



Prime Minister's
Rural Development Fellows
प्रधान मंत्री ग्रामीण विकास फेलोज़



सत्यमेव जयते

Ministry of Rural Development
Government of India

PRIME MINISTER'S RURAL DEVELOPMENT FELLOWS 2012-13





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PRIME MINISTER'S RURAL DEVELOPMENT FELLOWS 2012-13

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Foreword



A year has passed since the first batch of Prime Minister's Rural Development Fellows were recruited and joined work. The primary objective of Prime Minister's Rural Development Fellowship (PMRDF) Scheme was to provide catalytic support to the administration of the Integrated Action Plan (IAP) districts in improving programme

delivery and relationship with the marginalized section of the population. We got over 10,000 applications and selected 156 fellows through a rigorous selection process. Young and bright women and men with the urge to work with the poor were recruited, trained and placed in these districts that have a large 'development deficit'.

I have personally remained in touch with the State Governments as well as with the Fellows and am enthused by the results so far. All the concerned States accepted the Scheme without hesitation and the Fellows were warmly welcomed. We have had little attrition. My field visits, interactions with the various concerned persons, media reports, reflective self profiles of the Fellows in our blog and the Facebook narrations tell me that the Fellows are working hard on their assignments, even if the outcomes are yet to be fully manifest. In my travels to these districts I often meet them and am impressed by their commitment and passion.

Helping the poor get their place in the society and the development of underdeveloped regions remains a major challenge before us. The task is much more complex than is commonly understood. It calls for a high degree of professionalization of our development interventions and a

great sense of empathy while dealing with the underprivileged. We have an acute scarcity of professional human resources in the districts and for working with the poor. This is more so in the underdeveloped regions of our country. We need to expand the pool of professional human resources to confront the challenge of poverty head-on. PMRDF is an experiment to address this challenge.

Our Ministry has taken several steps towards strengthening the implementation arrangements of the Scheme. Revised guidelines are in place; a support cell has been created in the Ministry and the States too have created their own support cells. An education programme leading to a post graduate degree in development practice is being considered, which will further equip the Fellows to deal with the issues of poverty.

To end, I would like to thank all concerned, especially State Governments and District Collectors, Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology (CAPART), the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (Aajeevika) and the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) for actively contributing to the success of this collaborative experiment. I would also like to invite suggestions and feedback from all stake-holders so that we can make the experiment a success and build upon what has already been created. Last but not the least, I would like to congratulate the fellows for what they are accomplishing. I look forward to the continued success of the PMRDF programme.

Jairam Ramesh
Minister for Rural Development

Government of India

Prime Minister's Rural Development Fellows

An Overview

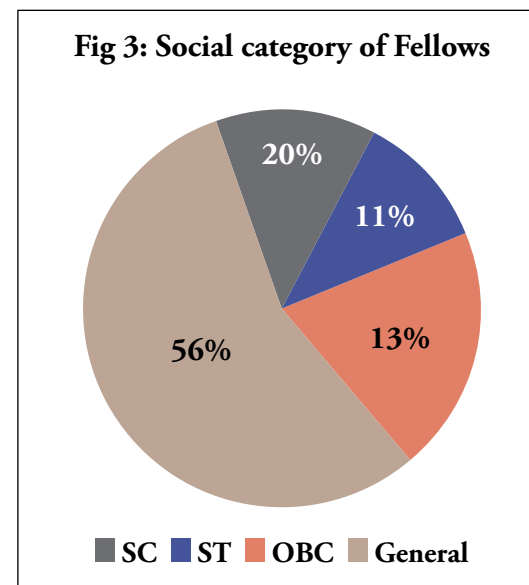
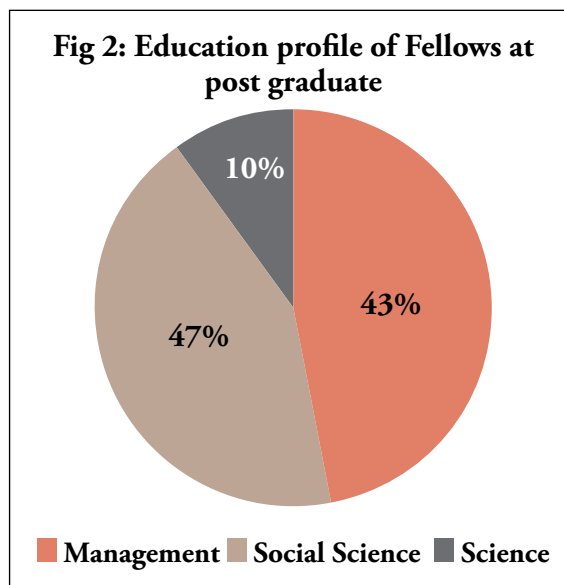
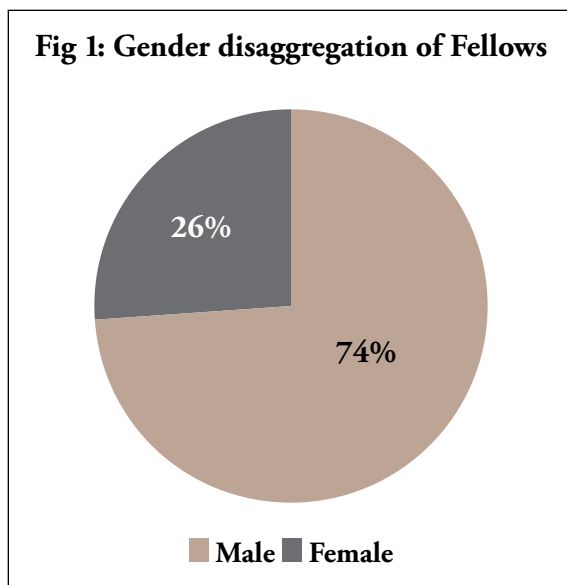
Prime Minister's Rural Development Fellowship (PMRDF) is a scheme anchored by the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India. PMRDF is a short term work opportunity (three years) for bright young women and men who already possess some level of academic and professional expertise, that will serve the district administration in improving programme delivery and interface with the marginalized sections of the population. Over the long term, the aim is to develop a cadre of development professionals who are committed to working for the poor and the disadvantaged. The immediate aim is to provide catalytic support to the district administration to reduce the developmental and governance deficit in regions which are less developed and isolated.

PMRDF was announced by Shri Jairam Ramesh, Union Minister of Rural Development, in the presence of Shri Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of India, on 13 September 2011.

Profile of Fellows

One hundred fifty-six PMRD Fellows were recruited in two batches in 2012. Minimum eligibility criteria was a degree from a recognized university with a four-year degree course, including those like Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Engineering, Law, Medicine etc, or a post-graduate degree from a recognized university (in case of a graduate holding a degree of a course duration of three years or less). Work experience of a few years was preferred.

Selection was carried out through a highly competitive process conducted in association with TISS, Mumbai. Out of 8,560 applicants 816 were shortlisted for group discussion and personal interview. Finally, 156 were selected for training. It is a diverse cohort in terms of gender, education and experience. Out of the 138 Fellows currently on the rolls, 34 are females. One hundred of them are post graduates. The following diagrams show the disaggregation of these Fellows.



The selected candidates underwent a two-month intensive training course at TISS, including a four week internship in the districts before they were placed.

Placement

One hundred and thirty-eight Fellows are working in 84 districts covered under the IAP across nine states. One or two Fellows are placed in each district, excepting a few districts where there are three Fellows. The summary of placement is as below:

State	Number of Fellows	Number of districts in which they are placed
Andhra Pradesh	12	8
Bihar	16	10
Chhattisgarh	18	14
Jharkhand	29	16
Madhya Pradesh	15	10
Maharashtra	4	2
Odisha	33	18
Uttar Pradesh	6	3
West Bengal	5	3

Role of Fellows

The Fellows work under the supervision of the District Collector. They perform mainly the following functions:

- a) Work with institutions of the poor to build their capacity and help them access their rights and entitlements.
- b) Facilitate capacity building in Self-Help Groups (SHGs), and in institutions of local democracy, like panchayats.
- c) Conduct socio-economic analysis of the local areas at Block level and contribute to ascertaining the felt needs of the people.
- d) Help the district administration in local area planning.
- e) Assist in better implementation of poverty alleviation programmes, particularly Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, National Rural Livelihoods Mission, National Rural Drinking Water Programme, Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan, Integrated Watershed Management Programme, National Social Assistance Programme, Integrated Action Plan, Integrated Child Development Services, National Rural Health Mission, Sarvashiksha Abhiyan, Rashtriya Madhyamik Siksha Abhijan.
- f) Undertake action-research to discover more appropriate ways of programme delivery by the district administration
- g) Design and implement innovative projects.
- h) Provide feedback on rural development initiatives.

Fellows are expected to reach out to the poor, help them access their rights and facilitate the district administration in redressing people's grievances. They are supposed to bring in fresh thinking and inputs for local planning, execution, community interaction and outcome management. Several Fellows have undertaken innovative projects by sourcing funds from different sources to translate some of their innovative ideas into action, that have direct implication on the lives of the poor.

In their role as a learner, each Fellow maintains a daily diary describing their actions and reflections. They participate in regional and national conventions/meetings (also known as retreats) or any conventions organized under the Scheme, which provide the opportunity to them to exchange notes with peers, develop a shared understanding of situations, explore self and develop the capacity to handle personal crisis and plan for the future. They also participate in other learning events and study courses, as and when organized by the Government.

Remuneration and other benefits

Fellows get a consolidated stipend of INR 50,000 per month during the orientation period, INR 75,000 per month during the first year and a 10 percent increment during the second year as well as during the third year of Fellowship, subject to the Fellow's satisfactory performance. They are provided office and transport facilities by the district administration. Fellows are entitled to travel reimbursements for official work and a specified amount of leave for certain reasons. Fellows are not employees of the Government and they receive a stipend during the entire duration of their Fellowship as compensation. Upon successful completion, they are awarded a Fellowship Certificate.

Implementation arrangements

The District Collector is the supervisor of the Fellows and allocates works to them. The District Collector is also the most immediate person to reap the benefit of the PMRDF Scheme. S/he looks after the well being of the Fellow and ensures that the Fellow is provided support to access all necessary resources. The Principal Secretary for Rural Development in the State takes overall responsibility of the PMRDF Scheme in the State. The Nodal Officer of the State PMRDF Support Cell looks after the day-to-day monitoring and coordination of the scheme and placement and transfer of Fellows within the State; addresses issues raised by the District Collector and the Fellows; and liaises with the Principal Secretary for Rural Development in the State and the Central Government. An academic institution of national standing having relevant expertise acts as the Programme Mentor and knowledge partner in the PMRDF. Programme Mentor organizes and provides the sources for recruitment, selection and initial orientation, as well as mentoring and monitoring Fellows, and designing and offering them an education programme on Development Practice. Currently Tata Institute of Social Sciences holds this responsibility. Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology (CAPART) appoints the Fellows and provides administrative and logistical arrangements for the

Scheme. This responsibility, along with a few others, will be taken over by National Rural Livelihoods Promotion Society (NRLPS). Finally, the Programme Support Cell of the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India engages with CAPART, State Governments, partner academic institution, Fellows and others concerned to oversee the working of the Scheme and for facilitation of various kinds.

Future plans

A post-graduate course leading to an M.Phil/M.Sc degree in Development Practice has been planned for the Fellows. TISS will offer the course, through e-enabled distance learning as well as contact sessions, integrated with their work in the field. A new batch of Fellows will be recruited soon and the scheme is going to be extended to the North Eastern States. A study to assess the Scheme has been planned, which will suggest measures for further strengthening it.

More about PMRDF is available at:

www.rural.nic.in/pmrdfs/

www.pmrdfellows.wordpress.com/

www.facebook.com/pmrdfofficialpage



Fellows Speak

Priya Tayde

Gadchiroli, Maharashtra



I was an urban development professional by experience and qualification, and setting foot in the rural development sector was pretty accidental. But my journey in this field has showed me a different world and has led me to diverse

experiences. While I was enjoying the visual treat of natural scenery, it was simultaneously disheartening to see the rural realities—the thought of leading an entire life in distress deeply troubled me.

Even after six decades of Independence and a plethora of policies we have not been able to secure the basic infrastructure for citizens, to help develop their capacities to lead a dignified life. I have deep faith in systems and believe they are the only method which can bring stability in the long term. But at the same time, I am also well aware of the implementation crisis faced by the country. As I was personally sceptical about the philosophy of policy makers, I wanted to be in a position where I could contribute to the macro-structure while being close to the grassroots.

It is my mission to enable freedom of choice for every individual. The capacity to make a rational choice can only be generated through sound education and human development efforts. While pursuing this fellowship, I hoped to receive hands-on experience in creating an environment where we could design, implement and analyse community development efforts.

I consider this fellowship a milestone in my career; it not only helped to broaden my horizons, but also touched those areas of life which lie miles away from more mainstream lifestyles. It helped me grow as an individual as well as to become a better citizen.

We only managed to deal with the implementation aspect of service delivery. We planned various projects which will not only increase the living standards of the people but also encourage local enterprise. The effort is to provide maximum exposure, so that people can choose for themselves and demand their own path to development. Moreover, we are also designing institutional methods of bringing newer and modern ideas to ensure easy accessibility of services to the villagers.

We were involved largely in institutional monitoring in the last year of the fellowship. We went through the records of all the projects/works and interventions made in each village. Whenever we visited a village, we verified the status of the work done in the field. One of the toughest jobs in the district is to get reliable data

on work status, because functionaries hardly visit remote villages. Through the initiative of institutional monitoring, we gained a better understanding of the village situation, their requirements and challenges in planning new projects. Even though the motivation was fear of penalty, this exercise improved the attendance of the staff at the village level. I still remember an incident from my initial days, when a village welcomed and garlanded me saying: “We are receiving our first government official in our village after Independence.” I could barely decide how to react!

Initially, we were asked to undertake an infrastructure availability survey at the village level. With the help of this survey, we identified pockets in the district which had a critical infrastructure deficit. It also helped to gain an understanding of the efficiency of the departments and agencies in general.

A fellow colleague developed an indicator called “Net Infrastructure Index (NII)” which determines the infrastructure standards of each village. We were initially required to focus on villages with the least NII. Eventually, we formed clusters of villages showing adverse indicators and developed a cluster development plan. The idea was to bridge the physical, economic and service infrastructure gap.

The villages in Gadchiroli are mostly disconnected with the district headquarters; whether geographically or in terms of electronic communication. I realized that radio services could provide an effective way to reach out and communicate. However, five languages are spoken in the district. Thus, I figured out that a community radio project would be of higher utility for providing choices in transmission, as well as a better employment opportunity. When I communicated this idea to the Collector,

it was readily accepted. We asked the local Industrial Training Institute centre to act as the transmission centre, as we were wary of possible malpractices if the project was outsourced. The project will be executed as soon as we receive technical sanction.

Gadchiroli is a huge district with a scattered and very thin population. Hence, providing services based on a regular popular count is irrelevant for the district. A reflection of this was the low response to the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act due to the absence of banks. People do not prefer employment under the MGNREGA, as payments are made directly to bank accounts—and they have to travel 90 kilometres to reach a bank. Taking advantage of the PCI's decision to expand bank networks through IAP, the Collector also decided to improve the banking networks. Fellows actively helped in establishing banking units. We brought in 14 new Ultra Small Branches across the district—which provides services to almost 1.5 lakh people dwelling in interior pockets.

Apart from these group projects, I have individually undertaken two assignments. The first was research on the Public Distribution System in Gadchiroli. I analysed the current system along with its challenges and made recommendations to improve its efficiency. Secondly, with the help of DRDA officials, we designed a dairy project in Gadchiroli, which till then was seen as a distant dream.

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Shila Matang Khunti, Jharkhand



I was born and brought up in Gujarat. My exposure to poverty and related issues was limited to western and southern Gujarat—it meant not having access to private hospitals and private schools. This perspective underwent a change when I was sent for a month-long

rural practicum, along with four others, to Dhenkanal district, Odisha. I spent ten days eating rice and salt with water, slept in a school building and worked to mobilize the community for the Forest Rights Act, 2006.

After spending two years in the field of public health, I was keen to work for tribal rights—especially on issues related to ownership of natural resources. This shift or transition occurred due to my extensive field visits and travel across Jharkhand. It helped me realize that economic empowerment precedes social empowerment. Only once an individual's basic need for food is secured, can she be mobilized for rights and entitlements. Meanwhile, I got an opportunity to work as a PMRDF.

I was sent to the Khunti district of Jharkhand. The first phase of work was focused on strengthening local administration

and PRI members with regarding decentralized planning and strengthening gram sabhas. It also entailed reaching out with information on flagship and state sponsored programmes, mobilizing communities and resolving issues of Self-Help Groups

in backward and forward linkages through training and capacity building. We also concentrated on organizing farmer committees for collection, storage and sale of non-timber forest products, especially lac. The objective was to organize farmers to enhance their control over the market and their bargaining capacity, and also to minimize the role of middlemen. Additionally, we aimed to provide them with scientific training in lac cultivation and develop networking with buyers.

We have been successful in organizing 200 lac farmers in two of the most interior blocks of the district. Besides this, the work which gives me inner satisfaction is advocacy against human trafficking through networking with NGOs, awareness training and workshops with the police and community.

It feels rewarding when the community recognizes you and says “Aap jab tak hai hame hamare adhikaro ke prati jagruk kar dijiye” (Till you are here, please make us aware of our rights and entitlements).

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Dr Kumar Shubhashish Mayurbhanj, Odisha



During my childhood, I had always dreamt of doing something for the needy people of our country. I came to know of PMRDF in 2012 and applied for it. I thought it would provide me a proper platform to do something for the poor of our country. Many

friends and relatives opposed me on the grounds that I am a doctorate from a prestigious institution and should not apply for a post involving work in an left-wing extremism affected area. But I went ahead and was selected, fortunately.

I had little knowledge of social sciences as I am a science student. However, after two months of rigorous training, I came to know a great deal about the development sector—for which I am thankful to Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai and the Mayurbhanj district administration.

I was assigned to undertake a seasonal (month-wise) planning of MGNREGA works, which would make it easier for people to know the types of work they could do, corresponding with

different seasons or months. I, along with my colleague RR Rout, categorized the permissible works under MGNREGA on a monthly basis, based on the geographical and seasonal conditions of Mayurbhanj. This work was later published in Oriya in a book meant for palli sabhas and

gram sabhas of Mayurbhanj district as part of the Gram Sabha Sashaktikaran Karyakram (GSSK) undertaken by the Government of Odisha in October 2012. We received a huge number of MGNREGA project proposals for roads and ponds, contour bunding, trenches, compost pits, soak pits, check dams, recharge pits etc from each revenue village.

I was assigned as nodal officer for Kaptipada Sub-division, for the proper conduct of palli sabhas and gram sabhas. I was also in charge of one block (Moroda) for GSSK in 2012. I stayed for 15 days in the concerned area during the GSSK process.

I have conducted and attended more than one hundred palli sabhas. I also coordinated with the police, Block District Officers, APOs, PEOs, GP nodal officers and PRIs to make the process successful. I, along with my team, would mobilize the public to attend palli sabhas.

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Under our new District Magistrate, Rajesh P Patil, we introduced a rapid monitoring system into our district. I, along with my team, developed a format for the system and made 25 teams of officers. According to this system, the District Magistrate instructs one team to visit a gram panchayat each day and oversee all the developmental work in the area. It is a random tour and no GP is assigned till a day before the district visit. This programme is helpful in knowing the status of developmental activities in different gram panchayats.

I was also assigned to monitor the running of the mid-day meal scheme, for which I visited more than 200 schools to ensure the quality of food. Language problem is a major cause of school dropouts in the district. Thus my team introduced shiksha sathis in the district's interior pockets. A shiksha sathi is a local

boy/girl who has passed Class X and can teach the students in their local language. While visiting the school, I interacted with the parents and motivated them to send their children to school. I was an active member of the team that organized workshops for teachers and introduced a programme called *Mu Bhi Padhibi*. We also initiated a massive enrolment drive for the educational year 2013-14, and I dealt with all public grievances by conducting a personal enquiry into matters.

Presently, I am responsible for the proper implementation of the MGNREGA scheme in the Mayurbhanj district and look after all education related issues and public grievances. My thanks to the Ministry of Rural Development for this wonderful opportunity to do something for the poor. It is easy to criticize the government, but equally difficult to understand the difficulties of the field.

Ravi Dhanuka Munger, Bihar



The term 'development' carries different connotations. The debate on what constitutes development is not fully settled, and I doubt if it will be ever. However profound the meaning of development might be, the stark reality is that vast sections of population are deprived of 'sadak, bijli, pani' (roads, electricity, water) and 'roti, kapda aur makan' (food, clothing and shelter). The only development agency that can fulfil these basic needs is the government.

The PMRDF was a platform I could not afford to miss—it was an opportunity to take governance where it matters the most. I have always had my own share of scepticism—if nothing else has worked as envisaged, could this scheme work?

The last one year has been a period of immense pleasure, satisfaction, frustration, learning and un-learning. I have donned different hats as part of this job. As a catalyst, I could get things moving, things which had been stuck for a long time. I, along with my co-fellow, searched out land for the landless. There were schools without buildings and anganwadis accommodating children of Class I-VIII in one classroom—some had been operating with ad-hoc roofs for longer

than half a decade in some of the most interior panchayats of the district. We managed to find land in more than 70 percent of the cases, which was a huge success.

I hope more than 500 children will be able to get education and will no longer have to face the scorching heat of the sun, biting cold or heavy rainfall in the open. As initiators, we took the initiative of collaborating with Jeevika—the nodal agency for the implementation of the National Rural Livelihood Mission in Bihar and—brought it to Munger much before its scheduled arrival. We organized a job fair in collaboration with Jeevika and managed to place 150 of the tribal youth in the mainstream organized sector. I hope they can continue with their jobs and never see the ugly face of poverty. As ambassadors of the government, we took the message of communal harmony to conflict prone regions. We organized cultural festivals at the panchayat level to bring various communities together and to give children and local artistes an opportunity to showcase their artistic talent. As people's representatives, we took villagers' grievances to the

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administration and tried to get them redressed as much as possible. As a professional managers, we worked with the administration to overhaul the implementation machinery of some flagship schemes like MGNREGA and to introduce technology like Global Positioning System (GPS) mapping to reduce corruption and increase transparency.

My experience with bureaucracy has been fascinating, but not without its challenges. There were difficulties: sluggishness, winning the trust of various actors and bringing them onto common platform to get the ball rolling, getting bogged down with too many operational formalities needing to continuously establish yourself within the system. I learnt that things will happen if there is strong will. No programme design can be

strong enough to work, if there is a governance vacuum. And no programme design can be too weak to run, if there is good governance and a system of feedback to re-design. I learnt of a number of unsung heroes who keep things going—unappreciated and unrecognized—but making a difference each day with their integrity. However, at the end of one year, I am once again sceptical about how the next year will be.

I am not very sure if I can keep up the pace we achieved but will continue trying. I also don't know where this road will take me, but I hope it leads me to something meaningful and exciting. The opportunity to do things for people matters the most—and the prospect of achievements, however little will keep me going.

Laxmidhar Singh Sundargarh, Odisha



I applied for the PMRDF with hopes of contributing to the development of rural people in remote areas of India, especially the adivasis. I was born and brought up in a village surrounded by forests, close to the famous Simlipal National Biosphere. I belong to one of the remotest

and most backward villages in the district of Mayurbhanj. Since childhood, I have closely witnessed and experienced all forms of poverty, exploitation and discrimination. I had to move out of the village for my studies and stayed in residential schools run by the government for Schedule Tribes and Schedule Castes, because of the non-availability of good schooling in my village. It was during my childhood that I decided to work for the toiling masses in rural areas. My studies at the two premier social science institutes of the country, especially the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, provided me with different perspectives of rural poverty and greatly sensitized me to work for the elimination of all form of exploitation.

Since being posted in the Sundargarh district of Odisha, I have been involved in various government programmes and innovations in the district. Initially, I was involved in conceptualizing a district and village resource centre to create permanent structures for

information dissemination of various government programmes and policies at the district and village level. The idea was to empower rural communities by providing all necessary information regarding their rights and entitlements. I was also involved, for a short time, in the conceptualizing and implementing of model gram panchayats. In the initial phase, the district administration decided to make two gram panchayats in each block model gram panchayats, providing all information to the rural masses. People can demand their rights and entitlements once they are equipped with sufficient information.

Later, I reported to the District Rural Development Agency, Sundargarh and engaged with the flagship programmes of the government focusing on employment, livelihood and housing schemes. I was involved in major activities, such as the planning and monitoring of the National Rural Livelihood Mission, MGNREGA and Indira Awas Yojana. My activities also included talking to different stakeholders during regular field visits and, wherever possible, suggesting small creative ideas for better implementation.

Working as a fellow has been a great learning experience. It has greatly sensitized me to the issue of development in the rural areas, especially with regard the Scheduled Tribes. At a personal level, I have forged bonds with community leaders, PRI members and civil society, organizations which have helped in personality development.

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Shraddha Pandey

Garhwa, Jharkhand



I am a lawyer. I started working for NGOs as well as legal and policy making institutions while in the first year of my law course, as I believed that it was important for me to have both textbook and practical knowledge of law. I realized very early in my work experience that what is written in textbooks is quite different from what actually happens. When

the opportunity for the PMRDF came, I accepted it immediately as it gave me the chance to work for people whose basic human rights are being snatched away from them every day, and who are constantly in fear of their lives.

I had been to conflict affected states of India before joining the PMRDF, but I had never been to Jharkhand and had never heard of Garhwa district where I am presently posted and which is now my home. Garhwa's district boundary touches the boundary of three states, namely Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Chhattisgarh and thus its three subdivisions—Garhwa, Nagar Untari and Ranka—have three different socio-economic and cultural conditions.

I have mostly been involved in supporting the district in better implementation of flagship schemes such as MGNREGA, NRLM, SSA, IAY, IAP and IWMP. My work was to study the kind of work that had already been done in the district with regard to these schemes, and then conduct a need-based survey to find out the kind of work or support

needed by people in those areas. The need-based survey involved intensive fieldwork in the district, which gave me the chance to interact with people and listen to the needs of various sections of the community. Monitoring and evaluation of various rural development schemes is another area in which I assist the district at various levels.

When the opportunity for the PMRDF came, I accepted it immediately as it gave me the chance to work for people whose basic human rights are being snatched away from them every day, and who are constantly in fear of their lives.

Apart from the above mentioned work, I have also worked in the area of legal and technical support to the district. There were various pending court cases, which were taking a lot of the district officials' time. I helped them to achieve the speedy filing of papers by developing a standard format. I am also supporting the district by developing a grievance redressal tracking system which will enable people to file and track grievances through mobile phones and the internet as there is already a grievance redressal office in the district.

A significant achievement in the area of planning has been in developing the Bhandariya Action Plan (BAP). Bhandariya is one of the least developed blocks of the district and is affected by conflict. I supported the district in the planning, research and making of the BAP. BAP was approved by the government and the district has already received the first instalment of the planned amount to carry out developmental activities.

My time in the district has taught me to be more patient and has made me realize that sincere and continuous efforts to fulfil an objective always yield positive results.

Vamsi Krishna Nukala Karimnagar, Andhra Pradesh



I began my career as a software engineer but after some time, I felt I did not belong there and wanted to shift to the development sector.

I enrolled at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences for a Masters in Social Entrepreneurship. During my Masters I gained theoretical

knowledge about various

social issues and some ideas as to how

to resolve these issues. But there was

not much opportunity during my academic study to work on various

issues related to development, even

though my course provided some

space for field activities. When

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One, it would enable me to work

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of our country, which is the best

way to provide good learning. Two, it

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government without being part of the regular

cadre and help me understand the issues from the administrative

side as well.

When I applied for PMRDF, I thought it would be great for two reasons. One, it would enable me to work in some of the difficult geographies of our country, and second, it would give me a chance to work with the government without being part of the regular cadre.

During my training I was schooled in various issues of development, such as the rural-urban divide, gender, poverty, health, education, migration etc and familiarised with various tools like Participatory Rural Appraisal, GPS Mapping and SPSS. Additionally, there were academicians, practitioners, NGO functionaries and bureaucrats who held interactive sessions and presented their perspectives of development, which was highly enriching.

I was placed in a village as a part of field training (called village immersion) and asked to understand the socio-economic condition of the villagers and other dynamics of the village by applying various skills imparted during training. The exercise was really fruitful as it provided various insights into the village economy, culture and livelihoods.

Following this immersion, I was posted in Karimnagar district of Andhra Pradesh. In Andhra Pradesh, the state government allocated three interior mandals (blocks), predominantly tribal, to each PMRDF, and we were asked to stay in any one of the mandals during the fellowship. I stayed at Manthani mandal of Karimnagar district.

I am interested in working on livelihoods; especially community- managed small enterprises in which I am competent. Our district administration also planned to initiate some livelihood activities in the interior parts of the district and I was involved in, preparation of livelihood plans. We (my colleague and I) undertook the resource profiling of mandals through qualitative (Focus Group Discussions {FGDs} and Participatory Rural Appraisals {PRAs}) and quantitative (village survey) means. After data analysis and a series of discussions with the community, projects were finalized by considering local resources, skills and market.

These planned livelihood activities include establishment of a tussar cocoon bank which strengthens livelihoods of all stakeholders who are dependent on tussar silk. The cocoon bank was started in March 2013. The project aims to eliminate middlemen and provide

fair price to tussar farmers, ensuring year-long work and better prices to weavers and regular income to silk reelers.

Another project under the livelihoods programme was the establishment of mini apparel units. These units will serve as a platform for women to utilize their tailoring skills for their livelihoods. The project has recently started and the units are to manufacture school uniforms to begin with.

It has been one year in the district and my experience in working with this community has been very satisfying. What encourages me a lot is that I am able to work on areas I am interested in. I am able to see small changes as our intervention has resulted in the increase of income of 12 weaving families due to an improvement in market linkages and 300 farmers have benefitted as a result of increased local consumption.

Anshuman Gupta Surajpur, Chhattisgarh



Being brought up in different cities across India, my idea of a village was green fields; long, winding roads; vast, empty spaces; clean air; a closely knit society. This idea

was a big attraction and very early in my career, I had decided that I would spend at least some time exploring and understanding village life. The first opportunity I had to exploring a village, was during my engineering degree, when I visited villages near my college and spoke with the people. This made me realize that people in villages too face severe hardships, and it isn't all as hunky-dory as I had imagined. It was then that I decided that I wanted to work with the people in rural areas. As luck would have it, with my post graduation in rural management, I got my first opportunity to stay in villages for a much longer time and to understand the nuances of village life.

Having completed my education in 2011, my tryst with the development sector continued with a job in a reputed CSR where

Life as a fellow for the last ten months has truly been a rollercoaster ride. I have been lucky to have a dynamic District Collector who has involved me in a number of schemes like MGNREGA, the State Skill Development Mission and various other livelihood projects that are currently being implemented in our district.

we worked to improve the quality of education in government primary schools of a tribal district in Rajasthan; and later in an action research project on the socio-economic impact the use of micro-irrigation in agriculture. Though both these opportunities gave me valuable experience in this sector, the sense of having directly contributed to the betterment of rural society was missing. That is when I came across this opportunity to join the PMRDF.

The fact that we would be given a chance to work within the government administration system and gain first-hand experience of how important rural development schemes like NRLM, MGNREGA, IWMP, NBA etc work made me think that this was going to be an invaluable learning experience. Besides, it was also an opportunity to understand the deficiencies plaguing our system and make meaningful contributions to improve the delivery and outreach of these schemes. The training provided to us in the first two months of our fellowship gave me further clarity on what we were expected to do as fellows, including the areas where we could contribute during our stay in the districts.

Life as a fellow for the last ten months has truly been a roller coaster ride. I have been lucky to have a dynamic District Collector who has involved me in a number of schemes like MGNREGA, the State Skill Development Mission and various other livelihood projects that are currently being implemented in our district. Working in the District Rural Development Agency has allowed me to understand the provisions of many more schemes, and my focus has been on trying to converge different schemes so that targeted beneficiaries can avail the maximum benefits.

However, working with the field staff in implementation of these schemes was not always easy. My efforts at convincing them and the higher authorities did not yield fruit every time.

The convergence of different schemes has also been a challenge as each scheme has different criteria for beneficiary selection and process of implementation. However, struggling with these issues every day helped me understand the minutest details of these schemes and the complexities involved in the development sector. I have been able to move some earth while working with women SHGs on a convergence programme for vegetable gardening through NREGA, NRLM and NHM. We have also been able to add a secondary source of income for some women SHGs by training them in mushroom cultivation. These humble initiatives have made me more grounded and I have learnt that even a minor improvement in the income levels of a poor village household is a huge contribution.

Kavindra Kulkarni Sonebhadra, Uttar Pradesh



I was preparing for the Civil Services when I found out about PMRDF from the internet. I was looking for this kind of an opportunity and was very glad to join the PMRDF. I have another good reason to join the programme - I am a fan of the Minister, Jairam Ramesh.

There is a reason for this. When he joined the Environment Ministry, he took action on some pressing issues such as the Lavasa city and panchayat participation in forest area development. This type of ideological action shows a considerable depth of understanding of the marginalized sector and sustainable development.

Criticism is easy, action is more difficult. I wanted to work with the government system before according blame. I joined the PMRDF programme in Hyderabad. During the training period, my colleague and I did a lot of work in the selected block. We were supported by the district administration at the outset. Our District Commissioner supported us in understanding the system. We were assigned to Chopan Block for field training.

I was looking
for this kind of an
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very glad to join the
PMRDF.

Chopan Block has a great deal of geographical diversity and is different from other blocks of UP. It has a greater population of SCs, STs, more poverty and a dense forest area. We selected two villages to understand local geography and culture. These villages had Chero, Baiga, Kharwar and Gond tribes among the Scheduled Tribes. Their tolas are far from the other communities of the villages. They do not have basic facilities like water, health and livelihoods. We stayed in the village and tried to motivate the elected representative and local people to participate in developmental activities. We organized a social audit meeting where we were told that the secretary and pradhan were making money by doing bad quality work. We asked the secretary and told him that he had to face the villagers at the Panchayat Bhawan. The next day, many people came and started arguing about the bad, incomplete work. I persuaded them not to fight, but to try to understand the reason and the date by when work would be complete. After a lot of discussion, the Secretary said that he would try to complete the work in one month. The villagers were happy and satisfied with this kind of a solution. We approached government employees to speak to the locals about government programmes. This technique helped to create productive pressure on both parties.

After completing my training, I came back to the district headquarters. I realized that without the help of higher authorities, I could not make any change. We targeted IAP, SSA, MDM, ICDS and other Scheme like MGNREGA, Innovation fund etc. I contacted local politicians and thinkers and local representatives to make them aware of our programme and goals. After a survey and analysis, I approached the district collector and authority concerned to address these problems. Corruption was the biggest issue and one incident will continue

to stay with me. We visited Kasturba Gandhi School, and put together a report on our visit, which we submitted to the district authorities. The report highlighted the safety, drinking water, health and sanitation problems and also mentioned that there was no boundary wall which could be a major threat to the safety of adolescent girls. However, due to a delay by higher authorities, one girl committed suicide due to mental and sexual harassment. Her guardians allege murder. I ask myself, who is the 'murderer'. Still, I continue to do my work; corruption hinders my speed.

Amrita Dhiman Gaya, Bihar



I have always wanted to work in Bihar with the people. After completing my MBA, I went to Hyderabad and then Mumbai. I found out about PMRDF on the last day they were accepting applications, through a friend. Prior to becoming a PMRDF, I had planned to run an NGO devoted to people-centric development. Fortunately, I am a PMRDF today and am trying to do whatever little I can, to provide an impetus to development.

The people in villages have great ideas and they know how to utilize available resources. I see this when they use even an empty water bottle as a funnel for irrigation. There is a large variety of such big and little innovations that people are undertaking. These people have inspired me, especially the women. I have seen pregnant labourers working till the date of delivery to eke out a living. As a PMRDF, I realized their pain and strength when I delivered a baby myself. I have decided to work towards improving health facilities and alleviating the condition of mothers and their newborns.

In Gaya district, I was instrumental in the conceptualization and implementation of various new ideas under the IAP, such

as the installation of smokeless chulhas for anganwadi centres and of mid-day meals in primary and middle schools, solar charging stations at Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas and libraries at the block level with periodicals, books and magazines. My work also included providing coaching facilities to meritorious students from poor families for different competitive exams. I believe providing a skill is providing the means of empowerment – individuals can then earn a living. Various skill development initiatives have been undertaken with funding from different schemes in the district.

I believe schemes like MGNREGA are a good means to check distress migration. Several steps are being taken in the district to increase the reach of information and to enhance people's participation.

Being a PMRDF has given me an opportunity to be close to the people, to learn from them and to work with them. My experience of four years in the corporate world and the knowledge I gained in the process have helped me become a significant member of the district team.

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Arindam Banerjee

West Midnapore, West Bengal



A year after completing my post graduation at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai and following three jobs, I was unsure about most things except that I wanted to travel and experience new places, to listen to people's stories and about their struggles,

lives and inspirations. As I have always interested in issues of conflict, insurgency and development after my days at TISS, the PMRDF was but a natural choice for me.

With ideas of directly venturing into areas like Lalgah and Jhargram in Paschim Medinipur, armed with an eagerness to listen and document the stories of people and their needs, I found myself selected as a PMRDF. After initial training sessions and one month well spent with the other fellows, it was time to move to the field.

I often have difficulties explaining the nature of my work to people. For most people in the country, administrative services and NGOs represent two opposite ends of the development spectrum. Trying to carve out an independent space and

facilitating change under such circumstances is always difficult, if not impossible. It became my endeavour to try and travel to the maximum possible blocks, villages and panchayats in the district.

Eight months into the fellowship, I thank myself that I made a choice to be a part of such an interesting journey.

I am fortunate enough to have been exposed to several sectors and informed about multiple issues and problems.

On late evenings—returning to the district headquarters after spending some hours in remote villages, at NREGA worksites, in small community halls amidst women producing sal leave products, tasting the last of the mid-day meal with an enterprising group of primary teachers and listening to 'Daffodils' recited by a small girl—I realize that these experiences are unique.

I am fortunate enough to have been exposed to several sectors and informed about multiple issues and problems. In my visits to the field, I saw workers with perennial problems and disillusionment, as well as complaints from people about services rendered. Yet when workers at a MNREGA site in Lalgah cheerfully listened and interacted with me under the mid-day sun, I spotted a glimmer of hope for a better society and improved lives. Fully conscious of my limited authority and facilities, I

decided to intervene in areas likely to show results over the next couple of years. Working with rural artisan groups, women's Self-Help Groups, natural fibre-based artisans, craftsmen and the youth, I now strongly feel that some amount of motivation and correct market linkages can result in greater chances for the realization of their dreams.

During my undergraduate days at Jadavpur University in Kolkata, while studying literature, I often debated the lack of

the reflection of social reality in contemporary literature. Years later as I move around amidst the vast stretches of sal, pial and mohul trees and listen to the countless narratives of hope, despair and dreams, I have realized that literature is born from such experiences.

Possibly in the near future when I complete this fellowship, I shall look back on the time spent and will hopefully reaffirm my belief that we are all governed by the choices we make in our lives.

Arti Mishra

Balaghat, Madhya Pradesh



Following my post graduate degree in Rural Management, I started my career as a development professional with the society established by the Tribal Development Department, Government of Gujarat.

This was akin to a dream come true. My year-long tenure in

the organization not only provided me with an opportunity to work for tribal education but also helped me polish my academic knowledge and skills. Although I felt lost at times in my struggle with files, guidelines, note sheets and rejected ideas, the real pleasure came when during my field visits, students told me how they had started loving their school after the new playground, about their efforts to engage with the recently implemented e-learning project, their enjoyment of their first career counselling workshop and how their mess was in a better shape now. These were small, good changes – which I was either part of, or pushed to materialize. My biggest takeaway from my previous job are phone calls from these children asking me join them again or visit as early as possible.

My motivation to join PMRDF was to work with government, that too in difficult areas, and be part of a well conceptualized mission with structured strategies and activities. The prospect of mutual learning and facilitating development in backward

areas attracted me greatly. Additionally, the opportunity of working and sharing knowledge with some of the best government officials was another interesting aspect of this fellowship.

As a PMRDF in Balaghat, I have been able to develop both personally and professionally.

This last one year as a PMRDF at Balaghat has helped me develop both personally and professionally. It has given me a chance to work and interact with people at every level of the hierarchy, starting with the panchayat secretary and going up to state officials. The initial phase of settling down helped me understand district dynamics and expanded my knowledge of different development schemes. The district administration of Balaghat is experimenting with various technological interventions for effective and efficient implementation of development schemes. I worked in one such project which was a work management system, developed to tackle delays in construction works in the district. I was also involved in project planning of IAP.

During the past one year, my main objective has been to identify an area of work so that I can engage more effectively in the district with my set of skills and knowledge. I still have to rationalize how these small works of mine benefited the district and as far as achievements are concerned, I have miles to go before I sleep.



The Fellows



Andhra Pradesh



Ramesh Reddy interacts with beneficiaries of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in East Godavari district.



Anantha Krishnan RK

Adilabad, Andhra Pradesh

BTech in Agricultural Engineering and MTech in Food and Agricultural Process Engineering, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore.

Anantha has worked for over two years as a Scientist with the MS Swaminathan Research Foundation. He was also involved in the bio-industrial watershed programme in Koratput district in Odisha, working with tribal farmers in planning and implementing watershed management works, soil and water conservation interventions and developing farmers' collectives.

“Working with the government provides a deeper insight into understanding the functioning and performance of service delivery mechanisms.”



Rajendra Kondepati

East Godavari, Andhra Pradesh

BTech in Chemical Engineering, Indian Institute of Technology Madras and Masters in Public Policy, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore and Georgetown University, Washington DC.

Rajendra drafted a model Grievance Redressal Bill which was sent to a Parliamentary Standing Committee as well as an Andhra Pradesh Lokayukta Bill to be introduced in the State Legislature. He was part of a three member team responsible for the planning and execution of a Spices Grinding and Sterilization Plant, worth INR 8 crore, which provides direct and indirect employment to around 150 people and indirect employment as well.

“The practical experience gained as a Prime Minister's Rural Development Fellow is a perfect complement to my academic education.”



Narendar Garidi

Karimnagar, Andhra Pradesh

BTech in Electronics and Communication, Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University, Hyderabad and MA in Social Entrepreneurship, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

Narendar has worked for five years in a variety of sectors including social enterprise development, software development and education. He has participated in assignments focussing on social marketing, social impact assessment and social network analysis.

“As a PMRDF, I have the unique opportunity to work with the poorest of the poor and to put forth their concerns directly to the highest administrative forum.”



Nukala Vamsi Krishna

Karimnagar, Andhra Pradesh

BTech in Electrical and Electronics Engineering and MA in Social Entrepreneurship, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

Vamsi Krishna has worked as a software engineer with Wipro Technologies for over two years. He has also volunteered for Wipro activities related to corporate social responsibility.

“Working with PMRDF is one of the best ways to get grassroots experience and understand developmental challenges.”



Prathima Nalabolu

Khammam, Andhra Pradesh

BTech in Electronics and Communications Engineering, VNR Vignana Jyothi Institute of Engineering and Technology Hyderabad and MA in Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

Prathima has worked for two and a half years in the IT sector. Her work involved programming and analysis of business flows.

“The Fellowship has been an enriching experience which has enabled me to understand tribal people and provided me an insider’s view of the functioning of the district administration.”



Suresh Babu G

Khammam, Andhra Pradesh

Mechanical Engineering, Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University, Hyderabad.

Suresh has worked for three years with Yugantar—an independent research, advocacy and outreach organization. As a research associate, he has worked on various projects such as provision of urban amenities in rural areas and performance and prospects of insurance in rural areas for IRDA.

“I have taken up this fellowship to work as a facilitator between the local administration and tribals, to understand the dynamics of administration and make tribals part of the development process being one amongst them.”



Katamgari Balaiah

Srikakulam, Andhra Pradesh

BA, Dr BR Ambedkar Open University, Hyderabad and MA in Social Work, Pondicherry Central University, Puducherry.

Katamgari has worked as a community organizer for three years. Using Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), he has worked with community members on issues of school dropouts and livelihoods. He has also been involved in the planning and organizing of fundraising events for children.

“The idea is to use the skills and abilities of district youth for effective implementation of developmental programmes.”



Pooja B.V.

Srikakulam, Andhra Pradesh

BE in Computer Science, GM Institute of Technology, Davangere Karnataka.

“I wanted to see the dedication of the district administration in fulfilling the hopes of the people.”



Chetan Yarlagadda

Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh

BE in Urban and Regional Planning, School of Planning and Architecture, Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University, Hyderabad.

Chetan has worked in various capacities for six years with the government and corporate sectors, as well non-government organizations. He has worked on urban planning and development, as well as issues of livelihood and rural employment.

“This Fellowship is a good opportunity to work with the system and contribute innovatively towards transformational change.”



K Balakrishna Reddy

Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh

Bachelors and Masters in Biotechnology.

Balakrishna has worked as a molecular biologist with Sri Biotech Laboratories and was part of a public private partnership to develop insect resistant genetically modified brinjal. He has also worked with the M.S. Swaminathan Foundation as a State Bank of India Youth for India Fellow. Balakrishna has worked in the field of agriculture for four years.

“The PMRDF programme exposed me to various topics related to social development, policies and schemes administration.”



Harsha Vardhan Chiruvella

Vizianagaram, Andhra Pradesh

BE Osmania University, Hyderabad and MS, Texas A&M University, Texas.

Harsha has worked with a startup and was involved in the sales and marketing of a patented product. He has also worked for Accenture as a supply chain analyst.

“Exposure to village life was a learning experience which enriched my knowledge on delivery systems, last mile gaps, tribal culture and more importantly gave me an opportunity to mingle, particularly with the youth and Self Help Groups.”



D Shyam Sunder Rao

Warangal, Andhra Pradesh

BA (Honors) in Sociology, Loyola College, Chennai and MA in Management, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNTU), Hyderabad.

Shyam has worked with Dr Reddy's Foundation, Hyderabad as part of the corporate social responsibility team of Dr Reddy's Laboratories. His role included conducting training sessions on life skills, personality development and communication skills. He also participated in administration and industry interface for assignments.

“PMRDF is one of the best possible ways to reach people and understand development challenges at the grassroots level.”



Chintan Raj participates in a meeting on the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in West Champaran district.



Pankaj Kumar Rai

Arwal, Bihar

BA (Honours), Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi and MBA, Dr DY Patil University, Navi Mumbai.

Pankaj has seven years of work experience, four of which he spent working with an organization undertaking political research, data collection and analysis. He has also worked with an IT company involved in e-governance and financial inclusion projects.

“The great thing about this fellowship is that it has been envisioned to address the problems of marginalized communities, paralyzed PRIs and malfunctioning of administration in an inclusive manner.”



Namrata Vilochan

Aurangabad, Bihar

BA (Honours) Economics, Lalit Narayan Mithila University, Darbhanga, Bihar, Masters in Economics, Patna University, Bihar.

Namrata has worked with MIMANSA, an NGO involved in child rehabilitation and women's empowerment. Her work involved coordination between the NGO and various government departments. She has also worked as state coordinator for UNICEF in Jharkhand, which entailed monitoring the progress and improved implementation of the anemia control programme.

“Receiving the fellowship was the turning point of my life.”



Shashi Karn Prasad Akela

Aurangabad, Bihar

B Tech (Information Technology), Muzaffarpur Institute of Technology, Muzaffarpur, Bihar.

Shashi has worked with Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) of India as a Direct Sales Executive. As a trained software developer, he has worked as an IT assistant with the Bihar Prashanik Sudhar Mission where he provided computer training to block officers.

“As a PMRDF, it is possible to easily meet with the local community and higher government authorities. I hope PMRDFs become an important tool in rural development.”



Amrita Dhiman

Gaya, Bihar

B Sc (Agriculture), Govind Ballabh Pant University of Agriculture & Technology, Pantnagar and PGDM with specialization in Agribusiness Management, VAMNICOM, Pune.

Amrita started her career with a field job in a public sector bank and then worked with Karvy Comtrade Ltd. While with Mahindra & Mahindra Limited, she was instrumental in the conception and launch of Mahindra Samriddhi India Agri Awards. She shares the glory of winning “Zee Business Award for Best Fundamental Analyst 2009” and “Golden Peacock Innovation Award 2010” with Karvy Comtrade Ltd and Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd respectively.

“Being a PMRDF has provided me the opportunity to become closer to people, learn from them and work with them.”



Kshovan Guha

Gaya, Bihar

BSc in Agriculture, Uttar Banga Krishi Viswavidyalaya, Cooch Behar, West Bengal and MSc in Agriculture in Seed Science and Technology, Bidhan Chandra Krishi Viswavidyalaya, Mohanpur, West Bengal, MBA in Rural Management, Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology School of Rural Management, Bhubaneswar.

Kshovan has worked for two years with the Bihar Rural Livelihood Promotion Society as Chief Executive Officer of the Women Farmer Producer Company (WFPC).

“Working as a PMRDF has been one of my most challenging jobs, but also the most rewarding and enriching.”



Aditya Tyagi

Jamui, Bihar

BSc, Delhi University and MCA, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

Aditya has a background in business analytics consulting where he was involved in business problem solving, planning and implementing, coaching and motivating, and alignment of objectives at different levels.

“In addition to meeting the target of enabling lives, the Fellowship is helping me understand the complexities of human and administrative behaviour.”



Shravan Kumar Jha

Jamui, Bihar

BSc in Agriculture and MBA in Agribusiness.

Shravan has worked with SKS Microfinance, spearheading the microfinance operations of the organization. He has experience in auditing, and has also worked with an NGO in Bhopal in the field of education and microfinance. He has worked for four years.

“PMRDF is the best platform to understand administration and its tryst with development.”



PK Anand

Jehanabad, Bihar

BA Hindi and MA in Social Work, Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam, Kerala.

PK Anand has worked for three years on issues related to MGNREGA, enhancement of tribal participation, strengthening grievance redressal mechanisms and livelihoods for tsunami victims, as well as with Self-Help Groups. He has also been a lecturer at the Department of Social Work, Amrita University, Kollam, Kerala.

“Life as a PMRDF has been transformational.”



Priyanka Kumari

Jehanabad, Bihar

BSc in Biotechnology, Patna Women's College, Patna, Bihar and MBA, Birla Institute of Technology, Mesra, Ranchi.

Priyanka has worked in human resources at a solar plant. Her work entailed handling of manpower, planning and training.

“Rural development is the main pillar of the nation's development.”



Avinash Tiwari

Kaimur, Bihar

BTech in Civil Engineering, Cochin University of Science and Technology, Kochi, Kerala and Post Graduate Programme in Advance Construction Management, National Institute of Construction Management and Research, Mumbai.

Avinash has three years' experience in the infrastructure construction sector. His specialization lies in the planning and monitoring of projects. He has been a management trainee and assistant manager and manager (planning).

“The PMRDF has turned out to be an exceptional learning experience.”



Ankush Singh

Munger, Bihar

BTech in Electronics & Communication, Uttar Pradesh Technical University, Lucknow.

Ankush has over five years of experience in the software industry. He has worked with Amdocs Development Center Pvt Ltd and Infosys Technologies Limited. He has been involved in different life cycles of software development as a technical expert and team lead.

“In PMRDF, I have gained firsthand experiences of the system, education, people, society and our collective psychology of communities. The fellowship allows me to experiment, learn and deliver on a broad canvas.”



Ravi Dhanuka

Munger, Bihar

BA Honours in Economics, Hansraj College, Delhi University and Post Graduate Diploma in Rural Management, Institute of Rural Management, Anand, Gujarat.

Ravi has worked in the areas of microfinance and rural livelihoods for two years. His key responsibilities included managing a district branch with the portfolio of INR 14 crore, forming Self Help Groups/producer companies and providing professional management to these institutions. He supported efforts to establish market linkages and provided other business development services. He also helped in the recovery of an ailing microfinance unit.

“The fellowship was a platform I could not afford to miss - it was an opportunity to take governance to where it matters the most.”



Deepak Kumar

Nawada, Bihar

BSc Honours in Biochemistry, Deshbandhu College. University of Delhi and Post Graduate Diploma in Rural Development, Xavier Institute of Social Service, Ranchi.

Deepak has worked for two years with Development Support Agency of Gujarat, Government of Gujarat. He worked on agricultural diversification projects, leverage of funds from different schemes, augmentation of irrigation facilities and enhancing the efficiency of water usage through micro irrigation. Deepak has worked on strategies to increase the incomes of farmers.

“PMRDF has provided me a unique opportunity to work in a variety of sectors such as education, livelihoods and institutional finance. It has provided me a platform to coordinate efforts of stakeholders including rural communities, civil society organizations and government departments.”



Aman Akash Bhardwaj

Rohtas, Bihar

BTech in Mining Engineering, Indian School of Mines, Dhanbad, Jharkhand.

Aman has worked as a senior officer in Coal India Limited. His work involved assisting in mining operations and the application of safety standards and proper operational procedures. His role was largely of a crisis manager, handling conflict on the worksite.

“In my first year as a PMRDF, I have played various roles as a researcher, motivator, analyst, observer, field surveyor, coordinator, feedback provider and honest critic.”



Mansi Kaushik

Rohtas, Bihar

BTech in Computer Science, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, New Delhi and Post Graduate Diploma in Rural Development Management, National Institute of Rural Development, Hyderabad.

Mansi has worked as a software engineer with Infosys and has also interned in the rural development sector.

“It is easy to sit outside and criticize the government. But it takes guts to join it and work for the country.”



Chintan Raj

West Champaran, Bihar

BE, Mumbai University, Mumbai

Prior to joining PMRD Fellowship, Chintan was the co-founder of a social enterprise 'GreenAdd' and a manager in enterprise risk and sustainability at Larsen and Toubro. He has also spent time as a fellow at the Foundation for Universal Responsibility of HH Dalai Lama, as a journalist at the Education Times and as a researcher at Green Peace. For achievements in embedding environmental and social risk management in core operations at L&T, he was invited as a speaker by the Project Management Institute. His social enterprise was incubated twice by UN Ltd. India. He is the recipient of the “International Award for Young People” for all round achievements during school and college.

“Simple innovative solutions can bring about positive change.”

Chhattisgarh



Shikha Singh participates in an immunization camp in Sukma district.



Rajeev Kumar

Balrampur, Chhattisgarh

BTech Honours in Electronics and Communication Engineering,
Meerut Institute of Engineering and Technology, Meerut, Uttar
Pradesh Technical University, Lucknow.

Rajeev has worked in various capacities as a lecturer, transmission
engineer and team lead. He has participated in several projects in
the telecom sector.

*“PMRDF has been a golden opportunity to work
with people and administrators together.”*



Dr. Harsha Vashishtha

Bastar, Chhattisgarh

Bachelor in Physiotherapy and Masters in Neuro Physiotherapy.

Harsha has worked with differently-abled children and the elderly.
She has also been a lecturer at Scope Physiotherapy College,
Raipur, and has participated in many national conferences and
seminars on applied ergonomics, manual therapy, spinal care,
cardiopulmonary physiotherapy and exercise science. Harsha has
her own physiotherapy clinic.

*“The Fellowship has provided me with a
platform to not only work with the disabled,
but also to work on other major issues in society.”*



Neeraja Kudrimoti

Bijapur, Chhattisgarh

BE in Computer Science, University of Pune, Pune.

Neeraja has two-and-a-half years experience in the IT sector. She has worked with a multinational company, where she was involved in producing detailed specifications, writing programme codes and product testing.

“As I started working with the district administration, I realized that technology can be useful to effectively monitor activities.”



Rahul Tiwrekar

Bijapur, Chhattisgarh

BLS LLB, Government Law College, Mumbai and MA in Globalization and Labour, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai and Berlin School of Economics and Law, Germany.

Rahul has worked with the Tata Institute of Social Sciences on a project involving the provision of legal aid for poor people seeking justice. He has also been a consultant with a field action project of the Nirmala Niketan College of Social Work, Mumbai which required his participation at the grassroots level.

“My close association with tribal communities and an understanding of their issues and perceptions turned out to be an asset during my time in Bastar as a PMRDF.”



Akash Badave

Dantewada, Chhattisgarh

BE in Electrical and Electronics Engineering, MSc in Biological Science, Birla Institute of Technology and Science, Pilani.

Akash has worked in internet banking at Barclays and LSI Corporation, which entailed work in the field of electronics. Akash has also completed a number of internships in the social sector, working on education and livelihoods issues.

“The Fellowship has provided a platform not only to suggest interventions but also to become involved in planning and implementation across different government departments and schemes.”



Shrish Anantprakash Kalyani

Dantewada, Chhattisgarh

Bachelors in Social Work, Matru Sewa Sangh Institute of Social Work, Nagpur and MA in Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai with specialization in Rural Development.

Shrish has two years' experience in the social sector. He worked as State Level Manager with the Gujarat Livelihoods Promotion Company Ltd. under the Rural Development Department of the Government of Gujarat. His focus was on issues of sustainable livelihoods through promotion of micro-enterprises, social mobilization, institution building, and skill development in the rural areas.

“There cannot be a ‘quick-fix’ and ‘one size fits all’ solution to the issue of underdevelopment in areas prone to socio-political unrest.”



Anurag Deep Pathak

Jashpur, Chhattisgarh

BTech from NIT Hamirpur.

Anurag has worked for a US-based MNC as a software engineer. He has participated in several projects and acquired skills related to leadership and management.

“I have learnt that change is a process rather than an outcome, and requires continuous and sustained effort.”



Pramod Kalekar

Kabirdham, Chhattisgarh

BA in Political Science, Wilson College, Mumbai and LLB, Government Law College, Mumbai; MA in Development Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

Pramod has first-hand experience in community mobilization and institution building for the economically marginalized. He has provided consulting services to various organizations on institutional and organization management, developing perspective plans and project proposals.

“The best way to deal with socio-economic marginalization is to invest in building capacities of the poor.”



Priyanka Yadav

Kanker, Chhattisgarh

BA Honours in Psychology and MA in Clinical Psychology,
University of Delhi.

Priyanka has worked in the field of education and public policy. She has lobbied with stakeholders (MPs and MLAs) on women's issues and tribal development in conflict affected areas of India. As a student volunteer Priyanka has also successfully conducted training workshops, provided field support and created a support network for psychologically disturbed people and their families.

“PMRDF opened new vistas of learning for me.”



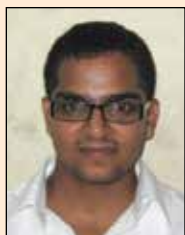
Dr Mayur Gupta

Kondagaon, Chhattisgarh

Bachelor in Occupational Therapy from the National Institute for the Orthopedically Handicapped, Kolkata and Masters in Public Health from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

Dr Gupta has worked as a Research Fellow at the School of Public Health, University of Minnesota, USA on a study titled “Health Assessment of Taconite Worker.” During his masters studies he conducted public health studies in rural, urban and industrial setups.

“The platform provided by PMRDF has given me the confidence to be a good administrator and not only work well, but also help people work better. My skills in public health and research have been upgraded and are now being used in different aspects of rural development.”



Lalit Pankaj

Koriya, Chhattisgarh

BTech in Computer Science & Engineering, Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati and Post Graduate Diploma in Forestry Management, Indian Institute of Forest Management, Bhopal.

Lalit has worked with Reliance Tech Services as a system developer. He handled training and supervisory responsibilities during his two year stint.

“Working with Self Help Groups (SHGs) taught me that the foundation of all good work is trust.”



Akshay Kapur

Narayanpur, Chhattisgarh

BE in Electronics and Communication.

Akshay is an electronics and telecommunication engineer with three years of work experience spanning information technology, market research and sustainable development. He began his career with Infosys and then moved to Grail Research, where he worked for a year, after which he was awarded the State Bank of India Youth for India Fellowship.

“PMRDF has provided me with the opportunity to work on a range of activities such as planning resources, developing business plans, building ponds, skill development trainings, setting up new government departments and looking after complex government schemes.”



Yatin RS Diwakar

Narayanpur, Chhattisgarh

MSc in Biotechnology, University of Pune and M Tech in Technology and Development, Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay.

“After having gained this experience with a government mechanism, I believe I can make a decent administrator.”



Dr Preshit Nemdas Ambade

Rajnandgaon, Chhattisgarh

Bachelors in Ayurveda Medicine and Surgery, Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj Shikshan Sanstha Ayurved Mahavidyalaya, Aurangabad and MA in Health Administration, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

“The PMRD Fellowship is an excellent opportunity to connect health with rural development and livelihood opportunities.”



Dr Satish Chandrabhan Tajne

Surguja, Chhattisgarh

Bachelor in Ayurvedic Medicine and Surgery from Maharashtra University of Health Sciences, Nashik and MA in Health Administration, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

Dr Satish has worked as Medical Officer in the field of health insurance, where he was responsible for the analysis and evaluation of reimbursement claims and providing insurance benefits to genuine beneficiaries.

“Working as a PMRDF has been an enriching experience for me and strengthened my belief that any change can occur if you have a will to do so.”



Dr Ajitendra Kumar

Sukma, Chhattisgarh

Bachelor in Homoeopathic Medicine and Surgery from Dr BR Sur Homoeopathic Medical College, Hospital and Research Institute, New Delhi and MA in Health Administration from Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

Dr Ajitendra has worked as a medical practitioner and has been involved in organizing health camps and imparting training. He has worked in tribal areas to understand the problems of health care delivery at the grassroots level.

“The best feature of this Fellowship is that it provides you with a platform where you can intervene at many levels, and in different sectors, simultaneously.”



Shikha Singh

Sukma, Chhattisgarh

BSc from Navyug Degree College and MBA, Lucknow University, Lucknow.

Shikha has spent two years as a development professional working with the Gond community in Madhya Pradesh. She was engaged in activities related to the promotion of livelihoods and attitudinal change.

“It is a joy working with tribal communities and I learn a lot from them about life.”



Anshuman Gupta

Surajpur, Chhattisgarh

BE in Electronics and Communication, Manipal Institute of Technology, Manipal, Karnataka and Post Graduate Diploma in Rural Management, Institute of Rural Management, Anand, Gujarat.

Anshuman has worked with the ICICI Foundation for Inclusive Growth in the tribal district of Baran, Rajasthan. He worked with the primary education department at the district and block level to improve the quality of education in government primary schools and to develop some schools as institutions compliant with the Right to Education Act. He has also researched on the economic and environmental benefits of micro-irrigation techniques in agriculture.

“I have learnt that even a minor improvement in the income levels of a poor village household is a huge contribution.”



Fellows, Vartika Singh and Shailja Tigga join Ms Aradhana Patnaik, District Collector of Latehar on a field visit.



Amit Kumar Valmiki

Bokaro, Jharkhand

Bachelor in Business Management from Birla Institute of Management Mesra, Ranchi and Post Graduate in Rural Development, Xavier Institute of Social Science, Ranchi.

As a programme associate with Church's Auxiliary for Social Action, Amit has worked on Dalit rights, Right to Food and management of disasters. He has been involved in planning, implementation, support services and monitoring of programmes. Amit has worked on livelihood issues in Bihar as a manager of monitoring and evaluation with Jeevika, Bihar Rural Livelihood Promotion Society.

“This Fellowship provides a platform to understand rural issues in a holistic manner.”



Neelanjali Kumar

Bokaro, Jharkhand

BE in Electronics and Engineering, BDT College of Engineering, Kuvempu University, Davangere, Karnataka and MBA in Oil & Gas, University of Petroleum & Energy Studies, Dehradun.

Neelanjali has worked with Reliance Retail, where her work entailed studying the buying behaviour of customers in retail. She has also worked with the Government of Jharkhand on the implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act at the block level, focussing on social auditing, fund management, monitoring and evaluation of schemes, capacity building, training and creating awareness.

“PMRDF is helping me expand my horizons.”



Rajeev Kumar Ranjan

East Singhbhum, Jharkhand

MTech in Agricultural Engineering, Post Harvest Technology from Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur.

Rajeev has been involved in the monitoring, evaluation, documentation and implementation of natural resource management-based watershed development programmes in more than 300 villages of Jharkhand. He has also been actively engaged in promoting livelihood options for poor communities. He has been part of the Jharkhand Tribal Development Programme.

“PMRDF provided me with a platform to nurture my dream of enhancing the prospects of livelihoods for poor rural people.”



Tariq Rasool Wani

East Singhbhum, Jharkhand

BA in Liberal Arts, Amar Singh College, Srinagar; Post Graduate Diploma in NGO Management, Amity University, Noida and MA in Globalization and Labour, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

Tariq has over five years experience in the corporate and social sectors. He has worked with a range of organizations such as Dell Financial Services, American Express Banking Corporation, Dubai Islamic Bank, Save the Children India and Child Rights and You.

“I have learnt a great deal as a PMRDF, which will help me in my onward journey as a development practitioner.”



Santosh Kumar

Garhwa, Jharkhand

BA in Public Administration, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi and MA in Public Administration, Magadh University, Bodhgaya.

Santosh has worked with the village development committee at the panchayat level, where he focussed on building awareness and capacity building for local youth to increase livelihood opportunities. He also worked to promote girls' education and empowerment of women at the panchayat level, and collaborated with various government and non-government organizations.

“My vision of development is to bring people's aspirations closer to government initiatives.”



Shraddha Pandey

Garhwa, Jharkhand

BA and LLB (Honours), University of Lucknow, Lucknow.

Shraddha has held a number of consultancies during the last five years. She has worked as a legal consultant with the High Court and the Supreme Court of India. She has also been a documentary film consultant as well as a policy consultant.

“I want to work in the development and legal sector to strengthen and improve development and criminal justice systems.”



Jechonia Islary

Girdih, Jharkhand

BA in Economics, Gauhati University, Guwahati and MA in Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

Jechonia has worked in the NGO sector in policy and planning roles for one year. For two years he worked with the National Rural Health Mission in Assam as District Community Mobilizer.

“Health is not just a bio-medical phenomenon, it is influenced by a host of social, cultural, political, economic, geographical and psychological factors.”



V Sai Vamsi Vardhan

Giridih, Jharkhand

BTech in Information Technology.

V Sai has worked with Tata Consultancy Services as a software developer. He is also an RTI activist, who has filed many applications with regard to the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. He has participated in an online certification course on RTI conducted by the Department of Personnel and Training.

“Thanks to the Fellowship, I have been able to learn Hindi.”



Rajeev Ranjan

Gumla, Jharkhand

Bachelor in Computer Applications, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi and Post Graduate Diploma in Rural Development, Xavier Institute of Social Service, Ranchi.

Rajeev's work has involved participation in community-based natural resource management projects and studies related to the local impact of climate change on Jharkhand. He has also presented his findings at national and international conferences and published journal articles.

“The experience of working at multiple levels - village, block and district - has helped me grow as a professional and acquire the skills to work on bigger projects.”



Srikant Purwar

Gumla, Jharkhand

BSc in Mathematics, Chhatrapati Shahu Ji Maharaj University, Kanpur; MBA in Rural Development, Govind Ballabh Pant Social Science Institute, University of Allahabad, and Advanced Post Graduate Certificate Course in Corporate Social Responsibility from Corporate Value Management and Research Institute, New Delhi.

Srikant has worked as a marketing and project coordinator at an NGO based in Rae Bareilly. He was involved in promoting SHGs and their links with banks, developing supply chains, promoting income generation activities in SHGs as well as periodic field surveys and data analysis.

“This was an opportunity to learn the functioning of administration, understand the programme implementation process, identify critical gaps and suggest solutions to ensure schemes reach the last person.”



Mohd. Karimuddin Malik

Hazaribag, Jharkhand

BA in Mass Communication and Social Work and MA in Social Engineering, Lucknow University, Lucknow.

Karimuddin has undertaken policy research related to the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and participated in 137 social audits in Pratapgarh District with the Government of Uttar Pradesh and Action Aid. He has also provided training to panchayat officials and the general public regarding how to conduct a social audit under MGNREGA.

“I wanted to see myself as more passionate and responsible towards society.”



Vinod Chandrwal

Hazaribag, Jharkhand

Bachelors in Life Science, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur; MBA in Human Resources, Faculty of Management Studies, Udaipur; Post Graduate Diploma in Rural Development, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi; Post Graduate Diploma in Labour Law, Vardahaman Mahaveer Open University, Kota.

Vinod has worked with the Ministry of Panchayati Raj and Ministry of Rural Development, Government of Rajasthan as a Programme Officer. Vinod was involved in work related to the MGNREGA such as project management, planning and public relations.

“When I found out about PMRDF, I felt somebody had designed the job of my dream.”



Belmati Jonko

Khunti, Jharkhand

BSc in Biotechnology, Boston College for Professional Studies, Gwalior and MBA in Rural Management, Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology University, Bhubaneswar.

Belmati has a year's experience in the areas of livelihood management, agribusiness and agri-input marketing.

“The fellowship provided me with the space to enhance the understanding of development among the people.”



Shila Matang

Khunti, Jharkhand

BA Honours in History, MA Social Work.

Shila has worked extensively on issues of public health during her two-and-a-half years of work experience. She has worked with the Gujarat State Government AIDS Control Society as well as on issues of women's reproductive health and public health issues in urban slums, in Rajasthan. Her stint in Jharkhand involved work on adolescent health issues.

“The key determinant of holistic and sustainable development is community ownership in planning and implementation of programmes.”



Ashwin Prasad

Koderma, Jharkhand

Bachelors of Commerce, Ranchi University, Ranchi and Post Graduate Diploma in Rural Development Management, National Institute of Rural Development, Hyderabad.

Ashwin was employed with IL&FS Cluster Development Initiative Limited, where he was the Jharkhand State Coordinator for the placement-linked skill development initiatives of the company. He has also been involved in social mobilization, coordination, and forging strategic partnerships with government agencies, industries and social organizations. He has participated in skill gap assessment studies for the Ministry of Science and Technology and the Government of Jharkhand.

“The journey has only started and there is still much work to be done.”



Vivekanand Gautam

Rural Development Department, Ranchi, Jharkhand

B Tech in Computer Science and Engineering, Dr BR Ambedkar College of Agricultural Engineering and Technology, Etawah, and Diploma in Information Technology from Government Polytechnic, Lucknow.

Vivekanand has two years of experience in the telecom industry. He has worked as an advertiser and also as a survey engineer.

“The PMRDF gave me an opportunity to see and understand the problems at grassroots level in rural areas.”



Shailja Tigga

Latehar, Jharkhand

BA Honours in Economics, St. Xavier's College, Ranchi and Post Graduate Diploma in Rural Development, Xavier Institute of Social Service, Ranchi.

Shailja has three years work experience in rural development. She has been involved in project planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation of ongoing flagship schemes, data analysis and organizing training and capacity building for SHGs. She also initiated a residential education project for children from primitive tribal groups, organized a Gram Shree Mela in collaboration with CAPART and TATA Steel, Jamshedpur, and initiated a residential skill development training programme for unemployed youths in East Singhbhum.

“My engagement with different social groups has sharpened my ability to understand and react to socio-political dynamics.”



Jayanti Kujur

Lohardaga, Jharkhand

B.Com Honours in Accounts, St Xavier's College, Ranchi and Post Graduate Diploma in Rural Development, Xavier Institute of Social Service, Ranchi.

Jayanti has worked for three years on issues related to natural resource management, strengthening village institutions, sustainable livelihoods and women empowerment. During the course of her fieldwork, she conducted studies of three villages, and trained rural volunteers.

“My main reason for applying for the Fellowship was to work for primitive tribal groups within government.”



Shradha Bhagat

Lohardaga, Jharkhand

BA Honours in Political Science, St Xavier's College, Ranchi and Post Graduate Diploma in Rural Development, Xavier Institute of Social Service, Ranchi.

Shradha has been engaged in community mobilization, planning, implementation, monitoring, documentation, micro level planning and training. Her work is related to issues of declining sex ratio, gender discrimination, education and child labour.

“As a tribal girl, my first responsibility is to work for the development of my people.”



Sumit Kumar

West Singhbhum, Jharkhand

BE in Electronic and Telecommunication Engineering, CV Raman College of Engineering, Bhubaneswar and MA in Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

Sumit began his career in the corporate sector, working for the JSW Foundation, where he looked after environmental initiatives of the organization in water conservation, waste management and clean development mechanism projects. He also liaised with government bodies and NGOs to improve the implementation of projects.

“Working in the corporate sector did not give me satisfaction as I was not directly involved in the implementation of programmes at the grassroots level.”



Arvind Lakra

Palamu, Jharkhand

BA from Calcutta University, Kolkata and Post Graduate Diploma in Rural Development, Xavier Institute of Social Service, Ranchi.

Arvind's experience has been in the field of financial inclusion. His job involved planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and documentation in four blocks in a district of Gujarat. He has also looked after education and livelihood projects.

“ I realized that the government has greatly helped the rural poor and strengthened their economic status through different programmes and schemes. However proper monitoring and evaluation are urgently needed. ”



Sweta Trayambak

Ramgarh, Jharkhand

Bachelor in Business Administration, Birla Institute of Technology, Mesra, Ranchi and MBA, Xavier Institute of Social Service, Ranchi and Post Graduate in Entrepreneurship Management, Xavier Labor Relations Institute, Jamshedpur, Jamshedpur.

Sweta has worked with CAPART and the Tribal Cultural Society, Jamshedpur. Her work has been in the field of livelihood, women's empowerment, employment and education.

“ I saw a ray of hope when large numbers of women turned out for the social audit and raised their voices for their rights. ”



Vaibhav Maheshwari

Ramgarh, Jharkhand

BSc and MBA, Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya, Indore.

Vaibhav has worked for a year in event management. As a project manager, his job involved coordination and travelling, which exposed him to a range of cultures, societies and systems.

“ Understanding the way in which any system works is absolutely essential to make meaningful and effective interventions. ”



Akshay Kashyap

Chief Secretary's Office, Ranchi, Jharkhand

BSc Honours in Information Technology, Institute of Advanced Studies in Education, Sardarshahr, Rajasthan and MA in Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

Akshay has worked with BASIX Consulting and Training Services on various projects to provide strategic advisory services at institutional and sector levels and support product development for institutions.

“ I am now more aware of the various challenges confronting the government in poverty alleviation. ”



Dipti Paridhi Kindo

Ranchi Rural, Jharkhand

BSc Honours in Computer Application, Ranchi University, Ranchi and Post Graduate Diploma in Rural Development, Xavier Institute of Social Service, Ranchi, MA in Public Administration from School of Social Sciences, New Delhi.

Dipti has completed an internship with CGPL, A Tata Power Company in Kutch, Gujarat. She has worked in Gujarat as a Cluster Coordinator for strengthening self-governance panchayati raj institutions, health, livelihoods, education and NRM. Dipti has worked in Jharkhand as a State Facilitator promoting livelihood opportunities for poor, rural women..

“I became a PMRDF to work as a facilitator towards the empowerment of the deprived so that they can shape their own destiny.”



Nilanjana Moitra

Ranchi Rural, Jharkhand

BA and MA in Social Work, Viswa-Bharati University, Santiniketan.

Nilanjana has worked as an enterprise development trainer and Monitoring, Evaluation cum Documentation Officer in Jharkhand. She has trained and hand-held poor rural women on livelihood generation and also conducted enterprise building training and enterprise development training for women entrepreneurs. Additionally, she has designed digital curriculum on functional literacy.

“PMRDF happened out of curiosity to explore what it would be like to work with the government, with power and authority, and most importantly with access to resources to do good for the people.”



Nitin Shukla

Saraikela Kharsawan, Jharkhand

BE in Telecommunications Engineering, Visvesvaraya Technological University, Belgaum.

Nitin has worked as an independent entrepreneur for a year, trying to address issues of information access in rural areas. He has also worked in the telecom sector.

“The Fellowship has allowed me to work with a variety of schemes such as IAP, MGNREGA and UID in a short span of time.”



Shashi K. Verma

Rural Development Department, Ranchi, Jharkhand

B.E. in Engineering, AVIT Vinayaka Missions University, Chennai.

Shashi has worked with leading information technology firms on data management and data centre technologies. He has expertise on many cutting edge technologies like IBM AIX, Cloud and Grid Computing.

“I was forced to think beyond technology for the people and their felt needs and concerns.”



Ramashis Rajak

West Singhbhum, Jharkhand

BA Honours in Economics, Jamshedpur Cooperative College, Ranchi University, Ranchi and MA in Social Work, Delhi School of Social Work, New Delhi.

Ramashis was an assistant manager in a co-operative project initiated by the National Dairy Development Board. His task was to create livelihood opportunities through animal husbandry, form Self-Help Groups (SHGs) at village level, procure milk directly from farmers and reduce the effect of middleman on milk pricing at the village level, as well as providing them with forward linkages. He has worked for five years at the grassroots in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.

“PMRDF has given me an opportunity to promote livelihoods for youth through skill training and placements.”

Madhya Pradesh



Katha Kartiki at a training of district officials in Balaghat district.



Neeraj Ahuja

Anuppur, Madhya Pradesh

BE in Electronics and Communication.

Neeraj has worked as a systems engineer with Infosys, following which he joined the ICICI Fellows programme and worked with Samarthan - Centre for Development Support on issues of Panchayati Raj and local self-governance in the Panna district of Madhya Pradesh.

“I have come to appreciate the way systems work at the district level, despite bottlenecks.”



Arti Mishra

Balaghat, Madhya Pradesh

Bachelor in Physiotherapy, Barkatullah University, Bhopal and MBA in Rural Management, Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology School of Rural Management, Bhubaneswar.

Arti has worked in the field of tribal education. She has been a project consultant for public private partnership enterprises and organized career counseling for students. She has also been involved in short term projects tracking of progress of students who have passed Class X, and coordinated with organizations to set up mathematics laboratories at schools.

“The prospect of mutual learning and facilitating development in areas which are in dire need of development attracted me to this Fellowship.”



Katha Kartiki

Balaghat, Madhya Pradesh

BA Honours in English Literature, Lady Shri Ram College, New Delhi and MA in Development Studies, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex.

A Commonwealth scholar, Katha has worked for three years in the field of international development, climate change negotiations and rural development.

“Working at the district level has been like stepping through the looking glass and discovering a version of reality I always suspected existed but never dared to confront.”



Vikramjeet Sharma

Chhindwara, Madhya Pradesh

BE in Computer Science and Engineering, Panjab University, Chandigarh and Masters in Liberal Arts and Sciences (Young India Fellowship, University of Pennsylvania & IFRE).

As a consultant, Vikram has worked with clients like McAfee, Microsoft and EMC2 in the technology consulting domain for almost two years. Being a part of the core team of a social sector start-up he conceptualised and implemented issue-based online polls to engage young people of India and to capture ‘attitudinal’ data on sensitive issues like poverty, rural development, corruption, gender discrimination and foreign policy. As an international delegate he has been associated with global forums like Starting Bloc (Boston 11), Oxford (YBD) and Clinton Global Initiative (St. Louis12) to share his ideas on social entrepreneurship, governance and youth empowerment.

“The Fellowship has been an invaluable opportunity for me to understand the microcosm of development and governance.”



Rohit Joshi

Singrauli, Madhya Pradesh

Bachelors in Commerce, Kumaun University, Nainital and Post Graduate Diploma in Rural Management, National Institute of Rural Development, Hyderabad.

Rohit has close to three years work experience in research and development. He has worked on capacity building, livelihood and skill development, as well as research work on the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, cash transfers and the Public Distribution System.

“During my time as a PMRDE, there have been a few disappointments but also several moments of joy.”



Sourav Datta

Dindori, Madhya Pradesh

BSc in Electronics, Government Model Science College, Jabalpur and MA in Social Work from Rani Durgawati Vishwavidyalaya, Jabalpur.

Sourav has worked with the National Sample Survey Organization as a field investigator. He was also associated with Development and Research Services Private Limited, as a field supervisor and investigator. This involved helping conduct the Annual Health Survey under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

“This programme gave me a window through which I could work in the rural development sector.”



Neha Gupta

Mandla, Madhya Pradesh

BTech in Agricultural Engineering, College of Agricultural Engineering, Jabalpur.

Neha's experience of six years includes the promotion of women's Self-Help Groups, as well as planning and supporting the execution of planned livelihood interventions through capacity building. She has worked with PRADAN. Additionally, she has been conducting gender sensitization workshops in communities.

“I felt the need for involvement with other important stakeholders in development, such as the government.”



Dr Sushma Taywade

Mandla, Madhya Pradesh

Bachelors in Ayurvedic Medicine & Surgery, Pandit Khushilal Sharma Government Ayurvedic Medical College & Institute, Bhopal; Masters in Hospital and Healthcare Administration, Institute of Management Studies, Devi Ahilya University, Indore; Post Graduate Diploma in Rural Development.

Dr Taywade has worked as a resident medical officer at Bafna Hospital and Orthopaedic Research Centre in Indore. She has also worked with NRHM, Government of Maharashtra as a healthcare quality consultant.

“The PMRDF programme has provided me a great platform to contribute in a better way, towards the vision of a healthy, rural India.”



Rekha Singh

Seoni, Madhya Pradesh

BE in Information Technology, Rajiv Gandhi Proudhyogiki Vishwavidyalaya, Bhopal.

Rekha has worked as a software test engineer in Chennai. She has also worked in health, finance and hotel management.

“Working with the administration gave me an opportunity to implement my development ideas in the field.”



Swasti Pachauri

Seoni, Madha Pradesh

MA Development Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai; BA. Hons. Economics, Hindu College University of Delhi; Certificate Programme in Participatory Monitoring & Evaluations.

A Gold Medalist in Economics, Swasti has over five years' experience in government, civil society and consulting organizations in India. She exercises a stronghold over programme management at the grassroots, strategy consulting and community investment measurements. Her pioneering efforts in the area of Social Returns on Investments won her the KPMG Encore Award in 2011. Her work interests and experiences include dualism in labour markets, agrarian crisis/ crop economics, welfare economics and grant management.

“The rural poor are the best entrepreneurs.”



Rajesh Singh

Shahdol, Madhya Pradesh

BSc in Biotechnology, Christ College and MBA in Health and Hospital Management, International Institute of Health Management Research, Delhi.

Rajesh has worked with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare on an AIDS Control Project. He has also been involved in the establishment of smart card systems for HIV patients. His responsibilities included liaising with international organizations such as WHO and UNDP.

“Being a management professional I was curious about how the government, with its different levels of hierarchy, manages its myriad schemes at the ground level.”



Rejani Pavithran

Shahdol, Madhya Pradesh

BA in Mass Communication, Mar Ivanios College, Trivandrum and MA in Social Work, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Coimbatore.

Rejani has worked for two years with non-profit organizations in the area of rural development. She has been involved in the designing of livelihood development plans in the Andaman Islands. She has also worked on migrant workers' welfare and rights projects and promoted public participation in governance through organizing citizen government meets and establishing socio-legal kiosks in remote Himalayan villages.

“Interaction with villagers and officers gave me food for thought and kept me grounded and humble.”



Chirag Kumar Solanki

Sidhi, Madhya Pradesh

BE in Electronics, Sardar Patel University, Vallabh Vidyanagar and ME in Telecommunication, University of South Australia, Adelaide.

Chirag has worked for a year as a trainee electrical engineer, during which he dealt with issues relating to circuits, transformers and transmission lines.

“PMRDF proved to be an ambitious and revolutionary leap for me.”



Bhagwat Ahirwar

Umaria, Madhya Pradesh

BTech in Dairy Technology, Maharashtra Animal & Fishery Sciences University, Nagpur and Post Graduate Diploma in Forest Management, Indian Institute of Forest Management, Bhopal.

Bhagwat has worked for nearly two years in the dairy industry, as a technical officer at Valsad District Cooperative Dairy Federation. His responsibilities included coordination, quality control and manpower management.

“I joined PMRDF because it offered me the opportunity to work at the grassroots level with various stakeholders to understand the complexity of rural development.”



Kumar Manish

Umaria, Madhya Pradesh

BA in Business Administration, Indraprastha University, New Delhi, Post Graduate Diploma in Business Administration (Human Resources), Symbiosis Centre for Distance Learning, Pune and Masters in Social Work from Delhi University, Delhi.

Kumar has experience in sales, marketing and promotion. He has handled BlackBerry operations as well as processes at a Wipro BPO. Kumar Manish has been involved in training, organizing events and process presentations. He also has field experience with the Self Employed Women's Association in Delhi. Kumar has been awarded Kunda Datar Gold Medal and Karve Memorial Award.

“This experience has made me more humble and humane, and I think this is my greatest piece of learning from PMRDF.”



Mahesh Raut participates in a village meeting in Gadchiroli district.



Priya Tayde

Gadchiroli, Maharashtra

BA in Political Science, University of Pune, Pune and MA in Development Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

Priya has held work profiles which required her to observe governance practices in different economic contexts. She has been involved in advocacy, research, campaigning and drafting of policy.

“The PMRDF has helped me to grow as an individual and to become a better citizen.”



Santosh Vishwanath Gedam

Gadchiroli, Maharashtra

BTech, Laxminarayan Institute of Technology, Nagpur and Post Graduate Diploma in Management, Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore.

Santosh has worked in the oil and gas sector for eight years. He spent seven years with the Mumbai refinery of Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited, during which he led a team of 15 technicians and came up with a range of innovations. Later, as an assistant manager in retail, Santosh forged relationships with local communities through corporate social responsibility initiatives.

“I understood the social, economic, cultural and political landscape of rural areas through interactions with farmers, village level government employees, educated young people and women who were in SHGs.”



Dr Vijaykumar Madhukar Tate

Gondia, Maharashtra

Bachelor in Ayurveda, Medicine and Surgery, Sion Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya and MA in Public Health, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

“The Fellowship has enabled me to look at things differently, encouraging me to think beyond what I usually perceive.”



Mahesh Raut

Gadchiroli, Maharashtra

BA in Political Science, History and English Literature, Yashwantrao Chouvan Open University, Nashik and MA in Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

Mahesh has over two years work experience as a primary school teacher in Maharashtra and Goa. He has also worked in the research and survey departments of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare as a project executive with New Concept Information System in Delhi. Mahesh worked with VIKALP Nagpur in the zilla parishad of Gadchiroli where he collected data for the vision document for the Backward Region Grant Fund district.

“Over the last year, I have become a more responsible citizen, aiming to work towards creating a more responsible society.”

Odisha



Prabeena Kumar Bebarta on a village tour in Gajapati district.



Rajkumar Gupta

Balangir, Odisha

BA Honours in Geography, Gangadhar Meher (Autonomous College), Sambalpur, Post Graduate Diploma in Development Management from Tata Dhan Academy, Madurai and MA in Sociology, University of Madras, Chennai.

Rajkumar has worked in the development sector for one-and-a-half years in microfinance and livelihood promotion, and has been involved in the marketing of non-timber forest products and tea.

“I was convinced that MGNREGA could be used as an effective tool to check migration.”



Swapna Sucharita

Balangir, Odisha

BA in Psychology, Buxi Jagabandhu Bidyadhar Autonomous College, Bhubaneswar and MA in Clinical Psychology, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar.

Swapna has worked with Apollo Gleneagles Hospital for two-and-a-half years and has been involved in the neuropsychological assessment of patients. She has also been actively engaged in research work in the hospital's cognitive neurology unit involving patients with Alzheimer's diseases, semantic dementia and vascular dementia.

“PMRDF is an excellent opportunity for committed young people to be among the rural masses and contribute to enhancing the development and welfare of rural and tribal areas of the nation.”



Gangadhar Puala

Balangir, Odisha

BA in Political Science, Raygada University; MA in Social Work and MPhil, Pondicherry University, Puducherry.

Gangadhar has worked in the areas of livelihood and health for a year. He was involved in the preparation of yearly livelihood plans for the rural poor in Raygada district, Odisha. He has also worked to spread awareness on health issues.

“I applied for the PMRDF because I felt it would give me independence to work and help the rural poor.”



Aliva Das

Deogarh, Odisha

BTech in Electronics and Communication Engineering.

“The Fellowship has helped me rediscover myself and understand my potential and provided me the scope to figure out where I would like to work.”



Prabeena Kumar Bebart

Gajapati, Odisha

BA in Economics from Buxi Jagabandhu Bidyadhar Autonomous College, Bhubaneswar and MA in Social Work (Disability Studies and Action), Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

Prabeena has two years of work experience related to disability. He has undertaken a series of research projects on issues such as needs assessment of persons with disability in rural and tribal areas of Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh and Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives in the disability sector.

“ I believe working closely with people and the government is certainly going to help me understand reality and build perspectives which will be useful in my doctoral studies and academic career. ”



Prakash Kumar Sahoo

Gajapati

BCom Honours in Accounting, Pranath Autonomous College, Khurda and Post Graduate Diploma in Management, The Human Development Foundation School of Management, Cuttack.

Prakash has worked as a Gandhi Fellow with the Piramal Foundation in Churu district, Rajasthan. As a fellow, he worked as a facilitator to bring positive change in five government schools.

“ PMRDF gave me a ringside view of the complex mechanics of the Indian governance system. ”



Palani Phani Kiran

Ganjam, Odisha

BE Honours in Electrical and Electronics Engineering, Birla Institute of Technology and Science Pilani, KK Birla Goa Campus.

Palani has worked as a sales engineer with Rockwell Automation in Kolkata looking after the areas of Tripura, Meghalaya and Bhutan.

“I am contributing in a small way to bringing about technological innovations in the process of monitoring, evaluation and planning government works.”



Alok Kumar Biswal

Jajpur, Odisha

BA, Sambalpur University, Burla and MA in Rural Management, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar.

Alok has worked in the areas of entrepreneurship development, livelihood development, disaster management, tribal development, public health, tribal education and natural resource management.

“PMRDF is an excellent platform to learn about government mechanisms to address local problems. We are able to provide our own professional inputs and experiences to support the district administration.”



Anil Sharma

Kalahandi, Odisha

BA, Buxi Jagabandhu Bidyadhar Autonomous College, Bhubaneswar and MA, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

Anil has worked with the Tribal Development Department, Government of Gujarat to promote and strengthen the livelihoods of tribals in Northern Gujarat.

“In the course of this Fellowship, I have realized that even a small intervention which we often trivialize or ignore can create an unimaginable impact on the life of another.”



Nivedita Mohanty

Kandhamal, Odisha

BE in Electrical Engineering, Orissa Engineering College, Bhubaneswar and Post Graduate Diploma in Rural Development Management, National Institute of Rural Development, Hyderabad.

Nivedita has worked as a Training Manager in a UN Women - National Institute of Rural Development project on ‘Promoting Women’s Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia’. As a trainer, she has conducted workshops on gender issues such as human trafficking, gender friendly tools and gender budgeting. She has also undertaken research studies on elected women representatives.

“The village stay provided me with an excellent platform for involvement with the tribals and helped me understand various issues of poverty faced by them.”



Saumya Ranjan Nath

Kandhamal, Odisha

BA Honours in English Literature, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar and MA in Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

Saumya has worked as a consultant at the Development Support Agency of Gujarat, Tribal Development Department, Government of Gujarat. His areas of work included minor and micro irrigation for rainfed-based agricultural livelihoods, placement linked skilled development programmes, dairy based livelihoods and quality residential tribal education programmes.

“I believe, understanding and acknowledging the ownership and rights of the people is crucial in the process of development.”



Chandrasekhar Bhuyan

Keonjhar, Odisha

BSc, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar and MBA in Information Technology Management, Indira Gandhi National Open University.

Chandrasekhar spent over four years with Infosys in various roles involving project execution, management and risk mitigation. He is also a Teach for India fellow. During his fellowship, he taught at a school for children from low income families and worked on teacher training programmes.

“A combined and concurrent effort from all stakeholders can create a vibrant rural India.”



Pandaba Charan Munda

Keonjhar, Odisha

BTech in Agricultural Engineering, Orissa University of Agriculture and Technology, Bhubaneswar and MBA in Agribusiness Management, National Institute of Agriculture Extension Management, Hyderabad.

Pandaba has worked with the Union Bank of India, where he was engaged in credit appraisal, underwriting, sales and marketing. He has also been associated with Spandana Sphoorty Finance Limited, where he helped to form Self-Help Groups and looked after credit appraisal, sanction and disbursement of agriculture, tractor, farm and dairy loans.

“I see myself as a development agent who helps the poor common man get his due.”



Kuldip Gyaneswar

Koraput, Odisha

MA in Development Administration, Gandhigram Rural University, Gandhigram.

Kuldip has worked at the Public Affairs Centre, Bangalore where his major areas of work were policy research and analysis, knowledge development and management, and partnership management. While working on a project on environmental governance, he contributed to the development of an accountability tool called the Climate Change Score Card, which supports citizen monitoring of the impact of climate change on the livelihoods of coastal communities in Tamil Nadu. He also helped form a People's Coalition for Green Tamil Nadu a citizen-led pressure group, to ensure the inclusion of an environmental agenda in the manifestos of political parties during the State Assembly elections of 2011.

“Transparent, accountable governance which value dignity and respect for tribals can win the trust of the people in areas like Koraput, which are affected by Left wing extremism.”



Soumyashree Omprakash Sahoo

Koraput, Odisha

BSc in Botany, Nayagarh Autonomous College, Nayagarh and MBA in Marketing, Bhubaneswar Institute of Management and Information Technology, Bhubaneswar.

Soumyashree has worked with Ripplesoft Private Limited, an information technology company in Bhubaneswar. He was also part of a one-year rural development fellowship programme called State Bank of India Youth for India, during which he worked with a group of small, marginalized vegetable growers and formed a farmer's club and producer organization, which helped them enhance productivity as well as income with backward and forward linkages.

“I am enjoying my stay at Koraput with the possibilities it offers, revealing a new India every 10 kilometres, in the splendid diversity of its people and cultures.”



Anup Kumar Giri

Malkangiri, Odisha

BA in Sociology, North Odisha University, Baripada and MA in Social Work, Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya, Indore.

Anup has worked with Sewa Mandir, an Udaipur-based NGO. He was responsible for planning, budgeting and implementation and monitored education programmes related to youth development, girls' literacy initiatives and non-formal education.

“This Fellowship has been a great learning experience.”



Bibhuti Bhusan Nayak

Malkangiri, Odisha

BA in Sociology, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar and MA in Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

Bibhuti has worked in the areas of health, livelihood and education, He has dealt with issues of mental health, tribal children's education, and made efforts to create alternative livelihoods such as Self-Help Groups. His tasks included programme management, coordination, monitoring, evaluation and strengthening civil society initiatives.

“I learnt about village culture and traditions and the customs, lifestyle and politics of different people.”



Name: Dr Kumar Shubhashish

Mayurbhanj, Odisha

BSc in Botany, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar and MSc in Botany and PhD in Botany (Ecotoxicology), Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi.

Dr Kumar has been an education practitioner for six years. He has taught and conducted research at the Department of Botany, Banaras Hindu University, and attended 25 international and national conferences, besides writing 13 research papers for various journals. He has also written articles on environmental issues for various newspapers.

“I believe that without the development of villages, India cannot dream of becoming a developed country.”



Nirlipta Mohanty

Mayurbhanj, Odisha

Bachelor and Masters in Computer Application.

Nirlipta has worked with IBM India as a software engineer and with ICICI Bank as a branch operation manager. Her tasks included software development, ensuring operations and risk control at branches in line with operation manuals and e-circulars, daily monitoring of inflow and outflow reports and verification of inventory items. She was also a part of the Corporate Social Responsibility team.

“Rural development is a process of improving the quality of life and economic well-being of people living in relatively isolated and sparsely populated areas.”



Rashmi Ranjan Rout

Mayurbhanj, Odisha

B Tech(ETC), B.P.U.T, Odisha.

As faculty associated with Aptech Private Limited, Rashmi has been engaged with youth on transforming knowledge through the IT world. He has also been associated with Mahindra Satyam as a Software Developer and Product Manager. His tasks were to assign and co-ordinate the activities of various teams and individuals, for monitoring and ensuring smooth execution of projects.

“I have always dreamt of doing something prolific for deprived groups of people that present and future generations will remember forever and I believe as a PMRDF, I will be able to do so.”



Anuranjan Minz

Nabarangpur, Odisha

BA in Social Work, National Institute of Social Works and Social Sciences, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar and MA in Social Work, Indore School of Social Work, Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya, Indore.

Anuranjan has worked in the education sector. His work involved promoting a better quality life for children by increasing access to quality and relevant education through community ownership and services. His tasks included development of livelihood and life skills for school children and adolescents.

“Working as a PMRDF is a great opportunity to understand government mechanisms and implement innovative ideas in the development sector.”



Devi Archana Ashe

Nabarangpur, Odisha

BA Honours in Psychology, Kuntala Kumari Sabat Women's College, Balasore and Masters in Population Studies, Fakir Mohan University, Balasore.

Devi has five years experience in livelihoods and health. This included strengthening of Self-Help Groups, building capacities of groups to leverage loans from banks and initiating livelihood activities with tribal families. She also participated in the training of community health facilitators.

“A great challenge remains in reaching out to as many families as I can, to change their quality of life.”



Minakshee Sandha

Nayagarh, Odisha

BTech in Civil Engineering, National Institute of Technology, Rourkela.

Minakshee has worked for five years in the Information Technology sector with Tata Consultancy Services (TCS). Apart from her routine work as an IT engineer, she always found time on Sundays and holidays to participate in the corporate social responsibility activities of TCS, where she was involved in rural development initiatives and worked for women's empowerment by organizing livelihood skill training in tailoring. She has also worked to further English education and computer literacy of rural school children.

“I am passionate about working for the development of rural areas. In addition, I have always felt the need to acquire professional skills in order to contribute to society in a more efficient way.”



Chittaranjan Mahapatra

Nuapada, Odisha

MA in Geography, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar and M Phil in Planning and Development, Indian Institute of Technology, Mumbai.

Chittaranjan has five years experience in regional and community development, environment and development, education, livelihood enhancement, project management and evaluation, action research and documentation. He has worked on projects commissioned by the Ford Foundation and the Tata Trust.

“PMRDF has been very useful in exposing me to the development paradigm in India.”



Gouri Sankar Mishra

Nuapada, Odisha

BSc in Botany, Government College, Phulbani, and MA in Rural Development, Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan.

Gouri has worked with CAPART New Delhi, where he was engaged in coordinating the recruitment of young professionals from various institutions and organizing orientation and refresher training programmes and workshops. He has also worked with the Orissa Rural Development and Marketing Society.

“Given the opportunity and information, people come to the palli sabhas and gram sabhas. However, the major challenge is to mobilize the gathered masses towards a fruitful discussion for development of their area.”



Devan Kumar Kuda

Rayagada, Odisha

BA, DAV College, Koraput; Post Graduate in History, University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad; M Phil in Social Sciences, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

“I was looking for an opportunity to contribute to the ‘countryside re-building process’, thereby hoping to help reduce growing inequalities by promoting participation of the common people in planning and development.”



Sudhir Kumar Halba

Rayagada, Odisha

BSc, Berhmapur University, Brahampur and Masters in Social Work, Pondicherry Central University, Puducherry.

“PMRDF gives fellows exposure to realities in the field, which are quite different from the mainly theoretical perspectives of academic studies.”



Alok Kumar Mahapatra

Sambalpur, Odisha

B Pharmacy, Roland Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Berhampur and Post Graduate Diploma in Rural Development Management, National Institute of Rural Development, Hyderabad.

Alok has worked with the Ministry of Rural Development on a skills development project. He was responsible for mobilizing and training youth as well as liaising with private industries for placements.

“In a short span of two months under the leadership of the District Collector, I was able to brighten the life of many poor families in rural Odisha.”



Nilamadhab Digal

Sambalpur, Odisha

BA Honours in Economics, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar and
MA in Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai

Nilmadhab has worked in the development sector for nearly four years in the areas of livelihood, healthcare for women and children, severe acute malnutrition, institution building, womens enterprise development, value chain development and the right to food.

“I have always felt encouraged whenever our team directly or indirectly impacted the lives of people.”



Sunil Ranjan Thanapati

Sonepur, Odisha

BTech in Agricultural Engineering, Orissa University of
Agriculture and Technology, Bhubaneswar.

Sunil has worked with tribal communities for three years. His work involved planning and execution of activities for soil, water and forest conservation and providing technical assistance.

“My PMRDF experience included visiting inaccessible areas of the district, listening to and resolving people’s problems through discussions with the community and ensuring timely public service delivery systems.”



Laxmidhar Singh

Sundargarh, Odisha

BA Honours in Chinese, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi and MA in Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

Laxmidhar has worked with the Department of Rural Development, Government of Andhra Pradesh as a Programme Manager in charge of the grievance redressal under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. His tasks included regular monitoring of grievances through the toll free number and the web and ensuring timely and quality redressal.

“Working with rural communities is the realization of the best dream a young professional can have at an early stage of his career.”



Rahul Dasgupta

Sundargarh, Odisha

BA Honours in Sociology, Ravenshaw University, Cuttack and MBA in Rural Management, Amity University, Noida.

Rahul has worked with the Panchayati Raj Department of the Government of Odisha. He designed training modules and calendars for different stakeholders and coordinated with state and national level institutes. Additionally, he served as nodal officer for rural housing schemes and conducted periodic training needs assessment of stakeholders.

“I believe my broad involvement with tribal communities, people's representatives and beneficiaries of different programmes along with support from district administration began to bridge the gap between the people and the administration, at some point.”



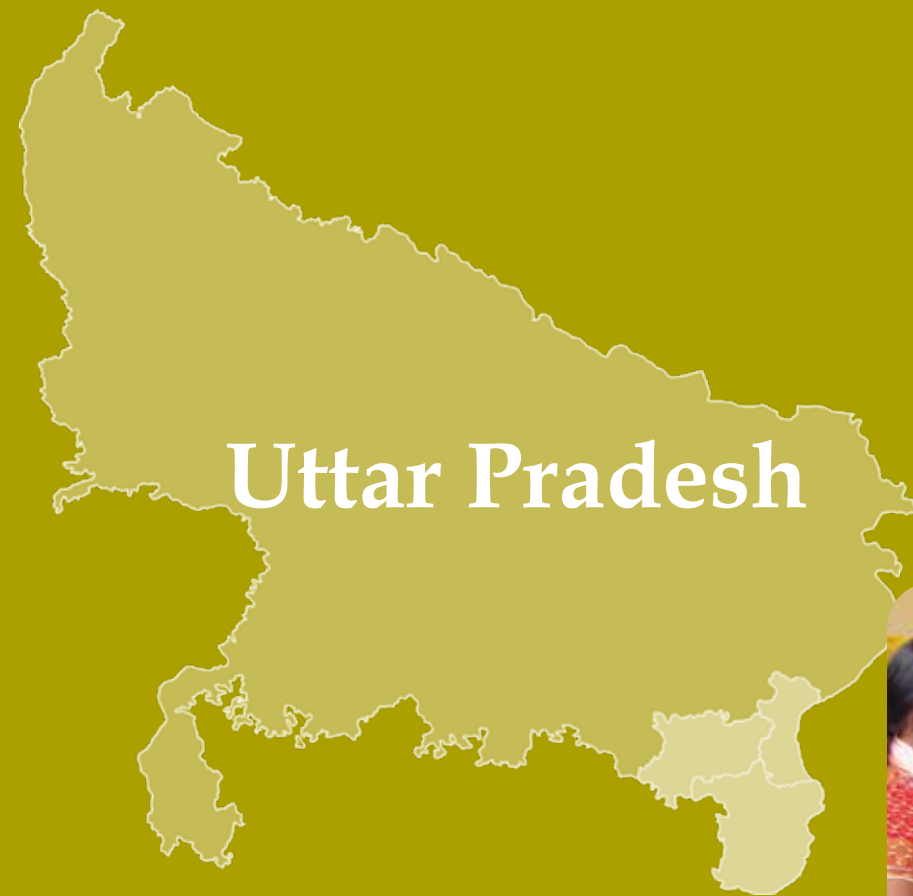
Prasan Tete

Ganjam, Odisha

BA from Bhopal School of Social Science, Bhopal, MP and M A Social Work, from Department of Sociology & Social Work, Barkatullah University, Bhopal, MP

Prasan has worked for six years (CASA & MPDPIP). He has worked on issues such as governance, institutional building, capacity building, livelihood, youth training and placement, drip irrigation, SRI, SWI, PME.

“PMRDF is one of the best opportunities to work closely with the district administration for the poor and support government services to reach the unreached areas of the district.”



Uttar Pradesh



Annu Singh organizes a capacity building workshop in Mirzapur district.



Varinder Komal

Chandauli, Uttar Pradesh

BA, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar and MBA.

Varinder has worked in the private sector for three years.

“I have always wanted to see how public administration works.”



Vineet Kumar Singh

Chandauli, Uttar Pradesh

BTech in Electrical Engineering, National Institute of Technology, Durgapur.

Vineet has been a State Bank of India - Youth for India Fellow. During this fellowship, he was involved in two projects on tribal development through financial inclusion and agricultural interventions for food security and poverty alleviation. He has also briefly worked in the manufacturing sector.

“PMRDF became an extension of my already ongoing work in a more diversified manner.”



Annu Singh

Mirzapur, Uttar Pradesh

BA in Psychology, English & History and MA in Population Education and Rural Development from Lucknow University, Lucknow. Pursuing Ph.D. from Department of Social Work, Lucknow University, Lucknow.

Annu has worked in the NGO sector for seven years on youth sexual and reproductive health and rights, policy advocacy and women's health and rights. She has worked with adolescent girls under the SABLA programme launched by the Ministry of Women & Child Development, Government of India and has been associated with an Oxfam India funded school strengthening programme. Annu participated in the Global Youth Forum: Youth Rights at the Heart of Development in 2012 in Bali, Indonesia. She was also invited to attend a capacity building workshop on sexuality & sexuality education, Copenhagen, Denmark in 2011.

“The PMRDF opened up a new panorama.”



Sandeep Kumar Gautam

Mirzapur, Uttar Pradesh

BTech in Information Technology, Gautam Buddha University, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Greater Noida.

Sandeep has worked in software development. His primary area of focus is web technologies.

“Since my skills and expertise are in IT, and I have practical experience of web technologies, I have always wanted to utilize my skills in rural development.”



Kavindra Kulkarni

Sonebhadra, Uttar Pradesh

BTech, Government Central Textile Institute, Kanpur and Masters in Fashion Technology, National Institute of Fashion Technology, Bengaluru, Karnataka.

Kavindra has worked on issues of livelihood and education. He has also been a teacher and worked with a Lucknow-based NGO which focuses on skills training for the textile sector.

“I work with rural people towards a secure future for India.”



Om Prakash Paswan

Sonebhadra, Uttar Pradesh

BTech in Mechanical Engineering, Skyline Institute of Engineering and technology, Greater Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar, Uttar Pradesh.

Om has worked for six years in the automobile sector as head of department, research and development. He was engaged in Research and Development for Robotic & Automation in private sector.

“Now I realize I am human; because I work for needy people, not robots or machines.”



Animesh Ghosh at a field demonstration of agricultural technology with district officials in Purulia.



Animesh Ghosh

Purulia, West Bengal

BTech in Electronics and Instrumentation from Techno India, Saltlake, Kolkata under WBUT.

Animesh has worked in the rural development sector with Professional Assistance for Development Action (PRADAN), an NGO. His tasks involved community mobilization through SHGs, establishing community-based drinking water systems, livelihood interventions in agriculture through INRM models, encouraging organic agriculture and setting up of child learning centres.

“The Fellowship fulfilled my dream of working as a change agent for the under-privileged.”



Sourabh Bhattacharjee

Purulia, West Bengal

BSc Honours in Mathematics, Vinoba Bhave University, Hazaribag; Software Engineering from NIIT, Ranchi and Post Graduate Diploma in Rural Development, Xavier Institute of Social Service, Ranchi.

Sourabh has worked with Development Support Agency of Gujarat, Tribal Development Department, Government of Gujarat as a Development Consultant in the areas of Information, Education & Communication of the developmental programmes run by the agency. He also handled the HR vertical of the agency. Further, he has also worked with ITC Limited under its Corporate Social Responsibility head where he steered projects on solid waste management, primary education, livestock development etc.

“PMRDF is not only an opportunity for me to excel, but also a platform to test my ability to foster change.”



Arindam Banerjee

West Midnapore, West Bengal

BA Honours in Comparative Literature and Diploma in Multimedia and Animation, Jadavpur University, Kolkata; MA in Media and Cultural Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

Arindam has worked in journalism, communications, research, project management and consultancy. He has been a correspondent for *The Indian Express* and written on the Maoist conflict, development issues, insurgency and football culture. He has also been an audio-visual coordinator for a University Grants Commission project.

“PMRDF has made me thankful that I chose to be part of such an interesting journey.”



Habib Raihan

West Midnapore, West Bengal

B. Tech in Information Technology and Post Graduate degree in Executive Management.

Habib has worked with ICICI Prudential Life Insurance Company as a manager. His responsibilities included sales and marketing of different products and operation processes. He was also an assistant manager with ICICI Bank Ltd.

“Working jointly with the government and the community is the best way to work for development.”



Sayantan Sarkar

Bankura, West Bengal

B Sc in Microbiology, University of Calcutta, Kolkata and Post Graduate Diploma in Rural Development Management, National Institute of Rural Development, Hyderabad.

Sayantan has worked for the Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP) as a Young Professional. SERP looks at all dimensions of poverty and seeks to address them by organizing poor women into Self-Help Groups and federating them at different levels, providing micro credit, livelihood promotion interventions, education and health interventions.

“I have been fortunate to have been exposed to a wide range of programmes such as household sanitation, food security, geospatial planning and the panchayati raj system.”

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