

ACTION FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATION

ANNUAL REPORT

2020-2021

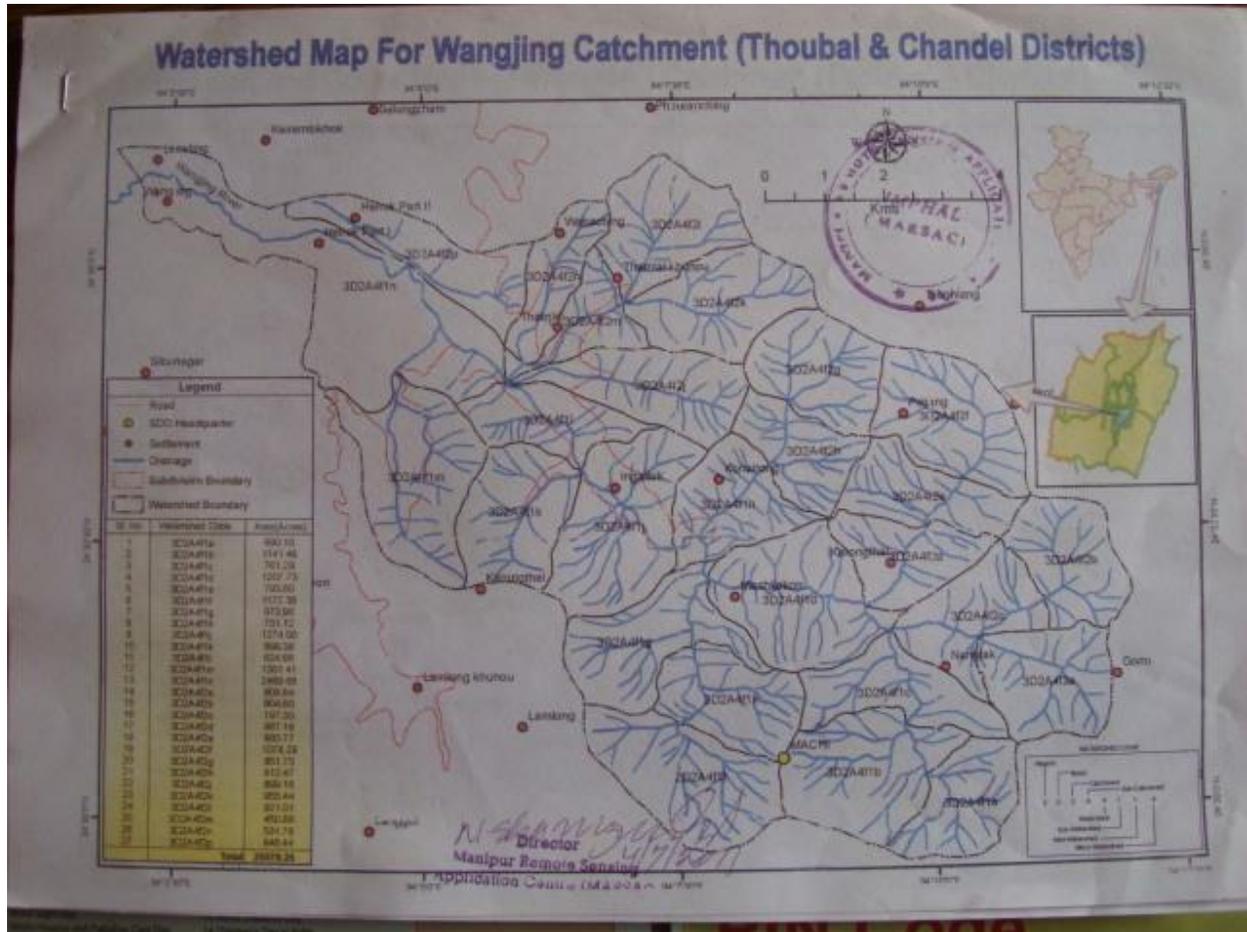


INTEGRATED WATER AND SOIL CONSERVATION IN RIVER CATCHMENT OF WANGJING

One of the key factors of degradation of forest ecosystem in the River catchment areas is related to the practice of shifting cultivation, locally refer as “Pamlou” in Manipuri which is widely practiced in other states of north eastern region and this is one of the most suitable form of agriculture for the agro-climatic condition and steep topographical terrains in the region. However, more and more land is being brought under jhum cultivation and shorten jhum cycle is being observed. The cycle was once 10-14 years or more now reduced to 3-5 years period leaving little time to regenerate plants and resulting in accelerated soil erosion and disruption of hydrological system of the areas. It is estimated that 70% of the top soils loss, land degradation and water source deteriorations attributed to the practice of shifting cultivation. The shorten of jhum cycle is insufficient to allow restoration of soil fertility before the land is again cultivated, with the result that yield have successively declined over time, and families once almost totally self sufficient in food grains are not able to produce enough food even for a few months of the year. As such, Jhum cultivation is widely practiced in catchment areas of Wangjing river. Rapid growth of population is the indirect driving force to the adverse change in the jhum cultivation. Therefore the major challenge continuing to face in the area is how to adapt this land use and production system to raising populations and changing lifestyle while also maintaining ecological sustainability. Under business- as -usual scenario, shifting cultivation systems will continue to play an important role in the local economy and, given population and economic pressure, jhum is unlikely to go back to the longer, more sustainable cropping –fallow cycle. This will continue to lead to increasing rates of soil erosion, disruption of hydrology and undermining of ecosystem services in the Wangjing river catchment areas.

Considering all these given situation, the Action for Rural Development Organisation (ARDO) has started reviewing the situation as a long term measures to restore a sustainable solution to the problem in the catchment area. A team of organization visited Thamlai ST village in April to meet the villagers with the idea to initiate a preliminary survey of the area. What we understood in the preliminary assessment of the basin were reported as under;

The Wangjing River Basin is of the sub basins under Manipur River system formed along the adjacent districts of Tengnoupal and Thoubal district of Manipur and the river is the main trunk of many rivulets flowing down from the eastern hills, running through the middle of the town of Wangjing. It lies between latitude of 24°N 36°N and 94° E 1’48°E. Longitude. The basin is surrounded by Shalungpham village, Kairembikhok village and Khangabok in the northern bank of the river; Machi Sub-Division (Chandel district) in the east, Sapam, Langathal, Phundrei, Khongjom, Tenta and Tekcham in the south of the river and Ekop Lake in the west. . The area extension of the basin is 20 km from north to south and 45 km from east to west, covering 900 sq.km (4.02%) in Thoubal and Machi Sub-Divisios in the state. The existence of the river is



maintained mostly by three conserved forests in the catchment namely the Bungli, Khajinglok and Ishingthingbi respectively. There are 7 important tributaries of the river in the short course of its origin. Out of these, only three tributaries are feeding the river in the form of springlets throughout the year namely Bumi, Khajinglok and Turel Macha and other gorges fed only in the monsoon season. The Khajing Lok forest is preserved by the local people of Machi village and biotic resources available in the area are kept intact since fishing and other activities of quarrying have been banned in the area. The basin is beset with a myriad of water related problems and issues. While the problems are interrelated, the basin may be classified in three sub-systems to have a better understanding. Forest areas, characteristic of the upper hilly part of the basin, are extremely degraded due to intensification of Shifting Cultivation, (a practice in which farmers clear forest areas by cutting and burn the trees to reclaim the land area for cultivation) have left the watershed increasingly barren leading to drastic changes in the water regime of the hill watershed in particular and the entire basin in general. The problem is compounded with poor land management practices in the farmland. Water availability in the area has dwindled as springs and other natural water sources have begun to dry out. This has adversely impacted the way of life of the people specially the womenfolk who traditionally toil to fetch water from far away sources. As most of their time is now wasted in fetching water, their roles in earning household income have been virtually incapacitated. Sanitation and health have become

extremely vulnerable due to decreasing water availability and absence of proper water distribution systems for domestic purposes.



A tributary originated from Thamlai lok or Khajing Lok joining Wangjing river

The middle part of the basin, characterized by flat valley areas with extensive paddy fields, depends on Wangjing River for all the water needs. The area incidentally is highly populated. River course is heavily silted a result of high scale erosion in the watershed and its discharge capacity is no more capable of carrying flash floods triggered by barren watershed condition. The river course is highly fragmented with numerous water works to impound and divert water for agricultural and drinking purposes. This process of competition has resulted to various water use conflicts between villages in the valley part of the basin. As a result, social discord among villages and law and order problems are strongly prevalent. Pollution has adversely impacted the water quality of the river along the valley course with serious implications in terms ecological and human health.

The lower part of the basin is characterized by a wetland complex called Kharung Pat (lake) surrounded on four sides by the villages like Mayang Imphal and Thoubal Leishangthem in the north , Wabagai and Terapishak in the south, Tentha in the east Santhel and Uchiwa in the west. This lake is an integral part of Loktak Lake, a Ramsar Site, and a wetland of international importance. Kharungpat falls between $94^{\circ} 0' - 94^{\circ} 15'$ E longitude and $24^{\circ} 30' - 25^{\circ} 45'$ N latitude and lies at an altitude of 780 m above mean sea level. The area of the lake is 33.52 sq.km with average depth of 1.85 meter. (Source: K. Khelchandra, Ecology Laboratory, Department of Life Science, Manipur University). The wetland complex is endangered with siltation accelerated due

to deteriorating upstream watershed condition and severance of the vital wetland-watershed connectivity. The following water related problems are observed in the basin ;

- Erosion due to unsustainable land use practice in farmlands.
- The problems of high intensity flood flows during rainy season.
- Declining lean season discharge leading to conflicts in water sharing.
- Absence of proper irrigation system leading to inequitable distribution of water in time and space.
- The pressing problems of drinking water both in the hill and valley.
- Pollution of river water due to construction of unsanitary latrines along the river banks in valley portion.
- Pollution of river water due to disposal of solid waste especially along its stretch through Wangjing town.
- Pollution of ground water in the valley part of the basin due to excessive use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers in the agricultural areas.

The purpose of the initiation under the research project is to ;

- examine and disseminate the overall situation and setting geo-hydrological environment of the river basin,
- examine people's perception and water sharing conflicts on the water resource management and analyze impacts on the socio-economic and cultural lives of the farming communities in the river basin
- Investigate a solution based scientific oriented approach in the basin for long term management of the water resources in an integrated manner.
- And finally to draft a comprehensive development project and finding out a donor agency for implementation of the project.

EMPOWERING PROCESS OF RURAL WOMEN AND GIRLS THROUGH SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Employability of the growing young population is an important factor in economic development of a region. Skill development increases the employability of the workforce which in turn contributes to further economic growth of the region (NEIFI)

Out of 28 lakhs population of Manipur more than 7 lakhs educated youths are now seeking employment with more than 2 lakh girls listed in the employment exchange. Limitations in employment opportunities are mainly due to lack of industries and other private enterprises in the State. There are a large number of Manipuri boys and girls who are working in offices in the big cities in India after their completion of studies. At this juncture, the skill development programs implemented under this Government are going to make a boon to the youths in Manipur.



Literacy Rates: The literacy rate of Manipur is 76.9 %, which is higher than that of the national rate of 73%. It means that, out of the total population of 28, 55,794 persons, 19,08,476 persons possess the ability to read and write. Literacy for males stands at 83.6% and literacy for females stands at 70.3%. as per 2011 census report.

Drop-out Rate: The drop-out rate in the state at Primary and Upper Primary level are quite high in comparison with the national figure. The drop-out rates in the Primary and Upper Primary levels are 9.66% and 4.20% respectively. However, the drop-out rates at Secondary level (14.38%) is lesser in comparison to national average.

Such gap can be filled up engaging themselves in vocational and skill development works . As such Action for rural development organization had started running 5 different vocational courses at the following places

Name of trade	Intact nos	Collaboration	Description
Beauty and wellness	20	CCEF	
Cutting and tailoring	20	JSS THoubal	
Mushroom Cultivation	20	JSS Thoubal	
Embroidery	20	JSS Thoubal	
Fruit and vegetable processing	20	CCEF,Wangjing	

COVID-19 AWARENES AND WASH CAMAPAIGN

In view of the current situation of covid-19 pandemic, all movements in the state have been banned as a part of containment measures. From time to time the government issued carfew relaxation orders by the concern district administration so that the people in the state can address require conditions during relaxation. These condition made poor vulnerable to the poor families who are the daily bread earners. Free provision of fooding materials by local volunteers and

government could not serve all the requirements; as such these people have to come out home for earning.

Under such circumstances, there were urgent needs to organize community awareness program under strict protocols of covid -19 management norms. 10 different village and 3 Municipality areas were identified to conduct awareness building in Thoubal district. The community members were taught about Covid-19 distancing, use of mask and maintaining cleanliness to prevent the spread of diseases. Apart from creating awareness, certain misconception relating to covid-19 spread was also dispelled.

COVID -19 RELIEF MATERIAL DISTRIBUTIONS

From March 2020 till June, the entire country were under curfew lockdown accept some workers who are providing essential services. All schools colleges, shops and other establishments were closed down. The management committee of the ARDO has decided to distribute some relief materials for the selected private school teachers whose income is so less comparing to other well establish schools. The contribution of teachers in transformation of society and in national building is paramount important and well known. However, their hardships during the lockdown were less recognized this is the reason why ARDO started such services. Under such situation, ARDO started distribution of food items to teachers of private schools and van drivers.

MAINTAINACE OF AGED HOME

25 inmates were from various family backgrounds are living in aged home run by ARDO with the community support of well wishers. From time to time these people contributed basic requirements like clothes, soaps, oils, umbrellas, chapels, medicines and others daily food requirements . However, their conditions were really taught during lockdown due to spread of covid -19. Families of some inmates were also requested to either contribute daily food requirements or take them home for some months till the situation get improved but these older people refused to go home. The ARDO tried its best level to management requirements of the older people during the covid -19 pandemic.

EARTH DAY AND WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY CELEBRATION

This year ARDO was not in a position to organize Earth day physically along with the school children. However the school celebrates this day through online platform. Children were asked to plant trees and care it till is fully grown. Their caring tree or plants were to be validated when they show it with healthy plant on World Environment Day. The school Management committee and ARDO were in principal agreement to earmark 10 marks from such children's participation.

Supporting deprived of CCEFs school education program: 33

The Action For Rural Development Organization support a Day School to provide high quality and technology up to date education for the children from poor families. Children go back to their home and inspire other to educate their children. However this year the children couldn't attend school physically due to covid-19 pandemic. Only virtual classroom facilitating interaction between students and teacher online, deliverance of learning materials helped students in completing their syllabus.

Challenges: out of 350 students enrolled in various classes, only 150 students can attend online classes. There are various reasons of why children could not attend online classes. The following reasons could be major factors for absence of classes by the students

1. Some parents could not purchases android phone
2. There are parents who have purchased phone but do not give phone to their schildren considering learning online would not effective
3. There are others parents who neither purchase phone nor send their children for private coaching