



St. Xavier's Bishramganj Vocational Training Centre

C/o Don Bosco Centre
Bishramganj, 799 103
W. Tripura, India

Mr. Michael New
Chairman
Aquaculture without Frontiers
Wroxton Lodge
25 Institute Road
Marlow
Bucks SL7 1BJ
United Kingdom

23.7.05.

Dear Sir,

Sub: Project proposal for Integration of aquaculture in watershed management programmes to benefit the poor tribal people of Tripura, India.

We would like to present you the above project for the possible funding support from AwF. We have initiated an integrated agricultural farm and training centre with an objective of training people with focus on youth, to create employment and improve their agricultural productivity. With heavy rain fall in the area during some part of the year, water shed management has become an important component to manage the soil health and create healthy environment. Ponds created as part of such water management programmes or ponds built as water storage devises to cater household necessities for water are either unused or underutilized for aquaculture activities. Hence, through this project, it is proposed to introduce / improve aquaculture activities by providing people with training at the centre that is already built and provide technical and small material support to enable farmers to initiate / improve their aquaculture activities.

We have been fortunate to have the support of ICAR – Fisheries Division in building the farm and the College of Fisheries Support to improve our aquaculture interventions. Based on the information provided by Prof. M.C.Nandeeshha about the possibility of getting small financial support and the assurance of scientific community from the College of Fisheries and ICAR to help us technically, we are presenting this proposal for your kind consideration.

If you need any other information, we would be happy to provide. Your kind help will enable us to initiate our activities in this new area and help the poor tribal people to derive benefits from aquaculture.

Yours Sincerely

Fr. K.J.Joseph Sdb

THE BISHRAMGANJ-INDIA AwF PROJECT

Integration of aquaculture in watershed management programmes to benefit the poor tribal people of Tripura, India

Background

This project on Integration of aquaculture in watershed management programmes has been planned to help the very poor to marginal farmers. It is necessary to educate the people about the new opportunities available for the effective utility of the available resources and create responsibility for the protection, preservation and responsible management of all the available resources. The quality of the eco-system and the people are planned to be improved through the intervention of the proposed project. The occupation of the people in this project is largely agriculture and labour work. They are cultivating rice, vegetables, Potato and Pineapple. 100% of the people are scheduled tribes. They are the major tribal group like Debbarma, Riangs, Jamatia, Tripuri, Notia and Garos along with many other sub tribes. The other sources of livelihood for the tribal are Fishery, Piggery, Goatary and Poultry. The people are largely dependent on forest products. Through this project, we would like to create awareness on integration of aquaculture in watershed management to improve their income, family nutrition and create employment opportunities.

Situation in Tripura: Specific problems and needs

The state of Tripura is divided into four civil districts namely Dhalai, North, South and West Tripura. It spreads over an area of 10,846 Sq K.M. And the population is around 30 Lakhs. Though the government and its Tribal Welfare Department were doing different projects for the welfare of the tribals for a long time, it had not made any impact in the life of the real poor tribal people in the state. The socio-economic life of the poor tribals remains unchanged because of the insurgency and corruption among politicians and bureaucrats. The tribal economy is based on the principle of self-sufficiency mainly centred around the hills and forests.

There are 19 major tribes who form 30% of the total population of the State. The remaining 70% are Bengalis and Manipuris. The history of the tribal and the non-tribal living together in the State of Tripura has been a story of repeated outbursts of intolerance and distrust. Of late, such violent incidents have been on the increase and fear looms in the minds of people that the entire State is on the brink of a widespread communal riot. These and other factors, historical and geographical, have combined to make Northeastern region of India one of the poorest in the Country. Besides poor communication facilities, large-scale presence of armed militancy is another factor that drives away potential investors from this region. Violence has already brought to a grinding halt the system of education and healthcare especially in the tribal dominated rural areas. While most systems of development have ceased to function effectively, ethnic strife continues unabated claiming more and more innocent lives. The root cause of violence is poverty of the people especially the tribals. They are turned to violence and terrorism. The only way to bring back these people is wholesome employment. As employment in government sector is very limited and the only way is self-employment through vocational training either in mechanical or agricultural sectors.

Origin of the project

After much deliberation and thought, we the members of the St. Xavier's Bishramganj (Social Welfare Organization) thought it proper to intervene at this critical stage in the life of the people especially the poor

people of Tripura. The only way to bring peace is economic development of the people, especially the tribals. The tribals have good amount of land. They have their personal land and the common land belonging to the tribe where they are able to cultivate. What the people at present require is training in scientific way of cultivation and some support to initiate the activity. They can be trained in different agriculture practices including aquaculture. They can set up their own aquaculture activity to improve their living.

Hence, St. Xavier's Bishramganj (NGO) and Fishery College, Lembucherra have identified the need for developing training modules for poor tribals engaged in their livelihood on natural resources and enable them to improve their livelihood through aquaculture. This project does not envisage training as an end itself, but aims to strengthen watershed management programmes through aquaculture. This project envisages imparting of comprehensive training in watershed management and upgrading the technical skills of people on aquaculture and providing them with equipments and financial support to set their own fishery for family consumption, self-employment and income generation.

As a first step, this project is directed to the 30 poor families who are ready to learn and enable a living through self-employment by getting training in aquaculture. The proposal is the result of our interaction with the people of the area, who have repeatedly expressed to us the great benefits that would be derived if such a help is provided. Since the poor people living with poverty and unemployment, they find this project easy and assuring.

It is also our hope that the beneficiaries of our project will successfully go through their course of training and later become successful fish cultivators, with the technical help forthcoming from the specialists. They will become agents of peace and communal harmony in a place that is in constant disturbance. We feel that the long-term objective of this venture is peace and human dignity through self-sufficiency.

Location of the Project:

The Bishramganj-India AwF Project is located in Bishalgargh Block of West Tripura district. The project area is located around 25 km from the district head quarter and around 35 km from the state capital Agartala. The project area consists of ten villages namely Laltilla, Masterpara, Chikancherra, Bastoli, Bangshibari, Gulirai, Amtali, Sutarmura, Luntangcherra and Padmanagar.

Aim of the project:

To improve the quality of the eco-system and meet the livelihood needs of people, which will contribute to improve the socio-economic- nutrition- health status of people and ecological condition of the environment.

Objectives of the Project:

1. To utilize unused or underused land and water resources
2. To promote aquaculture and increase consumption of fish.
3. To improve the economic condition of the poor people through aquaculture

Methodology:

Thirty farmers chosen to work on this project will be trained by using the family approach wherein both husband and wife will be trained on fish culture over a period of two days by bringing them to the training centre. These trained farmers will utilize their knowledge to renovate their own ponds, which are currently

used for water storage, wild fish capture and in some cases stocking of cultivated variety of fish, but without resorting to proper aquaculture practices. Popular carp species along with few of the self recruiting species will be introduced to ensure sustainability to the activity. Farmers will be encouraged to use the resources available for use as pond input. Integration of fish ponds with other agricultural activities will be encouraged.

A project monitoring committee will be formed consisting of elected 4 -5 members from the community including the technical advisors from Central Agriculture University (Fishery College, Lembucherra) and Indian Council for Agriculture Research (ICAR). On site training necessary for the farmers will be provided based on the monitoring results. Base line bench mark information will be recorded to track the changes through the project. Participatory approaches coupled with the traditional scientific methods as appropriate will be used to capture the impact of the intervention.

In order to create confidence among people and gain trust, the society will conduct initial training programmes and village level meetings with the technical support of experts.

The follow up support and monitoring will be done by representatives of the society and technical help will be given by technical advisors. As we are closely associated with the developmental work carried out by Prof. Nandeesh (Fishery College, Lembucherra) and Dr. Santosh, Scientist of ICAR, Regional Office, Tripura, we are confident of implementing this project successfully. Additionally, the technical input for the project will be assisted, supervised, and monitored by Prof. Nandeesh in his capacity as an AwF volunteer.

In recognition of the financial and technical input from AwF, the project will be named and referred to as the 'Bishramganj-India AwF project' in all documents.

Expected benefits of the project:

The implementation of the project will benefit the poor tribal people by enabling them to better utilize the resources available within their reach through aquaculture. This project will help to increase fish consumption through the introduction of this new activity scientifically. It will also create employment opportunity. Improved watershed management will help in recharging the groundwater resources, reduce soil erosion, decrease run off speed and increase agricultural productivity. In this first phase, we expect thirty families to derive benefits from this activity.

Project duration:

One year, commencing August 2005.

Reporting:

We will submit half yearly and final reports about the progress of the project to AwF. Also, on a regular basis, we will bring to your notice any interesting developments and problems encountered.

Estimated project cost:

The project aims at providing technical support and minimal support essential for the people to initiate the activity and experience the benefit of the programme. While part of the project activity will be covered through local contribution, an amount of Rs. 155,000/- is requested from AwF. The local contribution will be in the form of labour and other farm inputs by farmers and the support by the Training Centre to cover part of the expenses involved in monitoring, organizing regular trainings, etc.

Note: 1 million = 10 lakhs: One USD: @ Rs. 44/-

Names of potential beneficiaries requesting help for the implementation of the Bishramganj-India AwF Project:

1. Gopal Debbarma
2. Lolang Debbarma
3. Harichand Debbarma
4. Khundi Debbarma
5. Haphius Mia
6. Humayun Mia
7. Nurul Hag
8. Apon Mia
9. Mujibur Rehman
10. Salima Mia
11. Wakhi Rai Debbarma
12. Borjola Debbarma
13. Kishore Debbarma
14. Rotiranjan Rai
15. Vijayakumar Taran
16. Kamaini Debbarma
17. Uttam Debbarma
18. Balaram Debbarma
19. Krishna Debbarma
20. Premmohan Debbarma
21. Shanti Debbarma
22. Nabin Debbarma
23. Nanigopal Debbarma
24. Shambu Debbarma
25. Mangal Debbarma
26. Kiran Mia
27. Sachindra Debbarma
28. Kamal Debbarma
29. Jadu Mia
30. Sadhu Molsom

Note: Debbarma is a particular tribe. The list contains only male heads of family. The list has tribal families and Bengali hindu and muslim families as well.

BUDGET OF THE BISHRAMGANJ-India AwF PROJECT

SI.No	Particulars	Amount	
1.	Maintenance and deepening the ponds for watershed management and aquaculture: earth work including excavation, lead, lift and compaction for 30 ponds @ average of Rs: 4000/family	120000	255000 00
2.	Fingerlings, fertilizers @ Rs: 1500 /family	45000	
3.	Feed @Rs: 1500 /family	45000	
4.	Training and follow up support	30000	
5.	Miscellaneous cost including tools and implements @ Rs: 500	15000	
Grand Total (Two Lakhs Fifty Five Thousand Only)		255000	00
Local Contribution (One Lakh Only)		100000	00
Amount Requested from AwF----- (One Lakh Fifty Five Thousand Only)		155000	00

Explanation to the budget requested:

(1) Depending on the poverty level of the family, payment for the work carried by the family members for renovating their pond including hired labour will be compensated by paying the wages at the Government rate.

(2) Part of the training and follow up support expenses will be covered with the budget indicated.

(3) It is planned to restrict support to each family to a maximum of Rs. 5000/- . Families will be encouraged to make best possible decision on the utility of this support to increase aquaculture productivity.

Yours Sincerely,

Fr. K. J Joseph Sdb

If the project is acceptable, please send your help in the name of the

St. Xavier's Bishramganj
A/C No: 6963
Central Bank of India
Agartala Branch
Agartala, West Tripura
India
Swift code: CBINIBICAL

It is important to state that the money should go to Central Bank of India, Agartala Branch.

About the organisation: St. Xavier's Bishramganj (SXB)

St. Xavier's Bishramganj (SXB) is a social work organization and development wing of the Salesians of Don Bosco (Salesian Fathers) working in Tripura towards integrated development for all irrespective of cast, ethnic groups, and religion, with special focus on poor and marginalized, in the spirit of love and service. It is a non-profitable, non-political, voluntary organization registered under the Societies Registration Act 1860, and is committed to the uplift of the marginalized. Our vision is a self-sustaining, just and peaceful society based on the gospel values of empowerment, love and justice. We commit ourselves to the empowerment of the poor and the marginalized through development strategies that release the powers of the rural poor to transform their lives. The institute works with the people, rather than for them. SXB's strategy recognizes that the poor face multiple problems: lack of education, inadequate income opportunities, lack of scientific yet affordable know-how, ill health, a degraded environment, political oppression. SXB uses bottom-up, participatory, integrated strategies to address this interlocking nature of rural poverty. It is carrying out various Training programmes on different vocational trades, health, hygiene and environment.

Objectives of St. Xavier's Bishramganj:

The dream is to usher in through Economic Self-reliance, a suitable ambiance for dignified human living for all people especially the rural and economically weak agrarian community of Tripura.

- Bring about self-reliance in economy by creating possibilities for people to engage in alternative forms of development that are viable, proven and self-sustaining.
- Promotes development of the economically weak and predominantly agrarian sections of people in the remote areas.
- Focuses on development strategies that release the powers of the rural poor to transform their lives.
- Strengthen the self-determining capacity of the rural poor on the economic front.

Programme areas and Goals:

- Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture
- Rural Enterprise Development
- Community Health, Reproductive Health & Nutrition
- Literacy – Formal & Remedial
- Culture – Language and the Arts
- Emergency Relief

THE BISHRAMGANJ-INDIA AwF PROJECT

This project has been approved by AwF and a transfer of funds was initiated on 3 August 2005.

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light grey background. The signature is written in a cursive style and appears to read "Michael B. New".

Michael New
AwF Chairman