

A Success Story of Gambhira Cooperative Farming Survival of the Weakest Through Anti Darwinian Principle

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Abstract:

Cooperatives are member driven organizations and work on Anti-Darwin principle, Cooperatives are shelters of weak people, and they survive & grow on principles of survival of weakest. The present case study is a success story in India made up of poor farmers namely Gambhira Cooperative Farming Society. The case brings pluralism through institutionalization, benefits through economies of scale, equity through labour & distribution of surplus on basis of wages to farmers.

Due to heavy & frequent floods agriculture lands were badly destroyed in few villages of Borsad Taluka in India. The small farmers who were dependant on this land for their livelihood were rapidly impoverished and most of them became landless labourers. In 1951, with a view to help the distressed cultivators, at the request of a dedicated social worker the Government granted 246 acres of land to 176 cultivators from four villages near Gambhira, The grantees cultivated the land individually in small fields but yield was very low as the batha lands were saline and farmers had nothing to invest in reclamation, and had to take water for their crops from the owners of water pumping plants in return for half the produce.

The government gave 161 acres of land for co-operative farming to 176 families. 28 groups were made for each plot made up of 8-16 members, each group is allotted plots of land in proportion to its size. The society supplies seeds, manure, fertilizer, pesticides, irrigation facilities to all groups; the members of the group in turn provide labour, bullock power and services of their implements. The marketing of all produces is undertaken by the society through an open auction process, the society claims 40 percent towards the cost of inputs and the group retains 60 percent. This 60 percent share is distributed to all members equally, but with adjustments made for labour and bullock power supplied by different members. Out of the 40 percent share the society pays land rent, cost of inputs and other administrative costs. After meeting all these costs the cooperative is left with substantial surpluses of which 70 percent is

distributed equally among members as bonus. Author argues, as depicted in the following table, collective farming like Gambhira Cooperative Farming brings plural benefit through collective farming in contrast with other type of farming.

Type of Farming	Better Farming	Tenant Farming	Joint Farming	Collective Farming
Land ownership	Individual	Society	Individual	Society
Land cultivation	Individual	Individual	Society	Society
Plan of cultivation	Society	Society	Society	Society
Input	Society	Society	Society	Society
Service	Society	Society	Society	Society
Sharing produce	Produce from individual land	Produce from individual land	Share on basis of plot size	Share on basis of labour
Success Story	→ → → → → → → → → → → → → → → →			Gambhira Cooperative Farming