Community Leaders-Capacity Building

FIAN organized a capacity building program to the community leaders at Tokuru Village on the right to food issues on 28th July 2013. 56 community leaders participated the training from 22 villages of Tokuru panchayat in Araku valley Mandal. The villages are

1. Tokuru
2. Borigavalasa
3. Jagaravalasa
4. Kummarivalasa
5. Nishaniguda
6. Seesaguda
7. Padmaravalasa
8. Baliyaguda
9. B. Kothavalasa
10. Doraguda
11. Bridgevalasa
12. Tentheliguda
13. Muliyaguda
14. Bodaguda
15. Pooluguda
16. Rayavalasa
17. Chittampadu
18. Yegukambhavalasa
19. Digukambhavalasa
20. Timpuravalasa
21. Nandanapuram
22. Nandanapuram Kothavalasa

Mrs. Uma Maheswari facilitated a Group exercise to identify issues in their respective villages in general and particularly on Right to Food and water. And also explained clearly how their Right to food and water violations occurred and who are the responsible for their violations.

The villagers expressed the problems in their villages. The villagers gave depositions as follows:

- No safe drinking water
- No electricity
- No work
- “The MNREGS has failed to fill the bellies of the Tribals. The tribals find no use with the job cards
issued by the government. Though the job cards were issued to them, the officials could show work only to very few. Even if the job was provided, the wage payments are very much delaying,” says Gopanna from Jagaravalasa village. He says that the NREGS didn’t provide any work for 2013 year and the payment of wages also not done for the previous work done. 14 groups should get the wage payment for 6 weeks of work and also not providing 100 days of work.

- 80 (4 groups) members should get the work for 3 weeks of the work done in 2012 says Applaswamy from Padmaravalasa village.
- In our survey in the panchayat of Tokuru 30 Job cards are not at issued.
- Work is not provided for 0 job cards.
- Duriya SubbaRao, Sarpanch of Pondiba Panchayat says that “when we use to meet the officials we (Girijans) are facing lot of discrimination and not even listening to our words, we are not even getting minimum respect when we approach the Government officials.
- Former Sarpanch Sara Dannu of Tokur Panchayat said that” we have no access for safe drinking water. The Government provided water pipeline directly from the stream at but the water is so dirty with the mud. In the rainy season it will be more dirty filled with mud and all of us are getting the waterborne diseases like Diarrhea, cholera, amebiasis etc. K. Soman from Bodaguda village said that there is nearly 250 acres of waste land in the panchayat, we approached for pattas to the waste land but the Government is not providing with the pattas. We are doing cultivation in the land from past 40 years.
- Chinnarao from Baliyaguda said that the rain water/spring water should be preserved by constructing checkdams so that the water will be utilized for the irrigation works.

Taking into consideration all these problems Mr. Ravi Kumar explained to solve the problem we should demand our entitlements. He explained all the Social Security Schemes from the Government for the poor and said them to demand their entitlements. Local youth can help to spread awareness among all concerned: village residents, teachers, Anganwadi workers, Panchayat members, MLAs, and even local officials. He also advised them to approach the Government by submitting the requisition letter on particular issue and get the acknowledgement, so that we can send the reminding letter once again.

FIAN facilitated the community leaders how to solve the problem and what is the right way to solve the problem. Mr. Chandar Rao explained in detail the solution to solve the village problem. The first step is to approach the local Government i.e Mandal Project Development
officer and submit the requisition letter, get the acknowledgement and keep the photocopy with us. If we won’t get the help the second step is to approach the ITDA-Personal Officer and submit the memorandum, then also if we won’t get help then we have to submit the District collector in the Praja Vani programme which will be organized on every Monday and Tuesday in the mandal level.

We can solve the problem by conducting the Gramsabha regularly atleast quarterly and for gram sabha we can invite ITDA PO, and other Government officials and all the village will attend the gram sabha and put our problems in front of the officials. Before organizing gram sabha, the Sarpanch and the ward members will be the general body and they have to take the decision on the problem of village and carry forward to the Gramsabha.

For Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, if we have any problem the first step is to approach the local Government i.e Mandal Project Development officer and submit the requisition letter, get the acknowledgement and keep the photocopy with us. If we won’t get the help the second step is to approach the Assistant Project Director and submit the memorandum, then also if we won’t get help then we have to submit to the Project Director, then to the Commissioner.

Mr. Ravi concluded that no one should feel/think that it is not our/my duty; we should feel responsible for our village development and work accordingly. The entire village should be with unity. With unity only we can solve so many problems.