



Summary Report

Project

Alternate Livelihood Programme via Poultry Farming, Panna Tiger Reserve

Reporting Period

March 2020- July 2021

Submitted to



Submitted by



Project Team

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Project Details

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|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Reporting period: | March 2020-July 2021 | Project title: | Alternate Livelihood Programme via Poultry Farming, Panna Tiger Reserve |
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Executive Summary

Pardhis are a traditionally nomadic community known for their exceptional hunting skills and prowess in the jungles of central India. As a result, their unique skills were employed for centuries; first by the earliest emperors of the Mughal Empire around the 1500s, up until the mid-19th century when the British and ‘Zameendars’ (landowners) used them for sport and stocking the royal kitchens respectively. The rapid decline and eventual extinction of tigers in Panna Tiger Reserve (PTR) have been primarily related to the Pardhi community.

Though it is easy to paint this community in a bad light and solely blame them for this extreme loss, it is unreasonable to expect a group of people accustomed to a hunter-gatherer lifestyle for hundreds of years to suddenly accept that their way of life is illegal and to immediately adopt another lifestyle without any institutional help or guidance.

Therefore, the Last Wilderness Foundation (LWF) proposed to introduce backyard poultry farming as an alternative livelihood for this community, under the aegis of the UN sustainable Development Goals 15 (SDG 15) of “Life on Land”, which states to “protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss”.

Through a three pronged strategy of establishing community focus and ownership; partnerships with local Government institutions and capability building at community, institution and internal organizational level, the LWF was able to successfully establish a pilot version of the project. Two sheds were established through the generous support of Abercrombie and Kent Philanthropy, and through collaboration with a local poultry farm, two households were trained in the process, where cycles of chicken rearing have already begun

in today's date. Future plans are already in motion to strengthen the programme by standardizing the quality of the rearing to cater to more high-end buyers.

Progress

At the onset of the programme, two families were selected to be part of this pilot project. Two individuals (one from each family) were then given an opportunity to attend a training course provided by the Krushi Vignan Kendra, based in Panna, specifically focusing on poultry farming. The two individuals were successfully trained over the course of 4-5 days.



Figure 1 Two individuals from two selected households attending poultry farming training

Construction of the poultry sheds was started as soon as possible, sometime in the month of March 2020, so as to provide a source of income to the participants of the programme before their situation became too dire as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. Two sheds measuring 15 x 30 feet with a height of 8 feet were made using bricks; corrugated cement sheets; and iron poles and mesh framed windows. The purpose of investing in permanent structures such as these was to assure the participants that this could be a viable, long term livelihood option, rather than a short term fix, which would most likely increase the chances of them not abandoning it to return to their traditional livelihood practices. Work was completed on both sheds sometime around May 2020.



Figure 2 Construnction of poultry farming shed underway

Results

Overall, the introduction of this project to the Pardhi community has proven to be highly beneficial in ensuring that individuals did not face too much hardship during the COVID-19 crisis and be forced to return back to their nomadic and hunting lifestyle.



Figure 3 Completed poultry shed ready to house cycle of chicks as part of alternate livelihood programme

One shed is fully functional, already having successfully completed two cycles of chick (broiler chickens) rearing and currently rearing the third. In each cycle, they were able to buy and rear around 250-300 chicks, with minimal loss. Eventually, both cycles were sold for a profit to the original poultry farming insitution, as well as some to other retailers for a higher profit.



Figure 4 A cycle of chicks enjoying feeding time in the first functional shed

Expenses

| Expense | Amount (INR) |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| Cement Sheet rooftop with iron poles | 50,000 |
| Metal Grill | 14,000 |
| Labour charges (for welding) | 10,000 |
| TOTAL | 74,000 |

Challenges Faced

Work on the construction of the sheds slowed down for a while due to cases of COVID-19 and Bird Flu spreading through the area, though this did not heavily impact progress of the project and eventually construction was finished on schedule.

While seed-funding to kick-start the poultry farming was secured, it covered only the functioning of one shed. However, the success of this first pilot shed clearly shows the efficacy of the project and importance of continuing and expanding the programme to more families.

Future Plans

With the successful functioning of the first shed, the LWF is currently in the process of securing support to help the second family get the second shed functional as well. In addition to this, it would also be prudent at this early stage to train and set up key quality control measures with the help of Taj Safaris to ensure that more high-profile buyers can be secured for the chickens. This would not only allow the community to nurture sustainable relationships with local businesses, further strengthening the programme, but also increase the potential profits they can expect, further incentivizing them to establish roots and adopt poultry farming as a serious and long term livelihood. Furthermore, with the ongoing success of the pilot programme, the LWF also hopes to convince more families to participate, where once more families adopt a more sedentary lifestyle, it would then be easier to introduce other programmes being run by the LWF to improve their quality of life, capacity building and education.

End of Report