

# Victory over Drought through Watershed Initiatives

*An English Translation of Eenadu Local (Telugu) Newspaper published on 22 January 2016 on the Impact of Farm Ponds in Adilabad (WDF Watersheds) by Ms. Anitha Reddy Vustela, Program Officer (Research and Knowledge Management Consultant), WASSAN / January 25, 2016*

Average rainfall of Adilabad District is 1157mm. More than half of the rainfall is draining in to oceans. According to the statistics there are 119.40 TMC of water is available in Adilabad District, only 74.212 TMC of water is being utilized. With the resources available in the District there is a lot of scope for the construction of new water storage tanks and ponds. Due to less storage and more draining of rainwater tanks, rivers and ponds are drying.

## Upcoming Risks

Climate change is leading to risk for the forthcoming years. Due to uneven rainfalls rainwater is not sufficient and randomly groundwater availability will also reduce. As there is an excess rainfall in previous year underground water level reached to 3.26mt. Previous year underground water level reduced to 8.23mt. In 28 mandals underground water level reduced to 10 mt so there exists a risk of excess fall of underground water in summer season.

Rainfall rate falls down in Anantapur district. Irrigated land reduced. Agricultural production reduced. Cultivation in Rabi season totally stopped. In these critical situations, watershed initiatives done for storing water have benefited people. Some of the farmers easily overcome from drought. Due to water storage and ground water recharge Irrigation problems in some of the villages are reduced. Watershed works are benefiting the villages and serving as a role model in solving the problems of farmers. On the other hand giving importance to water storage activities central government thinking of prompting watershed activities in villages through Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY). For the progress of this PMKSY necessary resources were allocated for the district. In this situation News today has captured the special focus on watershed activities and the development taken place through these activities.

## Local resources

To develop the tribal villages in Anantapur district particularly concentrating on agriculture NABARD has started watershed initiative. Previously there exists a problem of water scarcity for both drinking and Irrigation. To overcome these situations and change the present Scenario

NABARD has provided financial support for watershed activities in 9 mandals, 120 villages and 30,000 hectares of land in Anantapur district. Under this process NABARD has Sanctioned 31.65 crores. In Indravelli and Utnuru mandals a NGO named SIS, in Kautala, Gudihatnuru mandals DHAN foundation, in Bhajarhatnur SURE, in Narnoor mandal CCD, in Kubiru and Tanuru mandals CRD, in ashidabad APMSS has done the implementation works regarding water storage. These NGOs apart from implementation will also look after the Maintenance of the activities and Equal allocation of resources, mobilizing farmers in these activities, creating awareness among people, etc.

## Overcoming the Issue with Peoples Participation

NABARD with people's participation started water resources development activities in villages.

Due to this wage opportunities were created to labours and also scheme objectives were fulfilled. Apart from solving the problems of water availability, a solution for water wastage is also created along which groundwater level also increased. For storing the flowing water which is draining along the stones are saved in



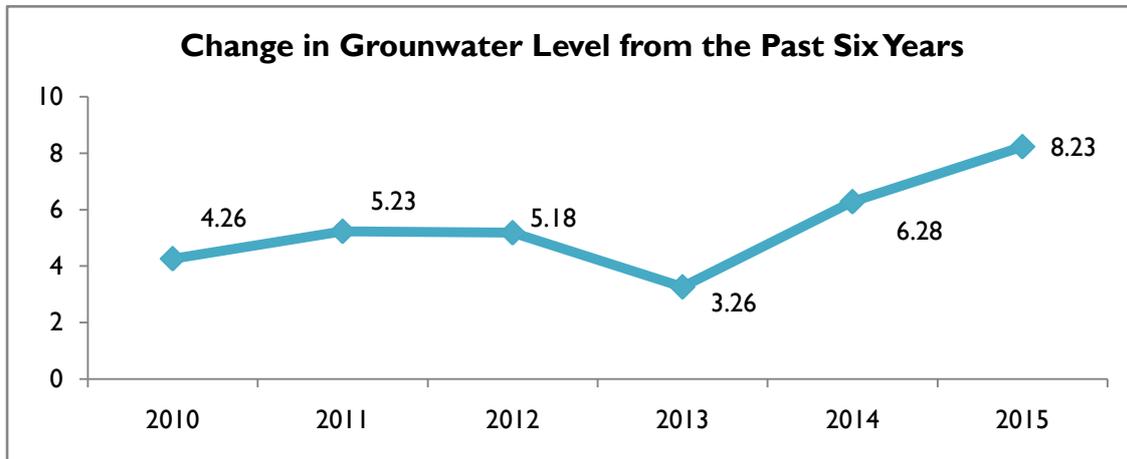
newly constructed kuntas for ground water recharge. Establishment of watershed committees in each village, timely allotment of resources, peoples participation, regular monitoring all these factors lead to the successful and efficient use of resources.

In Utnuru Mandal, Chintakara village land is not suitable for irrigation and all the agricultural fields were covered with stones and rain water drains without any use. Under the Watershed program all the stones in fields are removed and contracted stone walls for storing rainwater. People started cultivating in their fields from past two years after the watershed initiatives and many of them are benefited with better income.

In Bhazar Hatnur Mandal, Rampur Village watershed activities brought the drastic changes in Irrigation. A farmer named vasantaravu stored rain water along his field due to which his uncultivable four acres land changed in to cultivable land. He is benefited by cultivating



onions, coriander and other vegetables crops with the utilization of stored water. Slowly lands besides vastantaravu's fields also become cultivable land. People started pulling water through oil engines for their fields with mutual understanding and they are also benefited. Apart from these water level in wells are increased and all the local people are benefited.



**Example - 1:** Jadi Laxman belongs to Kautala Mandal, Balajianukoda village in Anantapur District. He is holding a land of 2 acres in his own village. Previously water scarcity dragged him back from cultivation. Later after the Initiative of watershed program water storage capacity increased, as water is available he is cultivating two different crops in his 2 acres of land.



**Example - :** In kuntala mandal balaji anukoda farmer used to cultivate in only 1 acre when there is rain. He constructed a farm pond near to his field due to which he is cultivating 3 seasons in 2 acres of land and his crop productivity also increased.



**Example - 3:** Sidam Nagaravu lives in Utnuru Mandal Motiguda village. Before the construction of watershed activities he used to cultivate Cotton with less productivity. Later crop duration and productivity increased he is getting an outcome of 2 to 3 Quintas more than previous years due to availability of water in wells.



## **Better management of water resources leads to success**

“Water resources storing and utilization done under watershed activities are giving good results. Due to efficient water storage in nine districts groundwater level has increased. Particularly farm ponds created opportunities to people to cultivate in un irrigated land. For fore coming years central government had taken the new initiative for water storage and management. Under this central government asked for the priority areas for the initiatives. Sooner these initiatives will start in field”  
– Said by Srikanth Purohit, NABARD DDA.

## **Initiatives through community Involvement**

“Peoples participation helps for the success of this initiative. During the first phase of construction many farmers rejected construction of farm ponds. Inspite some farmers came forward constructed farm ponds and as a result they are benefited. This encouraged other farmers to construct farm ponds. Due to water storage facilities ground water level is increased and randomly people are benefited. Water shed activities also curried migration issue. Collaborate working of Public and Government leads to the timely completion of project and good results.” Said by ChandraMohan

## **Farmers got benefited**

“Watershed activities benefited farmers. Previously it’s very hard to cultivate and get productive income at least for one acre of land. But the scenario changes people started cultivating in their own lands sue to which migration also stopped. Many farmers are cultivating 2 to 3 crops in a year due to this water storage facilities.” Said by Shakeel Khan Watershed Committee convener.