



The Bihar Project

Awakening the Sleeping Giant through Creative Solutions for Development and Poverty Alleviation (Vihara Foundation 2009)

August 2009

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Bihar Project is a multi-disciplined approach to fast track the overall goal and objective of poverty alleviation and development of rural Bihar and Eastern Uttar Pradesh. To date, much of the region remains impoverished and poverty stricken in need of solutions that could make a significant difference in the livelihood of people.

The premise of this proposal is based on the following problem statements, *“Why do farmers who work so hard and produce in the region continue to remain poor and be subjects to underdevelopment. What are the overall effects on the sustainable economic base affecting poverty, what factors are causing this, and how can it be overcome?”* Investigating the answers to these provides the rationales for guiding and converging strategies towards developing practical solutions.

The Bihar Project presents an approach called Comprehensive Rural Sustainable Development Planning (CRSDP, pronounced “CRISP”). CRSDP is a methodology developed that converges socio-economic-environmental-technological inputs (research and development concepts working in synergy) to effect positive outcome of rural community sustainable development and poverty alleviation. CRSDP sets out to achieve the following objectives, but is not limited to:

- empowering decision making and negotiating through community reorganization
- conceiving new and innovative creative financing novel to fighting poverty
- leveraging capital investments for optimizing and improving farming model
- critical and foremost, facilitating irrigation and groundwater sustainability
- optimizing crop planning and R&D to achieve highest field productivity outputs
- implementing new and renewable energy technology for rural development
- bringing the agrarian processing industries near the fields of production
- evading losses in market supply-chain trade revenues to farmers
- enabling higher income and equitable distribution of wealth
- empowering livelihoods of women and farmers
- improving nutrition and child health and welfare
- reversing migrant village labour movement in search of employment

Economic Creativity

The Bihar Project proposes a novel approach to accessing creative finance for funding development. This is a framework to self-reliance to enable all the aforementioned poverty reduction and development objectives to become attainable.

The Bihar Project creative finance scheme is based on a concept of macro-economic modeling to constitute macro-economic lending. It is based on a concept of Total Life Cycle (e)valuation (TLCv) of equity that exist in the regional agrarian economy, but only accessible through sustainable development intervention. Structuring such creative financing would enable development self-financing, requiring minimal donor and government financial intervention and subsidies.

Present Actions

The Bihar Project has teamed with Indian non-government organization Prabhat and is already deployed in the field surveying and collecting data and designing the project to meet the specific needs of two selected research *beta* locations, Nalanda, Bihar, and Ballia, Uttar Pradesh. The Bihar project has defined a research scope to 100 typical North India villages, and already has garnered the cooperative willingness of hundreds of farmers comprising thousands of hectareage; these are the basis of what would become the first development milestone, constituting the creation of a farmers' cooperative entity.

Strategic Intent

Overall, the strategic intent of CRSDP is projected to compliment many of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals through demonstration of significantly improving the socio-economic-environmental-cultural basis necessary for improving the human development index of the research locations. This is expected to generate data and investment confidence for system-wide deployment throughout the rest of the region and State, and hopefully, anywhere there is needs and applicability in India, and potentially, globally. In the end, the benefit of human quality of life would be improved, together with a world of sustainable abundance.

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