

The Monthly Journal  
**Kurukshetra**

MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Vol. 50 No. 4 February 2002

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Kurukshetra seeks to carry the message of Rural Development to all people. It serves as a forum for free, frank and serious discussion on the problems of Rural Development with the focus on Rural Uplift.

*The views expressed by the authors in the articles are of their own. They do not necessarily reflect the views of the government or the organisations they work for.*

## Empowering Community for Sustainable Livelihood through Jankar system

Binay Kumar Sahay

**T**he Eastern India Rainfed Farming Project (EIRFP) is managed by Gramin Vikas Trust with the support from Krishak Bharati Cooperative Ltd. (KRIBHCO), Government of India and Department of International Development (DFID), United Kingdom (UK). The EIRFP has conceived as a part of National Strategy to set in a process of change in livelihood of the resource poor men and women of the eastern plateau region comprising of three states; Jharkhand, Orissa and West Bengal.

EIRFP is a participatory, poverty and Gender focused project for sustainable improvement of the livelihood of the deprived men and women especially from tribal community. EIRFP has developed a process under participatory, bottom-

up approach and involved a Jankar system for empowering the community for change and sustainable improvement in their livelihood.

EIRFP is being implement by a team of specialists – headed by a Project Manager. At cluster level-consisting of 3-4 villages, it is being implemented by two community organizers - usually, one each from social science and agricultural/ forestry background with the support of specialists of different subjects. The project has tried for gender balance by posting one male and one female in each cluster. The Community Organizers are the key functionaries of Project.

The project has developed a *Jankar system* for sustainable improvement in livelihood.

Tree Jankar and group



### Who is 'Jankar'

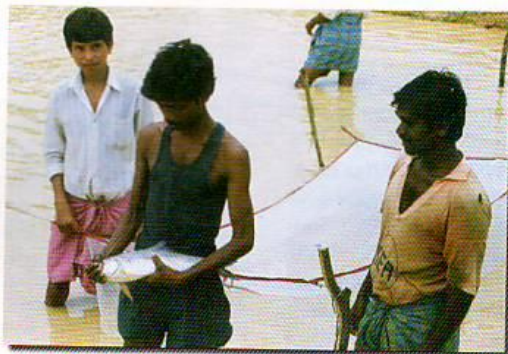
A Jankar is a Paraprofessional, a female or male member of the community, who serves as an internal catalyst, information bank, service provider, trainer, disseminator and innovator.

A Jankar act as a facilitator to manage the SHG, activity undertaken by group, its monitoring, to establish link with government and to bring sustainable change in livelihood. A Jankar also acts as a facilitator for planning, implementation & monitoring of the activities for the development of group as an institution for its sustainability.

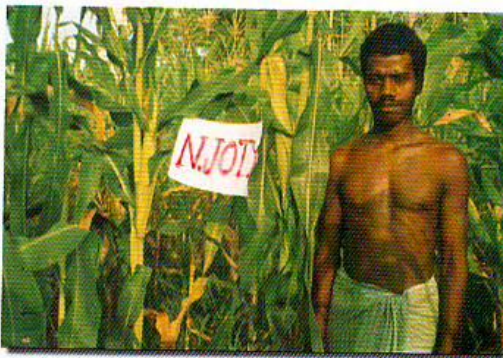
### Role

The **Jankar** plays an important role to bring change in village for sustainable improvement in livelihood especially of the deprived women and men of tribal community. The role of Jankar is pre-defined by the group members and the villagers. The activities of a Jankar are as follows:

- Motivate the community to understand the needs for development.
- Initiate vision development of the community for sustainable livelihood development.
- Facilitate the community to participate in the process of development i.e. planning, implementation, monitoring & evaluation of the activity/ programme.
- Adoption of suitable technologies by the community.
- Empowerment of the community and distribution of their roles and responsibilities in development process.
- Linkage with GOs/NGOs/others for the development and institution building.
- Dissemination of Project approach to surrounding area in order to achieve the wider goal.



Aqua-culture Jankar



Crop Jankar

With the facilitation of EIRFP, Jankars have been identified by group/villages for their assistance/support in different areas. The training and exposure in a specific area has been arranged in order to work effectively. The role and responsibility of a Jankar are pre-defined by village group members

and it may differ from village to village, group to group. The EIRFP encourages development of Jankar in different component for integrated development/RNR development. The role and responsibility of Jankar of different area/component are given below:

### 1. Group Jankar

Major responsibilities of a Group Jankar is facilitation of community for formation, development and strengthening of the group as per SHG norms. His responsibilities includes management of conflict and smooth functioning of the group for sustainable improvement of the livelihood.

### 2. Saving, Credit & IGA Jankar

Responsibility of this Jankar is to mobilize saving through contribution of the participant, development of group fund, facilitation for credit through group and its management. He/She is also responsible for development of norms of group and maintain related records.

### 3. Crop Jankar

To bring change in cropping pattern especially of the deprived community, having upland, introduction of new high yielding varieties and facilitate the community for selection of the suitable one for its adoption are the primary responsibilities of the Crop Jankar. He/She is also responsible for facilitation of the community for

preservation of seeds for future use as well as to facilitate the community to bring change to improve in the livelihood. He/She is a source of information on crop for the community at village level.

#### 4. Tree Jankar

Tree Jankar is primarily responsible for creating awareness among the community about the importance of the trees and the forest existing in and around the village. His/her task also includes facilitation of the community for establishment of the village nursery and its plantation. He/She is a source of information on trees for the community at village level and can motivate the community for patch plantation in order to utilize the common property, barren land or the unutilized land effectively through group.

#### 5. SWC Jankar

The role of the SWC Jankar is to draw the attention of the community on the problems related with the loss of soil and water through run off etc. and creation of awareness for its conservation. His/her responsibilities include planning and implementation of different measures for SWC in the watershed by the active participation of the group members. He/she is a source of information on SWC for the community.

#### 6. Aquaculture Jankar

The project is facilitating community to mobilize the existing resources in order to improve their livelihood. In order to utilize the existing water bodies effectively the Project has taken initiative for the development of Aquaculture Jankar. The responsibilities of Aquaculture Jankar includes motivation of the community to undertake the aquaculture activities and generate income through transfer of the suitable technology for above. The responsibilities include facilitating the group for pond development, management and undertaking the aquaculture activities to generate income.

The EIRFP is also facilitating development of the health, education, livestock Jankar under Jankar System in order to empower the community, scaling up the existing skill and transfer of technologies and make an integrated effort for the livelihood improvement especially of the deprived community.

#### 7. Dissemination Jankar

The successful establishment of the participatory process for the development leads to disseminate the approach of EIRFP to the surrounding areas. The Dissemination Jankar is the carrier of the EIRFP approach to other villages/ Institutions for its wider implications. The Jankar becomes a cost effective sustainable tool in order to achieve the broader goal of the Project. The EIRFP has developed a strategy to disseminate the successful approach through trained and active Jankar identified as Dissemination Jankar. The work of the Dissemination Jankar is monitored in the monthly meeting organized by them wherein they share their experiences which leads to the transfer of the planning, monitoring system at lower level.

#### Benefits of "Jankar System"

- Motivation of community becomes easier through Jankar.
- Technology can easily be transferred to the community for its adoption.
- Confidence development among the group members to make their own plan and implement it effectively.
- The skill/capacity development among the Jankar reduces dependency.
- Helps to sustain activities and group.
- Empowerment of women and deprived sections of community for their active participation in decision making.
- Dissemination becomes cost effective and sustainable.
- Leads to integrated RNR development and improvement of livelihood.

Thus the Jankar System developed by the Project leads towards framing of a plan for integrated development, scaling up the capacity on different components and empowering the community for sustainable livelihood. The Jankar becomes a cost effective and sustainable tool in the development process looking for shifting the responsibilities to ensure the participation of the community in planning, implementation, monitoring as well as evaluation process in order to improve the livelihood pattern of the rural poor.

*The author is Field Specialist (Social Development), Project HQ, EIRFP, Grameen Vikas Trust, Bikash Nagar, Ranchi.*