



COMMUNITY APPROACH TO Non Timber Forest Product based livelihoods

Biodiversity Conservation



Project Background

The Project area in Khaprakhol Block, is one of the most backward regions in Bolangir district of Orissa. This vast track of forest area of the Block surrounded around puranic famous Gandhamardhan Hill is well known for its rich biodiversity. It is a storehouse of large varieties of NTFPs, like Mahua flower, Mahua seed, Karanja seed, Charnut, Myrobalans, Sal seed, Kendu leaf, Neem seed, Harida, Bahada, Amala, Medicinal plants and different species of wild life and birds like Peacock, Sparrow, Crow, Parrot, etc. While working with the community on Governance issue, the organization **The Humanity** confronted with problems relating to over exploitation of forest resources by vested market interests, who are more concerned of 'Profiteering' Repeated drought situations in the area also added to the problems of the people especially the poor and marginalized. Traders have been found successful in roping the gullible tribals in their misadventure and adopted unsustainable harvesting practices, which adversely affected the biodiversity in the region. With support from **Global Environment Facility (GEF), United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) and Small Grant Programme (SGP), The Humanity** has implemented a project entitled "Ensuring sustainable livelihood of the primary collectors through conservation of forest eco-system and NTFP potential and undertaking NTFP-Agro business". Under this project, the organization has strengthened community-based institutions and involved them in protection and management of forest coming under jurisdiction of 50 villages of eight Gram Panchayats (GPS) of Khaprakhol Block and also taken step to conserve its rich bio-diversity through developing networking of forest protection groups in the project area. Besides that the organization has developed entrepreneurship skill of woman SHGs for processing and marketing of NTFP items with a view to provide them alternate livelihood which ensures sustainable management of forest resources.

Project Objectives

Conservation of bio-diversity with involvement of forest protection groups, Panchayat Raj Institutions and Woman Self-Help-Groups and Strengthening livelihood support base of the Primary collectors through capacity building training on NTFP- Processing and Marketing. **Centre for Environment Education (CEE)** is on regular basis providing support to implement the project.

Project Activities

- Develop NTFP and Medicinal Plant-based community level enterprises and rice-based programme to secure sustainable Livelihood.
- Capacity building of the community through community-based institutions
- Carry out ex- situ cultivation of medicinal plant and develop a knowledge management system.
- Facilitate formation of forest management groups, networking them in order to have a comprehensive and effective management of forest and its bio-diversity.
- Demonstrate small technologies and develop entrepreneurship model, eg. rice processing unit at group level.

Project Strategy

- Creating local ownership over assets through community participation in sharing responsibility and costs.
- Adopting participatory methods involving all stake-holders decisions and sharing costs.
- Enhancing local skill and building capacity of community through regular exposure visit.



Geographical area	:	75 Villages of Khaprakhol Block of Bolangir District (Orissa)
No of Beneficiaries	:	1000 households (5,000 People) scaled upto 10, 000 HHs (70,000 people)
SGP Grant	:	Rs.12,00,000/- Scaled upto Rs.19,00,000/-
Co Financing	:	Rs.4,48,700 and Rs.12,00,000. (in scaling up)
Project Time Period	:	2004-2006, scaled upto 2008-2011.



Co-financing and Local Ownership

- The Community has contributed towards successful implementation of the project in terms of contributing their labour, plantation, donate land for plantation and shed for setting up oil extraction machines.
- Bank and Watershed Committee have financed to the trained SHGs in tune of Rs.4,00,000 for running NTFP business.
- Directorate of watershed Mission Govt of Orissa has sanctioned a project of 2, 47,000 for capacity-building of woman SHGs on NTFP processing.
- ORMAS, a marketing institution of Govt of Orissa has distributed 50 oil expeller machine in the district for a value of Rs. 5,00,000.
- Community has contributed their labour in terms of Planting 50,000 saplings in the area on a range of local plant species.
- People participatory approaches are showing empowerment, but create sustainable action through local ownerships community rapport and trust i.e. essential for long term implementation of project.

Project Achievements

- 500 Locals including SHG members are trained on nursery development, and plantations.
- 1000 students involved about use of herbal plants and conservation of bio-diversity.
- 3 Acre demonstration field has been set up and 130 varieties of herbal species has been preserved.
- 450 farmers have been trained on collection and preservation of seed and grain.
- 20 seed bank and 10 grain bank has been developed in 30 villages.
- 50 SHGs are engaged in range of activities starting from collection and marketing of NTFP to management of seed bank and conservation of forest.
- Income of primary collectors have increased from Rs. 300/- to Rs. 2000/- through oil-extraction, NTFP processing, preparation of herbal medicine.
- 20 Forest protection groups have been formed, and are continently linked to livelihood based actions.
- Two management committee has been formed for management of agriculture equipments.
- 450 farmers trained on marketing value of traditional paddy, method of collection, preservation and processing.
- Trained volunteers of the organization are now resource person for training on NTFP-processing and marketing organized by Govt. and Non-Govt. organizations.
- The practice of conservation of traditional variety of seeds through seed bank is a one-step forward towards community control over seed and challenge to corporate monopoly over seed.

Lessons

- Influenced by the outcome of oil expeller machine, ORMAS has distributed 50 oil expeller machines to women SHGs for processing of NTFP items. This is creating new benefits for locals.
- Many NGOs have come forward to set up oil expeller machine in their areas after learning from the experience of the organization
- Regular experience sharing is essential in project in such remote areas.
- NTFP-collection, processing and marketing by SHGs not only contributes to their income but also ensures sustainable management of forest resource with participation of the community.

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