

Story of Change

Empowering Women. . .

In the villages served by the Kapiriggama Cascade System, there has been very little upland farming in the recent times due to long droughts, poor soil conditions, and consequent general neglect of the land.



The project started providing assistance to farmers for soil conservation. There were number of farmers who were not in favour of any soil conservation work in their lands. The level of knowledge on the need for soil conservation was low. The project persevered with its proposal to establish soil conservation measures, and was able to get many farmers to agree to this concept. Each land was provided with about 200 m of contour bunds, carefully placed to prevent erosion by run-off of rain water. They were also provided with

planting materials of perennial crops. Additionally, the farmers began to cultivate vegetables with water drawn from agro-wells in their properties.



In the upland holding of Siriwardene, there is a variety of crops; tomatoes, chilies, brinjals, long-bean and other crops. Mrs Siriwardene is fully occupied with tending to the crops, and looks after the plot carefully. She avoids

using pesticides, and has been making compost to provide the nutrients and mulch to ameliorate the effects of dry conditions. She has ample vegetables to eat now.



There is often surplus of vegetables. She has put up a small store in the land to sell the extra produce and other groceries. The demand for vegetables is high. Now that the neighbourhood and others know about the store, and the fact that the vegetables are grown without pesticides, there is increasing demand for the produce. She would sell out all produce by about 11 00 am due to this demand. The sale of produce from the homestead has substantially increased their monthly income.