

Watershed Development Plan for Rongmil Micro-Watershed in East Garo Hills District of Meghalaya

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Abstract—Agriculture is the backbone of the 80 percent of population in East Garo Hills region of Meghalaya which comprise of hilly terrain in the middle and south-west parts and some pockets of plain areas bordering Assam. The district is mainly drained by perennial and non-perennial streams and the drainage system of the district comprise of Simsang(Someswari), Damring(Krishnai), and Manda(Dudhnoi) and its tributaries. Rongmil Micro-Watershed is located under Dambo-Rongjeng Development Block in East Garo Hills district of Meghalaya which comprised of two villages namely Gabil Daningka and Gabil Rongmil. Conserving the natural resources like soil, water and forests, increasing and stabilising the agricultural production to provide sustainable land use and generating employment opportunities are the major objectives towards development of this micro watershed. In order to fulfil the above objectives, the project was initiated in the year 2013 with some technological strategies involving soil and water conservation measures like construction of water harvesting structures, bench terracing, diversion drains, gully control structures; training programmes; establishment of nurseries for seedling production; distribution of surface water pumps; distribution of seeds, fertilizers and plant protection chemicals; livestock support system for landless families. The significant outcome of this watershed development programme was its ability to generate benefits in terms of enhancing the capacity building through people's participation and increasing productivity of crops and water. Besides the peoples responses towards using improved seeds and fertilizers, raising vegetable crops in their cropping pattern, adoption of soil and water conservation techniques and rearing improved breeds of poultry and piggery were some of the achievements attained after implementation of the programme.

Keywords: Micro-watershed, Sustainable production, Employment generation.