



Every Drop Counts: Water Conservation Through Water Efficient Rice Cultivation

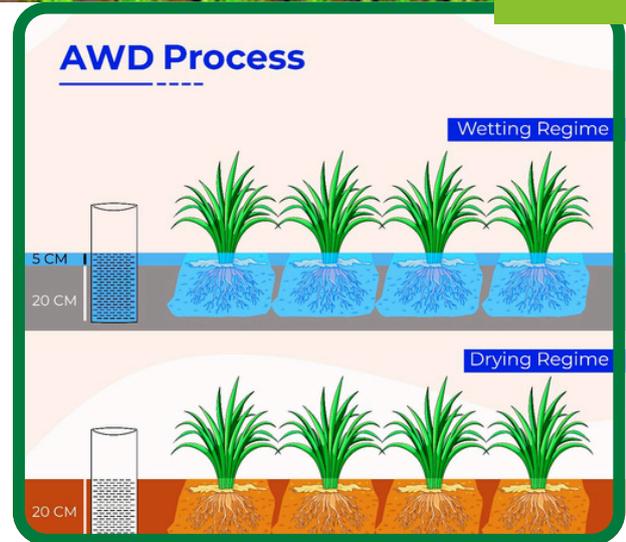
India is the world's second-largest rice producer, contributing nearly 43% of global production (FAO, 2021). Rice cultivation has traditionally relied on labor-intensive methods involving puddling of fields, nursery preparation, and manual transplanting of seedlings. While this approach ensures high yields, it is resource-intensive, particularly in terms of water consumption.

Consuming around 33% of India's total freshwater resources (Ministry of Water Resources, 2019), this method often leads to waterlogging, methane emissions, and soil degradation, posing significant environmental challenges.

Recognizing the pressing need for sustainable agriculture, water efficient practices like Alternate Wetting and Drying (AWD) and Direct Seeding of Rice (DSR) are on rising trend of adoption. AWD involves intermittently flooding and drying paddy fields, significantly reducing water consumption by 20-30% without compromising yield (International Rice Research Institute, 2018). DSR, on the other hand, eliminates the nursery phase and puddling of rice fields, thus saving time, labor and water, resulting in saving up to 25-40% of water compared to traditional methods (Indian Council of Agricultural Research, 2020).

By adopting AWD and DSR, farmers can optimize water use, enhance soil health, and mitigate climate change impacts. These methods also contribute to reduced labor costs and increased farm profitability. Moreover, DSR can facilitate mechanization, leading to higher efficiency and reduced drudgery for farmers.

A shift towards AWD and DSR is crucial for India's agricultural sustainability. By embracing these modern techniques, farmers can ensure food security while preserving precious water resources and safeguarding the environment.



HIGHLIGHTS

H₂OPE (Hyundai Motor India Foundation): Empowering Schools in Gadchiroli

PROSPER (Mankind Pharma): Nurturing Rural Potential in Meerut and Bijnor Districts of Uttar Pradesh

Empowering Mithila Artists (Wurth Electronics): From Canvas to Commerce

Sangam (LIC HFL): CSR Lead's Visit to West Jaintia Hills

Empowering Mithila Artists (Wurth Electronics): From Canvas to Commerce

A two-day intensive workshop was conducted on July 4 & July 5, 2024 at **Mithila Art Studio, Darbhanga, Bihar**, where **55 female artists** immersed themselves in the art of transforming traditional Mithila motifs onto contemporary products. Under the expert guidance of Mr. Ajay Kumar Jha, participants mastered the delicate art of applying these intricate designs to handbags, clutches, laptop bags, folders, sarees and dupattas. This initiative aimed to revitalize the Mithila art form by integrating it into modern lifestyle products.

By providing a platform for these skilled artisans to showcase their work at the prestigious **'Haat of Art' exhibition in Delhi** from July 26 to July 28, 2024, they received unprecedented exposure to a vast audience. The event was a resounding success, with positive feedback and potential collaborations emerging.

This experience has empowered the artists, enhancing their product presentation and sales skills. Moreover, it has opened doors to new markets and product lines, ensuring the longevity and growth of the Mithila art heritage.



Gram Seva (SBI Foundation): A Community Health Initiative

A free medical camp was organized in Kiri Village on July 30, 2024. The camp provided essential healthcare services to approximately **150 villagers** covering 16 villages in Chamba District, Himachal Pradesh.

A team of medical professionals conducted comprehensive check-ups, addressing health needs and treating common ailments. Recognizing the importance of overall well-being, multivitamin supplements were distributed to enhance their health. Severe cases requiring specialized care were promptly referred to nearby hospitals for advanced treatment.

Additionally, villagers were provided with guidance on potential health issues and advised to consult appropriate specialists for further evaluation and management.

It brought essential healthcare services to their doorstep, saving them time, money, and effort.



Augmenting Water Efficiency for Climate Resilience Farming (Hindustan Unilever Foundation): Sowing the Seeds of Behavioural Change amongst farmers in Budaun



A groundbreaking journey towards water-efficient and climate-resilient farming has commenced in Budaun District, Uttar Pradesh. As part of the initial community-building phase, the project team, in collaboration with senior management, took a significant step by transplanting paddy seedlings.

This hands-on involvement symbolizes our deep commitment to standing shoulder-to-shoulder with our farming community.

Rice, a staple food, is cultivated with immense effort, especially in waterlogged fields. Recognizing the critical need for water conservation, we are determined to transform traditional rice cultivation practices.

The focus is on introducing and implementing water-saving technologies to ensure a sustainable future for farmers. The successful adoption of Pioneer Line Sowing technology is just the beginning. We envision a future where Budaun's rice fields thrive with abundance, while preserving precious water resources for generations to come.



Unnati (SBI Foundation)

Comprehensive Training on Poultry and Support for Women Entrepreneurs

Following the successful completion of the Poultry Enterprise Training in July, SUVIDHA is now setting up **Backyard Poultry Units for 200 beneficiaries, including SC/ST, widows, and PwD women** in Sirmor and Solan Districts of Himachal Pradesh.

This initiative aims to empower women through enterprise development and income generation. The training provided essential knowledge on chicken maintenance, treatment, nutrition, and economic benefits.

With the provision of chicken coops and 21-day-old chicks, these women are now equipped to embark on a sustainable poultry farming journey, contributing to their economic upliftment and self-reliance.



HRDP Assam (HDFC Parivartan) Climate-Smart Orchard Initiative Boosts Rural Economy

To address climate change and uplift rural livelihoods, a transformative orchard development project has been implemented in 13 villages of Jorhat District, Assam.

By planting **10,000 seedlings**, the initiative has not only facilitated the cultivation of **high-yielding Arecanut varieties** with early harvest potential (4-5 years compared to the previous 7-8 years) but has also potential for meeting robust market demand of the produce.

This dual-pronged approach is set to significantly boost the farmers' income, ensuring long-term economic stability and contributing to a sustainable future for the community.



ORGANIZATIONAL UPDATES

H₂OPE (Hyundai Motor India Foundation) Empowering Schools in Gadchiroli



In a groundbreaking collaboration with **Project H₂OPE**, we have initiated significant strides in providing access to safe drinking water in **100 Government Schools of Gadchiroli District, Maharashtra**. This transformative initiative will benefit over 35,000 beneficiaries, ensuring a consistent supply of safe drinking water.

A comprehensive Rapid Rural Appraisal highlighted the alarming contamination of water sources, underscoring the urgent need for intervention. In response, we installed water purification units and storage tanks tailored to each school's requirements. This holistic approach ensures a consistent supply of safe drinking water for students, teachers, and the surrounding community.

Together, we are building a sustainable future where every child has access to clean water, a fundamental right essential for growth and development.

PROSPER (Mankind Pharma): Nurturing Rural Potential in Meerut and Bijnor Districts of Uttar Pradesh

We are excited to embark on a transformative journey with Mankind Pharma through the PROSPER Holistic Rural Development Project. This ambitious initiative aims to **uplift the lives of nearly 5,000 farmers across 20 villages** in Meerut and Bijnor districts, Uttar Pradesh.

PROSPER is a comprehensive program focused on fostering sustainable livelihoods, improving access to quality education, enhancing healthcare, and empowering women. By diversifying income sources, enhancing infrastructure, and promoting community development, we aim to create a lasting impact on the region.

This partnership underscores our shared commitment to rural development and building resilient communities.



Sangam (LIC HFL): CSR Lead's Visit to West Jaintia Hills

We had the honor of hosting **Mr. Sourav Chakraborty, CSR Regional Lead, Eastern Zone, LIC HFL**, at our project site in West Jaintia Hills, Meghalaya on 11th and 12th July, 2024. During his visit, Mr. Chakraborty monitored the progress of our Sustainable Agro-Economic Development project, which focuses on promoting the cultivation of Lakadong Turmeric and Ginger to uplift the economic conditions of the local farmer community.

He engaged in meaningful interactions with the community and the project staff, gaining insights into the positive impact of the efforts. His visit not only provided valuable feedback but also reinforced our commitment to community empowerment and sustainable development.

We are grateful for LIC HFL's continuous support in driving forward our mission of enhancing rural livelihoods and fostering sustainable growth.



SUVIDHA's Management Team Undertakes Field- Based Monitoring and Strategic Review

The senior management team comprising of Mr. D.C. Pandey, Former Principal Executive Director RVNL, (Ministry of Railways) and Advisor, Mr. Ashish Srivastava, Director- Programmes and Operations, and Dr. Pratap Dhaila, Programme Coordinator- Climate Division, recently undertook a field visit to Maheshwar, Madhya Pradesh and Chamba, Himachal Pradesh. The primary objective was to assess the progress and impact of the projects.

SBI Gram Seva Project, Chamba, Himachal Pradesh



The team provided capacity building support to the project staff and conducted comprehensive monitoring of various project components including Purna Center, Village Pathway, Chamba Chuk Unit, Street lights, Irrigation tanks, Gram Seva Kendras, Remedial classes, Farm Machinery Bank and Solid Waste Management initiatives.

Through interactions with project teams and community members, the team critically evaluated the sustainability of these interventions and discussed strategies for further improvement.

Project- Asha ke Ankur, Chamba, Himachal Pradesh

A comprehensive evaluation of the plantation site was conducted to assess the survival rate and growth of lemon, guava, and pomegranate saplings.

Simultaneously, farmers were equipped with essential skills through training on polygon data collection and seed ball creation.



HRDP Project, Maheshwar, Madhya Pradesh



Mr. D.C. Pandey conducted a comprehensive review of key project components, including handloom centers, smart classrooms, Community Safe Drinking Water Facility (Jal Minars), and floriculture initiatives. He assessed the progress made in revitalizing traditional handloom crafts, enhancing digital education, addressing water scarcity, and promoting sustainable livelihoods through flower cultivation.

His insights will be instrumental in further refining project strategies and maximizing their impact on the local community. The project is demonstrating tangible benefits for its primarily tribal and marginalized beneficiaries.