

CHRONICLE

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Rural Transformation Households, Schools Get Water Supply in Meghalaya

Water Management Systems Improved in Many Villages

Nongpoh (Meghalaya): In what could be called a major breakthrough initiative, four villages namely; Khogwing, Markang, Umwang Nongbah and Umphathaw in Umling block of Ri-bhoi district of Meghalaya got household water supply. A large number of people living in the villages of Meghalaya face the drudgery of fetching water from the water source which is normally quite far from their houses.

In 2018, Seven more villages (3 in Umling and 4 in Jirang) will get household water connections.

The initiative is part Holistic Rural Development Programme (HRDP) by HDFC Bank Ltd being implemented by Society for Action in Community Health (SACH) in 15 villages of Umling and 10 villages of Jirang block.

Apart from this, the water supply situation in eight other villages in Umling was also improved. These villages are- Pahamjiri, Marmain, Dondral, Belkuri, Sohtad, Umlakhar, Ronghilik and Mawlong.

Khongwing in July 2017, became the first village in Umling Block to get household connection on July 5 2017 which has 24 households. Similarly, the 14 households in Markang, 39 in Umwang Nongbah and 117 households in Umphathaw also got household water connections.



Earlier, SACH under HDFC Bank Ltd's School Sanitation Project (SSP) also implemented the biggest School Sanitation and WASH project in 133 schools during 2015-16 covering five districts- Ribhoi, East Khasi, West Khasi, East Jantitya and West Jantitya Hills. All these schools were also connected with regular water supply.

SACH to construct 1500 household toilets in Orissa



Bhubaneswar: SACH will construct nearly 1500 household toilets in Jhasuguda district of Orissa with support from Orissa Power Generation Corporation (OPGC). The project covers 26 hamlets spreading over two villages.

The project to be implemented in 2018 is part of PM Modi's flagship project 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan'. SACH which signed the MoU with OPGC in December was awarded the project following a bid.

In 2016, SACH constructed over 250 school sanitation units in five districts of Meghalaya and 10 districts of Punjab under CSR initiative by HDFC Bank Ltd.



Surendra Panwar
Editor

It gives me an immense pleasure to announce that SACH has decided to bring out a quarterly news letter which will chronicle its journey through major interventions across several states. This will provide the readers the glimpses into the efforts of the organization to reach out to the poor and the marginalized to make a better world. In the past two years, SACH implemented some of the pioneering programmes which got recognition from all quarters. The organization won prestigious Social Change Awards in two categories, sanitation and best documentary, competing with other renowned organizations. This news letter is an attempt to showcase our activities on the regular basis to keep all the stakeholders updated about the impact we are making. This first edition will provide our readers an opportunity to have a glance at our recent initiatives which might turn out to be defining moments for us.

MEGA HRDP LAUNCH IN MEGHALAYA

Umpataw, Ri-Bhoi: HDFC Bank Ltd launched its mega Holistic Rural Development Programme (HRDP) on November 23 in Umpathaw village in Umling block. SACH is implementing the programme in 25 villages (15-Umling, 10-Jirang) to transform the lives of the poor and the marginalised.

HDFC Bank Ltd is supporting HRDP under its CSR initiative 'Parivartan'. Community water supply, promotion of livestock, sustainable agriculture, improvement of school and community infrastructure, agriculture tool banks and improving quality of education are major components of the programme.

Paresh Sukthankar, deputy MD, HDFC Bank said: "This initiative was a microcosm of our attempts to change rural communities. If India has to achieve inclusive growth, our rural areas have to grow in tandem with cities." He added



that through HRDP, the bank is trying to create sustainable communities in remote pockets of the country.

Secretary and executive director, SACH, KP Rajendran said that in the past one year, the programme has created a pioneering model of sustainable rural development. "It will only get strengthened in the coming years", he said.

SACH WINS SOCIAL CHANGE AWARDS IN TWO CATEGORIES



New Delhi: SACH bagged the prestigious Social Change Awards in two categories, Sanitation and Best Documentary, in a function held at India Habitat Center in New Delhi on December 11. The Union Minister of State for HRD Mr Upendra Kushwaha gave away the awards.

SACH got the awards for its huge contribution to Swachh Bharat Abhiyan by constructing more than 250 school toilets followed by Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) programme, and for a short film on its Holistic Rural Development Programme being implemented in Meghalaya.

Other organizations which won the awards were- Reliance Foundation, Hindustan Unilever Limited, Mahanagar Gas Limited, Odisha Power Generation Corporation, Biocon Foundation, PI Foundation, Centre for Holistic Development, Vishwa Yuvak Kendra, Suez Environment and Sarthak Education Trust



SACH ties up with PEDDA to set up 180 household bio-gas plants

SACH has tied up with Punjab Energy Development Agency (PEDDA) to construct 180 household bio gas plants in the 18 HRDP villages of Punjab. This will not only reduce the pollution in the village through decreased dependence of fossil fuel and fire wood, but also saves the families the precious money.

For this Deen Bandhu Model has been adopted. The main feature of a Deenbandhu biogas plant is the fixed underground digester chamber, constructed with a layer of bricks and an additional layer of cement mortar forming the roof above. Connected to the underground chamber is an inlet tank

(labelled on diagram as "Mixing Tank"), through which manure is fed into the plant. The manure then ferments separating the slurry from the methane gas which rises and collects at the top of the digester tank, and is released through the gas outlet pipe. The slurry passes into the outlet tank where it is ejected from the plant and can be used as fertilizer on the field.

Since Punjab also experiences severe cold during winters Bandhu Model is ideal in these villages because the digestion chamber is underground providing good insulation against the cold. The plant has a 25-30 year life span.



MHUs REACH OUT TO 10,000 PATIENTS IN 3 MONTHS

The mobile health units (MHUs) continue to attract the patients in the rural areas of Prakasam and Banka districts of Andhra Pradesh and Bihar respectively. MHUs managed to reach out to approximately 10,000 patients during November 2017-2018. The majority of the patients include children, women and the elderly.

The common ailments that were treated included hypertension, dyspepsia, gastritis, diabetes, joint pain, lower respiratory tract infection, cough, allergy, conjunctivitis, cataract, fever, urinary tract infection, diarrhoea/dysentery/amoebic colitis.



New cluster resource center in Jirang to boost HRDP activities

Jirang (Meghalaya): SACH opened a cluster resource center in Jirang block of Ribhoi district to facilitate its activities under Holistic Rural Development Programme (HRDP). SACH's existing cluster resource center is located in Nongpoh to promote HRDP activities in 15 villages of Umling Block.

With the opening of new center in Jirang, the SACH team will have easy access to 10 villages under HRDP. The center will not only act as a knowledge center for all the stakeholders with the availability of all the IEC materials. The center will also provide space for meetings with Community resource persons (CRPs).

GROUNDNUT MAKES IT TO RI-BHOI, MEGHALAYA

KVK scientists are upbeat over the farmers' success



"I am determined to grow groundnuts in the next season too, and this time on bigger area. My children have tasted them for the first time in raw form and they liked it. I also earned some profit for the family"

- Rukmani



"What these farmers did in Sohtad is remarkable and is really an encouraging sign not only for the other farmers but also for us too as the government is now focusing on introduction of new crops to supplement farmers' income."

Dr. Mokidul Islam
Senior scientist & KVK head

On the Christmas Day the people of Sohtad village of Ri-Bhoi district in Meghalaya were surprised to see 50-year old Rukmani Pator sell groundnuts in Rs 5 and Rs 10 packs to the children. Some of them had not even seen the groundnuts before. Rukmani even baffled the KVK and ICAR scientists by harvesting 120 kg of groundnuts in mixed cropping (ginger and vegetables) on the land measuring 6 dang, something that could be put in high yield bracket. Another farmer Midalis Klein harvested 100 kg of groundnuts on 2 dangs of land (one dang is equal to approximately 21 sq meters).

People of the village say that groundnut used to be grown in the region till decades ago, but due to lack of awareness and the insects, the farmers refrained from cultivating it. If the version of Dr. Mokidul Islam, senior scientist and KVK head is anything to go by, the crop was introduced in the state way back in 2002, but the efforts could not yield the desired results.

Few months back farmers in 12 villages under HRDP were provided groundnuts seeds and insecticides to prevent the crop from the potential damage. While many were skeptical to grow the crop given their past experiences, some like Rukmani and Midalis came forward to go for one more attempt. Both of them mixed the soil with the insecticides before sowing and removed weeds at the regular intervals.

When the crop was harvested in December, both of them had no idea that they would be in for a big surprise. They extracted 120 kg and 100 kg respectively from a land traditionally known for ginger, paddy and turmeric with 'Megha' prefixed to them giving them the distinct identities.

Buoyed by the success both of them sold the major quantity to the locals and kept some for self-consumption and as seeds for the next crop. While Rukmani earned Rs 1500, Midalis got

Rs 1000 from the sale. Both of them maintain that the crop has proved to be a big bonus for them as it has not only increased their family income but is also serving as a nutrient for their school going children.



A groundnut farmer in Umwang Nongbah



Midalis Klein harvested 100 kg of groundnuts on 2 dangs of land

Sriti Matong, another farmer in the village harvested 50 kg of groundnuts on a small patch of land close to her house. Apart from her, at least 10 farmers in Umwang Nongbah village harvested groundnuts in smaller quantities (10-15 kg) for the self-consumption.

According to KVK scientists, the region which is hugely dependent on meat for protein, groundnut if popularised systematically, could not only reduce their dependence on meat and fish consumption as it is full of protein and other nutrients, it also has the potency to be converted into a cash crop for the farmers in future.

But on being asked as to how they look at this in terms of a pure cash crop, both Rukmani and Midalis said that apart from more awareness about its scientific cultivation, they need some marketing channel.

Though all these farmers cultivated the groundnut for the first time, the success in their very first attempt has amazed many. Now all of them want to grow the crop again. And this time they are certainly looking beyond self-consumption and festive day sale.