

## Meeting Minutes

**Subject: Public Hearing on Hunger and Food & Nutrition Related Schemes**

**Date : 12<sup>th</sup> August 2011**

**Venue : North East Network, J.L. Borooah Road, Guwahati**

**Organized by: Oxfam India, Humanitarian Hub, Kolkata**

### **List of Participants:**

1. Zubin Zaman- Humanitarian Programme Manager, Oxfam India
2. Saito Basumatary-People's Rights Forum
3. Janki Pegu- People's Rights Forum
4. Chandan Talukdar, Gramya Vikash Manch
5. Debdulal, the ant
6. Anurita Pathak, NEN
7. Bondita Acharya, Purva Bharati Trust
8. Biplap Saharia- SATRA
9. Simanta Sharma- sSTEP
10. Amit Sengupta- Communication Officer, Oxfam India, Kolkata
11. Bulbul Moshahary-Programme Officer-Assam, Oxfam India

On 12<sup>th</sup> of August, 2011 a meeting was organized by Oxfam India in Guwahati, Assam in context to the issue of public hearing on hunger and food and nutrition related schemes.

Some of the key issues highlighted on hunger and food security by the group during the meeting is as follows–

1. Subjects for inclusion in the food security bills in context to Assam and NE – mid day meal in unaided venture school.
2. Food sovereignty is a solution. Here procurement issues have been high -lighted by the group during the meeting. A clear road map towards food sovereignty was not articulated. Links to procurement issues and corruption within the system were highlighted.
3. Cash transfer – would not be suitable in Assam. Not a lot of thought has gone into analyzing the reasons why it is not suitable except that there is an overwhelming opinion that it is not the way forward.
4. Issues of penalty for fair price shops.
5. Food security issue in context to IDPs was raised by the group. This is especially on provision of food in IDP camps.

6. Conflict and movement of people from one area to another.
7. Revision of the BPL list.
8. Schemes that can be analyzed are – ICDS; NREGA; PDS
9. Violence against women is on rise in Assam. The issues of women should also be focused.

**Key areas of discussion:**

- a) It would be rather difficult to organize ‘public hearings’ especially with government official’s involvement by Sept 30. The alternative is to have ‘testimonials’ or ‘fact finding cases of hunger or systems breakdown’ from Assam which can then be presented at the national level.
- b) SATRA one of the organizations present have stated that in their experience government officials are now shy of public hearings because public hearings have been effectively used as a part of RTI at the ground level by organizations in Assam and have held Govt. officials accountable.

**ACTION POINTS –**

- i. Key issues identified by the group for testimonials from the field on hunger are – i) IDP camp and ration cards for IDPS ii) Hunger and Tea tribes/ tea gardens iii) Urban poverty and hunger iv) Rural poverty and hunger – PDS functioning.
- ii. A meeting would be held with the steering committee of People’s Rights Forum to get better clarity on the way forward and how Oxfam India can add value to the process. Oxfam clarified that it could be a facilitator to raise local issues of hunger and malnutrition in Assam to a larger forum at the national level and that we as a group should exploit this window of opportunity.

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