender from years and days for marriage and other livelihoods related. Due to high rate of interest they were not able to pay back to money lender and life long they worked as bonded at money lender cost.*

*Smt. Lavangi devi, who is inhabitant of this village says her story: 18 years ago her husband (Mr. Sri Narayan) was died. She has two adolescent children who were not able to contribute in livelihood management. There was none after Sri Narayan deth, who cares his families. Gradually, Lavangi Devi's condition had fallen and griped in to money lenders' hand. All the ornaments were gaurnted for little money as time to time required. She lended farming land and got married her children.*

*After a long time, however she could not forgive ther aIn and ornaments, she wse threatened to sell her land ornaments. No sooner, she was hassled, YCK initiated group concept and organized a strong community mobilization. Women initiated and organized a self help groups. Through their regular savings they made Lavangi Devi free from money lender. Now she...*