

Project Update: July 2018

Monsoons have set in our villages in full swing. It is encouraging to see our beneficiaries getting involved in paddy cultivation. Most of are very small land holders and they are trying to grow folk rice using organic manure and traditional farming practices. Our women beneficiaries are particularly motivated in this regard, and are transplanting saplings in the flooded fields.



Paddy sowing in our different villages.

Through our workshops and training sessions we have introduced them to the cultivation of indigenous rice varieties that can withstand impacts of climate change as flood, salt water and saline conditions. Further, they are also preparing organic manure as against use of expensive chemical insecticides/ fertilisers.



Left & Middle: Beneficiaries attend various workshops on organic farming. Right: preparing natural insecticide with neem leaves.

Our beneficiaries are integrating duck rearing with paddy cultivation. Ducks not only eat up the pests and weeds from the rice fields, but their droppings also enrich the soil. Further, duck meat and eggs also add on to their income. Small paddy ponds are also bearing fish. Since they are not using chemicals, their rice fields are inviting mollusks, fish etc. which are also supplementing their diet.



Left: Ducks wading through paddy field. Middle: Beneficiaries given ducks. Right: Fishing in a paddy pond

Next the community ponds for fish and crab culture that have been dug up in the summer months are now ready and filled with water from the rains or tidal streams. The beneficiaries are stocking them with fish and crab fingerlings.



Left: Purchasing fish fingerlings. Middle & Right: Fish fingerlings of various species being released in a community fish pond in Shantigachi village.

The earlier community ponds are already raising good harvest of fish and crabs, augmenting the income of beneficiaries. These water bodies are maintained by the beneficiaries themselves, with a certain percent of their earnings derived from them based on the mutual consensus of the villagers.



Left & Middle: Raising fish from earlier community fish ponds. Right: Crabs raised from a community pond being sold by a beneficiary.

Our mangrove plantations by the banks of rivers / streams are going on in full swing in various villages. Due to monsoons, the level of tidal water through the streams is optimum for inundation of the saplings.



Left: One of our mangrove nurseries enclosed by net fencing. Middle & Right: Mangrove plantation work in various sites.



Left: A rare mangrove species - sundari (*Heritiera fomes*) in one of our plantation sites. Middle: One of our inundated mangrove plantation sites. Right: An earlier plantation site being cleaned & maintained by our beneficiaries.

Our awareness programmes with children and street corner meetings with beneficiaries continued throughout the project duration. The children participated in various interactive sessions, drawing competitions, created small patches of educational mangrove gardens and took part in conservation lessons imparted by experts and local environmentalists.



Left: An awareness campaign by our beneficiaries in a village. Middle: Children participate in an interactive awareness session. Right: Our children participating in a drawing competition.