

Monthly Updates- June 2026

Empowering Tribal Economies through Regenerative Natural Agriculture and Livelihoods (ETERNAL)

Overview

Project ETERNAL is being implemented across Odisha and Jharkhand in partnership with The Gates Foundation. The project works to unlock the economic potential of tribal communities by strengthening regenerative natural agriculture, diversifying livelihoods, and building community ownership over natural resources, while preserving indigenous knowledge and cultural identity. Operating at no cost to state governments, CRISP functions as a systems-reform partner, providing technical guidance and field support, with state ownership central to the design.

Project Goal

The objective is to catalyse a nature-based economic resurgence of tribal communities in Odisha and Jharkhand, rooted in sustainable livelihoods, dignity, and local ownership. Despite rich natural resources and deep indigenous ecological knowledge, tribal households in both states continue to face livelihood vulnerabilities and persistent poverty. ETERNAL seeks to address this by leveraging two landmark legislations, the Forest Rights Act (FRA) and the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA), to secure and activate community rights, and by building economic systems around regenerative agriculture, Non-Timber Forest Produce, and women-led enterprise.

Key Pillars



Strengthening the implementation of PESA and FRA at the village level



Promoting low-input, chemical-free farming and revive natural agriculture



Enhancing NTFP-based livelihoods



Strengthening SHGs and producer groups/womens collectives



Value Addition & Market Access

Progress this Month

Jharkhand

- Prepared the draft Action Plan along with a detailed Gantt chart outlining key activities and timelines.
- Shared the draft Action Plan with mentors and incorporated initial feedback and suggestions received.
- Engaged with the stakeholders to identify potential blocks and villages for project implementation.

Odisha

- Began structuring the NTFP micropilot plan based on field insights from the Dongaria Kondh women and officials from DKDA.
- Regenerative natural farming: identified two districts and two clusters for the vegetable pilot, and began scouting sites and secondary-source data collection to inform pilot selection.
- PESA: progressed the draft towards finalisation; capacity building and the training module to follow once the Rules are passed.
- Apprised the Secretary, Panchayati Raj Department, Government of Odisha, on the work and sought departmental convergence and support.

Way Forward

Jharkhand

- Finalize the Action Plan and Gantt chart based on mentor feedback.
- Finalize the selection of blocks and villages for project implementation.
- Initiate field-level stakeholder engagement and preparatory activities in the selected project areas.
- Obtain departmental approval for the launch of the pilot.

Odisha

- Finalise the NTFP micropilot plan, confirm pilot sites, and begin primary data collection.
- Complete the scoping visit and baseline for the natural-farming vegetable pilot in the identified clusters.
- Finalise the PESA draft Rules and prepare the training module for rollout once passed.
- Follow up with the Panchayati Raj Department on convergence and support.

Photo Gallery



The Odisha team with Sri S. N. Girish, IAS, Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Panchayati Raj Department, Government of Odisha, and Shri R. Subrahmanyam, CEO, CRISP, accompanied by Dr. Sisir Kanta Pradhan, Living Landscapes, and CRISP State Lead Dr. Mihir Kumar Jena.