

Fodder Development became an Integral part of Agriculture

Livestock is an integral component in the economy of the mountain region of Uttarakhand. People of Uttarakhand, mainly women usually depend on the availability of naturally produced fodder in the form grasslands which day by day is becoming limited in order to develop Livestock as a potential source of livelihood. Hence, it becomes important to include Fodder production along with agricultural production work which has been started by many people in the mountains. Women of Nyay Panchayat - Bairangna of Village Panchayat - Kalla, Block Dasoli have shown an example by doing it.

Village Khalla is situated in 15 km distance from District headquarter Gopeshwar and at an elevation of 1650 metres above sea level having total geographical area of 137.62 hectares. There are 78 households in the village out of which 51 households lie under general category and 27 households under Scheduled cast category. Total population of the village is 357. Most of the households are dependent on traditional agriculture and animal husbandry practices. Forest is the sole medium of providing fodder for animal husbandry which is situated in 3 to 5 km range from the village which results in a lot of time consumed by the women just to get the fodder for livestock. Apart from that many households also send their livestock for grazing. After putting so much efforts and time, women didn't get the right compensation in terms of the product.

Availability of land resources and livestock in village Khalla was suitable to introduce Integrated Fodder and Livestock Development Project (IFLDP) in the village. Jakheshwar Sikshan Sansthan with the support of Himmotthan organized village level meetings and shared the objectives of the program with the villagers. Old village level groups were assessed and process of forming new groups was started by the organization. Considering the importance of women, it was ensured that women participate in village level meetings and proposals are put forward according to priorities of Gram Panchayat. Women participated in the meetings with enthusiasm and priority was given to development work in the village. It was decided that the agriculture land that is not being used by the villagers/barren land shall be converted into grassland under Mahatma Gandhi National Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA).

With the guidance from Himmotthan Society, detailed general and technical information was collected regarding Village Level Fodder Development Program under MNREGA, financial assistance was provided and Fodder Plot was successfully constructed at village level. It was the result of these efforts that between 2010 to 2013, advanced fodder grass (Napier, Auns, Khad) was planted in 11 Hectares of land and fodder leaf plants (Bhimal, Kwiral, Bhahtuh, Ringal, Baanj, Subbool) was planted in 10 Hectares of private land owned by 57 households. Work was completed by 102 Job Card Holders in 1716 days.



Construction work under MNREGA

Year	Area (ha.)	Labour component (Rs.)	Material component (Rs.)	Total Cost (Rs.)	Employment generated (person days)	Total Job Card Holder involved (Nos)		
						Men	Women	Total
2010&11	2	40000.0	15000.0	55000.0	400	7	18	25
2011&12	3	72408.0	9300.0	81708.0	589	3	16	19
2012&13	3	43336.0	17425.0	60761.0	346	2	14	16
2013&14	2	40000.0	0.0	40000.0	381	6	36	42
Total	10	195744.0	41725.0	237469.0	1716	18	84	102

Financial Support from MNREGA:

It was financial support from MNREGA, Str Ratan Tata Trust and Nawaj Bai Ratan Tata Trust, Mumbai (Himmotthan Society, Dehradun) that such a task was completed successfully. At village level, Savitri Devi – Van Panchayat Sarpanch and Nanda Devi – President, MMD, actively participated in the pre and post work of the construction of the plot like maintenance, removing of weeds, manuring, guarding , fodder grass cutting etc. Village Pradhan, Block Development Officer and Village Development Officer also contributed to accomplish the task mentioned above.



Fodder Plot

Women Awareness about the Use of Land Resources:

Information dissemination about the effective utilization of land resources by Himmotthan under the project has developed the understanding of village households to protect and enrich the fodder land. Manuring, removal of weeds, expansion of fodder land is done from time to time by the women and it is gradually becoming habitual for them. The land which was full of thorn bushes in 2010, is making village

women feel happy after converting them into fodder land. This inspired women of the village to plant more Napier grass and Bahtoot in the boundaries of agricultural fields and other barren land.



Fodder Plantation in Private Land



Saving of Efforts and Time:

Now fodder for livestock is available easily and in nearby area. Villagers share that from month of March to November, they cut good quality fodder grass 11 to 15 times which is convenient for the villagers.

Impact:

- Use of barren land by the villagers for plantation of good quality fodder grass.
- Understanding was developed in collective responsibility of the villagers for protection of fodder plot/s.
- Fodder is easily available and throughout the year which motivated villagers to expand the plantation of leaf plants like Bahtoot.
- Discussion with the Milk Vendors to determine the prices of milk products.

Future Plans/Strategies:

- There is a plan to utilize remaining barren land for fodder grass and leaf plant production.
- Advanced development and construction of cowsheds under MNREGA.