

## Village Pachod is on the way of achieving Water Security

AFARM has implemented the Bajaj Water Conservation Project in 20 drought affected villages from Aurangabad district over a period of three years. Pachod village from Paithan block is one out of the 20 villages. The village was suffering from a recurrent drought situation for the last 2-3 years and was dependent on tanker supply for drinking purposes. Groundwater levels quite declined. In absence of adequate availability of water for irrigation and drinking, farmers stopped cultivating orchards and shifted to other food grain crops. Earlier Pachod was known as "Mosambiche Gaon" (Village famous for Mandarin Orchards). But, due to subsequent droughts, about 60% orchards were demolished. Cotton, Soyabean, Tur and Bajra are the major kharif crops whereas Wheat, Gram, Jawar are major rabbi crops in the village.

Transact walk, resource mapping and participatory consultations were conducted while planning of water conservation measures with prime focus on strengthening of drinking water sources.

Galati River flowing through the village was having 8 Cement Nala Bunds (CNBs) constructed on it which were fully silted up. Hence desilting of these CNBs including deepening and widening of nalas was finalised through community consultation processes.

During first year of implementation three CNBs on Galathi river located around community drinking water sources were taken up for de-silting.

These CNBs enabled recharging of drinking water sources. It **helped to overcome drinking water issues and dependency of the village on tanker supply reduced in the first year itself. As a result women's drudgery for fetching water with loads on heads has decreased.**

During the year 2017, another six CNBs were de-silted along with deepening of Nalla. Altogether 4.5 km of nalla has been deepened and de-silted which has enabled harvesting 145 thousand cubic meters of rainwater. This has collectively improved the ground water table in the village resulting in year round availability of water for irrigation as well as drinking purposes. The village became evergreen. **Those wells dried for four to five years got recharged yielding water even in peak summer for three to four hours. This has given immense satisfaction to farmers.**

With the assured availability of water throughout the year, farmers rejuvenated their Mandarin orchards. Area under Mandarin cultivation has increased to about 110 ha., pomegranate increased to 22 ha. and sericulture increased to 16 ha. Area under rabbi crops mainly wheat and gram has also increased to about 121 hectare. Murrum excavated from stream beds was used for improving about 8 km long farm approach roads. Guide bunds created along banks through excavated materials found protecting habitation area from floods.

Mr. Siddheshwar Tare, one of the members of water user group reflected his views, "I have 28-acres of land. However due to water scarcity, a Mandarin orchard in 3 acres was demolished. I took bank loan of Rs. 12 Lakhs for digging another well. However, it was in vain due to inadequate water availability in the ground. After completion of the water conservation works, my old well got recharged and is able to support horticulture. I can repay my loan borrowed for digging of another well but I wonder why I invested in digging another well?" Another farmer Mr. Badrinarayan Narale spoke about cultivation of pomegranate on 3 acres land due to increased water level of his bore well.

**Having realised the impacts of the water conservation works undertaken by AFARM in this village, the State Government has felicitated village Pachod with the second prize at the District level under Jalyukta Shivar Abhiyan in the year 2017-18. Village Pachod has really transformed from drought affected to drought free over the period of three years.**

