

Krushak Club becomes the “Bhagiratha” (The Success Story of Pahadbudha Farmers Club of Village Tarapur)

Tarapur village of Rokal Gram Panchayat is a medium size village in Boden block of Nuapada district. It has a population of 1167. Among the 155 households, 31 households belong to Scheduled Tribe, 21 households belong to Scheduled Caste and the rest 103 households belong to general caste families. All the households depend upon agriculture as their primary source of livelihood. Even though the block headquarter is about 20 kms from the village, they depend upon Khariar town for their marketing activities as Khariar is the main trading centre in this region.

Boden block is considered as the most backward and underdeveloped block in Nuapada district and as there is no major irrigation facilities in this block the farmers depend upon the rain god for their crops. Because of erratic rainfall in most of the years the villagers face crop loss because of drought situation. As such, on an average the food production of the villagers in Tarapur was enough to meet their food need for only eight months in a year. Hence, most of the households used to migrate to outside places for work and also they were depending on their labour to meet both their ends.

COMING TOGETHER LEADS TO SUCCESS:

During the year 2009-10 SVA facilitated a process of Micro Level Planning in all the villages of Boden block and in this process the villagers of Tarapur also conducted PRA and prepared a detail Micro Level Plan for the overall development of their village. During this process, they could realize that ultimately they will have to depend on agriculture for their sustainable livelihood. However if they can tackle to the problem of drought then only they will have a prosperous future. The process of Micro Level Planning also helped them to realize that this region has a very good water table and by harnessing the ground water they could easily make their village as prosperous as any village in Punjab or Haryana within a very short time. Now the major challenge before them was how to realize this goal.

Thereafter, as a strategy they decided to form a farmers association in the village named “Pahadbudha Krushak Sangha” and prepared a long term action plan to implement whatever they had planned during the process of Micro Level Planning supported by SVA. Initially, there were 25 male members and 25 female members in the Krushak Sangha. SVA facilitated the Krushak Sangha to get link to the NABARD programme and with the support of NABARD a series of training programmes were organized for them.

BARREN LANDS CONVERTED TO “SUJALAM, SUPHALAM”:

During 2010 the members opened a savings bank account in the name of the farmers club. Gradually the villagers were aware about various Government programmes concerning agricultural development and the President Mr. Jagannath Mund and the Secretary Mr. Panchanan Baras took initiative to contact different Government officials

in Khariar, Boden and Nuapada. After learning about the Biju Krushak Yojana (BKY) taking support of the Minor Irrigation Department 29 farmers came forward to deposit 10 percent of the margin money for 29 deep bore wells and all the 29 deep bore wells were installed. Unfortunately, 3 bore wells failed but the rest 26 bore wells have been most successful. Very soon all these bore wells were energized. All the farmers got 90 percent of the cost of the bore well as subsidy. Now that the crop fields of Tarapur got irrigated there was so much joy among everyone and everyone felt as if the Krushak Sangha became the “Bhagiratha” which brought Ganga to their village.



Sujalam, Suphalam, Mataram...

Erstwhile dry and uplands which were lying barren have now become lush green with bumper paddy crops, it was possible only because of the Biju Krushak Yojana and efforts of the Pahadbudha Krushak Sangha. (In the picture the crop field of Shri PanchananBaras and his newly installed irrigation Bore Well.)

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE FOR SUSTAINABLE INCOME:

The Krushak Sangha has prepared a broad crop plan for the villagers and even though they have decided to take up paddy cultivation as the major crop during kharif season they have decided to grow it in the organic process. They are aware of the hazardous affect of chemical agriculture and all the farmers are planning to completely switch over to organic agriculture within next couple of years. During 2011-12, 50 farmers have taken up paddy cultivation using SRI method. All the farmers are now carefully making farm yard compost and several farmers are now preparing magic compost, amrut jal and the vermi compost. As cash crop, the villagers have grown 200 acres of maize and 60 acres of improved varieties of Arhar with support from ICRISAT and National Food Security Mission. 20 families have also taken up horticultural tree plantation in 20 acres of land. The villagers have planned to convert most of the non-irrigated crop land for tree plantation and agro forestry species so that they will get enough biomass to prepare compost in the future years and there will be no threat of drought for those fields.

The village did not have a proper road and the street used to get muddy during rainy season because of poor drainage facility. Hence, the villagers contacted the Sarpanch Mrs. Madanabati Biswal and with a small grant of Rs. 6000/- from the Gram Panchayat they contributed voluntary labour to build the drains and make improvement of their village street. The village has three tube wells and three open wells which are used for drinking water purpose. Now the Gaon Kalyan Samity in Tarapur is quite active and they have been taking steps for periodic cleaning of the tube wells surroundings and periodically putting bleaching powder in the open wells.

Every year during the month of November the farmers' club celebrate their annual

function in which they invite district level officials and eminent persons as their guests. The farmers club has its own building and with the assistance of NABARD and SVA they have set up an information centre which is having a TV, furniture, library books and various information materials.

Now the farmers club has 80 members of whom fifty percent are women. Seeing the activities of the Tarapur village, farmers in adjoining villages have also come forward to get organized and form farmers clubs in their villages.