



Plantation drive to support farmers in Gautam Budh Nagar district, Uttar Pradesh

Development Alternatives is working for Tank Rejuvenation and Biodiversity Conservation under a programme supported by HCL Foundation. A plantation drive was organised under this programme with 10 farmers in four villages of Gautam Budh Nagar district, Uttar Pradesh on 2 October 2020.

An innovative multi-layer farming approach was adopted in this plantation drive in which different height crops are planted in the same field and at the same time. Through this method, farmers can harvest fruits throughout the year and simultaneously plant small cash crops in the same farmland. This was done with an objective to ensure that farmers get a year-round income and are able to support their livelihoods.

In planning for the drive, Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) activities were conducted to find native plant species that suit the local climatic condition and deliver economic benefit to the farmers. Secondly, farmers were selected in four villages based upon different criteria such as land availability, their annual income, and their interest. There were several meetings organised with them to introduce them to the benefits of multi-layered farming. After a detailed discussion with farmers and also based upon the finding from PRA activities, five fruit plants were selected for plantation – Guava, Mango, Drumstick, Jackfruit, and Lemon. Depending on the area of individual farmer land, a layout was given in each field.

Right from digging the pits to planting the sapling, a complete demonstration was given to farmers for this activity. Neem cake and vermi-compost were used to provide nutrients to the plants. A total of 363 plants have been planted covering an area of 2.05 hectares. A regular visit is done by the team to monitor the health of plants, and give timely inputs to the farmers.

Apart from this, the programme also involves the rejuvenation of ten tank ecosystem and increasing the green cover by planting native species in the catchment areas of tanks.