

Human and Nature: A Harmonious Bonding



Garjan Forest Protection Committee in Kalahandi District of Odisha, committed to protect their village forest and ensure livelihood

The drought in 2015 has completely destroyed the season crop of rice cultivation in partner communities of LWSIT particularly the Western Odisha districts of India. The situation also pushed for farmer's suicide and the number is rising. The families of these farmers have no option of sustaining themselves as all their savings have been invested in agriculture. LWSIT is working extensively with such farming families and showing the ways and means to sustain their livelihood with the help of forest resources.

The Garjan Forest Committee of Pitaguda village in Kalahandi district set the example for others by tapping resources from Govt. Forest Dept. mobilizing

MGNREGS (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme) – a flagship program of Govt. of India which ensures right to work and reduce unemployment problems. The community has successfully mobilized the works for 103 families in their community those are predominantly Dalits and Advasi (the backward caste and lower income level groups) and received Rs 150 per day. Each of the families ensured 100 days of work to sustain their livelihood through such scheme. Some of the work includes fencing, making of Loose Boulder Check Dams (LBCD), planting of seedlings in the forest and undertaking measures to prevent forest fires. These activities have been

managed and mobilized entirely by the Garjan Forest Committee.

Apart from these opportunities minor forest products also help sustain around 20 families by providing them a monthly income of INR 1,500 through the sale of these products. The Forest Committee members are hopeful that such tragic incidences resulting in loss of lives are not encountered again and that the forest's abundant resources help in overcoming this tragedy.

The families of Pitaguda village are now working towards mobilizing resources from the Forest Department to construct a water shelter, a tank and a sitting platform inside the forest, and this proposition has been accepted by the Forest Department.

Villagers Applaud New Water Supply System



Shane is a very small village with a total population of 85. The region is so mountainous that their homes are located a bit far away from each other due to the scarcity of flat land. Shane village can only be reached by motorbike. It takes about 50 minutes to drive from Mindat township to the village. The way from Mindat Township to the village is a sinuous mountain pass.

U Shwi Har, 50, is a Village Development Committee (VDC)'s treasurer in Shane village. His wife, Daw Lain War,

42, is a treasurer of women's group. They have 8 children.

As a major financial support, LWF provided over Kyat 30 lakhs (approximately USD 3,000) to the VDC to implement the construction of new water supply systems, which was completed, on 30 September 2014. Villagers contributed their labor to the construction of water tanks and installation of water pipes. According to a VDC secretary, the new water supply system includes a water filter tank (2ft*2.5ft)

and a water storage tank (4ft*4ft) for 8 households living at the higher area of the village, and a receptive water tank (5ft*3ft), a water filter tank (3ft*3ft), and a water storage tank (7ft*7ft) for the rest 7 households at the lower area. 3 lines of 1inch PVC pipes are connected with water storage tanks to distribute water to all 15 households.

U Shwi Har talks about the implementation process of new water supply system, "LWF's Community Empowerment Facilitator (CEF) suggested and, we

ourselves wrote a project proposal. Actually, we wanted to build water tanks in 2013 summer. He continues talking about the advantage of the clean water because of the presence of new water system, "previously, rubbish, toads and worms were present in the water as it is directly from the streams, both adults and children used to suffer from diarrhea due to the drinking of unclean water; there is a difference between cleanliness and dusts; now no need to boil it, I feel more confident to drink water".

“Let there be Light” for “Light of Knowledge”

The literacy rate in India varies from state to state but it is alarmingly low in our intervention areas which ranges from 65-70% (lower than the national average of 74.04%). The Government of India has already undertaken a campaign on “Sarva Shiksha Abiyan” or “Education for All”, an intensive programme that is being organized in all schools to strengthen education. However, the major issue is imparting education that is of quality and easily accessible by all.

Lutheran World Service India Trust is also working towards ensuring the quality of education and its accessibility by providing coaching to the first generation learners through the remedial coaching centres. These coaching centres are usually run at night and in most of the LWSIT operational communities; there is no electricity or if available in some areas, they are constantly facing power cut.

Consequently, the education of the children is badly affected during evening hours, resulting to



poor performance in their school results. In order to mitigate the problems of light, LWSIT has provided 438 solar lamps to the coaching centres those running across partner communities. This has helped the first generation learners to come forward for the education and has encouraged them to attend their classes and

score good results. The record envisaged that, there are 100% children in age group of 5-15 years are attending school and level of dropout has decreased significantly.

Besides, LWSIT has provided solar lamps to individual student those would be graduating from high school level (10th Standard) exams. In a

drive to uplift the education level among girl children, there are 398 solar lamps have been assisted to the same number of girls those are continuing their schooling in high school level. Thus, solar lamps not only provide light to combat the darkness but ensuring light of knowledge through continued quality education.

LWF Laos donates humanitarian aid to flood affected people



Ms Tuey Phoula

In early August 2015, natural flooding hit Vieng Phoukha and Nalae districts, Luang Namtha province and affected the lives of people in the areas including loss of cultivating land, food, houses and household utensils. This affected the food security of affected residences.

LWF Laos had immediately responded to this since the beginning of the flood by conducting rapid assessment and provide relief support to the most vulnerable and affected people funded by Rapid Relief Fund (RRF) under Act Alliance support worth 60.000 USD. This support covers 1,298 people among 233 families in 13 most affected villages. There are 3 types of assistance given to them including food items, non-food items and shelters.

Mr Maikham, 56 years old, a residence of Hatdao village, Nalae district Luang Namtha province,

he is 1 of 22 families who had been assisted under this mission said that “I could not save any kilogram of rice in my storage, because it happened very early, my family also lost many household utensils as well.” Mr Maikham is a person with disability caused by accident since his was young. He added that “this is their ever first time to receive this generous support as there was not any assistance given since previous flood in 2007 ”

More unfortunately, there was following by second flood during rapid assessment period this emphasized existing troubles and harmed more damage to the lives of people emotionally and environmentally, Ms Tuey a residence of Phoula village said that “ I’ve never seen this kind of assistance to help people in my village and I’m very happy for this assistance.”

LWF is a core responsible body to represent Act Alliance to re-

spond to the emergency first hit Udomxay in 2013 and second in 2015 in Luang Namtha provinces. Mr Bounheuang Duangphachanh, minister to government office said that “Thanks to LWF Laos to immediately take action to respond to this flooding that we consider as valued contribution to help affected people who are in urgent need of help.”

Following the second flooding, one man was killed while he was boating to fish in the middle of Namtha river in Huaylao. Mr Chit a residence of Huaylao village said that “Thanks to LWF for helping me and my family as I lost all of my rice and household items. This assistance will help reduce our difficulties for a period of time.” Ms Vankham from Thongthone village added that “we used to get only little support from local authorities but this is very big assistance I’ve ever seen.”

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AZEECON's primary role is primarily capacity-building - facilitating practical, peer-to-peer learning in the broad field of LRRD (Linking Relief, Rehabilitation & Development) responding to mem-

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