

Project Update: May 2018

It is flowering season for mangroves and most of the species in our community forests are in full bloom. With flowers also come the honey bees.



Left: Flowers of Kankra species (*Bruguiera gymnorrhiza*). Middle: Goran species (*Ceriops decandra*). Right: Kholshi in full bloom (*Aegiceras corniculatum*).

Apiarists from the neighboring districts have arrived with their beehive boxes that are left outside the homes of our beneficiaries. Our villagers rent out their land that are in the vicinity of the community mangrove forests for 3-4 months in the year, which add to their livelihood options. As the area of our community mangrove forests is increasing, more number of beehive boxes are coming in each year, thereby covering more number of households and villages.



Bee hive boxes of apiarists outside village homes next to community mangrove forests.

With this additional income coming into their households, we are partially able to convince our beneficiaries against their going into the tiger habitat for wild honey collection during the season, especially when there are threats to their lives as well.

Our developing community mangrove forests are also safeguarding the earthen embankments that border our villages for enduring the impacts of storms and tides. It was found that without these forests earlier they often got damaged or eroded away in these powerful tidal gushes. This would cause incursion of sea water within the villages, resulting in loss of assets and rendering the soil saline in certain fields it may. However, our community mangrove forests are today guarding nearly 35 km of our embankments against tidal erosion.



Our community mangrove forests protecting embankments in our various target villages.

Our pilot project of cultivating Indian Jujube apple (a seasonal fruit) by the sides of our community ponds is proving to be good sources of firewood. After the fruiting season, the stems and other parts of plant are used by the villagers to light their hearth



Dry stems and plant parts of Indian jujube apple tree provides fuelwood in village homes.

With onset of summer and rising temperature in our villages, the earth has gone dry. For our beneficiaries it is the ideal time to get by with manual de-siltation of natural aqua systems that have got silted up and rendered useless. Our villagers are reviving such water bodies in our villages to develop them into community ponds. Eight such ponds are being made ready prior to the onset of monsoon, when fingerlings of fish, crabs, and shrimps would be introduced for culture. These ponds will also be used for water harvesting and organic cultivation of local fruits and vegetables.



Work to develop community ponds in full swing in various villages.

Our social surveys, street corner campaigns, wall writing, and other such awareness activities are also gaining momentum as part of our awareness campaigns. This time we have been able to create wall writings on the walls of some of our villagers' homes. Some of the villagers allowed us to do wall writings in their homes and walls too.



Social survey with tiger widows in a village on importance of tiger protection.



Wall writings on walls of village homes for awareness on tiger conservation.