

Project Update - March 2017

We are reaching the last leg of our work but we feel happy to note that our activities are becoming self-sustaining, generating good livelihood options for our beneficiaries. Our special programmes for children have made them more involved and aware of tiger and mangrove protection.

INCOME GENERATION FROM APICULTURISTS

The time of the year is spring. Our community mangrove forests bordering the villages are in bloom. This is drawing beekeepers with their beehive boxes, from outside districts. Our beneficiaries rent out land to them, surrounding their home, who leave their boxes for 3-4 months of spring. The flowers from the community forests are rich source of honey for the bees. Apart from income generated through rent from land, these villagers are also hired by the bee keepers for miscellaneous work during the season, which supplements their income.



Beehive boxes kept in land rented by the beneficiaries near their homes

Beehive keepers from outside areas

FISHING IN COMMUNITY PONDS

Our community ponds are also ready with their harvest of fish and crabs. Fingerlings released during last monsoon in (June - July) have developed into commercial fish ready for sale. Their weight may vary from 1 2.5 kg each, fetching between Rs. 100/ kilo - Rs. 220 / kilo. Each pond raises about 250 300 kg of fish in a year.



Fish being raised from one of our community ponds

HARVESTING CRABS FROM CRAB PONDS

The crab ponds get ready even faster, within 90 days - 100 days of releasing the juveniles. The yield is nearly three times the input. For instance with 10 quintals of juveniles, the villagers raise about 30 quintals of crabs, each weighing between 300 - 350 g. Crabs are sold in market between Rs. 400- Rs. 700, depending on their time of sale.



A typical pond for crab culture



Crabs being harvested

USE OF VERMI COMPOST IN AGRICULTURE

We are also happy that our beneficiaries are making further efforts to develop agriculture/ cultivation of vegetables/ bananas etc. Many of them have dug up pits outside their homes for developing vermi compost and are using this organic manure in their cultivation. Though initiatives in this regard are presently on a small scale, the positive trend reflects the awareness/ consciousness of the beneficiaries to improve yields from cultivable land.



Vermi compost pit dug in a home



Organic manure sprinkled in plots

SPECIAL LESSONS ON TIGER AND MANGROVE CONSERVATION FOR OUR CHILDREN

Our beneficiary children have become an integral part of our awareness campaigns. They have developed educational mangrove gardens in their school which have been developed and are looked after by them. We have also organized special lessons for them on tiger and mangrove conservation as part of their extracurricular activities. They are also spreading our conservation message through drawing and local plays.



Educational mangrove garden in school



Learning about mangroves & tiger

OUR DEVELOPING MANGROVE FORESTS SETTING HEARTH AGLOW-

Our developing community mangrove forests are also supplementing the needs of fuel in village homes. Women folks are seen entering into them with baskets and sacks to collect fallen dry leaves and twigs, to set aglow their earthen hearth.



Picking up dry remains from community mangrove forest

OUR NET OUTPUTS FROM RSG

1. 32 ha of community mangrove forest in 11 out of our 22 target villages, which are reviving sustainable means of traditional livelihood.
2. Manual desiltation of nine community ponds in our target villages. This is promoting fish and crab culture.
3. Developing agriculture as a feasible option - about 2.5 - 3 ha of land made cultivable with coarse paddy, seasonal vegetables, banana plantations etc. through our community ponds
4. Our three cultural teams, with 11-12 members each, involved in awareness programmes are performing in tourist lodges. This is not only generating income for them, but also educating tourists on do's and don'ts of forest conduct.
5. The four Self Help Groups, we have set up in this round of RSG with tiger widows and village women have been trained to create "wealth out of waste" (items of daily use from plastic throwaways), embroidered pillow cases, bed sheets etc. which are finding a market with the tourists.
6. Some of these women have diverted the money into generating additional sources of income by raising poultry in their homes.
7. Our Mangrove Conservation Committees (MCC) comprising local villagers are developing into community watch dogs to monitor the grassroots implementation of our activities and their efficacy.