

## **Work updates from January-June 2016**

### **Local work in Dungarpur**

My work in Dungarpur focuses on conserving soil and water by building / reviving ponds, in collaboration with the Vagad Mazdoor Kisan Sangathan, which is an community-based organisation of adivasi farmers and labourers in Dungarpur district.

Work on two new ponds was completed earlier this year between January-March 2016 in the villages of Mandwa and Valota. A photo of one of the ponds after the rains is attached. The ponds will help improve the groundwater availability in its vicinity, which will be accessed by farmers through wells and borewells for irrigation and drinking.

Three district-level workshops / meetings were held at Dungarpur, with members of the Vagad Mazdoor Kisan Sangathan, to share and discuss the results of the work done so far on 7 ponds in 3 villages and to identify new villages where the work can be expanded based on the local need and interest of farmers, and presence of the Sangathan in these villages. Representatives from the older villages where work has been done were present in the meeting to share their experiences. Through this process, 10+ new villages have been identified. A photo of one of the meetings is attached.

Preparatory work is ongoing in the new villages through site visits and meetings at the village level. On ground work on the ponds will begin from October 2016 onwards, after the rains are over. This includes some villages where preparatory work began last year after October 2015, but in which on ground work could not be taken up, before the rains began in June 2016.

### **Regional work in Rajasthan**

My work in Rajasthan is through Sambhaav, and focuses on supporting local teams working on soil and water conservation with farmers and pastoralists in Alwar, Jaipur, Dausa, Nagaur, Jaisalmer and Barmer districts, through site visits and meetings and overall coordination with local team members.

Some work done during this period **entirely** through locally raised contributions from farmers and pastoralists and with support from Government programmes raised through the Gram Panchayats:

#### **Rajgadhi Block – Alwar district, Rajasthan**

In the villages of Nandu, Ghevar, Nayala and Chava ka Bas, farm bunding work was done over 5 hectares of land. Farm bunds help to conserve soil moisture from rain within the farm itself, which in turn helps to grow crops and recharges groundwater downstream of the bund.

In the village of Rup Bas, farm bunding work over 4 hectares of land and construction of 1 new pond was completed.

In the villages of Tilwad, Palpur, Govardhanpura, Mallana, Kakarali, Kho, Dariba, Rampura and Urwadi, farm bunding work was done over 44 hectares of land.

In the villages of Kakarali and Rampura, construction of 2 new ponds was completed.

In the villages of Kundla, Ramsinhpura, Virpur, Vidhota and Sakat, farm bunding work was done over 23 hectares of land.

In the village of Sakat, construction of 1 pond was completed.

In the village of Virpur, construction of 1 anicut was completed. An anicut is a pucca structure

made of stone in cement mortar, and usually built over a rivulet or a large stream that helps to store rainwater and recharge groundwater downstream of the anicut. It also helps to maintain flow of the rivulet or stream over a longer period of time.

**Dausa block – Dausa district, Rajasthan**

In the villages of Vapi, Rampura, Udawala, Biharipura, Banjaro ki Dhani, Bisanpura, Koliwadi, Vinawala and Bani, farm bunding work was done over 47 hectares of land.

In the village of Bisanpura, 1 existing pond was deepened. Deepening a pond, helps to improve its water storage capacity, which in turn helps improve the availability of water for drinking for livestock and humans and wherever applicable improves water available for irrigation and recharges groundwater downstream of the pond.

In village Bani, 1 new pond was constructed.

**Dudu block - Jaipur district, Rajasthan**

In village Savli, farm bunding over 16 hectares of land and construction of 1 new pond was completed.

**Phagi block - Jaipur district, Rajasthan**

In village Hirapura, deepening of 1 pond was completed.

In the villages of Jawad and Hirapura, farm bunding work over 16 hectares of land, and construction of 2 new ponds was completed.

**Kuchaman block – Nagaur district, Rajasthan**

In the villages Kuni and Thikariya, farm bunding work over 5 hectares of land was completed.

**Ramgarh – Jaisalmer block, Jaisalmer district, Rajasthan**

About 50 hectares of Bijrasar Khadin was revived for agriculture by removing unwanted vegetation with contributions from the community and Government programmes. The Khadin was not in use for about 30 years. After the rains, the Khadin held about 2 feet of water. A pond was dug near the Khadin with help from the Border Roads Organisation, which captures the surplus water overflow from the Khadin. The moisture in the Khadin and the water from the pond was used to irrigate the Khadin through sprinklers and to grow a crop of mustard for the first time in 3 decades.

A Khadin is an agricultural system that is jointly owned and managed by several villages or farmers from a village, that harvests and stores rainwater. Crops are then grown using the soil moisture that is stored within the Khadin. It also recharges groundwater within and downstream of the Khadin.

**Bakhasar- Chhotan block, Barmer district, Rajasthan**

In Koliyon Ki Dhani, Dindava and Bhawariya, 3 ponds were deepened over 1-2 months, with support from the NREGA.

In Gangasar, Bhawariya, Manmodo Ki Dhani and Devasiyo Ki Dhani, 4 community tankas were constructed with support from the NREGA. Tankas harvest and store rainwater for drinking for livestock and humans.

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