

Enhanced drought resilience through Rainwater Harvesting

Sekhapur is a small village in Ashti block of Beed District having around 260 households. Nearly 80% of the households are small and marginal rain-fed farming households. The primary livelihoods source for the villagers is Agriculture. More than 90% agriculture is rain-fed and depends on erratic monsoon rainfall.

In Sekhapur, the stream flows from the mountain through the undulating land. A substantial area of agricultural land is covered by this stream. There were few water bodies damaged & defunct due to their non-maintenance by the villagers.

The village receives average or below average rainfall, thereby disturbing the crop cycle. This also results in low agricultural production with higher cost of cultivation. More than 75% of the cultivable land is cultivated under Kharif season and rest is used either for Rabbi or left uncultivated due to unavailability of irrigation. The agriculture had become a non-affordable activity for the people. This has result in regular migration of more than 50% villagers to sugarcane cutting area as seasonal labour migrants.

AFARM started the work in the village Sekhapur through Special Initiative (SI) Project supported by AWO International. For the purpose of creating demonstration, SI Project focuses on in-si-tu soil moisture conservation work with few selected farmers to enhance their agricultural productivity. The project focus has been on the restoration of soil and moisture conservation and water conservation and for that the desilting of existing two Cement Nalla, (CNBs) were undertaken. Every structure renovated has added water to the extent of storage capacity. These structures constructed on stream in Sekhapur have demonstrated its result.

The Cement Nala Bunding (CNB) work has resulted in increasing the water level in bund itself and has been instrumental in increasing the water level in 9 open wells and 7 bore wells at the downstream side. The farmers, whose lands are located in the command area where these CNB is desilted,



have started taking the second crop. According to the beneficiary farmers of the area, the production has increased by 15% to 20% due to assured protective irrigation facility to the rainfed crops.

According to Mr. Devrao Nivruthi Bade, Mr. Namdev Maruti Bade & Mr. Dhyandev Muralidhar Bade a small land holder rain-fed farmers from the village Sekhapur , “More than 42 acres of land has been brought under cultivation in this rabbi season. People who were hardly able to water crop only once, are now able to access the water twice to their crops”.

Villagers claim that Water storage period has increased by one to two months. Desilting and deepening of two cement nala bunds, has contributed a lot for the storage of the sufficient water in these structures.

It is true water has been seen in the storage structure and water level of 16 wells & bore-wells is increased, however the real impact of increased income due to this interventions and longevity of water access will decide the impact factors. Yet it is believed by the experienced farmers that rabbi crop production has increased to some extent.

