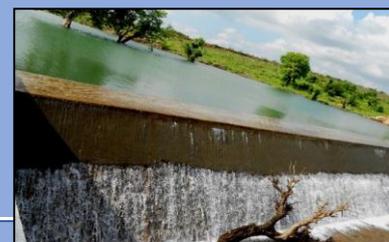


Model Village - Water Replenishment Project

Securing water availability and source sustainability

Lead Organisation: Haritika
(www.haritika.org.in)

Geographic Spread: Patna, Bijawar,
Chhatarpur
480 people of the village Patna



Background:

Patna is a small village in the Bijawar block of Chhatarpur District of Madhya Pradesh. It falls under the rain scarce drought prone area of Bundelkhand. The dominant tribal villagers have been allotted with only 5 acres of land each. Agriculture could be the prime source of livelihood for them but due to extreme water scarcity in the village, the villagers were forced to collect NTFP (*Tendu, Mahua etc.*) and sell it for household income generation. The average annual income of each family in the whole village was Rs. 10,000-15,000 only, earned from NTFP products. This poor economic condition of the villagers was aggravated with inadequate access to basic amenities, social exclusion and gender inequalities. **Haritika** with the belief that land based resource management activities can transform the lives of these marginalized villagers into social and economic prosperity, started the Water replenishment project with the support of **Coca Cola Foundation**. If anyone now will have to visit this village Patna, will be able to hear a strange sound -- sound of running water and to see the strange scene - floating water in a seasonal nala in such a water scarce region!

Need

The tribal dominated village Patna in Chhatarpur falls under one of the most rain scarce drought prone area of Bundelkhand. Most of the villagers remained isolated from the mainstream development initiatives and suffered numerous deprivations w.r.to safe drinking water, irrigation facilities and livelihood opportunities. People in this village used to fight against extreme water stress during every summer. The marginalized poor communities had forced to depend on non-timber forest products as the major livelihood option in spite of having fertile agriculture land, due to severe water scarcity and absence of any irrigation facilities. All these had put impact on the quality of life of the villagers in the form of poverty, illiteracy, disempowerment and crime.

Response

By considering the acute problem, Patna village has been selected as one of the model village under the intervention. The approach followed as community led natural resource management through institutionalization, capacity building and ownership creation. Different institutions as Village Water & Sanitation Committees (VWCs) and Village Procurement Committees (VPCs) have been formed and they have been undergone through series of training and capacity building programmes to understand their roles and responsibilities. Soil and water management structures as big dam with mass storage, extension of old earthen ponds and farm ponds have been constructed with the support from local authorities, especially PRIs.

Stakeholders involved

Community Institutions: Local communities, institutionalized into village level committees (VWC & VPC) are the main driver of this initiative. Since VWC is a part of the Gram Sabha, it helps

linking and influencing the decision-making of the Gram Panchayat, thus creating scope for integration of this project with other government watershed programmes.

Civil Society Organization (CSO): The NGO, **Haritika** acts as a mentor and helps analyzing the problems in consultation with the village level institutions to develop and establish an integrated natural resource management system towards economic prosperity and sustainability.

Impacts

- The check dam and pond now act as reservoirs, which will be used to recharge the hand pumps in the close proximity to the water conservation structures thus creation of a sustainable source of water which lasts even after the monsoon ends.
- Increased crop production with increased water availability enabled villagers to take agriculture as the major and sustainable livelihood option.
- Enhanced food security with change in crop pattern. Villagers started climate resilient and improved practices like agro-forestry, cash crop cultivation and inter cropping.

