

Story of
Lalita

PARTICIPATION AS A COMMUNITY MEMBER



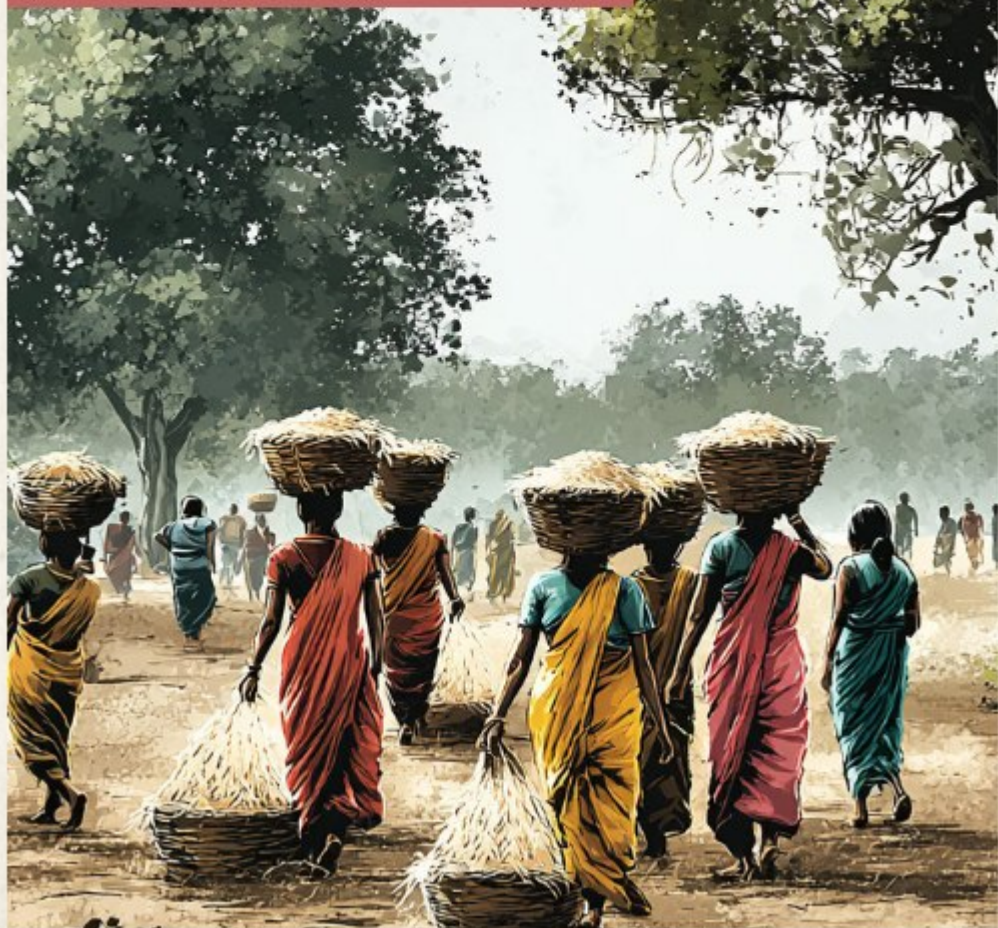
Playbook series for rightholders under
**Dharti Aba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyaan
(DAJGUA)**

**Common
Ground**

The Kutia Kondh tribals residing in Kandhamal district of Odisha, India, are known for their traditional cultivation practices and cultural beliefs.

They cultivate millets, sorghum, paddy, fruits, tuber, spinach along with other crops such as turmeric and bananas on the hill slopes, utilising their deep traditional knowledge of the local environment.


Among the 13 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) in Odisha, the Kutia Kondh community has a strong cultural and spiritual connection with the hills, which they consider sacred.





They collect non-timber forest produces (NTFPs) such as sal and siali leaves, wild tubers, corn, maize, jhuna, honey, tamarind, mahua from the forest to sell it in local weekly haat, and financially support their family during tough times. The Kondh women are forced to sell them to local traders at throwaway prices as the market is far off. Taking advantage of this, the local traders come and buy all these items from the women.

Short-changed by them, the women felt the need for better management and control of their own resources. They approached the Sarpanch to help in fulfilling their household needs and support for effective management of their community forest areas. The Sarpanch asked them to put forth their proposal in the gram sabha meeting. The women members also decided to go to the village meeting and discuss their priorities for household assets, upkeep of their community forest resource, and marketing of their NTFPs to increase their earnings.



Behan, every year we work hard in the dongar (hill), planting fruits, vegetables, corn, millets, and sorghum, but these are not fetching us good money.

We also collect NTFPs from the forest and go to the local market to sell these items, but the middlemen come and buy them at throwaway prices. We get a meagre amount; hardly anything is left to save for our children's future.

Yes, the new programme DA-JGUA is different as it has been prepared keeping all these issues in mind. It is especially for tribal/ indigenous people so those living in remote villages can get the benefit.

We can ask Kusum. Yesterday, she was talking about a new programme to develop our village with new infrastructure, household level entitlements, and securing community forest rights.

Let's meet her tomorrow. I am sure she will guide us. Where will we go looking for her? I have household chores and farm work also...

Yes yes, we all have work. But, we will invite her to the community hall tomorrow, and she can tell us more about the new programme.



Next day at the community hall

I am happy that you all are interested in knowing more about the new programme, DA-JGUA (Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan). I will give details on how an individual or a group can voice out their demands under this programme.

We want to access and understand about all government programmes and schemes. We also want to have rights over our community forests, and understand how to manage our community forest areas once it is provided to us under the Forest Rights Act (FRA).

You can propose this in the next gram sabha meeting. The gram sabha can then demand this under the new DA-JGUA programme.



Few days before the next gram sabha meeting

Behan, when is the next gram sabha meeting?

Remember, we all had decided at the SHG meeting that we will demand access to different government programmes for tribal and poor people, and have our forest resource rights to manage and sell the forest products directly to buyers?

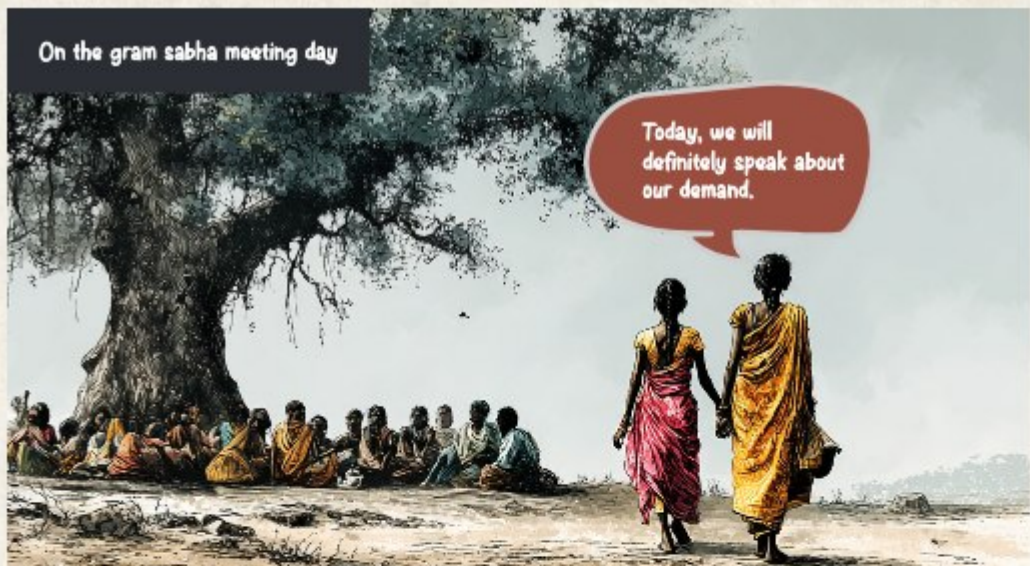
Have you heard that there will be a special gram sabha meeting on August 15? Let's attend and discuss our priorities.

Every other day, the government is launching schemes for villagers. But do you think poor people like us, living on the hills, will benefit?

Haan behan, I had forgotten. I will definitely attend.

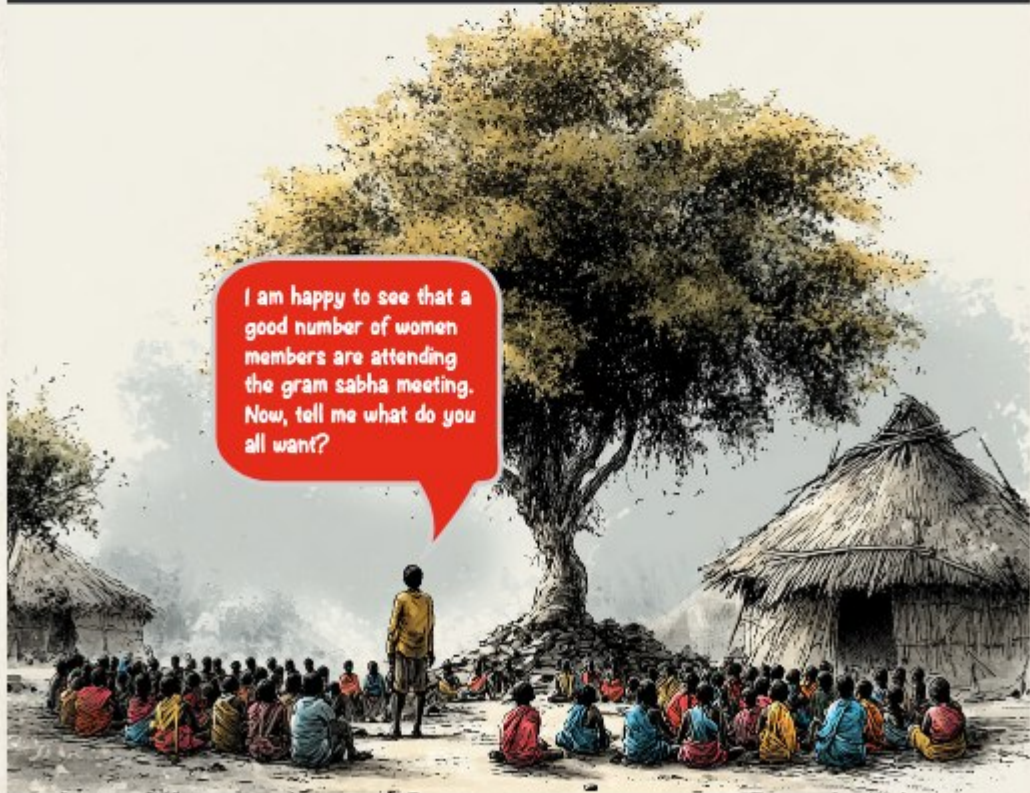


On the gram sabha meeting day

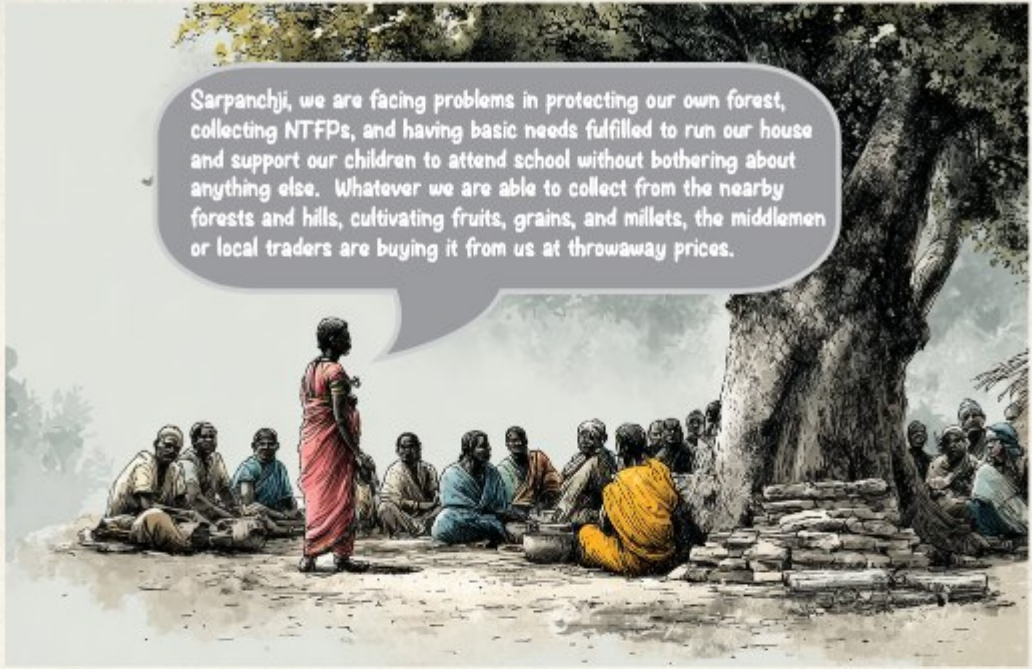


Today, we will definitely speak about our demand.


At the meeting, all members shared their priorities for the development of their village and panchayat. The Sarpanchji looked at the group of women sitting on one side.



I am happy to see that a good number of women members are attending the gram sabha meeting. Now, tell me what do you all want?



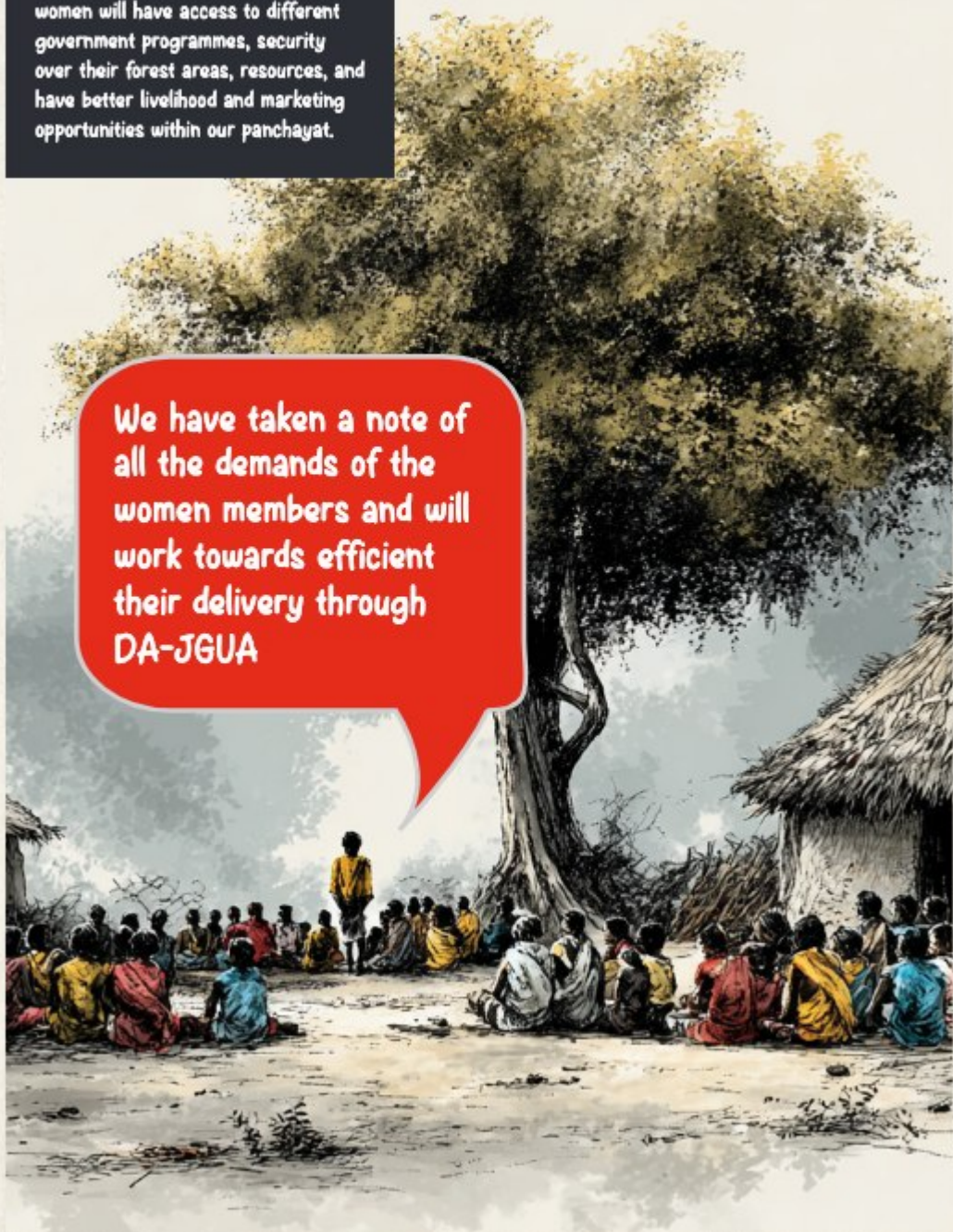
Sarpanchji, we are facing problems in protecting our own forest, collecting NTFPs, and having basic needs fulfilled to run our house and support our children to attend school without bothering about anything else. Whatever we are able to collect from the nearby forests and hills, cultivating fruits, grains, and millets, the middlemen or local traders are buying it from us at throwaway prices.



Last week, Kusum (the facilitator) said we can demand this through the new programme DA-JGUA.

The Sarpanchji asked the panchayat executive officer to note down the demands and apply through the DA-JGUA programme, so that tribal women will have access to different government programmes, security over their forest areas, resources, and have better livelihood and marketing opportunities within our panchayat.

We have taken a note of all the demands of the women members and will work towards efficient their delivery through DA-JGUA



ANNEXURE

List of Interventions

Individual Household Entitlement	Community resource governance & management	Innovative place-based programming
<p>Pucca house - PMAY (Gramin) Panchayat Raj & Drinking Water</p> 	<p>Universal Service Obligation Fund/ Bharat Net Electronics & Information Technology</p>	<p>Mobile Medical Units - NHM Health & Family Welfare</p>
<p>Water Supply - JJM (FHTC) Panchayat Raj & Drinking Water</p>	<p>Connecting Road - PMGSY Rural Development</p>	<p>Establishment of Centers of Competency on Sickle Cell Health & Family Welfare</p>
<p>Household Electrification - RDSS Energy Department</p>	<p>Community water tap Panchayat Raj & Drinking Water</p>	<p>Establishment of Anganwadi Centers - Poshan Abhiyan Women & Child Development</p>
<p>Off-grid solar - New Solar Power Scheme Odisha Renewable Energy Development Agency (OREDA) & Energy Department</p>	<p>Establishment of Van Dhan Vikas Kendras - PMVDY ST & SC Development, Minorities & Backward Classes Welfare</p>	<p>Construction of Hostels - Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan School & Mass Education Department</p>
<p>Ayushman Card - PMJAY (NHA) Health & Family Welfare</p>	<p>Establishment of Tribal Multipurpose Marketing Centres (TMMCs) & FRA Cells ST & SC Development, Minorities & Backward Classes Welfare</p>	<p>Establishment of Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) ST & SC Development, Minorities & Backward Classes Welfare</p>
<p>LPG connections - PM Ujjwala Food Supplies & Consumer Welfare</p>	<p>Capacity building - RGSA Panchayat Raj & Drinking Water</p>	<p>Poshan Vatikas - National AYUSH Mission Health & Family Welfare</p>
<p>Jan Dhan Accounts - PMJDY Finance Department</p>	<p>Promotion of sustainable agriculture - Multiple Schemes Agriculture & Farmers' Empowerment</p>	<p>Tribal Home Stays - Swadesh Darshan Department of Tourism</p>
<p>Fish culture support - PMMSY Fisheries & Animal Resources Development</p> <p>Livestock rearing - National Livestock Mission (NLM) Fisheries & Animal Resources Development</p>	<p>Livelihood Opportunities - PM Vishwakarma & Mudra Loans MSME Department Finance Department</p>	<p>Establishment of Skilling Centers - Skill India Mission Skill Development & Technical Education</p>

Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the knowledge contribution of resource persons from Common Ground partner organisations and ecosystem actors, including Centre for Research in Schemes and Policies (CRISP), Centre for Public Policy Alternative, Foundation for Ecological Security (FES), Seba-Jagat, State Institute for Rural Development (SIRD), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and Vasundhara.

Common Ground is a collaborative systems change initiative in the domain of environmental governance and rural livelihoods in India, jointly led by several organisations and anchored by a secretariat organisation, called Living Landscapes. Common Ground leverages the unique opportunity presented by the Commons to address three interconnected crises of our time – livelihoods, climate, and social equality – by integrating a socio-ecological narrative into mainstream development models. Through a collaborative action framework, Common Ground focuses on ‘field setting’, so that entrepreneurial action by multiple actors is accelerated and multiplied, seeding the ecosystem with institutional apparatus and a distributed network of change leaders, to set the stage for sustainable impact beyond the scope of any single initiative or organisation. To know more [click here](#).

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