

SUCCESS STORY OF NREGA PASCHIM MEDINIPUR, W.B.

1. Water harvesting scheme implemented under NREGA at the Astapara village of Paschim Medinipur, West Bengal



Astapara under Kapgari GP, Jamboni block, Paschim Medinipur, West Bengal is one of the adopted villages of Seva Bharati KVK. The main constraint to agriculture and livestock production of the locality is scarcity of water. Agro-eco System analysis followed by PRA method conducted by Seva Bharati KVK in the said village revealed that if Rai Bandh, a heavily silted water harvesting structure in the village could be re-excavated then the water body would have substantially solved the problem of water scarcity in order to go for higher cropping intensity and other agricultural ventures.

Seva Bharati KVK developed a participatory plan for re-excavation of Rai Bandh with necessary provision of grass turfing, fruit plantation, irrigation channels. However, arranging necessary fund to carry out the developmental plan was the main constraint.



District Magistrate visited the project site on 22.01.2008 along with the Sabhadhipati of Paschim Medinipur Zilla Parishad to assess the participatory mode of operation adopted by KVK. The participatory model on resource utilization developed by the villagers was discussed. The village people justified the need for re-excavation of Rai-Bandh through their presentation. District Magistrate, Paschim Medinipur was then approached for necessary financial support for the benefit of the farming community of the village. Having assessed the project proposal District Magistrate sanctioned the project with fund involvement Rs. 9.43 lakhs under NREGS and Seva Bharati KVK was entrusted to act as PIA of the work.

PARTICIPATORY IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

Following the norms of NREGS, Seva Bharati KVK played the role of facilitator to ensure active participation of Village Unnayan Committee, Asthapara Palli Unnayan Sangha and also the Gram Panchayat for the said programme. Health camp was organized at work sites for labour folks.

Regular monitoring, follow-up, was maintained for transparency, accountability and participation.



During the execution of work, village community used the earth which was good quality of moorum for the village road on their own effort. No extra fund was spent for it and it was done by the villagers by contribution of labour.

CONVERGENCE OF DIFFERENT PROGRAMMES FOR EFFICIENT UTILISATION

Subsequently, 80 acres of land under the catchment area of Rai bandh was sanctioned by District Magistrate for promotion and production of Mango under National Horticulture Mission. The need based intervention like, land development for SC/ST people, drought pondering measures, nutritional food security measures were envisaged in the project by the scientific team of Seva Bharati KVK. Out of above sanctioned project of 80 acres, 40 acres of land has already been converted into mango orchard with nearly 90% survivality during the current year.

LESSONS

It is too early to conclude the impact of the project in terms of socio-economic enhancement profile. However, effects of participatory implementation of the scheme under NREGA are reflected in the following:

1. Encouragement of the enthusiasm of local people to participate in the adoption of improved technology.
2. Increased cropping intensity.
3. Active participation of people in participatory planning and implementation of the project.
4. People's commitment to convert unproductive / fallow land into fruit orchard to supplement the family income.

Thus, a single project of NREGA implemented in a participatory mode is in the process of opening up new vistas in the livelihood pattern of the village community

2. Convergence with Soil Conservation Department

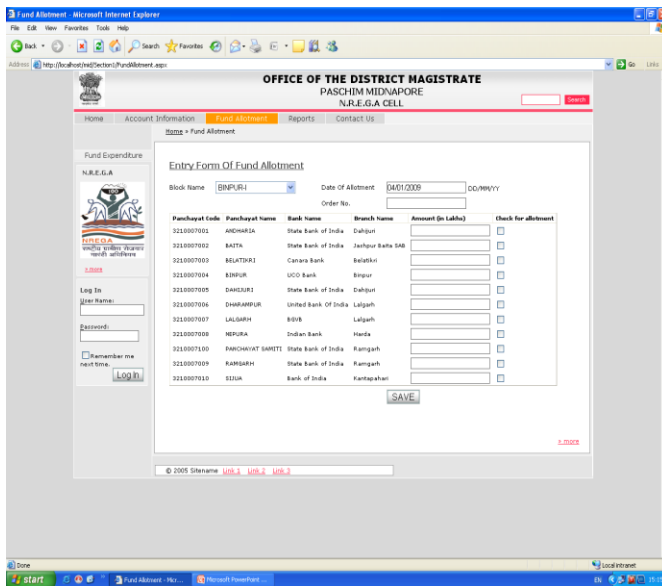


- At Nayagram Block, 658 acres of land were lying barren as slope of land was steep and rainwater used to drain out very quickly.
- All the lands belong to tribal population.
- Soil conservation Department executed land leveling & field bunding work of Rs.10,83,055/-
- Result - Last monsoon, tribal land owners could plough the land for the first time.
- S.C. Deptt. is implementing schemes of Rs.160 Lakh with watershed development approach.



INNOVATIONS IN IMPLEMENTATION OF NREGA.

1. Use of software in allotment and transfer of fund to PIA.



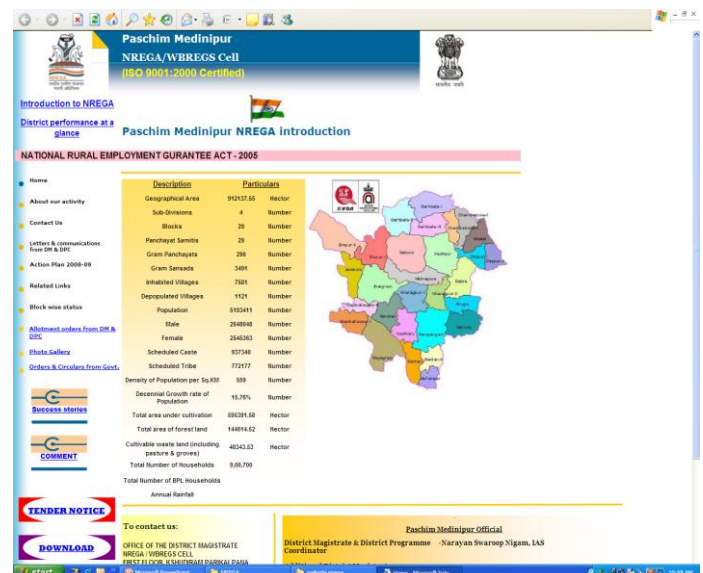
We allot fund to PIAs directly by means of electronic transfer. There are 326 PIAs in the district. It is an onerous task to transfer fund to the appropriate with 100% accuracy manually. Usually, we receive requirement of funds from 50-70 PIAs a week. In calculating entitlement of fund of any particular PIA we take into account. Month wise average expenditure, balance in its hand and number of ongoing schemes at its disposal.

Calculation for entitlement of fund, issuing allotment order, preparing PIA wise and bank wise advices, maintaining PIA wise ledger were becoming more and more complex. Typing of 16 digit CBS a/c numbers added to the pain and were more prone to type mistakes and wrong credit of fund.

We thought of seeking help of IT and the DIO, NIC developed software for this process. Now, before making an allotment, we only give PIA wise input regarding expenditure and balance of fund. The entitlement of fund, allotment order, PIA wise and bank wise instructions, PIA wise ledger are generated automatically. We can now send fund to PIA faster with more accuracy. Also, can we keep watch on individual PIA regarding the periodicity of submission of fund requisition and release of fund.

2. Developing Website for NREGA of our district and use of IT at Gram Panchayat (GP) / PO level.

As mentioned above, we send copy of allotment order and copy of instruction to concerned PIAs, so that they can get information of allotment prior to credit in the bank accounts. Sending of allotment and instruction to 50-70 PIAs by post / fax was troublesome and took time. Moreover, we had to send letters / Govt. orders etc. to all PIAs by post.



To avoid delay, we decided to develop our own website. We now upload letters, orders, allotment & instruction to banks, annual action plan, GP wise performance report in the NREGA website regularly. This enables us to disseminate information to PO / PIAs quickly. As a step for making proactive disclosure on the performance of NREGA, we have given our website address to all political parties and Press, so that they can access the website and can get all information regarding NREGA in Paschim Medinipur.

3. ISO 9001:2000 certification

We are maintaining our office and internal system as per the standardization specified by KVQA (the accreditation and certification body of ISO).