



DFM food security and climate change & private sector seminar

21 April 2023 at CBS – Dalgas

Have 15, 2nd floor, room

2V.070+C71



Dansk Forum for
Mikrofinans



Contexts:

Geographically: India – North/East – States of West Bengal, Jharkhand and Odisha
(to some extent, also East Africa (Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania and even Zambia))

Sector/work: NGO-work on `Food Security and Eco-Livelihoods`

Topic/substance:

Focus on assisting the poorest of the poor and engaging local government

Towards exploring local livelihoods through handicrafts & how to enhance local income opportunities

Build the private initiative (entrepreneurship, business, producer cooperative)

Grow Socio-economic development in rural areas





iiINTERest (www.iiinterest.dk)–Ahead Initiatives (www.aheadinitiatives.in) partnership (2008)

Example:

Handicraft initiative

Tantipara – Birbhum district, West Bengal, India

High quality silk products, but with ‘traditional East Indian design’ (not selling), with increasing use of artificial tread & (artificial) input (colorings) from China

Revitalise silk (handicraft) production (and hence restore income and employment options)

- a. Modify design – modern Indian style**
- b. Remove artificial ingredienses – replace with natural, including natural dyes**
- c. Establish a local producer cooperative to handle production, marketing and sales**

iiNTERest-Ahead Initiatives

Handicraft & Food security, India





What are your findings?

- Lots of local engagement – though also conflicting interests (local government own interest, local middlemen not pleasant and internal divides – who to be the chairperson?)
- Huge change in mindset – so far taken five years, and still `emergent`
- Complex endeavor to ensure that the private initiative (entrepreneurship, business, producer cooperative) takes a sustainable shape
- Socio-economic challenges of trying to persuade young people to join (view the silk industry as `old-fashion`)
- Without rebuilding of local (socio)economic activity, the rural areas/villages are emptied of people (the youth) and with regard to economic activity (industrial dynamics)



Which questions arise, that you would like to discuss

- **Meaningful roles for the private sector in maintaining and/or rebuilding socio-economic life and activities in rural areas**
- **How do other actors (local governments, NGOs, think-tanks etc.) contribute to the above? Or if they counteract such developments, how to address these (unfortunate) practices?**



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