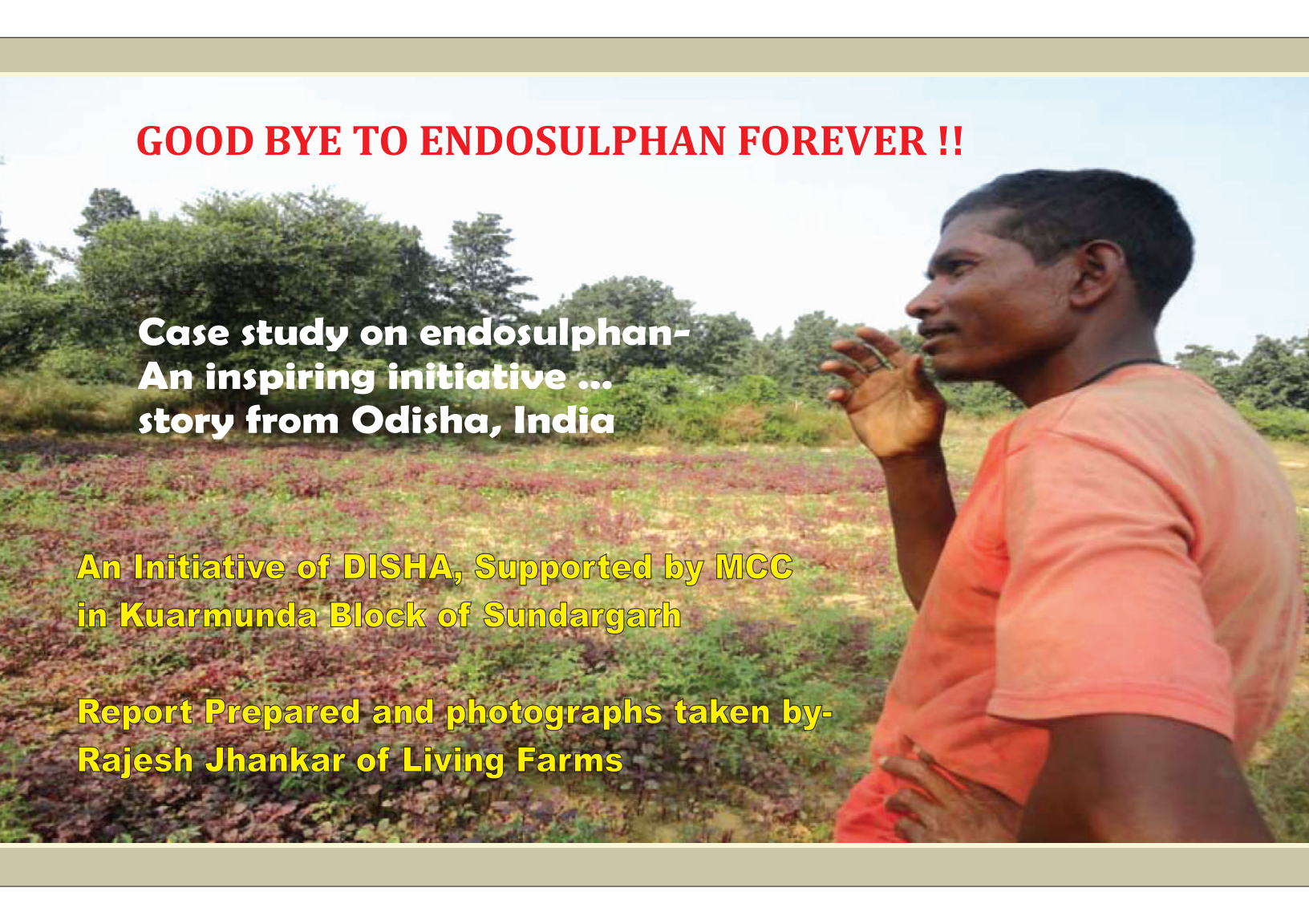


GOOD BYE TO ENDOSULPHAN FOREVER !!

**Case study on endosulphan-
An inspiring initiative ...
story from Odisha, India**

**An Initiative of DISHA, Supported by MCC
in Kuarmunda Block of Sundargarh**

**Report Prepared and photographs taken by-
Rajesh Jhankar of Living Farms**



Should farmers thank all for the given agrarian journey since last half century under the umbrella of Green Revolution? Bollywood's silver screen response reflects the whole picture more vividly. One can very much assess the Indian peasant's way forward from Manoj kumar's "UPKAAR" in mid-seventy singing with joy 'mere desh ki dharti ,suna ugle ugle hire moti', putting the plough on his shoulder to nathu's plight in "PIPLI LIVE".

Luchabahal,(Girija tola),Panchayat- Kalosaria, Po- Kacharu, Block/Tahsil- Kuanrmunda, Dist –Sundargarh, Odisha, can be called a remote village in the sense of its infrastructure despite being in the vicinity of only 17 kms from Raurkela city where few tenacious farmers due to their self endeavor and daring gestures showed that there could be alternative to endosulphan.

Coming to Luchabahal with a motorbike is like constantly carry out a war with the wretched road and with much bravery not succumb to the challenges put before by the road. I was continuously observing my co-biker's/colleague's concerns over the safety of his bike. While having a stoppage at a tube well to quench our thirst just at the entrance of the village,he was explaining how the villagers had taken hardship to set up a tube well last year, previously there was no tube well in the village. One may certainly surprise how the peripheral development done by huge industry with much galore is just a mirage in reality. After more than sixty years of freedom and being in a vicinity of only seventeen kilometers from steel city Raurkela neither the Government nor the Industry can facilitate its people with a road fit for riding even with a bike. Even people of Luchabahal have not been given the basic facility like drinking water since last year as after much strenuous effort of a local Organisation along with the villagers one tube well has been set up in last December. One can assess the sincerity on the part of the Govt. that how it has successfully sent Endosulphan to a village like Luchabahal before two decades where people were struggling to avail their basic rights like drinking water till last year.

Gondra Oram nick-named Bandhna, aged 42 years, father of two sons and three daughters, has experienced through a close association with endosulphan for a period of 12 years. He is a farmer with much alertness as compare to the rest of their village who gives much attention to details like what are the on-going govt-schemes in the farming sectors, what amount of subsidies are there on which crops and on which farming equipments and what initiatives should be taken to avail it up to the maximum extent. He used to cultivate more than seven to eight varieties of vegetables in this field such as Brinjal, Tomato, Ladies Finger, Carrot, Wheat, Greens, Bitter Gourd, and Capsicum etc. And about 750 mg to 1 litre of Endosulphan he used to spray in each year to curb the pesticides. While being asked how he came to know about endosulphan, he promptly answered, “It was the VLW who had instructed to spray for unwanted pests.” But after few years Gondra observed that it has become mandatory to spray endosulphan on weekly basis to control the pests but still the pests gradually increased and went out of control. According to Gondra after a period of time he realized that he was more committed to



endosulphan rather than to the farming. His mind was totally engaged in when to spray next and therefore he could not think of any further crops or vegetables. Gradually Gondra also noticed that he along with his family members were so often falling ill and it was taking much more time to get recovery out of that illness. He felt loosing his eye sight and his normal vision got affected. Gondra and his wife were severely affected by gastritis. Gondra witnessed that his foot nails had become thin and disfigured and very soon he lost almost all the nails in his feet. He felt difficulty in breathing. While Gondra was describing all this, his wife promptly intervened and said, “I was also hospitalized repeatedly and suffered acute gastritis.” It was after Gondra's revelation before the Doctor that he had been engaged in endosulphan spraying since 10 years, the Doctor altered the medicine and they got recovered. Then his wife also insisted to quit endosulphan and advocated for and asked to search other alternatives.

Resolution taken :

Gondra then vowed not to use endosulphan any further and with a jerk he quitted using endosulphan since last two years. In the



process of exploring some alternative he shifted to poultry manure from chemical fertilizers and initially minimized his area of farming. Earlier he used to cultivate 5 acres of land but now he confined it to 2 and half acres only. But he attributed this shrinking of cultivation also due to the lack of water sources, wild boars, Forest mouse etc. He has prepared a juice out of the leaves of a tree locally called Benga Tree. After crushing the leaves he boils it by adding some washing powder to it and later sprays the juice over the crops. And Gondra said to a considerable extent he has been succeeded to control the pests. He also taken up some pest management measures like planting marigold in



between the brinjal, cabbage and other vegetables. Now both Gondra and his wife are satisfied and confident in their farming using no pesticides at all. Gondra even cited that since then he along with his family have never been fallen that much ill.

Now Gondra is an example to many in that locality who are aspiring to quit chemical farming and trying to adopt the organic and eco friendly alternatives.

Village - Tangren, Panchayat - Jharbeda, District - Sundargarh

In the village of Tangren when we reached, their preparatory programme was going on for the coming religious event of opening of a catholic church. Still we managed to have a discussion session with the local farmers on the present plight of Indian agriculture. Mr.S.K.Sher Ali from DISHA addressed the people about the purpose of the meeting. Then I briefly presented the scenario of the current agricultural crisis the entire nation is going through. I mostly tried to relate the topic with people's own experience of farming. Farmers were responded well to the discussion and described how farming in their days was entirely different in terms of input cost, use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, hybrid seeds etc. Soil was used to be much fertile those days. Their forefathers were more healthy and strong as compared to them only because of the eco friendly agricultural practices they had and the absent of chemicals. I also cited the examples of Punjab and its plight due to green revolution that even mother's milk has not been spared. Now Punjab is the cancer capital of India. The farmers then told that day by day their use of pesticides and fertilizers had been increased a lot without any substantial growth in production. It was observed that the farmers were very much critical on the current farming practices but still using fertilizers and pesticides only because of dearth of alternatives at hand. Later we discussed a bit on possible alternatives to chemicals to save the farmers and the environment as well. At the end of the meeting people urged to organize such meeting further to enable the people about the organic farming practices.

Village - Luhamal, Panchayat - Jharbeda, District - Sundargarh, Orissa

One of the next meeting had been organized at village Luhamal coming under Jharbeda Panchayat in Sundargarh district. I and Mr. Sher Ali arrived at the village at 11:30 am. A local activist of Disha did inform all the villagers about the meeting. Within half an hour people gathered at one end of the village under the banyan tree. There were around thirty people out of which around ten were the female. In the beginning of the meeting I told them to share their experiences and the views on agriculture. They expressed their concerns in a lively manner. Most of the farmers were worried about non availability of seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and on the other hand under-rate selling. "Selling ice cream is a better option than farming",- a dejected farmer told. I brought the discussion to the point by presenting the flow of events that how the present state of agriculture came to existence. The farmers were also added that all the problems that had been associated with were due to the chemicals infused farming. Then the hazardous impacts of insecticides such as endosulphan and how the entire course could be altered were discussed. Prasanta Ekka,aged 29 years, a young farmer said that he had been farming without chemical pesticides and fertilizers since two years taking guidance from the workers of Disha. He told that his vegetables were in high demand in local as well as in Raurkela market as it tasted well than chemically treated vegetables. Later I summed up the meeting with the caution that in order to sustain as a farmer and save the farming as well we all have to work for finding alternative to chemical pesticides and fertilizers. In the end Mr. Sher Ali also assured them all to provide every possible help in adopting organic farming from their organisation DISHA.

Village - Pasra, Panchayat- Kacharu, District - Sundargarh, Odisha

The meeting was held in the village prayer mandap at the village Pasra coming under Kacharu Panchayat. Here around twenty farmers were present as others had gone to the nearby weekly market. We had a brief discussion on current farming issues along with the problem faced by the farmers themselves. Then the discussion was centered on pesticides and fertilizers and how our farming had been devastated by it. I elaborated further that how ransom amount had been invested on fertilizers and pesticides only to fatten the corporate treasury. If the current practices of farming would continue then it would land in a point of time where farming as well as sustaining life would be almost impossible. Farmers were responded in a passionate way and urged to find a way to avoid chemicals in farming. They requested us to organize a training programme on organic farming practices. In the end of the meeting all the farmers vowed to minimize the use of pesticides and fertilizers.



DISHA

B-12, Ashiyana Colony, Bisra-770036, Sundargarh, Orissa,
Phone: 91-661-2612447, Fax: 91-661-2612614, E-mail: disharkl@yahoo.co.in,
www.dishaodisha.org