

Compendium on Learning Circle Initiative

Preface

The Learning Circle is a unique initiative of WASSAN that reflects our collective commitment towards continuous learning, knowledge sharing, and innovation in development practice. It is envisioned as a collaborative platform where employees, development professionals, practitioners, community leaders, and grassroots actors come together to exchange experiences, critically reflect on field realities, and co-create new ideas for sustainable development.

At its core, the Learning Circle nurtures a culture of peer learning, mutual respect, and collective growth. It recognizes that meaningful development emerges not only from institutional expertise but also from the lived experiences, local wisdom, and practical insights of communities and practitioners working closely with people on the ground.

The initiative places strong emphasis on capacity enhancement, reflective dialogue, and inclusive participation. Its multilingual and accessible approach enables wider engagement across diverse social, cultural, and professional contexts, thereby strengthening both organizational and community learning processes.

Through thematic discussions, interactive sessions, documentation, and reflective exchanges, the Learning Circle seeks to deepen understanding, encourage innovation, and build a vibrant network of practitioners committed to community-driven and resilient development pathways.

This compendium stands as a reflection of that collective journey of learning and collaboration. It captures experiences, insights, and emerging perspectives that can inspire further dialogue and action in the development sector.

I sincerely appreciate and thank the core team of the Learning Circle Initiative for their dedication, commitment, and contributions beyond assigned project responsibilities. Their efforts demonstrate the true spirit of collaborative learning and institutional strengthening.

We believe that initiatives like the Learning Circle will continue to enrich our organizational learning culture and enhance our collective ability to respond meaningfully to the evolving challenges of rural development and social transformation.

Prakash Chandra Mallick
State Lead
WASSAN, Odisha

Core Team Members



Manoj Kumar Magili



Abhijit Mohanty



Barsha Baishali Das



Bablu Purty



Sukanya Mandal

Together, We Learn!

“Every session brought new ideas, shared experiences and meaningful conversations. Together, we created a space to learn from one another, reflect on our practices, and grow as a collective.”

- Team Learning Circle

About the Learning Circle Initiative of WASSAN

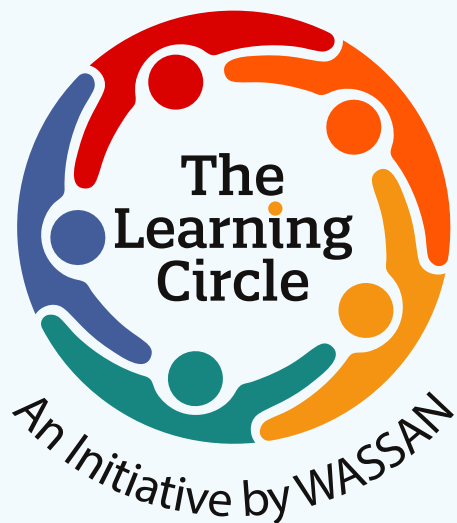
The “Learning Circle”, is an initiative by WASSAN to foster continuous learning, experience sharing and innovation. The initiative creates a collaborative space for its employees, other development professionals, practitioners, and grassroots actors to exchange experiences, question existing approaches, and co-develop new ideas. It emphasizes peer learning, capacity enhancement, and critical engagement with field realities.

A distinctive feature of the Learning Circle is its inclusive and multilingual design, encouraging participation and ensures wider accessibility and meaningful engagement across diverse backgrounds.

Through thematic sessions, discussions, and reflective exchanges, the platform seeks to deepen understanding, inspire innovation, and nurture a strong network of practitioners working towards sustainable and community-driven development.

This initiative is rooted with the following core values -

- ▶ Peer-to-peer knowledge sharing
- ▶ Practise based learning focusing on implementation strategies
- ▶ Multilingual and inclusive participation



Session Highlights

The process flows through planning, execution and feedback collection for further improvements. From the last year through this initiative 12 sessions have been successfully completed around different topics and in multiple sessions both in physical and virtual mode.

► Session 1 :

Climate Smart Agriculture

Resource Person- Somedip Chatterjee

Sr. Project Coordinator, SwitchON Foundation

The session focused on strengthening resilience in rainfed regions through soil conservation, crop diversity, adaptive farming techniques, proper irrigation facility and climate risk planning.

Key Output - Strengthened understanding of climate-resilient farming, including soil conservation, crop diversity, adaptive practices and climate-risk planning.



► Session 2 :

Digital Communication Practices in Social Development Sector

Resource Person- Somedip Chatterjee
Sr. Project Coordinator, SwitchON Foundation

The sessions focused on the evolution of communication in India, exploring how citizen communication has changed and what it means for NGOs. Key areas include the history of communication, the impact of digital platforms, and implications for NGOs.

Emphasizes creating sustainable digital strategies, covering engaging content, platform-specific tactics, and building collaborations. The sessions wrapped up with an assignment to identify essential communication strategic elements with an observation-based assignment.

Key Output- Participants learned to develop sustainable digital communication strategies, create engaging content and use platforms strategically for social development.

Momentum Shifts

Mainstreaming Impact Narratives

We pioneer narrative-driven approaches to social change, transforming citizen engagement through strategic storytelling and impact amplification.

By mainstreaming impact narratives, we create bridges between grassroots initiatives and systemic change, ensuring community voices shape sustainability agendas.

Our work reimagines social impact through the lens of narrative power – making citizen stories the catalyst for global transformation.



Farmers' Protest – As a tool of mobilisation

- The **Farmers' Protest** against the controversial **Farm Laws** in India saw widespread use of social media
- Farmers and content creators used the platforms of facebook, Twitter and whatsapp to share information about the laws and its implications
- The viral **#FarmersProtest** hashtag trended globally
- Memes, infographics, and powerful images of farmers in the fields or on highways with tractors became iconic symbols, spreading the movement further.

 **DILJIT DOSANJH** 
@diljitsosanjh · Follow
Baba Ang Sang Sahai Hove 🙏
#FarmersProtest



9:28 PM · Dec 5, 2020

▶ Session 3 :

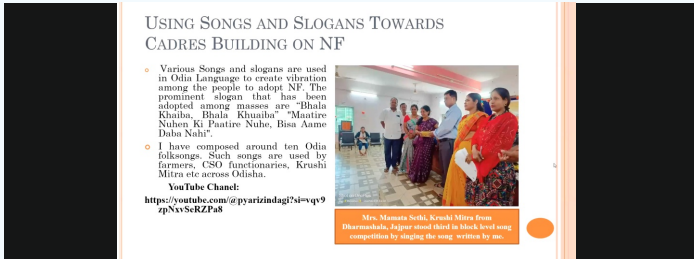
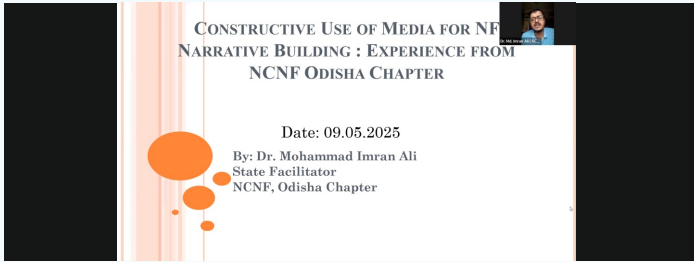
Constructive use of Media for NF Narrative Building Experience from NCNF

Resource Person- Dr. Md. Imran Ali (WASSAN)

The session was taken by the internal member from WASSAN and it brought together WASSAN team members to reflect on the role of media in shaping Natural Farming narratives, based on the valuable experiences with NCNF in Odisha and in other states.

The practical insights mainly focused on Community radio initiatives for Natural Farming, Engagement with mainstream and digital media platforms, Collaborations with journalists, YouTubers, and content creators, Development and use of NF communication tools (radio shows, articles, folk songs, publications, etc.), Publication of features and success stories in newspapers/portals etc.

Key Output- Identified practical approaches to strengthen Natural Farming narratives through community radio, digital/mainstream media, journalists and content creators.





Pastoralism in India

Resource Persons- Kavya Chinda, Mridul Ganguly (WASSAN)

The session was taken by the internal members of the organisation along with the Executive Secretary, who has shared his valuable experience in the mentioned field, which made the sessions even more enriched.

The sessions covered about the unique features, spread of pastoralism in India, status and conditions of pastoral communities, Experiences and learnings from interventions and research, Interlinkages between Pastoralism and other primary production systems, Key challenges faced by Pastoralists in India, WASSAN's engagement with pastoral communities in the Deccan region, scope of WASSAN/ RRAN's work on Pastoralism. Linking Pastoralism to Rainfed Landscapes etc.

Key Output- Enhanced understanding of pastoral communities, their challenges and their linkages with rainfed farming, landscapes and other production systems.

[illegible]




An Introduction to **Pastoralism** in India



July 8, 2025



5:00 – 6:30pm

Mode – Virtual

Resource Persons

- Dr Sabyasachi Das
- Kavya Chinda
- Mridul Ganguly




learningcircle.odisha@wassan.org

Session 5 : Systems Thinking

Resource Person- Dr. Nagesh Kolagani
Organisation- Centurion University

The session was taken by individual resource persons, an alumni from IITM in virtual mode. The sessions focused on the need for the systems thinking, as part of any project, to understand its larger system/ sub- system as its part, its analytical approaches to understand connections between institutions, ecology, markets, and communities. The session topics also includes food security and population dynamics, Terminology-City population growth, simulation- Prey Predator Problems and its future scopes.

Key Output- Developed an understanding of interconnected systems and how institutions, ecology, markets, communities and population dynamics influence development outcomes.



The poster is for a course titled "Systems Thinking" with the subtitle "A short, hands-on course". It features a lightbulb icon surrounded by a circular flow of arrows. The course date is "July 15, 2025" and the time is "8:15 - 9:00pm". The mode is "Virtual". The resource person is "Dr. Nagesh Kolagani". The poster also includes logos for "The Learning Circle" and "Centurion University". A circular inset image shows several hands interacting with wooden gears. At the bottom, there is an email address: "learningcircle.odisha@wassan.org".

► Session 6 :

Small Scale Entrepreneurship & Business Plan Development

Resource Person- Laxman Palta Singh (Freelancer Expert)

This is a two- day session organised in physical mode at CYSD, Bhubaneswar and the session was taken by an individual resource person having large experience in giving training in the specific area. The session includes the basic knowledge of financial analysis, overview of financial terms required for DPR preparation, DPR preparation, marketing, branding strategies mainly focused on small scale entrepreneurship development, project estimations/ profit analysis etc.

Key Output- Built practical knowledge of financial analysis, DPR preparation, marketing, branding, project estimation and profit analysis for entrepreneurship.



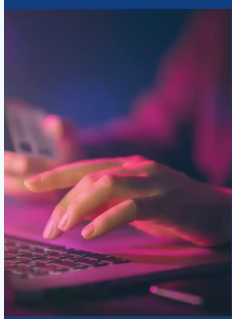
▶ Session 7 :

Introduction to Cyber Security

Resource Person - Himansu Bhusan Nayak (WASSAN)

This session was taken by the internal member of the organisation in virtual mode and the session is about digital safety, data privacy, and risk prevention. The topics covered in the session are ways of cyber crimes, common signs of phone/ system hacking, detection of call/ SMS forwarding ways of doing 2 factor authentication as a tool of prevention, detection of suspicious links using online tools etc. along with that some tools and their usage for detection of phishing and malicious URLs and checklist for cyber hygiene for work/ office had also been discussed.

Key Output- Improved awareness of cyber threats, phishing, suspicious links, data privacy, two-factor authentication and essential workplace cyber-hygiene practices.



Signs That Your Device Might Be Hacked

- Phone suddenly becomes slow
- Battery drains quickly
- Receiving OTPs you didn't request
- Unauthorized transactions or emails sent



Reporting and Response

- Cybercrime Helpline: 1930
- Report through
- **National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal** (<https://cybercrime.gov.in/>)
- Report through
- **Sanchar Saathi Portal** (<https://www.sancharsaathi.gov.in/>)
- Inform your office IT/admin team immediately if you notice anything suspicious



Cyber Hygiene

At Work and Home

June 20, 2025

5:00 - 6:30pm

Mode - Virtual

Resource Person
Himansu Bhusan Nayak
Graphic Designer, WASSAN

learningcircle.odisha@wassan.org

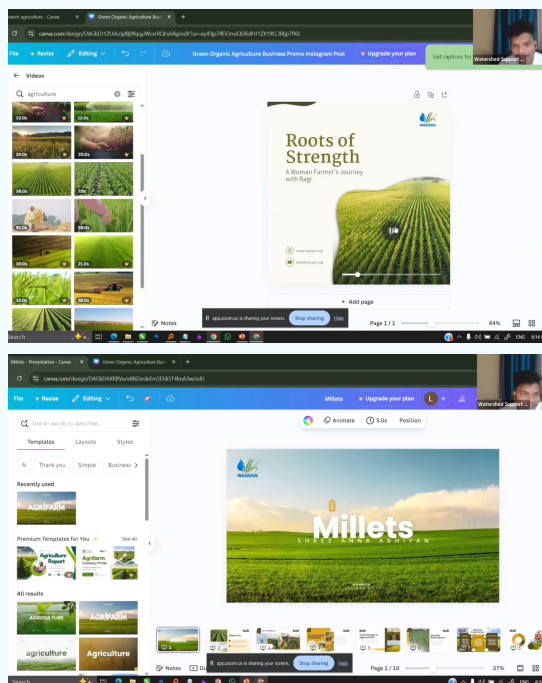
▶ Session 8 :

Canva and Video Editing

Resource Person - Bablu Purty (WASSAN)

These sessions were also taken by the internal team members of the organisation in virtual mode. The sessions started with knowing the fundamental elements of designing followed by 5Ws framework, designing basics in photos, texts, shapes, Logos, colours, icons, graphics, patterns, compositions and many more. Through Zoom room participants were engaged by trialing in photo designing. The session concluded with high engagement of participant's learning through entertaining engagement wayouts.

Key Output- Developed foundational design skills covering composition, colours, typography, graphics and practical photo-designing through Canva.





Canva

Advanced Tools & Techniques

 **April 16, 2025**

 **5:00 - 6:30pm**

Mode - Virtual

Canva

Resource Person
Bablu Purty
Graphic Designer, WASSAN

 learningcircle.odisha@wassan.org

Session 9:

Master Your Workflow: Time, Tasks & Tools

Resource Person - Bablu Purty (WASSAN)

The session was also taken by the internal team members of the organisation in virtual mode. The session covered common workplace issues faced by the employees like poor time management, task overload, E-mail overload and mismanagement, disorganized files and resources, lack of collaboration or miscommunication among colleagues, too many distractions due to different reasons, low motivation or burnouts. The session ended with a practical tutorial for the participants. The session mainly focused on productivity, planning systems, and effective workflow management.

Key Output- Strengthened productivity through practical approaches to time management, task planning, email/file management, collaboration and workflow organization.

The slide displays a task matrix with columns for Urgency, Importance, Example, Time Taken, and Do it? The matrix is divided into four quadrants: Do, Delegate, Eliminate, and Schedule. Below the matrix, there are three sections of text:

- 3. Forgetfulness / Missed Follow-ups**
 - "Oh no, I forgot that!"
 - Incomplete tasks or missing action items
 - Cause: Not using task trackers, relying on memory
 - Solution: Google Spaces, task reminders, checklists
- 4. Email Overload & Mismanagement**
 - Inbox cluttered, missing important emails
 - Feeling overwhelmed by daily emails
 - Cause: No filters/labels, no routine to clear inbox
 - Solution: Labels + Archive system, Inbox Zero practice
- 5. Disorganized Files & Resources**
 - Wasting time searching for the same file again and again
 - Cause: No folder structure, unlabelled files
 - Solution: Use Search Everything tool, proper naming conventions

The slide also features a calendar icon showing the date 31 and a checkmark icon.

The graphic features a dark blue background with a large white alarm clock in the center, held by two hands. The text "Master Your Workflow" is prominently displayed in white, with "Time, Tasks & Tools" in a smaller font below it. The date "May 30, 2025" and time "5:00 - 6:30pm" are shown in white boxes. The mode "Mode - Virtual" is indicated. The resource person's name "Bablu Purty" and title "Graphic Designer, WASSAN" are listed. The contact information "learningcircle.odisha@wassan.org" is provided at the bottom. Logos for "The Learning Circle" and "WASSAN" are visible in the top right corner.

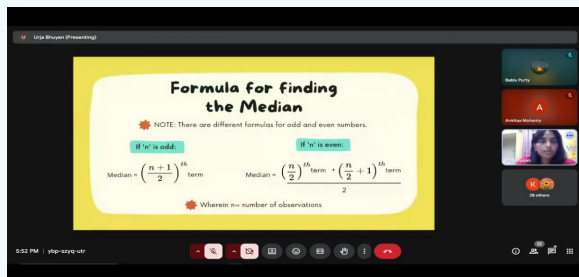
▶ Session 10 :

Python

Resource Person - Urja Bhuyan (WASSAN)

These sessions were also taken by the internal team members of the organisation in virtual mode. The sessions started with introduction to data, statistics with assigned tasks in each session, inferring and manipulation of data, data sorting and manipulation on Pandas, data cleaning, cleaning and visualising an entire data sheet, data visualisation and practical usability of coding with data set for visualisation. The session had concluded with assignments for practice and implementation in the day-to-day assignments. These sessions mainly focused on basic programming concepts and simple applications for data management in development contexts.

Key Output- Gained basic skills in data handling, cleaning, sorting, visualization and practical Python applications for development-related data management.



Session 11 : Knowledge-Sharing Session on Single Women Pilot Initiative

Resource Persons - Gender Team (WASSAN)

The session reflected on the experiences of the Single Women Pilot Initiative and the challenges faced by widows, deserted, and unmarried women, ranging from limited access to entitlements to social exclusion and fragile livelihoods. Experience from field visits highlighted the importance of collective platforms in helping women access social security schemes and livelihood opportunities. Community sensitization and convergence with government programmes were identified as critical for sustainability. The session underscored that the initiative is not only about economic support, but about restoring dignity, confidence, and agency among single women.

Key Output- Deepened understanding of challenges faced by single women and the importance of collective platforms, social-security access, livelihoods and convergence.

SINGLE WOMAN PILOT

Emerged out of recommendations from the Gender Analysis Committee, the Single Women Intervention intended to promote:



Single Women as
Farmers



Single Women as
Entrepreneurs



Single Women as
CRPs





**SINGLE WOMEN
INTERVENTION**

The Single Women Intervention

Addressing Vulnerability,
Promoting Inclusivity

 **March 20, 2026**

 **4:00 – 5:30pm**

Mode - Virtual

Resource Persons
• Gender Team, Odisha

 learningcircle.odisha@wassan.org



Collective Learning & Reflection

Over the course of these sessions, the Learning Circle initiative has evolved beyond a series of discussions into a shared space of trust and collective growth. Participants did not just exchange ideas, they shared field struggles, questioned assumptions, and reflected on what works and what does not in real-world contexts.

A key insight was the interconnected nature of development issues on pastoralism, rainfed farming, women's livelihoods, and climate resilience are deeply linked and must be understood as part of larger systems. Practical, field-based discussions made the learning grounded and relevant.

The inclusion of digital and emerging skills highlighted the need to balance social understanding with technological readiness. Above all, the initiative fostered a sense of community encouraging diverse voices, multilingual participation and collective growth.



Testimonials & Insights



Very good initiative by WASSAN to provide employees with an opportunity to strengthen their capacity and deepen their knowledge in relevant fields. This will empower them to become technically sound and increase their inner strength and confidence in their specific areas of work, beyond their organizational responsibilities. Such initiatives are truly tremendous, as they help both employees and the organization grow together.

payel@wassan.org

The Digital Communications Strategy sessions were innovative and new to explore, especially considering their high relevance in today's era. The curation and overall planning were very well executed.

sbehera@wassan.org

A good initiative by WASSAN.

josim@wassan.org

The tools are very effective for us. I am expecting that if there are any advanced or insight-based tools, they can be covered in future sessions.

Priyanka Kumari

We would like more sessions on the usage of AI tools for generating reports such as Excel and PowerPoint.

Silabhadra Digal

I want to learn more about Google tools like Google Forms and other features that we have not explored yet.

Akshay Patra

This kind of technical session is very useful for time and work management. We would like more sessions on this topic.

Vishal Kumar Sahoo

All the topics were very relevant and interesting for me.

Bhawani Shankar Meher

We need more practical session with in-depth practice.

bikash@wassan.org

All these topics were new for me, and they will be very useful. Thank you for covering them.

Sanjeeb Kumar Nayak

It was a good session, and we would like to learn more about how it can be integrated into day-to-day work.

uday333kalyanapu@gmail.com

Sessions like this are very important for our career growth. I really enjoyed the session.

Gaganbihari Pal



Watershed Support Services and Activities Network

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