

## INSIGHT: A Praxis Immersion Programme

At Praxis, we have shaped an immersion programme and called it Insight. An immersion is a guided, holistic experience in which a participant spends a number of days fully immersed in the daily realities of specific groups of people in a given context. Participants of the immersion will live, eat, work, and sleep with flood-affected families – not as guests, but as participating

### About Praxis

Praxis - Institute for Participatory Practices is committed to mainstreaming the voices of poor and marginalised sections of the society in the process of development. This stems from our belief that for development to be sustainable, the process must be truly participative.

Praxis devises practices to enhance the participation of community in all its endeavors while at the same time acknowledging that 'participation' is not technical or mechanical process that can be realised through the application of a set of static and universal tools and techniques, but rather a political process that requires challenging the existing power structure. Thus, for us, the community is not seen as an object but rather as an agent of change.

**Vision:** World without poverty in which every person has the right to participate in decision making processes, and to a life with dignity and choices.

**Mission:** Democratisation of development processes and institutions to ensure that the voices of poor women, men, transgender, girls and boys are heard and acted upon.

#### **FOR FURTHER DETAILS CONTACT:**

**Sharmistha or Nilima**

**Praxis - Institute for Participatory Practices**

**C-75, South Extension, Part II, New Delhi - 110049, India**

**Email: [sharmisthas@praxisindia.org](mailto:sharmisthas@praxisindia.org) or [nilimam@praxisindia.org](mailto:nilimam@praxisindia.org)**

**Tel/Fax: +91-11-41642348/49/50/51**

**Website: [www.praxisindia.org](http://www.praxisindia.org)**

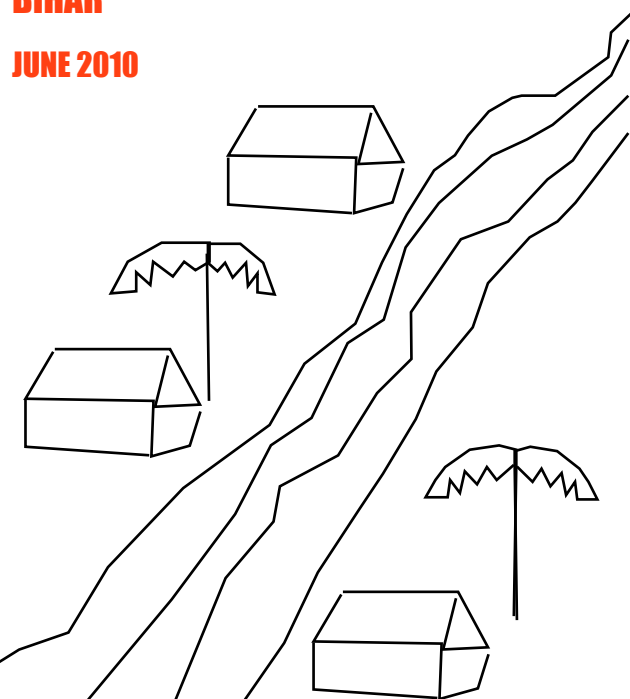
**PRAXIS**



### Insight Immersion Series

## LEARNING ON DISASTER PREPAREDNESS WITH THE COMMUNITY OF KOSI BASIN, BIHAR

JUNE 2010



**INSIGHT**

An immersion Programme of Praxis

**PRAXIS**

## ABOUT KOSI

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Floods and prolonged water logging have been perennial problems in the plains of north Bihar, drained by as many as eight major rivers, including the Kosi. The severity of floods in north Bihar has been on the rise over the years due to climatic reasons as well as on account of deficiencies in flood control measures. Over the last fifty years, a minimum of eight major breaches are known to have occurred in the embankments of the Kosi river alone, causing severe flooding and destruction. Inhabitants of the Kosi basin, particularly communities trapped inside the embankments of the river, live for months together in a waterlogged state and have to fend for themselves in an effort to cope with the floods year after year. Dalits and Muslims constitute a substantial chunk of the population trapped inside the embankments.

## ABOUT THE IMMERSION

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Praxis - Institute for Participatory Practices, as part of its Insight programme has planned to organise an 'immersion' for development functionaries in the Kosi basin in Bihar, to bring them face to face with people living and coping with floods for generations. As part of the immersion process, participants would be provided with an opportunity to spend three full days with a flood-prone family hailing from a disadvantaged category, as if she/he were a member of the family. The objective is to acquaint policy makers and programmers, advocates and activists with the insights from community members with respect to their own local, individual and collective, disaster preparedness systems; as well as their facts and perceptions on how these communities have been excluded from policy making, planning and programme implementation. The immersion is timed just before the monsoons in Bihar, to enable a 'lived insight' into the pre-flood preparations and realities of families living in the Kosi basin.

## OBJECTIVES

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The objectives of the immersion in the Kosi basin are:

1. Create a learning opportunity for development workers to have a realistic view and first-hand knowledge of the people and issues of flood-affected areas
2. Provide an in-depth understanding of various community-based disaster preparedness mechanisms
3. Highlight issues related to disaster preparedness to development functionaries and policy makers



## EXPECTED OUTPUTS

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This immersion will enrich participants' knowledge on:

- Available resources and opportunities of disaster preparedness at the household and village level
- Individual and collective mechanisms of disaster preparedness
- Past experiences of families/communities in coping with floods
- State's responsiveness to the needs of flood-affected in the wake of floods

## HOW THE IMMERSION WORKS

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1. Pre-departure orientation: The participants as well as the host families would be briefed about the process and participants would be encouraged to explore their individual learning objectives, hopes and fears. They would also be given an orientation on the use of appropriate participatory tools and approaches to interact with the family members and the community in order to maximise their learning from the people living in the flood affected area.
2. The Immersion: the participants will spend three nights with a family in a flood-affected community.
3. Post-immersion: There would be a debriefing session, meant to serve as an opportunity for reflections and sharing on lessons learnt.

## WHO CAN PARTICIPATE

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The Insight programme is designed for a wide variety of development functionaries and policy makers (e.g. functionaries of government bodies, UN agencies, INGOs, NGOs, media agencies, activists, interested individuals)

## TIME LINE

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The immersion process itself will be four days – half a day pre-departure orientation, three full days with a family, and another half day debriefing after the immersion. This excludes travel time. ***The immersion is planned from June 14th to 18th, 2010.***

## FEEES

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INR 12,000 for participants from India

***TO GET YOUR PARTICIPATION ENSURED, PLEASE APPLY BEFORE 20TH MAY 2010***

***This Immersion is a self-funded initiative and costs are covered through fees***