

Press Release

Vedanta's pilot project in Korba increases crop yield by 41%

Mumbai, India, 3 February 2015: Project Jalgram's Systematic Rice Intensification (SRI) technique, an initiative of Vedanta's group company, BALCO, benefitted 17 farmers who took part in the pilot demonstration. The farmers experienced on average, a 41% increase in crop yield. The success of the SRI technique pilot project and the support of the farmers involved also led to additional seed provision from the local government.

“BALCO has a philosophy of partnering with communities with a focus towards creation of sustainable assets to enhance livelihood. The ‘Jalgram’ project is one of the significant projects BALCO has undertaken which is a pioneering initiative in the region, for the adoption of high efficiency technology in the agricultural sector. The success of this project has gained support from the local government, and during our Golden Jubilee year we look forward to further social and meaningful partnerships with the government that will bring long term benefit for the new Chhattisgarh state,” said Mr Ramesh Nair, CEO & Whole Time Director, BALCO.

By developing the water infrastructure of the four villages; the project gives local farmers the means to generate a self-sustaining income, through year-long availability of water and better crop management practices. Given the success at these villages, the SRI technique will be extended to other locations.

Project Jalgram was established in 2012, aimed at creating sustainable livelihoods by efficient water and crop management practices. Over Rs. 78.11 lakh has already been invested in the villages of Dondro, Rogbahri, Chuiya and Jambahar, in the district of Korba, Chhattisgarh where BALCO operates two aluminum smelters.

The project is a joint venture between:

- Vedanta Resources' subsidiary BALCO;
- Action for Food Production, an India based NGO; and
- NABARD, the government of India's apex development bank.

BALCO originally identified the need for this project in Korba's core villages, and provides financial backing. Action for Food Production works on the ground executing the project, and NABARD organizes training initiatives, including agricultural awareness and farmers training programmes. Cattle vaccination was also conducted in all four villages, protecting over 1,500 animals. So far, the provision of surface water to farmers throughout the year has led to a saving of over 2,775 cubic meters of water. Village Development Committees have been established in each area, which hold regular meetings. The committees were instrumental in identifying the places where water conservation structures could be built.

Specific outcomes of the Jalgram project include:

- Fencing for 33 acres of land at Dondro, benefitting 28 farmers
- Construction of three farm ponds and two wells, allowing for vegetable cultivation in the immediate area
- Promotion of second crops through soil water conservation; crop yield has increased in the area thanks to irrigation facilities and agricultural support
- Moisture retention has reduced local vulnerability to climate change
- Promotion of Wheat, Gram, Mustard and vegetables for the first time in the area during Rabi season
- Irrigation for 40 acres of land, benefitting 28 farmers in Dondro
- Community ponds at Jambahar and Rogbahari benefitting over 80 families and allowing fish rearing





Image caption: Clockwise from Top: Water Conservation Structures such as Check Dam, Pond, Dugwells created as a part of project, People participating in the training for crop practices and rice being grown as per latest scientific practices

About Vedanta

Vedanta is a diversified natural resources company, whose business primarily involves exploring and processing minerals and oil and gas. The company produces oil and gas, zinc, lead, silver, copper, iron ore, aluminium and commercial power and has a presence across India, South Africa, Namibia, Ireland, Australia, Liberia and Sri Lanka.

Sesa Sterlite Limited (SSLT) formerly known as Sesa Goa Limited, is the Indian subsidiary of Vedanta Resources Plc, a London-listed company. Sustainability is at the core of SSLT's strategy, with a strong focus on health, safety and environment and on enhancing the lives of local communities. SSLT is listed on the Bombay Stock Exchange and the National Stock Exchange in India and has ADRs listed on the New York Stock Exchange.

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