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## **ITC MISSION SUNEHRA KAL**

**NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME**

**THENI DISTRICT, TAMIL NADU**



**Annual Report FY: 2021-22**

**Submitted By:**

**DEEPAM RURAL DEVELOPMENT CHARITABLE TRUST**

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**Kanniyakumari District, Tamil Nadu**

## Introduction:

First up all, we the DRDCT owe our heartfelt thanks to ITC Ltd-MSK Division for its wonderful supports to implement the NRM activities till date in Theni district, Tamil Nadu state from the financial year 2014-15. As like past years, this financial year also is a milestone for ITC Ltd-MSK Division and as well as for DRDCT. The **Soil and Water Conservation Programs (SMC)** and **Intensive Agriculture Programme (IAP)** carried out in Theni district during this financial year 2021-22 also over welcomed by the beneficiary farmers, Government officials and village Panchyath Presidents. Now we can sure that 99% of the farmers of our core villages in Theni district are well known about ITC Ltd., and its CSR activities.

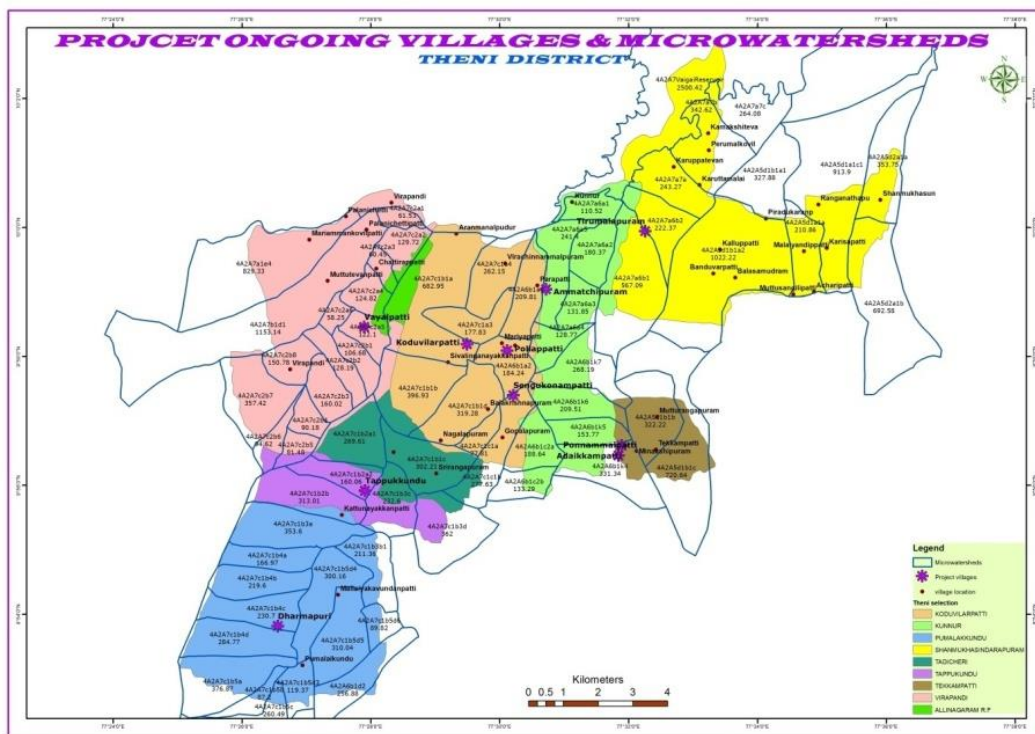
## Project Title:

The title and theme of the project for the year 2021-22 is;

Natural Resource Management program with an objective of **"Sustainable Development of Land and Agriculture through Effective Management of Natural Resources"**

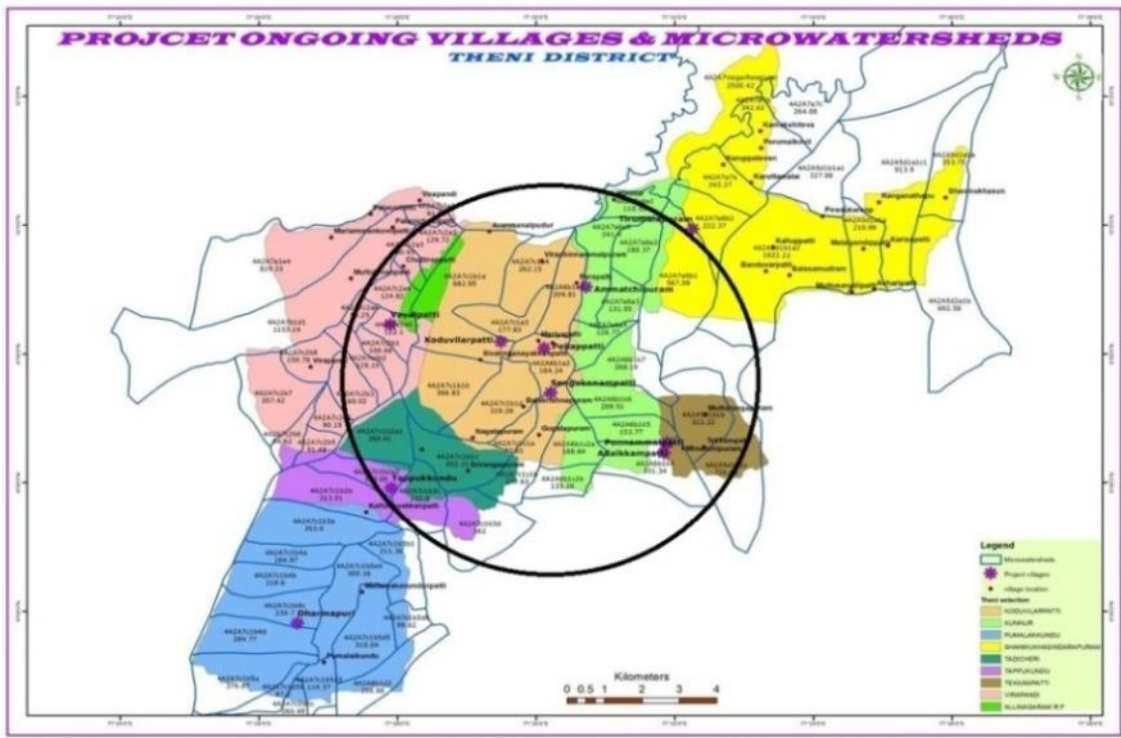
## Village Panchayaths Covered in FY: 2021-22:

This current financial year, we have worked in 8 Village Panchayaths of Theni district which are comes under Theni, Mayiladumparai and Aundipatti blocks.

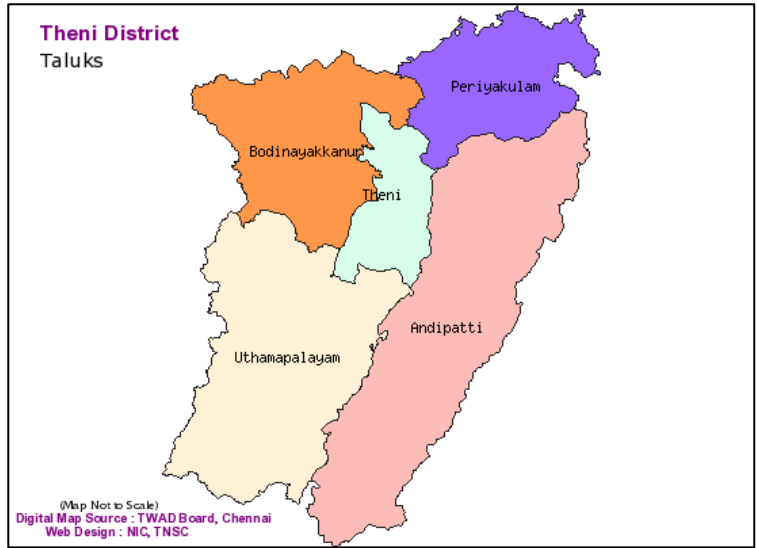


In this financial year, we have implemented our activities in 26 Micro-water sheds which covers 8 village Panchyaths included 31 village hamlets. The below map shows the selected micro water sheds in our target area.

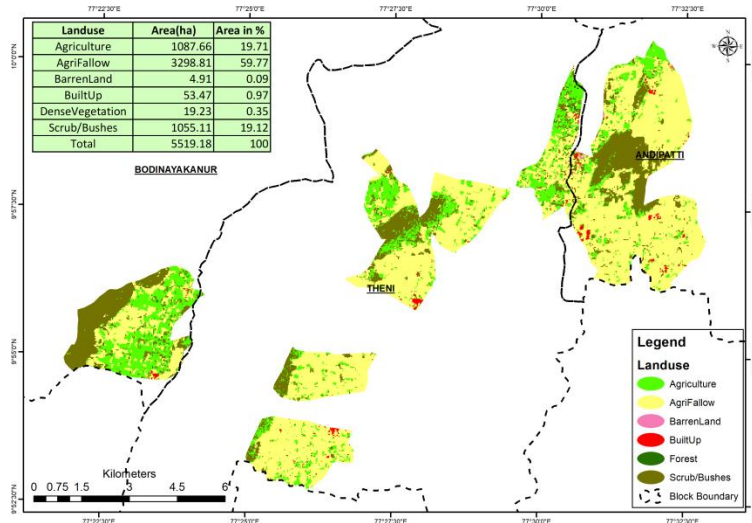
1. SITHARPATTI
2. ETTAPPARAJAPURAM
3. THEKKAMPATTI
4. THEPPAMPATTI
5. RAJAKKALPATTI
6. MARIKUNDU
7. G. USILAMPATTI
8. KANDAMANUR



**Theni District Map:**



**Project Area from 2015-2022:**



Earlier we were working in vast areas with a focus on Bodinayakanur assembly constituency and now we are working in 10 village Panchayaths to ensure 100% saturation. Mostly it will be saturated by FY: 2022-23 with SMC activities.

**Proposed Development Issues in the Project area:**

- Acute water scarcity prevails in these our working areas due to the continuous deficit rainfall for the past five years. The groundwater table in these areas has gone down badly.
- Ground water depth crossed around 1000 feet; Out of 100% almost 69 % well were dried.
- Most of the irrigation tanks have not received sufficient water due to inadequate rainfall and also improper maintenance of the supply channel. Due to that most of the command area left fallow and occupied with prosodies weed.

- Though the district get rainfall in some time, But there is no proper structure & drainage line for rain water harvest. Some water storage structures are there, but it's all are not desilted in a periodical interval by the government departments.
- The rain fed farming was affected severely due to the erratic change of rainfall pattern and also due to reduction of rainy days.
- Unaware on proper WUE-Water Use Efficiency.
- Lack of knowledge on nutrition management (soil management)
- The Livestock owners have to go in search of fodder also in addition to water. Non-availability of hay and green fodder has forced them to take their cows to sell out.
- The farmers and labourers whose were dependent on agriculture are slowly migrating to another livelihood for their survival. Seasonal and permanent migration for the want of employment also in increasing trend in these villages.
- There are no collective institutional arrangements and mechanisms to solve the development issues in the project villages.

#### **PROPOSED SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE**

- ▶ To saturate 10 drought prone village panchayaths in Theni, Mayiladumparai & Aundipatti blocks of Theni District with community-led Conservation and Development.
- ▶ To contribute to renovation of 10 mini percolation tanks, improved agriculture practices in 200 acres and bio-diversity promotion with the approach of sustainable agriculture practices.
- ▶ To support around 400-500 families in both Theni, Mayiladumparai & Aundipatti blocks for strengthening their livelihood through conserving water and improving agriculture.

#### **PROPOSED ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS IN FY 2020-21:**

##### **IRRIGATION TANK RENOVATION**

###### ***Proposed:***

Water is elixir of life. Though it is available everywhere and the quantity is not equal but skewed. In the project area, harvesting every drop of water decides the village economy, as they struggle on a day-to-day basis for the want of water. Effective performance of tanks and its conditions are critical for survival. The proposed action addresses the recurring droughts and the on-going desertification process by alleviating the water shortages. The tank components like feeder channel, tank bund, water spread area, sluice, field channel and surplus weir will be focused for renovation. One or more components will be renovated according to the needs and priority of the local community. During the last FY year 2020-21 totally 21 tanks were renovated and received less amount of water as first time after long gap during the south west monsoon. The livestock in and around the village of Thekkampatti having access for their drinking and fodder in the tanks due to the presence of water.



*(Sheep's drinks water in our one of the renovated MPT at Thekkampatti Panchayath)*

We have proposed only 10 MPTs for renovation works. In January'22, the ITC gave us revised budget with additional 10 MPTs. So the total target for this financial year is 20 MPTs.

***Achieved:***

***We have renovated 21 MPTs in this financial year against the target of 20 MPTs in these following Panchayaths.***



Sl. No.	Name of the Panchyath	No. of MPTs Renovated in FY 2021-22
1	Theppampatti	5
2	Ettapparajapuram	5
3	G-Usilampatti	2
4	Sitharpatti	4
5	Rajakkalpatti	5

## FARM POND CONSTRUCTION

### ***Proposed:***

Farm Pond will provide lifesaving irrigation to the crops at the critical stage. Last year (2021-22) there are 30 farm ponds were done to demonstrate the benefits of the farm pond among the farmers. Most of the ponds received good amount of water.

### ***Achieved:***

***We have constructed 30 farm ponds against the target of 30 farm ponds in this financial year 2021-22. There are 30 farmers got benefits, among them 18 farmers are belong to scheduled caste and 11 farmers are females. 7290 CuM water storage was created through these 30 farm ponds.***



## INTEGRATING MGNREGS

The "Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act", MGNREGA), is an Indian labour law and social security measure that aims to guarantee the 'right to work'. Over the last decade it has been observed that more than half the MGNREGA funds have been spent on water related projects. This was very much needed because water bodies have been shrinking especially in rural India. Around Rs 15,000 Cr. under MGNREGA has been spent each year during the last decade on developing rural water bodies, wells, aquifers, catchment areas. The project team will work with integrating the MGNREGA in the project villages for maximizing the impact. The process steps for integrating MGNREGA will be followed as given below.

- \* Joint agreement with the Block/District administration will be made for the effective ways of integrating MGNREGA work and ITC MSK works.
- \* The left out components by the MGNREGA will be taken for saturating the development intervention in the identified water bodies.
- \* Plantation and soil conservation measures will be carried through MGNREGA.
- \* Sectioning, Consolidation of Bund and repairing works will be explored through the MGNREGA.



***Through the MGNREGA we have done the following SMC works in our core villages:***

- ▶ ***Watering to our plants which were planted on the bunds of MPTs***
- ▶ ***Weeding was done among the agro-forestry plants***

### PROMOTION OF TUGS:

#### ***Proposed:***

Promoting village level organizations serves as foundation to achieve community-led development in drought prone areas of Theni district. The project intervention helps to restore community management on water bodies and improve the conditions of the irrigation tanks. These associations are independent organizations and they are led by the community. Under this project 9 tank user



(TUG) associations were promoted since 2020-21. During 2020-21, totally 9 tank associations were promoted for the renovated tanks. The associations promoted under this project are expected to function beyond the project period and provide continuity to the project initiatives. So we have planned to promote 10 WUGs for the FY 2021-22 in our core villages with 200 farmers as members of Water user groups. These TUGs are also called as ABCs which means Agri Business Clubs.

***Achievements:***

***There are 6 TUGs were promoted in this financial year with 137 farmer as members. These members will take care of the renovated MPTs.***



**TRAINING /CAPACITY BUILDING**

**Proposed:**

Capacity building is a continuous process and it is essential for the sustainability of the intervention. DRDCT has a plan to organize training on Common Restoration during the month of January'2022.

**Achieved:**

***We the DRDCT has been organized a two day training program on Commons Restoration at Mettupplalayam, Coimbatore District on 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> of January'2022. The staffs from DRDCT, Dhan Foundation and COODU were participated in the training program.***



### ***Trench cum Bund:***

#### **Proposed:**

Totally 343 farmers did trench cum bund in their land which covered around 976 ha during the year 2020-2021. The erosion was drastically controlled within the lands and the soil moisture was improved and supported the rain-fed crops for completing the harvest successfully. Due to its suitability in the project location the land from the catchment area of 500 ha of the proposed tanks have been chosen for the treatment in 2021-2022.

#### **Achieved:**

***The ITC MSK has given the target of TCB about 500 hectares for this financial year. With the help of farmers we have treated 501.92 hectares of lands in our core villages.***

***There are 197 small and marginal farmers were benefitted and among them 49 farmers are women. And also 106 scheduled caste farmers also covered under the land treatment activity. There are 47433 CuM of water storage also created through this trench cum bund program.***





### **IMPROVED AGRICULTURE PRACTICES (IAP)**

Vegetables, Drumstick, Corn maize, Cotton, Flowers, Pulses, Grains and Cereals are the major crops in 10 village Panchayaths being cultivated around 6000 ha which is around 70% of net cultivation area. Water is the major issue in these blocks as there is high fluctuation in rainfall. Improved soil nutrition, improved irrigation methods and improved soil conservation methods are highly required for better productivity in this block. Demonstration fields and Farm field schools will help the farmers to adopt suitable technologies for the farmers to get higher production with lesser investment.

### **Farmer Field Schools (FFS):**

#### **Proposed:**

For this financial year we have proposed 15 numbers of FFS sessions on vegetables and grains. This program is also aimed to give the training on cultivation and as well to prepare organic insecticides and organic manures.

#### ***Achieved:***

***We have organized 10 FFS sessions for the farmers on vegetables and grains. Around 47 farmers were benefitted through these periodical trainings. Production of Panchakavya was demonstrated to all the farmers.***



### **Dry Land Horticulture Promotion (Agro Forestry):**

In this financial year, we have promoted 139.89 hectares of land with dry land horticulture crops like Neem, Pungan, Country teak, Guava, Teak, Tamarind and Mango etc., There are 40 farmers were benefitted through this activity. There are 8220 saplings were planted through this activity. This is a milestone in our journey and this program was well received by the beneficiary farmers.





**Bund Plantation:**

Under this program, we have done plantation on the bunds of MPTs which were renovated through our project from the past three years. We also done plantation in common lands such as road side, burial ground and puramboke lands etc., We have planted 2300 plants through this activity. We have collaborated with local village Panchyath MGNREGS by using the labours for plantation and irrigation activities.



**Achievements against the proposed activities in the FY: 2021-22**

**SMC – Proposed SMC Activities & Achievements: (2021-2022)**

<b>S.No</b>	<b>Particulars</b>	<b>UOM</b>	<b>Proposed 2021-21</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
1	<b>Catchment Treatment</b>			
2	Treatment (TCB) – Manual	Ha		
	Treatment (TCB) – Mechanical	Ha	500	501.92
3	Foreshore/ Bund Plantation	NO.		2300
4	<b>Water Harvesting Structures</b>			
5	Minor Structures/Farm Ponds	NO.	30	30
6	Large Tanks	NO.	20	21
7	Masonry check dam	No.		
8	<b>Water User Groups</b>			
9	WUGs Formed	NO.	10	06
10	WUG Members - Total	NO.	200	139
11	<b>Impact Created</b>			
12	Command Area	HA	800	980
13	Area protected from erosion	HA	500	501.97
14	Water Storage Capacity	cum	30000	116236
15	<b>Coverage</b>			
16	Beneficiaries	NO.	500-700	540

**IAP – Proposed Integrated Agriculture Practices (Demand Management Initiatives):**

**2021-2022: Achievements**

Particulars	UoM	Proposed 2021-22	Achieved
<b>Farmer Field Schools/ Demonstrations</b>			
Total Farmer Field Schools / demonstrations for agriculture	No.	15	10
Total Farmer Field Schools / demonstrations for Fodder	No.		
<b>Convergence with Existing Government schemes</b>			
Soil testing	No	200	200

**Our total achievements from FY: 2014-15 to till date:**

Achievements		2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Total
S.No	Particulars	Qty	Qty	Qty	Qty	Qty	Qty	Qty	Qty	Qty
1	Treatment (In Ha.)		203.2	696	390	801.69	662	970.66	501.92	4225.47
2	Farm pond/Sunken pond (In Numbers)	35	156	120	52	155	22	83	30	653
3	MPT					3	13	16	21	53
4	Common Land Development (Plantation in numbers)						7470	4000	2300	13770
5	FFS (No. of Sessions)		5	4	7	9	5	10	8	32
6	Mechanization (For Groups)	4	6							10
7	ABC-Agri Business Centres		4	2			9	3		19
8	WUG- Water User Groups						9	6		15

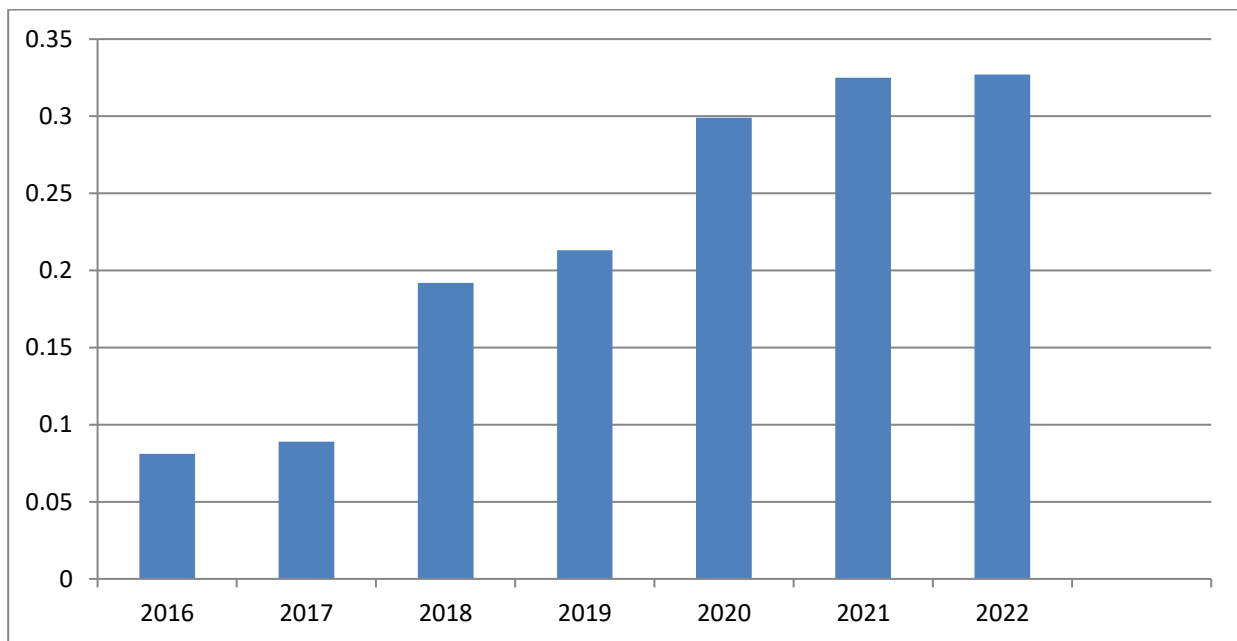


9	Agro-Forestry (Plantation In Numbers)			1000	2100	13000	13900	4000	8220	27120
10	NADEP (Structures)		100	130		50				280
11	Drip- Irrigation (Farmers)	5								5
12	Cattle Trough (Numbers)		2	2	4					8

**Impacts from our project:**

**Impact on Soil Health:**

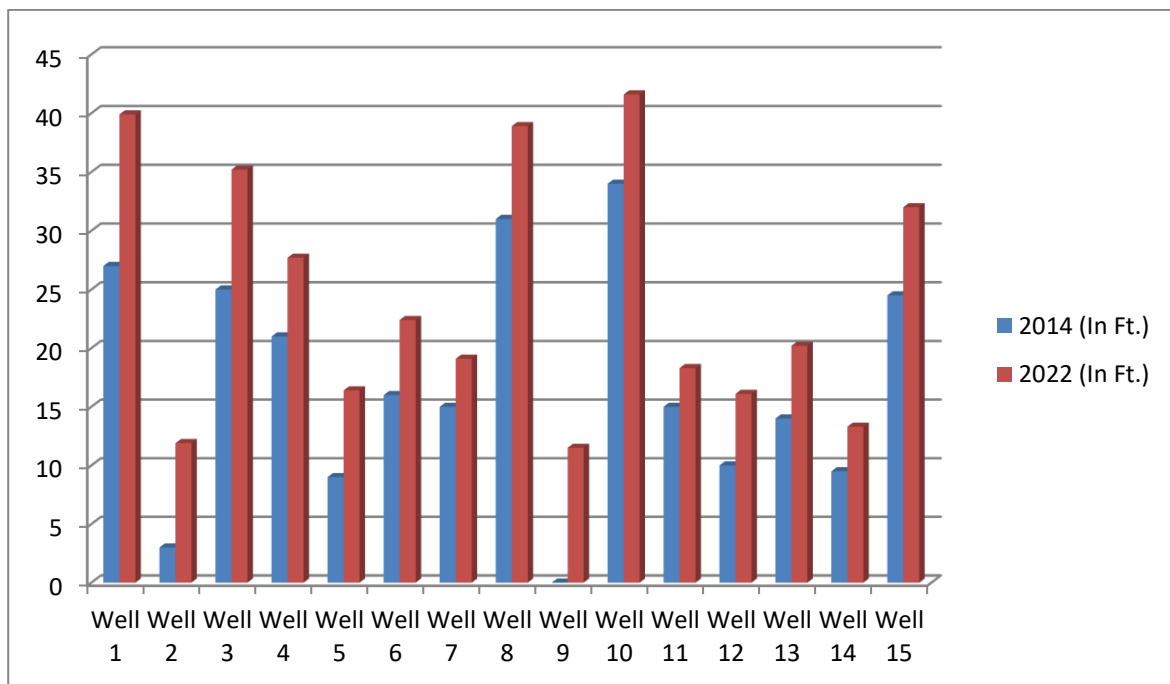
From the year 2016, every year we are doing regular soil test for 200 farmers’ fields to know the soil health of our core area especially about the growth of organic carbon level after the intervention of our soil and moisture conservation project. We are doing this soil tests in government soil test centre which is run by Department of Agriculture, Government of Tamil Nadu in Theni. From these tests we came to know that the OC percentage in the soil has been significantly increased when we compare with the year 2016 and 2022. At the time of starting SMC project in our core area in Theni, the OC level in soil was below 0.1 percentages. Due to an effective implementation of our SMC activities in the area, the OC level was significantly increased to above 0.31 percentages from 0.1 percentages.



The above chart shows the increase of Organic Carbon (OC) level in our area

**Impact on Water (Static Level of Well):**

Main objective of our SMC program is not only to develop the soil and moisture levels and also to increase the ground water level in our project area. We strongly believe that this SMC works will surely leads to increase the vegetation area which means cultivation area will get increased. We have conducted a survey in five Panchayaths to know the ground water level from our intervention to till now. From this survey we found that the ground water level is increased through our SMC activities such as renovation of mini percolation tanks, construction of farm ponds in farmers' fields and soil treatment of trench cum bund. Some farmer's irrigation wells were dried and there was no water in 2013 & 14, but now all these wells are having significant water level and they started cultivations. The land use is tremendously increased.



The chart showing the increase of water level (Well Static Level)

### Success Stories:

#### **Improved conveyance infrastructure bringing back family agriculture**

*Mr. Rajeswaran from Vaikalpatti village have 8 acre of agriculture land with one open well and bore well at highly elevated area in Theni district. Open well water availability failed one decade of years ago then they moved to bore well irrigation but bore well also yield 4 -6 hours per day due to high run off of water in this field. Earlier his full family is in agricultural activities only but due unavailability of water for irrigation family members were moved to other salaried work specially his younger generation who are educated.*

*After 2016, through ITC sponsored DRDTC project of SMC program facilitated the farmer in improved conveyance infrastructure (such as TCB, farm pond, or increased storage) has significantly reduce losses of water though run off and increased water storage in land. In upper watershed*

*areas, diversion and subsequent irrigation is often driven by water availability rather than irrigation needs. Proper regulation and storage offer the ability to time and more efficiently apply water. Outcomes could include economic growth, improved family safety and increased water availability which results directly in bringing his family back to agricultural. Mr.Ayyanar son of Mr.Rajeswaran has worked in IT Company quits his job*

### **Appreciation from Panchayath Presidents:**

We have renovated 5 mini percolation tanks in Theppampatti, 5 MPTs in Ettapparajapuram, 2 MPTs in G-Usilampatti, 4 MPTs in Sitharpatti and 5 in Rajakkalpatti Panchayaths The Panchayath Presidents highly appreciated the ITC Limited and its social development activities for the well-being of farmers of their villages.



Mr. Panneer Selvam  
President, Theppampatti Panchayath



Mr. Siva Rangu  
President, Sitharpatti Panchayath

### **Government Collaboration:**

The District Collector Office, Theni District

The District Rural Development Agency, Theni District

The Block Development Offices, Theni & Aundipatti

Department of Forest, Theni District, Government of Tamil Nadu

The Horticulture College and Research Institute, TNAU, Periakulam, TN

Department of Agriculture, Government of Tamil Nadu

Department of Horticulture, Government of Tamil Nadu