

ANNUAL REPORT

2022-2023



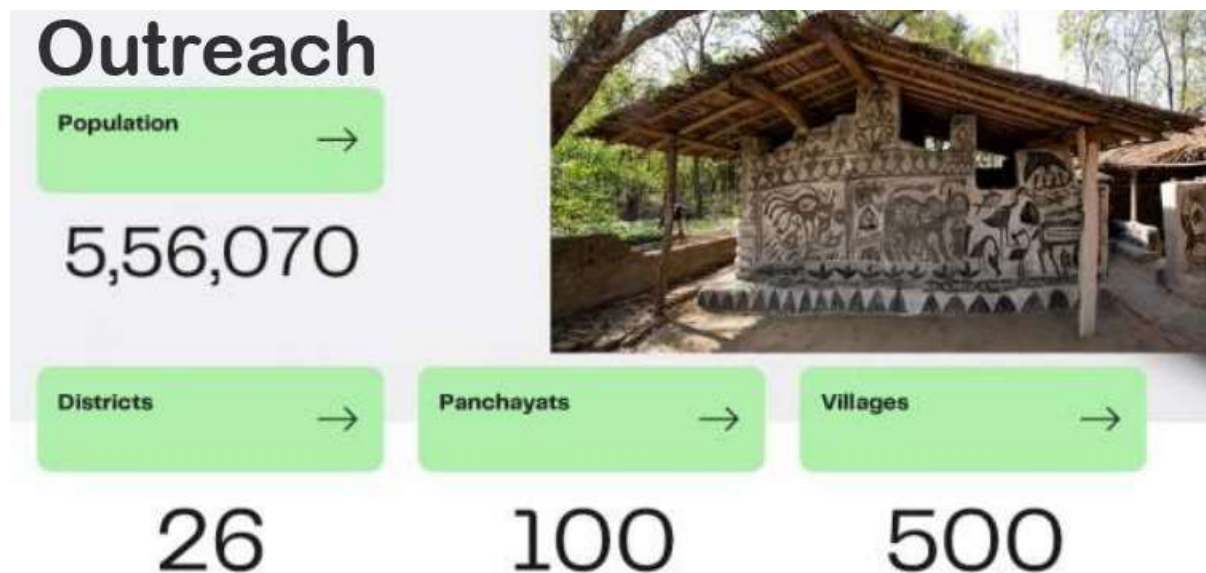
Contents

| | |
|--|-------|
| 1. About the Organization | 02 |
| 2. Fellowship Programme on Constitutional values: Cross learning and experience sharing with fellows | 03 |
| 3. Participation in Chitra Parav in Maliparvat, Koraput, Odisha..... | 04 |
| 4. Summer Camp for tribal children: | 05 |
| 5. Meeting locals and solidarity..... | 06 |
| 6. Field Visit with Team APPI to Katiki, Borra..... | 07 |
| 7. Participation in Coal Satyagrah, Raigarh, Chhattisgarh | 08 |
| 8. Meeting and distribution of T-shirts for KWDC members..... | 09 |
| 9. Gram Sabha: Empowering communities to participate in the decision-making Process..... | 10-11 |
| 10. Livelihood and Eco-tourism Development: | 12 |
| 11. Workshop on developing Koya children's literature in Koya Language:..... | 13 |
| 12. Workshop on Rehabilitation and Resettlement in Polavaram:..... | 14-15 |
| 13. Workshop on PESA and MESA | 16-17 |
| 14. Way Forward..... | 18 |

About the Organization:

Samata is a social justice organization working for the upliftment of the tribal “Adivasi” people of Andhra Pradesh, India, and for the protection of the natural resources and ecology of the Eastern Ghats (hills). Samata started working in a small tribal hamlet in 1987 with a group of tribal and rural youth, to mobilize tribal communities against exploitation by outsiders and by the government. Samata was formally registered as a non-government organization in 1990.

Our vision is to help build an India in which tribal and scheduled castes, Adivasi groups, the poor, and other disadvantaged minorities can fully participate in a healthy Indian democracy, enjoy the benefits of economic development and retain their rights, their culture, and their history. Our mission is to advocate for the voiceless, to hold the government accountable to its promises, to enable minorities to fully achieve and exert their rights, to promote sustainable development while defending against environmental abuses, and to aid the human development of the disadvantaged. We believe the best way to achieve our mission is through adherence to nonviolence, community empowerment, and adherence to the democratic process. We believe in the possibility for development that advances the cause of social justice instead of undercutting it; in the ability of communities to develop and interact with the environment sustainably instead of exhausting natural resources and destroying ecological systems; in the capacity of tribal communities for self-government and their right to control their land and resources; in the power of an organized and informed community; in the wisdom and the necessity of pursuing our mission through peaceful and democratic means.



Fellowship Programme on Constitutional values: Cross learning and experience sharing with fellows

Samata organized cross learning and experience-sharing program with our fellows on 4th April 2022 at the Public Library in Visakhapatnam. Samata has supported 20 dynamic grass activists who are working on the ground on different issues through our fellowship program on constitutional values and principles for two years during the covid. We have been able to reach out to 5,56,000 people spreading across 26 districts in 5 states of India- Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, West Bengal, and Andhra Pradesh through our fellows. Each fellow shared their experiences including the impact they have made during their fellowship journey. The program ended with a resolution to continue the work each fellow is doing to bring more impact on people and their lives.



Fellowship program on Constitutional Values in India. We are supporting 20 grassroots fellows working at the ground level.

1. Andhra Pradesh
2. Odisha
3. Chhattisgarh
4. Jharkhand
5. West Bengal



Group Presentations from various states

Participation in Chitra Parav in Maliparvat, Koraput, Odisha

Samata team participated in the Chaitra festival on 19th April 2022 which was organized by the Maliparvat Surakshya Committee in Maliparvat, Koraput District of Odisha. The meeting was attended by nearly 5000 local tribal communities to assert their religious and spiritual rights over Maliparvat. This festival is one of the most important festivals of the tribal people of Koraput. The celebration of Chitra Parva is more about preserving and protecting their culture by practicing and performing songs, dances, tribal cultures, deities, spiritual values, and ecology.



Chaitra Festival at Maliparvat



Chaitra Festival at Maliparvat.

Summer Camp for tribal children:

A 5 days summer camp was organized from 22nd May to 28th May 2022 by Samata for orphans and single-parent children at Pratyusha Girls Hostel, Araku. The main objective of the program was to enhance the skill and personality development of these tribal children through extracurricular activities like traditional dance forms, music, drama, yoga, etc. A drama teacher from Rishi Valley School, a Sahiti (Vocal Music teacher) from Kakinada, Kalidas, and Mahesh from Geetanjali University, West Bengal, (Art Teachers) and Krishna Sri (Yoga teacher) from Visakhapatnam facilitated the whole program and provided and shared their valuable inputs to the children. A total of 68 tribal children participated and benefited from this camp. The program was learning, engaging, and entertaining as well for the children. This program was a huge success.



"Pratyusha"-Tribal girls home children



Drawings by the tribal children



Yoga Practicing

Meeting locals and solidarity:

Samata team has visited the proposed Yerravaram Pumped Storage Hydroelectric Project that would require about 800 acres of cultivable land and affect 30 villages in two mandals, namely Chintapalle and Koyyuru. The main objective of the visit was to meet and interact with the local team and Sarpanch regarding the proposed power project and the possible impact on people and the environment. A brief discussion on the power plant and its impact was made with the local communities. A meeting with local youths and elders of Yerravaram panchayat was also organized to understand the people's opinion on the power plant and its impact. The total land required to acquire is cultivable land and tribals are cultivating pepper, turmeric and coffee, paddy, etc. As local tribals were opposing the project and we extended our solidarity support. All together made a representation and appeared before the collector and other officials.



Meeting with local sarpanch and communities

Field visit with Team APPI to Katiki, Borra

Team Samata along with Mr. Raghu and Swamy from APPI visited the Katiki village on 7th September 2022 to understand the local situation and requirements. Samata organized a small village-level meeting, which was attended by KWDC members, Borra Sarpanch, ward members, and village elders. The Dressing rooms and toilets that are built by the KWDC for the tourists were inaugurated by Mr. Ravi Rebbapragada, Executive Director, Samata, and APPI team. Some of the issues that KWDC is facing today were shared by the members and discussed in the meeting to address them through legal actions.



APPI field Visit, Borra Gram Sarpanch J Apparao garu was addressing the local issues

Participation in Coal Satyagrah, Raigarh, Chhattisgarh

On 2nd October in 2022, the Samata team attended Coal Satyagraha at Tamnar Block, Chhattisgarh, nearly two thousand community participated in this meeting. The meeting witnessed a massive participation of women opposing coal mining. Elders said that Government, Private companies have been taking our resources for a long time, and the local community is not getting any benefit from the mining companies.



Coal Satyagrah, Community gathering, Tamnar, Raigarh

Meeting and distribution of T-shirts for KWDC members:

A meeting was organized on 29th and 30th December 2022 with KWDC members to distribute T-shirts for the member of the waterfalls committee and also to discuss the development of Katiki Waterfalls areas and to increase the revenue generation. Keeping the increasing number of tourists coming to see the waterfalls, hygiene, cleanliness maintenance of areas, proper parking management, shops in and around waterfalls, etc. were also seriously discussed in the meeting. The meeting stressed revenue sharing between various stakeholders. It was decided in the meeting that out of the revenue that comes from parking and waterfalls, 30% to land owners, 50% to KWDC, and 20% should go to Panchayat. Sarpanch and Borra agreed on bringing on the matters in the gram Sabha and pursue with the government officials. A Gram Sabha was organized in Borra Panchayat on 1st January 2023 to discuss the ticket collection and revenue sharing and represented before the collector.



Village level meeting at Katiki village, Borra Sarpanch inaugurated T-Shirts with KWDC team

Gram Sabha: Empowering communities to participate in the decision-making Process

Samata has been mobilizing the communities to participate in the decision-making process in the Gram Sabha. A Gram Sabha was organized on 2nd January 2023 by the Borra panchayat at Sachivalayam Borra Panchayat. Katiki team has given the representation for the ticket collection of each tourist. The meeting was widely participated by Sachivalayam staff, volunteers, MGNREGS workers, Health workers, VRO, men, and women. Men and women discussed the issues openly while asserting their rights and entitlements. Various issues, requirements, and entitlements were discussed in detail Following are the points/items that were discussed in the Gram Sabha.

| S.L. No | Requirement/ Items | Unit | Estimated budg in Lakh. |
|----------------|---|-------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 | New house under PMAY | 60 | 7.8 |
| 2 | Konapuram to Koyataguda BT Black toping | 410 mtrs | 8.5 |
| 3 | Koyataguda to Bittaribedda road | 900 mtrs | 15.3 |
| 4 | Katiki BT road to Ballipattu | 500 mtrs | 9.5 |
| 5 | Katiki to boddapadu | 400mtrs | 8.6 |
| 6 | Borra caves main road to Eguvamamidi | 400 mtrs | 9 |
| 7 | Borra caves main road to Jeerugadda cc ramp | 200 mtrs | 7.43 |
| 8 | Dekkapuram internal cc road | 80 mtrs | 2.16 |
| 9 | Koitaguda internal CC road | 80 mtrs | 7.7 |
| 10 | Katiki internal cc roads | 80 mtrs | 3.9 |
| 11 | Paderu pipeline | | 3 |
| 12 | Nennimamidi pipe line | | 2 |
| 13 | CC drains Gatuvalasa | 510 mtrs | 18.5 |
| 14 | Besoiguda road | 445 mtrs | 14.5 |
| 15 | Community sanitary complex | 1 | 3 |
| 16 | New Water scheme | | |
| 17 | Egumamidi | | 12 |
| 18 | Dekkapuram | | 12 |
| 19 | Ninnimamidi | | 11.6 |
| 20 | Borra | | 1.5 |
| 21 | Gatuvalasa | | 3.9 |
| 22 | Katiki | | 84 k |
| 23 | Kontyasimidi | | 3.5 |
| 24 | Nennimamidi | | 2.7 |
| 25 | Peduru | | 90 k |
| 26 | Pulaguda | | 90 k |
| 27 | Land patta (legal documents of land) distributed in Borra | | |

In addition, 25 new ration cards and pension cards were distributed among the eligible beneficiaries. Moreover, it was in Borra panchayat that some parts of land has never been surveyed before. However, now after finishing the survey revenue department is providing land patta (Legal land entitlement).



Mr. Deva Kumar is addressing the meeting.



Sarpanch distributing ration cards in Borra



Borra panchayat

Livelihood and Eco-tourism Development:

Samata has been helping the local tribal communities with the community's rights over natural resources. To improve the economic situation of the tribal community in Borra, Samata has organized a first meeting with KWDC members and an expert on hospitality management to discuss the possible requirement and further action and follow-up. Mr. Sohan, the eco-tourism expert, interacted with the KWDC committee and decided to organize a hospitality management training workshop for the KWDC members.



With Katiki Waterfalls Development Committee at Katiki

Workshop on developing Koya children's literature in Koya Language:

Samata has organized five days long workshop on Koya literature from 7th to 11th February 2023 under the shade of the two giant Mahua twin trees at the Koyathore Bata campus in Ramannapalem village of Chintur Mandal. The main objective behind organizing the workshop was to revive, and develop the language across the tribal hinterlands and, also to promote and propagate first-generation writers and the role of Koyathore Bata, reviewing the work done earlier, especially Poems / Rhymes and their efficacy. The aim was also to create new literature i. e. poems/rhymes/songs focusing more on primary school children.

The session started with the introduction and objectives of the workshop which were drawn in by Mr. G. Yadaiah, the co-coordinator of the program. In his remarks, he declared this as the second phase of the Koya children's literary movement.

Moreover, valuable insights and methods were shared by participants and the speakers. The pedagogy of writing for the children in Koya was shared in detail by Mr. Yadaigh. In the final session, a total of 50 rhymes were generated by the participants. Two participants showed willingness and undertook the task of doing in the field. So far, Mr. Yadaigh who has been extensively working on Koya language in the field been able to bring out 12 books on Koya and Kondareddy languages.



Samata organized one week 8th -12th February 2023 workshop on Koya language literature at Chinthuru.

Workshop on Rehabilitation and Resettlement in Polavaram:

Samata has organized a workshop on Rehabilitation and Resettlement on 16th February 2023 in the Polavaram multi-purpose dam project affected area in West Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh. The main purpose of the workshop was to bring about awareness of rehabilitation and resettlement and chalking out plans and concerns to take them to the appropriate and all possible platforms. The workshop was participated by community leaders and people from affected areas from East and West Godavari district. The Programme started with an introduction and purpose of the workshop by Mr. Ravi Rebbapragada, Executive Director, who mentioned that the Polavaram dam is the single biggest project in our country. He also spoke about how the tribal communities are sacrificing for the “Development” losing their land, lives, and cultural values. He also mentioned how tribal communities are cheated, neglected, and never compensated for the historical injustice meted out to them.

Mr. Subhani Garu, Executive Director, Asha, spoke about how Gram sabhas are being organized without the participation of concerned people who are affected by the project. In the Chinthuru area, the dam has caused serious damage by causing a flood that in turn has cut off the total communication. He alarmed the participants about the consequences of having a dam.

Mr. Subbaraju, Executive Director from Prakruthi organization, Devipatnam informed that the survey on the Polavaram project-affected villages has started in the Yetapaka revenue division under the Chinturu ITDA limits. The division consists of four mandals - Chinturu, VR Puram, Kunavaram, and Yetapaka - which were merged in East Godavari of Andhra Pradesh from Telangana after the 2014 bifurcation, due to the implementation of the Polavaram project.

He also informed that the survey will be held in two phases. The first involves the enumeration of houses, human beings, and lands by revenue department staff. Later, engineering department staff will take house measurements and other constructions in the villages to assess property value. The villages come under the 41st contour and 45th contour levels.

The people of these villages - tribals and non-tribals - have appealed to the government to bring them under the 41st contour and complete the resettlement and rehabilitation process and shift them to the rehabilitation colonies immediately. Due to the construction of the Cofferdam, the backwater flow towards their villages posed the biggest problem and these villages may get submerged, they fear.

ITDA project officer of Chinturu informed that the survey by revenue officials started and the people are being informed only through village secretaries and village volunteers about the dates for each area. He further mentioned that about 21 villages will be covered in the 41st contour and 54 villages in the 45th contour.

The survey has been completed in six villages and it was in Sabari-Kothagudem village. After the completion of the preliminary survey by revenue officials, the final survey will be done by

the engineering department. Grama Sabhas will be held to take the opinion of the people. If any objection is raised by them, it will be discussed and sorted out.

About fixing the age of maturity (18 years) for the beneficiaries, a date will be fixed for discussions. A new app will be created to upload the details and the survey will be expedited.

The preliminary survey will be completed by the end of July as the survey of 1,000 houses was already completed out of 12,000 households in the Chinturu ITDA limits. The backwaters or the flood waters have not entered the villages so far. "The affected communities are requesting the authorities that they be taken to the rehabilitation colonies soon.

"A total of 211 villages and 34 thousand families from Kukkanur, Velerupadu, VR Puram, Chinthuru, Koonavaram, Bhadrachalam excluding Bhadrachlam temple, and Burgampadu areas will be affected by the project in Andhra Pradesh. As per the LAAR, Act, 2013, the government should provide all 44 facilities for the affected communities, before they shift to the rehabilitation colony. Out of 44, so far, only 12 facilities like water, land sanitation, toilets, Plantation, etc. are provided whereas the remaining facilities are yet to be provided." There is a huge gap between what is being guaranteed on paper through legislation (LAAR Act, 2013) and what has been done so far in the rehabilitation colonies.

Smt. Krishnaveni, the fishermen community spoke on how fisherfolks are restricted from fishing in the sea which is causing loss of their livelihood in the Polavaram areas. Due to the various government rules including the Coastal Regulation Zone Act, fishermen will be losing their age-old traditional livelihood.



Subhani Garu, Executive Director, Asha, addressing the meeting on Polavaram rehabilitation

Workshop on PESA and MESA

A workshop on PESA and MESA was organized on 15th March 2023 in Asanagiri Village. People from 8 villages of Sundarakota Panchayat participated in the workshop and made it a huge success. Mr. Bandi Gangaraju, a local leader from the village, spoke on the major issues they are facing like water, land ownership issues, road, medical, education, transport, etc. During the rainy season, it makes very difficult for the local communities to reach even the nearby hospital due to the road problem. Prem Kumar, Vice Sarpanch, Sundarakota alerted the participants about how officials are coming to the village to find a way to do mining, certainly not for villagers. He also stressed the importance of the implementation of provisions of PESA by the state government.

Team Samata-Saiman and Satish -explained the role of the Grama sabha and how it could be strengthened. Mr. Satish explained in detail the role of the Gram Sabha and how it should play a key role in developing and nurturing each village of the panchayat.

Mr. Gangaraju raised his concerns about the conditions of people and how they are excluded from the entitlements and government schemes after their village merged in the Anakapalli district, after the bifurcation of the districts. He also mentioned that they represented to program Officer, ITDA, and other political leaders. So far, nothing has turned up.



Mr.Satish kumar, Samata, explaining the role of the Gram Sabha

ఐదో షెడ్యూల్లోని గిరిజన గ్రామాలను ఐటీడీఏలో విలీనం చేయాలి

» అసనగిరి గ్రామ సభలో గిరిజన సంఘాల ప్రతినిధుల డిమాండ్



హక్కులు కల్పించాలని అసనగిరిలో నినాదాలు చేస్తున్న గిరిజనులు

నాతవరం, మార్చి 15 : ఐదో షెడ్యూల్లో ఉన్న గిరిజన గ్రామాలను ఐటీడీఏలో విలీనం చేయాలని పలువురు గిరిజన నాయకులు డిమాండ్ చేశారు. మండలంలోని అసనగిరిలో బుధవారం గిరిజన నాయకుడు ప్రేమ్కుమార్ ఆధ్వర్యంలో గ్రామ సభ ఏర్పాటైంది. ఈ సందర్భంగా ఆయన మాట్లాడుతూ సరుగుడు, సుందరకోట తదితర గిరిజన గ్రామాలు ఐదో షెడ్యూల్లో ఉన్నా ఇక్కడ గిరిజనులకు ఐటీడీఏ రాయితీలు అందడం లేదన్నారు. యువకులకు ఉద్యోగాలలో రిజర్వేషన్లు కల్పించడం లేదని మండిపడ్డారు. సరైన విద్య, వైద్యం తదితర సౌకర్యాలు కూడా లేవన్నారు. ఉమ్మడి విశాఖ జిల్లాలో నాన్ షెడ్యూల్డ్ గిరిజన ప్రాంతాలను వీఎంఆర్ డివిజన్లో చేర్చడాన్ని తప్పు బదుతూ గిరిజన సంఘాలు ఆందోళన చేస్తున్నాయని తెలిపారు. దీనివల్ల గిరిజనులకు మరో సమస్య వస్తుందని అభిప్రాయపడ్డారు. సరుగుడులో లేట్ రైట్ ఖనిజ తవ్వకాలలో ప్రభుత్వం నిబంధనలు పాటించలేదని ఆరోపించారు. అనంతరం పలువురు గిరిజన నాయకులు మాట్లాడుతూ ఈ ప్రాంత గిరిజనులకు ఐటీడీఏ రాయితీలు అందేలా పోరాటాన్ని మరింత ఉధృతం చేస్తామని స్పష్టం చేశారు. అనంతరం గిరిజన హక్కులతో కూడిన ప్రతులను ఆవిష్కరించారు. ఈ కార్యక్రమంలో సమత కో-ఆర్డినేటర్ కె.సతీష్ కుమార్, గునపర్తి సైమన్, గిరిమిత్ర సంఘం నాయకులు బండి గంగరాజు, చంద్రరావు, చిన్నబ్బాయిలతో పాటు వివిధ గ్రామాల గిరిజనులు పాల్గొన్నారు.

Way forward:

As the world and India are coming out of the pandemic mindset, we are still confronted with the rules and restrictions of the pandemic times and thus started this year.

Some attempt to go back to pre-pandemic activity level is being made by one and all. Most interactions among NGOs and governments at all levels use hybrid offline and online interaction methods.

Moving freely among the communities and taking up normal activities is indeed a relief. The atmosphere for NGO work is threatened for various reasons, and funding has become very difficult. Thanks to all our supporters, Samata could maintain the team and activities in the last few years. We thank all our institutional and individual supporters. Samata has entered its 33rd year of work with the same enthusiasm as in 1990 - to help and support the tribal communities as per the provisions of the constitution of India.

We at Samata are focusing on youth capacity building & skilling to continue the awareness of constitutional values and strengthen communities' command over natural resources, e.g., the Katiki waterfall development committee, we are also looking at the problems of human trafficking, migrant workers, and bonded labor and we shall continue to help the marginalized communities as per law.