



Rejuvenating Communities & Ecosystems

# Watershed Organisation Trust **Jharkhand**



Watershed Organisation Trust (WOTR) is a globally recognised organisation dedicated to transforming the lives of millions of poor across India through participatory watershed development and eco-systems restoration, climate-resilient sustainable agriculture, integrated and efficient water management and climate change adaptation, with a special emphasis on building the resilience of vulnerable communities, farmers, and women. Established in 1993, the non-profit organisation WOTR works at the intersection of practice, knowledge and policy to ensure food, water, livelihoods and income security to disadvantaged communities on a sustainable basis. Head-quartered in Pune, Maharashtra, WOTR has a presence in nine states and provides occasional services to agencies across all states of India and from twenty-eight countries. In addition, the organisation aims to develop ecosystems in an integrated manner for the well-being of poor communities.

WOTR has worked in 3,754 villages and has impacted over 3.8 million people cumulatively since 1993. These figures cover projects in all its areas of implementation, training and capacity building activities.

WOTR has been working in Jharkhand to reduce poverty through integrated watershed development and sustainable livelihoods since 2010, when the Jharkhand-Regional Resource Centre (RRC) was established. As of date, WOTR is engaged in 226 villages across Khunti, Gumla and Giridih districts. These districts of Jharkhand are highly vulnerable to climate change and are already witnessing erratic rainfall patterns, heavy winds, and droughts. The sudden downpours cause surface runoff of water from upper catchment regions to lower catchment regions leading to soil erosion and sedimentation; a major concern for the communities.

The Jharkhand-RRC is also engaged in helping the tribal households in these districts to enhance their livelihood security through effective and sustainable management of natural resources.





## Ecosystem-based Adaptation

WOTR's Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) is a strategy that helps vulnerable communities adapt to climate change by building the resilience of their degraded ecosystems and livelihoods. EbA also generates significant socio-economic and cultural benefits.

### Key Highlights

- **Training and capacity building** of community mobilisers, key stakeholders and community members on EbA
  - Approximately **700 people**, including community members and community mobilisers as well as government department officials, trained
  - Around **500 participants** have visited Bamni watershed to learn about the watershed approach and ridge to valley method of treating degraded landscapes
- **Community participation and inclusive decision making** at the village level, at every step of the process during project implementation

## Land Management

The topography of Jharkhand is undulating. While uneven and changing patterns of monsoons impact both land and soil, heavy downpours also affect crops, and the high velocity of water often causes soil erosion, nutrient loss, and sedimentation in lowland areas. WOTR's land management work spans over 20,000 ha under different projects, including activities such as area treatments, drainage line treatments, afforestation In the coming days, WOTR plans to implement these measures in an additional 30,000 ha of area in the Gumla district through convergence with government departments.



## Water

Water scarcity, changing pattern of monsoons, run-off rainwater causing soil erosion, and decreasing groundwater table were major issues in Jharkhand. Watershed management and sustainable water harvesting have been a established the bedrock to promote sustainable cropping patterns, and efficient water use for domestic needs. Moreover, efficient micro-irrigation systems are promoted among farmers for judicious use of harvested water.

**195**  
loose boulder  
structures built

**9**  
gabion structures  
built

**197**  
gully plugs built

**200 ha**  
land converted from  
non-cultivable to cultivable

**40.57 Cr. litres**  
water harvesting potential created  
through area treatment

**6.54 Cr. litres**  
water harvested in  
72 villages

**6000**  
families benefited  
through farm ponds

**25.70 Cr. litres**  
storage capacity achieved through nala bunds,  
afforestation, and new and existing well repairs



## Sustainable Agriculture Practices

Most households in Jharkhand practise rain-fed agriculture and belong to marginalised communities. WOTR supports and build capacity on sustainable agriculture practices, with an aim to enhance the resilience of farmers to climate change and extreme weather conditions. From System of Crop Intensification (SCI) to Organic Formulations, training and demonstrations are provided by WOTR's agriculture experts. The Birsa Farmers Producer Company Limited, formed under PRODUCE fund of GoI through NABARD, has been promoted by WOTR with a membership of 546 shareholders in Murhu.

**7000**

farmers supported for  
Climate Resilient Agriculture

**1200**

farmers supported for  
kitchen garden activities

**400**

families provided a source of  
income through livelihood  
activities

**3000**

farmers capacitated and  
supported through sustainable  
agricultural practices

**3300**

farmers guided towards year-round food security



## Livelihoods

While Agriculture and farm-based activities are the primary source of income in Jharkhand, WOTR also focuses on generating alternative livelihood opportunities through non-farm activities. In 72 villages of Murhu, numerous farmers have now adopted lac cultivation, fish farming, poultry, and NTFP collection.

### Key Highlights

- Promoted and supported lac cultivation among **500 households**
- Supported **260 households** with alternative livelihood options like backyard poultry, pig farming, goat farming, fish farming, grocery, and tailoring units
- Supported the Birsa farmers producer company's promotion for **NTFP collection and marketing of produce** in the local market



## Community Mobilisation & Institution Building

Gram panchayat and other village institutions play an essential role in community mobilisation. Well-being ranking, net planning, Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and formation of village development committees (VDCs), Self-help groups (SHGs), Sanyukt Mahila Samhiti (SMS) have been done at the initiation of every project.

### Key Highlights

- Supports **24 VDCs** and **104 SHGs**
- Creation and distribution of **protective face masks** to deal with COVID-19
- Promotion of additional household incomes by **encouraging women** to gain employment.



## Awards

For its diligent efforts in lac cultivation, WOTR was felicitated with the 'Excellence in Lac Promotion Institutional Award 2020' Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR) on 13th Feb 2020 at the 'Kisan Mela cum machinery exhibition'.

## Convergence with Government Schemes

WOTR has been building linkages between poor households and different government schemes, enhancing beneficiaries' coverage, and raising awareness among villagers on beneficial schemes. The convergence under various government schemes has also ensured social security to the most vulnerable and poor households in WOTR's project villages. Jharkhand-RRC has been working in Khunti and Jari as a facilitator to assess and plan the work under MGNREGA, and to coordinate with Gram Panchayats to enrol migrant labourers.



**WOTR's work in Jharkhand is supported by**

