Sustainable Livelihoods
Incomes of the Poor & Marginalized
Enhanced, Distt. Gonda, Uttar Pradesh

Brochure No.2
Project Background

Steel Authority of India (SAIL) through the projects was keen to address its social, environmental and economic responsibilities of business. SAIL wanted to address key concerns such as reducing unemployment, creating primary and secondary education, addressing health facilities and enhancing sustainable livelihoods, approached Centre for Environment Education (CEE) to develop a more hands-on, participatory and gender sensitive approach in a remote, floodplain landscape of Gonda District. Series of discussions between SAIL and CEE led to defining the area in Paraspur Block of Gonda District.

Regular meetings with village communities by the CSR team of CEE built on the experience from GEF UNDP SGP led to develop a more systems approach, wherein all actions and decision were agreed with the people in village meetings.

The CEE SAIL CSR team has developed a more process approach with people encouraging a 3-step approach.

- Village meetings: participatory rural appraisals building greater rapport and trust between communities.
- Local village institution building, e.g. formation of women Self Help Groups; and issue-based groups for actions like sewing machines, rent a light for school, etc.

Name of the Organization
Centre for Environment Education (CEE), New Delhi

Geographical Area
15 villages with 810 households in 3 Gram Panchayats; Bahuan Madar Maza, Shivgarh and Charchari of block Paraspur

Project Time Period
2013-2015

Funding Agency/Grant
Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL)
Rs. 80 lacs

Project Partners
Barefoot Power, Local Banks, District Collector-Gonda, District Forest Officer-Gonda, NEDA, CMO-Gonda, KVK-Gonda and other line departments (e.g. Forests, Agriculture, Schools and energy, etc.)

Co-Financing
Rs.20 lacs from various departments, local Banks, CEE and other sources.
Exposure, skills-building of the local communities on a range of issues, e.g. smokeless chulhas, savings and credit groups, schools, crops, livestock and plantations, etc.

PROJECT GOAL
Enhancing the quality of life and increased incomes of the poor and marginalized through a community led integrated approach using enterprise based, renewable agricultural approaches.

PROJECT BENEFICIARIES
Poor agriculture and non-agriculture farmers, landless, physically challenged, women, girls and children. All age, gender and class groups to be involved in the program.

PROJECT PURPOSE
I. Build skills and capacities of farmers by introducing low cost, easy to understand and implement modern agricultural and allied technologies, based on local conditions and resources available. Enabling them to increase their knowledge and income in a range of activities in natural resources management.

II. Introduce simple energy efficiency, biomass based technologies, and usage of organic fertilizers and pesticides for better management of households and reduced drudgery for women.

III. Ensure more community led participatory, gender sensitive approaches for building local institutions and local ownerships.

IV. Link and leverage resources, including knowledge, best practices to the ongoing schemes of the state and central governments. Link to the national action plans, banks, institutions for skills and enterprise.

V. Encourage locals to establish more sustainable business enterprises for increased incomes.

(Children given stitched clothes by local village girls)
Project Strategy

The project adopted a two phase strategy in doing the implementation of actions with communities.

In the beginning, participatory methodologies, were used including participatory rural appraisals (PRAs) were used. The process started with primary data collection. Apart from this, PRA tools like social mapping, well-being analysis, village socio-economic survey, seasonality tools, vein diagram & pie diagram etc. at village levels were used.

Developed and strengthened different village level informal social institutions through kinship, common trade and gender based approaches of group formation and dynamics.

CEE's experience through Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants Program (SGP) and lessons learnt to build women Self Help Groups (SHGs) and other resource based user groups were developed with community support.

Knowledge Sharing and documentation is the essential and integral part of the project approach. Emphasis is laid in process level documentation and learning during the community interactions. The key objective of SAIL project is to be seen as a responsible actor in society. SAIL is keen that their every action leads to sustainable growth and economic development in India.
Ram Gopal; Khariywa: I have received assistance in Mustard cultivation for a new variety. This variety is growing very well (NDRE4) which we learned from KVK (Krishi Vigyan Kendra), Gonda. We have always feared to try new variety because of risk and this SAIL CEE project has provided me assistance of up to 70% of the cost, in availing seeds, fertilizers, field preparation etc and I bore the rest of the cost myself. After seeing the growth it is expected that per bigha there should be at least 15 Kgs increase in production i.e in total 37-40 Kgs more production from 2.5 bigha of cultivation. And now I am confident to plant this variety in the coming year as well and also other farmers seeing me will join next year.

In future I would like to receive new agricultural equipment that we got to know in the KVK training program for farmers, for example, Drum Seeder, Laser Leveler, etc. We will provide our full support now to this team like attending committee meetings and paying monthly contribution of money, but would want things to happen in time. I also have a question to ask that can we also get assistance in other crops as well. We would really want them to develop a self sufficient village institution which can keep on working on its own and would like to receive regular trainings from Pradip Sir and Piyush Sir.

Sunita Yadav; Shivgarh: These village sewing machine classes by SAIL CEE have really helped us in learning basic knowledge of tailoring. And this is very helpful as we don’t have to travel kilometres to attend the classes, “Yeh class nahi hota toh humein sikhne ke liye bohut dur jaana padta, aur kabhi jaa nahi pati kyun ke ghar wale bohut dur nahi bheje” she said. We are only contributing Rs 25 per month and gaining skills right at our doorstep. The fees is so appropriate that we all can provide and also a security deposit of Rs 150 which we deposited in the beginning we are going to get it back after completion of the six months classes. We will also get certificate. With this program now there will be 100s of girls like me around the village who will learn about cutting and stitching with certificate. In future I would like to teach other new village girls in the same class and earn money for my parents. At last I would like to say that there should be more such centres in the gram panchayats to cover up more girls in the entire region, as many girls cannot attend this class because of the distance from many villages.

Neta Yadav Bahuan Madar Mazha: A travis is installed in our village by SAIL & CEE team, and because of this it has become very easy to plant semen in our cattle and doctor finds it easy and so do we! We have used it for more than 300 cattle for treatment and as my father himself is a vet doctor it has become very helpful for us. Earlier we used to tie the animals on trees and but now with the installation of TRAVIS life is easy. I would also like to thank this company SAIL for thinking about us and funding for our development in village. SAIL CEE team is doing very good work in the village and reaching us in such a difficult condition where no one has reached till now is really commendable. I would like this project to run for another 5 years.
Activities

Rapport and trust building exercise had been done in all the project villages through formal and informal meetings with the community members, SHGs, Panchavati Raj Institutions (PRIs), housewives and various opinion leaders. In the meetings the discussion was done about basic needs of the communities, existing issues, social structures of the village, etc. In total more than 200 village meetings have been conducted till now with the villagers. Every month we conducted around 20-25 formal as well as casual meetings. More than 1500 villagers with at least 40% women participated in these from the project villages to know about our work. They participated actively and also contributed in cash and kind in the activities in the villages.

2 Health Camps were organized in two villages namely Kangdan Purva, Marran Purva. In both the Health Camps more than 250 people got their free health checkups and got medicines for free. With these health camps villagers contribution of money in cash and kind was total Rs. 9750/-. The most prevalent diseases were Asthma, Scabies, Anemia, Stomach Worms etc.

1 Veterinary camp was organized in the village named Kangdan Purva. 200 cattle were vaccinated and more than 25 households took benefits from the camp.

In a small "under tree school" of the village named Marran Purva, Republic day and Independence day were celebrated. Around 120 students participated in the activity and took part in drawing, singing, mehendi making, hurdle race etc. and won prizes.

16 farmers were helped with risk and cost sharing while introducing a new variety of Mustard crop to them i.e. NDRE 04 provided by Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Gonda. These farmers are identified in village meetings who are poorest of the poor in the village.

PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisals) exercises were conducted in the project villages. A total of 500 community people (40% female) participated. Social map of those respective villages has been drawn by communities with guidance from CEE team. These meetings are done during day and in the evening as well when farmers come back to home after the day light is over.

Installation of Smokeless Chulha was inaugurated with SAIL team on their visit to the project villages.

Three Women Self Help Groups were formed who are doing monthly savings and undergoing training for taking up various activities. One group has identified candle making as their activity and other groups have identified detergent making as their alternative livelihood activities. Candle making training has been provided to a 10 member group of SHG of Kharkwa Gram Panchayat. Together in these groups there is a saving of around Rs. 6500/-