

**SUCCESS STORY ON IMPROVING WATER AVAILABILITY
UPON CONSTRUCTION OF CHECK DAM AND LINK ROAD
UNDER FOCUS-ZAWNGIN**

PROFILE

Activity : Construction of Check Dam (Protection of water source)
& LINKED ROAD UNDER IFS

Project : FOCUS, District Management Unit-Saitual

Funding : International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

District : SAITUAL

Amount : Rs 84,000 per unit (3 units per village) & Rs 500000 for Linked road (1 km)

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Rainfall is the primary source of irrigation for agriculture which is the main livelihood of the people of Saitual district. The district observes an average annual rainfall of 312.77 mm (12.31 inches) of precipitation and has 210.65 rainy days (57.71% of the time) annually that feeds the four rivers (Tuivawl, Tuirini, Tui phal, Tui vai) flowing across the district. Most outlets from these rivers are not quite perennial and although water is abundant in quantity during the monsoon season, it parches rather quickly during drier season. They, nevertheless, are the main source for domestic use and for cultivation of crops. The non-availability of timely and adequate water for irrigation is a serious constraint in achieving higher productivity.

Although the total rainfall in Saitual district is often satisfactory, its distribution over time and space is highly uneven. Out of the total rainfall received, higher percentage is wasted due to surface run-off and leaching and only less amount of rainwater remains available for crop use. Therefore, rain water harvesting and water use efficiency are critical for increasing production and productivity. Given the geographical and soil conditions, the most effective method of rainwater harvesting is to collect runoff through construction of small check dams that will enhance water conservation. With this overview, construction of check dams as a means of protection of water source and increasing availability, for crop and household use, remains with no doubt a vital activity.

ACTIVITY INTERVENTION

As a part of activity for Community Conservation Area, construction of Check Dam was implemented under FOCUS by the District Management Unit-Saitual. The activity was thoroughly invested by the technical staffs right from site selection, estimation, planning and construction. The farmers/members of the Farmer Interest Groups (FIGs) also actively took part in all these activities, knowing fully well the impact for their own villages. Zawngin village received support for 3 units each and depending upon the requirement and land properties, the villages have utilized the support as viewed necessary and appropriate.

Site selection: The location and site were carefully selected by the technical staffs in consultation with the villagers and before installing the check dam, the concerned engineer inspected each of these selected sites.

Construction: Community participation was the salient feature of the construction and members of the FIGs dedicatedly oversee the construction with regular monitoring from the DMU staffs.





Fig: Depiction of few completed works

OUTCOME/ IMPACT

Several impact and outcome as a result of the successful implementation of the activity

- Check dams constructed visibly reduces water flow velocities in the channels and waterways, during which water were harvested using pipelines or collected in water storage structures.
- The rain water has been checked after construction of the dam and increases the availability of water for irrigation of their farm crops and for domestic use.
- In villages where Rabi season crops could not be cultivated due to unavailability of water during this period, water could be stored from the check dam + storage structures constructed for utilization to raise Rabi crops.
- The amount and period of water availability will be increased, thus increasing the number and continuity of working days across the season.
- The increase in water availability increases water use efficiency.
- As farmers themselves were engaged in the whole process, including women, this inculcates a sense of responsibility and community purpose for the village.
- Check dam prevents silting and thus , help in reducing the augmented height of the lower levels.
- The silt collection can be used in farms all throughout the year as a possible substitute for chemical fertilizers
- It helps in all-around increase fertility of the immediate area and Animal Husbandry can also be facilitated

CONCLUSION

The implementation of ‘Construction of Check Dam ’ under FOCUS project is therefore, considered a significant success owing to the immense requirement by the villagers and its impact seen just days after the completion of the activity. This results in newly developed interest among farming community as support for such kind was brought upon by funding agencies like IFAD in eliminating several irrigation constraints faced by

ZAWNGIN LINK ROAD



Latitude: 23.899233
Longitude: 93.013549
Elevation: 1044.22±22 m
Accuracy: 19.1 m
Time: 19-07-2022 14:17
Note: zawngin link road

Powered by NoteCam



OUTCOME/ IMPACT OF LINK ROAD

Several impact and outcome as a result of the successful implementation of the activity .

1. **Offers better transportation facilities:** Rural roads contribute significantly by creating linkages, thus increasing the opportunities to access goods and services located in nearby villages or major towns/markets. This means that through the improved transportation services, rural roads can lead to improved access to market centres for the rural producers and ensure better availability of inputs and raw materials at reduced prices which can highly impact the income opportunities of the rural poor. Simply put, if the rural producers are able to travel to the markets to sell their produce or buy raw materials for enhancing production, then they can earn a good amount of money and this can increase their income considerably
2. **Boosts agricultural activities and productivity:** Rural Link roads are essential for sustaining agricultural development also. A good network of rural roads can provide a boost to the agricultural activities by making water, seeds and other raw materials needed for farming reach in time to the farmer. This can have a huge impact on the quality of agricultural produce and if that is good, then farmers can earn better by selling such a good produce in the market. This can result in increased earnings. Improvement in agricultural productivity can not only reduce rural poverty directly by increasing income of poor households but it can also cause decline in poverty indirectly by raising agricultural wages and lowering food prices.

3. **Ensures diversification of agricultural activities:** Rural Link road network can also favour growth of cash crops and commercialisation of agricultural activities. By this, it means that rural people can employ latest methods of farming and increase their production for selling them in the market.

4. **Improves mobility and saves time:** Presence of roads in rural areas increase the mobility of labour and materials, thus increasing the domain of rural livelihood beyond the rural production boundary. Typically, rural roads can ensure shorter travel time and the time saved this way can help the rural poor to be more productive and generate increased incomes. The time saved can be used for doing other off-farm jobs as well where farmers can earn some extra income. Thus, in rural areas, roads give a blending of non-farm economic activities along with farm activities and such diversification positively impacts the living conditions of the rural mass.

5. **Makes way for more livelihood opportunities:** Rural Link roads can also lead to changes in income sources as they can enhance non-agriculture income opportunities. Simply put, better connectivity through better roads in the rural areas can enhance off-farm employment opportunities too as masses can move freely from one place to another. Particularly, women, labourers and small contractors can benefit from the improved mobility and move out of the villages to the nearest employment centres and earn a better income.

6. **Gives access to education:** Improved road connectivity can also enhance access of rural masses to education services. They can travel to nearest towns and cities and get better and higher education which can open better employment opportunities for them. Through this way, rural poor can earn a better living for their family.

7. **Offers socio-economic benefits:** The socio-economic benefit of rural road improvement and construction is that they can increase the asset value of the rural people and thus facilitates trade and business opportunities.

The above points clearly show that rural connectivity is central to the alleviation of rural poverty and has a close synergy with rural livelihood outcomes such as increased incomes (e.g., tradable agricultural surplus, material goods and cash).

CONCLUSION

The implementation of 'LINK ROAD' under FOCUS project is therefore, considered a significant success owing to the immense requirement by the villagers and its impact seen just days after the completion of the activity. This results in newly developed interest among farming community as support for such kind was brought upon by funding agencies like IFAD in eliminating several irrigation constraints faced by