

RAIN DROP ASSOCIATION / YEAR 2010 – 2011

Summary: In order to ease the stress of drought on the rural communities of Bargarh, India the Rain Drop Project aims to reintroduce traditional rainwater harvesting methods and to reforest the area, through participative community action.

Index

WHO ARE WE?1
Rain Drop's ID2
The President's Words
Rain Drop in Numbers
Our Values4
Rain Drop in France5
Partners and Networks5
OUR ACTIONS6
Field Studies7
Awareness Campaigns10
Natural Resource Management Workshops12
Rain Water Harvesting and Reforestation15
CONCLUSION19
Annex 1: Profile Details22
Annex 2: Myth from the Kena Upanishad (v. 3,1 – 4,3) and adaptation23



WHO ARE WE?

Rain Drop's ID

Creation: 02 March 2010 in Paris

Adress Change: 23 December 2010 in Grasse

Years of existence: 1 year and a half

Headquarters :

9 Traverse du Chemin de la Coste d'Or Supérieur 06130, Grasse, France

Contact :

Telephone : 04. 93. 36. 23. 23 Fax : 04. 92. 92. 04. 62 E-mail : raindrop.info@gmail.com Website : www.rain-drop.org

SIRENE :

Identifiant SIRET : 529 644 502 Code APE : 94 99 Z Identifiant SIREN : 529 644 502 00013 Déclaré le 18 Janvier 2011

Bureau :

President: Alexis Roman Secretary: Thomas Bourgeois Treasurer: Antonelio Leone



The President's Words

It is a great honour to present to you our first activity report. The Rain Drop Association was officially declared at the Paris Prefecture of Police on March 2, 2010. On December 23, 2010, however, the headquarters was moved to Grasse.

The Association was created following a direct request from the villagers of Bargarh, Uttar



Pradesh, India. During a visit in 2009, the people repeatedly expressed their despair due to the recurrence of drought. I especially remember a deeply moving moment when the villagers showed me a dry well. As we were leaving the village, I heard a woman cry out in Hindi: "Help us, we are dying". That was the turning point. I knew that it was in Bargarh that our action would start.

This first year marked our entry into the international development scene. Therefore, we had to dedicate much of our time to establishing our presence in the development community and to look for the resources necessary to implement the project.

However, it was clear from the start that Rain Drop was first of all an association that aims at action. In response to a concrete request, we wanted to provide concrete help. Not having found outside financial and human resources for the project, we began with money from our own pockets and invested our own time.

Although these factors could limit the scope of certain actions, our accomplishments are all the more appreciable.

Rain Drop in Numbers

14 members
1 permanent volunteer
5 temporary volunteers
4000 euros (USD 5 600) budget
2 pilot projects initiated with 2 villages in 2010
500 Indian villagers mobilised

Our Values

Vision

> Human activities are in symbiosis within the local and the global ecosystems.

Mission

- Encourage the restoration of damaged ecosystems while meeting basic human rights and needs.
- > Research techniques and methods to integrate human activities in the environment.
- Sensitize the general public on water and ecosystem management in order for the necessary changes for a truly sustainable development to occur.

Innovativeness of our approach

- Work in isolated areas and with marginalized groups: We seek to assist those who depend the most on nature's services for their survival, the rural poor, especially those who live in isolated areas with little exterior support to tackle environmental degradation. In Bargarh, SSA (Sarvodaya Sewa Ashram), our local partner, is the only actor working with the local population (85% lower casts and tribal groups).
- <u>Respond to a local demand</u>: It is important for us to act only when asked. During a visit to Bargarh in 2009, the villagers made a direct request to us to help them tackle the problems of recurring drought. We were also called upon by the director of SSA, who admitted lacking the required capacity to deal with environmental issues.
- <u>Use of local resources and techniques</u>: In order to ensure the project is adapted and replicable, we use local materials for constructions, indigenous plants for reforestation, and traditional know-how for its implementation. It is important that the people regain confidence in their own culture and way of life. Therefore, through this project, we aim at improving the status of traditional knowledge among people. Of course, modern inputs are used whenever appropriate.
- Active community participation: The conception, implementation, management, monitoring and maintenance of the project are done with the direct participation of the villagers. Moreover, we take the time to work with them, live with them and share their daily concerns. Only through understanding the local villagers, can we build upon local knowledge and capacities.
- Holistic approach: Ecosystems being complex organisms, we simultaneously engage in issues related to the environment (water, reforestation, biodiversity) and also related to human beings (agriculture, food security, income). Moreover, though the implementation of the project takes place in marginalized areas of India, our action touches a larger public through our awareness campaigns in urban centers both in India and Europe.

Rain Drop in France

Bureau :

President: Alexis Roman Secretary: Thomas Bourgeois Treasurer: Antonelio Leone

Members:

Ms. Emeline Diaz Mr. Yoanne Urtizberrea

Partners and Networks

France

Mairie de Grasse France Volontaire PS-Eau (network) Trees & Life (NGO) WeForest (NGO)



Working in groups of two, the villagers take about 4 to 5 days to produce a pile of sand equivalent to Rs. 500 (8 Euros/ \$US 11). Women and children work as much as men. Mr. Kirti Durelle

- Ms. Charlotte Izard
- Mr. Mathias Namanovichi
- Ms. Aurélie Cadier
- Mr. Alexandre Levigne
- Ms. Alessia Bertolli
- Ms. Jennifer Liniger
- Mr. Stephane Crayne
- Ms. Géraldine Chaneac

India

French Embassy SSA (partner NGO) Mao Bloc (local gov.) State Horticulture Department Rae Beireli University Tarun Bharat Sangh (NGO) Navdanya (NGO)

Whenever drought strikes, the villagers have no other choice then to take to breaking stones manually to make silica sand. Not only is this work under-paid, but also causes respiratory problems and joint pains.





OUR ACTIONS

Field Studies

First contact and preliminary survey

Though September 2010 marks the official debut of the project, the first contacts with the villages of Bargarh and SSA began with three visits between September 2009 and December 2009. Until September 2010, general research was made on the Bundelkhand region, the changes in its ecosystem, and the situation of its population. This helped us formulate the basic structure of the project.



Last vestige of the dense forest that Bargarh once was, now transformed into a semi-desert.

September 2010 to December 2010: In-depth study

As a newly created organization in a foreign country, India, we were required to establish our presence among the national and regional authorities, as well as other civil society members and French institutions in India.

Contacts in Delhi

During our first month in India, we concentrated our efforts to identify key players in Delhi. We got in touch with various civil society members, NGOs such as Navdanya, the Clinton Foundation, FORCE, and universities, and got acquainted with Professor Babu of the Delhi University and Professor Ramakrishna from JNU University. We also met officers of the French Embassy, including Mr. Benjamin Gestin, and private players such as the director of Veolia Waters in India.

The main objective was to explore partnership possibilities, but we also aimed at establishing a network of contacts.

Results:

Among the fruitful contacts we made, Professor Ramakrishna of JNU has been a particularly enriching and useful acquaintance, having led us to Professor Anil and Professor Tunira, both of whom have since assisted the implementation of the project.

The support and advice of M. Gestin of the French Embassy has been and continues to be a precious help.

Settling of the Rain Drop team in Bargarh and the visits to the villages:

Directed by Alexis Roman, the Rain Drop team established its presence in the village of Bargarh. We then visited many additional villages in order to identify two key villages for our pilot projects.

Selection of 2 villages for the pilot project: Chetteni and Singasrot

SSA, our local partner, helped us select the pilot villages based on their strategic location, number of inhabitants and the demands and needs of the villagers. We identified Chetteni and Singasrot. The former is situated on the main road connecting the cities of Allahabad and Chitrakoot, and the latter at the source of a drying stream.

Discussions with the villagers and other key actors

Many community meetings and informal discussions were held with the population of each village. In order to share their lives and to gain a better understanding of the rural life in India, we personally went to live among them. We met with regional authorities including the Superintendent of Police, the Rural Development Officer, and the Forest Department, and national authorities including the India National Grassland and Fodder Research Institute, the Indian National Agro-Forestry Research Institute, the Department of Science and Technology of the Central

Government, and a member of the Ministry of Environment. Finally we also made sure to meet the other NGOs working in the region or in



Community meeting under the Chetteni village main tree.

similar fields including Development Alternative, CRS, Navdanya and Child Fund India.

Precision of the strategy: Rain Water Harvesting and Reforestation:

It was soon clear that the most urgent need was water. We could see from our preliminary research that seven consecutive years of drought, irregular monsoons and the drying up of wells, rivers and lakes had a drastic impact on a population that depends almost entirely on rain water to sustain agriculture. Therefore, we decided to build rain water harvesting structures, a traditional Indian method that is still used to good effect in many regions such as Rajasthan and Bengal.

Deeper research into the causes of drought led us to an interesting track. The elders of the village gave us an account of the changes in the ecosystem in the recent decades. Their observations revealed a correlation between the depletion of the forest cover, the irregularity of monsoon, and the decrease in rainfall. This was important information, which not only gave us a wider perspective of the ecosystem, but also reaffirmed the observation of Ms. Cindy Morris, of the French research institute in I' INRA, in Avignon, who is currently studying the relation between forest cover and rainfall. According to her research, the Ice Nucleation Active bacteria in trees cause the water droplets in the clouds to freeze at warmer temperatures. In warm regions such as Bargarh, the bacteria favor precipitation during the summer. The villagers often talk of rain clouds passing without the rain falling. One possible explanation would be deforestation. Therefore, it was jointly decided by the villagers, SSA and Rain Drop to reforest the area. Other than increasing the quantity of water on the surface and in the aquifers, reforestation helps improve the Rain Water Harvesting Structures because trees prevent the soil erosion that

often clogs them. Trees and also improve water absorption by the soil, and the overall humidity level thus increases.

Writing of the project's detailed implementation strategy

Supplementary information gathered in the last 4 months has led us to modify and clarify our project.

Constituting a local team



From left to right: Santosh Soni (Field Assistant), Abhimanyu Singh (Secretary and Director of SSA), six women from the Chetteni village with their representative Shanti, Alexis Roman (Director of the Rain Drop Project), Babu Lal (village representative) Professor Professor Anil, Tunira (Experts in ecosystem restoration), Jeff Freeman (Volunteer). See Annex 1 for profiles.

December 2010 to January 2011 - Meeting key actors in France

Returning to France, we sought to find support for our project in our region as well as among private groups such as the Veolia Foundation, the Ensemble Foundation and Good Planet. We also got in touch with the Centre de Jeunesse de la Mairie de Grasse as well as the PACA region. We also contacted actors in the fields of water and reforestation such as PS Eau, Weforest and Trees & Life.

Awareness Campaigns

 1^{st} February to the 31^{st} of March 2011

Our awareness campaigns consist of conveying, through traditional methods, the message of respect for Nature along with other information relating to the functioning of the ecosystem.

Singasrot Village:

- Community Meetings
 - Discussions on the causes of the drying-up of the stream.



- Analysis of the major causes lack of stream maintenance and deforestation.
- Creation of a water management council.
- \circ Discussion of an action plan de-silt the river and plant trees.
- Tree Puja
 - The tree ceremony is a traditional practice in India.
 - $\circ~$ It consists of paying tribute to the deities of Nature.
 - \circ It is a way of connecting to Nature and through Nature, to the Sacred.



 17 women participated
 34 people assisted including members of the village, the NGO and of the local government The women in the village of Singasrot believe in the power of Nature and are conscious of man's place in its working. No project could be successful without Nature's blessing.



Desilting of the dried up river. The earth dug out is put at the feet of the tree, to cover its exposed roots.

Chetteni Village

- Community Meeting:
 - Exchange of information on the causes of environmental degradation deforestation and unregulated use of water,
 - o Explanation of the functioning of the ecosystem,
 - Finding suitable solutions;
- Traditional Myth:
 - Use of a traditional myth from the *Kena Upanishad*, one of the founding texts of Hinduism, around which we prepare the activities.
 - The myth expresses the relation between Uma, the Goddess of Nature, Agni (Fire), Vayu (Wind) and Indra (Rain). See Annex 2 for the myth.



Drawing sessions were held for children between the ages of 5 to 9 years. The themes covered were related to nature and mythology.

- 23 children participated
- 1 hour of drawing per day
 - during 7 days

Children between 10 to 15 years took part in a play which was presented to the village.

- 29 students participated
- 3 to 4 hours of rehearsal per day during 2 weeks





In order to transmit respect for the environment and its ways of functioning, we engaged directly with the villagers. We drew from the richness of their own culture, through adapted and engaging methods, to deliver the message.

Natural Resource Management Workshops

20 March 2011 to 31 May 2011

Vermicompost

To improve the quality of traditional compost (composed mainly of cow dung) we experimented with vermicompost, which consists of adding earth worms to the cow dung to increase its fertility. Professor Tunira of the Rae Bareilly University, an expert in vermicompost, came personally to participate in those workshops.



The young men of the village in front of the worm pit.

However the help of other members of the community is also welcome.



Villagers look at the worms both amused and disgusted.

Youngsters aged between 15 and 24 years were engaged in this workshop. We hope that these representatives of the active future generation will make these techniques (which are new to them) a common practice.



The children infused joy and motivation with their participation

Once the vermicompost is ready, it would be subjected to scientific experiments in the village. Two samples of the same variety of plant, one cultivated with vermicompost and the other with cow will compared. This dung, be demonstration aims at convincing the of effectiveness of villagers the vermicompost and to encourage its use.

Monitoring of Natural Resources

It is difficult to observe and document the magnitude of environmental changes without careful monitoring. These changes occur over several years, varying greatly with the seasons. They were well noticed by the village elders, but they brought about no mobilization. We organized workshops to monitor natural resources so that the villagers can better notice the changes in the environment from one year to another. During 12 sessions we trained six young men of the village to make a scientific observation of three natural elements: air, soil, water.

<u>Air</u>



Explaining the device under the thatched roof of a hut in the month of May under a temperature of 45° C with less than 20% humidity.

<u>Soil</u>

We then measured the quality of soil at the spot dedicated to planting trees. PH, conductivity, rate of organic carbon, potassium, phosphorous, and nitrogen were measured by the villagers under our supervision.



With the help of an electronic device, we taught them, firstly, to measure temperature and humidity in the air, at one spot. (For this purpose, we used a spot near the Rainwater Harvesting Structure).



Measuring the levels of nitrogen in the soil between two sacred trees.

CONCLUSION:

Without use of pesticides or chemical products the soil maintained good quality naturally. The only problem was lack of adequate moisture.

A child measures the Ph levels of the soil.

<u>Water</u>

We measured the quality and quantity of water in the village wells. The water from these wells is used for personal hygiene, the washing of clothes and utensils and for drinking. We measured the temperature, PH, the amount of dissolved oxygen, nitrate, phosphorous, chlorine, fecal matter (none was present) and fluorine.

Water was of good quality apart from its turbidity (opacity of water) which was higher than recommended.



Villagers gathered under the sacred tree waiting for the well water test results.



Little girls concentrating hard on their rain gauges.

After discussion, we found that the problem was due to the meager quantity of water in the wells. Buckets caused damage to well walls and floors. This increased the amount of soil in the water. Water was found at 1.35 meters from the bottom of the well. Many villagers complained of stomach disorders, but nothing could be done other than to wait for the monsoon and to take precautions with the buckets.

With help from the village children, we built our own rain gauges from discarded plastic bottles, a ruler and gravel.



Construction of 5 rain gauges

Rain Water Harvesting and Reforestation

1st May 2011 to 31st July 2011

Drought is the main challenge faced by the villagers of Bargarh. Two centuries of deforestation have transformed the area, once a thickly-wooded forest, into a semidesert. In order to reverse this drastic change, we have put in place a three part strategic plan to help the poorest of the population.

On the short term, we build ponds to store rain water. At medium term, our plan is to plant fruit bearing trees to ensure food security and to diversify the means of revenue of the people. Finally at long term, we plan to bring about reforestation in the area and regenerate the ecosystem.

Construction of Rain Water Harvesting Structures

During the dry months, from April to the end of June, the village men work in open mines, breaking stones manually. Therefore, we proposed to employ them to help digging the ponds.

We studied the land inclination and soil composition with the help of villagers and experts in order to determine the most suitable catchment area.



Beginning of work under the heat of May

After the Puja (= ceremony) was conducted for good omens, the work started. We provided the workers with shovels, pickaxes and other materials that they could keep after the work was done.



Following traditional organization, men dig and women carry the earth.



Despite being used to physical labour under intense heat, the villagers found the conditions extreme this year, and soon, we required the assistance of a bulldozer, in order to finish the tank before the onset of monsoon.

After 35 hours of intense work from the villagers and the bulldozer, we had two rain water harvesting structures built.

One of : 20x 10x 1,5 m And the other of : 15x 10x 2 m

The first showers of monsoon filled both the tanks, with one up to the brim.



Reforestation

With the help of the Chetteni villagers and a specialist from the Department of Horticulture of the Indian Government, we chose fruit-bearing tree species suitable for the region and useful to the villagers.

We brought in 200 stone pillars and 300 kilograms of barbed wire to enclose the 1.5 hectares of newly planted trees. These 250 young trees are now protected from cows and other wild animals.









A rainfall caused one of the ponds to overflow. The saplings are covered by water.



Rain Water Harvesting site



A recently planted, young guava sapling

Conclusion

Remarks and Observations

This first year of the project was rich in learning. Our desire to completely immerse ourselves in the rural milieu to gain proper understanding and discover the culture and the ways in which the locals function, has helped us better analyze the needs of the people and find suitable remedies for their problems. Often we needed to alter our plans due to economic, material and time constraints.

There was no dearth of surprises and of difficulties along the path. Fortunately, despite all of them, the objective of the project was attained and within the time frame.

Two examples:

First, regarding time management, we found that what many Indians call Indian Stretchable Time (IST) is a surprising and sometimes difficult reality to deal with, especially given our western modes of organization. More aware of IST's functioning, we shall better tackle this cultural difference in the following of the project.

Second, we found it challenging to make plans for the near future with a population for whom day-to-day survival is a constant struggle. This dichotomy materialized during the implementation phase, when many villagers who had shown support for our project were called away to attend more urgent matters.

Due to our continued presence at the villagers' sides during this year, sharing their way of life and concerns, confidence and trust were established between us. Improving our Hindi contributed to our success and gradually began to encourage their interest and participation. Though it is unreasonable to expect a mostly illiterate village to monitor the environment regularly, attempts at monitoring contributed to a sense of common purpose and cohesion in the village. The project could not be realized without the support and participation of the people, who will now take charge of it even if we are not with them.

As for us, this first year has been an enriching and unique experience.

Prospective

The success of this first year and the lessons learned from the experience encourage us to carry the project forward. The second year, starting from September 2011 will witness expansion of the project to five new villages, while still keeping track of the development in the existing villages.

In parallel, as requested by the SSA Board of Directors, we will train their staff to draft plans for project proposals and to organize their implementation.

To accomplish these missions, two new members are to be introduced in our team: Sunita Goel from Delhi who is to fill the seat of Project Manager, and Ashok Sarwade from Maharashtra for the post of Project Coordinator.

Year 2 Calendar:



We thank you for your support

The Rain Drop Team



ANNEX

Annex 1: Profile Details

Abhimanyu Singh is the director and secretary of SSA. He has been working with the tribal and rural villages of Bargarh for the last 16 years. He has dedicated his life to the betterment of health conditions and to the education of children, women and youth of the communities of Bargarh. His dedication and perseverance makes him renowned and respected in the whole region. His profound knowledge of community and administrative procedures and in project implementation makes him a valuable asset to us.

Santosh Sonni: Born and bred in Bargarh, he obtained his Masters in Social work and joined SSA to help his native region. In addition to his important regional network, his 8 years of experience in SSA have bestowed him with an ability to make easy contact and to have a thorough knowledge of the local communities. He is an indispensible mediator not only for his linguistic capacities but also for his ability to mobilize the villagers.

Professor Tunira obtained a PhD with her research in Soil Regeneration through Vermicompost from JNU, Delhi. Then she worked with projects related to Natural Resource Management and regeneration of ecosystems in the Ganges plains and in the mountainous regions of east and west India. These projects included harvesting rain water in the Himalayas, improving bio-fertility of soil in semi-arid regions as well as the mobilization of women for health and hygiene in the central Himalayas. Her research is recognized worldwide through publication in reputed international papers. For the above mentioned projects, she obtained the Women Scientist Award and the Young Scientist Award from the Indian Department of Science and Technology.

Anil Kumar also did his PhD from JNU, Delhi, in different uses of soil in the mountains of North East India and their ecological implications. He calculated, in economic and ecological value, the relation between two local tribes and their ecosystems. Through his research, he obtained deeper knowledge of tribal culture and natural resource management, particularly the implementation of rain water harvesting systems. His specialization in Botany led him to take part in an ecosystem restoration project supported by the World Bank. His aim was to improve agriculture in UP through the use of eucalyptus. Introducing brick ovens and improving techniques for breeding cattle are among his other projects related to natural resource management.

Alexis Roman obtained his Bachelor degree from McGill University, Montreal, Canada, specializing in Political science, Economics and Religious Studies. He is familiar with work related to rural and indigenous people, having undertaken a project of ecotourism in the Amazonian forest of Ecuador. Having lived among the indigenous communities, he learned the values of traditional techniques, particularly in natural resource management. His Masters in International Affairs from Science Po, specialized in Environment, Sustainable Development and Risks brought him to work with Rajendra Singh, one of the Indian experts in traditional methods of harvesting rain water through active community participation. He has created the Rain Drop Association to be able to share his experiences with other needy regions.

Sunita Goel holds a Masters in Commerce from the Calcutta University. After many years in the private sector, Sunita dedicates herself to social work in the Bundelkhand region (where Bargarh is situated). She worked for various NGOs, including SSA as

Project Manager and Document Maker. Her dedication to social work led her to create her own NGO in 2009, so as to increase her capacity to help the poor in the region. In October 2011 she will join the Rain Drop team as Project Manager. In addition to her management and implementation qualities, she is a role model to the other women.

Ashok Sarwade obtained a BA with Honors in Social Work, specializing in Rural Development from Tata Institute of Social Work in Bombay in 2009. Then in 2011, he obtained his Masters in Social Work from the Bundelkhand University. He has been working for the last two years in Bargarh on projects related to Rural Development. He is dynamic and reactive to new situations. He has already worked in all villages of Bargarh and has an excellent knowledge of local issues. Ashok will join the Rain Drop Project as Project Coordinator in September 2011.

Volunteers are essential for the project. We already have a large number of volunteers from India, Japan, the USA and France. Their diverse knowledge, be it in communication, water engineering, Indian literature, fashion or other fields, is an important contribution, useful in enriching the project.

The Villagers are simultaneously the beneficiaries and the players of the project. Their knowledge about the local ecosystems, seasons, and plants are used and upgraded through the implementation of the project.

Annex 2: Myth from the Kena Upanishad (v. 3,1 – 4,3) and adaptation

Agni, Vayu and Indra were boasting about their qualities. Agni said, "I can burn everything, nothing can stand on my way!" Vayu said, "I can blow away all that stands before me, nothing can stand on my way!" Indra said, "I can flood everything that stands before me, nothing can stand on my way!"

As the arguments were heating up, an unknown figure appeared near them, Yaksha. Curious about the newcomer, Agni was sent to ask. As Agni approached, Yaksha asked, "Who are you?" Agni responded, "I am the deity of fire, I cause all things to burn!" Yaksha presented a blade of grass and said, "Burn this."

Agni tried and tried but failed. He returned back to his friends. Vayu then approached Yaksha. Yaksha asked him, "Who are you?" Vayu responded, "I am Vayu, the deity of wind. I can blow anything away!" Yaksha presented a blade of grass and said, "Blow this!"

Vayu blew and blew but failed. He returned back to his friends.

Indra then approached Yaksha. Yaksha asked him, "Who are you?"

"I am Indra, deity of rain. I can drown everything."

Yaksha presented a blade of grass and said drown this. Indra rained and rained. It rained so intensely that the entire realm was covered with water. All were under water and couldn't see anything, so Indra stopped.

Agni heated up to evaporate the water and Vayu blew on it. As the water level came down, Yaksha had disappeared. Yet the blade of grass was still there, in the earth.

The ground started shaking and the blade of grass started growing. It grew and grew and as it grew it became a beautiful lady, Uma, the deity of nature. She told Indra: "The unknown was none other than the Absolute, Brahman itself. I, nature, am its highest manifestation."

Based on Kena Upanishad and commentary from Sri Aurobindo.

Addition:

Indra immediately fell in love with Uma, her green beauty, her beautiful branches, her leaves. Birds came to rest and sing on her. Deer found refuge close to her. All the animals found comfort near her. Nature is their refuge. Nature is the source of life. At this understanding, Indra shed a tear and a light rain came from the sky. As the water fell on Uma, she grew. Her splendor radiated on the entire realm. Indra wanted to see Uma grow more, so that all could enjoy her beauty. So he started to pour rain. It rained and rained. Uma grew and grew but without the wind and the sun to consolidate, she became fragile. Her radiance dimed until Uma herself started to wither. She fell to her knees, lay on the floor and decomposed into the earth.

Indra, horrified by what he had done, ran and took refuge in a cave. Agni and Vayu who had seen the spectacle stood mesmerized. Surya, the Sun, who was also looking descended from the heavens. As he approached, the water evaporated and a blade of grass sprung from the soil where Uma had disappeared. Agni and Vayu ran to get Indra. They arrived to see Uma rise from the earth. Yet all of a sudden, the blade of grass begun to dry up and once again withered away. Surya had come too close and all the water had gone. Indra understanding the fragile equilibrium Uma required to live gave her a little water and allowed a little of Surya's ray to pass through the clouds. Uma started to grow and once again radiated her beauty on the realms.

Animals once again gathered around her. Flowers bloomed. Trees gave fruits to eat and shade to rest. Plants gave medicine to cure, and the earth vegetables to consume.