

Case studies of "Pani Thiye Panjo" Programme



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Becoming Responsible...Story of Kandhay village

The water situation in Kutch is so bad that often entire villages migrate out, news papers are always highlighting the water problem, and one always hears the government's promise to supply Narmada water. In such circumstances, it comes as a big surprise when people of one village claim that "our village will not face the drinking water problem in future and we are sure that water tank will not have to come to our village"! That is exactly what Shri Hari Singh Jadeja resident of Kandhay asserted. Rights and responsibility are two sides of the same coin. This is what villagers of Kandhay have proved. For them, rights come with responsibility and they have learned to manage their drinking water responsibly.

This village has mostly people from Patel, Rabari, Harijan, Darbar and Koli communities. This village was facing the problem for drinking water at the time of drought. Women of this village get water from a well which is a half kilometer far from village. Well was constructed for drinking water but it is not enough to supply the drinking water through out the year. Three storage tanks 'dunki' were made in 1970 to solve the drinking water problem with the help from government fund. But during droughts this does not solve the problem. Women draw water manually from wells. In 1992, the village got water under a scheme. However, since the village is at a higher level, it gets water only once in every 15 days. Problem for drinking water has increased. Villages become dependent on supply from outside.



Drinking Water System of Kandhay

In between the patidar community prepared a separate scheme for drinking water meant only for themselves. Some time later, Sahjeevan was carrying out a geo-hydrological survey of a nearby area and became aware of the hydrological conditions of the village also. The studies indicated that towards the North of the village basalt layer is available upto 30 feet depth, therefore, this area can not provide sufficient drinking water in summer season. However, in South - west side of the village has basalt layer upto 50 feet depth. There are series of check dams on the rivulet passing through that side can help in ground water recharging. If well is constructed in



south-west side of the village then village can get sufficient water even in summer season.

Based on this understanding, one well was constructed for drinking water with the help of KFFFT and Sahjeevan on south-side river bank. This yielded enough drinking water. Additionally, a check dam was also built with the support from WASMO. Villagers have formed one committee to take care of the scheme and all other water related work.

This committee is also responsible for collection people's contribution. Now each and every household gets drinking water. Kandhay has tried to implement an own scheme for drinking water and maintain it. Water committee has charged Rs 1500 for each connection and now collects water charges of Rs 40 per month for each connection. The main expense of this scheme is his monthly salary of valve operator.

Currently 62 tap connections are there in the village. All water charges collections are deposited in bank and all transactions are done through the bank. When the scheme was started diesel pump was used which increased the operating cost. So, the villagers decided to use solar-powered pump instead of diesel. The installation was done with the guidance from Sahjeevan and financial aid from WASMO.

The village now enjoys regular supply of water through this solar motor and there are no more maintenance expenses for this. They are getting water for whole day still committee is decided to supply water for only 45 minutes twice a day in morning and evening. This village has made own responsibility for drinking water. Hari Singh Jadeja, member of his water committee says that "Development works are completed by co-operation only, problem for drinking water is a major problem for all us but we get sure success through co-operation, it is important to manage the scheme implemented by Government or any organization and if village manage it, it become responsible.

Sarpanch of this village says that "It is important that village must get the drinking water but at the same time it is also important to ensure there is no wastage of it".

Women in leadership role at Karamta village

Does it not make one happy to meet someone who thinks not only about the whole village, but is also concerned of its future? Hansbai of Karamta village who works selflessly for solving the water problem is one such person.

Hansbai is about 50 years old. Her words convey much confidence. She says: “.. after the completion of this scheme our next generation will enjoy and will not get troubled like us.” Only Rabari community lives in this village. The population is about 400. She says that during drought, most males will leave the village with the livestock leaving behind families. Only about 250 people may remain in the village.



One time villagers are doing vain efforts to get the water and now they don't believe by seeing this much of water. Village gets water only once in a week. Village has a pipeline of 15 years old and now gets water provided by the Sanghi industries. But this is very irregular. When there is no supply, women fetch water from a nearby talav (tank) and *Virda* for domestic use and drinking. Villagers wish to have their own water resource. But, there are no sources such as wells within village that can be improved to yield water.

One day two men visited the village. They had come to do a geo-hydrological survey to prepare drinking water plan for Abdasa taluka. After the intensive survey, they concluded that that North-West and East side of village has some possibilities of groundwater due to presence of sandstone layer. They took consent of the sarpanch of the village with the help of Hansbai for conducting detailed geo-hydrological profile. It was seen that there is a sandstone formation about 100 feet below and it is possible to extract groundwater for drinking.

About eight months passed. Time has come for the implementation phase of the plans under 'Pani thiye panjo' in Abdasa. A representative of 'Manav Kalyan Trust' comes to get the consent of the village to participate. The



village was overjoyed! It was like the doctor prescribing what the patient wanted!

Village helped with all the preparatory work of testing and in deciding the location. Meetings were held to frame proper rules and regulations. The village adopted a systematic approach to implement the scheme as per plan. They formed a water committee for the implementation and management with the full participation of the people.

Meenaben of this village says: "I came to this village 22 years ago after marriage. We never paid paise for water all our life! Now I paid first installment of Rs 100 and will later pay Rs 170 for this scheme." Now people are contributing to share the cost of the scheme that will provide them their own water. In first phase, Rs 15,000/- has been collected and the work has started. Committee supervises the work. Hansbai says: "The Pani Samiti is responsible for the regular on-site checking of the work during the construction. They ensure that work is proceeding properly. A "Visitors Register" is maintained and all suggestions and comments recorded in it, so that when the NGO staff comes, these can be discussed and instructions given to construction workers. The work contract has a provision that the committee will check the quality of raw-materials and work."

After the completion of well work village scheme will provide a solar powered motor. Water will be distributed from the tank to each and every household. Rs 500 will be levied from each household for an individual a pipeline connection in this scheme. That money will be deposited into a bank account. This fund will be used for the maintenance and repairs. If there is any problem from main line to household, it will be repaired by the house owner as per the rules. The rules in the scheme clearly specify all these things.

If the village is showing so much interest in the upcoming scheme, then what the status of collecting water charges now is, we ask Hansbai. Hansbai says: "firstly, earlier we were getting water only once in a week and secondly, this bill system has been implemented only since last year. Before that, water charges were not collected. Even sarpanch don't know about it. I can vouch for it, because I was sarpanch before."

The villagers have also decided that once the water scheme will function,



they will give in writing that they do not want the common pipeline that brings water from outside. That should be stopped. Once the village has its own system, people do not need the external supply.



Panchayat taking responsibility at Naranpar village

What can the village panchayat do to solve the drinking water problem of the village? How can panchayat help to sustain a scheme managed by the village? Many panchayat members and sarpanchs have these kinds of questions. But, if the determination to get work done and useful information were to come together, then the panchayat can play a big role in village development. That is how the Naranpar panchayat took initiative in solving the drinking water problem and give relief to the village.

The Naranpar village has about 700 people - mainly of the Darbar, Harijan and Bhatt communities. Agriculture and animal husbandry is main occupation of this village. Water supply is from the Vinjan group scheme. But the supply is not enough. So, for a long time, this village has been looking for ways to have its own water system. That is how with the help of VRTI the village came under the WASMO scheme. This provided them some facilities like water tank, pipelines to every household and tank to provide water for animals. The supply from the group pipeline was very irregular. But supply was not sufficient and they did not get a long term solution. In this situation the sarpanch of village decided to somehow find a solution. This was no easy task. But, not impossible. Planning a water scheme is not a small thing. It requires planning. Also, from where is the water going to come from? How to distribute it to each household? These were difficult tasks.

Panchayat and the village prepared a plan to construct a well 7 kilometer away from the village because one bore-well of nearby village, Dumara, was already there. It was felt that there will be enough water to supply even Naranpar from that place because sandstone is available. Furthermore, check dam built over Kankavati river passing near the site will also recharge bore well if constructed.

From where will the funds for all this come? The costs were very large: bore-well construction, motor and pipeline for seven kilometers - it may cost as much as Rupees Twelve to Thirteen Lakhs. But panchayat found a solution for it. Sarpanch knew that it is possible to get financial aid for development. Panchayat can get upto 33% grant for drinking water scheme under a provision. So the Sarpanch and panchayat made effort to get this grant. Panchayat has applied in the district panchayat and got positive



response for it. Inspired by all these developments, some well wishers in the area, also decided to provide financial support.

A 225 feet deep bore-well was constructed. The seven kilometer pipeline was laid out with the labour of villagers. People worked day and night. Sarpanch Batuk Singh says: "if we call anybody for labour from this village, he or she has to come without any excuse!" We worked a lot for over one and half month for this scheme. Like this scheme was formed and the grant was sanctioned, we also have hope to get other development grants.

This village thus got the water scheme by hard work, knowledge of the panchayat rules, information on government schemes and combining all this by a determined panchayat. Village has also formed rules and regulations to run this scheme. Both panchayat and water committee is working very responsibly. So there is a lot a panchayat can do! But it requires active sarpanch and the co-operation of people. It needs two hands to clap. When we claim our rights, then we have to bear the there responsibilities also.

Note: The use of groundwater for irrigation is causing rapid fall in the water table. The geo-hydrological conditions are such that this area needs urgent steps for recharging of the groundwater. If this is not done, there will be problems with the water quality.

Reviving Traditional Source.... Journey from Virda to Well (Nimanivandh village)

This village has no pipeline, no tank and no bus stand! Still Abdrehmanbhai, residing at Nimanivandh - declares: "Nobody will be as happy as us when it comes to water". This village shows that our assumptions could be proven wrong. Villagers are depending on traditional source, *Virda*, not tank or pipelines for water supply!

We are talking about Nimanivandh a coastal village located 25 km from Abdasa. They get water from '*Virda*' since last seven generations. The families are spread out over the village. The population is only 124. All are from 'Jat' (Muslim) community. There are about 120 cows and buffaloes. The main occupation is animal husbandry. In addition, they also undertake rainfed farming and fishing. We



are puzzled about how sweet water is found in this coastal area so close to the sea. On checking the geology, it is evident that this is possible because of the combination of sand and sticky clay layer that allows rainwater to accumulate. Grass also grows on the land providing fodder for animals.

With passage of time, there are changes in population and animal stocks. Now there are only four or five virdas in the village. When we asked Abdrehmanbhai about how the family-wise virdas were maintained, his reply is simple: "those who use are also responsible to manage it"

Now Panchayat is developing a common Virda to provide water for animals. A sub committee has been formed under panchayat under the 'SNEHAL' project supported by 'CARE' through VRTI. This committee will be responsible to maintain the 'virda'. This committee also has a responsibility for doing other water related work. Recently construction of one 'virda' was undertaken by the committee under Pani Thiye Panjo. VRTI is the local organization responsible for support. Sahjeevan is responsible to

giving a capacity building training to water committee.

However, the village is not capable to pay even a 10% contribution as cash. Now they have decided to contribute through labour - Sramdan. Each household pitches in to dig the well. The digging is as per traditional knowledge. But some efforts do not yield good water and they have to start again. Finally, the work is done and the construction begins to make permanent structures. The committee is procures the raw materials and hires construction expert. Committee is also keeping all records in a register of the details such as labour, inventory etc.



The villagers want to retain traditional 'virado' as their main source for drinking water. They are not giving priority to the modern systems. Instead they believe that 'Virado' is their own, and are proud of it. When they have own resource, why not be proud of it.?

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