

## Fodder Development Initiative in Village Panchayat Pinglo

Village panchayat Pinglo, District Bageshwar and is in 12 km distance from Block Garud. Geographical area of the village is 197.11 hectares out of which 79.947 hectares is agriculture land and 53.600 hectares is Forest Panchayat land. There are 289 households in village Pinglo having a total population of 1655 comprising of 740 males and 915 females. In the year 2011-2012, an organization - SIMAR studied the micro plan of the village. It was found that most of the villagers work on agriculture and livestock. Everybody raised the issue of work overload for women with regards to livestock and agriculture. Villagers shared



that there is a huge problem of green fodder in the village and in winter season, situation goes worse when it is difficult even to find dry grass for livestock. Villagers either have to buy fodder from other villages or travel as far as 5 km to get the fodder which usually takes most of the women's day time. Considering the situation, village people were motivated for fodder plantation under Fodder Development Project. People were informed about utilizing their panchayat or collective land for fodder grass plantation under MNREGA Scheme. Motivated villagers proposed Fodder Plantation proposal in 3 hectares of land in Hamlet Karchhinagdhera during the open house village panchayat meeting.

With the financial help of Rupees 1,00,000/- from MNREGA and guidance of the organization, Fodder Plantation work started in July – August, 2011. 15 villagers were employed under MNREGA Scheme to initiate the work like cutting bushes, fencing, construction of water ponds and vermicompost pits. Contour trenches were also constructed with technical help of the organization in which 25 quintals of Napier and 1200 different types of fodder plants (Bhimal, Baanj, Kachnar etc.) were planted. For the protection of the land and plants, a guard was employed by the villagers with the financial support of Rupees 600/- monthly from the organization. Village Pradhan Bhagwati Devi has been supportive in the whole process. After one year, 12 families of the village used 400 to 500 quintals of fodder from the land. This resulted in inspiring villagers to expand the land for fodder plantation and in the year 2012-2013, 3 hectares more land was planted with Napier and Auns grass with the financial assistance of Rupees 1, 00,000/- from MNREGA. Villagers have used 200 to 300 quintals of fodder from this land. Again in 2013-2014, with the same amount of financial help from MNREGA, 3 hectares of land was used for fodder development.

### Impact:

After seeing the benefit, villagers have started using their private barren land and the agriculture field boundaries for grass plantation. Where women had to go 4 to 5 km for fodder in the winter season, now it is available within the parameters of the village. Women shared that while in the past, it used to take 4 to 5 hours to get the fodder, now they save at least 2 to 2.5 hours of their time and it is reducing the workload to a great extent.

### Fodder Development Initiative in Village Panchayat Maigdi State

Village Panchayat Maigdi State is situated in District Bageshwar and is 20 km away from Block Garud. It is in distance of 1 km from road. Village Panchayat is spread over 350.166 Hectares of area comprised of 183.250 hectares agricultural land and 24.726 hectares of Forest Panchayat land. Total village population is 1355 in which 725 are males and 630 are females, living in 238 households. Most of the villagers are involved in agriculture and livestock activities. In the year 2012-2013, SIMAR organization organized a meeting with the villagers under Integrated Fodder and Livestock Development Project (IFLDP). Fodder Plantation idea was discussed with the villagers for which they could use forest panchayat or collective land. Villagers shared the problem of not having a land for the purpose.

The English have formed estates in the villages in which each household has a collective land which only could be used for Fodder Development. After detailed discussion in the meeting, one of village's hamlets Silabagad was chosen for the Fodder plantation under MNREGA Scheme. The land decided for the work is collectively owned by three families. With the financial support from Sir Ratan Tata Trust and Himmotthan Society and technical support and guidance from SIMAR organization, the process of fodder plantation was started in July, 2012. 20 villagers were



employed initially for cutting bushes, fencing, construction of Contour trenches and vermicompost pits. After completing the initial work, 15 quintals of Napier grass and 850 fodder plants were planted in the plot. Where it created employment for the women under MNREGA, fodder plantation also became an investment for their own benefits. . Geeta Devi was hired for taking care of the land with the help of the organization. SIMAR paid rupees 600/- monthly as wages for looking after the land. In 2012-2013, 10 quintals of Napier root stock provided an earning of rupees 3000/- and additionally, villagers got 300 quintals of grass for their livestock. Moreover, 20 women used Napier grass from this plot to plant it on the boundaries of their fields. The production is increasing gradually and villagers keep removing weeds on regular basis for better results. At present, fodder is available even in the winter season. Women are happy not to lose their time and efforts in finding green fodder in the forest and are saving 2 to 3 hours of their time everyday which result in less workload on women.

Block and other societies have inspected the plot and have appreciated the work by the villagers. It also motivated people of Simsaal hamlet, village Maigdi State to plant fodder grass under fodder development Initiative with the help of MNREGA and the organization and finally fodder plot was developed by the villagers.

## Fodder Development Project in Village Panchayat Prerna

Village Prerna is located 8 km far from Block Garud on the Gwaldam Road, District Bageshwar. Village's geographical area is spread over 74.653 hectares out of which 27.520 hectares is agricultural land and 15.541 hectares is Forest Panchayat land. SIMAR organization studied the micro plan of village Prerna in the year 2011. There are 141 households in the village where 595 people reside, comprising of 282 males and 313 females. As livestock and agriculture is integral part of the society in the mountains, most of the households of this mountain village also practice the same occupations. Due to adverse conditions in the mountains and lack of information about technology, women are victim of heavy workload associated with livestock and agricultural works. During the study, villagers said that they face a lot of problems to get the fodder for livestock especially in winter season. Women move up to 6 km in the forests to get the fodder which causes too much physical efforts and waste of time. Having low value production after too much effort, villagers started taking less interest in livestock and agricultural activities. People were usually dependent on traditional and old practices.



After assessment of the situation, SIMAR and village panchayat held a village level meeting to discuss the issues and find a solution for them. A proposal was put forward by the participants and SIMAR to start Fodder Development program under MNREGA Scheme. With the objective of Fodder development in the village and making livestock business profitable, Himmotthan Society, Dehradun and Sir Ratan Tata Trust, Mumbai provided technical and financial support and in the year

2011-2012, technical training was organized for the villagers regarding Fodder Development Process. As a result, Fodder grass plantation was done in 3 hectares of land in village Prerna.

During the process of building fodder plot/land, village women were informed about advanced and nutritious fodder for their livestock and motivated to use their barren land for fodder development. Gradually, a change could be observed in women's attitude towards fodder development and they started taking interest in supporting the initiative. Villagers' efforts resulted in availability of green and good quality fodder within the village area. Villagers get 300 to 400 quintals of Napier grass and 200 to 300 quintals of natural grass every year from fodder land. A positive output from first effort inspired the villagers to expand the fodder development area and they again proposed 3 hectares of land to be used for fodder development under MNREGA in their village level meeting.



In July 2012, with the financial assistance of Rupees 1, 00,000/- under MNREGA scheme and technical assistance from the organization, 3 hectares of land was used for fodder grass plantation. Villagers participated in fencing of land, cutting of bushes and plantation work. Villagers have used 250-300 quintals of fodder for their livestock during the month of October and November. They shared that if they had to collect fodder from the forests, it would take at least 3 to 4 hours where now fodder is available within their reach and it takes only 1-1.5 hours to get the fodder. It is obvious that women are saving 2 to 2.5 hours of their time and at the same time, getting good quality fodder produce for their livestock. One of the village's Hamlet namely Magaltha was inspired by this and planted Napier grass on the boundaries of their private fields. Women suggested that productivity is more on the boundaries of agricultural fields than in fodder plot/land. The village is surrounded by Green Napier grass which makes villagers excited.