

FEBRUARY , 2024 (6-MONTHS) IN THE LOOP



Vasundhara Newsletter, 20th FEBRUARY

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“Odisha’s Chief Minister Grants Forest Rights to Seven Villages of Balasore”

Recently, seven villages located in Balasore District, Odisha, were granted special documents that acknowledge their rights over their community and forest resources. The Chief Minister of Odisha, Sri Naveen Patnaik, presented these documents virtually during an online event organized by the District Administration. The process was led by District Collector Sri Dattatraya Bhausahab Shinde, IAS, and involved various officials like the District Welfare Officer, Tehsildar, and others. The Regional Coordinator of Vasundhara, Sri Susant Ku Dalai, played a critical role in facilitating the

Community Forest Rights and contributed to the success of this initiative. This achievement is a significant milestone for the villages, as it has been 16 years since the Act granting these rights was first announced. Despite the lengthy process, the determination and collaboration of the District Administration and other stakeholders have finally enabled the distribution of these important documents in Balasore district. Now, the communities have legal recognition and control over their forests, which empowers them to manage and protect their natural resources effectively. This development ensures the welfare of the villagers and reflects a step forward in sustainable forest management and community empowerment in the region.

CONTINUE.....

COMMEMORATING LIBERTIES: A JOYOUS OCCASION!

The Forest Rights Act of 2006 is a crucial law in India that aims to protect the traditional forest rights of Forest Dwelling Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers. This law is particularly important in Odisha, a state with India's largest Scheduled Tribes population. Since the enactment of this law in 2007, Odisha has made significant progress in recognizing individual forest rights over occupied land. To further this cause, the State Government launched a scheme called 'Mo Jungle Jami Yojna' on August 9, 2023. The objective of this scheme is to improve the livelihoods and food security of forest-dwelling communities by acknowledging their forest rights as per the Forest Rights Act of 2006. The scheme includes providing human resources support to Gram Sabhas, Tehsils, and Districts. Additionally, funds have been allocated to train frontline officers, Forest Rights Committees, and representatives of Panchayati Raj institutions, particularly Sarpanchas and PEOs. The government has also collaborated with civil society organizations operating in relevant regions to make the scheme more effective.



These concerted efforts have yielded promising results in Balasore, a district in Odisha. Until January 2024, no community forest rights claims were acknowledged in this district. However, by the end of February 2024, seven villages across six Gram Panchayats received Community Forest Resources titles, covering over 2260 acres of forest land. A team comprising the Sub-Collector, Tehsildars, District Welfare Officer, Additional District Welfare Officers, representatives of the Forest Department, members of District and Tehsil FRA Cell, and Vasundhara played a crucial role in securing these titles for the seven villages within just two months. This progress underscores the effectiveness of the State Sector Scheme.





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»» GPS mapping

NAYAGARH DISTRICT

Sirikibadi, kanthipadar, Hanumant, podasahi(khesera), Bam GP ,16 Mauja

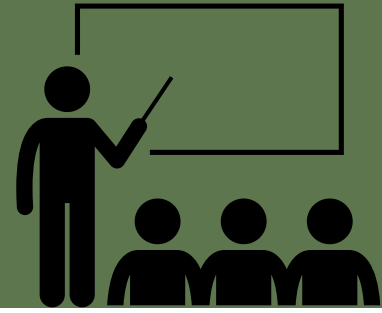
Gps mapping completed in chadeyapali and kalasakhman GP under Dasapalla Block



GPS mapping is a modern approach to accurately mapping geographical features in rural areas, including traditional boundaries such as village territories, farmlands, and forest areas. This method offers several advantages over the traditional approach, especially in rural settings where accurate land documentation may be lacking. Traditionally, identifying boundaries in

rural areas relied on physical markers like trees, rocks, or streams, which could be ambiguous and prone to disputes. However, GPS mapping allows for precise boundary demarcation by recording coordinates and creating digital maps that accurately represent land boundaries and features. GPS mapping can help preserve and document traditional boundaries in rural settings, where land ownership and boundaries are often intertwined with community customs and traditions. By overlaying GPS data onto digital maps, communities can visually identify and reinforce their historical boundaries, ensuring that land rights are respected, and disputes are minimized.

TRAINING PROGRAM



On September 22nd, 2023, the final Gram Sabha meeting was held at Tigiria Forest Village, which falls under the jurisdiction of Sunapenth Gram Panchayat. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the conversion of the forest village into a revenue village. The meeting was attended by several officials, including the Tahsildar, Block Development Officer, Forest Range Officer, Forester, Daitari, Staff of Vasundhara, PEO, and Revenue Inspector. Tigiria Forest Village is home to about 700 people, with 245 households belonging to the HO, Munda, and Juang PVTG communities.

During the meeting, the Tahasildar expressed gratitude to the Gram Sabha members for their valuable assistance in coordinating efforts with the Tahasil staff, Forest Officials, and Vasundhara to facilitate the process of converting the forest village into a revenue village. The district administration has approved Gram Sabha's proposals for the conversion through the convening of SDLC and DLC meetings. This decision ensures that all tribal households in the village will gain rights over the forests for their livelihoods.

The Block Development Officer reaffirmed the district administration's support for government schemes and developmental initiatives, including convergence programs, pensions, and MGNREGA, aimed at benefiting the village. He emphasized a commitment to uphold transparency and prevent corruption during his tenure.

At a recent Gram Sabha meeting, the Forest Ranger named 'Daitari' emphasized the importance of collective responsibility in nurturing the forest area. He urged members to collaborate with neighboring villages to prevent forest fires, which are a threat to food security. The meeting concluded with the Tahsildar announcing the delineation of the Customary Boundary Area. This area was meticulously mapped through GPS by the Forest and Revenue Departments. The Sarpanch of the Gram Panchayat expressed deep appreciation for the district administration's recognition of their prolonged struggle to convert the forest village into a revenue village under the Forest Rights Act.

It is noteworthy that this meeting is part of a series of final Gram Sabha gatherings aimed at gaining approval for the Customary Boundary areas of six forest villages. More such meetings are scheduled in October 2023.



FESTIVE OF RIGHTS AND JUSTICE

➤➤➤ SPECIAL GRAM SABHA FOR MO JUNGLE JAMI YOJANA



VILLAGE PEOPLE ARE ON PLASTIC-FREE CAMPAIGN...



TRANSFORM 18 VILLAGES

They are far away from the hustle and bustle of the city, heat, polluted air, and plastic. Simple living and eco-friendly thinking are the criteria for their survival. Although these people, called forest dwellers, depend on the forest for their survival, their thinking is at a higher level than that of educated people. Here is one opinion of the village people. Driven by a collective spirit, the Village People have successfully transformed their

village into a plastic-free haven, setting an inspiring example for others to follow. With the cooperation of Vasundhara, we have now made 18 villages plastic-free and established them as model villages.

Kandhamal district is at the top of this list. The people of the three villages in the district have taken the initiative and joined the plastic-free campaign regularly. The three villages spearheading this movement in Kandhamal district are Madikhol and Khajuripada Block of Jamujhari Panchayat, Bardiguda village of Dopada Panchayat, and Budukakhhol village of Chakpad Block Kakharujhola Gramme Panchayat. Residents of these villages, regardless of age or gender, have actively committed to eliminating single-use plastics from their lives.

In a remarkable display of dedication, every household in these villages now utilizes dustbins for waste disposal, with compost pits established behind each residence for organic waste and plastic segregation. Residents conscientiously collect single-use plastics such as masala packets, chocolate wrappers, polythene, plastic bottles, cold drinks bottles, and gutka wrappers, storing them in a designated area. Once a week, the collected plastic waste is meticulously removed from the compost pits and collectively incinerated in a designated open area away from the village.

To maintain the cleanliness and plastic-free status, a weekly village cleaning program is organized where every resident actively participates in the initiative. The campaign kickstarted with an awareness procession, where villagers displayed banners and posters to ensure widespread participation.



Walls in major streets and crowded areas of the village take an important place in this campaign. where plastic-free drawings are painted. these paintings serve as a constant reminder of the villagers' commitment to the plastic-free cause.

Speaking about their collective decision, a resident of Madikhol village shared, "When we collectively decide on something and take an oath to do it, then there is no shame. Taking an oath to live in a plastic-free village is one such decision."

Trijata Mallik of Bardiguda village added, "Now, on one day of the week, we go for the village cleaning campaign. Some people in the village clean up; some collect the plastic waste that has already accumulated; some help in carrying it away from the village, and some help in burning it."

The success of these villages has spurred the expansion of the plastic-free campaign, reaching Gocha village of Odgaon block, Brahmin Kumei of Bandhamunda block, and Kanipadar village of Kalashakhaman Panchayat of Daspalla block. The movement for plastic-free villages is gaining momentum, marking a significant step towards sustainable living in these communities; without single-use plastic.



PRESERVATION OF TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE THROUGH ELDERS

➤➤➤ PLATFORM TO ELDERS

Vasundhara, committed to the preservation of lost knowledge, skills, and traditions, has successfully gathered elders from Regdakhol village, Barkot block, and Deogarh district in a recurring forum. This initiative, held every three months, provides a platform for elders to share traditional practices, their knowledge, conservation procedures, management processes and rules, and ancestral knowledge that has been passed down through generations.

The knowledge group, consisting of 13 members from Regdakhol village, engages in discussions about traditional practices, recalling old memories, and reviving preservation methods. Vasundhara initiated this effort to ensure the transmission of traditional knowledge to the next generation.

In Regdakhol village, members discuss traditional methods of collecting sal and mahula seeds and predicting their production. Bhagirathi Bagha, a 75-year-old villager, shares insights into predicting good seed production based on atmospheric conditions, emphasizing the connection between climate and seed yield. Golapi Bagha adds that the sound in the forest during a year of good rain is discernible only to those closely connected with the forest.

Expansion to Other Villages: Vasundhara's initiative extends to Mandali



village in Khajuripada block and Nuasa Sahi village in Daspalla block. In Mandali village, 13 elders convene to discuss traditional knowledge, conservation methods, and forest dependence. Similar knowledge groups have been established in Gocha village, Brahmin Kumei, and Kanipadar village, focusing on medicinal plant use and preservation.

The knowledge groups maintain records of discussions, documenting insights into material scarcity, traditional practices, and herbal remedies. Currently implemented in all supported districts, Vasundhara aims to create 60 knowledge groups in the future, further enriching the preservation of traditional knowledge across communities.



THE VILLAGE PEOPLE CAME TO KNOW ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT PLAN AND SKIMS

The state government has launched various schemes to make the people of the state financially independent, to strengthen their livelihoods, and even to ensure that there is no problem with their survival. Many people in rural Odisha are still ignorant about this scheme, which has been going on for many years.

To bridge this knowledge gap, awareness programs were conducted across six different districts with the support of Vasundhara. The primary objective of these awareness programs was to educate eligible beneficiaries about their rights and guide them on accessing the benefits offered by government policies and schemes. Officials from the Social Security Department actively participated in these programs, disseminating information about the diverse array of schemes and elucidating the straightforward process of availing them.

During these programs, residents from various districts communicated pertinent issues related to Job Cards, Old Age Allowance, Disability Allowance, and the Mahatma Gandhi Nischita Karma Nijukti Yojana Scheme. One such awareness initiative took place in Nuasahi village, Dashapalla, Nayagarh district, with the Block Social Security Officer in attendance. Concerns such as unemployment in the Mahatma Gandhi Nischita Karma Nijukti Yojana Scheme and challenges in the registration of ration cards and job cards were brought to the attention of officials.

Another awareness program focusing on government schemes was conducted in Saliajhari village, Bantapur Gram Panchayat, Odgao Block, Nayagarh district. Approximately 45 participants from the village engaged in discussions covering 40 schemes, ranging from Mamata Yojana to Harishchandra Yojana.



The program saw the active involvement of the Sarpanch of the Panchayat, PO, Samiti Viharman, and OLM Officer. In Deogarh District, awareness programs were held in Tillibani Block's Taichushar Panchayat and Barkot Block's Kantapalli Panchayat, drawing participation from 53 and 47 individuals, respectively. Notably, both Sarpanchs were present during these sessions. The conclusion of the awareness initiatives featured discussions on government plans in Ektali, Vahitbani, and Podagad Panchayats of Mayurbhanj district.



A THREE DAY LEARNING EXCHANGE PROGRAMME



A three-day learning exchange session was held in New Delhi from November 2nd to November 4th. Vasundhara actively participated in the media roundtable meeting on the 2nd day and shared her experience and challenges in implementing FRA throughout the meeting. The second session of the 2nd day was on "Social Cohesion: An Inclusive Forest-Dependent Community" moderated by Tushar Dash, our researcher. The entire session was interactive and helpful for sharing experiences and handling new challenges.

BLOCK LEVEL MEETING FOR LIVELIHOOD



on November 1st, a block-level meeting was held in Chakapada, in the Kandhamal district. The meeting was attended by all block staff members, including BDO (Block development officer), WO, OLM (Odisha livelihoods mission), and Tahasil staff. During the meeting, we discussed NTFP-based livelihood,

COMMON ANNUAL ACTION PLAN

To prepare the Annual Common Action Plan Six workshops were held in different field areas of Vasundhara in August. Those meetings were held in Ranpur, Deogarh, Jashipur, Kuchinda, Dasapalla, and Kandhamal area.

This approach aims to address the unique requirements of each field and provide tailored solutions to our producer groups and women primary MFP gatherers on a larger scale. To achieve this, we will be preparing individual action plans for each field area. The process will commence with separate one-day workshops held for each federation. These workshops will be attended by the Federation members and the planning committee, which includes all Field Coordinators and thematic heads. The process began with separate one-day workshops held for each federation. These workshops were attended by the Federation members and the planning committee, which includes all field coordinators and thematic heads. These workshops will be attended by the Federation members and the planning committee, which includes all Field Coordinators and thematic heads.

SIALI LEAF STITCHING TRAINING AT BANGALA SAHI

The siali plate-making training started in Kadrapada village of Duduki panchayat in Kandhamal district. In the three-day program, the villagers of Bangala sahi and Kadrapada were trained on how to pluck siali leaves from the forest, how to prepare the leaves before going for stitching, stitching quality siali plates, and know how to market those in different stakeholders. With the help of Sargifula Mahila Sangha, OLM organized this training program. The manager Subhadra Bhuyan, has joined the training. This training will be completed on September 29. The OLM Block Coordinator also attended this meeting and encouraged the women brigade for sustainable livelihoods.



GPS MAPPING IN 61 VILLAGES



GPS mapping has been done in 61 villages in the last 4 months with the help of Vasundhara. Forest department staff, revenue department staff, Vasundhara staff participated in this mapping process with the help of village people. This process has been completed in 36 villages of Nayagarh and two villages of Balasore between August and November. Similarly, 12 districts have been mapped in terms of blocks and mapping in terms of subdivisions. Based on the 2011 Census, Darpanaryanpur, Laxminaryanpur, Mahatapalla,

Odpalla, Nuapalli, Manpur, Routraypur, Kantasiri, Andharua, Jiripada, Kuspalla, Garhbnikilo, Thhanapalli, Talakani, Adala, Khajuripadasahi, Girinda, Randa, Gachhapatra/Kodalpall, Chintamanipur, Binodapada, Kandpada, Badhipatna, Badbhuin, Ostapada, Champagada, RAipada, Majhiakhanda/Sinduri, Kadmajholla, Bajrakota, Sangada, Sanchakundajhara, Vetabara, Bramhankumei, Ukutikumei, Bndhamunda, Srikuti, Oupada, Tavadihi, Sakatasal, Khaman, Lakhamunduli, Tikiraipada, Nelipada, Jaripada, Sankhajodi, Jamuganda, Dimiribadi, Ranlla, Badchakundajhara, Nuagaon, Gunduribadi/Jasodapur, Nagajhara, Paikabhuin, Nakithhana, Dadhera, Dimiria, Paikasahi, Kendua, Godasahi, Baunsagarh, Kakalama had GPS mapping.

In this renewed mapping process, various issues under forest rights have been emphasized. For example, the technical data of villages adjacent to protected forests, important villages under forest rights, villages with scheduled tribes, villages with people, villages without people, etc. has been collected.

Now there are 34 blocks in the whole state and there are 50 thousand 232 villages under it. While people live in 47,200 villages, there are no people in 3,32 villages. Similarly, in 36 thousand 114 villages under the Forest Rights Act, 16 thousand 168 villages are attached to reserved forests and there are 34 thousand 489 villages with Scheduled Tribes.

NGO COORDINATION MEETING

NGO Coordination Meeting for Forest Rights Act Implementation in Nayagarh District

Nayagarh district witnessed a pivotal NGO coordination meeting organized by Vasundhara where civil society leaders united to strengthen community-based forest management and ensure the recognition of Individual and Community Forest Rights under the Forest Rights Act.

In a heartwarming display of solidarity, organizations dedicated to vulnerable communities unanimously stepped up to protect the food security of the forest-dwelling community through the implementation of Forest Rights Act.

Together, these community-based organizations have committed to collaborating with the district administration to successfully implement the State Sector Scheme MO JUNGLE JAMI YOJANA for Right Holders.



REGIONAL BOARD MEETING AT NEWLY FORMED PG



A Regional Board of Directors meeting was held at the newly formed PG in Kanapaju. In this meeting, the members discuss the approach to collaboration and unity among our PGs. It is planned to produce 50,000 eco-friendly sal leaf plates from the Kalasakhman region by the end of this month. Members of the newly formed PG emphasized the importance of maintaining high standards for the quality of their Siali leaf plates. Kanapaju has been chosen as our plastic-free and zero-waste village. They discuss non-timber forest products and how they profile those MFP products for business. They also place importance on the community Forest Management Committee. 38 members from 8 PGs actively participated in the meeting.

CONDOLANCE MEETING FOR RANA ROY

In 2023, Vasundhara suffered a great loss when our former Director, Mr. Rana Roy passed away. Mr. Roy joined Vasundhara in 1999 after completing his studies at XISS, Ranchi, and continued working with us until 2010. His contributions to both programmatic and organizational development were exceptional.

For this on 7th September, Vasundhara held a condolence meeting to offer prayers and pay tribute to Mr. Roy's journey. The attendees were heartbroken by his sudden demise, which was truly unimaginable for the Vasundhara family.

Our field members and Vasundhara team collectively offered tribute to late Rana Roy and shared the beautiful memories they had of him that will be cherished forever.



VANAJATA STALL AT ANTHROPOLOGY CONGRESS

The 19th International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (ICAES) in the year 2023 was held at the KISS(Kalinga Institute Of Social Science) campus on the 9th of August. More than 10000 delegates from more than 150 countries are expected to take part in the World Congress, which is held every five years in different parts of the world.

The ICAES is the largest gathering of academicians and researchers in the fields of Anthropology and Ethnology in the world. It is also the oldest meeting of scholars engaged in the scientific study of humankind. The event will provide various indigenous communities with a platform to participate and showcase their talent and art in this grand celebration.

During the program, tribal culture and traditional dance were performed, and the indigenous communities were allowed to introduce their culture to the world. where the Kandha, Santala, and Kolha indigenous community people of Odisha presented, showcasing the authenticity of Odisha's culture. The Vasundhara placed a Vanajata stall in the ICAES 2023, facilitating people with Vanajata products to ensure a healthy lifestyle.



TWO DAYS TRAINING ON FRA AT BALASORE



Two days Sensitization cum Training Program began in Balasore on the Forest Rights Act and Mo Jangal Jami Yojna. Balasore District Administration and ST & SC Development Department, Govt. of Odisha Sri Sudhakar Naik, OAS, Additional District Magistrate, inaugurated the two days Sensitization cum Training Program on the Forest Rights Act and Mo Jangal Jami Yojna.

Mrs. Biduyt Lata Mohapatra, District Welfare Officer welcomed the guests and shared the purpose of the sensitization cum training program. Sri Sudhakar Naik, OAS, ADM, Balasore, highlighted the importance of the Forest Rights Act 2006 and Mo Jangal Jami Yojna.

Vasundhara executive director Y. Giri Rao presented the salient features of the Forest Rights Act, 2006 and Rules 2008 (amended up to 2012) along with the initiatives undertaken by the Government of Odisha to operationalize the Act. He clarified various questions raised by the participants on FRA.

Mr Binay Kumar Das, Training Coordinator, SPMU, highlighted key features of the State Sector Scheme 'Mo Jangal Jami Yojna' and functions of frontline officers, including Gram Panchayats & Gram Sabha.

Sub-Collector, Nilagiri, DWO, Balasore, DLC & SDLC members, Tehsildars, ADWOS, WEOs, Director of Vasundhara, and Training Coordinator of SPMU. Sri Sudhakar Naik, OAS, Additional District Magistrate, Sri Mahendra Mahalik, Sub-Collector, Nilagiri, DWO, Balasore, Tehsildar, Training Coordinator, SPMU and Director of Vasundhara present over there. Vasundhara director Y. Giri Rao unveiled the tool kit designed and prepared jointly by the Vasundhara and State Project Management Unit (SPMU) to create awareness of the Forest Rights Act 2006 and Mo Jangal Jami Yojna.

WAY TO RECOGNISE BULUNDA AS A REVENUE VILLAGE

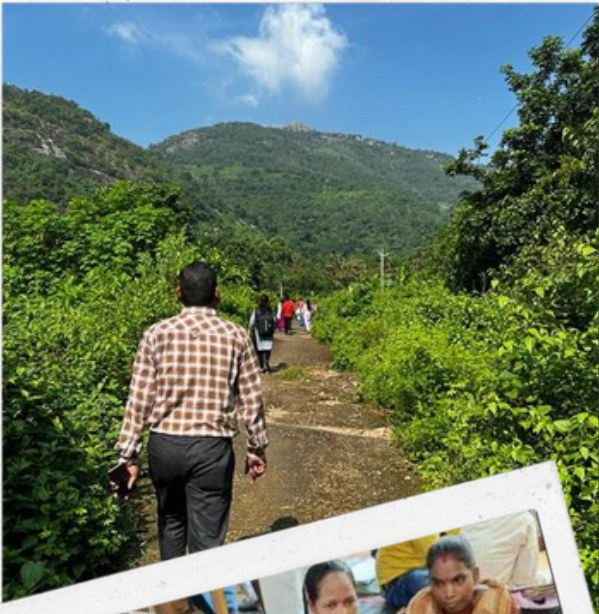
A significant milestone was achieved in Buluda village, located in the Raygada block of Gajapati district. In partnership with Vasundhara, the Gajapati district administration conducted a four-day training program, followed by group exercises, in Buluda village. Notably, Buluda village has remained un-surveyed. This collaborative effort marks a substantial stride towards officially recognizing Buluda as a revenue village.

The endeavor aims to facilitate the integration of the forest-dwelling Sabara tribe, comprising 25 families, into various government schemes and grant them rightful land ownership.

In this regard, Vasundhara shared that Shri Dinesh Kumar Deo, Assistant District Welfare Officer (ADWO) and the member convenor of the Sub-Divisional Level Committee (SDLC) Paralakhemundi, actively participated in this momentous occasion.

Situated a mere 27 kilometers away from the district headquarters and Gandahati waterfall, Buluda village has traditionally relied on the forest for sustenance. While some families have already benefited from housing under the Prime Minister's Awas Yojana and financial assistance from some State Level schemes, the prospective recognition of Buluda as an un-surveyed village promises access to a multitude of government benefits. These benefits hold the potential to significantly enhance the quality of life for the village residents.

The recent meeting on the Forest Rights Act (FRA), which was attended by the FRA Team Lead of Vasundhara, has played a pivotal role in paving the way for these positive transformations.



FINANCIAL ASSISTANT TO EMPOWER WOMEN BRIGADE



The outstanding performance of women was well recognized by MLA Ramesh Chandra Behera on 8th September 2023. The outstanding work of four exceptional producer groups; such as Banadevi Mahila Utpadaka Gosthi, Banaghagudidei Mahila Utpadaka Gosthi, Kumbheganda Pahadijharana Mahila Utpadaka Gosthi, Banamalli Mahila Utpadaka Gosthi are honoured.

For this, a meeting was held at the Mission Shakti Office of Daspalla Block. MLA Ramesh Chandra Behera, the Chairman, BDO, WEO, District Council members, and our dedicated block office staff are attending this meeting. Each producer group received financial assistance of 1 lakh rupees. This support will empower them to make their dreams a reality!

Banadevi Mahila Utpadaka Gosthi will soon be equipped with an oil extractor machine to extract Neem, Karanjaa, and Kusuma oils.

The other three producer groups are embarking on an exciting journey to build a leafplate machine, contributing to sustainable practices and livelihoods in our community. The 4 pg have taken ownership & visited machinery shops to see & check machinery & they want to invest in a good product before investment. They have visited 3 shops located at Cuttack are - 'Top Tools, *Universal Marketing, RK Bearing & Machinery

INITIATIVE TAKEN TOWARDS PLASTIC FREE ZONE



In the effort to transform Kuanria Dam into a Plastic-Free Zone, a significant advocacy initiative has been undertaken by the local women's brigade called Adibhumi Women's Association. which comprises women from 52 villages in the surrounding area. Recognizing the environmental impact of single-use plastics, the State Government has declared plans to extend this initiative to 100 picnic areas, entrusting the State Pollution Control Board with its implementation.

Kuanria Dam, situated in the Daspalla area of Nayagarh district, is a popular local tourist attraction, drawing visitors during the winter season. Unfortunately, the annual influx of tourists has led to the accumulation of single-use plastic waste in the dam area, adversely affecting the environment. In response, the Adibhumi Women's Union, in collaboration with Vasundhara, has proactively engaged with the District Collector to address this issue and ensure the dam premises remain clean and plastic-free.

The collective efforts of the Adibhumi Women's Union culminated in a formal complaint filed with the District Collector's grievance cell and a direct meeting with the District Collector.

Subsequently, the District Collector has taken swift action by issuing a letter to the Superintending Engineer of the Irrigation Department, urging immediate measures to make Kuanria Dam plastic-free.

The significance of this initiative extends beyond environmental concerns, as the livelihoods of the residents in the 52 villages surrounding Kuanria Dam are closely tied to the forest. These communities depend on the forest for their livelihood, collecting wild produce and selling it in nearby markets. The success of making Kuanria Dam plastic-free will not only contribute to a cleaner environment but also indirectly safeguard the livelihoods of the women in these villages.

Ipsita, the chief of Vasundhara's Daspalla area, highlighted the economic dependence of these communities on the forest, particularly the sale of shal and siali leaves. Approximately 2 lakhs of these leaves are produced in these villages, and the women sell them at the Daspalla Market. With the potential implementation of the plastic-free initiative, the need for women to travel to Daspalla Market and endure associated challenges may be alleviated, further enhancing the well-being of the local communities.

WHH TEAM VISIT JAMUGANDA VILLAGE



Jamuganda village received knowledge and ideas on women's empowerment and the betterment of the community people in the presence of members from the WHH team, along with members from Daspalla and Ranpur. Sri Vijay Rai, the project manager, addressed issues related to the villagers' livelihood and business management of funds. The villagers, particularly the women, actively responded to the questions and sought help to provide basic infrastructures to improve their lives.

During the discussion, Mrs. Nivedita Varshneya, the country director of the WHH team, was curious about the security and awareness of the

village women regarding their lifestyle, profit sharing, and record maintenance. She discussed the leaflet outlets and how much they make in a day, as well as how they organize their income to maintain their livelihood. She was amazed to receive such a positive approach toward house management skills from the village women.

WHH member Lincy, who was more focused on women's empowerment, discussed the drastic change in women's daily lives after the introduction of daily wages. The village women were happy and more self-reliant after the support of Vasundhara. She asked how the new generation of the village approached the forest based on their knowledge.

INTERNSHIP DAIRIES...



Two incredibly talented internship students from TISS, Mumbai in Banihochha, Kujamendhi, and Duda panchayat within Dasapalla block of Nayagarh. During their time with us, we engaged in enriching discussions with our PG members.

PHOTOS OF THE MONTH.....



GPS mapping is underway from Managada to Panchalingeswar in the Kuldiha Wildlife Sanctuary, of Shyamsundarpur. The team is accompanied by forest officials, RI, FRA cell personnel, and our team members, covering the entire distance.



The claim-making process for CR, CFR, and IFR was completed on Friday with the active participation of villagers during the final Gram Sabha meeting at Dhatikidihi village, Mayurbhanj



The community members of Suakathi Forest Village have prepared a map of the forest resources in their area. This map shows the community forest resources and is a hand-drawn representation. These techniques have been used for numerous years.



A special meeting of the Gram Sabha, also known as Palli Sabha, was held in Padeiguda village of Khairput block, Malkangiri district.



Vasundhara shared inspiring stories at the 'South Asia Region Roundtable on Indigenous Peoples Resilience to Climate Shock' in Kathmandu, Nepal, on September 28-29, 2023.

PHOTOS OF THE MONTH.....



Panchayat level meeting was organised in Pasara GP hall,,where GP sarapanch and OLM staff are particepated.



The Balasore District Administration organized two days sensitization cum training program on the Forest Rights Act and Mo Jangle Jami Yojna. It was attended by the frontline officers from different line department.



A three-day training under Mo Jungle Jami Yojana in Mayurbhanj. Ranjita Pattanaik, program officer of Vasundhara, shared valuable insights on the typology of forest rights under FRA during this insightful session. A total of 52 FRA Cell members from 26 Tahasils in the Mayurbhanj District are participating



BDO Chakapada has approved our request to open a bank account for MFP collectives in the Chakapada block



A productive discussion with the district welfare officer (DWO) of Nayagarh district about provisioning a Van Dhan Vikas Kendra (VDVK) .



released the Odia translated version of "Guidelines for Conservation, Management and Sustainable use of Community Forest Resources", issued by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India on 12th September 2023

We are an organization, deeply committed to nurturing the lives of forest dwellers in the state, has provided invaluable support through research-based guidance and hand-holding assistance. Our research-driven approach has facilitated a profound understanding of the intricate relationship between these communities and the environment they inhabit.

Through on-the-ground engagement and knowledge sharing, Vasundhara has empowered these communities in their quest for sustainable livelihoods. The organization's work has been instrumental in enhancing forest productivity, improving incomes, and advocating for the rights of these marginalized communities.

We celebrate Vasundhara's significant contributions to the success of forest dwellers facing formidable challenges in their pursuit of a simpler, more sustainable life.



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