

# **ECO-ALLIANCE PROJECT**

## **HALF YEARLY PROGRESS REPORT**

**Jan-June 2014**

The half year of 2014 saw many significant initiatives being taken and various grassroots level activities being done for the effective implementation of Eco-Alliance project that is aimed at protection of community rights for natural resources and people based conservation. For ensuring the rights over the natural resources of livelihood of the tribal people, major thrust was given on the awareness generation and capacity building of the community people through various trainings, meetings and literacy camps. In context of conservation of forest and forest produce, remarkable activities have been undertaken to motivate and encourage the people to save forest from fire and other degrading factors. Also in many areas plantation was undertaken at a large scale to restore the natural resources and natural resources as well as wild food were documented. Different traditional water resources are repaired and renovated to be utilized for the domestic and agricultural purpose by the people. For the economic sustainability, first hand support was provided for collection and marketing of the NTFPs. The attention of administration was drawn for the proper implementation of pro-tribal acts and policies basically FRA and PESA. With the above efforts, Gramsabhas have been strengthened and community have become conscious to protect their rights over natural resources.

The major activities under different programmes, which are being done during Jan-June 2014 by all the partner organizations, are provided as under

### **1. Rural Awareness Programmes**

- MSS organized 20 village level meetings being attended by 671 men and 276 women. Major topics being discussed are natural resources of livelihood, conservation of forest, water resources and pollution. They also discussed about various problems arising from deforestation like irregularities in rain, destruction of ecological balance, reduction of forest produce which affects both human and animals. People are also made aware of FRA, its application related process and rights of Gramsabha.
- On 13<sup>th</sup> May 2014 awareness meetings were held with lakh farmers in villages of Thithai thangar and Sisai blocks by PCK. 20 farmers had faced the first of its kind problem of death of lakh insects. Thus they inquired about the problem and the same also intimated to lakh research centre.
- An awareness meeting was held in the Mudpar village (Sarona) by JSS with rural tribal and community leaders. 30 people from the project area had participated in the meeting. In the meeting it was instructed to represent the proceeding by the applicants for the community forest act at the sub-divisional level.

- NIRMAN has conducted programmes for creating awareness on traditional bio diversity based mix cropping and 320 men and 30 women of 10 villages have participated the programme.

## **2. Block Level Workshop**

- MSS organized 4 block level meetings in which 171 men and 87 women had participated. The topics being covered in the meeting were damage caused to forest due to fire, method of collecting forest produce without harming the small plants and FRA. Also people are made aware of the progress of 7 community claim with regard to FRA being applied last year and the related proceedings in the assembly are also communicated.
- A block level meeting was held by JSS with panchayat representatives, secretaries, representatives of forest right committee and village heads on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2014 at Baredbhta, Kanker.21 people of project village and other villages had participated in the meeting. In the meeting the sarpanch and secretaries were given the responsibilities to precede the panchayat level delegation and conducting gram sabha for the community application of forest act. Besides JSS also directed all the stakeholders on their role and accountability for effective implementation of eco-alliance program.
- NIRMAN has covered around 701 men and 17 women of 10 villages under village & block level meetings for awareness of PESA and FRA acts in the last 6 months.
- Two block level meetings were organized by LEAF and interaction was done with villagers on the subject of plantation of fuel woods and thorny plants
- GK had organized 2 block level meetings for creation of awareness in people regarding benefit of participation in Gramsabha. In another block level meeting, people are encouraged to apply for work under NREGA, and villagers of 3 villages have filled the application form and got 39 days of work which 17 days more than other villages.

## **3. Maintenance and Plantation of sacred groves**

- Various meetings were held for discussion on conservation of forest and forest produce by MSS and after the extensive discussion it was finalized that with the co-operation and collaboration of the organization, the indigenous people use their traditional techniques for collection of forest produce and plantation of herbal medicine plants.
- LEAF has been continuing the maintenance work in three sacred groves i.e. Sandh karmari's Mawalikot, Aanwrabhata's khodiyabhairam and kotguda's Matagud.

## **4. Documentation of NTFP and wild food**

- First of all a format is prepared and 3 villages within the project area of MSS are selected. Then 10 families are selected from each of the village and based on the format, the information is collected on which of the wild food is consumed by them in

the entire year. Based on the study it was found that, the forest produce is rapidly finishing and if this trend continues, perhaps they will be vanished in the coming years.

- Of all the 19 villages of Kansoude panchayat women cluster meeting was held on 22<sup>nd</sup> January where 26 women had participated. They kept a tentative account of Mahua to be collected this year from the villages and decided to purchase the same in the group level. So that by selling it after some time, they could earn profit of 600-700 per person. In 5 villages of Pandria panchayat of Sisai blok under Gumula district, women have listed the available seasonal forest produce. This information is immensely helped the women in collection of mahua, beedi leaves, bel, tamarind, kusum, mango, jamun etc which is yielding profit of Rs 500-600 per person. Also they have initiated many steps to protect forest.

#### **5. Conservation & Plantation of wild yam**

- Wild yams and herbal medicinal saplings were planted in the own and community land, around the houses of beneficiaries and hostel of secondary school in the project area of VIKALP.

#### **6. Forest Protection**

- Villagers and LEAF members voluntarily came forward for protection of forest from fire and thereby helped the forest department in saving the maximum forest area.
- Villagers of 4 villages in the project area of GK have been protecting 977.554 hectare forest land and restoration of forest was done in 1600 hectare of land which was unused/wasteland.
- 7 meetings were held by GK with regard to forest protection and 2 new villages have started the forest protection committee.

#### **7. Nursery Raising & Plantation**

- MSS has planted around 10000 saplings of sal, mohua, tendu, char, bhelwa, saroti, amla, khudur, main, dumar bel, bair, karouda etc in 7 villages. Also it was found that 30% of the seeds being planted last year are still alive.
- 10 farmers in Jaldega village of Kansoude panchayat have been engaged in bamboo plantation.
- PRERAK has already prepared 25,000 saplings in dhabalpur and 35,000 in Raipur who will be planted in August.
- LEAF gets most of the indigenous forest seeds from Kakalgur and Sandhkarmari forest. But this year they couldn't get sufficient quantity of good quality seeds due to unprecedented rain in Bastar. Due to lack of good quality seed, 5000 saplings at Kangoli, 2000 at Jaitgiri and 3000 saplings are being raised. Due to continuous rain, plantation couldn't be started yet, but it will start from middle of August.
- GK has made the necessary arrangement and digging and fencing for plantation of 2550 saplings in 1.6 hectare land against target of 5000 saplings. It not will foster forest in 1.6 hectare land but also generated employment of 72 days for 22 people.

## **8. Micro Planning**

- In two villages of the project area, i.e Kataroli and Kanakpur, the micro planning work is done with the help of villagers.
- PCK had organized one day micro planning programme in Ol Munda village and around 23 farmers had participated in the same including 16 male and 7 female. In the programme, the farmers are trained on lakh cultivation and water management. Around 10 farmers have started the farming of lakh. Shantimaya women group had done the micro planning meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> February, in which 16 women and 4 men had participated. In the meeting, the knowledge which was collected from the lakh department was disseminated, and they unanimously decided to initiate the lakh cultivation in every village where there are Palas and kusum trees.
- A meeting was held by JSS for the village level management and interference for community forest act in Chhindkhandag and Khallari village in which 46 persons had participated. In the meeting, people were informed about PESA act and importance of forest in our day to day life. 15 villagers joined in a movement to have a dialogue with the collector of Kanker district with regard to proceeding status of community forest act application.
- The people of Chapwar and Titrahi villages had not filled the application for community right under FRA since they didn't know the process. The people were made aware through meetings and trainings. Further the applications were filled and submitted in panchayat through micro planning in both the villages.
- Villagers of two villages under the project area of GK, have prepared the micro plan to present the claim for the management of community forest.

## **9. Reconstruction and renovation of traditional water resources**

- Between Jan-June 2014, 4 traditional water resources are renovated in three villages of the project area with the help of people and panchayat including two in Bakalo, one each in Nan Jaria and Annapurna village. The village panchayat of Annapurna have contributed rs.18, 000 in the work.
- Three kachha dadi wells are cleaned in February in Pandaria village by PCK and the water is utilized for vegetable cultivation in 1.5-2 acre of land. A kachha check dam was constructed by the community in Unnikal village of Kansoude panchayat of Bano block under Simdega district which is finished by 28<sup>th</sup> January. On 25<sup>th</sup> April, the staff of PCK had organized a meeting with Jamgai village water resource officials, Gram sabha representatives, and women group members which was being headed by Puja Kerketa. They Planned for cleaning of dug wells and repairing of tube wells for the purpose of drinking water for livestock. On 25<sup>th</sup> May 2014, the water management group meeting was held in Kansoude village. In the meeting the responsibility was given to the group to clean the water of dova and deepen it further and putting disinfectant in wells to clean it

- A water body was built between Pandripani and Puswada road of Kumhankhar village by which the tribals of Puswada and Kuhamkhar who are dependent on forest for livelihood are getting drinking water. The traditional Chhuan was repaired by women group in Saranda village with the help of JSS. Around 100 people are getting clean drinking water from the chuan. A new chhua was built by JSS for the tribal of Pardhi para of Khallari village who used to dig holes in the mountains for their daily water requirement. Now 12 families of entire Pardhi para are getting clean water for drinking and daily ablutions.
- The traditional water resources of Goura and Lalsaya villages were repaired and renovated. Both these resources play an important part in meeting the drinking water requirement of Goura village during summer.
- Under the project 6 traditional water resources were planned to be renovated by VIKALP in the last 6 months but only 4 water bodies could be repaired due to unavailability of fund on time.
- 5 water resources were constructed by villagers of 2 villages in the project area of GK and it ensured productivity of 3 hectare land.

#### **10. Wild Food Festival**

- NIRMAN has organized the awareness camp on wild food and tribal food festival. Around 134 women and 174 men of 2 villages had participated in the programme. On 10th-11<sup>th</sup> January 2014 Dasera festival was celebrated in Baigatola of Gourakanhari village where Baiga tribes performed their traditional tribal dance and traditional grains and forest based food were exhibited. Almost 98 types of food items were placed in the exhibition. Around 300 people including men and women of Jilang, Talaidabra, Ajar, Dhaba, Chapwar and Goura villages had participated in this programme. There was also a discussion on wild food and the same was documented.
- Wild food festival is organized by VIKALP but budget for the same is not yet received.
- Mango festival was traditionally celebrated by LEAF in May 2014.

#### **11. Awareness & Liosning on FRA ,and PESA & Legal literacy camp for costmery law, Self Rule**

- In January one person has received the patta in Bano block under PCK project area. on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2014, as per the decision of villagers, a training programme was organized by PCK in Mahutoli on measurement of forest land ,method of application of patta and filling of application form.
- JSS organized an one day awareness camp in Kumhankhar, Mandabharri, Amapani and Masulpani villages on FRA and PESA act. total 152 applicants participated in the program. They were informed about the process of filling community forest act application form, conducting gram sabha, depositing the application form at sub-division and drawing maps.

- Different awareness programmes and liaisoning work are done with govt authorities at the sub-divisional and district level by PRERAK for the provision of patta to deserving applicants under FRA.
- Total 893 application forms have been filled for individual right under FRA, out of which 109 have been cancelled and 452 application forms were returned due to errors in filling the form. Further 452 of such forms were rectified and submitted to village panchayat through forest right committee post approval of gram sabha. The status of the progress of these applications are regularly followed up by NIRMAN in the public hearing of Govt. every Tuesday. With regard to the community act under FRA, application forms have been received by almost all the villages of the project area of NIRMAN. But all the villages have reported heavy irregularities and errors in the forms. They have applied for the rectification and the same is monitored regularly.
- Awareness regarding FRA and PESA is created among people and beneficiaries through many meeting, workshop and training programmes conducted by VIKALP.
- There was a camp at Sandh karmari village in the month of May -14 where advocates were invited to address and aware the people on the subject of Gram panchayat and gram sabha.
- In the continuous initiative by GK for empowering the tribal people through creation of awareness regarding FRA and PESA and also liaisoning with implementing agencies for the proper distribution of right, 217 families of 8 villages received forest land of 179.357 hectare. Also 216 families of 3 villages have claimed the community right on forest land of 55 hectare.

## **12. Support for NTFP Collection & marketing**

- 14 families were supported in NTFP collection by VIKALP in this period.

### **Case Study of Paryavaran Chetna Kendra, Jharkhand.**

The forest of Kansoude panchayat area under Bano block of Simdega district has now been saved from degradation. The conservation work of last two years has now started bearing fruits. Shantimaya women group, Chandramukhi women group and Belli women group have played active role in restoration of green cover. The forest line of this area was gradually fleeing from the village. Women were depressed as supply of seasonal forest produce and livelihood based on it were at the verge of ending. The availability raw material for traditional leaf plate, khunta, branches being used in marriages, medicinal plants, wigs, chatai, and brooms was getting difficult. At this juncture, the women groups have shouldered the responsibility of protecting the forest. They participated in the micro planning with their male counterparts and become aware of forest related benefits. Now the members of the three groups have actively started protecting the forest and not only meeting the requirement of their family but also started earning their livelihood by collection and marketing of seasonal fruits, mushrooms, leaf plates. 2-

3 women have started getting livelihood per 10-12 families of the villages. They also have decided not to harm trees for collection of branches and woods for marriage purpose. Rather they'll reuse the already existing branches.