

BAIF-Gram Marg Jawhar visit: 20 to 25 August 2019

With training inputs from Digital Empowerment Foundation and Servalots

20 August 2019: Day One

I, Mr Yogesh Karyakarte, Mr Manoj Pawar, Mr Rangan, Ms Aishwarya (SBI YFI Fellow), Dr Sarbani, Ms Shalini (from Servalots/Janastu) and Mr Girish (from Servalots/Janastu) visited Wanganpada, which is a hamlet of Pathardi. In Wanganpada, we had a discussion with Vanita Tai and other members of the group preparing Nachni/Nagli/Ragi/finger millet Ladoos (Figure 1). We also listened to and captured on the Raspberry Pi radio, the songs sung by the group members. The Jio network connectivity at Wanganpada is very feeble, however, a new Jio tower installed here is yet to get activated. We also discussed about the possible placement of internet-in-a-box at Wanganpada.



Figure 1: Discussions with women of SHG making finger millet Laadoos in Wanganpada.

21 August 2019: Day Two

In the morning, I, Dr Sarbani and Ms Shalini visited Khuded to witness Mogra plucking. Unfortunately, due to rains, the Mogra flowers were not in bloom. We discussed with Mr Ganpat

Harpale of Mahalepada about the network connectivity situation especially Jio. In two of the houses Jio connection was available and people had found ingenious ways to get connected to the network (Figure 2). We also discussed about the possibility of creating an eDost from Khuded, as there was little connectivity but no banks/ATMs nearby.



Figure 2: Ingenious ways to get connected in Mahalepada in Khuded Gram Panchayat.

Mr Sudhir Wagle, Dr Sarbani Belur, Mr Gorakshanath Bhor, I, Mr Yogesh Karyakarte, Mr Nachiket Metkar, Mr Suyog Pawar, Mr Manoj Pawar, Mr Rangan Ghosh and Ms Aishwary were part of the discussions on the activities, timelines and action in-charge for APC project to be implemented in Pathardi. In the evening, some of the above members along with Ms Ritu Srivastava, Ms Fauziya Nasim, Mr Arshad of Digital Empowerment Foundation visited Pathardi hamlet. In Pathardi, we visited the house of Warli artist Mr Sitaram Bujad (Figure 3). We also met Anjali Tai and discussed about her journey as an eDost.

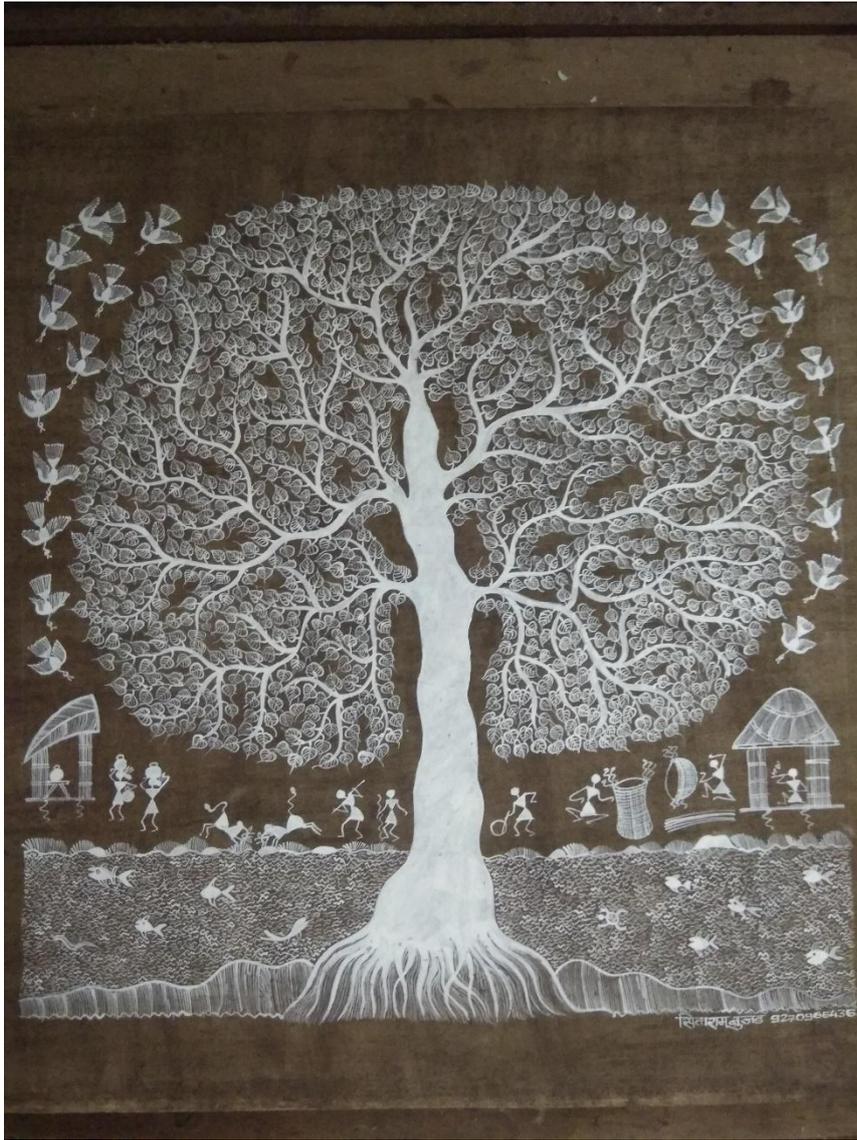


Figure 3: One of the Warli paintings of Mr Sitaram Bujad in Pathardi.

22 August 2019: Day Three

This was the first day of the training of Barefoot Wireless Engineers training by Digital Empowerment Foundation team led by Ms Ritu Srivastava, Ms Fauziya Nasim and Mr Arshad (Figures 4 and 5). The training was for 15 women and 5 men (including CRPs) from five hamlets of Pathardi viz. Pathardi, Ramkhind, Wanganpada, Solepada and Dongarpada.



Figure 4: DEF team explaining wireless communication concepts and Mr Rangan also showing some hands-on demonstrations.



Figure 5: Mr Goraksh Bhor translating the training into Marathi.

The training explained the fundamentals of wireless communication, location selection of communication devices and explained the technical details of IP (internet protocol) addresses. The training was primarily translated by Mr Gorakshnath Bhor. In the evening three teams presented their aspirations of wireless connectivity in three hamlets of Pathardi, Ramkhind and Dongarpada (Figures 6, 7 and 8)



Figure 6: Team 1 presenting on expectations of wireless connectivity in Dongarpada.



Figure 7: Team 2 presenting on expectations of wireless connectivity in Pathardi.



Figure 8: Team 3 presenting on expectations of wireless connectivity in Ramkhind.

23 August 2019: Day Four

This was the second day of barefoot wireless engineers training wherein we focused on how the community can be a part of setting up the connectivity. This was a hands on day where the training was focused on various hands on things like how to crimp the wire, community radios and how to use local applications that run without connectivity. We divided into different groups and each of the groups was taught how to crimp wires. This is an essential thing in the connectivity domain. Please refer to Figures 9, 10, 11 and 12. There was a very good group participation and participants were happy to learn and crimp the wire.



Figure 9: Teaching how to crimp wire by BAIF staff.



Figures 10, 11 and 12: Participants working on crimping the wire.

After this session, Girish and Shalini from Servalots, Bengaluru discussed community radios and various offline applications like Talkie which can be used by the community. Girish and Shalini demonstrated the applications on smartphones and people were very happy about it. The day came to an end with a group photo of all the participants.

24 August 2019: Day Five

On this day in the early morning, Ramprasad, Shalini, Dr Sarbani left for the field along with Mr Goraksh ji to catch some early morning activities on the field. We also filmed and interviewed Anjali tai who has been nominated as the digital correspondent (refer Figure 13). The interview is being worked as a short film by Neena. We shall be sharing the film soon with everyone. We filmed Anjali tai helping some villagers to withdraw money from their account.



Figure 13: Anjali tai enabling banking facility in the village.

This was also the Foundation day of BAIF. After we returned from the field, we participated in a small ceremony organised at BAIF campus in Jawhar. We paid respect to the founder of BAIF and people at the BAIF office shared their experience in working with BAIF. Please refer Figure 14.



Figure 14: Sarvani garlanding the photograph of Manibhai Desai on BAIF's 52nd Foundation Day.

After participating in the Foundation day celebrations, we proceeded for Mokhada where the wild food festival was organised by Mr Sanjay Patil. It was nicely organised with a few talks by eminent people, women SHGs exhibiting green vegetables which are specially found during the monsoon. We also had food cooked by the villagers at this location (Please refer Figures 15, 16, 17 and 18).



Figure 15: Women SHGs exhibiting green leafy vegetables at the wild food festival.



Figures 16, 17 and 18: Women participating in the wild food festival.

25 August 2019: Day Six

We set out to leave from Jawhar for Mumbai early in the morning of this day. On our way to Mumbai we met a group of jasmine (Mogra) farmers. We stopped to see the entire process of how they collected the Mogra flowers from each of the farmers and then aggregated the same. We interacted with these farmers and tried to understand what methods have they adopted to create the value chain. Please refer Figure 19.



Figure 19: Mogra farmers aggregating the flowers and then taking it to Mumbai flower market.