



Pond renovation in progress - Sambalpur

Sanitation for all: Open defecation, a noticeable social illness rampant in southern Orissa causes sickness through water-borne diseases.

In the first phase, one hundred thirty-one households were identified by the Cluster Committee and 131 nos. of toilets got constructed, with an aim of attaining total sanitation for the villagers in the coming years. While the materials have been provided free by the project, the households contributed voluntary labour to construct the toilets.

Rejuvenating childhood through education: As literacy rate in the villages of Ghodahad dam cluster of Berhampur is very low and the dropout ratio in the schools is very high, five night schools have been established, with local educated unemployed youths imparting coaching to 157 tribal boys and girls of primary grade. Overwhelming response to the night-school has been noticed since its inception.

Enlightening lives: Two nos. of solar lights have been installed in Mahulpada, an un-electrified project village in Berhampur which has greatly cheered the villagers.

SUPPORTING LIVELIHOOD

Providing alternative sources of livelihood and enhancing the income level is another avowed objective of the project. Strategies have been developed after several rounds of discussion with project villagers and line department officials. Considering the short duration of the project and limited resources, the inputs to be provided for livelihood programmes were carefully selected, mostly to upscale the ongoing activities or to make the activity more productive by way of providing supplementary input



Distribution of HYV seeds & agricultural implements - Sambalpur

Construction of Boat for Ecotourism - Berhampur



Chick rearing unit - Berhampur

Construction of irrigation channel - Berhampur

Boosting Agriculture & Horticulture: In Padiabahal cluster of Sambalpur(s) division, six pump sets have been distributed in five villages and was kept under the charge of the VSS President. The pump sets are being used for agriculture and pond renovation works. The pump sets are hired on hourly basis by the villagers @ Rs. 10/hour and the collected money is used in pump set maintenance. Various HYV vegetable/fruits seeds e.g. Tomato, Watermelon, Ladiesfinger, Coriander, Green chilly, Bitter-gourd etc along with agricultural implements have been distributed to the villagers, both individually and to groups as decided by the beneficiaries in all the five project villages in Sambalpur(s) division.

Irrigation for Rainfed Areas: One Check-dam is under construction at Beheramal village, Sambalpur(s) division. One irrigation channel of 200 meter length has been constructed in Balighai village of Berhampur division.

Empowering Women: 5 nos. of WSHGs (72 members) have been identified in two project villages (Beheramal & Mahulpali) for promoting Backyard Poultry. In the first phase, about 500-600 chicks (Banaraj breed) have been provided (7-8 chicks per beneficiary). Once the programme shows signs of success, this would be upscaled.

Eco-tourism: Since the project site is based near Ghodahada reservoir, having Mugger crocodiles, and nearby Lakhari Valley Wildlife Sanctuary is famous as an elephant habitat, a twenty-five seater country boat has been constructed to promote tourism with an aim to boost local economy through eco-tourism.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

The three project sites are unique biodiversity spots and the project aims to attain good health and protection for the selected forest patches, both by way of strengthening protection and augmenting aided regeneration.

Regenerating Degraded Forests :Pre-planting operations, viz. survey, demarcation and silvicultural operations for rehabilitation of degraded forests have been completed in 200 ha forest areas (Beheramal & Kulcher Reserve Forest, Loida DPF) and Nursery developments have started in 3 villages' viz. Beheramal, Mahulpali, Basupali, Sambalpur(s) division. A nursery of 36,000 plants was developed in Burubandha village for plantation in 100 hectares of Gaida DPF, Berhampur.

Our Green Saviours: One Forest Protection Squad (Thengapali system) was formed in Sambalpur (s) division to prevent the timber mafias from cutting trees and to prevent illicit transport through these villages. The Barbara and Tamana reserve forests of Khurda division have also been attracting organised timber mafia from several places and particularly neighbouring Nayagarh district. In order to protect forests adjoining to their villages, the Cluster Committee in association with the Forest department has identified five youths who have been trained by the departmental staff to patrol the area and to act as informer. Establishment of a sustainable and vibrant community protection network is aimed in the coming years.

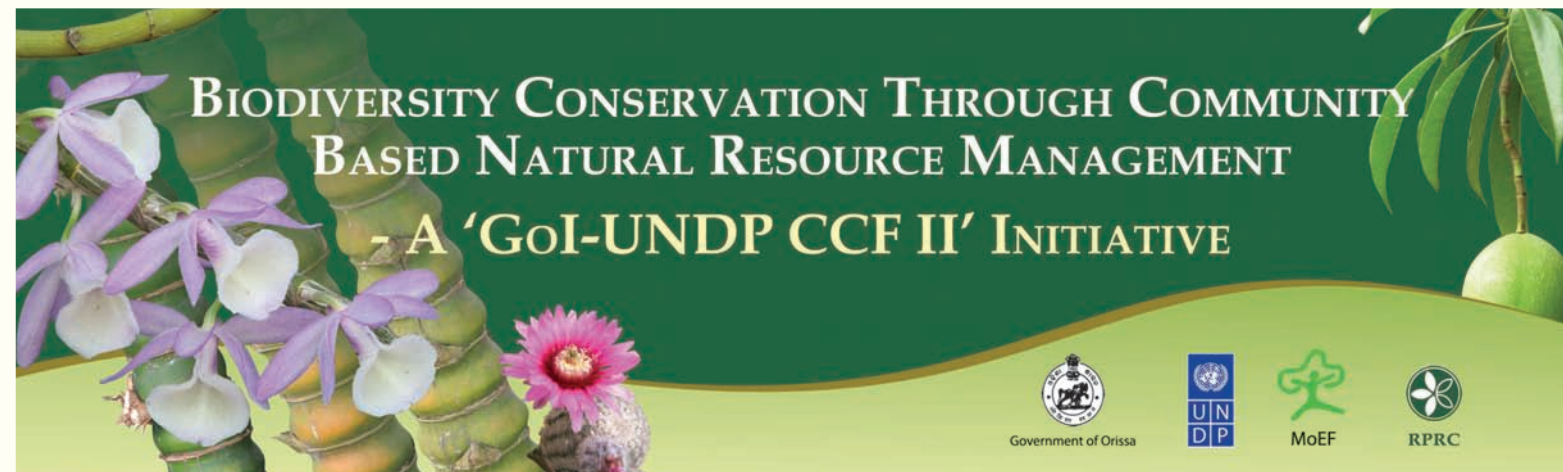


Pre-planting operations - Sambalpur & Berhampur

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ISSUE NO. 1

OCTOBER, 2008 - MARCH, 2009

Regional Plant Resource Centre

MESSAGES

Sri U. N. Behera, IAS
Secretary, F&E Dept.
Govt. of Orissa



I am glad to know that Regional Plant Resource Centre is bringing out this Newsletter on GoI-UNDP-CCF II project titled "Biodiversity Conservation through Community Based Natural Resource Management in the state of Orissa", relating to the project activities on a half-yearly basis.

In Orissa, a good chunk of population live close to forests and to them bioresources, mean their livelihood, shelter and saviours of their traditional knowledge. Thus, I believe our accountability towards both conservation and regeneration of biodiversity has multiplied in the milieu of alarming depletion of these life support systems as much as our concern has grown for the innumerable life forms that the ecosystem sustain. Partnering with the local rural communities in conservation and regeneration drive is essential precursor for achieving success in restoring the ecosystem, which the CBNRM project implemented by Regional Plant Resource Centre, is attempting to demonstrate.

This Newsletter will be helpful for different functionaries and stakeholders in understanding the progress made by the project, besides disseminating information and sharing knowledge on various issues relating to the biodiversity conservation. I expect that this particular project will aid in arresting the degradation of biodiversity leading to an enhanced socio-economic conditions of forest dwellers. I express my gratitude to UNDP and Ministry of Environment & Forests, Government of India for supporting the project.

I wish every success to the project & this publication.

Dr. A.K. Mahapatra, IFS
Chief Executive, RPRC



Experiences learnt from around the world, in conserving biodiversity and managing natural resources has established the inalienable linkage between natural communities and natural resources. Both have a right to exist and flourish. Foresters and Conservationists have therefore begun to consider the bio-resource users as an integral element of biodiversity and try to provide space in the management plan for both forest dependent communities and other components of the ecosystem. Since greater part of the livelihood of forest dwellers and rural poor is supported by natural resources and environmental products, any effort in sustaining the natural diversity has to also aim for providing alternative livelihood. But community based natural resource management faces several economic, social and institutional challenges. Regional Plant Resource Centre has come forward to make an experiment in this regard with support from Forest Department. A pilot project under funding from UNDP has been launched to demonstrate the conservation-livelihood linkage and to demonstrate the impact of caring for the environment through caring of local inhabitant's need. The approach adopted by RPRC is different from other forest based interventions both in its extent, scope and content.

We hope that the result of this pilot experiment would provide some vital clues to develop larger and successful CBNRM project in Orissa in future.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Livelihood of majority of the rural population in India is directly dependent on natural resources and elements of biodiversity in them. Ecological security is critical to the rural livelihoods because it provides for the survival of plant and animal species which have been the resource base of their sustenance. But ironically, continued dependence on natural resource bases has posed serious threats to biodiversity emanating from human activities; right from meeting household's need to paving way for the development projects for national interests. The result is unsustainable extraction, habitat loss & fragmentation, loss of crop livestock diversity and human-wildlife conflict. Since, the interdependence between livelihood and ecological security is inseparable, it makes the rural population a primary stakeholder and instrument in conserving biodiversity. Management of natural resources by community is hence a vital approach to ensure both conservation of biodiversity and augmentation of local livelihoods through empowering local community and community level institutions.

In this backdrop, Government of India (GoI) with assistance from United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has supported the project named "Biodiversity Conservation through Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) in the State of Orissa" which realizes the significance of developing a synergy between biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of natural resources through community mobilization. This pilot project also aims to demonstrate the impact of community participatory approach in enriching ecosystem, while unlocking income opportunities for marginalized section. The project got underway in April, 2008, and would continue upto 2011, with a budget of Rs. 250 lakhs.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION THROUGH COMMUNITY BASED NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT- A 'GoI-UNDP-CCF II' INITIATIVE

- Newsletter

This half yearly newsletter of the UNDP assisted Project will provide timely information relating to different project activities with a view to constantly improve quality of programme interventions.

STATE-LEVEL PARTNERS

The project is being implemented in four states; (Arunachal Pradesh, Chattisgarh, Jharkhand and Orissa) which are tribal dominated. The tribal population in these four states depends heavily on forests for their livelihoods and therefore will be largely benefited from various interventions proposed in this project. One implementing agency has been identified in each state, i.e., **GB Pant Institute of Environment and Forests in Arunachal Pradesh, Institute of Forest Productivity in Jharkhand, State Minor Forest Produce Development Corporation in Chattisgarh and Regional Plant Resource Centre** in Orissa, for implementation, coordination and monitoring of the project at state level. These state-level nodal agencies are helping the Project Implementing Agencies (PIAs) to identify and implement livelihood and biodiversity conservation interventions besides coordinating with MoEF and funding partner (UNDP) at national level.

In Orissa, the PIA is the DFO & the project is being implemented by Forest Department in Ghodahad Dam cluster of Digapahandi Range, Berhampur Forest Division, Padiabahal cluster of Padiabahal Range, Sambalpur(s) Forest Division and Niladriprasada cluster of Balugaon Range, Khurda Forest Divisions (5-6 villages covered in each cluster). The implementation got underway in October 2008.



State Level Partners Meet at RPRC - 25.01.2008

OUR TARGET AREAS

In Berhampur division (Coastal Southern Orissa) six villages viz. **Balighai, Burubandha, Burudanga, Siripur, Mahulapada and Padmanavpur** (Keuta Sahi) are selected as the project villages where conservation of Wetland biodiversity in Ghodahada reservoir is the major issue. The livelihood of fishermen in the habitat of Muggar crocodiles, and Podu/Shifting Cultivation (in Gaida DPF) are other concerns to be addressed. Interventions are centred on increasing the feed-base (fish) in the reservoir, so that both the fishermen and crocodiles benefit. Reduction of dependence on reservoir fishing by supporting alternative livelihood activities is one of the project objectives.

In Khurda division (Coastal Eastern Orissa), 6 villages viz. **Niladriprasada, Raidiha, Mudulidaha, Krushnatar, Dodagobinda Nuasahi and Silingpada** constitute the selected target area. The critical issues here to be attended are prevention of illicit felling of Teak trees in Tamana RF, and restoration of canes/rattans habitat. *Saraca asoka* - the most valuable medicinal plant of the area is the project focus for conservation. The project aims to establish a community based cane management area both in the interest of extractors and survival of four Cane species.



Cane fruit collection - Niladri Prasad Cluster

Ghodahada Dam - Berhampur



Dry Deciduous Forests of Padiabahal Cluster

Muggar Crocodile of Ghodahada Reservoir

In Sambalpur(s) division (in Western Orissa) 5 villages viz. **Laida, Mahulpali, Basupali, Tampergarh and Beheramal** have been selected to be covered under the project as these villages face problems of illicit tree felling in Beheramal RF, Kulchar RF, Laida DPF. Unsustainable firewood & timber extraction (a major livelihood support of villagers), lack of irrigation facility and scarcity of water for drinking & domestic purposes are the issues to be tackled. Regenerating biodiversity and promoting rejuvenation of the natural forest cover through community support is the major challenge.

NATIONAL PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE

The 1st Empowered Project Steering Committee meeting was held on 23rd April, 2007 at New Delhi to finalize the broad project objectives, criteria for site identification as per MoEF and UNDP norms.

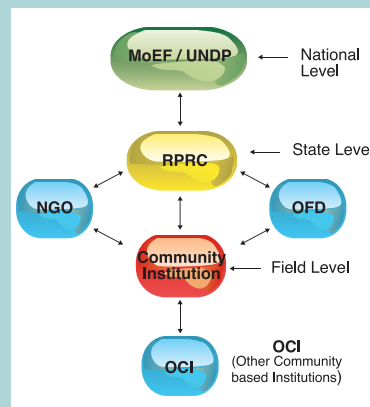


NSC meeting - Raipur (16.01.2009)

The EPSC has designated MoEF, GoI as the Project Executing Agency at the National Level. In the 2nd EPSC meeting held on 30th May, 2008 at Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh, resolution was taken towards early identification of partner organizations, finalization of Annual work plan-08 and consolidated 3 years work plan, strengthening of at least one local institution/ agency to sustain activities after project period. Besides the EPSC meetings, the National Steering Committee also met on 16th January, 2009 at Raipur, Chattisgarh. The Committee advised early submission of Annual work plan along with fund requirement for 2009 to MoEF, GoI and formation of a State-level Steering Committee in each of the project implementing state.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT IN ORISSA

At the state level RPRC is the Nodal Agency, which coordinates, monitors and facilitates project implementation led by Chief Executive Dr.A.K.Mahapatra, supported by one Project Coordinator and one Project Research Fellow. At division level, office of the DFO is acting as the Project Implementation Agency (PIA) and at community level the project is being executed by a Village Cluster Committee comprising of members from the cluster of 5-6 selected villages, exclusively constituted for the purpose.



The Cluster General Body is formed by 'members of Van Surakhya Samitis'/ 'selected representatives' of the project villages and Cluster Executive Committee by members from the project villages & is headed by a 'President' elected by the community, with Forester as 'Member Secretary'. The Forest Range Officer as the 'Team Leader' is providing necessary guidance & monitoring the project, while NGOs and Animators engaged for the purpose are facilitating community mobilisation, sensitisation and capacity building processes. 'Nehru Seva Sangha' in Khurda division, 'ISRD' in Berhampur division and 'UPCARS' in Sambalpur(s) division are the NGOs working for the UNDP project.

PROJECT INTERVENTIONS

Community Institution Building

In each of the three divisions, the apex decision-making and execution body at cluster/villages-level, viz. Village Cluster Committees (VCC) have been formed and the office bearers of these committees have been elected. To ensure balance gender, 1/3rd of the committee is represented by women. Besides, village level forest committees (VSS) have been formed and/or strengthened to identify and prioritise local needs, to build consensus, forward the same to the Cluster Committees and facilitate programme execution. Separate bank accounts have been opened for transacting project fund at PIA and Cluster Committee level.



Women in Niladri Prasad Cluster involved in Micro Planning

CF, Sambalpur & CE, RPRC addressing villagers in Padiabahal Cluster

Community Sensitization & Mobilization

Sensitization programmes, through organising video shows on biodiversity conservation, forest & wildlife protection and sanitation were conducted during March 2009 in all the 6 project villages in Berhampur, where 'Gram Vikas' actively supported the cause. As a measure of awareness generation on biodiversity conservation and Forest Protection, a Cycle Rally was organized in Sambalpur(s) division in the month of February, 2009, wherein 50 participants from all the five project villages participated and toured the adjoining villages exhibiting banners and slogans.



The public display of the villagers' interest to join the forest department in preventing illicit extraction of forest goods from adjoining 'Badrama Wildlife Sanctuary' took the smugglers by surprise and has reportedly put them on back foot. The first seed of people's participation to conserve biodiversity in the area has been sown.

Capacity Building

Empowering Women to improve household income: In Sambalpur (South) division, training on tailoring is being given in five villages, after identifying interested women trainees and eligible trainers from the locality. Twenty-two tailoring machines have been distributed to the women members of the self help groups. 5 nos. of women self help groups (72 members) in two project villages (Beheramal & Mahulpali) have been trained by Veterinary Doctor on Backyard Poultry-rearing process, maintenance of chicks, vaccination, and health care. Veterinary experts were also invited at regular intervals to interact with the beneficiaries about their activities and to address the rearing related problems.



Training on Tailoring in Padiabahal Cluster - Sambalpur



Micro Planning by VCC in Niladri Prasad Cluster - Khurda

Exposure visit to Nuapada

Exposure to Successful Livelihood Initiatives: A 30-member team (including the VSS/VCC representatives, WSHG representatives, Animator, NGO representatives and forest dept. officials) went on an Exposure visit to the Model Project sites of 'WORLP' in Nuapada district, Orissa, in March '09 to gain a first hand experience on On-farm, Off-farm livelihood activities initiated under the WORLP Project. Besides being trained on successful community institution building, rapport building, conflict resolution, SHG management, they also gained ideas on animal husbandry practices from 'WORLP' and successful village entrepreneurs of the locality.

Empowering Primary Stakeholders: Training programmes on record keeping, nursery development and micro planning with special emphasis on livelihood and biodiversity resource planning has been completed for the VCC and VSS members in Berhampur division.

LINKING WITH PEOPLE

Developing link and winning the confidence of people is the first hurdle every community based project has to overcome. In order to develop a continued rapport with the villagers, entry-point interventions are planned to address some immediate need for community infrastructure need. Priorities were given to work which specifically benefit the marginalized sections of the community.

Providing drinking water facility: Pond renovation work (cleaning and leveling) has been completed in two villages in Sambalpur(s) division to increase water retention level for domestic consumption as the project area is rain-fed and suffers acute water-scarcity during the dry periods. Three tube-wells have been constructed to support drinking water need in Balighai, Burubandha and Burudanga villages in Berhampur division (1 in each village).

Improving human and livestock health: Five livestock treatment and vaccination camps for livestock health improvement and six Health Camps for villagers have been organized during 2008 covering around 500-700 villagers in the five project villages of Sambalpur(s) division.



Health camps & livestock vaccination camps in Padiabahal Cluster - Sambalpur

Installation of Solar light - Berhampur