



A Quarterly Newsletter of **OFSDP**, Phase-II

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From Project Director's Desk

Odisha Forestry Sector Development Project, Phase-II aims at sustainable forest management through participatory planning and inclusive growth of community by promotion of sustainable livelihood through inter-sectoral convergence. The project also envisages to contribute in providing alternative sources of income for the forest fringe dwelling communities through its Income Generation Activities (IGA) promotion component. This is aimed to maximize the resource mobilization for the target beneficiaries.

Divisional Management Units are encouraged to augment livelihood promotion including the Income Generation Activities in the project villages through target VSS and SHGs.

The socio-economic impact of the inter-sectoral convergence undertaken at the VSS level are reflected in the steady growth of access to resources for the communities and project stakeholders. In order to recognise and collate the impact of VSS level interventions of the project, a special edition of Banayan Newsletter has been assigned which highlights some of the success stories of the Divisions. The efforts of OFSDP-II project personnel at ground level are showcased through these community focussed Case Studies and Success Stories. On the basis of community's response and adoption of livelihood initiatives, there is an opportunity to illuminate the Livelihood Improvement planning process and implementation focus in the project areas.

In this special edition of Banayan, Forest Divisions covered under OFSDP-II project, namely; Baripada, Rairangpur and Karanjia of Baripada Circle have been covered. Apart from convergence activities, progress on other project components like community mobilisation and capacity building in these Divisions have also been highlighted in this issue.

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PCCF (Projects) & Project Director
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"I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which women have achieved"

-B.R. Ambedkar



SUCCESS STORIES FROM RAIRANGPUR DMU

MAIZE CULTIVATION: A VIABLE ALTERNATE LIVELIHOOD SOURCE OF WOMEN MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

Constant innovations are necessary in order to achieve desired results in community development programmes. It is very important in the planning and implementation of economically beneficial livelihood opportunities. Under Rairangpur Forest Division, several round of pro-active discussions between FMU Coordinators and ITDA, Rairangpur have paved the way for a collective decision to grow Maize crop in selected areas as an alternate to traditional Rabi crop and vegetable farming. This was attempted initially in Manbir VSS. The VSS in consultation with the FMU Coordinators identified prospective farmers who are prepared to grow Maize with recommended package of practice in their land. Finally, 12 numbers of beneficiaries came forward with a total 17 Acre of land for cultivation.

In order to support this initiative of the women farmer, the Bahalda FMU in collaboration with ITDA, Rairangpur provided 8 KG of hybrid Maize seed under the FADP scheme to the farmer. The seeds were sown by the farmer under the guidance of the FMU team, Assistant Agricultural Officer and Livelihood expert of ITDA.

In this process a woman farmer Smt Champabati Bage, a traditional vegetable grower and a member of the VSS, opted for cultivating Maize as an alternative crop after the OFSDP-II mobilization activity. Regular visits and supervision by FMU Coordinators and other OFSDP-II field officials along with the Livelihood expert of ITDA encouraged the woman farmer to adopt right procedure for Maize farming. She was guided on implementation of proper package of practice for the Maize crop. At the end of the harvesting season, she reaped good benefit out of this innovative farm initiative. At present the crop has been harvested and production of 14.63 quintal was recorded which is found to be better than other traditional Rabi crop. She was also connected to the buyers and the ready market available for her new produce which is completely hassle free activity. Without any interference of middleman, in the first season she could fetch around Rs. 2000 per quintal. The total income she received from the sale of Maize is Rs 29,260/- with a profitable cost-benefit ratio. Now Smt Champabati Bage is planning to expand the cultivation to large area as she has understood that Maize cultivation is a profitable alternative cash crop for augmenting her livelihood.



Members of Manbir VSS receiving Maize seeds from ITDA, Rairangpur



Champabti Bage with her Maize cultivated land and the produces

After witnessing the tangible success of Smt Bage, it is noticed that other farmers who were reluctant to switch over to Maize crop as alternative to subsistence vegetable cultivation, are now ready to cultivate Maize crop in next season and they are actively coordinating with the OFSDP-II officials for Maize seed supply for the next season crop.

Manbir VSS is an example of new innovations in sustainable farming and sensitization of stakeholders with right mix of technical and financial support through inter-sectoral convergence. The farmers were looking for an alternate crop

since long time to augment their traditional subsistence on Rabi crops. Ensuring good market price for the produce without any interference of traditional middle men is directly beneficial to the community members which is assuring augmenting their income. Through cultivation of hybrid Maize and its timely production along with sizeable profit has brought them the desired relief from economic constraint by providing good profitable income. This case also proves that if the extension machinery is effective in its service and delivery, desirable changes can be quickly brought in the traditional subsistence livelihood pattern of the farmers living in forest fringe areas.

NOVEL INITIATIVE BY MAA LAXMI SHG AT BESRAKACHA VSS.

Besrakacha is one of the remote villages located in the fringes of Gorumahisani Forest Area. The village is drastically effected by frequent mining activity. The soil erosion from the upper ridge and slit deposits cause degradation of in situ upper layer of the soil. This adversely effects the farm forestry, due to soil erosion and due to the absence of water in the natural streams, OFSDP-II, Rairangpur thoroughly examined the environmental and socio economic scenario of the village and initiated livelihood intervention to intensify the off farm activity for a sustainable livelihood stability.

Women SHGs are key personnel to bring in the economic stability in a village. Maa Laxmi SHG consists of 10 members selected for the livelihood intervention after analysis of the SHG grading and financial conditions. A SWOT analysis was coordinated by SMS (Livelihood) along with Livelihood

Coordinator. The SWOT analysis report recommended the Mushroom cultivation programme in convergence with the Horticulture Department, Rairangpur.

The group has started with 1500 beds round the year, with both straw mushroom of 800 beds and Oyster Mushroom of 700 beds till today. They produced 15 qntl. of products and the total cost of production is Rs. 1,34,000/- including shed, water tank, sprayer & electricity etc. The group has been selling the product at nearby local market of Gorumahisani Haat and sometimes in Rairangpur market in the range of Rs. 150 to 200 per kg. In the first spell, total selling price reported was around Rs. 2.26 Lakh and the SHG made net profit of around Rs. 91,000/- in the beginning. Currently, the buyers are directly collecting the produce from the village.



Mushroom Cultivation Training programme at the VSS



Practical Demonstration to SHG members by OFSDP-II functionaries



Oyster Mushroom beds ready for plucking



Monitoring and hand holding support by Horticulture Department & DDH, Rairangpur

STORY OF GINGER FARMING IN RAYASAH VSS

Ganga Hembram, the President of Rayasahi VSS of Rairangpur FMU under Rairangpur DMU is a marginal farmer traditionally cultivating paddy. He came in contact with the project personnel who facilitated the farmer to switch over to ginger (spices) cultivation which is more profitable through convergence with ITDA, Rairangpur. After his interaction with the project staff, Ganga Hembram has been motivated to start the Ginger cultivation, initially in 0.5 acre of upland, which is very close to forest area. In the beginning he has uprooted the weeds and other plants from the land and ploughed the land. ITDA has procured the hybrid planting materials of Ginger like Mahima and Varada varieties from IISR and supplied to Shri. Ganga Hembram who planted these materials in his field. He carried out the land preparation, application of compost along with calcium oxide before sowing the seeds under the guidance of Horticulture Department. He has adopted proper recommended practices for good production of ginger and expecting 10-12 qntl of ginger from his small

area cultivated. The minimum price of ginger in local market around Rs. 80/- per kg and hence the income will be near about one lakh from a 0.5 Ac of his degraded land patch. Shri Ganga Hembram, the marginal farmer is a happy man and other farmers are interested to go for similar farming during coming season.



Community member with his Ginger cultivated land

DISTRIBUTION OF "POWER TILLER": AN INITIATIVE OF MAA AMBIKA SHG IN KALATAMAK VSS

Kalatamak VSS consists of 92 households comprising a population of 285. All households belong to Schedule Tribe. This VSS is formed under in Batch-II of OFSDP-II in Bisoi FMU under Rairangpur Forest Division, of Mayurbhanj District. The VSS is situated 36 km away from NH-49 (Bisoi) and 42 km from Rairangpur. It is strongly united village and cooperate well with the Orissa Forestry Sector Development Project Phage- II (OFSDP-II) in implementing the interventions related to sustainable forest management and livelihood

improvement which are identified through need-based survey. All households fall under the BPL category and at the same time they are forest dependents, the situation justifies and facilitates the implementation of the Project. The households, possessing small land patches to cultivate and mainly dependent on subsistence agriculture and farm labor work for their livelihood. In the recent past, the VSS members did not have much communication with the line Departments other than the Forest Department. After

implementation of the OFSDP-II, the villagers gradually learnt how to improve their socio-economic situation through adopting improved livelihood options.

Under this VSS, six numbers of SGH groups were existing, however, all these SHGs were defunct. The FMU team had series of meetings with the VSS and SHG members and as a result, the members gained confidence to take up the activities to support their livelihood without wasting further time. Subsequently the FMU team had meetings with different Line Departments in order to explore gainful livelihood opportunities for the villages. Due to this effort, the ITDA came forward to help the SHGs to take up income generating activities for sustainable livelihood and offered Rs. 1 lakh through Mission Jivika Scheme to one of the leading SHGs under the VSS. The FMU team then did the gradation of all existing SHGs on different aspects and selected Maa Ambika SHG with the ten ST Women members as the best



functioning SHG. The FMU team facilitated to prepare all the documents required for ITDA's support.

Maa Ambika SHG requested to get a power tiller with that money and seeking the help from the FMU team to arrange another Rs.1 lakh loan to purchase the power tiller. After exploring the loan possibilities in different banks, they were successful to get one lakh loan from the Odisha Gramya Bank, Sargoda. After the loan amount got credited to the SHG account, the FMU team helped the SHG to purchase the Power tiller from the dealer. During the cultivation season of 2021-22 Maa Ambika SHG earned Rs. 50,000/- by lending the power tiller on rental basis to the farmers who wanted to use it in their field for cultivation. The SHG members started repaying the loan in installments to the bank from this earning. They are also planning to increase their earning so as to support their livelihood. Their hope for changing their socio-economic status by putting the power tiller in proper use will be realized soon.



Members of the Maa Ambika SHG with the Power Tiller

PLANTATION: A SUCCESS STORY OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN NARANPUR VSS

Odisha Forestry Sector Development Project Phase –II (OFSDP-II) is a multidimensional programme with inputs on providing guaranteed wage employment, creating durable assets and strengthening the livelihood resource base of the rural households. Focus on sustainable natural resource management and water conservation measures undertaken by the project have been helpful in enhancing the land productivity in the project area. Interventions including ANR Plantation, AR Plantation & Soil Conservation Measure (SMC) have made a difference to the lives of the poor. The livelihood interventions under OFSDP-II have helped in augmenting rural income and improved skills for diversification of earning opportunities of poor households.

In order to meet the domestic consumption needs of the villagers for fuel wood, small timber for construction, fodder and other NTFPs and at the same time to increase the green cover in the village, several discussions between VSS members and project personnel of this Project were held. These discussions have led to the initiation of afforestation programmes in the village on revenue lands. In addition, some parts of Reserve Forest, primarily the barren hillocks were also included in this afforestation component in the project. This afforestation plan was also included in micro plan of this VSS and passed in the GB and EC meetings, and finally in the Gram Sabha. As per this plan, in the year 2018-19, an area, covering 8 ha. under AR plantation for fuel &

fodder purpose and 10 ha. area under ANR plantation was finalized to be taken up through plantation activity under the aegis of OFSDP-II. This total 18 ha of area in the village was totally barren hillocks covered by weeds.

Both ANR-200 & AR – Fuel & Fodder plantation under OFSDP-II were taken up in the Joint Forest Management Committees along with other interventions like SMC works, DLT, fire line operation and so on.

The plantation specifically included species like Kanchan, Subabul, Gambhari, Jamu, Sirish, Sisoo, Karanja, Acacia, Tentuli, Simarua, Arjun, Harida and Bahada. Successful plantation was done along with natural regeneration

which covered barren hillocks which was converted into a green landscape. Since the hillocks also serve as the grazing grounds for the village cattle, now it fulfils the fodder requirement of VSS community. As per the demand of local community, fodder species were planted in some parts of the hillocks. The usufruct yielding trees were planted on the foot hills to ensure benefits to the local community. The forest / tree cover in those hillocks also help to enhance carbon sequestration in addition to meeting the villagers' requirement for fuel, fodder, timber & NTFPs. In total 337 man days were created for the plantation works undertaken in the VSS.



Community Mobilization & Plantation Activities in Naranpur VSS

RESTORATION OF OPEN FOREST THROUGH PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION: A SUCCESS STORY OF ANR AND GAP PLANTATION

Dahupani VSS of Rairangpur Range under Rairangpur Forest Division is strategically located at Odisha- Jharkhand boarder. This VSS plays a crucial role in preventing forest fire spreading from Jharkhand side during the fire season every year due to pro-active protection measures taken up by the VSS members. The VSS has effectively created external fire line along Odisha-Jharkhand boarder and internal fire lines

within the VSS area. Because of the strenuous fire protection efforts of VSS, no forest fire has been detected inside the VSS area during last 5 years.

During 2020-21, ANR plantation was taken up in 106 ha. area under OFSDP-II. The plantation was done @ 200 plants /ha in Jari Reserve Forest with the active co-operation of the VSS members led by the Member Secretary cum Forest

Guard, VSS President, Treasurer and the two Animators. The plantation is in excellent condition and fencing has been done by the VSS members voluntarily to protect the plantation from biotic interference. The species planted are Neem, Karanja, Harida, Bahada, Asan, Amla, Sisoo, Gambhari, Arjun, Char, Sirish, Mahua, & Kusum etc. The average height of the standing plants is 5.5 ft. with 100% survival percentage.

The VSS is adopting Thengapali system to protect Jari RF as well as new plantation carried out under ANR. Due to the stringent protection measures adopted by the VSS, the wild animal population viz. wild pig, barking deer, Indian hare etc. are increasing gradually. Due to increase in browsable layer a few spotted deer are now found in the VSS area. Besides, the forest area protected by Dahupani VSS is regenerating well.



Different stages of ANR-200 taken up at Dahupani VSS in Jari Reserve Forest

SUCCESS STORIES FROM BARIPADA DMU

POULTRY FARMING SHOWS THE WAY TO SUSTAIN FOR VSS MEMBERS DURING CORONA PANDEMIC

Sulisahi VSS is situated 20 km far from Bangriposi block and a part of this VSS is linked with Similipal-Biosphere Reserve which is endowed with natural beauty and wealth. The VSS is consisting of three small villages viz. Sulisahi, Bhalubasa and Hessledihi. The total households in the village is 283. The members of VSS have adopted poultry farming as a livelihood activity to supplement the household income with the help and guidance of the OFSDP-II project personnel. Initially 63 households started the activity which has now been extended to all houses in the village.

Rearing of poultry has proved to be a self-sustaining allied farming activity adopted by the members of VSS. In this

activity, both the male and female members of the village households participate, bringing a sense of equality in achieving financial gain. The initiatives of VSS members is now one of the prime example of livelihood promotion through poultry farming in the state. It is the result of years of dedication, loyalty and hard work of the SHG members and their vision of mitigating impacts of poverty in rural areas.

The year 2021 has been a lean year in terms of household income generation to mitigate the financial constraint faced by the village families due to pandemic COVID-19. During the first wave, many of the local breeds like Banaraj and Kalinga Brown which had a good market in the state, faced sluggish

demand due to low consumption by the meat eaters and short supply due to temporary stoppage of transportation system. The poultry business had faced a blow, causing enormous distress to thousands of poor and marginal farmers. At present, the market is reviving and bringing their consumers back. The demand has been reviving with increasing activities. In absence of large scale demand across



the state, the VSS supplied minimum productions locally to different government agencies around to stay afloat in the business. The VSS members are setting examples by their initiatives to improve their livelihood through poultry farming and supporting their families with the substantially augmented income. And now the rest of VSS members are motivated and they are requesting the Forest Department to make arrangements to supply chicks for rearing.



Poultry farming activity in Suliasahi VSS

SUCCESS STORY ON PLANTATION PROGRAM THROUGH COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION

Odisha Forest Sector Development Project, Phase- II is a major project under Forest, Environment & Climate Change Department in which afforestation related activities and soil moisture conservation works are implemented through people participation under Joint Forest Management.

Among the six FMUs in Baripada DMU, Dukura FMU covered 22 nos of VSS in 1st Batch in this Project. These VSSs are located right from the foot of Simlipal Forest to border of Balasore. The members of these VSSs have understood the importance of protecting forests and need for its regeneration through plantation by the continuous efforts on awareness building for last 3 years in the form of meetings and trainings by Forest Department and project personnel. The main aim and objective of the OFSDP-II is to improve the condition

of adjoining degraded forest. Out of 22 VSS committees, 12 Committees came forward to take up massive plantation program during this year 2021-22 in vacant spaces of the assigned area as well as outside assigned area with the seedlings supplied by the Forest Department. The related works like pitting, planting, watch & ward have been taken up by the members of VSS free of cost. In this process 10,000 seedlings have been planted in different VSSs. This change of attitude and approach of the villagers towards forest protection and management through plantation was possible due to the impact of implementation of OFSDP-II. The villagers are now voluntarily willing to take care of the seedlings planted and strongly desire to regain the past vibrance of Simlipal Biosphere Reserve.



Community Mobilization & Plantation Activities in Dukura FMU under Baripada DMU

ENROLLMENT FOR LABOUR CARD UNDER E-SHRAM PROGRAM IN CONVERGENCE WITH CSC E-GOVERNANCE

Most forest fringe dwellers in the OFSDP Phase-II Project area are being engaged as labour in various scheme of Govt. of Odisha as well as Govt. of India. But they were unorganized prior to their involvement in the project. They were not getting the actual wages for their labour as decided by the Government from time to time. For this reason, Ministry of Labour & Employment, Govt. of India has initiated a program called E- Shram all over the country for the benefit of un-organized labourers.

With this initiative the project staff motivated the villagers of Jhinkpahadi VSS for the benefit of forest as well as the forest dwellers in association with the project OFSDP-II and registered them with no cost through convergence with CSC

E-Governance Services India Ltd. Around 239 unorganized labour from 49 House Hold has been registered and got their first labour card issued by Ministry of Labour & Employment. Besides, the above linkage, the labourers also get benefit like EPF Facility, direct enrollment in PMJJBY & crediting of financial assistance to their account from Govt. during the pandemic situation. With this introduction of E- Shram program as well as for their livelihood improvement, the project is being carried out all over the area of rest 19 VSS working under Bangriposi FMU of Baripada DMU. This initiative has brought in accountability and transparency in implementation of Government schemes for the villagers.



Community members enrolled under e-SHRAM Programme

SUCCESS STORIES FROM KARANJIA DMU

CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME FOR THE VSS MEMBERS ON REVOLVING FUND MANAGEMENT IN DUDHIANI FMU, KARANJIA DMU

In order to enable the SHG members to self-sustain and manage the revolving fund, a six days' capacity building training programme was organised for Batch –I & II VSS members in Dudhiani FMU, Karanjia DMU. This CB programme was for the LAC (Loan Appraisal Committee) members at the VSS level. The LAC's were formed for the purpose to provide loan from the Revolving Fund from VSS to SHG, CIG and PoP by following the guidelines on Revolving Fund management with proper procedures. The main responsibility of the LAC is to give priority for disbursement of loan on the basis of need and ground reality for increasing the IGA related activities at the VSS level, scrutinized the loan application form along with business plan and verify the credibility and

experience of members in managing micro enterprise etc. The VSS President, Member Secretary, Treasurer, Animators and other selected one to two members of the VSS are the members of the LAC. Accordingly, total six numbers of CB programme were organised in both Batch I & II VSS and total 220 members belonging to 40 VSSs were trained. The LAC members trained on management of the RF, loan disbursement procedures, process involved in the fund disbursement, eligibility criteria, repayment status, interest, role and responsibility of stakeholders, to explain to them concept of RF in promoting the IGA activities at the VSS level and clarity on maintaining the documents for utilization of Revolving Fund.



Training programme on Revolving fund at Dudhiani FMU

MEGA PLANTATION DRIVE IN KARANJIA DMU

The Vana Mahotsav week observed by the Karanja DMU was instrumental to increase the forest cover through mega plantation drive which was undertaken on 1st of July 2021. Although this occasion is observed by the Forest Department during every year, this year the Vana Mahotsav was celebrated in Batch –III & IV VSS in Karanja DMU under OFSDP-II to provide multiple benefits like alternative fuel, increase production of food resources, create shelter-belts around fields to increase productivity and to prevent soil erosion etc. through plantation drive.

The Vana Mahotsav was first started in Ghodaghaguri VSS Batch – III, Karanja FMU. The DMU Chief, Tahasildar, Karanja Block, Fire Officer-Karanja, VSS president and other VSS members were present during the plantation ceremony. Total assigned area of Ghodaghaguri is 141 Ha (90 ha under

ANR plantation & 9 ha under AR Plantation). A total 41800 nos of different varieties of plants were planted (Karanja - 9000, Neem - 1000, Sisoo - 1000, under ANR@200, Karanja - 10000, Neem - 4780, Amla - 1000, Sisoo - 1820 under ANR@400, Badchakunda - 3500, Bad chakunda - 1500, Gambhari - 2000, Babul - 3000, Sirisoo - 1000 under Fuel & Fodder, Karanja - 500, Sisu-500, Amla - 200, Neem - 1000 under NTFP). All the VSS members were involved during the plantation in their own assigned forest area through OFSDP-II.

At the end, the DMU Chief, Tahasildar, Fire Officer as well as the VSS President appealed and administered an oath to the VSS members to protect the forest and increase the forest cover to save the environment for the interest of the health of earth.



Plantation Drive undertaken in Karanja Forest Division



PHOTO GALLERY



DLT Works in JFM at Purunapani VSS, Karanjia DMU



Non JFM DLT at Rengalbeda VSS, Karanjia DMU



Plantation of Fuel Fodder at Danuabaliposi VSS, Karanjia DMU



Fuel Fodder Plantation at Daldali VSS in Betanati FMU



ROWHS at Daladali VSS in Betanati Range of Baripada DMU



Plantation at Chhadakata VSS in Baripada DMU



Training on RF Guideline in Itamundia VSS, Baripada DMU



Sal leaf stiticking by community members in Itamundia VSS, Baripada DMU



Power Tiller to Lete Gosayana SHG at Haldiboni VSS, Bahalda, Rairangpur. Convergence with ITDA, Rairangpur



Sewing Machine to Baba Tilla SHG of Kudarsahi VSS, Rairangpur DMU



Mustard Cultivation at Pundida VSS, Rairangpur DMU



VSS Building cum IGA Facilitation Center, Badakedum VSS, Rairangpur DMU

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your comments
and inputs to:**

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