



ASSAM AGRIBUSINESS AND RURAL TRANSFORMATION PROJECT (APART) E-newsletter

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PROJECT DESIGN OF APART

The guiding principles under the project are: (i) focus on cluster based approach to bring forth Assam's comparative advantage to meet the growing domestic, regional and the potential international demand; (ii) increase private sector participation in the development of agriculture supply chains and markets; and (iii) improve public sector capacity in delivering climate resilient technology transfer and related services.

The project is designed to support, value addition in the production and post-harvest management of selected agriculture value-chains; facilitate agribusiness investments through inclusive business models that provide opportunities to small farmers and enable establishment of new agribusiness SMEs; and support resilience of agriculture production systems in the targeted districts for better manage increasing production and commercial risks associated with climate change. The project adopts a cluster strategy, to generate economies of scale; promote vertical and horizontal links between local agricultural enterprises. By adopting a cluster approach, the project enables all the value chain participants to develop competitive and innovative products that meet the market demands.

The project also aims to bring about a transformational impact on rural poverty through improved agricultural productivity, value-addition, higher non-farm employment opportunities and increased farmers income. The project facilitates better inclusion of the poorer and marginalized communities in the growth process through better access to markets, jobs, growth opportunities, and services. One of the major thrust of APART is on enhancing agglomeration of producers to improve economies of scale in producing, processing and marketing of agricultural produce. Corresponding to this, the project will support agriculture and livestock productivity (including value and incomes) through essential technology transfer in production and improved post-harvest and market operations. APART supports the development of higher value commodity supply chains for structural transformation of the agrarian economy. Project focuses on food processing, agribusiness, logistics and infrastructure, and MSME finance and insurance and establishes a new standard of excellence for entrepreneurship and business skills training by improving skills and knowledge transfer from trainers to micro small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

APC REVIEWS PROGRESS OF APART IN BARPETA

Agriculture Production Commissioner (Agri) & Principal Secretary to the Government of Assam (GoA), Agriculture Department, Shri Rajesh Prasad, IAS along with Director, Agriculture, Shri MS Manivannan, IAS, and State Project

Director (SPD), ARIAS Society, Shri Vinod Seshan, IAS, reviewed the Progress of the World Bank financed Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project (APART) in Barpeta District on 18th March, 2019 (Monday) in presence

of Senior officers of Barpeta District, Govt. of Assam.

Shri Rajesh Prasad visited Kamdhenu Dugdh Utpadak SamabaiSamiti (DUSS) and its Bulk Milk Cooling (BMC) Unit located at Nityananda village in Bajali region of Barpeta District. The Bajali region in Barpeta district plays an important role in the milk procurement operations of WAMUL in the district. As on date, WAMUL has organized around 1115 dairy farmers as member pourers of its 25 milk collection centres nested in Bajali region from where it's procuring a daily average of around 7200 liters of milk across two shifts in a day. Of the total procured volume of milk in the region, Kamdhenu DUSS is supplying/ pouring around 50% of milk through a Bulk Milk Cooling (BMC) unit of 5,000 liters capacity. The milk price paid to the dairy farmers in Barpeta district by WAMUL is Rs.34.00 per kg of milk fixed at standards of 4.00% Fat and 8.50% solids-not-fat (SNF) of milk composition. It has been observed during the visit that the dairy farmers in the region are getting a price which is as high as Rs.38-40 per liter due to high fat content of their milk. A sample test performed on site in presence of APC was found to have 5.00% Fat and 9.40% solids-not-fat (SNF). Under APART, it has been envisaged that the village level milk collection centers and BMC Units will be get strengthened further through deployment of automatic milk collection units (AMCUs) which will test and measure the quantity and quality of milk being procured by WAMUL on a daily basis for onward payment of milk bills to its dairy farmers. At present, the points of generating milk bills are- BMC Units and Liquid Milk Processing Plant of WAMUL located at Guwahati, whereas under APART the village based collection centers, post deployment of AMCUs, can themselves become the points of milk billing. The other milk procurement infrastructure to be provided to village based milk collection centers under APART are mentioned below:

- Stainless steel milk cans of 40 liters capacity
- Power driven gerber machines
- Milk Adulteration Kits
- Milking machines for demonstrating clean and hygienic handling of milk
- Milk collection accessories

WAMUL is also providing extension and input services to its dairy farmers in Bajali region of Barpeta district. It has



Visit to Kamdhenu DUSS and its BMC Unit having an installed capacity of 5000 liters

deployed one Veterinary Executive, recruited under APART, in the region for monitoring the Artificial Insemination (AI) services of around 20 Mobile AI Technicians (MAITs) who were deployed under APART. During the last 10 months, WAMUL had arranged a supply of 7800 kg of cattle feed and other feed supplements to its dairy farmers in the region at affordable rates. Since last many years, WAMUL has emphasized a lot on training and capacity building of its dairy farmers on key aspects of dairying and cattle rearing. This function of WAMUL has been further strengthened as it could so far provide the following training and capacity building services to its dairy farmers under APART:

- Training of DCS Secretary
- Training on DCS operations to the newly associated members
- Training of DCS Management committee
- Farmer Induction Programme
- Farmer Orientation Programme
- Awareness programme on "Clean Milk Production"

VISIT TO PADDY VARIETY BINADHAN -11 INTEGRATED CROP MANAGEMENT DEMONSTRATION (ICMD):

The team also visited the Binadhan paddy plot of Shri Kurban Ali Khan, in Kadamgudi village, Bhabanipur Block, Itervita ADO Circle in Barpeta District. Good, uniform

crop growth was observed with proper line transplanting. Binadhan 11 is a short duration variety of around 120 days period and contains submergence tolerance gene. In spite

of being of short duration, the variety does not compromise on yield and produces around 5.5-6 t/ha paddy. The variety was notified in 2015 and found suitable for medium or shallow lowlands covering the geographies of Assam, West Bengal and Tripura. ICMDs are generally taken for scaling

up and rapid adoption of improved rice crop management practices for transplanted rice. The complete package of best management practices is demonstrated right from nursery bed preparation to harvesting.



Visit to Binadhan-11 ICMD Plot of Shri Kurban Ali Khan at Kadamgudi village, Bhabinipur Block of Barpeta District

A MILK STORY

Chatabori is a small village in Morigaon district of Assam, where Shri.Jyoti Prasad Deka, 30, successfully runs Lakshmi Milk Producers Institution (MPI). His journey was not an easy one though; being born to a family with no land holdings, with his father working as a gardener in the forest department, making ends meet was herculean for the family. Jyoti completed his graduation in 2013, however, getting a job to sustain the family was hard to come by. He then decided to buy a local breed cow, yielding ½ litre a day and joined the Jagi Bhakat Village MPI as a member. But it was not an easy task because of the distance of 5 ½ km from the village. Dairy farming, as a livelihood, was not very appealing for the local people of Chatabori village, where alternative means of livelihood was not available. Moreover, with the Veterinary dispensary located at Jagi Bhokot Gaon, quality artificial insemination service was not easily available and was expensive too, which further discouraged the local population to take up dairy farming.

Along with 12 other members from the village, Jyoti formed the Lakshmi MPI at Chatabori village in February 2014, collecting 5-10 litres of milk daily and thus started the association with the Western Assam Milk Union Limited (WAMUL). Jyoti worked hard, as he was now married with a family. Seeing his dedication and perseverance, WAMUL selected him to be trained as a Mobile Artificial

Insemination (AI) technician and sent him to National Dairy Development Board, (NDDDB) Eastern Region Development and training centre (ERDTC) located at Siliguri, for a 45 days Basic Artificial insemination course under the “Assam Dairy Development Project”, which was financed by World Bank under the “AAP-AF” (Assam Agricultural Competitiveness project). While he was away, his wife, Smt Purnima Deka, took charge and started managing the Lakshmi MPI and on his return from the training, Jyoti was engaged by WAMUL as Mobile Artificial Insemination Technician (MAIT) and started providing “Doorstep AI delivery service” in and around Chatabori village.

With more villagers taking up dairy farming in the area, WAMUL intensified its outreach and held extensive awareness meeting to make the local people aware about the benefits of Artificial insemination and thereby enhance and upgrade the local breed cows to improved cross-breeds for higher productivity. WAMUL’s veterinarians conducted infertility and vaccination camps to improve animal health and productivity. With easy access of pouring their milk at Lakshmi MPI, the membership gradually increased from 35-40 members in 2015 to a present membership strength of 89 members, which primarily consists of female members from Chatabori and surrounding villages of Saru Kuloi and Bar Kuloi.



Performing Artificial Insemination for genetic upgradation



Female members of Lakshmi DCS

Purnima continued taking charge of the unit as a full-time MPI Sahayak, while Jyoti Deka continued providing AI service at farmer's doorstep. He has been instrumental in motivating people to take up Dairy farming as a means of livelihood and formed around 4-5 MPI's in and around 10-15 km radius, which have helped the villagers to have easy access for pouring their milk to WAMUL, throughout the year, with vaccination camps, infertility camps and other services held at regular intervals. With a fruitful association with WAMUL, there has been a

significant impact in the lives of Jyoti and his family. They have repaired their improvised house, the daughters are getting a good education and they also have added assets, like motorcycle etc. for the family. The hard work and dedication of Jyoti have helped him to emerge as a successful dairy entrepreneur and also set an example for many who wanted to take up dairy farming as a livelihood option. As a tribute to the success, Lakshmi MPI was finally registered as a "Lakshmi Gau Palok Dugdha Udpadak Samabai Samity Limited" in 2017.



Purnima, as MPI Sahayak at the Lakshmi MPI



Women empowerment is thy name

Assam being a Milk deficit state, the Govt of Assam invited WAMUL to undertake the breed upgradation through "Doorstep Artificial Insemination Project" under the World Bank funded 'AAP-AF' project in Nagaon and Morigaon, which was monitored and supervised by ARIAS Society. Due to the success of the "Doorstep AI delivery project", it has been incorporated in the follow-on World Bank Financed Project "Assam Agri-business and Rural Transformation Project (APART)" and to be implemented in 13 districts of Assam.

MONITORING OF THE CONSTRUCTION SITE OF ROADS

With the initiation of civil works for roads, District Social Safeguard Coordinators (DSSCs) have started monitoring the sites of construction. Labour camps have been set up at the construction sites. Necessary protective measures are made available to the labours involved in the construction.



Labourers with construction equipments during the construction

PIG REARING – AN INCOME BOOST FOR FARM FAMILIES

The backbone for any sustainable animal production system is the availability of superior quality germplasm. To increase the productivity and profitability from farm animals, the prerequisite criteria is the selection of a breed with sound breeding efficiency. Animal Husbandry and Vety. Dept (AHVD), Govt of Assam under APART had a provision to introduce exotic germplasm in two nucleus pig breeding farms in Kothiatoli (Nagaon District) and Morigaon District of Assam. Accordingly, a survey cum selection of pig was carried out in Govt. Pig Breeding Farms as well as private farms in Punjab by a team of Veterinary officials from AHVD and ARIAS Society. During the survey, it was observed that Govt. Farms have been maintaining good pedigree register/records compared to the private farms. Subsequently, AHVD decided to procure pure breed Large White Yorkshire (LWY) breeder piglets from Punjab Govt. Farms for sustainable piggery development in Assam. It is also worth mentioning that, during 2012-13, pork production in India was 0.45 million tonnes with an average yield about 35kg/animal which is much lower than the world average. The declining population of pig is a major concern in India and to enhance development of pig sector in Assam the necessary interventions like selection of good breed adaptable to agro-climatic regions, scientific management and rearing and climate resilient housing is extremely important.

Under APART, the AHVD has put forwarded their first step for overall development of pig sector by introduction of LWY pigs from Punjab into Nucleus Pig Breeding Farms and sequence of activities in 13 APART Districts has also been carried out viz. formation of FIG (Farmers Interest Group), Training of Master Trainer, selection of beneficiaries for Climate resilient housing, selection of Pig Bandhus in Cluster level etc. with a mandate to augment the productivity from Pig sector at farmers' level and to reach per capita

availability of meat to the ICMR recommended level by the end of project period.

Accordingly, under the approved AWP 18-19, the first batch of 97 LWY breeder piglets consisting of 32 males and 67 females were procured from three Pig Breeding Farms, Punjab. The standard protocol of transportation was strictly followed during the whole procedure. As per the transportation protocol, maximum comfort was provided by allowing an avg.3.82 sq.ft space to each animal. The goods loading part the truck was divided in to four compartments, separated by thick ply boards to prevent aggregation or hurdling, inter mix with large & small or to prevent infighting etc during travel period. Sand and paddy straw was used as a bedding material with about 8 inches of bottom sand layer and a top layer a straw, evenly spread throughout. The feeding and watering schedule of the piglets during transit was maintained as per the recommendations of the Punjab Govt. Farms. After 108 hrs of journey, the trucks carrying the breeder piglets arrived in the custom built quarantine area at Morigaon and after 7 days of observation, the pigs were distributed to four farms as per the breeding strategy and capacity of the farms, viz.:30 (10:20)* to Govt Pig cum Poultry Farm, Diphu, 23 (8:15)* to Base Pig Breeding Farm, Rani, 22(7:5)* to Demonstration Pig Farm under ALPCo and 22 (7:15)* to Pig Breeding Cum Demonstration Farm, Sonapur, Kamrup. [* Male:Female ratio].

Mortality in livestock transportation is a common phenomenon, but the current transition of 97 breeder LWY piglets without any mortality is a significant landmark in APART. This meticulously planned and systematically implemented operation, which was a joint venture of ARIAS Society and AHVD, Assam, is credible enough to be taken up as a case study for future interventions.



Piglets being received at Govt Pig Farm, Diphu



Piglets transported from the Punjab Govt. Farms

SIKKIM STATE CO-OPERATIVE SUPPLY AND MARKETING FEDERATION LTD. (SIMFED)“ HIRED AS SERVICE PROVIDER (SP) FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMON SERVICE CENTERS (CSCS) THROUGH THE FORMATION OF FARMER PRODUCER ORGANIZATIONS/ COMPANIES (FPOS/FPCS) FOR ZONE-2

Under the subcomponent C-2, i.e. “Facilitating market linkages through market intelligence & product aggregation”, project would be focusing on establishment of Common Service Centers (CSCs) through the formation of Farmer Producer Organizations/Companies (FPOs/FPCS). For this, APART districts are divided into three (3) Zones and for each zone one Service Provider (SP) (i.e. Consultancy Firm) will be engaged to complete the whole process of CSCs establishment and FPO/FPC formation. In this connection, project team has selected “Sikkim State Co-operative Supply and Marketing Federation Ltd. (SIMFED)” as the Service Provider (SP) for Zone-2 following the World Bank procurement norms.

CTRAN Consulting Limited will work with SIMFED as joint venture for this assignment. The Contract Agreement with SIMFED has been signed on 4th March, 2019. As per the Contract agreement and Terms of Reference (ToR), SIMFED will complete the whole process of CSC establishment and FPO/FPC formation in the districts of Sivasagar, Jorhat, Golaghat, Karbi-Anglong and Cachar. SIMFED will establish 30 CSCs and form same nos. of FPOs/FPCS in the production clusters (blocks) of those districts in different Value Chains. The Inception report has been submitted and approval from PCU is awaited. The Value Chain wise target for CSCs and FPOs/FPCS for Zone-2 is given below:

Districts Under Zone 2	Agri + Horti	Fish	Pig	Sericulture & Handloom & Textile (Silk)	Total
SIVASAGAR	2		6	1	9
JORHAT	3		3	1	7
GOLAGHAT	3				3
KARBI-ANGLONG	1		5		6
CACHAR	3	2			5
Total	12	2	14	2	30

**(CSC is a physical infrastructure where minimum Post Harvest Handling operations or basic value addition activities can be done at farmers’ level by FPO/FPC members)*

PROMOTION OF CARP-MOLA POLY CULTURE IN ASSAM UNDER APART FOR NUTRITIONAL SECURITY OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Under the Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project (APART) major thrust is given for increasing the production and productivity of fish from pond aquaculture, paddy cum fish culture and beel fisheries by use of environmentally sustainable technologies on market led approach to provide nutritional security of local communities. Carp-Mola polyculture is a viable technology demonstrated by WorldFish in many countries including Bangladesh to provide nutritional security particularly to Pregnant and Lactating Women (PLW) minor and young children. Under the First 1000 Days Nutrition programme emphasis is given to provide wholesome nutrition for the

cognitive development of the child with low cost, micro-nutrient rich Small Indigenous Fish Species (SIFS). In this context, the SIFS particularly Mola is a rich source of micronutrients both vitamins and minerals which play a major role in brain development and growth. Among all available fishes, Mola contains the highest level of Vitamin A and is also a good source of Calcium, Zinc and Iron which are essential to combat malnutrition. Apart from mola, there are many other nutritionally important SIFS in Assam like Puti, Chela, Dhela, Darkina, Tengra etc. which can be promoted for polyculture along with carps to provide nutritional security of the local communities.



Under the fishery component of the APART project, WorldFish based on its experience in Bangladesh and under the F&RAD and USAID Projects in Odisha will be promoting Carp-Mola Polyculture in pond aquaculture, paddy cum fish farming and also in beel fisheries with the objective of providing nutritional security to the local communities involved in small-scale aquaculture and fisheries. One of the important requirements to promote Mola is the availability of the broodstock of mola in the local areas for stocking in

the demonstration ponds. The technology will be introduced in ponds, rice fields and beels in few clusters initially and will be scaled-up in all other clusters under the various interventions proposed in the project. It is also proposed to provide nutritional education among the local fish farming and fishing communities to promote consumption of SIFS particularly for the First 1000 days for pregnant women, lactating mothers and minor children.

**Write-up and Photo Courtesy: WorldFish*



Molay and SIF farming at Dimoria Development Block, Kamrup dist. Assam

PREPARATION OF SITE SPECIFIC SOCIAL MANANGMENT PLANS (SMPS)

APART has conducted the Social and Environmental screening of 22 nos. of roads (approx. 40 kms.) selected under the project. In coordination with the concerned AACP Divisions of PWRD, APART has also conducted community consultation in the selected sites, where the roads are to

be construction. At present, APART in coordination with PWRD is in the process of preparing the site specific Social Management Plans (SMPs) and Environmental Management Plans (EMPs).



Social Survey of Roads



Community Consultation

ORIENTATION OF PWD CONTRACTORS ON SAFEGUARD MANAGEMENT

An orientation workshop has been conducted on 7th March 2019 for the contractors selected for civil works under APART by PWRD. Officials of PWRD, Safeguard coordinators of the project districts, contractors and the Engineering team and safeguard team of PCU has participated in the workshop. An

orientation has been given to the contractors on compliance with the site specific Social Management Plan (SMP) and Environment Management Plan (EMP). Orientation has been also given on preparation of site specific Labour Management Plans



Orientation on Safeguard Management

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VALUE CHAIN SCHOOL (VCS)

Directorate of Horticulture & Food Processing (DoH&FP) supported by International Potato Centre (CIP) organised a training/workshop on Value Chain School(VCS) for the facilitators under Module-E i.e. 'Enterprises developments' of CIP supported activities under APART. The workshop was held from 26th -29th March 2019, at Guwahati. The purpose of this workshop was to develop facilitators at the district, block and community level so that they can establish the Value Chain School (VCS) at the block level to run the business by the community.

In the 1st phase, the Value Chain School (VCS) is planned to be implemented in 14 blocks of 7 APART districts, namely: Barpeta, Darrang,



Nagaon, Sonitpur, Morigaon, Jorhat & Golaghat. The CIP experts explained that a single VCS cycle generally requires 6-9 months starting from the orientation of the participating farmers to product development and launching and for each stage there is structured course module which was explained by the Experts from CIP.

The four day training/workshop was attended by the District Horticulture Coordinators, ATMA staff of the selected districts besides officials from APART, CIP and Directorate of Horticulture, Govt of Assam and ARIAS team. The different sessions of the workshop was taken over by Value chain experts from CIP led by Dr. Diego Naziri, Value Chain Specialist, and CIP-APART team.

RURAL ROADS FOR UPLIFTING RURAL ECONOMY

To facilitate Agro Cluster Development, APART through PWRD is upgrading rural access roads that will connect project supported production clusters and enterprise clusters to higher classes of road, market centres and urban centres. These upgraded roads are aimed to provide better connectivity and market access to the rural farmers and project beneficiaries. The foundation stone and inauguration of some of the rural roads are:

Bamundi PWD Road (Beltol-Mahkallol Dhuliapara Road) under Hajo LAC connecting the neighboring villages to Hajo wholesale market and State Highway 2. The road covers 1.10 km, directly benefitting 500HHs and farming families and indirectly benefitting 10,000 (approx) of the rural population. The foundation stone and construction of the road was inaugurated by Smt Bijoya Chakraborty, MP, Lok Sabha on 1st March 2019.



Rongphar village, Phulonggaon to Sonapur –Burnihat PWD Road under Dispur LAC covering a length of 2.3 kms was inaugurated by Shri Atul Bora, MLA, Dispur on 5th March 2019. The link road connects the villages to NH 37 and nearby market areas of Sonapur, Khetri, and Guwahati. The road will directly benefit 900 HHs and farm families and indirectly benefit 7200 population (approx).



Sampupara Bazar to Chaygaon PWD Road under Chaygaon LAC connecting Goroimari village with Chaygaon wholesale market. The road covers a length of 2 km directly benefiting 750 HHs and farming families and indirectly benefiting 7500 rural population (approx).

Sampupara Bazar to Chaygaon PWD Road under Chaygaon LAC connecting Goroimari village with Chaygaon wholesale market. The road covers a length of 2 km directly benefiting 750 HHs and farming families and indirectly benefiting 7500 rural population (approx).



Construction of roads through APART

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