MESSAGE

It gives me immense pleasure to know that there have been positive changes brought about by the schemes and projects of the Soil & Water Conservation Department as this publication 'A Journey towards better horizons' would testify.

Today, socio-economic life and livelihood system of the people are inextricably linked with natural resources conservation and management. A glance at some of the stories in this publication confirms this fact. Wherever natural resources are conscientiously exploited, the possibility of sustainability increased. This is mutually beneficial both to man and the environment.

I congratulate the Department for documenting some of the success stories which are testimonies to the great strides made by the Department in natural resources management and in the uplifting of the livelihood of the rural community in particular.

(Shri. M.R. Synrem)
Commissioner & Secretary to the Govt. of Meghalaya, Soil & Water Conservation Department

MESSAGE

It is heartening to see that the implementation of the schemes and projects of the Department are positively impacting upon the State's natural resources and on the livelihood of those that depends upon these natural resources.

The Department had through the years adopted people friendly approaches to the implementation of its projects. These seem to have paid dividends. People and community are now active participants in the implementation of the Departmental projects. As a result, there is an increasing awareness of the importance of conservation and management of natural resources by the rural community. People, particularly, local traditional bodies and farmers have responded with great enthusiasm to concepts and ideas introduced by the Department. This in turn is conducive to socio-economic betterment linked to positive and judicious natural resources usages.

In this publication, though only a few success stories were selected, they however reflected the tremendous impact made all over the State wherever the projects of the Department are implemented. The purpose of this publication therefore, is to showcase such stories as a way of educating and encouraging all concerned that livelihood could go hand-in-hand with management of natural resources.

In this regard, I extend my thanks to the Editorial Board of the Department for meticulously preparing this publication and the officers and staff who provided the necessary inputs that made this issue of 'A Journey towards better horizons' possible. I particularly would like to express my gratitude to the Hon'ble Minister incharge, Soil & Water Conservation, Shri Singjawat Dhar and the Commissioner & Secretary I/c Soil & Water Conservation Department Shri. M.R. Synrem IAS.

(Smt. V. Papang)
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The Editorial Team would like to express its gratitude to Honourable Minister of Soil & Water Conservation Department, Shri. Sniawbhalang Dhar for his support in bringing out this magazine “A Journey towards better Horizon” Special thanks to Shri. M. R. Synrem, IAS, Commissioner & Secretary, Soil & Water Conservation Department, Smti V. Papang, Director and Smti. S. Ch Sangma, Additional Director, for their valuable guidance and inputs towards finalising the magazine.

Secondly, we would like to show our appreciation to all the Joint Directors, Divisional Officers, Senior Assistant Soil & Water Conservation Officers, Assistant Soil & Water Conservation Officers, Range Officers, Registrar and the Staff of the Department for contributing towards gathering information, collection of data in completing the project.

Editorial Team:
1. Smti. C.S. Thabor
2. Shri. J. Marbaniang
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Special Thanks to
Shri. K. K. Karmakari
On NH-51, 50 km from Tura lays a watery spectacle that was as aesthetic as it was mesmerizing. This is Dachi Lake in Angre, West Garo Hills District. The sparkling waters of the lake beckon travellers, passersby and people from all around to bask in its beauty. The lake was a brainchild of the West Garo Hills Soil Conservation (T) Division which through the Departmental Scheme Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana Scheme (RSVY) renovated it in 2009-10 at a cost of Rs. 37 lakhs.

Before implementation of the project, the Dachi Lake was a dying water body, with heavy siltation and clogged by vegetation. People here had no access to drinking water and had to use the murky waters of the lake for their daily needs. All this changed after the renovation of the lake.
The added bonuses from the lake have a positive impact on its immediate vicinity and the environment. Moreover, people have come to realize the importance and need of maintaining the natural assets for their livelihood and commercial pursuits.

The Joint Management Committee, Angios West Baris Hills, was awarded the National Ground Water – Augmentation Award 2020 under the category of NGWA Green Roofs Urban Hydroecology for improvement practices for ground water augmentation through rainwater harvesting and Artificial Recharge in the ground water by the Department of Irrigation and Water Management, Government of India. The award was conferred by the Hon’ble Minister, Ministry of Water Resources, the award was presented by the Joint Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources, the Joint Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources, and the other dignitaries. The Joint Management Committee was awarded a cash prize of Rs. 1,00,000 and a citation and a certificate.

With a bit of foresight, vision, meticulous planning, enthusiasm and a large dose of hard work, the Dashu Lake could become one of the topmost hotspots of the District having its wake environmental and commercial base to the community. It may also serve as a motivational model for other communities to follow suit whenever beauty of nature are tapped to its fullest potential.
Building Bridges

Wallis, Justin A.

Given were the days when people of the five villages straddling both sides of the Limbot stream had to make long detours or wade through the stream to get to the other side. The existence of a road link over the stream is a great statutory not only for travelling but transport of goods back and forth. This is a great solution for an attempt to accelerate economic growth.

It’s in such a scenario that the Integrated Watershed Management Programme was set for implementation of the two micro-watershed of Limbot. Under this programme, three two-micro-watersheds which cover a total project area of 2,900 hectares comprise the five villages. The villages are: Bokwang, Nk multic, W. Mbaumbi, East Toms and Tsiang, lower to the Pmke. The activity component of the Pmbukini Water and Rural Development Project (PWRD) involves Integrated Watershed Management Programme is proposed for construction of a suspension bridge across the

Accordingly, the suspension bridge was constructed in the following. The bridge is 50 meters long and 1 meter wide. It is made of iron and is painted black. The cost of the bridge was about 5,000,000 Shs. The bridge was inaugurated by the Maize Farmers’ Cooperative Society (MAFACO) in 2015.

The suspension bridge has caused a communication problem of the five villages and increased accessibility to both sides of the river. It has greatly helped in the transportation of goods and produce of the area, particularly for those in rice market besides an increased ease of agricultural and domestic goods and commodities to people of the village on either side of the Limbot River.
Flavour Of Life

For Teresa T. Sangma of Gonglengre village in West Garo Hills district, life revolves around the same tedious cycle of toil and toil. He would have been just one ordinary farmer going with the flow and flunk in an endless battle to keep his livelihood afloat. Teresa T. Sangma perhaps was no talking of what was in store for him when the Task Force & Rural Development (TFRD) Division implemented the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY) Watershed Development Component (WDC) (system-integrated Watershed Management Programme (Sl. No. 1) in Dimaharajganj micro-watershed in 2012.

As part of a component of the project, development work under rainwater harvesting was carried out under the Watershed Development Component (WDC) (system-integrated Watershed Management Programme (Sl. No. 1) in Dimaharajganj micro-watershed in 2012. Teresa T. Sangma decided to try his hand at clearing the Queen of Spice. He started with just 400 saplings to 10 hectares of land. By the third year of plantation, he had been able to raise 120,000 plant of chilka turmeric, that is known as capsule. These capsule fetch a price of Rs. 120/- per kilogram at Khargram market. This gives him an inspiration and impetus to increase his cultivation plot to 15 hectares.

Teresa T. Sangma had been able to make a jumpstart in terms of income generation. Cardamom has brought flavour to his life and improves the living condition of his family. His success inspires other farmers in the nearby villages to develop interest in cardamom plantation. It would not be long before others take the cue and spin cardamom plantation as the grass-roots condition of this watershed is highly suitable for the cardamom plant, and the department was able to provide saplings to other farmers through the consolidation fund of the project.
When Good Winds Blow

For years, arid conditions, extremes of drought and rain, and the scarcity of water have forced farmers to practice annual crop rotation and dependent on the seasonal rain. The frequent droughts have forced them to move their livestock to avoid falling into the trap of hunger and starvation. This has resulted in a decrease in the productivity of their farms and a decrease in the overall living standard of their people.

With the implementation of the Khorangarhai River Valley Projects (KRP), Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) and other similar programs, the government has taken steps to improve the living conditions of the people in the region. The government has provided funds to build irrigation canals, improve the roads, and establish infrastructure to support the local economy. These projects have helped the people to increase their agricultural productivity and improve their living standards.

The Khorangarhai River Valley Projects are designed to provide a sustainable water supply for irrigation, and to improve the living conditions of the people in the region. The projects include the construction of irrigation canals, roads, and other infrastructure, as well as the establishment of agricultural training centers and other support services. These projects have helped the people to increase their agricultural productivity and improve their living conditions, and have contributed to the development of the region.
Tapping Cascades
South West Ghana Hills

In the South West Ghana Hills district of the Tselemebo River basin, there is something of a settlement where inhabitants work the land in a similar way to irrigate their crops. They rely almost entirely on the energy of the hillside and fallow lands for the growth of their staple crops. With the help of some irrigation systems, their crops production falls short of requirement. This is in a vicious cycle that they find is a very real threat to their livelihood.

Fortunately, this situation is serving to be an end. The implementation of the Kaye South Ghana Irrigation Programme (Kayser Kekete Akwe) which has been in place for the last 10 years has brought new life to the region. The project, which has been ongoing since 2002, has resulted in the creation of a 12,457-hectare irrigation system, with a total number of participating farmers of 227. The Project has a user fee of $1.75/acre, which is significantly lower than the previous irrigation charges. The project has also been successful in providing water for groundnut and other agricultural activities. Under the project, 171 numbers of irrigation dams, a water harvesting infrastructure, wells, and control structures were constructed. These structures have boosted the rice and other food production.

Perhaps the most significant impact of the implementation of the project is the growing awareness among the people here on the importance of community organization, environmental awareness, and conservation of their resources. The impacts they have had through the implementation of the project are far-reaching beyond the horizon and to look ahead. No, there are more of the project’s initiatives that have been implemented or improved after and this gives them the impetus to upscale their agricultural practices.
The introduction and implementation of the Gaibandha Protection and Development of Water Sources at this place by the Shilong (IT) Division of the Soil & Water Conservation Department is therefore a monumental effort worth mentioning. After having the community's confidence, the task of mobilization and participation of the people was taken. Then, a site of measures was vigorously given under the project. These involve the construction of 30 nos. of brick latrine platforms, 20 nos. of storm terraces, 2 nos. of protection walls. The area now dotted with more structures aimed at soil and moisture conservation in the form of water harvesting structures, sand filter, storage tanks and even washing and waste disposal. Afforestation of degraded catchment was also taken as well as fencing of the catchment to prevent encroachment.

A flurry of activities are now seen at the place and this in itself has created awareness amongst the people on the importance of catchment protection and future water security. Now, there is ensured water availability at year round for about 226 households which is no mean achievement giving the state of affairs pre-project. The village authority had ever been able to sell excess water during the dry season and the beds collected every year for maintenance and repair of the assets created. Overall, there is likelihood improvement through water based activities besides employment generation in the area.

It is an encouraging sight that in an area once prone to flooding its desirability, the rate of hope begin to permeate in the community. Besides this, visible changes are appearing in the form of vegetation and the catchment area, reduction of erosion and soil loss, conservation and harvesting of water, water storage, improvement of water quality and easier access to clean drinking water.
To The Green Horizon

If ever there was a farmer who takes integrated farming to a whole new level, it was Shri Sane Ganguli, founder of Mandvi's village of Wadambabli. His journey started in a modest way and his progress was very slow. But quietly, he has achieved more than anyone else in the state. Shri Sane Ganguli is a self-taught farmer who learned all by himself from his father. His farm was a small piece of land that later expanded to a much larger area.

Shri Sane Ganguli was born in a small village near Mandvi in Kutch. He started farming at a young age and soon realized that traditional farming methods were not enough to sustain his family. He decided to explore new ways of farming that would help him earn more money. Initially, he started with small-scale farming but gradually expanded his farm and diversified his crops.

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Done It With Vegetables

The one component of the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY) Watershed Development Component (WDC) of Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) that could dup out efforts of group and individual farmers to higher levels of production is the Production and Market Component. Under the implementation of the Project RPMK-PI of Phutnyrung and Jari Nawang by two units—one a group and the other an individual—and success attributed to the phenomenon. Bound by the need to push their resources into the market, 14 members of the Kangnew Dopshang Self Help Group (KHG) of Phutnyrung village took up cultivation of vegetables as well. From the total financial assistance of just Rs. 2,200 (Rs. 1,000 from the Production and Market Component of the IWMP), they were able to cultivate a variety of vegetables ranging from potato, tomato, cauliflower, broccoli, cabbage, onions, turnip, peas and beans. During the year 2023-24, they were able to produce over 12 metric tonnes of vegetables and in the process raking in an annual income of about Rs. 20,000 each. This, in a rural setup where farmers are use to marginal production and sales volume of the season can be adduced. They have been able to meet their objectives, which included productivity and income generation over and above supplementing end-use requirements of the nearby market at Nawang and even the Sinthong main market.

Erak Rina Jiales

Some are the days of non-coaching and single activity for this group. They are now reaping to say the most and looking at opening their activities through partnerships with concerned governmental agencies particularly in the field of capacity building technical and scientific support and even market linkages and enhancement of financial investment.

Similarly, one successful beneficiary of the Uppak RPMK-PI from Morksam Longno who had taken up exotic vegetables cultivation at her village in Jari Manong. The introduction of Kitchen Gardening especially Brassica cultivation in her farm & also financial support for construction of a small cold store immensely increased her income in serious terms of farming. Thus, in the process she evolved a greenhouse unit through the Department of Horticulture in the same belt, where she could produce supplies of broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower and even papaya (Capsicum). At present yellow and red colour varieties and plant them throughout the four seasons of the year.

This made of tremendous and enhanced her productivity to a much larger scale and increases in her income. She not only be able to sale into the other villages and far-off villages to show her knowledge and experience to her fellow farmers about the exotic vegetables cultivation could fulfill the food need and be beneficial to the farming community. Even Longno is now able to generate total annual of Rs.80,000– income from Brassica. Whereas, from Capsicum she gains a profit of Rs.30,000– annually. This is a far cry from the situation she had endured in the past in the agriculture front.
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It is through the Integrated Resource Development Project (IRD) where the SDR Department of the Soil & Water Conservation Department provided assistance for afforestation to only 5% of the forest. Now, the people are aware of the folly of their past and are more responsible and protect the forest which is their source of water alive and well. The scope of the experiment in this is there is a crucial benefit for both the environment and people that depend on it for their livelihood and water needs.
The people of the village of Mangalpara in South West Khasi Hills District, meeting their daily domestic requirement of water, use to speak of irrigation water. They dig wells after the annual monsoon and the regeneration of the same for their use in off-monsoon periods. Overburden under such water tends to rise at.

The people are struggle to make-do with whatever natural resources they find at hand. It goes without saying that this situation had badly affected their efforts to flourish in their economic pursuits, particularly agriculture.

The people here would have got stuck in a quagmire of helplessness had it not been for the intervention of the South West Khasi Hills Division of the Soil and Water Conservation Department. In the introduction of the Water Plus project for multiple water resources in the form of Multipurpose Reservoir through Catchment protection, multipurpose pumps for improved productivity, domestic water provision, green energy provision, etc. The construction of an irrigation canal through Mahatma Gandhi National Park (MGNP) and the installation of irrigation canals from the Project have not only brought joy to the community as it serves to provide irrigation water to some parts of the village.

Understanding the potential of the water plus project, the community enthusiastically participated in the successful allotment of the land and the entire effort for the operation and maintenance with technical support and other logistics from the department as well as an extension of necessary inputs from other governmental and non-governmental agencies. These convergence partners to the project include the South West Khasi Hills Soil and Water Conservation Division, the Basin Development and the Soil Conservation (SESC) of South West Khasi Hills, Meghalaya Basin Development Authority (MBDA), National Irrigation Management Project, Energy Development (NIPED), Meghalaya Rural Health Engineering Project, Department of Irrigation and Housing, Meghalaya Energy Corporation Limited (MECL), and Mahatma Gandhi National Park (MGNP) and also the Agri. The dynamics of participation, funding, upscaling, technical support, hard working members and sustaining the miracle are already on progress.

The contours of the present scheme include the irrigation canal and channel, Hydel Power Plant, MGNP, Briga, Overhead tank and electricity distribution. Under the project live numbers of households in the village are getting irrigation facilities. 35% of households are now having easy access to drinking water while the other five households are using green energy through the hydel. In addition, the village is now getting the numbers green lights from the hydel.
Raising The Bar

Ri-Bhoi District

Tall, slender and gently swaying in the hot breeze is the banana, a symbol of the people and their lifestyle. The banana is a staple crop of the people of Meghalaya and is a main source of livelihood. The fruit is harvested when it is green and is consumed fresh, boiled or fried.

After the completion of the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) exercises in the Lower Umshiah watershed, Ri-Bhoi District, the concept of improving the existing traditional system of fermentation was mooted under the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchay Yojana (PMKSY) (Water Resources Development Component (WRDC)component). A feasible and sustainable method of fermentation was adopted by the community to improve the quality and quantity of the produce. The new method of fermentation has improved the taste and texture of the product.

The immediate impact of these structures is high economic returns for the farmers. The market value of processed palm oil is almost five times the price difference between an unprocessed oil. Similarly, the sellable Palm kernels are normally discarded but with the fermented kernels, the oil is converted to some byproducts used to the benefit of the farmers. However, this improvement in production is not without its challenges.

The cost of construction of each tank is Rs. 75,000. They were built in convergence with the Backward Region Fund through fund support at a ratio of 50:50. To sustain the viability of all tanks is a big challenge and the community coordinated and worked together to ensure the sustainability of the project. The introduction of the improved fermentation practices in the wastewater have greatly helped in raising the bar qualitatively and quantitatively for the betterment of farmers and in the process brought in a huge change in their economic well-being.

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Quiet Flows The Stream

East Garo Hills

The perennial streams should become seasonal due to soil and reflects the role of the local environment in the area. This was what had happened in a village in East Garo Hills. Over the years, vast tracts of land around the village of Sambangki Sambangkiri which falls under the catchment of Sangmi River had been degraded of vegetation due to burning. Many tributaries of the Sangmi River originate this catchment but gradually, streams and springs began to dry out. Observing the dire consequences, the Panchayat in Khand Nabangri (Sangmi) (KKiND)/Water Resource Development Component (WRDC) under Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWRMP) was implemented in the project monitored. The scheme was funded by the Department of Food and Agriculture, Ministry of Rural Development of the Government of India was started in 2009-10.

With the aim to arrest the vicious rate of natural degradation through improvement of vegetation cover and enhancement of water conservation system in the village, a Community Water Reservoir was constructed alongside the Sangmi stream with a total catchment area of 18.538 hectares contributing in the reservoir. The total impounded area is 3.330 km². The reservoir has a total storage capacity of 4500 m³. The dam was constructed during the year 2012-13.

While constructing this reservoir, the villagers were taken into confidence. Hence, they actively participated in the management of the reservoir. To ensure sustained flow of water to the reservoir, the villagers have kept the total catchment area under natural vegetation with proper regulations that prohibit any kind of activities. The community was involved in devising and other maintenance works. On sight member User Group was formed to ensure proper management of the reservoir.

The immediate impact of the reservoir is that it enhances ground water recharge capabilities besides facilitating better moisture regime for surrounding horticulture crops and fishery development. The indirect and long-term effects in terms of regeneration of natural vegetation of the catchment and the resultant economic benefits to be reaped by the villagers is bound to be quite substantial in comparison to what had been incurred.
When it comes to addressing domestic adversity, it is mostly the women of the house who have to face the brunt of hardship. Apart from numerous domestic activities, women had to travel long distances and spend long hours to fetch potable drinking water from springs, wells or streams. This is not a walk in a setting where water is not abundantly available near at hand and where there is no tangible system to supply of drinking water.

And this exactly what happened at Korpon Anongchul village in Ri-Bhooi District. Although water here is not a rare natural commodity, it simply was not tapped to its fullest potentiality. At this stage, the Integrated Water Management Project was implemented in conjunction with the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme at the Lower umpin Moi-Waheleh. After PRA-exercise, the community elected for an RCD storage tank with the aim of conserving water and make it available for domestic purposes. Accordingly, the asset was constructed during 2010-2011 under the Empower-India Activities component of WAPF along with convergence with NREGS at a total project cost of Rs. 2,44,300.

The storage tank (reservoir) constructed as a strategic spot in the village was able to store huge volume of water which was made use of as drinking water and for other domestic purposes. The structure opened on 22nd August, 2010 and has a capacity of 1,500 cubic feet. Now that water is readily and easily accessible, people in the village, particularly women are greatly benefitted. They can now maintain cleanliness and focus more on farming activities. For the 175 number of households in the village, that is fifty five families, the days when fetching water is a tedious affair. Besides, the presence of water in this spot has greatly improved the ground water status in the surrounding areas. Moreover, through the construction of the reservoir and the resultant positive impact, a new outlook on conservation had began to take hold of the rural community here.

Today the community is all geared up to sustain this activity by evolving mechanism for maintenance of the reservoir. For a community who had long been under the yoke of water scarcity, this aqua miracle is something that they cannot afford to lose or let go again.
Rubber saga

The predominant crop cultivation, difficult terrain, accessibility and frequent cases of uprooting by locals are just the facets of the story that linger in the heart. Rubber plantation, which began in the mid-twentieth century, for years untouched, the practice of rubber cultivation in the three villages of Dapli, Balchong and Khunchongi is known to have its origins in the 1960s. Located in the North Eastern Plains of Garo Hills, they had a long history of rubber cultivation. For the 360 households of the three villages, it was time for reforestation.

A large-scale area of environmental degradation and internal economic changes arose in the form of implementation of the Integrated Watershed Management Programme during 2005-11 under which the project, the 160 number of households in three villages gave 500-1000 rubber saplings which were planted in their long fields. The families were also instructed to take care of the saplings. This project was implemented in consciences of the people of Garo Hills, where rubber cultivation was done. The people further planted various new plantations for maintenance of their jhum as well as rearing of hens. After about a few years, the plantation was high and the rubber growth was good enough to fetch a decent yield.

Today, there is a flurry of activities in the rubber plantations in the Garo Hills which are providing income from this once-dominant venture. It is food and construction. The rubber latex is transported from the farms and it is made into products. This has given the Garo people a new hope and a new life. The rubber latex is transported from the farms and it is made into products. This has given the Garo people a new hope and a new life. The rubber latex is transported from the farms and it is made into products. This has given the Garo people a new hope and a new life. The rubber latex is transported from the farms and it is made into products. This has given the Garo people a new hope and a new life.
When The Levee Stands

A cause initiative of directing a stream that had gone dry is an unprecedented effort by any standard. Yet, this is what has happened when the people of East Khasi Hills village adopted indigenous technology to lead water from one perennial stream to another perennial stream. Division of water from the seasonal stream to the perennial stream was done by using PVC pipes over groynes and trees. The sagging of the PVC pipes is controlled by tying the pipes with a U-tie wire of about 3 to 5 gms. size. In this way, the stream flows through the groynes.

For the 340 odd families of the village, the steps have proven a success to their agricultural and horticultural crops particularly during the dry months but it is evidently not enough. The initiative taken by the community has been boosted through the intervention of some Governmental departments. Working in convergence, these Departments which include Soil & Water Conservation, Community & Rural Development, Integrated Basin Development and Livelihood Programme stepped in. A concrete cement headworks was constructed to that more water could be impounded and eventually increase the stream discharge of the Ulineh. To harvest and store the water as it creases, a headwater dam was constructed to act as a small multipurpose reservoir. The water from here was conveyed by laying of U-tie pipes for a distance of 2 kilometers. Three distribution tanks were constructed to distribute irrigation water for agricultural lands as well as horticulture plantations. Under this, a total of 200 families were benefitted. To ensure sustainability, a watershed committee was formed in which the families benefitted contribute Rs. 100/- per year as user charge to maintain the assets created.

During 2011, an amount of Rs. 12 lakh was sanctioned under Integrated Basin Development and Livelihood Promotion Programme (IBDLP) by the height of the headwater dam was further raised to 3.3 m and an additional length of 3.6 kms. U-tie pipes were laid. This brought an additional area of 35 hectares under irrigation in which 120 rice hectar and 22 hectares were benefitted. The surface area of the impounded water was increased from one hectare to two hectares. As an icing on the cake, the Fisheries Department had also continued in the form of fish nursery which were released in the waters of the reservoir.

The Mongrovina small multipurpose reservoir had opened up a new chapter in the lives and occupation of people of the village. Besides the direct benefits accrued from the assets created under the project, the people here were introduced to the concept of community organisation which brought the people together and concrete results in terms of economic and natural resources management. With foresight, vision, a little ingenuity, grit and tenacity they are well on the way to sustain the impulse they had gained through the projects implemented.
East Garo Hills

Harvesting Nature’s Bounty

Cascades of rainwater trays flowing down the drain are things that are always seen for granted. It is a paradox that almost every time of heavy precipitation goes into soil to raise with times of water scarcity. This phenomenon is no exception in East Garo Hills, that is, until an ambitious project was launched in over 10 schools of the district to harvest, collect and store rainwater for rain use.

Under the initiatives taken by the East Garo Hills Division of the Soil & Water Conservation Department, the project ‘Roof Top Rainwater Harvesting’ was launched in 10 schools involving a total project cost of Rs. 25,000 lakhs. This is a technology where water from rooftops is collected and harvested through a simple roof or gutter system and channelized to a storage tank. The project had a total collected storage of over 150,000 litres of water.

The benefits of the system are that water is obtained from a reliable source and the amount of water harvested is significantly increased. It is suitable for use and beneficial for the landscape and plant species. At the same time, it reduces down water runoff. This system is also cost saving, simple and flexible and is self-sustaining and socially acceptable.

For the 700 odd students and management of the 12 schools in which this rooftops harvesting structures are in place, it is a wonderful miracle. Now they can irrigate their fields with a simple requirement of cleaning, washing and post cleaning.
Milestone Tread Of Syntu Ksiar Minor West Kamit Hills

The historical Syntu Ksiar under the picturesque Pychonvath Valley of the famous Mykha Rivier of West Kamit Hills District is the location of a century long stone pitching dam, the impounded waters of which fed the large part of the Pychonvath valley fields, one of the very few rice bowls of the District. The area was a collective result of the hard and pioneering labour of the farmers over the years to set store stone over store to create some sort of barrier to impound the flowing water for dressing it to their land. The dam though celebrated as a large calculatory command area could not meet the demand due to its limitation.

In the year 2009-10 the water users/beneficiaries approached the office of the Divisional Soil & Water Conservation Officer, area Mandal Officer to construct the Dam with a permanent RCC structure so as to increase the irrigational potential of the area and to come up with a plan to reduce the menace of flooding which was occurring annually.

Subsequently the office prepared a Project Report for the whole upper Mykha basin under the Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP) and the same was sanctioned by the Ministry of Water Resources, GOI in the same year.
Mantle Of Protection
East Jaintia Hills

Strategically placed, the Umkang Market in East Jaintia Hills District had served as a vital economic centre for several villages in and around it and for traders and consumers coming from far flung areas. For years unnoticed, it had served not only as a centre of gossips, woes and products of the area but had provided the villagers with a link with what they can have economic interconnection. Theonnement in the market which is situated along the banks of the Umkang River is subjected to the fury of the elements in the form of a flood while the market was elevated above the riverbank by a few feet. An annual flood in this area is the flooding of the river bank with silt deposits which is a yearly event for the unique and subtle topography in its nature. Besides, the market had no proper drainage and therefore prone to flooding. Some of the stalls are plainly一起 a few inches below the surface of the water.

It was such a scenario that the East Jaintia Hills Soil & Water Conservation Division took an initiative by implementing the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund Act. Through this project, an RIC-Conservation Wall was erected along the bank of the Umkang River to prevent the water from entering the market area. Through the intervention of the wall, the market area was able to retain the setting up of its additional market stalls. This had greatly benefited both traders and visitors as to theみて the destruction of space and open ground while piling their stalls. Moreover, with the completion of the wall, the area saw tremendous improvements in terms of drainage and flood control. A footbridge was built across the nearby river to facilitate easy access of people and goods coming to the market.

The long-term benefits of the wall are one of the Umkang market is an outstanding example of what could be achieved through a sensible implementation of the intervention processes. The permanency of the protection wall instills confidence among the traders and its surroundings and reduced floods is irresistible given the erratic conditions of the area.
Harvesting Stream

North Garo Hills District

A new episode in the life of the farmers of Chima impact village is being played out in this village. The villagers now grow rice in the North Garo Hills District. In this instance, the implementation of the Middle Chir River Valley Project has brought about a new era for these farmers. Their hard work and dedication have changed their agricultural fortunes.

In 2014-15, the North Garo Hills Soil & Water Conservation Division constructed the 500-meter-long stream channel project with the aim of harnessing the waters of the river stream and channelizing it to provide water to the fields of the farmers here. The construction work was commenced on 1st April 2014 and was completed by 1st December 2014. The project has significantly improved the agricultural productivity of the farmers. Since the stream channel has been constructed, the farmers have been able to grow their crops without any worries. The stream channel project has helped in providing a continuous and steady supply of water to the fields, thereby increasing the productivity of the crops. The construction of the stream channel has had a positive impact on the farmers of Chima impact village as they now have more stable and reliable water supplies for their crops.