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IN FOCUS



Top 20
India's Best
NGOs to
Work For
2025



21 YEARS OF MAHASHAKTI FOUNDATION

Mahashakti Foundation, established in 2004, has completed 21 years of empowering rural and tribal communities through advancing holistic development in Odisha. Originating from the FARR-CARE CASHE Program, MSF has expanded its reach from the KBK districts of Odisha to 20 districts and into Andhra Pradesh. Over the years, it has integrated financial inclusion with livelihoods, focusing on Environment, Empowerment, Education, and Health & Nutrition. With strong partnerships across government, NABARD, and CSR institutions, MSF has promoted 48 FPOs and impacted over 300,000 households.



DIWALI MILAN CELEBRATION WAS ORGANIZED AT HIRAKUD



A Diwali Milan celebration was organized at Nimpali village in Hirakud under Project Shakti, supported by **Hindalco Industries Limited**. Over 100 women beneficiaries from four villages participated in activities such as musical chairs, Rangoli making, gender intelligence games, and a cooking competition featuring more than 30 Odia dishes. A traditional folk dance was also presented by the SHG women. The event was graced by Mr. Nilesh Koul (CEO-Downstream Aluminium Business) as the chief guest, along with Mr. Soumitra Roy (Joint President & Head of Unit), Mr. Surajit Mitra (Vice President), Mr. Siba Sankar Mishra (Assistant Vice President-HR), Mr. Siba Mahapatra (CSR Cluster Head), Mr. Jitesh Rath (Sr. Team Leader), and Ms. Kopal Agrawal (Chief Procurement Officer).

SAMRIDDHI ART & CRAFT SALES GALLERY INAUGURATED



Samriddhi Art & Craft Sales Gallery was inaugurated at the State Coordinatoin Office in Bhubaneswar, showcasing the skills and creativity of rural artisans supported by our livelihood programs. We also hosted senior representatives of the Tata Group including Ms. Pinakshi Sonpal (CSR, Tata Motors), Mr. Satish Kolte (HR, IHCL), Mr. Bibhudatta Parija (Infinity Retail), Mr. Pankaj Mishra (Procurement, Tata Bluescope Steel), and Mr. Pradeep Ghosal (CSR Head, **TPCODL**). The guests engaged with the artisans, gaining insights into their work and the social enterprise model.

TRAINING FARMERS ON VERMICOMPOST PREPARATION



Over the years, excessive use of chemical fertilizers has taken a toll on soil fertility and crop productivity in rural areas. To address this challenge, under Project Chirantan, with support from **HDFC Bank Parivartan**, vermiculture has been introduced as an eco-friendly solution. Through village-level demonstrations and hands-on training, farmers are being guided on preparing vermicompost pits, selecting suitable earthworm species, and managing composting processes. Starter kits have also been provided to help them begin production. The initiative is now helping small & marginal farmers move toward organic farming practices.

3 FPOS OF MAHASHAKTI INVITED TO FPO SAMAGAM 2025



FPOs promoted by Mahashakti Foundation under the Central Sector Scheme of the govt. of India, supported by **NABARD**, were invited to participate in FPO Samagam 2025, inaugurated by Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Hon'ble Minister of Agriculture, Government of India, at the NCUI Building, New Delhi. The two-day national event, held from 30th to 31st October 2025, brought together FPOs, policymakers, and stakeholders from across the country. From Mahashakti, three FPCs - Puintala Pragati FPC, Maa Mahadasani FPC, and Turekela FPC participated in the event.

THREE-DAY TRAINING AND EXPOSURE PROGRAM IN PURI



A two-day residential Training and Exposure Program on Business Development under the Subhalaxmi Udyogini Project, supported by **Vedanta** Jharsuguda was organized in Puri. Led by Mr. Shanin N.S. (Deputy Head CSR, Vedanta), Mr. Jugal Kishore Pattnayak (MD, Mahashakti Foundation), and Mr. Mohan Kumar Baliyarsingh (Director – Operations, MSF), the sessions focused on cooperative operations, business planning, and institutional strengthening. An MoU was signed between Vedanta, Mahashakti Foundation, and Subhalaxmi Cooperative to promote women-led enterprise growth and sustainable livelihoods in Jharsuguda.

NABARD-SUPPORTED FPO PROMOTES SCIENTIFIC MAIZE CULTIVATION



Uteivalley FPCL, promoted under the CSS of GoI, supported by **NABARD**, has initiated a 170-acre maize cluster in M. Rampur by providing quality seeds to farmers. A special collaboration with IIMR has been established for 20 acres in Ambagaon and Jhaliaguba villages to promote scientific maize cultivation. CBBO officials reviewed crop progress and cluster management, while plans are being made to create market linkages with IPL Company and traders to ensure fair prices. Farmers are also receiving direct technical guidance from IIMR scientists on pest management to improve yield quality.

TRAINING PROGRAM ON THE MECHANIZED DSR IN ANGUL



A training program on the Mechanized DSR method and Improved PoP was organized at Kampala, with support from the Office of the CDAO (**Govt of Odisha**) and DA & FE, Angul. Inaugurated by Mr. Sudhir Sethi, Local Sarpanch, the session aimed to educate farmers, Krushi Mitra, and Krushak Sathi from Kampala and Kiakata GPs on the benefits of DSR for enhancing productivity and efficiency. Mr. Binod Kumar Dalei, ADAO, Athmallik, explained the key objectives and practices of the method. A field visit followed, during which officials and Mahashakti staff interacted with farmers and shared practical insights for effective adoption.

FUMIGATION FOR A HEALTHIER COMMUNITY



Given the high incidence of malaria cases reported across western Odisha, fumigation drives have been initiated under the Integrated Village Development Program (IVDP), supported by **LTIMindtree**. This preventive health measure was implemented across 32 villages of Paikmal, Gudvella, and M. Rampur blocks, reaching more than 31,000 beneficiaries. By integrating fumigation drives within the broader framework of community health promotion, the initiative aims to reduce the incidence of mosquito-borne infections across project locations.

CROCHET CLUSTER INITIATIVE UNDERTAKEN AT PUINTALA



The Crochet Cluster initiative, under ISSRC, supported by **Reliance Foundation**, at Bileikani village, Puintala block, is creating new livelihood opportunities for rural women by promoting skill-based off-farm activities. Currently, 41 women from 18 SHGs are producing handcrafted items such as table mats, wall hangings, sweaters, and decorative pieces. They have received training in crochet techniques, design, and finishing, along with raw material and marketing support. Further, plans are underway to expand the cluster to 15 more SHGs, introduce advanced design training, and strengthen leadership for sustainable management.

21ST ANNUAL DAY CONCLAVE



The 21st Annual Day Conclave of Mahashakti Foundation (MSF) was held on 17th October 2025 at Hotel Swayam, Balangir, marking a significant milestone in the organization's two-decade journey of community empowerment. The event began with a warm welcome address by Mr. Balakrushna Rath, who extended heartfelt greetings to dignitaries and guests, followed by an elegant Odissi performance by Khushi Cultural Academy, celebrating Odisha's cultural heritage. The ceremonial lamp lighting and a melodious welcome song set a vibrant tone for the day.



Mr. Mohan Kumar Baliyarsingh, Director - Operations, Mahashakti Foundation, delivered an insightful address reflecting on the organization's long-standing contributions in livelihood promotion, women's empowerment, and community development. He emphasized the importance of collaboration and innovation in driving measurable impact, and acknowledged the support of partners, donors, and stakeholders. The Chief Guest, Shri S.K. Talukdar, CGM - NABARD, inaugurated the first session and shared valuable insights on strengthening FPOs in Odisha through better governance, accountability, and exposure learning. He highlighted how FPOs can thrive by building strong membership and transparent systems. Mr. Samir K. Samantra, DGM - NABARD, elaborated on the digitization of SHGs and introduced the "Double Difference" model for effective impact assessment.



The second session, chaired by Dr. Debasish Mahapatra, President - MSF, featured perspectives from CSR leaders including Mr. Pradeep Kumar Ghosal (TPCODL), Mr. Jitesh Rath (Hindalco Industries Ltd.), Ms. Aruna Marandi (TPWODL), Dr. Satyamaya Satpathy, Head - KVK Balangir, and Mr. Sudesh Choudhury (Deputy Director-Horticulture, Balangir). Discussions revolved around impact measurement, CSR alignment with government schemes, data credibility, and adaptive leadership in community development. They also emphasized the need for continuous capacity building of frontline workers.



The third session, chaired by and Dr. Pradeep Panda, Advisor - MSF, focused on the role of leaders in creating & retaining Impact, featuring insightful contributions from Mr. Shanin N.S. (Deputy Head CSR - Vedanta Ltd.), Mr. Sukanta Kumar Rath (Head CSR - Jindal Stainless Ltd.), Mr. Rajinder Singh (Project Director - Reliance Foundation), and Mr. Dharendra Bariha (CDAO, Balangir). They shared perspectives on fostering leadership, community resilience, and long-term ecosystem building through inclusive growth models.



The new MSF logo and Annual Report 2024-25 were unveiled, symbolizing renewal and growth. Outstanding staff members and FPOs were felicitated for their contributions, and an exhibition of farm and handicraft products showcased local innovation and livelihoods.

The event concluded with closing remarks by Mr. Jugal Kishore Pattnayak, Managing Director - MSF, who extended gratitude to all partners and team members. The program ended on a high note with a community lunch and cultural performances, celebrating the spirit of collaboration, sustainability, and grassroots impact.

17TH DAAN UTSAV

Mahashakti Foundation observed Daan Utsav - India's own festival of giving, from 2nd October to 8th October, a period dedicated to kindness, compassion, and sharing what brings happiness to others. We have always believed in the power of united effort to create meaningful change, and every year during this special week, we take small yet heartfelt steps to spread care among the people we serve. During this week, individuals, institutions, and communities engage in acts of kindness and contribute in their own ways to spread harmony.

Daan Utsav inspires millions to experience the joy of giving in their own unique ways. It is a nationwide celebration that transcends differences, reminding us that generosity is not measured by the size of what we give, but by the sincerity with which we share. Sharing the same spirit, Mahashakti Foundation's observance this year was filled with affection and unity as our teams reached out to villages through thoughtful acts of kindness. Each location had its own unique way of expressing the joy of sharing, yet the underlying emotion remained the same; to make someone feel valued.

In Magurmāl village of Paikmal block, the team spent a delightful day with the people, listening to their stories, interacting freely, and singing songs together. Study materials were handed over to children at the Anganwadi Centre, while warm winter clothes were gifted to elderly men and women. The event created a beautiful moment of shared gratitude. The entire village joined hands, making it a day of heartfelt connections and mutual respect.

At Gabharasa village under Gambhariguda Gram Panchayat, Gudvella, our team observed Daan Utsav by encouraging the spirit of sharing and collective goodwill. Blankets were provided to 30 families. Children from Classes 1 to 3, along with Anganwadi students, received notebooks and pens. Each staff member contributed wholeheartedly, ensuring that the day brought smiles and warmth to everyone present.

The Project Adhikaar team in Kankadahad, Dhenkanal, marked Daan Utsav at Primary School, Mahanta Sahi, Khajuria, with the belief that "it's not how much we give, but how much love we put into giving." The event featured dance and quiz competitions for students, followed by prize distribution. Every staff member contributed ₹1,000 each, and all students received umbrellas, notebooks, and pens. The event left a lasting positive impression on the young learners. The children's enthusiasm during the activities and their excitement in receiving the gifts added an inspiring vibrancy to the event.

Across all project locations, this served as a gentle reminder that empathy and effort can bring true happiness to others. From every corner, stories of empathy and connection made this year's Daan Utsav truly memorable. As we conclude this year's celebration, Mahashakti Foundation reaffirms its commitment to nurturing a culture of giving and gratitude, ensuring that the joy of Daan Utsav continues to inspire both our teams and the communities we serve throughout the year.



SPOTLIGHT INTERVIEW *with Ms Payal Patel*

The Pad Girl of Odisha

1. What inspired you to start working on menstrual health management in rural areas?

Since childhood, I have seen how women and girls in villages suffered in silence during their periods. They had very little knowledge and no proper sanitary products. It hurt me to see them treated with shame for something so natural. After my father passed away, I decided to dedicate my life to helping women live with dignity. That's how I started awareness work on menstrual hygiene through campaigns like **"CHUPPI TODO"** and **"Mission Hygiene and Wellness."** My aim has always been to break taboos and bring open talk and confidence among women.

2. What challenges did you face while setting up your enterprise and spreading awareness?

In the beginning, the biggest challenge was breaking people's silence. Many didn't want to talk about periods or hygiene. Some even laughed or ignored the topic. It was also hard to find support and funds. But I kept doing small awareness sessions in schools and villages, talking directly with women and girls. Slowly, they started opening up and trusting me. My awareness has become my biggest strength, it has changed the mindset of lakhs of women across Odisha.



3. How has your initiative helped improve awareness and livelihood among women?

Through my enterprise, Prasanta Enterprises, we make low-cost and reusable sanitary pads. This gives women both health and livelihood. Many rural women are now trained and employed in pad production and awareness drives. Our awareness campaigns under **"CHUPPI TODO"** have helped women understand their bodies, maintain hygiene, and speak freely about menstruation. I feel proud that my work has touched and changed the lives of lakhs of girls and women in Odisha.



4. What more can be done to make menstrual hygiene products accessible and affordable for rural women?

We need more local production units run by women, so pads become cheaper and easily available. Schools should include menstrual education for both girls and boys. Government and companies can also support small women-led units through CSR and training. When awareness grows, demand grows - and when women make pads themselves, it becomes both sustainable and empowering. When we all work together, we can make menstrual health a normal and proud part of every woman's life.



5. How can organisations like Mahashakti Foundation help in this mission?

Organisations like Mahashakti Foundation can help by joining hands with local women changemakers. Together, we can reach more villages, train more women, and create strong awareness programs. Support in marketing, training, and awareness will help small enterprises like mine grow and reach more communities. When we all work together, we can make menstrual health a normal and proud part of every woman's life.



SUCCESS STORY



HIGH-VALUE CROP CULTIVATION FOR ENHANCED FARMER INCOME

In Sindurmunda village of Gudvella Block, Balangir district, a group of 18 farmers has set an example of how smallholders can enhance their income and productivity through crop diversification. Traditionally, the region has been dominated by cotton cultivation, which occupies land for nearly six months and yields an average net income of around ₹25,000 per acre. Due to the long crop duration and dependence on a single crop, farmers often faced limited income opportunities and soil fatigue.

To address this, Mahashakti Foundation and the Village Development Committee with the support of **Reliance Foundation**, introduced Kharif watermelon cultivation as a high-value, short-duration alternative crop during the 2025 Kharif season. With technical guidance from the Assistant Horticulture Officer and Sagar Biotech experts, farmers received hands-on training on land preparation, raised-bed techniques with mulching, seed selection, and pest and disease management. Mulching support was provided under the ISSRC project, ensuring better moisture retention and weed control. The Green Gudvella Farmer Producer Company Ltd. and the VDC played key roles throughout the process, from farmer mobilization to market linkage and collective marketing. In the first phase of harvesting, three farmers cultivated 2.5 acres of land and collectively marketed 6.1 tons of watermelon at a farm-gate price of ₹14 per kg, earning a total of ₹78,054. Encouraged by the remarkable returns, within just 50-60 days of the crop cycle, more farmers in the village have expressed interest in adopting watermelon cultivation in the upcoming season. The initiative has not only improved household incomes but also enhanced awareness about crop diversification practices. By integrating technical training, market linkage, and institutional support, Mahashakti Foundation's intervention has turned Kharif watermelon cultivation into a promising model for resilient and profitable farming in the region.



