



**ASSAM AGRIBUSINESS AND
RURAL
TRANSFORMATION
PROJECT (APART)
E-newsletter**

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ASSAM AGRIBUSINESS AND RURAL TRANSFORMATION PROJECT (APART)

BUSINESS PLAN: A KEY TO A SUCCESSFUL SERVICE PROVIDER

Mr Kukheswar Kurmi is a progressive farmer from Borgoria village in Golaghat district. Every year during the harvest session, both in Sali and Bodo, he struggles to get labourers to do the harvesting. He was also worried about the losses during harvesting and postharvest handling of the crop. He was hopeful that an intervention of technology could help him reduce the losses as well as solve the problem of labour scarcity.

Under APART, Mr Kurmi got the opportunity to meet with the scientists of International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) and Assam Agricultural University (AAU), who introduced the Combine harvester that can be used to do the harvesting, threshing, and cleaning, all in a single operation. Mr Kurmi was inspired with the technology and decided to purchase- the Combine harvester, to solve his various harvesting and post-harvest issues. He took a loan of Rs 6 lacs from the bank to purchase the harvester,

and started using it the during Boro season 2018-19 to harvest paddy and mustard. He also started to lend it on hire basis to his fellow farmers. As the combine harvester was new to the area, it was a big challenge for Kurmi to create awareness among the farmers, on the benefits of using the harvester. He also wanted to explore business opportunities which could help him in paying back the loan, so he started charging a minimum of Rs. 1000 per bigha. During the Boro season, he could earn a profit of Rs 1,08,000/- through renting out the harvester.

With the initial profits from the harvester, Kurmi realized that a proper business plan will help him to plan his business model of using the harvester for better returns. He approached the officials of IRRI and with frequent discussions and analysis, and with their support prepared an operational and proper viable business plan for the next Sali season.



Combine Harvester

As a first step, he started motivating his fellow farmers by highlighting the benefits of using the combine harvester, with the help of the officials from IRRI, who helped him to answer the technical queries that they had. The total cost of hiring the harvester as compared to the traditional methods was much cheaper, which attracted the farmers. The cost for harvesting, threshing and cleaning by traditional method comes to around Rs. 4100/bigha, and it comes to only Rs.1200/bigha for hiring the combine harvester. The farmers were delighted to save a good amount of Rs 2900/- per bigha. Kurmi assured his fellow farmers that he will charge Rs 1200 per bigha for a normal crop, irrespective of variety and Rs 2400 per bigha for a lodged crop.

It worked like magic!

During the Sali 2019 harvesting season, Kurmi lent the combine harvester to 35 farmers for harvesting 274 bighas in 30 days in Morongi block, wherein his total earning by renting out the combine harvester was Rs. 3,28,000. The Combine harvester consumed a total

of 685 litres of diesel. The total operational cost was around Rs 73,750 including repairing, lubrication, fuel and labour cost.

"I could save approximately INR 30,000 in my 10 bighas of land by using the combine-harvester, I not only saved my money, but it also saved time and the trouble of finding labourers" a farmer said happily .

Mr Kurmi was able to earn a profit of Rs 2, 54,250 in the Sali season. From this earning, he returned 70% of his loan to the bank.

"It's a long journey! I planned to purchase the harvester years ago when I first heard about its advantages. It's now a happy moment for me that I could help my fellow farmers by introducing this new technology. I think it will attract more paddy and mustard farmers in the days to come. It's not only becoming an earning source for me but I am sure it will also bring a smile to the users for saving their money and time." Mr Kurmi said.

FIELD VISIT OF PCU OFFICIALS TO REVIEW PROJECT ACTIVITIES IN SONITPUR DISTRICT



Review of APART officials with district team

To review the activities under APART, officials from the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) visited the ATMA office in Sonitpur district on 30th January 2020. During the visit the officials interacted with the District Agriculture Officer, Asstt. Director, Agri (ADA), Block Technology Managers (BTMs), Assistant Technology Managers (ATMs) and other APART officials in the district. Various activities implemented through APART

including with the technical support of international agencies viz: IRRI, World Veg, CIP, were reviewed and issues relating to the same were discussed. The officials also took a review of the activities under AWP 2019-20 for Agri-Horti and other line departments covering the Targets & Achievement of different activities in regards to its present status.

ARIAS SOCIETY WELCOMES NEW STATE PROJECT DIRECTOR (SPD)

Smt. Laya Madduri, IAS, joined the Assam Rural Infrastructure and Agriculture Services Society (ARIAS Society) as the State Project Director (SPD) on 13th of January 2020. Prior to joining ARIAS, she was the Deputy Commissioner of Cachar district.

She belongs to the 2010 IAS batch of Assam Meghalaya cadre.

She took over charge of SPD from Shri M.S.Manivannan, IAS, Commissioner & Secretary, Govt. of Assam, Revenue and DM Department and CEO ASDMA who was holding the additional charge as SPD, ARIAS Society.



SURVEY OF AGRICULTURE MARKETS UNDER APART CONCLUDES

As a part of the Market Modernization & Improvement Program (MMIP), APART is supporting upgrading and modernizing the market infrastructure in agriculture wholesale markets, including about 10 wholesale markets managed by Regulated Market Committees (APMCs); and about 65 rural periodic markets (haats) owned by local bodies.

The detailed survey of potential agriculture markets to be taken up under the Market Modernization and

Improvement Program of APART, on the 20 point criteria agreed with the World Bank, kicked off through an orientation training on 8th Nov 2019 and remained in progress during Nov-Dec 2019 and Jan 2020. The survey officially concluded through a survey closing meeting on 24th Jan 2020 at Guwahati. From a long list of 100 markets, a total of 97 markets were surveyed by the District teams under the guidance of PCU team with district wise number of markets as shown below:

Sl	Districts	No. of markets Planned for survey	No. of markets surveyed
1	Nagaon	9	9
2	Goalpara	10	10
3	Sonitpur	12	12
4	Barpeta	6	6
5	Jorhat	4	4
6	Kokrajhar	6	6
7	Kamrup	8	8
8	Sivsagar	8	8
9	Golaghat	3	3
10	Darrang	5	5
11	Cachar	3	3
12	North Lakhimpur	3	3
13	Karbi Anglong	2	2
14	Morigaon	7	7
15	Nalbari	3	3
16	Dhubri	8	8
	Total	97	97

The major criteria on which markets were surveyed included the following:

1. Market Infrastructure: Age of market, location, land area, drainage, parking facility, road connectivity, power, availability of potable water

2. Market Governance and operations: Land ownership, change of lessees, computerization, wholesale activity, no. of APART commodities traded, willingness to maintain

3. Market Economics: Annual trade volume, wholesale trade volume as a percentage of production in the cluster, lease value (rural periodic markets)

4. Market Linkages: No. of FPOs linked to the market, the annual volume of arrivals from within APART Cluster no. of enterprises/ agribusinesses trading in

the market

Markets likely to go for the next step- environment and social clearance: 52

As indicated above, since the number of markets to be finally taken up for modernization and improvement shall be much less than 75, the Project has already initiated the process of inviting proposals from District for more markets which could be potentially taken up under the MMIP.

Development of the markets under MMIP shall lead to enhanced efficiency and reduction in transaction costs, enabling automation of the business processes in the selected market and opening stand-alone physical markets to distant buyers.



TECHNOLOGY DEMONSTRATION ON SHORT DURATION FISH CULTURE PRODUCTION OF HOTEL SIZE FISH

The College of Fisheries, Assam Agriculture University (AAU), Raha, as per the objective of component C1 of the Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project (APART), successfully implemented the climate-resilient technology on Short Duration Fish Culture through demonstration in 15 APART districts of Assam. The main objectives of these demonstrations were:

- To raise Indian Major Carps to a suitable table size fish in 80- 90 days
- To produce 100-350 gm fish commonly referred to as “HOTEL FISH”
- To utilize the fish culture pond before the monsoon period.
- To supply fish to the consumer during the lean and non-fishing period
- To do fish culture in the pre-flood period.
- To do a fish culture by using harvested rainwater.

The results of the demonstrations are very encouraging with a production level ranging from 2 quintals/bigha to above 12 quintals/bigha during the implementation period. The district-wise outcome of the demonstration results are as follows:

SI No	District	Cost of Demo (Rs. in Lakhs)	Harvested Quantity (Qtl.)	Assumed Income (Rs. in lakh)	Profit (Rs. In lakh)
1	Morigaon	1.00	11	2.75	1.75
2	Sonitpur	1.00	12	3.00	2.00
3	Nagaon	1.00	10	2.50	1.50
4	Lakhimpur	1.00	9	2.25	1.25
5	Goalpara	1.00	7	1.75	0.75
6	Kamrup	1.00	8	2.00	1.00
7	Kokrajhar	1.00	13	3.25	2.25
8	Sivasagar	1.00	8.5	2.125	1.125
9	Barpeta	1.00	9	2.25	1.25
10	Dhubri	1.00	8.5	2.125	1.125
11	Cachar	1.00	7	1.75	0.75
12	Nalbari	1.00	9.5	2.375	1.375
13	Jorhat	1.00	9	2.25	1.25
14	Darrang	1.00	6.5	1.625	0.625
15	Golaghat	1.00	2	0.50	-0.50

**** Total expenditure for the demonstrations incurred by APART*Avg. Selling rate of fish at market is taken as Rs. 250/kg**

From the economic point of view Adoption of this short duration fish culture technology would be beneficial for the fish farmers of Assam and North Eastern states.



Short duration fish culture

CAPACITY BUILDING OF COMMUNITY RESOURCE PERSONS AND BOOK KEEPERS

The Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project (APART) aims to support, value addition in the production and post-harvest segments of selected agriculture value-chains; facilitate agribusiness investments through inclusive business models that provide opportunities to smallholder farmers as well as stimulate the establishment of new small and medium agribusiness enterprises; and support resilience of agriculture production systems in order to better manage increasing production and commercial risks associated with climate change, in the targeted districts.

By adopting a cluster approach, APART aims to enable the value chain participants to develop competitive and innovative products that meet market demands rapidly and successfully. The project also supports the collective action of producers by establishing Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs); improving income realization at the farm level through value addition of produce through Common Service Centers (CSCs) managed by FPOs; better input and output market linkages; and facilitating access to a broad set of financial services and their responsible use by producers.

Sikkim State Cooperative Supply and Marketing Federation Ltd. (SIMFED), an organization of Government of Sikkim as Lead Partner and M/s CTRAN Consulting, Bhubaneshwar as Joint Venture Partner, is providing the consultancy services in forming the FPOs/FPCs and establishment of CSCs in Sivasagar,

Jorhat, Golaghat, Karbi-Anglong and Cachar districts under APART. SIMFED targets to sensitize and mobilize the farmers to form Farmer Interest Groups (FIGs)/ Common Interest Groups (CIGs) and FPOs as well as build their capacity and strengthen the groups for business development, good governance for economic development and sustainability of the groups.

SIMFED field team members identified Community Resource Persons (CRPs) and Book Keepers from each FPO/FPC and provided training on Management of FPOs, Group and collective marketing, bookkeeping and accountancy. They have now become master trainers to impart training to other farmer members and FIG representatives of the respective area and create adequate awareness on the process of FPC formation and its successful management.

In the 5 districts covered by SIMFED, a total of 150 CRPs and 60 Book keepers/Office Bearers have been selected across the target districts @ 5 CRPs and 2 Office Bearers/Book Keepers per FPO/FPC and trained in different training programmes organized across the 5 districts. These training programmes were conducted in consultation and full support/cooperation from the district officials of the concerned line departments/ other agencies. Experienced and professionally qualified faculties were involved to conduct these training programs to enable the trainees to handle their work independently and also educate the FPC members effectively.



CRP & Office Bearer Training in Jorhat District



CRP and Office Bearer Training in Karbi Anglong

WAMUL ACTIVITIES UNDER APART



Conducting Mastitis test at DCS level for detection of sub-clinical mastitis



MAIT doing AI



Female calf born out of AI



Demonstration of EVM preparation for mastitis



Demonstration of EVM preparation for mastitis





Demonstration of Urea Treatment of Paddy straw

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