

CommunicationsDesk

SchoolInfrastructure

After a few months gap of 'Orchid', the newsletter comes back with the same intention to keep everyone connected to the project 'Supporting Human Capital Development in Meghalaya (SHCDM)', on the same page. Orchid's readership and content remain the same, with clear attempts to keep all members of the project, at the block, district and state levels and those with national and international perspective in one loop.

The winter months have kept the project members busy with activities around construction, teacher training, skill challenge fund and the pressure to reach out to thousands of youth who will decide to register for the skill training programmes soon to be announced.

The arrival of Mr. Sanjay Goyal as new Deputy Project Director is paving way for fresh possibilities. The creation of the website has reached the Content Approval stage, and it will be just a matter of weeks before we all see the website online. The design and content drafting of the website had been done by PMC in consultation with other stakeholders. The web design is a mix of government feel and contemporary look, with an attempt to reach out to the youth and making it more people centric in look and feel.

In a way, the project is in that transition period where individual consultants attached with British Council, Technical Assistance Team will be passing the baton (in some cases) to their counterpart of PMC and NGO. The contribution of TA in paving the way for a project of this size to take off, is of great value.

We hope you spare a few minutes to go through the consolidated copy of Dec-Jan 'Orchid'.

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Project racing to completing work during Phase I of construction

Input: Kit Shangpliang and Biplab Das

The project is catching up with completion of infrastructure work (Phase I) comprising the first set of 30 schools.



With a few practical challenges on the ground, the winter season had given enough opportunity for construction to go full swing. PIU 4 (PWD) with the technical input of group consultant LEA Associate had put more efforts into making sure that the dry season is exploited to catch the deadline.

With regards to the infrastructure work of the rest of the schools in preparation for phase 2,3

& PIU 4 and DSC with support from the Project Management Consultant are working on

- Condition Assessment
- Architectural Designs
- Preparing and floating of Tenders

On the construction front, retrofitting activities are a major effort of the project. Most retrofitting works at identified schools has commenced and DSC had submitted school-wise retrofitting plan on 27th November 2015. For the schools where had not started until midwinter, concerned contractors have been asked to mobilised the workforce, after which, work had started.

Alongside, the technical progression – the project through the NGO – Aide-et-Action has been doing the job of sensitising school management committee members for the sake of cross accountability and the belief that it will help in quality control. In doing so, most SMCs (as it was perceived by the project design) hope that the new infrastructure of their schools will help retain the students of class 11 and class 12, therefore, reducing school drops out.

| Phase I (30 schools) | Till Previous Month | Current Month | Target for Next Month |
|--|---------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Schools Completed | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Under Construction | 21 | 23 | 2 |
| Schools with participation issues | 5 | 5 | 0 |
| Schools where construction is yet to start | 9 | 7 | 0 |

| Phase II (52 Schools) | Till previous month | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|----|-------|
| | KJH & RB | GH | Total |
| Condition Assessment Completed | 16 | 36 | 52 |
| Architectural Plans Completed | 16 | 26 | 52 |
| Architectural Plans On-going | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Architectural Plans to commence | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Awareness and Mobilisation

The project through the Non-Government Organisation - Aide-et-Action has reported various awareness & mobilisation activities conducted across the state. The NGO has been creating social mobilisation campaign to create awareness about the need for secondary and higher secondary education and vocational training.

Towards this effort, they have interacted with various social groups, local bodies, students and teachers.



Following is the details of individuals who have been covered during various meetings conducted by NGO.

| Groups | Dec | Jan |
|---|-----|-----|
| SMCs | 46 | 107 |
| Women groups | 35 | 66 |
| Youth groups | 582 | 530 |
| Parents | 541 | 266 |
| Teachers | 20 | 20 |
| Student Groups | 106 | 56 |
| Govt. Officials at districts/block levels | 74 | 44 |
| Minority Indigenous groups | 0 | 0 |
| Autonomous Village / District Council members | 119 | 272 |

Audience covered based on gender

| Gender Group | Nov | Dec | Jan |
|-----------------|------|------|------|
| Total | 982 | 735 | 455 |
| Female Audience | | | |
| Total | 1595 | 788 | 906 |
| Male Audience | | | |
| Grand Total | 2577 | 1523 | 1361 |

200 Teachers from 117 schools will start training soon

As part of the capacity building to teachers, the project is implementing a decision to train 200 teachers from the 117 schools under the project.

The 200 untrained teachers would be identified and will be deputed in two batches of 100 during 2016-2018 and 2017-2019 to a university or institution of good repute.



In the overall budgeting for the program, replacement cost for the teachers who would go

for the training also needs to be considered. Project Implementation Unit I would work on the replacement cost based on the RMSA guidelines.

The final proposal around this teacher training effort is being prepared by the Project Management Consultant. PMC has been doing its homework on the assessment and selection of the Capacity Building institution based on quality, experience, modalities of admission and fee structure.

There is hope that the admission process can be completed by March 2016 as the session starts in July this year.

Teacher & Secondary Education Curriculum & Learning Materials Development Expert met with Principal Secretary (DoE, GoM) on 29th January to present the proposal in detail. Subsequently, the PMC team made a visit to the institution to understand the way forward on how teacher training will be imparted.

Enhanced Clarity on Environment Front – key input, N. Bhattacharjee

Environment Safeguards issues assumed enhanced clarity during the visit of Mr. Ralph Starkloff, Senior Safeguard Specialist ADB during November 2015.

The approach to safeguard issues were to be in conformity with Environment Assessment & Review Framework (EARF). Accordingly, the existing concept of a consolidated Initial Environment Assessment (IEA) for all construction sites is to be replaced by school/site specific IEA and Environment Management Plan (EMP) forming part of IEA.



The issues of both community health and safety and occupational health and safety was also included as part of EMP for compliance. Safeguard issues till then has been implemented based on an Advisory issued by PMC during October 2014 through PWD(B) for compliance by contractors of phase-I schools.

The purpose of the EMP is to ensure that specific mitigation measures identified in the environmental assessment and agreed in the

contract are satisfactorily implemented. In addition, monitoring is necessary to ensure that the envisaged purpose of the project is achieved and results in desired benefits to the target population without adversely affecting the environment.

All infrastructure development of Schools/BTCs/TTCs shall follow the National/State Specific Environmental Rules and Regulations including ADB SPS – 2009, to avoid or minimize environmental impacts. Child-friendly, protection of school children by separating construction site from school yard has been given priority in the EMP template which shall also take into account relevant environmental conditions and climate change risk mitigation measures. Preservation of the surrounding ecosystems around the school building has also been given due importance from the view point of community health and safety. Preventive measures in sites where there is a risk of soil erosion or landslides shall be mitigated through improved drainage network with regular maintenance of drainage system.

The overall environmental management of the building will be improved in terms of drainage, handling and disposal of sanitary and solid waste, introduction of water harvesting etc. The project-related anticipated environmental impacts, though very limited in scale, may include dust and noise pollution, occupational health hazards, risk from existing poor sanitation system, land and water contamination, and soil erosion, etc. These will be addressed by adopting appropriate mitigation measures.

SKILLS: CommunityEngagement

Youth, parents and SHGs sensitised on the importance of Skill Building programmes

Aide et Action organised meetings with Block units of Garo Students' Union & District Unit of Khasi Students' Union, Damas and Manikganj Youth forums was organised in December & January.

A total of 130 students attended the meetings where they expressed that around 200 youth who were trained by other organisations in the past are unable to start their enterprise due to lack of knowledge in getting support from financial institutions.



While raising this issue, they were keen to know the difference between the other skill training programs in the state and the SHCDM Project's skill training component. KSU Unit of Ribhoi district came forward to extend support to SHCDM team during mobilisation drives.

Similarly, an interest inventory test of Registered Youths in Mairang & Mawryngkneng was conducted for 100 youths to measure the level of an individual's interest in various activities. The results of the test, which is based upon the scientific tool developed by John Holland, are underway.



Awareness Building & Mobilisation meeting with SHG Federation/s under Selsella Block was held where 59 women were sensitised on the opportunities available in Vocational skill trainings (Skill Challenge Fund –Short term course)

In December, the team organised Awareness Building meeting & Mobilisation of Youths and Women for Skill Training program in Bhoirombong in Umsning Block of Ri Bhoi District; Jongksha village in Mawkyntrew Block, Pomlahir village in Mawryngkneng Block & Nongkwai Village in Pynursla Block of East Khasi Hills District. A total of 232 youth and women attended these meetings.

ORIENTATION

Orientation on Civil works held in District Pyndemsohsaw SS, Mukhla Raid SS, Malai Sohmat SS, Laishnong Hr Sec School, Tirot Sigh Sec School, & Raid Lyngkhat SS. A total of 25 SMC members attended these orientations.

Orientation to School Building Committee on civil works related to Architectural drawings were organised in Janapriya SS, Zekabari SS, New Bhaitbari SS, Mount Senai SS, Gonchudare SS, Gimegre SS, Melim Def. SS, Rohonpara SS, & Babelapara SS. A total of 67 SBC members took part in the meetings.



AWARENESS

Awareness Building meeting with School Building Committee (SBC) on GAP and social safeguards: The team organized a meeting with SBC members in District Pyndemsohsaw HSS and Mukhla Raid SS to orient them on need for having separate entrance, ramp and special toilet for disable students to ensure the social safeguard are in place during the construction work. A total of 8 members took part in the discussions.

Awareness Building & Mobilisation meeting with Headman: The team organized meetings with Headmen of Amlarem Block, Nongstoin Block & Baghmara Blocks to discuss about various issues ranging from school drop outs to lack of employment opportunities for youth. The team explained the objective of the project and informed them about various activities taken up by the government to provide employment opportunities to youths. They also clarified on the procedure followed in the selection of the schools for renovation in the project. A total of 195 village headmen attended the meeting.

Mobilisation meetings in various locations for youth data base for Skill Training

Mobilisation meetings were held in various locations for developing data base of interested youths for undergoing skill training under the SCF component of the project. The data base of interested youths thus prepared will be shared with PIU2 after the Service Providers are finalized and are on board.



A total of 701 youths attended these meetings which were held in 27 villages across districts in Meghalaya.

SENSITISING COMMUNITIES

Sensitisation programme for students and parents held

In December 2015, the project team organised sensitisation programs to inform the students and parents about the components of the project (Education, Skill Development, GAP, IPP) . A total of 323 people attended the programmes which were organized in *Plasha Village- RiBhoi, Laitumkrah Bengali Secondary school, Madan Laban Bengali Secondary School, and Shiliang Jashiar village-Pynursla of East Khasi Hills.*

Sensitisation programs on school sanitation and waste management held

In December, 2015, the team conducted sensitisation programs on school sanitation and waste management and shared the tips about how every individual can keep their neighboring area clean and get healthy environment. The sensitisation programs were attended by 290 students from *Laitumkrah Bengali Secondary school, Madan Laban Bengali Secondary School, and Shiliang Jashiar village-Pynursla of East Khasi Hills.*

Meghalaya Day celebrated on 21 January

SHILLONG, January: Meghalaya Day was celebrated with less fanfare this year, but nevertheless, purposeful. Chief Minister Dr. Mukul Sangma was people centric in his speech and called for more implementation from government officers. "We have set a new benchmark for the people where it is time to execute and implement initiatives for the people,".



He urged the state leaders to be optimists so as to generate a sense of hope among the people, "As we learn from the past and strategize for the future, our efforts should be to seek better lives for the less privileged."

Based on recommendations of the advisory committee, awards were presented to the nominees including H. Rynthiang for the U Tirok Sing Award which is conferred to personalities from the field of Arts and Culture.

The cabinet also decided to confer the Pa Togan Sangma Award for social service to Rev. F.D. Sangma and the U Kiang Nangbah Award for achievement in sports to noted State footballer Eugenson Lyngdoh.

4 Meghalaya students get awards in Delhi

SHILLONG, Feb: Four students from Meghalaya were among the winners of the Digital India week online quiz competition on cyber safety organised in the month of February. The four students are Arti Adhikari from Army Public School, Ri Bhoi, Surabhi Gupta from Army Public School, Shillong, and Vikash Vishwakarma and Snehil, both from Kendra Vidyalaya, Laitkor Peak. Union Minister for Communication and IT, Ravi Shankar Prasad, presented them with the award at a function in New Delhi recently.

Industry pledges commitment to the National Skill Development Mission. Each district to have at least one skill development centre by 2017

Corporate India has responded positively to the Government's call for playing a bigger role in skill development. The challenges and opportunities of skill development in India were discussed elaborately at the National Industry Conclave on Skill held in Mumbai in the month of January.

Addressing a press conference at the end of the conclave, Union Urban Development Minister Shri Venkaiah Naidu said that skilling the youth is the biggest challenge in India. He said the number of vocationally trained people in India is only 5.3%, as against 70-90% in countries like Japan, South Korea and Western Europe. Shri Naidu said, in the areas of skill development we have to take care of school dropouts, college dropouts, graduates and post graduates, engineering, vocational skills, agriculture and allied activities, craft and self-help groups.

Stating that private sector employment and self-employment are the future avenues for the youth, Shri Naidu asked the industrialists to come forward and adopt ITIs (Industrial Training Institutes) across the country.

Shri Venkaiah Naidu informed media persons that almost all the corporate leaders pledged their help in bridging the skill gap. He said the industry requested the government to establish central mechanism of certification of skilled workers.

NE Youth leaders interact with Arun Jaitley, stressed on Skills and Youth Development

SHILLONG, January: A twelve-member delegation of Young Leaders Connect (YLC) from Northeast met with the Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley in New Delhi on January 14.

The YLC group suggested that a special employment-linked skill development drive along the lines of "Udaan" for Jammu and Kashmir could be launched in the Northeast as well. Udaan, the Special Industry Initiative (SII) for J&K is funded by Ministry of Home Affairs and implemented by National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC).

The programme is a part of the overall initiative for addressing economic issues in J&K. Chaired by Bhaichung Bhutia (Indian Football Icon), the delegation comprised of Kiren Rijiju (Minister of State, MHA), Sushmita Dev (MP), Gaurav Gogoi (MP), Karma Paljor (Business Editor, CNN-IBN), Conrad Sangma (Former Meghalaya Finance Minister), Imo Singh (MLA, Manipur), G G Kamei (IRS), Hekani Jakhalu (Director, YouthNet), Tanushree Hazarika (Managing Director, Eclectic Group), Dr Lalrin Jahau (Surgeon, Mizoram), and Bjorn Deneise (GM, Mayfair Hotels).

Towards reaching a common goal of

preparing North-East for the next level, YLC engaged with Jaitley and discussed and deliberated on several topics and issues related to the region.

In a statement issued here on Friday, YLC said that it seeks to create a platform for expression of ideas, that can harness the immense potential and the strategic location of the Northeast and transform it into a model region by drawing a roadmap for developing it in a sustainable, time-bound and planned manner.

The YLC group suggested that a special employment-linked skill development drive along the lines of "Udaan" for Jammu and Kashmir could be launched in the Northeast as well. Such an initiative would ensure adequate employment or entrepreneurship opportunities and put more emphasis on youth development.

The need of the hour is also to create new higher education institutions even while strengthening existing ones through improvement in their governance, curricula and others.

Shillong Polytechnic set to become engineering college

SHILLONG, Feb: Meghalaya Chief Minister announced that the Shillong Polytechnic would be upgraded to a new degree level engineering college beginning from this academic year. The existing resources of the institute is helping to turn it to a centre of excellence for the young generation of aspiring professionals.

Acknowledging the services rendered by the Institute to the students of the State in the past 50 years, the chief minister said it is now time to work harder and set a new benchmark higher than seen in the past to enable the young generation to realise their dreams.