

ACTIVITY REPORT

2017



Rain Drop



Rain Drop is a French organization that aims to improve living conditions through the sustainable management of natural resources.

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Introducing Rain Drop



Legal Information

Name: Rain Drop

Title: Association loi 1901
(Registered in France)



Objective: To improve living conditions and the sustainable management of natural resources

Registration

Registered on the 2nd March 2010 in Paris

Changed headquarters on the 23rd December 2010 to Grasse

Board :

President : Benjamin Gratton
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Message from the Director

This past year, many countries suffered harsh weather conditions. The areas where we work in India have not spared. Periods of intense drought alternating with heavy rainfall destroyed much of the agriculture, bringing misery to inhabitants. As a consequence, we focused on reducing these adverse effects by collecting water when abundant and using it when scarce, and by developing less climate dependant economic alternatives, like a dalh (lentils) mill.



December 2017 also ended our involvement in Bargarh, where the Rain Drop project was born 7 years ago. After 5 years of operations and a 2-year follow up, the time has come for the villagers to find their own equilibrium. For a smooth transition, the past 2 years were dedicated to capacity building and a total appropriation of the project by the families.

Our activities in India continue in Maharashtra, with Rain Drop India. In addition to the work in the villages of Ambajogai, Rain Drop India 's Director Ashok Sarwade, is developing projects in Tuljapur, another region of Maharashtra. We support his endeavors, mainly with fundraising and are thrilled by Ashock and Rain Drop India's growing autonomy.

This year, Rain Drop got involved on a new continent: Africa. We are exploring a project in Togo in the maritime township of Amoussimé. It entails the implementation of sustainable water and agricultural management practices. This project is in its inception phase and technical development stage. We aim to determine the appropriate solutions that best cater to the needs of the populations and the environmental ressources.

We thank our benefactors for their support, which enables us to continue to work toward improving the quality of life of rural community and better manage natural ressources.

Alexis Roman

Some numbers for 2017

- 7 years of activity
- 47 members
- 4 employees
- 8 active volunteers
- 16 587 trees planted
- 14500 beneficiaries in 26 villages
- 16 water retention basins built
- 1050 community meetings, training and awareness campaigns

Partners, sponsors, and support

Public



Private



OUR PROJECTS



Ayur Project

Context

The Ayur (« life » in Sanskrit) Project started in January 2016 in the Marathwada region, more specifically in Ambajogai, Beed District. We are now working with five villages: Dongra Pimpala, Rajewadi, Bhautana, Sonawala and Dhavadi.



Marathwada region

Decline of underground water & absence of latrines



Buckets waiting to be filled at one of the rare remaining water point

The villages we work in have been declared « Drought Prone Area » by the Indian government. The decrease in rainfall (as low as 431 mm in 2012) combined with excessive irrigation has led to the depletion of underground aquifers. Many villages are forced to reserve the scarce water resources only for domestic use and cannot irrigate their fields. Sanitation is another worrisome problem, as 97% of the population does not have access to latrines.

Agricultural transition & lack of economic opportunities

Families depend on agriculture for their livelihood. The harvest of sugarcane and cotton is no longer a viable option due to the lack of water. The absence of economic alternatives forces many families into migration to find work in the cities.



Dried out sugarcane field

Isolated rural populations and gender discrimination



SHG from Bhautana

Dhangars and Lambanis tribes as well as lower castes are the main inhabitants of this area. At the bottom of the economic and social ladder, they have limited access to government programs and poor economic alternatives. Within these groups, women suffer even more discrimination. Although they legally have equal rights, they are often subservient to their husbands. They have no economic or political power and are confined to household chores. Nevertheless, our conversations revealed a genuine concern for the development of their community.

Recharging underground aquifers and storing rain water

Watershed management



Embarkments are covered with vegetation, contributing to their sturdiness

The construction of fields bunds aim to retain rain water on agricultural plots by erecting elevated ridges around the parcels. In order to distribute the water equitably, deviations are created to redirect the flow to water needy areas.



Mr. Gosavi's plot is irrigated and cultivated thanks to the ridges

We have rehabilitated 28 hectares of land, more than our initial objective of 20 hectares. From the ridges to the rivers, bunds were built in order to maximize water infiltration in each plot of land. We dug openings in the bunds, letting the water trickle to the next parcel downhill, careful not to provoke the collapse of the bunds under pressure.

Motivation being essential, we asked the farmers a 20% contribution of the construction's total cost. As a result, we were able to work with a greater number of farmers, 74 people in total, and landscaped larger surfaces than planned. We worked on two areas around the village of Sonawala, as shown on the map below.



We can see on the map the river (green line indicated by the green arrows), between the two landscaped areas of land (marked in transparent white). The water would flow down the land into the river without infiltrating in the soil. They would then join the marked river which in turns joins a larger river (top right of the picture). In addition to the benefits for the farmers, the bunds also reduce river overflows in period of heavy rains as water is slowed down.

Bhaskar Gosavi, a farmer, explained that before the project, his land was unexploitable due to the lack of water. On a slight slope, his plot and that of his neighbors' didn't retain the monsoon precipitations. Now, he said enthusiastically, with the new water harvesting structures, he will finally be able to cultivate his land next year! Then, he showed us his well, which was full of water.

Bandhu Chaudhari and his brother are also very happy, but for the opposite reason. Their parcels are at the bottom of the slope, their cultures were drowned by the water flowing along the watershed. Now, the water spreads along the length of the watershed, supplying just the necessary quantity of water needed for a good harvest.

The 74 beneficiaries of the watershed constructions are unanimously satisfied with the results. In addition to the more efficient management of water resources, soil erosion has been reduced. Fertile soil remains on the parcels rather than flow in the river.



Mr. Ramdas combined the construction of dikes with the planting of trees around his water harvesting ponds for more efficiency.

Tree Planting

This year, 247 families planted 1957 trees. We have supplied multi-purpose trees, they have a double advantage: they maintain the ecological balance and they provide extra income for the families. We chose more resistant, 2 to 5 year old trees to guarantee a higher rate of survival and generate income more rapidly.

Compared to last year, we observed that more people are recognizing the economic potential of the trees. Pallawi Magarh and Ujala Tivari from Bhautana, Ramdas Maske from Sonawala, Kavita Korpade from Dongra Pimpla and Lakshmi Kendre from Dawadi preferred planting 30 trees rather than the 6 initially planned. Understanding the potential of trees, they decided to plant more and increase their chance of making a better profit.



Janabi Garkar from the village of Rajewadi with mango and guava trees on her head and her baby in her arms.

Apart from these families that already proved their motivation to care for the trees, with other families, we decided to focus less on quantity but more on quality and survival rates. We required farmers to make a 10% contribution of the cost of the trees.



Tree distribution in the village of Bhautana

This strategy worked well, as many farmers honestly admitted that they didn't feel they could care for too many trees, or that they lacked water resources, time or didn't have protection against animals.

This explains why we didn't reach our objective of 5000 trees for 2017. Next year, we expect to plant the remaining 3000 trees of 2017 plus the 5000 trees planned for 2018, with a maximum chance of survival.

The trees were planted around the water harvesting ponds built last year, near houses and around families' agricultural land.

The following trees were planted:

Common name	Mango	Lemon	Mulberry	Guava	
Scientific name	<i>Mangifera Indica</i>	<i>Citrus limon</i>	<i>Morus nigra</i>	<i>Psidium Guajava</i>	<i>Aegle Marmelos</i>
Properties	fruits	fruits	fruits	fruits	fruits
Number of trees planted	296	50	322	85	75

Common name	Shisham	Rudraksha	Teck	Amla	Jujube	Ritha
Scientific name	<i>Dalbergia sissoo</i>	<i>Elaeocarpus angustifolius</i>	<i>Tectona grandis</i>	<i>Phyllanthus emblica</i>	<i>Ziziphus zizyphus</i>	<i>Sapindus mukorossi</i>
Properties	wood	ornemental	wood	fruits	fruits	antibacterial
Number of trees planted	86	155	50	191	100	25

Common name	Tamarin	Jackfruit	Promogranat	Sapodilla	Total
Scientific name	<i>Tamarindus indica</i>	<i>Artocarpus heterophyllus</i>	<i>Punica Granatum</i>	<i>Manilkara zapota</i>	
Properties	épices	fruits	fruits	fruits	
Number of trees planted	200	100	97	125	1957



Maina Yadav is choosing sprouts



Mango tree planted this year

Ensuring proper sanitation in the villages

Raising awareness on hygiene and sanitation



The nurses measure and weight each participant

In the village of Bhautana, on January 4th 2017, we invited two nurses, Deepa Gorkhi et Swati Mune, from the local medical center to speak about the importance of clean water. 35 women and girls participated, they discussed personal and feminine hygiene and the fact that the fabrics used are not clean as they are washed in contaminated water. It was suggested that they buy the more hygienic disposable tampons.

Illnesses linked to water were examined - diarrhea, cholera, fever and stomach cramps - simple remedies like boiling water were advised. It is particularly important during the rainy season when contaminations are at their highest. The nurses presented printed material to illustrate good hygiene practices.



Komal Pardesh, Rain Drop's coordinator of projects for women, is participating

During this session, the nurses noticed that some of the women were too thin. Blood tests were performed, the results indicated low hemoglobin levels. The nurses suggested a more balanced diet composed of green vegetables, wheat, nuts and fruits.

Rain Drop's awareness campaigns are gaining in popularity in the communities. On April 14th 2017, the Women's Center of Bhautana invited Komal Pardeshi, a Rain Drop employee for a day of instruction on personal hygiene for the younger girls.

Building latrines in the villages

On October 2, 2015, the day of Mahatma Gandhi's birthday, the central government announced the start of Swachhata Bharat Abhiyan – Total Sanitation Campaign. On October 2, 2018, all villages in India must end outdoor defecation and have at least one latrine per family.

In two of the project's villages, women played a major role in this campaign. Thanks to their implication and the pressures exercised through Women Gram Sabah (groups of village women), encouraged by Rain Drop, the toilet construction campaign started in January 2017 in Bhautana and in June 2017 in Rajewadi. The Maharashtra government then required all of the state's villages to initiate their toilet construction campaign by August, 15, 2017. There has to be at least 1 toilet per household.

However, the construction of toilets doesn't guarantee their usage! Besides, some poor families don't have the finances nor the space to build them. This is where Rain Drop can help. We will support the government program by raising awareness on the use of toilets. We will also help the poorer families build latrines with the funds we have collected. In January 2018, we will evaluate the situation, understand the reasons some families haven't started the construction and assist them in the process.



Once these elements are known, we will build public toilets so all villagers have access to latrines by the construction deadline set by the government, October 2, 2018.



Toilets being build in the villages



Strengthening women's social and economic position in the villages

Raising women's awareness of their rights and decision making processes



Dr. Rama Pande explaining women's rights

On April 21, 2017, Dr. Rama Pande, professor at Manovlok University, specialist in women's legal rights, met with 21 women of 5 villages to lecture on the rights of victims of domestic violence, explain marital laws and legal procedures if a girl under the age of 18 is forced into marriage.

The Professor then spoke of women's economic rights. In the villages, the land is in the husband's name. Dr Rama Pande suggested that women put their house or at least some of their land in their own name, so as to guarantee an economic security in case of a problem with their husband. Those parcels of land can be used as they see fit, for instance, to diversify crops, plant vegetables even if less profitable in the marketplace, to promote a more balanced diet for their family.

She also provided a list of court sentences and phone numbers to call for help especially in case their families force them to abort or their husband beat or leave them.

Lastly, Dr Rama Pande initiated a role playing game: She represented a police officer or a government official and the women had to explain the dilemmas they face. In the habit of keeping silent and never mentioning their problems, this staging was hard for the women. She insisted on the importance to learn to speak up in order to receive help.



Role game on obstacles faced by women

Training SHGs on leadership and community mobilisation

February 21 to 23, 2017, 26 women from the 5 villages met at KVK center (Krishi Vigyan Kandra – center for agricultural sciences) for a class on leadership and community mobilization strategies. This course was taught by Mrs. Mamta Triparti, a specialist in women micro-entrepreneurship. She encouraged them to think about alternative sources of revenue other than agriculture and employment opportunities to ensure a stronger financial income.



Demonstration of a dryer with spinach

She reported on various types of micro-enterprises related to agriculture like food products derived from soybeans, tomato sauce or amla jam. She explained in detail the transformation processes, costs and profits associated with each product. The participants observed the different tools and the operation of machinery. After this training session, some women of Bhautana decided that in their situation, managing a dalh (lentils) mill would be a good choice.

Since this training, we have been working with them on the realization of this project.

Following this workshop, Kamal Shendge of Bhautana bought a noodle making machine. The women bring their wheat dough and transform it into noodles for 15 Rs per kilo.

Other women are thinking of starting nurseries and still others want to create small paper plates but these projects have not yet been achieved.

We organized another training session with 18 participants on December 19, 2017.



Transforming wheat dough into noodles

Creating women decision making committees - Women Gram Sabha

To help women participate more actively in the villages' political life, we created Women Gram Sabah. A Gram Sabah is a monthly meeting composed of the villagers, the village management committee and its president. Women rarely participate in those meetings where important decisions are made. They don't dare express their views, mainly due to pressure from their husbands and other men.



Bhautana's president during the Women Gram Sabah

So, we introduced Gram Sabahs for women only. The president and secretary of the village are invited to get acquainted with the women's concerns and take note of the decisions being made during the meeting. They relay the information during the general Gram Sabah for final decision making.

An important decision made during one of these meetings was the construction of toilets in Bhautana and Rajewadi, construction which started well before its requirement by the government. In Dongra Pimpla, the women pressured the village committee to construct soak pits to collect and drain waste water. In Sonawala, the women asked that the roads be repaired and access to clean drinking water. Their requests were accepted at the general Gram Sabah. The women of Dawadi asked the secretary to present the government programs in favor of women. They wanted them publicly presented to prevent discrimination.

Village	Number of Gram Sabah	General meetings	Number of participants
Bhautana	2	9	17
Dongar Pimpla	2	7	19
Dawadi	1	6	18
Rajewadi	1	8	22
Sonawala	3	6	22
Total	9	22	98

Despite these achievements, too many women are prohibited from attending Women Gram Sabah meetings, by their husbands. As a matter of fact, the president and the secretary didn't come to most of the meetings that we organized. These are labelled "general meetings" in the chart above.

Reinforcing SHGs capacities

Training women in accounting and management



Mme Murkute explains basic accounting

March 4 and 5, 2017, we organized a two day training in book keeping and management. We invited Mme Shobah Murkute, a government employee in the Rural Employment Mission department, to address the 25 women present. She spoke of the importance of keeping all receipts, and all official papers. The conversation then focused on the problems encountered by women.

One challenge is to keep a comprehensible accounting method in the women groups (SHGs). She explained the 9 different documents that have to be maintained by SHGs.

Mme Shobah Murkute suggested instoring a penalty system in order to avoid late payments. A Rs.5 daily fee would be charged for every late day of payment. This way the other women in the group would't have to cope with the unpleasant aspect of having to pressurize the tardy payer, who in turn knows she will be fined.

She also urged women to thoroughly think about the different undertakings they could start and accurately calculate the costs and earnings to avoid bankruptcy. Lastly, she explained how to get funds for their enterprises.



Creating a fund to support other women led businesses

Following the nurses' observations concerning the consequences of an unbalanced diet, we created small vegetable gardens. We distributed organic seeds to 80 women in the 5 villages. They received cucumber, spinach, pumpkin, gombo, coriander, zucchini, radish, beet, tomato, eggplant and hot pepper seeds.



Two women from Bhautana in their spinach and gombo vegetable garden

These vegetables will cover the dietary needs of the families. With an average of 7 people per family, this activity benefits 560 people, of which a majority are children.



Pallavi Magar is planting seeds donated by Rain Drop



Sushila Tirke's daughter will benefit from the magnesium and vitamins of her mother's vegetables !

Training on latrine maintenance

Two training sessions took place on the proper use and maintenance of latrines. The first, on October 29, 2017 in the village of Sonawala with 22 women attending and the second on November 14, 2017 in Dongar Pimpla with 31 women attending. Mrs. Dipali Gorkhe, a midwife at the regional governmental hospital first went over the importance of toilets for the hygiene of the village and for illness prevention. Women are especially affected by the lack of toilets



Explanation on the different types of latrines

because they have to wait until nightfall to defecate in the fields, risking snake bites and assaults by men. Many have to hold off all day resulting in stomach cramps. Mrs. Gorkhe gave a detailed explanation of how to maintain toilets. It has to be cleaned at least three times a week, the door has to stay shut to avoid dust and dirt to settle there, and, of course hands must be washed with soap. Lastly, she showed the women different types of toilets. Percolation toilets, compost toilets and biogas toilets which also produce gaz for the kitchen stove.

Training in entrepreneurship and development of small-businesses

On November 20, 2017, Mrs Anita Jogdand, entrepreneur in a nearby village, came to Sonawala to tell her story. She narrated the difficulties and satisfactions of starting a business. *« At first, she said, it is very discouraging, everyone says that it's impossible. Family, friends, the whole community tries to persuade you that you're not going to succeed. That is why you have to stay confident, even if you don't succeed in the end, persevere and motivate yourself. »* She then described the qualities of an entrepreneur : honest working habits in order to establish trust, a positive and creative attitude to motivate your collaborators. She then, initiated games to demonstrate how to motivate and involve even the shyest team members.



Game with balloons (see following pages for details)

December, 9, 2017, a second training session was scheduled but the lecturer was absent due to health reasons, so the Rain Drop team filled in. Komal organized a game that left the women pondering. Each participant was handed an inflated balloon and instructed to protect it from the others. The player remaining with her balloon would be the winner. Systematically, the women tried to burst their neighbors'

balloons. At the end, Komal pointed out that they hadn't been instructed to burst their neighbors' balloons, but that they had all picked that option. She compared this action to everyday life, where too much time is spent trying to pull others down, thinking it will bring an advantage. Had they decided to cooperate, they would all still have their balloon and everyone would be a winner!

Creating a Dalh Mill

One of the main purposes of our project is to encourage women groups to develop new sources of revenue. With the help of TATA corporation employees, a market study was done to determine the most appropriate activity for the women of Ambajogai.

It was decided that a mill was the best option, managing it is relatively simple, it is economically interesting and it is useful for the communities. Dahl is an Indian lentil that has to be separated from its shell and split in half to be cooked and eaten. It is the basis of the Indian diet. Currently, farmers take out loans to buy seeds, tools, fertilizers...etc, they sell their harvest to mill owners to be able to repay their debts. A few months later, the mill owners sell the dalh to the farmers for a much higher price, as it's no longer lentil season. This project consists in purchasing a dalh mill so Bhautana's women manage it. They will make extra income for their families and the neighboring farmers will be able to process their harvest themselves or sell it and buy it back at a reasonable price.



Visiting a dalh mill



The women see the functioning of a dalh mill for the first time

We have had many meetings with the women interested and motivated by the project. Together, we think over all aspects of its operation and management. With the Village Council, we have determined its location. December 9, the 18 women concerned visited a dalh mill in the area. They became acquainted with the functioning of the machinery and its maintenance.

Spring of Life Project - Follow up

Project Summary

The Spring of Life Project started beginning 2013 and ended December 2015. In January 2016, we began a follow-up phase lasting 2 years. It enabled us to monitor the evolution of the activities without direct involvement by Rain Drop and the possibility to improve our actions.

During this project, we worked with 21 villages, 512 families, to help them better manage their natural resources, mainly water, to reinforce their skills and diversify their sources of revenue. This project has provided an important contribution to the populations of Mau.



Bundelkhand region, India

Source : Wikipedia

We work mainly with the lower castes and villagers originating from the tribal populations, the Kols. As with all our projects, we emphasize a close collaboration with the beneficiaries, including them in all phases of the project, from its conception to its instauration to its follow-up. This participatory approach promotes an in-depth awareness and understanding of the methods and technologies put in place. For Rain Drop, it is a learning experience, as every project is “alive”, adapted to the specific conditions of each village and each family, evolving regularly in harmony with individual needs.

The 3 main objectives of the Spring of Life Project :

- 1. Improve water management*
- 2. Strengthen the community's capacities*
- 3. Diversify means of livelihood*

1. Improving water management

Water harvesting ponds

The 12 water harvesting ponds we built in the villages of Ajadpurwa, Kechuhat, Panihaï, Lasahi and Guruwa are all still in use. They replenish groundwater and are used to irrigate 52 hectares during the drought season.

In 2016, the farmers Fulchandra, Bajragee Lal, Babbu, Ramesh, Ayodhaya and Rakeshput utilized the ponds for fish farming. The fish are consumed by the families or sold at the market place. But, this year, rainfall was too sparse. The ponds weren't full enough to cover the 6 months period necessary for the development of fishes. The water harvesting ponds are our most useful and effective action, especially that the farmers can easily duplicate them. The water retention ponds have a positive effect on the environment, they replenish groundwater and recharge the wells used for drinking and in case of severe drought, the water is used to irrigate the soil. The livestock quenches its thirst in the ponds and uses it to keep cool. Ponds like these are an ancestral Indian method to conserve water, so they are well adapted to the local culture.



M. Babu Adiwasi of Lasahi in front of his pond constructed by Rain Drop in 2015

Water saving irrigation systems

Of the 80 farmers having received irrigation systems, 28 are still using sprinklers. The majority, 42 families use only the hoses. We were the first to introduce sprinklers and drip irrigation in this region. Despite close guidance and assistance, many farmers didn't adopt these technologies which are too different from their agricultural habits.

Nevertheless, we hope these irrigation methods will develop, they represent an inevitable transition considering the increased strain on water resources. The 28 farmers will be examples for future generations.

Tree planting



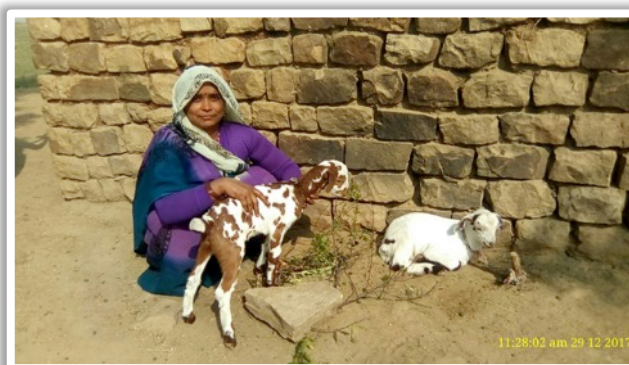
*Rajkumari picks guavas from trees
planted by Rain Drop in 2013*

We planted a total of 5810 trees during the Spring of Life Project. They benefit the communities with their fruits as well as their healing properties but also their environmental value. 3578 of these trees are healthy and growing, with a survival rate of 61.5%.

It's an improvement compared to our first attempts, but still below our expectations. The main causes for this mortality is a lack of upkeep, aridity and accidents (the young sprouts are eaten by livestock or broken by children or neighbors). In the Ayur Project, we plant older trees to improve their survival rate. They are more robust and bear fruits more rapidly.

2. Strengthening communities' capacities

The trainings organized during the first 28 months of the project were valuable for Mau's families. We organized workshops on entrepreneurship, women and farmers' rights, sustainable farming, hygiene and sanitation as well as instruction on value-added agricultural products.



*Sudha Devi from Guruha village is caring for her
goats*

These trainings were vital for the implementation of the activities. They motivated three groups of women to initiate vegetable gardens to better feed their families and sell the extra production at the local market. Owing to a better understanding of administrative functioning, 8 women received 6 goats for breeding through a government program promoting rural employment for women. The applications were written and submitted with Rain Drop's help.

3. Diversifying means of livelihood

Improving agricultural techniques



Rampratap of Kechuat has been using SRI for 3 years resulting in better productivity

During the year 2017, 70 farmers pursued the enhanced agricultural practices introduced by Rain Drop: SRI (System of Rice Intensification) and SWI (System of Wheat Intensification). 33 farmers undertook agricultural diversification by planting vegetables. Traditionally, they used to plant only rice, wheat, lentils and potatoes.

Diversifying productions

Following Rain Drop's numerous training sessions, many families in the project's villages realized the advantages of a diversified agriculture for the well being of their families and to ensure more stable revenues in case of crop failure. Although the importance of diversification was well understood, only 35% of the farmers implemented it because of time constraints, soil quality and past habits. Nevertheless many farmers diversified their production by planting fruit trees.



Bajrangilal shows his tomato plants

Chicken farming



The daughter of Brijbhan Kol of Ajadpurva's in front of the hen house

Out of the 30 chicken coops built, 12 still have chickens. Thanks to their efforts, Brijbhan of Ajadpurva village and Amrit Lal of Chuhuda Colony succeeded in turning their chicken farms into a successful source of revenue. They buy chicks regularly in order to diversify and increase their chicken population. They have also perfected their egg and chick production. The chickens and eggs are eaten by the families and sold at the marketplaces.

Other Developments

Project with Aquassistance

In March 2015, Aquassistance, a team of experts in water management visited Ambajogai to assist Rain Drop in a water adduction project. In 2017, Pierre Chaou, Chief Project manager at Aquassistance returned to Ambajogai to complete the technical details for the distribution of water. We identified two drilling sites that could supply the whole village of Rajewadi in drinking water. We also localized the spots where the 6 fountains would be as well as a 7th in the school. We performed pressure tests to have a first idea of the aquifer capacity and the water level. These first indications will be completed in April 2018 by a pumping test that will help us determine if the flow is sufficient to satisfy agricultural and village needs.



Measuring the tube well's pressure

Tuljapur Project

Since Rain Drop India's creation, we have helped Ashok Sarwade and his team develop new projects in India. In 2013, young farmers from Tuljapur, asked our help to overcome the drought problems and harsh economic conditions. We helped Rain Drop India secure help from Apollo Tyres Foundation to start a project in three villages located around Tuljapur: Kamtha, Apsinga and Kati.

This project has two main objectives: preserve natural resources by guiding the villagers toward an efficient water and soil management program and promote social and economic autonomy of women.

Awareness and training

As with all our projects, we organised many awareness-raising campaigns and performed many training sessions preparing the villagers for the implementation of our various activities. We arranged field visits to display the scope of our actions. Through plays, meetings, the screening of documentaries and the presentations of specialists, we trained villagers on themes of water management, sustainable agricultural practices and soil testing.

Sustainable management of natural resources

Constructing water harvesting ponds

This year, 2 water harvesting ponds were built in the village of Kamtha. For the inauguration, we invited a professor from the nearby university and some important local leaders. They encouraged the villagers to build more ponds to harvest rain water and alleviate drought problems.



Water harvesting pond in Kamtha

Tree planting

In order to bring about a sustainable change, we planted 2966 trees with 156 families. Below is a list of the trees planted

Village name	Pomegranate	Guava	Mango	Lemon	Apple cinnamon	Sapodilla	Amla	Moringa	Tamarind	Total
Kati	42	78	139	335	84	29	14	82	19	822
Apsinga	72	103	172	279	112	42	18	107	71	976
Kamtha	180	117	187	182	98	29	18	297	60	1168
Total distributed	300	300	500	800	300	100	50	500	150	3000
Total damaged	6	2	2	4	6	0	0	14	0	34
Total planted	294	298	498	796	294	100	50	486	150	2966



Strengthening women's capacities

Organizing Women Gram Sabah

Four Women Gram Sabah were organized in the project's villages. In Kamtha, 52 women came to the two Women Gram Sabhas to talk to the village chief. They wanted to discuss their concern about a broken drain pipe leaking unto the road. They asked him to fix it.



Meeting with the women of Kamta

In Apsinga, 27 women came and in Kati 24 women were present. They became familiar with the various government programs and their eligibility to subsidies. It was their first visit in the village chief's office: impressed, they didn't formulate any demands but wished to regularly reiterate the experience.

Develop kitchen gardens, chicken & goat farms



Gudya and her mother with a goat and her 2 little ones

Having identified the neediest families, we distributed goats to three women. A total of 25 goats were given out, 5 of which already had babies. These goats are used for their milk and to be sold. The team helps women save their income so they can purchase more goats thereby creating a sustainable economic model.

We proceeded the same way with the construction of seven chicken coops, this time we asked for a 40% participation of the cost. When the construction was finished, we gave each family 200 chicks. We continue to supervise the breeders in order to turn these into sustainable activities.

Finally, we set up 10 model vegetable gardens and distributed 12 different types of seeds to 30 women. We encouraged them to produce organically without pesticides or chemical fertilizers. Rani Talbhadore explained that she saves Rs.200 (3€) a week, amount she used to spend buying vegetables. Having realized the advantages of a vegetable garden, other women in the village expressed their interest in starting one.



Vegetable garden in the village of Apsinga

Diversifying sources of livelihood



The flowers will be sold to the temple

In order to guarantee economic stability, Rain Drop India also conducted activities to diversify means of income. An important temple being located in the nearby city, we encouraged Mr. Tukark Deshuk to cultivate flowers. These flowers, like the tuberoses are then sold to the temple. This activity has yielded a Rs.1,25,000 profit (1640 euros). This success has persuaded him to dedicate more land to this production.

We advised Mr. Kuber Pawar to plant watermelons. He grew them with vermicompost, drip irrigation and straw-mulching. Thanks to these techniques, he produced 34 tons of watermelons and made a profit of Rs. 3,50,000 (4600 euros) in only two months. Few farmers produce this fruit, and demand is high. He is repeating this experience this year and suggested to other farmers to do likewise.



Kuber Pawar inspects his watermelons before harvest

Nursery in Bargarh

Ramesh Chandra, owner of the Rain Drop nursery in Bargarh since 2012 continues his work with added zeal and passion as each year passes. He owns the only nursery in a 100 km radius, a growing number of farmers come to him for the quality of his sappings. His interest in our trainings and enthusiasm for learning have led him to experiment with grafting mango, lemon and guava trees. These represent most of his sales totaling 2470 trees this year.

Through Ramesh and his nursery, Rain Drop's objective of providing and planting quality trees in the area of Bargarh continues. Faced with harsh weather conditions, many farmers, following Ramesh's example, have chosen to convert their production from wheat and rice to fruit trees which is less labor and water intensive.



Sapplings in Ramesh's nursery

Conclusion

The year 2018 has two goals in addition to the continuation of our projects in India. The first is to develop our activities in Africa, mainly in Togo. The second is to work with Rain Drop India's team to render them still more autonomous and enable them to realize their projects by raising funds in India.

Rain Drop and its team thank you for your support !