

Project Update: November 2010

A preliminary field visit was undertaken from 14th to 17th November 2010. Because of the festivities, the preliminary field visit could not be undertaken as it was planned earlier during the first week of November. However, it was good that the visit got delayed because this time the elephants came to Sarlahi much later than they are normally expected there. The locals reported that elephants normally used to come to Sarlahi during August-September and return by the beginning to October but this time they came only towards the end of October. The very evening, when we arrived in Sarlahi, an elephant was sighted in the vicinity of Murtiya VDC. The next morning, when we went there to see if it had caused some damage, we could see rice field being trampled by the elephant. Fortunately, this time the elephant had not caused much damage except for snapping some sugarcane and uprooting some banana in the area. We were in constant communication with locals of Murtiya during our stay in Sarlahi but no further movements were reported from the area during the following days.



During the visit, meetings were arranged with few key informants from Murtiya, Janakinagar and Patharkot VDC. In addition, staff from CDO, District Court and BISEP-ST was reached in person or were called to see if they could provide some information on Human Elephant Conflict (HEC) situation in past and present in Sarlahi district.

As was planned, the specific HEC prone areas within Sarlahi district were identified during this field visit - mainly the central and the northern part of the district are found to be affected by HEC and not the southern part. District Forest Office (DFO) Sarlahi and Parsa Wildlife Reserve (PWR) authority were contacted to see if they have some records on past HEC events and movement of elephants in Sarlahi district. It has been planned to have similar contact with Chitwan National Park (CNP) authority to see if they have any such records in future. This is because it is mainly the elephants from PWR and CNP which comes to Sarlahi; elephants from India rarely get to Sarlahi. But it is sad that DFO Sarlahi, PWR and CNP do not seem to have any proper records on past HEC events and movement of elephants in Sarlahi. Thus, it seems locals are going to be the only source of information of past HEC events and movement of elephants in the district. Apart from that local newspaper could be possible source of such information. Thus, meetings with local media persons were arranged to see if they could help us with such information. Local media persons have shown interest in our project and have promised to provide access to their archives to see if they have any such information.



Damaged made by elephants.