

**Report on  
Strengthening water resources by improving governance of Panchayat level statutory bodies  
through active participation of youth.**

Submitted by:  
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## Acknowledgement

I am happy to share this one year report on our project namely “Strengthening water resources by improving governance of Panchayat level statutory bodies through active participation of youth” with financial support from IWP, New Delhi. As most of you are aware Yuva Gram VikasMandal (Yuva Gram) works in one of the most drought prone areas of India. The water is very scarce commodity here. Of 12 blocks of our operational Beed district, except 2 or 3 blocks, all other blocks in the district face acute water shortage even for drinking purposes. The irrigation is just around 12% as per government records but due to inconsistent rains, actual irrigation potential is hardly reached. On this background of the district Yuva Gram has been working in the in Beed district from 1984 in general and Kaij, Dharur and other scarcity blocks in particular to address the water issues concerning both drinking water and irrigation.

We have been in contact with IWP sharing our experiences on intervention on water issues over the past few years. From January 2022 onwards we have direct partnership with IWP through which we are working in 10 most drought prone villages in the district organising youth, local statutory committees concerning water, creating awareness amongst other stakeholders about the need and importance of addressing root causes of water scarcity and importantly mobilising resources from government and CSRs to create water conservation structures. The implementation processes, besides creating outcomes on the ground, have given us a number of positive learnings on working at various levels while working on the issues of water. The project have helped over 4000 population in drought prone block Kaij through various ongoing means to make the project villages water secured. The major outcome of the project is that our regular coordination with government on water issue and as a result of this the River Bobhati has been enlisted as one of the 90 rivers which state government has proposed to rejuvenate to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Indian independence.

My thanks are due to IWP who helped us financially and technically in execution of this project. We would not have been able to do much without their guidance and financial help. I am thankful to all villagers in 10 villages including Gram Panchayat elected members and youth who all actively participated in our project activities including helping us to promote Youth Groups in the villages and activating local statutory bodies. I would also like to thank participants of our various activities such as convergence workshops and stakeholders meeting which helped us to reach out our concept to a large number of similar minded persons, experts, students, media persons, government officials, local policy makers, NGOs, etc. in the district. Finally, last but not the least I would like to thank my team at Yuva Gram who all provided their honorary time in successfully carrying out all project activities and creating impact on the ground. My colleague Shri Santosh Repe coordinated the entire project and my acknowledgements cannot be completed without giving my special thanks to him on behalf of our Yuva Gram.

I thank you all and look forward to receiving the comments, inputs and observations on the report which we will definitely incorporate in our work.

I also take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy and fruitful New Year 2023.

H. P. Deshmukh  
Executive Secretary

## 1. Executive Summary:

Yuva Gram VikasMandal (acronym Yuva Gram) implemented a one year above titled project in 10 highly drought prone villages of Kaij block in Beed District of Maharashtra. Our operational area is known as a part of semi-arid zone of India which makes it highly prone to drought conditions and rain fed. Rural Communities especially from SC, ST, NT/DNT and other socio-economic backward castes communities. These communities face severe water shortage problems due to their socio-economic status (lower) in hierarchical and feudal rural society such as ours. With support from IWP we worked in 10 villages of Kaij block especially those villages which are located around the BobhatiRiver. The project focuses on organising local youth and Gram Panchayat level statutory bodies to address the water issues and make the villages water secured in long run. Our operational villages despite located on banks of the river, face severe shortage of water for drinking and irrigation purposes.

Implementing major activities such as Youth leadership training for village youth, Convergence workshops with government line departments and leaders of 2 Statutory Committees GPWSSC & WDC & Village Youth Groups and Block Level Stakeholders meetings with students, teachers/academicians, media, NGOs, watershed experts, environmentalists, Govt. officials & leaders of 2 statutory committees WSSC & WDC & Village Youth Groups, our team undertook regular follow up with government agencies to address the water scarcity issues.

The project helped us to map the present status of all defunct drinking and irrigation schemes in the 10 project villages which are located on both sides of the river Bobhati. Through this project we have been able to reach out to Ten (10) villages in Kaij block covering population of more than 4000 of the total population of 10,494 (2332 households) during the year.

As a result of implementing the project activities over a period of one year our major outcomes are:

- Trained Local leadership of 200 youth to address villages water issues and mobilization of government resources for the same
- A primary survey of status of water bodies, water supply and issues involved and discussed with WSD and WSSCs
- Activated and Capacitated WSD Committees and Gram Panchayat Water Supply and Sanitation Committees (GPSSSC) are now active and work with local/village Youth Groups addressing issues of water in their villages
- Regular meetings with administration for investment in water conservation schemes in 10 villages
- Enhanced awareness about water security which have motivated people to work on water issues now as they are now confident that water resources can be made sustainable
- Enhanced coordination with block and district concerned government departments especially related to water conservation, MGNREG, minor irrigation, etc.
- Submitted proposals to government and CSR worth Rs. 1.34 Crores for development of water bodies and some villages have received investment to construct / rejuvenate water bodies
- Due to advocacy efforts of Yuva Gram the Bobhati River in our operational villages has been included for *Rejuvenation by the state government as a part of its revival of 90 rivers in the state as a part of marking the 75<sup>th</sup> year of India's independence, This is one of the important achievements of Yuva Gram due to implementation of IWP project.*
- Met with Dy. Chief Minister of Maharashtra for development River basins on 3<sup>rd</sup> December at his office in Mumbai

The project has also given us motivation to work on rejuvenation of Bobhati River and we have committed the same to the villagers and communities around the river.

## 2. Project Background:

Yuva Gram implemented the one year project in 10 villages of Kaij block of Beed district which is known for its high proneness to drought conditions. Part of Marathwada region of the state of Maharashtra, the project villages/district is a part of Semi-Arid Zone of India facing harsh climatic changes over the past many decades causing serious harm to local flora and fauna biodiversity.

The State Action Plan on Climate Change (SAPCC) has predicted an increase in annual mean temperature between 1.2 – 1.5 oC by 2030, 1.8 – 2.1 oC by 2050 and 2.8-3.0 oC by 2070 in Marathwada. The small and marginal famers of proposed project block namely 'Kaij are facing livelihood vulnerability due to climate change impact forcing them to opt for high input cash crops for survival which have its own drawbacks both on life and local ecosystem. This situation demands here an appropriate resilient measures to avoid harsh vulnerable conditions for local people especially small and marginal farmers, landless, women, rural poor households who are facing acute shortage of water even for drinking purposes.

The area was selected for IWP Program intervention due to its semi-arid geo-hydrological features and climate change impacts which experience severe and recurrent drought conditions. Due to these features, the area here has been suffering from land erosion, ever decreasing ground level water, decline in agriculture yield, and erratic behaviour of monsoon, unseasonal rains, and hailstorms and so on. This results in huge out migration of labour force to rich sugarcane growing areas of western Maharashtra to work as harvesting workers or some casual labor work in industrial Cities and towns. One of the major reasons for migration amongst poor is the severe shortage of water for them, their cattle and whatever small piece of land and or absence of labour work due to lack of irrigation.

Our experience and analysis from time to time have revealed that the migrants largely included youth also – both male and female as they have major responsibility to earn for family. Due to this situation they're unable to contribute to the village development despite many of them are members of some of the statutory committees within Gram Panchayats. The poor performance of natural resources is one of the major reasons for their out migration. The performance of these resources can be improved by activating concerned committees at village level or Gram Panchayat.

In the absence of sufficient measures to address the issues of irrigation and drinking water at the level of government, there is need to activate government machinery on one hand and create awareness amongst communities to activate government machinery to establish their entitlements to basic survival need such as water or rather make their life and their villages water secured.

With this background in view Yuva Gram with is 25 plus years of experience in watershed programs decided to work in 10 villages to make them water secured by activating the water related governance system at village,, block and district level through active participation of local communities especially youth and create sustainable source of drinking water and irrigation.

For better impact of the project,Yuva Gram activated the Gram Panchayat level Watershed Development Committees (WDCS) and Water Supply and Sanitation Committees (WSSCs) along with organising local village youth in Village Youth Groups and mobilised resources from government and CSRs to create water resources for drinking and irrigation purposes in almost in all 10 villages. Appreciating its work and efforts on water, the district administration and the state government have nominated Yuva Gram Executive Secretary and one of the senior team members on rejuvenation of entire Bohati River under the state Program namely "ChalaJanuyaNadila" or Let's know Our River'. This state program is part of celebrating the 75th year of Indian independence under which 90 rivers in the state will be developed to rejuvenate them.

## **Objectives:**

**Following objectives were set to work on in 10 villages of Kaij block of the Beed district:**

1. Organize and train rural youth to improve governance and management of water system in rural areas
2. Improve performance of village statutory bodies such as Water Supply and Sanitation Committees and Watershed Committees to create sustainable water secure system for drinking and irrigation purposes
3. Facilitate coordination between village water committees' and government line departments to mobilize resources to make villages water secured.
4. Ensure young women participate in all decision making processes.
5. Sensitise diverse stakeholders such as school & college students, media persons, social clubs, other NGOs and environmental groups/experts about need of water security and adaptation measures.

### 3. Project activities descriptions:

Following activities were undertaken by Yuva Gram during the year 2022 to implement the above envisaged objectives:

- Youth leadership training: 3 trainings for 40 leaders from 10 villages (4 leaders per village trained)
- Convergence workshops (2) with government line departments and leaders of 2 Statutory Committees at Gram Panchyat level namely GPWSSC & WDC & community groups namely Village Youth Groups.
- Block level stakeholders meetings (2) - students, teachers/academicians, media, NGOs, watershed experts, environmentalists, Govt. officials & leaders of 2 statutory committees WSSC & WDC & Village Youth Groups.
- Follow up with government agencies
- Yuva Gram deputed its senior and technical staff – worked as volunteers

All activities were conducted as proposed with emphasis on creating local leadership, extensive dialogue with block and district level concerned government departments, strengthening & activating WCDs and WSSCs, mobilising resources for undertaking water conservation measures and also dialogue with other stakeholders such as academician, like minded NGOs, schools/colleges/students, media and local policy makers and subject experts in the water and farming sector. Regular contacts were maintained with government agencies

### 4. Details of Activities conducted:

#### 4.1. Youth Leadership Program

- i. **The first one day youth leadership Training** was organised on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2022 at Yuva Gram's Training Centre at ChincholiPhata near Kaij. 40 youth from 10 villages along with members of WASH committee participated. Three staff and trustees from Yuva Gram also participated. Schedule of the training was as given below:

Subject introduced	Resource Persons
Registration	Yuva Gram Team
Training background and introduction to Yuva Gram and project	Mr. H P Deshmukh, Yuva Gram Executive Secretary
Issues concerning drinking water and irrigation in rural parts of Marathwada, planning needed for water conservation practices and role of youth in rejuvenating the existing village resources and implemented schemes	Prof.NageshKarale (Geologist) Saraswati Senior College, Kaij (HoD – Geology)
Various program to increase the water level of village water resources	Mr.Parshuram Kulkarni, Secretary Nature Sanstha, Kalamb, District Osmanabad and a watershed expert.

Need of Capacity enhancement of Water, Sanitation and Health Committees of local Gram Panchayats	Prof.HanumantSoudagar – Shri BhausahebPatil B.Ed. College, Kaij. And a expert on water conservation.
Village water development and rejuvenation plans – Various components	Mr. H. P. Deshmukh, Yuva Gram Executive Secretary
Drought proneness, irrigation shortage and need of organic farming and rain fed agriculture	Mr. H. P. Deshmukh
Open discussion on the last two sessions	Prof.HanumantSoudagar
Thanks giving	Yuva Gram Team

The resource inputs given by subject experts are briefly presented below:



**Photo 1: Youth leadership training 27<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

Prof.NageshKarale: Youth have greater role to play in addressing or mitigating shortage of drinking water and irrigation and what plans could be prepared for the same. Prof.Karale explained the need of farmers to come forward to address the issues of irrigation for their farms. Given the climatic changes farmers need to try to increase the water levels in the farm/field. They need to adopt water conservation practices for the farms, storing rain waters in the farms/ wells and ponds to meet the need of irrigation.

Mr.Parshuram Kulkarni: Various watershed development activities and how to plan for the village, what are government schemes and the role of WASH committees in the village. Community participation is must to plan your own water supply and management for growing food and meet drinking needs. Never forget cattle, was also equally emphasised in planning.

Taluka Agriculture Officer (TAO) : Villager now need to go for such cereal and legume crops which need less water and which also meet the food need from your own farm. He provided practical experience of some farmers in some parts of Maharashtra and how farmers can adopt the same.





**Photo 2: Youth leadership training 22th April 2022.**

ii. **The second Youth Leadership Training Program** was organised at village Kevad in Kaij Block for youth from 10 project villages on 17<sup>th</sup> June. The schedule was as given below:

Subject introduced	Resource Persons
Registration	Yuva Gram Team
Purpose of training program and actions taken report after previous training in each village	Santosh Repe, Youth Organiser Yuva Gram
Village level water conservation measures with special reference to rainwater harvesting	Ms. Mali P.h. Agriculture Assistant, Dharur Block, District Beed
Importance of water resource management and water conservation methods.	Mr. H P Deshmukh, Yuva Gram Executive Secretary
Water conservation structures over natural water bodies such as small rivers and streams	Ms.Krantilkhe – water expert Geologist
Climate Change and its impact on water resources	Prakash Kale – Yuva Gram Agriculture and Climate resilient expert
Open discussion on the last two sessions	Facilitated by Mr. Kale and Mr. H. P. Deshmukh
Thanks giving	Yuva Gram Team

The training was participated by 59 participants comprising village youth leaders, WASH and water committee members besides elected Gram Panchayat members and frontline government officials such as Gram Sevaks, Patvari, teachers and PHC staff who all have one or other water related responsibility for the village.

The resource persons were from government departments and water experts from Beed district. A senior Yuva Gram staff who has been trained in Climate Change and agriculture resilient practices also provided inputs on solutions to safeguard the water resources from erosion, silting and maintenance. During this training emphasis was on rainwater harvesting, de-silting of water bodies and constructing new pucca structures on the streams and small rivers around the village. The exercise of mapping water resources was also discussed during the open session and inputs were given on collecting data on the same.

- iii. **The third Youth leadership training was organised on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2022** at village Aranwadi, TalukaKaij (one of the 10 IWP project villages). Thirty two (32) youth leaders from 10 project villages participated.

This training was organised after a series of meetings with youth groups, members of WDCs and WSSCs to review the issues involved in irrigation and drinking water schemes and applications submitted to various line departments for revival of the surveyed defunct or damaged schemes. Yuva Gram also discussed the use of water resource in the villages where it facilitated construction or rejuvenation of existing water conservation structures such as K.T. Weirs and Cement Nala Bunds (CNBs) and shared guidelines to form the Water Users Groups (WUGs).

Details of the training were as follows:

Subjects discussed	Resource Experts Subject	Methodology
Purpose and objective of the training program	Ms.Krantilkhe, Yuva Gram	Introduction
Issues faced by rural communities in Beed district concerning their drinking and irrigation water and the constructive role that youth can play in addressing them.	Mr. Sanjay Sarvade – a local water expert working on awareness and guidance in Marathwada on water issues.	input and question and answers
Rejuvenation of Bobhati River passing through the villages and how to access the available government schemes for the same .	<b>Mr. – Anant Jadhav</b> Asst. Engineer (Civil)Minor Irrigation Department – Kaij.	input and question and answers
Role that local statutory bodies namely WDCs and WSSCs can play in water conservation schemes and their capacity building to plan such interventions.	Mr.Nalvandikar - Asst. Engineer (Civil)Minor Irrigation Department – Kaij.	Input and question and answers
Drafting of Bobhati River Rejuvenation Plan and community participation	<b>Mr. H P Deshmukh, Executive Secretary Yuva Gram</b>	Facilitated discussion
Summary, follow up measures and thanks	Ms.AshwiniJadhav and Mr. Prakash Kale from Yuva Gram	Thanks and closure

**Mr. Sanjay Sarvade:** Importance of planning for the irrigation and drinking water in rural areas and role that young farmers can play in conserving the water in their own farms, village and in the vicinity. Mr.Sarvade suggested various methods of soil and water conservation during the monsoon for the villages in Beed district based on topography and its geo-physical topography.

Asst. Engineer (Minor Irrigation Department, Kaij Office): How to revive the water system in and around the river Bobhati. What are the possible schemes that villagers could propose and that

government can support and how to access them? The important aspect in the entire water conservation is the repairs of existing water structures such as CNBs and K.T. Weirs along with repairs of village wells and bore wells including desilting to increase the water storage. The river basin requires de-silting which will create significant source of water and increase water table of the villages on both sides of this small length river of 25 kilometres. He also suggested to use the agriculture implements in conserving rain water in the farms and wells. He suggested how to use government schemes under MGNREGS and Minor irrigation Department in this regard.

Mr.Nalvandikar, Asst. Engineer (also from Minor Irrigation Department, Kaij Office):He shared information on the important role that WDC and WSSC members have to play and government schemes available for their capacity building. He also emphasised on strengthening the committees and initiatives that the members need to take in accessing the government schemes and how to they can approach ZilaParishad for capacity building inputs.

Following the input sessions, Yuva Gram staff facilitated discussion on how to undertake planning for Bobhati River Rejuvenation Program and technical study that Yuva Gram wish to undertake to understand the potential for water conservation and its correlation with agriculture development. Discussion on drinking water schemes was also held and village wise and defunct scheme wise planning process was decided to be undertaken as a part of study.



Youth Leadership Training Program at village Aranvgaon, Kaij Block.

#### 4.2. Convergence Workshops:

- i. **The first convergence Workshop** was organized on 30<sup>th</sup> April at Yuva Gram's Training Centre. 42 participants comprising office bearers of statutory committees such as WSHCs, Watershed Development Committees, elected members of Gram Panchayats, Block Agriculture officer (TAO

as called locally), Block Development Officer (BDO), Village Development Officials (Gram Sewak), Taluka (Block) KrishiDoot, members of youth groups, experts from water sector from Beed and neighbouring districts were present. As proposed the focus of the discussion was on how to make village water secured through implementation of various government policies and programs? How to revive the existing defunct drinking water and irrigation schemes in this regard?

The following schedule was prepared and workshop was anchored by Executive Secretary of Yuva Gram Mr. H. P. Deshmukh.

Subject introduced	Resource Persons
Registration	Yuva Gram Team
Background and purpose of the workshop, introduction to Yuva Gram and project theme of IWP & GWP.	Mr. H P Deshmukh, Yuva Gram Executive Secretary
Capacity building of WASH and WDC to make water secured villages and hamlets.	Prof.HanumantSoudagar– Shri BhausahabPatil B.Ed. College, Kaij. Also a Social Worker and an expert on water conservation.
Role of WASH and WSD committees at the level of Gram Pachayat, block and district	Mr.VikasAmbure&Mr.VivekGadade: Technical Assistants at TalukaKrishi Office (AgriDept)
Government scheme for village level watershed development activities	Ms.SupriyaPalve
Watershed development and World Bank supported POCRA program of Agriculture Development and what role NGOs are supposed to play.	Mr.YogeshPatil and Mr.GnyneshwarJadhav (KrishiDoot at ATMA – Agri Dept.)
Drought proneness, irrigation shortage and need of organic farming and rain fed agriculture	Mr. H. P. Deshmukh, Yuva Gram
Facilitated open discussion between government officials and members of WASH, WSD and villagers	Mr. H. P. Deshmukh, Yuva Gram
Thanks giving	Yuva Gram Team

Brief about expert inputs given by Resource Persons and government officials:

Prof. Hanumant Saudagar: How to train committee members of WASH and WSD and plan Watershed development activities at village level. Role that these committees can play and train local youth in undertaking the soil and water conservation works to make water secure and water plus villages. What measures or activities could be taken to check run off of rain waters and Village level Waste Water Management activities and its conservation to increase water level of village.

Mr.Vikas Ambure and Mr.Vivek Gadade: Need and importance of WASH and WSD committees and what is their role and responsibility in ensuring smooth water supply for the village. How to access concerned government schemes. How to use MGNREGS for small scale water conservation activities

such as repairs or construction of small check dams, de-silting of water resources/wells, etc. need of plantation and its protection, biodiversity and water conservation – emphasis on local species of plants for village afforestation. Various measures to increase the ground water level in the village and the concerned conservation activities need to do around village.



Ms. Supriya Palve: Various government schemes available for soil and water conservation for the rural areas and how to access them.

Mr. Yogesh Patil and Mr. Gyneshwar Jadhav: Details of POCRA (the world bank aided state government program namely Project on Climate Resilient Agriculture implemented by Agriculture Department) and how to access its benefits at the level of village, What role NGOs such as Yuva Gram can play and using this program to make farming climate resilient.

Ms. Supriya Palve: Various government schemes available for soil and water conservation for the rural areas and how to access them.

ii. **Second Convergence Workshop** was organised on 22<sup>nd</sup> September for government officials and youth leaders and importantly members of WDC and WSSCs from all 10 project villages at Central village Varapgaon. Block Agriculture Officer, Block Development Officer (BDO), local revenue and Village Development Officials (Gram Sevaks), etc. also attended and provided their inputs. People working in water sector were also invited. Fifty four (54) participants including government officials were present. The details of the workshop are as follows:

Subjects discussed	tsSubject Resource Exper	Methodology
Introduction and purpose of the workshop	Santosh Repe from Yuva Gram	Introduction
Importance of active role of WDC and WSSC members and Yuva Gram initiatives in their capacity building	Mr. H P Deshmukh, Executive Secretary Yuva Gram	Facilitated discussion and need based inputs
Water Conservation, Government Policies and Programs and role of various government departments and local statutory bodies (WDC	Mr. Appasaheb Ugale, a social worker and head of Marathwada Gramin Vikas Mandal, Aurangabad	inputs Session and question and answers



and WSSCs)		
New POCRA Scheme of Maharashtra Government on climate resilient agriculture and how to access its benefits in adopting organic or climate resilient cropping system	BDO, TAO and Agriculture Department staff.	Input and question and answers
Accessing government schemes to develop land and water resources	Mr. H P Deshmukh, Executive Secretary and Ms. Krantilkhe of Yuva Gram	Facilitated discussion
Summary, follow up measures and thanks	Mr. Prakash Kale and Santoshe Repe, Yuva Gram	Thanks and closure



**Convergence Workshop**

Mr. Appasaheb Ugale, an experienced social worker who has devoted his life for water issues in Marathwada explained the need of people's participation in planning their own water conservation measures. He emphasised on local committees' active role in educating people about their role and government schemes that are implemented by concerned line departments. He shared some of the examples from Marathwada where such committees, NGOs and local communities have played an active role in securing their villages with water resource for round the year. He also pushed for constructive use of village waste water, its treatment and also how to go about harvesting of rain waters in the farms and water bodies in and around the villages.

The government officials informed about the various schemes available for irrigation through wells and repairs or construction of small water structures and agreed to their full cooperation. The POCRA scheme was also explained with a view to reduce chemical agriculture practices and adoption of climate friendly resilient cropping system.

Mr. H. P. Deshmukh while thanking all speakers, explained the initiatives taken by Yuva Gram in making the villages water secured. He also informed all participants that 3 more water structures are approved for repairs and across Bobhati river and the resources are given by an individual donor from the village who is settled in Metropolitan Pune.

### 4.3. Block Level Stakeholders Meetings

- i. **The first Block Level Stakeholders Meeting** was organised at Kaij on 10<sup>th</sup> May **with** a view to create wider awareness amongst general public, students, other NGOs, Media, etc. The meeting was attended and actively participated by 57 persons across students from schools and colleges, officials from Agriculture Departments, other NGOs, members of WASH committees from project villages, media, college academicians (teaching staff) and so on. The objective was also to introduce the micro-irrigation and cash crop management such as Sugarcane. It is generally believed that Sugarcane crop consumes huge quantity of water depriving other areas from their due share of water especially ground water. To speak on this, ex. Chairperson of local sugar factory was invited to orient participants on how to make judicious use of water resources for cash crops such as Sugarcane, Bananas, turmeric and create a water just environment in the area. The meeting was facilitated by our Executive Secretary Shri H. P. Deshmukh. The schedule and other details of the meeting are as follows:

Subject introduced	Resource Persons
Registration	Yuva Gram Team
Meeting background and introduction of the Yuva Gram and the project	Prakash Kale, Youth Organiser Yuva Gram
How to rejuvenate and develop village level water resources, equitable use of water for farming, micro-irrigation practices and role and responsibility of villagers and youth in sustainable use of water resources.	Prof. Ramesh Aadaskar, Ex. Chairperson of Amba Sugar Cooperative Society, Ambejogai District Beed.
Watershed Development is the key to develop water resources in drought prone areas and strategies to manage water resources.	Mr. H P Deshmukh, Yuva Gram Executive Secretary
Need of Capacity enhancement of Water, Sanitation and Health Committees of local Gram Panchayats	Prof. Hanumant Soudagar – Shri Bhausaheb Patil B.Ed. College, Kaij. And a expert on water conservation.
Watershed and water conservation – role of Gram Panchayat and WASH committees and villagers. How to create and manage the water resource in the village.	Prof. Nagesh Karale (Geologist) Saraswati Senior College, Kaij (HoD – Geology)
Open discussion on the last two sessions	Prof. Hanumant Soudagar
Thanks giving	Yuva Gram Team

**Prof. Ramesh Aadaskar, Ex. Chairperson of Amba Sugar Cooperative Society, Ambejogai District Beed:** Prof Aadaskar who was chairperson of a sugar industry earlier and presently one of the directors there, explained various reasons responsible for drying up of ground water, anti-environmental means used in exploiting this important ground water resource and dis-functioning or malfunctioning of government water infrastructure and what could be the solutions to address the

water needs? He explained the possible programs to reclaim the traditional water resources, conservation of rainwater in farms and on the village common lands, reviving natural water resources and importance of sustainable use of water resources by active involvement of people. The judicious use of water resource and management helps not only in increasing ground water level but also increases farm production which has its own benefits for small farmers and rural community in the entire village. He also argued for adoption of micro-irrigation practices as it would prove important strategy for sustainable use of this precious and increasingly getting scarce resource in the rain fed area such as Marathwada.

**Mr. H P Deshmukh, Yuva Gram Executive Secretary:** Sharing Yuva Gram experience in the area of Watershed Development and water conservation in Beed and Osmanabad districts, Mr.Deshmukh explained the scope of such activities in various parts of the Kaijblock which he said has tremendous potential to work on. With regards to IWP project villages, he said Yuva Gram will try to rejuvenate two small rivers namely Kevdi and Bobati by widening and de-silting their base to conserve sustainable water resource for irrigation and drinking water purposes. He further said, if done, the rejuvenated rivers will provide more than sufficient water to 5 project villages. He said, water has been the major issue of the Beed district and youth must use their energy to address it. Yuva Gram will stand strong with the youth groups. Work on water development will address their issues of poverty, irrigation, food and employment. He also gave examples of Osmanabad district where youth played a crucial role in watershed development activities.



***Photo: Block Level Stakeholders Meeting 10<sup>th</sup> May 2022***

**Prof.Nagesh Karale, Saraswati Senior College, Kaij (HoD):** Prof Karale explained various government programs concerning watershed development and water conservation and constructive role that WASH committees can play in securing water resource for the rural areas/villages. He expressed the need of strengthening Gram Panchayats and WASH committees as they are statutory and empowered bodies to plan water supply for the village.





**Photo: Block Level Stakeholders Meeting 10<sup>th</sup> May 2022**

Many college students and CSO/NGO representatives expressed their desire to work with Yuva Gram as volunteers and assist youth in developing their water resources in project villages. Media persons also informed that Yuva Gram work on water will be given due coverage in local media to promote understanding amongst people about ways and means of developing water resource which is prime need of Beed district.

ii. **Second Block Level Stakeholders meeting rather consultation** was organised on 28<sup>th</sup> August at 'Cultural Hall Chincholi Mali Taluka Kaij District Beed -431123 and was attended by over 58 participants from diverse background of youth leaders, college and school students/leaders, government officials, WDC, WASH and Gram Panchayat members from the 10 project villages. The consultation was addressed by government officials, subject experts and senior media experts. **As** one of the important activities under the project, the focus this time was given on impact of climate change issues on various sections of the society and need to make our life water secure especially the drought prone areas of the Beed district in general and Kaij Block in particular which is known for experiencing perennial drought conditions. The event was organised with following schedule:

Subjects discussed	Subject Resource Experts	Methodology
Introduction of the organisation and Event	Santosh Repe from Yuva Gram	Input session through PPT
Need and importance of Rain Water Harvesting and role of Gram Panchayats and youth groups in villages	Ms. Anjali Jagdev – Ambejogai Block Coordinator, Vasundhara Watershed Development Programme Unit, Pune	input and question and answers
Government programs and policies for water conservation on small local rivers Present Status of such –and tributaries water bodies, provisions for their repairs/ance and estimation for maintenance construction of new bunds.	Mr. –Civil Engineers –Anant Jadhav Minor Irrigation Department Kaij.	input and question and answers
How to –Rejuvenation of Bobbhati river proceed and what role Water Supply and	Mr. Vasant Jadhav, free lance journalist and a literate on Water	Input and question

nd WSD have to Sanitation Committee a play	issues in Beed distirct	and answers
Judicious use of water resources and efforts being made by Yuva Gram. What role each of us can play in making our block water secure	Mr. H P Deshmukh, Executive Secretary Yuva Gram	Facilitated discussion
Summary, follow up measures and thanks	Ms.SunitaVibhute, Yuva Gram	Thanks and closure

**The Agriculture and Water Management Trainer from Vasundhara Watershed Development Program of Government of Maharashtra, Ms. Anjali Jagdev** is responsible for training activities in Kaij block. On our invitation she provided details of need and importance of land and water management in the present and fast emerging climate change challenges. She emphasised on various measures that are required to conserve each and every drop of rain water in our farms and in the village.

In the specific context of 10 villages under IWP Yuva Gram in the vicinity of BobhatiRiver, she suggested that Yuva Gram and villagers should try for treating/rejuvenating each and every stream that is merging with the river and along with the catchment area treatment. This will provide water for both irrigation and drinking water. Secondly, farmers should also try for draining excess water from fields during monsoon to safeguard the crops from damaging due to heavy rains. This year due to heavy rains in parts of Kaij block crops in most parts are affected due to heavy rains and poor natural or available drainage in the farms.



**Photo 3: Stakeholders Meeting 28<sup>th</sup> August 2022**

She suggested to develop stony drains using slopes to drain the excess water and type of land preparation before monsoon cultivation season. She also explained various schemes available through her department for soil and water conservation and how farmers can access them. She appreciated the initiatives of Yuva Gram about water conservation measures undertaken by Yuva Gram on Bobhati River and some of the completed works on some bunds.

**Mr, AnantJadhav, Civil Engineer from Minor Irrigation Department, Kaij** headquarters, explained the various micro irrigation schemes available at his department. He also felt a need of rejuvenating

entire Bobhati River as the 13 water conservation (Cement Nala Bunds and KT Weirs) structures constructed from his department and other departments across the river are quite old – as old as 2008-09 and most of them are damaged. He further informed that as no catchment area treatment was done and no merging streams were treated the life of constructed structures is reduced by many years. Hence there is need of entire rejuvenation and catchment area treatment. He further informed that on the initiative of Yuva Gram his department has just completed rejuvenation works on 4 Bunds and 2 have been approved. These two will be repaired once monsoon rainy season is over. He thanked Yuva Gram for their initiatives and supporting his department in water conservation and promoting micro irrigation schemes of his programs in various parts of the Kaij block.

He also explained various government schemes available for micro-irrigation, construction of CNBs, KT Weirs and soil and water conservation measures through his department.



**Photo 4: Stakeholders Meeting 28<sup>th</sup> August 2022**

**Mr. Vasant Jadhav, a senior Journalist with special interest in Watershed Development** informed about the making the Bobhati River and replicable model for the water security of the villages. He said he has been following up with various sites in the block and district for watershed development especially for water conservation measures with various government departments. He informed that he will work closely with Yuva Gram to ensure the rejuvenation of Bobhati River including catchment area treatment for permanently addressing the drought in 17 villages around both sides of the Bobhati river vicinity.

**Mr. H.P. Deshmukh, Executive Secretary of Yuva Gram,** expressed need of introduction micro irrigation measures such as drip and sprinkling irrigation in perennially drought prone blocks such as Kaij which is one of the worst affected in past few decades due to increasing climate change impacts. He explained how land, water, pastures, cattle and livelihood based on these resources are affected. He analysed how rejuvenation of Bobhati river and treatment of its stream will recharge water bodies such as wells, bore wells, ponds, etc. will meet not only the irrigation and drinking water needs but would also improve soil quality and hence the crop production.

## 5. Outputs & Outcomes

- Local leadership of 200 youth comprising one Youth Group each with membership of 20 male and females is operational in each of 10 project villages providing local leadership to communities address villages water issues and mobilization of government resources for the same
- Basic survey of status of water bodies, water supply and issues involved there in to revive the same was conducted and discussed in all village level meetings and also with WSD and WSSCs
- Activated and Capacitated WSD Committees and Gram Panchayat Water Supply and Sanitation Committees (GPSSSC) are now active and work with local/village Youth Groups addressing issues of water in their villages working hard on issues involved in present drinking water and irrigation related schemes across Bobhati River along which the project villages are located.
- Regular meetings with administration for investment in water conservation schemes in 10 villages
- Enhanced awareness about water security motivated people to work on water issues now
- Enhanced coordination with block and district concerned government departments especially related to water conservation, MGNREG, minor irrigation, etc.
- Submitted proposals to government and CSR for development of water bodies and some villages have received investment to construct / develop water bodies (table of investment and type of water conservation structure is given below).
- From inception of IWP project, Yuva Gram mobilized from government departments some resources to repair the damaged defunct water conservation structures in the 10 project villages. Yuva Gram and village Youth Groups though Gram Panchayat have followed up to mobilise resources for water conservation activities in the villages. The details of the same are as follows;

Water conservation Activity particulars	Name of village in Kaij block	Investment Rs.	Name of agency involved
Repairs of damaged earthen bund	Kaprevadi	Rs. 600,000	JalsandharanVibhag (Agriculture Dept.
Repairs of old Bund across local river	Varapgaon	Rs. 16,00,000	JalsandharanVibhag (Agriculture Dept.
Repairs of old Bund across local river	Belgaon	Rs. 12,00,000	JalsandharanVibhag (Agriculture Dept.
Construction of 3 New KT Weirs	Kevad	Rs. 80,00,000	A village well wisher from Mumabi provided the grant to villagers as a social commitment.
Construction of 1 New KT Weir	Hadgaon	Rs. 60,00,000	JalsandharanVibhag (Agriculture Dept.
Village Pond de-silting and deepening	Sangvi	Rs.3,50,000	JalsandharanVibhag (Agriculture Dept.
Village Pond de-	Kelgaon	Rs.2,30,000	JalsandharanVibhag



silting and deepening			(Agriculture Dept.
Village Pond de-silting and deepening	Kevad	2,00,000	JalsandharanVibhag (Agriculture Dept.
Village Pond de-silting and deepening	Varapgaon	1,50,000	JalsandharanVibhag (Agriculture Dept
A large dug well and water supply pipeline for 1.5 kilometer	Varapgaon	Rs.500,000	Mr.Nandkumarkhandare – a villager and retired Vice-President of Ashok Leyland Company. Donated to village at the behest of Yuva Gram out of his social commitment towards his fellow villagers.



The repaired Village Tank at village Sangvi



## Monitoring of repairs of river bund on river Bobhati at village Dhoka

- *Rejuvenation of Bobhati River – preparations: With the state government announcing the revival of 90 rivers in the state including the River Bobhati in our operational area to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> year of India's independence, we are now concentrating on taking the rejuvenation process forward at the level of communities and the district administration. We are happy to report that the Yuva Gram IWP Project, the 10 intervention villages are also located on both banks of River Bobhati and Yuva Gram Executive Secretary Shri H.P Deshmukh and its Senior Coordinator Shri Santosh Repe are nominated as Sentinel Members of district river rejuvenation committee headed by District Collector. This is one of the important achievements of Yuva Gram due to implementation of IWP project.*
- **Meeting with Dy. Chief Maharashtra Maharashtra for development River basin:** A NGO delegation of 3 leaders including our Executive Secretary Shri Deshmukh met Hon. Dy. Chief Minister of Maharashtra Shri DevendraJiFadanvis on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2023 and informed him about selection of their NGOs in rejuvenating rivers in Maharashtra and what sort of policy state government need to adopt to work together to ensure drinking water and irrigation water through the rejuvenation process.

<p>Meeting with Hon. Dy CM Maharashtra on water issues and rejuvenation of rivers</p>	<p>Meeting with official of NAM Foundation</p>

Dy.CM has assured full support to all participating NGOs and informed that regular meetings will be held with NGOs and administrators to monitor the progress of the proposed ambitious program of the state namely 'ChalajanuYaNadila' (Lets understand our rivers). He appreciated the memorandum from Shri Deskmukh and other colleagues from NGOs.

## 6. No. of People (men & women) benefitted from the Project activities:

### Direct and indirect Beneficiaries:

- Youth: 200 through training (127 male and 73 female)
- WDC and WSSC members through meetings and trainings: 140 male and female villagers who are members of this committee
- Over 300 other stakeholders through convergence workshop and Stakeholders Meetings
- Villagers through water conservation activities benefitted are as follows:

Village Name	Population	
	Male	Female
Arangaon	646	530
Belgaon	441	337
Bhopala	326	266
Doka	616	504
Dongaon	524	428
HanumantPimpri	735	601
JadhavJawala	742	606
KalegaonGhat	1243	1017
Kaprewadi	273	223
Kelgaon	240	196
	<b>5786</b>	<b>4708</b>

## 7. Conclusions and Recommendations

The project has been implemented as per the approved objectives and activities by the IWP. Although the project budget outlay was very small, the contents were found very rich in terms of reaching out to water scarce areas of drought prone and semi-arid areas of Maharashtra. There are number of outputs and outcomes at the level of organising youth, statutory bodies and communities and mobilising resources from government and CSRS to address water scarcity in 10 project villages to some extent but the major outcome of the project from our point of view is inclusion of river Bobhati in the government list to rejuvenate it fully over the next 10 years. This we could do because of learning from the project which we used to lobby and advocate with government to include the river Bobhati around which the IWP project villages are inhabited.

We will be continuing out work on water issues with special reference to following areas:

- Regular meetings with various government departments to prepare a development plan for Bobhati River.

- Mobilise Resources from the CSRs for the various development activities as a apart of river revival program
- Activate government machinery to realize the planning for the rejuvenation of the River Bobhati and importantly create sustainable water resources for the villages around the river.
- Continue seeking guidance, technical and financial support from IWP in taking our work to its logical conclusion

In recommendation, we would like to suggest and request to IWP to increase the review the frequency of reports to IWP from partners. Six monthly or quarterly reporting would be better as such duration of reporting can capture some project progress and upward processes. The monthly reporting of a small project appears little bit burdensome. Not to take this recommendation in negative sense but this is just to help partner implement project for 3 to 6 months so that they can capture the project processes and achievements in a more tangible manner and report the same.

H. P. Deshmukh  
Executive Secretary  
Yuva Gram VikasMandal, Kaij  
Kaij/29/01/23

Santosh C Repe  
Administration - Yuva Gram