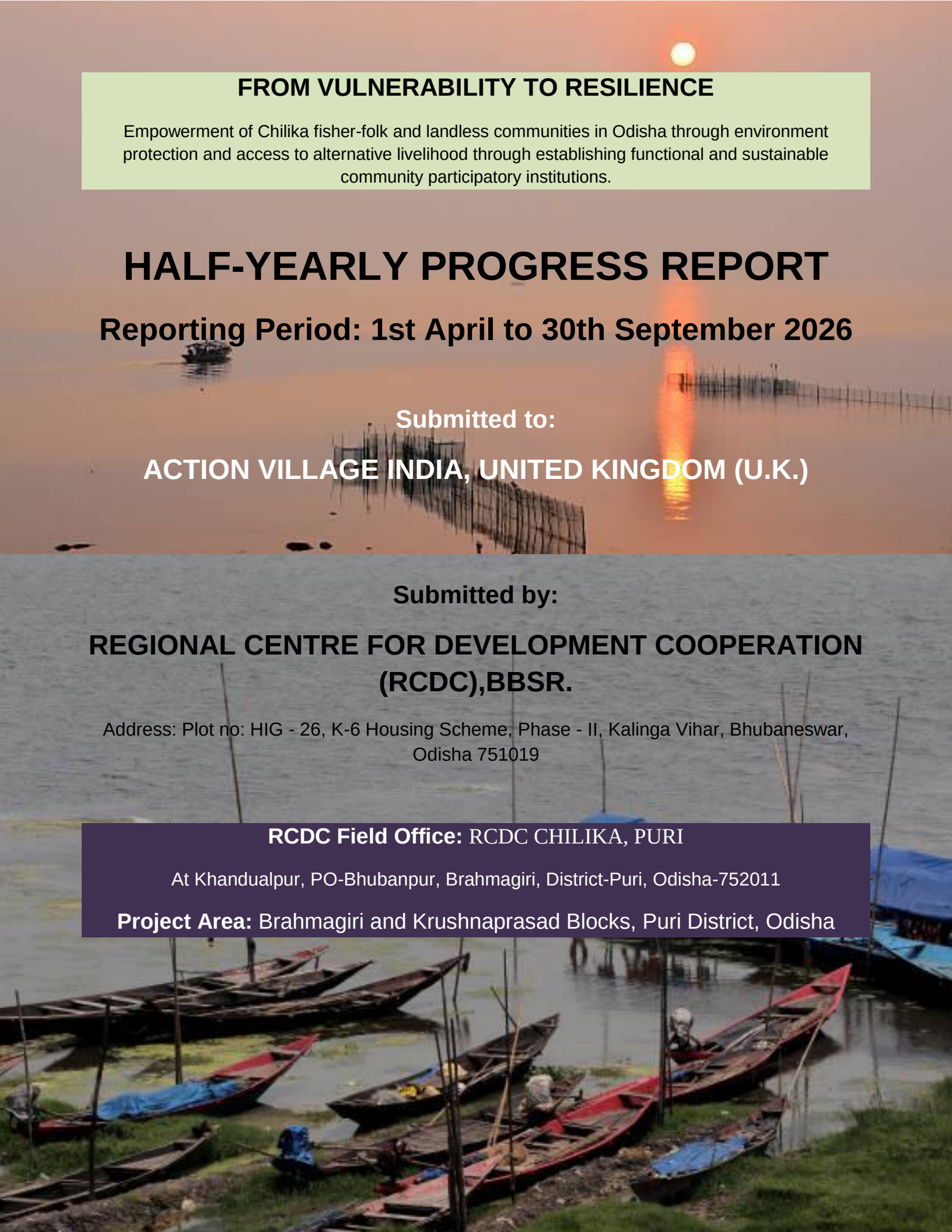




FROM VULNERABILITY TO RESILIENCE

Empowerment of Chilika fisher-folk and landless communities in Odisha through environment protection and access to alternative livelihood through establishing functional and sustainable community participatory institutions.

HALF-YEARLY PROGRESS REPORT

Reporting Period: 1st April to 30th September 2026

Submitted to:

ACTION VILLAGE INDIA, UNITED KINGDOM (U.K.)

Submitted by:

**REGIONAL CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION
(RCDC),BBSR.**

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RCDC Field Office: RCDC CHILIKA, PURI

At Khandualpur, PO-Bhubanpur, Brahmagiri, District-Puri, Odisha-752011

Project Area: Brahmagiri and Krushnaprasad Blocks, Puri District, Odisha

1. INTRODUCTION

During the first six months of the financial year 2026–27, RCDC continued implementation of the AVI-supported Chilika project with **emphasis on strengthening community institutions, promoting sustainable and alternative livelihoods, improving access to government schemes, developing SHG capacities, strengthening Padma Udaya Jibika Producer Company**, and supporting environmental resilience around Chilika Lake in costal belt.

The 2026–27 approved project plan includes capacity building of women SHGs and Village Development Committees, direct livelihood support in goatery, poultry, dry-fish vending and other small businesses, market linkage, entrepreneurship and financial-literacy training, plantation/environment activities, community mobilisation and regular staff review. The half-yearly implementation has therefore focused on translating these planned components into field-level action.

The earlier reporting format also places emphasis on village meetings, staff review, monitoring and planning, federation strengthening, exposure learning and FPO/Producer Company management. The present report follows the same broad structure while updating the activities and progress for April–September 2026.

2. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- Strengthen community institutions including Village Development Committees, SHGs, youth and women-led groups.
- Promote sustainable alternative livelihoods and strengthen household-level income opportunities.
- Build the capacity of SHG members on entrepreneurship, small business management, financial literacy, risk management and bank credit linkage.
- Facilitate access to government welfare schemes, entitlements and relevant departmental programmes.
- Strengthen Padma Udaya Jibika Producer Company through capacity building, market linkage and business development.
- Promote plantation, WASH and environmental actions contributing to resilience around Chilika Lake.
- Strengthen staff planning, monitoring, documentation and field-level coordination.

3. HALF-YEARLY IMPLEMENTATION HIGHLIGHTS

Sl. No.	Major component	April–September 2026 progress	Status
1	Community mobilisation & village institutions (45 Village Meetings)	Village meetings, field follow-up, livelihood discussions and community-level mobilisation continued in 55 project villages.	Ongoing
2	SHG capacity building (9 Training)	Entrepreneurship, small business management, financial literacy, risk management and bank credit linkage training conducted at 9 different project village.	Completed/ongoing
3	Direct livelihood support	Livelihood support was transferred to 70 no's identified poor to poor beneficiaries in 17 village and follow-up	Implemented

		visits were undertaken to review implementation and outputs.	
4	Government scheme & entitlement access	Old-age application, PMAY, different type of insurance, new ration card and other forms were submitted at Brahmagiri and Krushnaprasad Block; departmental convergence enquiries were pursued.	Ongoing
5	WASH & environment	WASH campaign activity was organised in five villages with 526 women. horticulture/plantation opportunities were followed up with the department.	Ongoing
6	Staff planning & reporting (6 Meetings)	Monthly review, planning, documentation, case study and progress reporting continued through the project period.	Ongoing
7	Producer Company/market linkage	Padma Udaya Jibika Producer Company activities and product/market-related follow-up continued as part of livelihood and enterprise strengthening.	Ongoing

4. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND VILLAGE-LEVEL MOBILISATION

Objectives

- Strengthen village-level institutions and community participation.
- Discuss livelihood support, local development priorities and access to government schemes.
- Promote collective action on WASH, environment, livelihood and community resilience.
- Follow up the implementation and output of livelihood support at household and village level.

Activities undertaken

- 45 Village-level meetings and community discussions were conducted as part of regular project mobilisation.
- Field teams discussed livelihood support, household-level enterprise activities and follow-up requirements with community members.
- Overall field visits were undertaken in seventeen villages to assess implementation and outputs of livelihood support.

- Community issues and programme progress were documented for follow-up through project staff review and planning.



Outputs

- Community members were engaged in discussions on livelihood development and local priorities.
- Household-level livelihood support implementation was reviewed through field visits.
- The 'Muthi Chaula' initiative was introduced/discussed at village level.
- Field observations were brought into office-level review and planning.

5. SHG CAPACITY BUILDING AND LIVELIHOOD PROMOTION (9 No's)

Training on entrepreneurship and financial literacy

A training programme was organised at 9 Zonal point for SHG members focusing on Entrepreneurship, Small Business Management, Financial Literacy, Risk Management and Bank Credit Linkage. The training was intended to improve the ability of SHG members to plan, manage and sustain small livelihood enterprises and to understand formal financial services.

S.N	DATE	PLACE	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
1.	21.05.26	Harachandisahi	1	54	55
2.	22.05.26	Bandhamunda	1	55	56
3.	25.05.26	Jadupur	1	57	58
4.	29.05.26	Kaji Bhoisahi	1	52	53
5.	02.06.26	Karimpur	1	56	57
6.	05.06.26	Gabakunda	1	74	75
7.	08.06.26	Dhabasahi	0	73	73
8.	12.06.26	Berhampur	0	68	68
9.	18.06.26	Khatisahi	2	57	59
Total Beneficiary			08	546	554

Key areas covered

- Entrepreneurship and identification of feasible small business opportunities.
- Basic small business management and planning.
- Financial literacy and responsible management of household/business finances.
- Risk management for livelihood enterprises.
- Awareness on bank credit linkage and access to formal financial services.

Follow-up

- Alternative livelihood formats and collection lists were developed for systematic documentation.
- Individual livelihood files were prepared/updated for beneficiary-level tracking.
- Field visits were conducted to review implementation and outputs of livelihood support.



Outputs

- SHG members and leaders were strengthened through capacity-building and livelihood-oriented training.
- SHG members gained knowledge on entrepreneurship, small business management, financial literacy, risk management and bank credit linkage.
- SHGs were supported to identify suitable **farm and non-farm livelihood opportunities** based on local resources and skills.
- Livelihood support was provided to selected beneficiaries, enabling them to **start or strengthen their income-generating activities**.
- SHG members were linked with **banks and relevant government schemes** for credit and livelihood support.
- SHGs were encouraged to undertake collective livelihood activities, production and marketing.
- **Women members increased their participation in** income-generating activities and household economic decision-making.

6. DIRECT LIVELIHOOD SUPPORT

The direct livelihood support in goatery, poultry, dry-fish vending and other small businesses. During the first half of the year, livelihood support was transferred to identified **70 no's** poor to poor beneficiaries in seventeen village of 61 Shg and beneficiaries started their respective livelihood activities. Follow-up field visits were used to review implementation and outputs.

Livelihood support areas under the approved plan

Budget component	Planned unit	Half-yearly update	Follow-up
Goatery input support	10 households	Support component included in the approved plan; beneficiary implementation followed up.	Monitor livestock care, survival, growth and income generation.
Poultry input support	20 households	Support component	Monitor poultry

		included in the approved plan; beneficiary implementation followed up.	management, production and returns.
Dry fish vending	20 households	Support component included in the approved plan; implementation/follow-up undertaken.	Track procurement, sales, margins and market linkage.
Other small business	20 households	Alternative livelihood documentation and beneficiary follow-up undertaken.	Monitor enterprise performance and sustainability.



Outputs:

- Direct livelihood support was provided to selected vulnerable beneficiaries to start or strengthen their income-generating activities.
- Beneficiaries utilized the livelihood assistance for the purchase of required assets, inputs, materials and working capital for their respective activities.
- Supported beneficiaries initiated or improved their farm and non-farm livelihood activities.
- The livelihood support contributed to increased income-generation opportunities and improved economic security among participating households.
- The supported beneficiaries have started earning approximately ₹1,500–₹2,000 per month through their livelihood activities, contributing to improved household income and economic security.

7. ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT SCHEMES AND CONVERGENCE

- Old-age application forms were submitted at Krushnaprasad and Brahmagiri Blocks for eligible community members.
- A visit was made to the Horticulture Office at Brahmagiri to enquire about new schemes and opportunities related to coconut plantation.
- Government programme information and possible convergence opportunities were followed up through block and departmental contacts.

- Community-level issues requiring government support were identified during village meetings and field visits.

These activities support the 2026–27 component on strengthening Village Development Committees and community capacity to access welfare schemes and monitor them.

CONVERGENCY WORK -2026-27										
SL NO	NAME OF THE VILLAGE	NO.OF TOTAL BENIFICIARY BENIFITED	SCHEME WISE BENIFICIARY BENIFITED							AMOUNT BENIFITED
			OLM	PMAY	APY	PMJJY	OAPY	MADH UBABU PENSIO N	RATION CARD	
1	Keutasahi, Nuapada	44	32	8	0	0	3	1	0	2,950,000
2	Bandhamunda	24	10	12	0	0	2	0	0	1,600,000
3	Mirjapur	38	20	13	0	0	5	0	0	2,160,000
4	Dhabasahi	34	10	15	5	0	4	0	0	2,600,000
5	Darghasahi	17	0	7	0	8	2	0	0	840,000
6	Khatisahi, Nuapada	42	20	10	8	0	4	0	0	2,000,000
7	Haripur	36	20	13	0	0	3	0	0	2,160,000
8	Berhampur	60	30	18	0	0	12	0	0	3,260,000
9	Gabakunda	35	10	19	0	0	6	0	0	2,580,000
10	Padanpur	25	10	8	4	0	3	0	0	1,960,000
11	Parbatipur	30	10	8	8	0	4	0	0	1,760,000
12	Gorapur	17	10	3	4	0	0	0	0	660,000
13	Jadupur	58	22	20	3	0	2	1	10	4,200,000
14	Gopinathpur	56	10	30	0	0	1	0	15	4,100,000
15	Arkhakuda	62	0	45	0	2	2	0	13	5,400,000
16	Harachandisahi	27	0	8	0	0	4	0	15	960,000
17	Betagurudi	23	0	7	2	1	3	0	10	840,000
18	Karimpur	18	0	8	3	0	2	0	5	960,000
19	Barakudi	12	0	3	0	0	6	0	3	360,000
20	Baghalanji	25	0	6	4	4	0	1	10	720,000
21	Kajibhoisahi	33	0	14	2	2	2	2	11	1,680,000
22	Gola	40	0	25	0	0	1	0	14	3,000,000
23	Keutakudi	36	21	8	0	2	1	0	4	1,960,000
24	Panda	21	0	7	2	3	0	3	6	840,000
TOTAL		813	235	315	45	22	72	8	116	49,550,000

OLM	Odisha Livelihood Mission
PMAY	Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana
APY	Atal Pension Yojana
PMJJY	Pradhan Mantri Jivan Jyoti Yojana

8. WASH, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE

- A WASH campaign was organised in five villages (Jadupur, Harachandisahi, Gabakund, Mirjapur & padanpur) to promote awareness and community action on sanitation and hygiene.
- Field-level discussions continued to link livelihood security with environmental resilience and community preparedness.
- Plantation/environment activities remain an important area for the second half of the project year.



9. PADMA UDAYA JIBIKA PRODUCER COMPANY AND MARKET LINKAGE

Strengthening Padma Udaya Jibika Producer Company remains an important part of the project strategy. The approved 2026–27 budget provides for women SHG capacity building related to business development planning, statutory compliance, books of account, risk management, Board of Directors roles, audit and ethical sustainable business practices, as well as market linkage support.

- Product-related information and market-oriented documentation were continued.
- Producer Company and livelihood enterprise activities were followed up through field and office work.
- Capacity-building and business-management needs were identified for continued support during the remaining project period.
- Market linkage and enterprise strengthening will continue in the second half of 2026–27.

10. STAFF REVIEW, PLANNING AND DOCUMENTATION (6 No.s)

- Monthly staff review and planning continued to monitor field implementation and resolve operational issues.
- Monthly progress reporting and office documentation were undertaken for submission to the head office.
- Staff coordinated field visits, beneficiary follow-up, government office visits, training activities and village meetings.
- Alternative livelihood formats, collection lists and individual files were developed to strengthen beneficiary-level documentation.



DATE	PLACE	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL P.P
04.04.26	Khandualpur	2	5	7
25.05.26	Khandualpur	2	5	7
26.05.26	Khandualpur	2	4	6
02.07.26	Khandualpur	4	6	10
29.07.26	Khandualpur	2	3	5
27.08.26	Khandualpur	2	3	5
TOTAL		14	26	40

11. SPECIAL FIELD ENGAGEMENTS AND KNOWLEDGE DOCUMENTATION

- A discussion was held with Rakshi Ghosh at the RCDC office on the history of Chilika and the livelihood situation of Chilika-dependent communities.
- A field visit was undertaken to Arakhakuda to meet some migrated people and understand livelihood and migration-related issues.
- A visit was made to Aranya Bhaban, Bhubaneswar for submission of legal documents.
- Field observations were incorporated into project follow-up, reporting and future planning.
- SHG capacity-building training on entrepreneurship, small business management, financial literacy, risk management and bank credit linkage was conducted.
- Livelihood support was transferred to identified beneficiaries and follow-up monitoring was initiated.
- Five villages were covered through overall livelihood-support field visits to review implementation and outputs.
- Eleven old-age application forms were submitted at Krushnaprasad Block.
- A WASH campaign was conducted in five villages.
- Alternative livelihood formats, collection lists and individual beneficiary files were developed.
- Horticulture Department convergence was pursued regarding schemes and coconut plantation opportunities.
- Village-level discussion on livelihood support and the Muthi Chaula initiative was initiated at Bandha Munda.
- Regular office reporting, staff planning and project documentation were maintained.
- **NHAI Household Survey:**
Completed a preliminary household survey covering **300 households** to collect primary information for the Government of Odisha's proposed **bridge connectivity from Satapada to Jahnikuda**. The survey focused on understanding household-level information, community needs, existing connectivity challenges, and the potential impact of the proposed bridge project.



12. CHALLENGES / ISSUES REQUIRING CONTINUED ATTENTION

- Regular follow-up is required to ensure that livelihood assets/support are used effectively and generate sustainable returns.
- Remote and dispersed project villages require continued field mobility and community mobilisation.
- Beneficiaries need continued mentoring on enterprise management, financial literacy, risk management and market access.
- Convergence with government departments needs sustained follow-up to convert identified opportunities into actual benefits.
- Environmental and WASH activities require continued community participation and coordination with relevant departments.
- **Limited Staff for a Large Project Area:** The project covers a large and geographically scattered area, including remote and island villages. The limited number of field staff makes it difficult to ensure regular village visits, close monitoring, timely follow-up, and effective implementation of all project activities.
- **Limited Resources for Livelihood Support:**
The project is covering a large geographical area with a high number of vulnerable households, while the available resources for livelihood support are limited. As a result, it is challenging to provide adequate livelihood assistance to all eligible beneficiaries and meet the growing demand for livelihood support across the project area.

13. Muthi Chaula Campaign(Handful of rice)

A Small Initiative for Food Security

RCDC Chilika has been working in the eastern region of Chilika since 2019 on various community development activities. During this period, one major issue was identified in the villages. Women often need to travel from their villages to Panchayat, Block, District, or State-level offices for meetings, training, and community-related activities. However, due to financial difficulties, managing travel and food expenses becomes a serious challenge.

To address this issue, a small collective initiative called “Muthi Chaula” (Handful of Rice Collection) was introduced. Through this initiative, women can save food grains and strengthen their financial and social security. “In the initial stage, the concept was started in seven villages.”

Objectives of Muthi Chaula

1. To promote daily food saving and food security.
2. To strengthen women’s leadership.
3. To encourage the habit of small savings.
4. To improve the financial condition of the organization/community groups.
5. To increase awareness and access to government schemes and support community development.
6. To strengthen unity and mutual cooperation among women.
7. To help women become socially and economically self-reliant.

Process of the Initiative

Every woman, while cooking daily meals, keeps aside one handful of rice in a separate container at home. After one month (30 days), around 2 to 2.5 kg of rice is collected.

From this collection:

- 1 kg of rice is contributed to the Self-Help Group (SHG).
- The remaining rice is kept at home for emergency food security.

On a fixed date every month, all women members of the group gather and collectively deposit the rice. The group then purchases the rice from members at a rate ₹2 less than the market price. The collected money is deposited into the SHG bank account.



Utilization of the Fund

1. Expenses related to community-level meetings and activities.
2. Organizational meetings and group programs.
3. Emergency support through a small community labor bank for workers facing health issues or unemployment. The amount can be repaid within 15–30 days with a 2% service charge.
4. Hospitality expenses for guests visiting the village SHG.
5. Cleanliness and sanitation activities in the village.

All expenditures must be approved in the village women's meeting before utilization of the fund.

Case study:

1. Wings of Self-Reliance: How Tulasi Behera Built a Poultry Haven Beyond the Lake

For generations, the coastal fishing communities living on the edge of Chilika Lake have relied completely on its waters for survival. However, as climate change and ecological imbalances alter the lagoon, the daily catch of fish and shrimp has entered a steep, continuous decline. This pressing crisis hit the home of Mrs. Tulasi Behera, a 30-year-old resident managing a close-knit household of four, which includes her husband, Bapi Behera, their two children, a son and a daughter. Kashi's primary occupation is traditional fishing in Chilika. As the aquatic yields shrank day by day, his income dwindled rapidly. Relying solely on the unpredictable lake became an impossible gamble, making it incredibly difficult for Tulasi to guarantee daily meals and secure her two children's future.

During this period of financial strain, a critical opportunity emerged when the RCDC organization introduced systematic community interventions by hosting monthly development meetings in the village. Tulasi actively participated in these forums, seeking an alternative pathway to secure her family's livelihood. To break the community's total dependence on fishing, RCDC unveiled a livelihood support program based on a unique Rotational Fund model. Under this initiative, five women from the village submitted their names, including Tulasi. She was selected to receive a financial support grant of ₹5,000 to kick start a micro-enterprise. The operational rule was highly strategic: after utilizing the money to generate profits over a period of time, the capital would be returned to the community pool so another vulnerable family could access it, ensuring sustainable, ripple-effect empowerment.

Tulasi carefully budgeted her ₹5,000 seed capital to start a backyard duck and poultry farm. She initially spent ₹3,000 to purchase a resilient batch of 10 ducks and used another ₹1,000 to buy 2 hens and 1 rooster, bringing her total setup infrastructure cost to ₹4,000. She wisely kept the remaining ₹1,000 aside to cover feed and dietary expenses for the birds.

Just a month after setting up the farm, the ducks matured and began laying eggs consistently. This created a steady and reliable income stream. Tulasi now earns an average of ₹50 per day, which accumulates to roughly ₹1,500 per month and then gradually increase to ₹2,000 to ₹3,000 per month. This consistent cash flow has fundamentally transformed her family's daily life. She is now able to provide safe, nutritious, and wholesome food for her family. Furthermore, she easily sets aside ₹500 every month to smoothly repay her loan back into the community's rotational fund. The extra income also allows her to clear her household's monthly electricity bills and manage miscellaneous domestic expenses without stress.

By stepping up as an independent entrepreneur, Tulasi has successfully transitioned into a capable co-breadwinner, significantly lifting the financial burden off her husband's shoulders. Looking forward, she plans to reinvest her earnings to expand her farm well beyond the initial 10 ducks. She extends her heartfelt gratitude to the RCDC organization and its field workers for providing the timely financial hand that restored security and hope to her household.



Reflective Insight (The Genius of Circular Empowerment)

Tulasi's case study shines a spotlight on the brilliance of the Rotational Fund model in rural development. Traditional charity often ends once a grant is spent, but a revolving fund turns a single ₹5,000 sum into a permanent tool for community growth. By treating the money not as a handout but as a revolving resource to be utilized, grown, and passed forward, the model instills a profound sense of accountability in entrepreneurs. Tulasi's venture proves that when you give a determined mother the means to diversify her income, she doesn't just protect her own children—she actively helps build a continuous cycle of financial security for her entire village.

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2. SAPHALA JENA'S JOURNEY TO SELF-RELIANCE

Place - Gabakund

The Challenge of Seasonal Livelihoods

Mrs. Saphala Jena resides in Gabakunda village, located in the Manika Panchayat of Krushnaprasad Block, Puri district. She manages a household of five, including her mother-in-law, her husband, Dillip Jena, and

their two sons. The family's primary income depends on the tourism industry in Chilika Lake, where Dillip works as a boat operator.

However, this livelihood is strictly seasonal, with the tourist boat association only operating for about five months each year. During the remaining seven months, the family faces severe financial hardship. Saphala had previously attempted to run a small shop to bridge this income gap, but due to a lack of working capital and persistent poverty, the business eventually collapsed and was forced to close.

A Strategic Intervention

In the 2025-26 fiscal year, the **RCDC** organization launched a project aimed at fostering self-reliance through micro-entrepreneurship. They conducted a community meeting in Gabakunda to identify individuals who could benefit from small business support. Recognizing the potential for women to become independent breadwinners, the organization selected Four Beneficiaries and Saphala Jena was one of them. She was provided with a financial grant of **₹5,000** to revive her dormant business.



Revival and Diversification

Saphala used the grant to immediately restock and reopen her closed shop. She strategically chose high-demand, daily-use items to ensure consistent sales, including soap, oil, breakfast items like beaten rice (*chuda*), brushes, and snacks for children. Notably, she also began selling petrol, fulfilling a local demand that brought more foot traffic to her store.

As her business grew, she expanded her inventory further to include more products and other miscellaneous goods. Although the initial profits were small, the business gained momentum within two months.

Impact and Empowerment

Today, Saphala earns a steady monthly profit of **₹1,200 to ₹1,500**. While this may seem like a modest sum, it has been transformative for her family. This income covers the essential (daily household) expenses, ensuring the family's needs are met even during the tourist off-season. Saphala has transitioned from financial uncertainty to becoming a vital co-contributor to her household.

She expresses her deep gratitude to the RCDC and its field workers for providing the "financial hand" that allowed her to restart her business and secure her family's future.

Reflective Insight (The Power of Micro-Capital)

Saphala's story illustrates that for those living on the edge of poverty, the barrier to success is often not a lack of skill, but a lack of **liquidity**. A relatively small investment of ₹5,000 was enough to turn a shuttered shop into a permanent safety net. By diversifying into non-seasonal goods like petrol and groceries, she successfully "de-risked" her family's survival from the unpredictable cycles of Chilika Lake tourism. Her journey is a testament to how targeted financial support can restore both a livelihood and a sense of dignity.



3. Harvesting Hope: How Nirbasini Behera Cultivated a Lifeline Beyond the Lake

The Reality of the Fishing Crisis

Chilika Lake has long been the primary life-support system for local fishermen. However, due to climate change and environmental shifts, fish populations have severely depleted. This ongoing ecological crisis has pushed fishing families into a corner, forcing them to look for alternative ways to earn an income.

Among those deeply impacted is Mrs. Nirbasini Behera, a resident of Gabakunda village. She manages a large household of six, consisting of her husband, her mother-in-law, her father-in-law, and their two sons. Her husband's sole source of income comes from fishing in Chilika, which is highly unpredictable and fails to guarantee money on a daily basis. To make matters worse, her father-in-law has been chronically ill and bedridden for a very long time. Her husband's meager, erratic earnings were completely insufficient to cover high medical expenses alongside the daily survival needs of a six-member family.

The Pivot to Micro-Farming

Amidst this mounting family crisis, the **RCDC** organization stepped in to provide a solution by introducing self-employment opportunities for local women. They organized a series of community village meetings in Gabakunda. Recognizing a chance to rescue her family from distress, Nirbasini registered her name for the program.

Nirbasini had a distinct advantage: her family owned a small plot of land that was lying completely barren and uncultivated. With the help of a **₹5,000 financial grant** provided by the RCDC, she bought high-quality vegetable seeds and organic manure to turn her idle land into a productive farm. She chose a robust variety of fast-growing and high-demand vegetables, including brinjal (eggplant), Green Chillies (*Kancha Lankaa*), Amaranth leaves (*Koshala Saga*), pointed gourd (*potala*), ridge gourd (*janhi*), and flat beans (*Simba*).

Overcoming Challenges and Scaling Up

In the initial phase, Nirbasini faced an unexpected setback when wandering stray cattle entered her open plot and destroyed a portion of her ripening vegetable crop. Undeterred by the loss, she adapted quickly. To eliminate this constant source of worry, she utilized a portion of her resources to build a secure net enclosure around the entire perimeter of the plot, protecting her investment and ensuring long-term success.

Impact, Sustainability, and Market Growth

Just two months after setting up the farm, the crops matured, and Nirbasini began harvesting fresh vegetables regularly. Her distribution method is efficient: she supplies the surplus vegetables to the local village shops and directly handles the retail sales herself.

The farm has turned into a steady financial pillar. Nirbasini sells her homegrown produce at fair local prices:

- **Brinjal:** ₹50 per kg
- **Amaranth Leafy Greens (Koshala Saaga):** ₹5 per bunch
- **Green Chillies (Kancha Lankaa):** ₹150 per kg

She has also capitalized on an existing lemon tree on her property, selling its fruit alongside her new harvests. Through these efforts, she generates a consistent daily income of **₹150 to ₹200**.

This daily influx of cash has fundamentally altered the family's economic stability. The money is immediately used to buy essential groceries and daily provisions. By stepping up as a co-breadwinner, Nirbasini has successfully relieved her husband of the immense individual stress of carrying the entire household's financial weight alone. She expresses her deep gratitude to the RCDC organization and its dedicated field workers for providing the timely assistance that brought peace and security back to her home.

Presented by: Ms. Priyanka Priyadarshini Dalai



Reflective Insight (Resilience Through Resource Utilization)

Nirbasini's journey highlights a profound lesson in community development: true empowerment happens when external financial support intersects with underutilized local resources. For years, her family's patch of land sat completely empty while they struggled to survive on fluctuating fish catches. The ₹5,000 grant acted as the exact catalyst needed to unlock the hidden value of that land. By quickly solving her cattle problem with protective fencing rather than giving up, Nirbasini proved that small-scale women farmers possess the exact resilience needed to build climate-proof, year-round safety nets for their households.

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4. Empowering Livelihood of Minakshi Samal through Alternative Income Support

Name: Minakshi Samal

Village : Khatisahi

Gp: Nuapada

Activity: Small cloth business.

RCDC Chilika is working in 11 Gram Panchayats of Brahmagiri and Krushnaprasad Blocks of Puri District. " "Nuapada GP is one of the project areas situated on an island. There is around 5 km distance between Satapada and Nuapada with Chilika Lake in between. The people of this area are highly dependent on Chilika Lake for their livelihoods. In Nuapada GP, RCDC Chilika is working in four villages - Khatisahi, Baurisahi, Keutasahi and Harijansahi. Minakshi Samal belongs to Khatisahi village. Minakshi Samal is a housewife and women leader of her village. She belongs to a fisherfolk family. Her husband used to go to Chilika Lake daily for fishing. Two years ago, he suffered a brain hemorrhage and could not continue fishing. Minakshi faced difficulties in managing family expenses, medicine costs and education of her two sons. She started a small spice business from home by purchasing raw materials from the local market, processing and selling them locally. Later, her spice machine became damaged due to technical problems. The RCDC Chilika team visited her village and discussed alternative livelihood opportunities.

After receiving financial support from RCDC Chilika and adding her own savings, Minakshi started a small cloth business. Her business gradually grew because there was no nearby cloth shop in surrounding villages. Villagers earlier had to travel to Satapada by boat across Chilika Lake to purchase clothes. Minakshi provides clothes according to customer choice and demand. Currently, she earns around Rs. 2,000-3,000 per month and more during festival seasons. The income helps her manage daily expenses, husband's medicine and children's education. Minakshi expressed her gratitude towards RCDC Chilika for supporting her livelihood and helping her become financially stronger. Impact The support has created a sustainable livelihood opportunity and improved the economic condition of Minakshi's family.

CONCLUSION

During April–September 2026, the project continued to work with communities through livelihood promotion, SHG capacity building, government-scheme facilitation, WASH awareness, environmental follow-up and regular field monitoring. The activities undertaken during the first half of 2026–27 have created a basis for continued livelihood strengthening, institutional development and convergence during the remaining project period.

RCDC will continue to focus on beneficiary follow-up, community institutions, Producer Company strengthening, market linkage, government convergence and environmental resilience so that the planned 2026–27 outputs are progressively achieved.

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