

**Report on
Awareness building among the community of Similipal foot hill of
Mayurbhanj district to save and protect elephant**



SANGRAM, Mayurbhanj

www.sangram.org

Introduction



Similipal forest range is a symbol of reverence and awe. It has the appeal of a religious sanctity, a coherent bond of cultural assimilation and a perennial source of livelihood. The massif hills rising very precipitously from the plains of Baripada and Udala extend as far as Jashipur in North and Bisoi in the East and Thakurmunda in the West covering a total area of 2750 sq kms. with their innumerable crests and valleys and perennial streams. The Khairiburu, in South Similipal, amidst the group of hills is 1,178 mts. whereas Meghasani is 1,165 mts. High.

The elevation in the central region at Dhudurchampa is 1000.8 mts., that of it in the North at Chahala is 774.5 mts. It is a unique habitat of mixed tropical forests in the Northern plateau of Orissa. The reserved forest area of 2,200 sq. kms. has been declared as a sanctuary since 1979. The core area of 845.70 sq. kms. within the sanctuary area has been gazetted under the provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act.1972 as the Similipal National Park. During 1994, the Similipal forest has been declared as a Biosphere Reserve by Government of India due to its bio-diversity and rich natural heritage.

The biodiversity of Similipal reserve forests with its typical ecosystems is a treasure house of varieties of flora and fauna. The forest is said to contain more than 1300 flowering plants, out of a total of 3,000 species found in the state. About 200 varieties medicinal plants are in Similipal. Sal exists in high proportions. The forest is the store house of terrestrial and epiphytic orchids. These are a class of climate sensitive species, which disappear with modifications in the habitat. Out of 126 orchids found in the state 90 are in the Similipal system. Many of the species are facing a threat due to modifications of the ecosystem, and have entered the IUCN Red Data Book as vulnerable, threatened, endangered, rare & indeterminate. Apart from tigers, the Similipal reserve boasts of 134 tuskers, 309 female elephant, and 64 baby elephant, 428 wild dogs, 305 bear, 4500 kutras, 3500 deer, 950 busks. It is the international recognition as one of the first nine prime areas for tiger and elephant conservation and for being one of the first eight Biosphere Reserves of India. It is one of the most promising landscapes for tigers, elephant and their prey species.



Similipal is located between latitude 20°17' N and 22° 34' N and longitude: 85°40' E - 87°10' E. Headquarter for management of Similipal is in the Office of the Conservator of Forests and Field Director at Baripada on NH-5 in Mayurbhanj district. Entry points to Similipal are at Pithabata, 20km from Baripada on the eastern side and Kalika Prasad 15km from Jashipur on NH-6 on the western side. Baripada and Jashipur are approachable from Calcutta, Jamshedpur and Bhubaneswar.

Background of the project



Conflict among animal and human is now a very common phenomenon in Similipal and increasing day by day. Every day news comes on elephants, where elephants have destroyed agriculture fields, damaged the houses of tribes and where they kill the people but you think why the elephants come to the village and agriculture fields and affect the life and livelihood of humans? The basic cause is we have destroyed their shelter like forests;

we block their path by constructing houses & roads, lease of mining. Pesticides in agriculture fields cause elephant deaths. Mass poachers and illicit hunters have disturbed the elephants. Massive scale forest cutting and forest degradation forced the elephants to come to the village area and create conflict among humans.

Again the issue was highlighted when the news published in the number of daily News papers about a number of elephant deaths in April and May 2010.

When the elephant carcasses were first detected in April 2010. Since then, there have been many conflicting reports, some indicating that the number of elephant deaths may be as high as twelve. Keeping these in mind Orissa wild life protection samiti and SANGRAM has decided to carry out a campaign on elephant protection in the peripheral village of Similipal.



Goal of the project

To create awareness among the community of Rairangpur, Karanjia & Baripada forest division of Similipal forest hill to protect elephants through village meetings, personal contacts, documentation, dissemination of IEC materials & issue based publications.

Objective of the project

To involve & capacity building of local community for reduce elephant poaching

To minimize the conflict among animal and community

To promote indigenous knowledge to protect crop from elephants

To sensitize media on the issue

To strengthen inter departmental coordination

Activity undertaken

- 11 sensitization awareness campaign in 3 forest divisions through village meetings, personal contacts, documentation, dissemination of IEC materials & issue based publications
- IEC material development like one leaflet, two types of posters etc

Activity at a glance

Total number of villages cover:- 11

Total number of Panchayat cover:- 10

Total number of Block cover:- 7

Total number of forest division cover:- 2 (Baripada, Karanjia)

Total number of Range :- 8, (Pithabata, Dukura, Udla & Kaptipada of Baripada division and Jashipur, Karanjia, Kendumundi and Thakurmunda of Karanjia division)

Total area cover:- 30 Kilo meter

Total population cover :- Direct 1500 and indirect 10000 people

Total number of department involved:- 4, Forest, Health, Panchayatraj, Education

Project period :- 22nd December to 26th December 2010 Baripada Division and from 3rd January 2011 to 7th January 2011 Karanjia division

Time period :- 11 A.M to 5 P.M with tea, Tiffin, lunch and snacks

Participants:- The participants are like villagers, SHG member, JFM member, VSS member, PRI member, NGO/CBO member, Youth club member, STP, ASHA, AWW, ANM, Teacher, BRC, CRC, Sarpanch, Eco club member, Media people.

IEC material :- Flax, 3 leaflet like 1. A Obhiyan Kanhiki in Odia

2. Song for Elephant in Odia

3. Mass hunting in Odia and Santali

Process of awareness building

Before we state the activity we have share and discussed the program with DFO and officials of forest department. Meeting with Range officer and finalise the village which are more sensitized for campaign. After finalise the village we have went to the village and informal discussion with the villager, VSS member, SHG members, JFM members and community leader and finalise the date & venue for village awareness meeting. We have circulate the formal letter to the Field director Tiger reserve project, DFOs, rang officers and staffs, VEC, VSS, JFM, SHG to the meeting. In all the meetings forest departmental people were participated along with the villagers. Before meeting we have massive discussion with the villagers and mobilize people.



All the meeting were stated at 11 A.M and continued till 5 PM. Meetings were followed by different Flax messages, deliberations, speeches, discussion, people suggestions and recommendations. Special campaign was carried at Debkund tourist sport through

different Flax message with the active involvement of STPF team members. Detail activity attached in Annexure-1.

Output

- Community has empowered and active involve in elephant protection
- Women are encouraged and involve in wild life protection
- Village youth are interested for informer
- Elephant poaching has decreased
- Increased coordination among forest dept. and community
- VSS, SHG and JFM are motivated and actively involve in wild life protection
- 11 villages people are sensitized and Level of awareness increased
- Involvement of PRI members increase in elephant protection
- Decrease of elephant poaching

Impact

- After the village awareness meeting of Dudhiani Range on 4th January 2011, one villager of that village informed some people are planning for poison to elephant to Mr. Vanoomitra Acharya and through this information we have save the elephant from poison death.
- Neduapal villagers requested for similar program in their village
- Number of VSS are activated and request for village meeting
- After the village meeting it was came to know that some illegal gun are available in Podiha village of Ktipada Range and action has taken.

Recommendation

- Strengthen and capacity building of EDC & VSS committee
- Regular village awareness meeting
- Precaution measure to protect elephant before they came to village
- Cordial relation building with villager
- Construction and renovation of trench in near by villages
- Formation of elephant protection group and capacity building of the member in elephant affected villages
- Discuss the issue of forest and elephant protection in Panchayat meeting
- Regularize of STPF
- Strong punishment to the hunter
- Seize of all the unauthorized country-made guns
- Construction of water harvesting structure in the perennial canal for irrigation to support livelihood and reduce dependency on forest
- Promotion of energy fire brick
- Systematic registration of VSS
- Posters and wall-painted hoardings in all the important peripheral towns, villages and panchayat headquarters
- There should be an identity card system for the inhabitants of peripheral villages

Problem face

- Illicit timber trade and wildlife crimes has threaten to the VSS member after the meeting organised.
- Lack of coordination among VED/VSS and forest department
- Heavy cold (3 to 6 degree) create problem to organise meeting
- lack of solution of the problem exposed by villager.

Future plane

- Regular follow up meeting in the villages
- Capacity building of VSS/VED, JFM, SHG
- Formation of Elephant protection committee in all peripheral villages
- Support to the informer and highlight the informed issue
- Fight against illicit timber trader and poucher

News Clips

- The Dharitri, Page no-9 on 17.1.2011 (Mayurbhanj elephant protection abhiyan)
- The Sambad on 16.1.2011 (Mayurbhanj elephant protection abhiyan)
- The Suryaprava on 17.1.2011 (Culmination ceremony of elephant protection abhiyan)
- The Samaj, page 12 on 28.12.2010 (Save Similipal bio spear and public relation awareness camp at Podadiha)
- The Dharitri, page -5 on 6.1.2011 (District level elephant protection abhiyan)

Detail Activity

<u>Sl.No</u>	<u>Name of village & Range</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Total participants</u>	<u>Member present</u>	<u>Guest present</u>	<u>Suggestion by villagers</u>
1.	Taragadi, pithabata	21.12.2010	82	SHG, VSS, STPF, Youth club, villagers, Sangram staffs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prasanta Behera, Forester 2. Chaityan Murmu, Secretary VSS 3. Dehuri Sing, president VSS 4. Suni Sing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination and cooperation of forest department is essential • Strengthen and capacity building of VSS • Elephant protection committee formation
2.	Jadunathpur, Dukura	23.12.2010	97	SHG, VSS, STPF, Youth club, villagers, Sangram staffs	Dukura Range Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect village from country liquor • Forest protection • Plantation • Capacity building of VSS • Formation elephant protection committee
3.	Nuagan, Udula	25.12.2010	80	JFM, SHG, VSS, STPF, Youth club, villagers, Sangram staffs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rupayu Baska, PS member • Sunaram Sing, Village leader • Rutarani Mohanta, SHG leader • Laxmi Singh, ASHA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce dependence from forest • Development of perennial canal for irrigation • Formation elephant protection committee • Environment protection

						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seize of all the unauthorized country-made guns • Fight angst illicit hunter
4.	Podadiha, Kaptipada	26.12.2010	135	SHG, VEC, VSS, STPF, Youth club, villagers, Sangram staffs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prafulla Mallik, Ranger Kaptipada • Forester Pradip Jena • Forester Achutananda Das • Basudev Sahu, ret. Airforce officer • Aurobinda Behera, ward member • Aswani Behera, security guard • Dr. Ramakanta Mohanta, Eco club district coordinator • Jitendra Mohanta, Range officer Udula 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elephant statue in different forest area • School awareness camp • Agriculture development • Capacity building of VSS • Formation elephant protection committee • Seize of all the unauthorized gun • Develop irrigation facility • Formation of eco development committee • Coordination with forest department • Awareness competition among student on elephant protestation • Plantation • Protest against mass pouching

5.	Jamukeswar, Karanja	3.1.2011	104	JFM, SHG, VEC, VSS, STPF, Youth club, villagers, Sangram staffs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Omkar Ram, Secretary Indira Sruti Parisada • Deepak Pani, Secretary Gramswaraj • Srihari Nayak, Ex Sarapanch • Raisen Naik, president VSS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish Information center • Install sport light in elephant affected village • Training on elephant protection to village youth • People participation in elephant protection
6.	Kalitumba, Dudhiani	4.1.2011	107	SHG, VSS, STPF, VEC, Youth club, villagers, Sangram staffs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prafulla Ku. Mohanta, Educationist & CRC • Village teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance forest and plantation in degraded hill • Massive awareness campaign • Sustainable harvesting of forest produces
7.	Sanpokhari, Dudhiari	4.1.2011	110	SHG, VSS, STPF, Youth club, villagers, Sangram staffs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baidyanath Majhi, RO • Forester Mr. Sahu • Purna Ch. Purti, village leader • Kanda Samrai, Village leader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen forest protection committee • Love to elephant • Protect fire in forest • Fight against illicit wood trader • Sustainable harvesting of forest produces

8.	Chatri Sahi, Kendumundi	5.1.2011	88	SHG, VSS, STPF, Youth club, villagers, Sangram staffs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pranab Pattanaik, RO • Biswajit Mohanty, Secretary Orissa Wild life protection society • Jayanta Mardaraj Harichandan, Nilgiri King and environmentalist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create forest & regenerate new plant • Exemplary punishment to elephant hunter • Capacity building of VSS • Protect against mining in forest area • People cooperation • Regular village meeting
9.	Chirupada and Mandaljhari of Thakurmunda division	6.1.2011	188	SHG, VSS, STPF, Youth club, villagers, Sangram staffs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achuta Mohanty, RO Thakurmunda • Chandramohon Bansulia, Sarapanch • Karunakara Barik, CRC, Kesdiha • Chitaranja Jena, reporter The Khabar • Jagendra Pati, reporter the Sambad • Dillip Ku. Behera, reporter the Pragatibadi • Gobinda Ch. Purti, Ex sarpanch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize on forest protection • People cooperation • Protest fire in village • Protest illicit hunter • Fight against illicit wood trader • Stop mass-hunting groups (<i>Akhand shikar</i>) from the peripheral <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seize the illegal guns to prevent large scale poaching of wildlife, including the killing of elephants • Restore tourism for tribal lively hood

						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reward to informer • The water bodies inside Jungle should be identified, to be managed & protected by local people's with the support of forest official & other concern.
10.	Nenduapal, Karanjia	7.1.2011	73	SHG, VSS, STPF, Youth club, villagers, Sangram staffs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kalicharan Hansda, DFO, Karanjia • Baidyanath Majhi, RO • Pradip Ku. Sahu, Forester • Bharat Ch. Sing, Village leader • Harakrusna Naik, Village leader • Kulamani Naik, SHG leader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People cooperation • Exemplary punishment to elephant hunter • Formation of elephant protection committee in elephant affected villages • Wild life protection is most important • Village informer should be protect by the department • Cooperation with forest department