

ACTIVITY REPORT

2018



Rain Drop



Rain Drop is a French non-for-profit organization that aims at improving living conditions through the sustainable management of natural resources and cultural diversity.

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INTRODUCING RAIN DROP



Some figures for 2018

- 8 years of activity
- 24 members
- 2 employees
- 8 active volunteers
- 19 466 trees planted
- 14 500 beneficiaries in 26 villages
- 16 water harvesting ponds built
- 1097 community meetings, trainings and awareness-raising campaigns

Legal information

Name: Rain Drop

Title: Association loi 1901
(Registered in France)

Objective: To improve living conditions through the sustainable management of natural resources and cultural diversity.

Registration

Created on the March 2nd 2010 in Paris, France

Published in the official journal of organizations: April 3rd 2010

Changed headquarters on December 23rd 2010 to Grasse, France

Legal rights

Declared of general interest: May 25th 2012 in Nice, France

Registration details

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APE : 94 99 Z

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Date of registration: January 18th 2011

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Message from the Director

The year 2018 was one of challenges, for Rain Drop and for our partner, Rain Drop India, but also for our beneficiaries.

First, environmental adversity deeply affected people in India, particularly in the drought prone villages we assist.

We also faced financial and administrative challenges, but fortunately less worrisome than expected.

We prefer not to see these challenges as obstacles, but rather as opportunities to grow and learn together.



India suffered from very low rainfall in 2018, especially in the areas where Rain Drop intervenes. As a matter of fact, both Beed and Osmanabad districts were declared drought-affected areas by the government of Mahārāshtra this year. Scarce water had a severe impact on our beneficiaries' farming activities. This is why Rain Drop will pursue its efforts to bring more sustainable water management and sanitation to address India's chronic drought.

The second difficulty we faced is Rain Drop India's lack of funds. On the one hand, one of the organisation's sponsors decided, for strategic reasons, to stop funding it, even though the projects were developing well, and the commitment on part of the beneficiaries was assured. On the other, Rain Drop is still waiting for a government-approved document, the FCRA (Foreign Contribution Regulation Act), without which we cannot transfer any money to India, and therefore to our partner.

This situation prompted us to rethink our strategic approach: now more than ever, Rain Drop India must secure long term Indian support, to diversify their financial partners. Ashok Sarwade, Rain Drop India's Director, started submitting tenders, which helped develop his project proposal writing skills and his autonomy.

Furthermore, Rain Drop felt the need to expand to another continent, in order to bring support to populations from other countries. We initiated a project in Togo, with our new partner OPED-Togo. A feasibility study was recently conducted, early 2019.

Along with our activity report, we send our best wishes for this new year, and our gratitude for your continuing support. Without you, Rain Drop could not help rural communities address climate change and rural poverty. Thank you very much!

Alexis Roman

Partners, sponsors and support

Institutional



Private



OUR PROJECTS



Ayur Project

1. Context

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



Marathwada region

Decline of underground water



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

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. The overall situation isn't improving: Mahārāshtra government declared Beed a drought-affected district in 2018.

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 population and gender discrimination



SHG from Dhawani

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 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.

2. Objectives

Objective 1: recharging underground water and store rain water

Watershed management

Our objective was to improve watershed management on 20 hectares of land to increase the retention of rain water. Without this layout, because fields are on a slope, the monsoon water would run off into the river, preventing it from penetrating deeply into the soil, and taking along the fertile topsoil - the humus - and the fertilizers spread by farmers in the process.



Embankment in Sonawala village



Mr Gosavi's plot is irrigated and cultivated thanks to the ridges: indeed, the construction of field bunds aims at retaining rain water on agricultural plots by erecting elevated ridges surrounding the lots. In order to distribute the water equally, deviations are created to redirect the flow to water-needy areas.

Managing watersheds is essential considering the chronic lack of water and the poor quality of the land. Furthermore, bunds are an efficient way to slow down soil erosion.

This explains why the idea appealed to more farmers than initially planned. We have worked with 74 of them, rehabilitating 28 hectares of land (our initial objective was 20 hectares). We built bunds from the ridges to the rivers, in order to maximize water infiltration in each plot of land. To avoid risking the collapse of the whole structure because of overpressure, we dug openings in the bunds, letting the water trickle to the next parcel downhill.

We worked on two areas around the Sonawala village, as shown on the map below.



On the map, we can see the river (the green line indicated by the arrows), between the two landscaped areas of land (marked in transparent white). The water would flow down the land into the river without infiltrating into the soil. It 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.

Almost two years after the construction, the results are very positive!

In 2018, Bhaskar Gosavi was able to plant soya for the first time: his 7-hectare land has been fully converted into an irrigated cultivable lot thanks to the bunds.

Pallawai Magar chose to grow cotton. In 2019, she will start selling it, thus providing her with a regular income. As for Mr Joshi, he started growing jawar, a daily-consumed cereal in South-East Asia.



Other farmers are also very satisfied to see their lands now irrigated: Shiwaji Patange for example, can now work full-time on his land growing soya and cotton instead of migrating for a job.

However, insufficient rainfall in 2018 deeply weakened farming activities. Though Rain Drop's watershed layout cannot make up for the lack of water, they do reduce the negative impact on livelihoods.

Watershed layout in Sonawala, on Keshav Patange, Bandu Chaudhari and Bhaskar Gosavi's lots. Water scarcity is visible by the dryness of the plants surrounding the bunds.

Water harvesting ponds

Building water harvesting ponds is a traditional Indian technique, which aims at storing rain water in large reservoirs dug in the ground. The water infiltrates slowly in the soil and recharges underground aquifers, providing clean drinking water in wells. In case of an unexpected drought, the surface water can also be used to irrigate nearby fields.

In 2016, we built 4 ponds in the project villages: 2 years later, they are still in use, and their owners are very satisfied!

Ponds have various uses: first irrigation (on 24 acres of wheat, papaya, tuberose, sugarcane and tour fields), drinking purposes by infiltrating in the aquifers and feeding clean water to wells and bore wells, fish farming, shelter for animals (which contributes to biodiversity)... They can also be used by children as big swimming pools when it's really hot!



Water harvesting pond in Dongra Pimpla.



Children beating the summer heat in the pond

Before the pond was dug in Dhavadi, Dattatre Kendre and his two brothers couldn't grow anything during the "Rabi" season (from November to April, after monsoon), because they had nothing to store the monsoon water in. They wouldn't cultivate anything for 6 months, and only when the "Kharif" season (from May to October) started, would they try planting seeds, counting on June's first rain. Most of the time however, kharif crops wouldn't develop properly, due to scarce or uneven rainfall.

Now, thanks to the pond, everything has changed for the better: the three brothers can finally irrigate their Kharif crops with the water stored in the pond. Last Rabi season, they were even able to farm and grew wheat and chick peas on 6 acres. They sold their harvest for 143 000 rupees (nearly 1 800 euros!).



Mr Ramdas' water harvesting pond in Sonawala.

Mr Ramdas grows sugarcane crops. He used the pond water 3 times to irrigate his one-and-a-half-acre plot. As a result, he sold his sugarcane harvest for 107 000 rupees (1 340 euros).

To conclude, the farmers are very happy with the ponds. They can grow more and better-quality crops. As a result, other farmers also wish to dig water harvesting ponds on their own lands, to enjoy the same benefits.

Tree planting

This year, after consulting with farmers, we decided not to plant new trees, mainly because the project area suffered from insufficient rainfall in 2018. Beneficiaries had no choice but to save the available water for domestic use, even though it meant not irrigating their trees.

Young trees cannot survive without regular water; as a result, it would have been useless to keep planting new ones, blindly following the initial plan.

Since 2016, we have planted 6 516 trees, of which 4 716 have survived (more than 72%).

Below is the list of the trees we planted in Ambajogai:



Amla tree

In 2016 (170 beneficiaries)

Common name	Mango	Moringa tree	Lemon	Mulberry	Curry tree	Amla	Total
Scientific name	<i>Mangifera Indica</i>	<i>Moringa oleifera</i>	<i>Citrus limon</i>	<i>Morus nigra</i>	<i>Murraya koenigii</i>	<i>Phyllanthus emblica</i>	
Properties	fruits	Fruits	fruits	fruits	leaves	fruits	
Number of trees planted	609	3102	548	80	60	160	4559
Number of surviving trees	524	2340	487	67	39	134	3591

In 2017 (247 beneficiaries)

Common name	Mango	Lemon	Mulberry	Guava	Bael	Shisham	Rudraksha	Teck
Scientific name	<i>Mangifera Indica</i>	<i>Citrus limon</i>	<i>Morus nigra</i>	<i>Psidium Guajava</i>	<i>Aegle Marmelos</i>	<i>Dalbergia sissoo</i>	<i>Elaeocarpus angustifolius</i>	<i>Tectona grandis</i>
Properties	fruits	fruits	fruits	fruits	fruits	wood	ornamental	wood
Number of trees planted	296	50	322	85	75	86	155	50
Number of surviving trees	178	32	158	57	46	34	36	27

Common name	Promogranat	Sapodilla	Amla	Jujube	Ritha	Tamarin	Jackfruit	Total
Scientific name	<i>Punica Granatum</i>	<i>Manilkara zapota</i>	<i>Phyllanthus emblica</i>	<i>Ziziphus zizyphus</i>	<i>Sapindus mukorossi</i>	<i>Tamarindus indica</i>	<i>Artocarpus heterophyllus</i>	
Properties	fruits	fruits	fruits	fruits	antibacterial	spices	fruits	
Number of trees planted	97	125	191	100	25	200	100	1957
Number of surviving trees	73	89	116	47	12	156	67	1128



Shrawani takes great care of the family's lemon tree



Payal beside a moringa tree, which already gives her and her family daily fruits.

Moringa is an Indian tree, which fruits and leaves have numerous nutritional properties.

The overall situation is worrisome, and families fear for next year, especially the summer. Indeed, if there is no rain next winter, they won't be able to irrigate properly their trees, which survival will be compromised.

That's why Rain Drop has put a lot of effort in ensuring a high survival rate, for example by training farmers on tree management.

Objective 2: ensuring proper sanitation in the villages

Building latrines in the villages

On October 2nd 2015, the central government announced the start of Swachata Bharat Abhiyan – Total Sanitation Campaign. On October 2nd 2018, all villages in India must end open defecation and have at least one latrine per family, otherwise they will face being fined.

This is a great challenge as in 2015, 75% of the families living in the Ayur project villages still had no access to latrines.

There are two main reasons: firstly, the poorest families often lack resources, time, and tools to build toilets; secondly, even when toilets are built, habits and lack of information regarding the risks associated with open defecation prevent their proper use.

Rain Drop took action to support the government's program by raising awareness amongst villagers on the necessity of building latrines, for health and comfort reasons.

Today, Pallawi Magar (who lives in Rajewadi) says that thanks to Rain Drop meetings, villagers gave the toilet campaign first priority, whereas before people didn't take this issue seriously.

Partly thanks to our efforts and mostly due to community mobilisation, the toilet construction campaign started in January 2017 in Bhautana and in June 2017 in Rajewadi.



*Toilet construction work
in the villages*



A year later, out of the 223 households in Rajewadi, almost 67% had toilets, 7% had toilets under construction, and 26% of the households still didn't have toilets. It's not for lack of will, as a majority of families without toilets did want them.¹ It shows that the awareness-raising campaigns, initiated by Rain Drop and taken over by women during Gram Sabah, were useful.

Following this assessment in the spring of 2018, we helped build 3 latrines in the village of Rajewadi.

The 3 households were chosen for different reasons. Megaraj Gadkar's wife, whose family has 5 members, is an active member of Women Gram Sabah². She will thus use the meetings as an opportunity to motivate other families to start building their toilets. The other two households (Asrubha Kashid's, 6 members, and Govind Kashid's, 5 members) are amongst the poorest families, belonging to the Dhangar tribe. They lack the resources to comply with the government's campaign.



*Asrubha and
Shital in front of
their new toilets*



It is fair to say that the three families mentioned above have given up outdoor defecation once and for all. 13-year-old Shital is very pleased by her new toilets: she explained that before, she would go defecate either very early in the morning, or at night-time, but never in-between, to avoid being seen by men. It caused her intestinal problems. During the rainy season, the situation got even worse: defecating in the muddy fields, infested with snakes and scorpions, could be dangerous. She now feels much safer and cleaner.

¹ Assessment of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Situation, Rajewadi Village, Ambajogai Block, Maharashtra, 2018, Survey ordered by Rain Drop and executed by Fight Against Hunger Foundation India

² See the definition on page 17.



Sunita showing her toilets in Rajewadi

By the end of 2018 (after the October 2nd deadline), about 80% families in the 5 villages had toilets: what good news!

Nonetheless, their long-term daily use is yet to be totally guaranteed: one of the main impediments is – again - the chronic lack of water, which makes the evacuation and cleaning of latrines difficult.

As a result, we will continue to organize training sessions on proper latrine use and maintenance, as well as awareness-raising campaigns highlighting the importance of giving up open defecation for good (some inhabitants agreed to build toilets only because it was a mandatory and subsidized campaign...).

Objective 3: strengthening women's social and economic position in the villages

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

In April 2017, Dr. Rama Pande, specialist in women's legal rights, met with 21 women from the 5 villages to lecture them on their rights - individual, domestic, economic, financial, and political. This was a much needed session, most of these women being unaware of what they are legally entitled to.

This training encouraged each of the 21 women to open personal bank accounts – until then, they relied on accounts in their husband's name. A significant and welcome step towards independence!

Additionally, some of them requested that some of the family land be put exclusively in their name (in the villages, again, land is under the husband's name), so as to guarantee a source of economic security in case of domestic troubles. We have also noticed that women now tend to ask to be part of the decision-making process in the farming business.

Finally, one of the crucial points of the training was to make participants aware of their entitlement to speak up and share their ideas, just as men do. The success of Women Gam Sabah (see below), is proof that Rain Drop's work is starting to bear fruit...

Creating women decision-making committees Women Gram Sabah

To help women participate more actively in the villages' political life, we created Women Gram Sabah. A Gram Sabah is a monthly meeting attended by the villagers, the village management committee, and its president. During those meetings, general and strategic orientations are voted, along with the yearly budget. Women rarely participate in these meetings, where important decisions are made. They do not dare express their views, mainly due to pressure from their husbands and other men.



Bhautana's president attending a Women Gram Sabah

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

In Bhautana for example, women were concerned with the old water tank, whose capacity no longer meets the villagers' needs. They raised the issue during Gram Sabah, which prompted Gram Panchayat³ to add the construction of a new water tank to the 2019 budget.



Meeting between the water committee and Aquassistance team, to which some women attend.

In Rajewadi, women took a great care in following the toilets' construction process. Then, motivated by Rain Drop's project to bring clean water to the village (see Project with Aquassistance on p.24), they chose to confront the issue of access to clean drinking water by putting it on the Gram Sabah's agenda. It prompted the village water committee to actively participate in the draft of our project.

According to Shila Gadkar from Rajewadi, Women Gram Sabah encourage women to participate in the general Gram Sabah. They no longer fear to reach out to the male members and raise questions or bring up problems affecting the community. They feel

³ The local government, which functions at village level, and is in charge of the budget.

more considered and taken seriously, because they now dare to express their demands.

Despite these important achievements, Women Gram Sabah's need further acknowledgement from male villagers. Husbands sometimes forbid their wives to participate, and Gram Sabah's presidents and secretaries often refuse to attend the meetings organised by women.

These are labelled "general meetings" in the chart below.

Village	Number of Women Gram Sabah	Number of participants	Number of general meetings (without the president)	Number of participants
Bhautana	1	22	2	23
Dawadi	1	23	2	19
Dongar Pimpla	1	16	1	16
Rajewadi	2	38	3	33
Sonawala	1	17	2	26
Total	6	116	10	117

Objective 4: reinforcing SHGs' capacities⁴

Training women in entrepreneurship and development of small-businesses

In 2017, Rain Drop set up several training sessions for women of the 5 villages. There was a two-fold goal: first, to strengthen their knowledge and skills in entrepreneurship, and second to promote the development of small-businesses supported by SHGs.

Below are the trainings we organized:

- February 2017: training on leadership and community mobilization, focused on food processing (for example: food products derived from soy, tomato sauce, amla jam...).
- March 2017: training in accounting and management, which pinpointed the need for a clear accounting system in SHGs.
- November 2017: training on leadership and development of small-businesses in Sonawala village, taking into account the local context.



SHG meeting

⁴ Self-Help Groups, committee composed of female micro entrepreneurs, who choose to save regular small sums of money to contribute to a common fund and to meet their emergency needs on the basis of mutual help. They also share good practices.

- December 2017: second training on community mobilization.

We gathered the reactions of Sandhya Shendage, Savita Kendre, Manisha Gadkar, Nirmala Gadkar, Koshalya Gadkar, Mohar Maske and Asha Tarkase after the trainings. All of their testimonies point to the usefulness of the training, and how easily they feel they can replicate what they have learned. Overall, SHGs now manage their accounting more thoroughly, because they understand it is in their mutual interests to do so.

With better knowledge of both their rights and how to make a yearly budget, women felt confident enough to share their views and give their opinions to Gram panchayat members – even when it meant disagreeing with them or claiming for the enforcement of their rights. This approach is new to the majority of women, because they were not aware of their decision-making rights and capacities. They would submit to the strategic orientations without taking part in their elaboration.

Inspired by the training, five women have decided to transform their business ideas into real projects: they have started various small businesses inside the villages. The chart below shows a record of the 5 women, businesses, and monthly income.

Names of the women	Village	Business	Monthly income (rupees - euros)
Pallawi Magar	Bhautana	Tailoring	3500 INR – 44 euros
Kamal Shendage	Bhautana	Noodles making	3500 INR – 44 euros
Manisha Gadkar	Rajewadi	Tailoring	4000 INR – 50 euros
Chakuli Gadkar	Rajewadi	Tailoring	4500 INR – 56,5 euros
Mohar Tarkase	Dhawadi	Spice making	3500 INR – 44 euros

It is important to understand that the activities enabled the 5 entrepreneurs to be financially self-sufficient. The minimum wage in India is 3500 INR.

These experiences, serving as an example, inspired other women to start their own business.

Supporting other women-led businesses

Following the nurses' observations regarding the consequences of an unbalanced diet, we created small vegetable gardens. We distributed organic seeds to 90 women in the 5 project villages. No less than 12 species of seeds were given to them: cucumber, spinach, pumpkin, gumbo, coriander, zucchini, radish, beet, tomato, eggplant, and hot pepper seeds.



Komal Rokade in her kitchen garden

In addition to contributing to a more balanced diet and higher income, kitchen garden plots also serve as a means to raise awareness on the spread of chemical fertilizers in agricultural inputs (the negative effects on health being unknown to most villagers).

Each of the women who were given seeds now cultivates a kitchen garden. 10 of them explained they chose to keep the mature vegetables for domestic consumption, because they thought they were particularly tasty and nutritious! Moreover, they save both time and resources; 300 rupees (3,07 euros) a week, since they no longer have to go to the market to buy food.

The project also serves as guidance for further kitchen garden programs, to be shared during SGHs. For example, Mrs. Vars showed how to plant seeds on a 1 m² plot to save space.

However, due to the lack of rainfall this year, kitchen gardens couldn't be irrigated as required. Their survival, just as the trees mentioned earlier, depends heavily on the ability to store, save, and distribute the water available in the area.

Spring of Life project

In December 2015, the Spring of Life Project, initiated in 2013, ended. In January 2016, we began a thorough 2-year follow-up phase to monitor the evolution of the activities without the direct involvement of Rain Drop.

1. Project summary

We worked in 21 villages of Mau district, in the Bundelkhand area. 512 families have benefitted from the project, which has provided an important contribution to the populations of Mau.

We mainly worked with the lower castes and villagers originating from the tribal populations, the Kols. Their financial resources are very limited, and they are helpless in the face of growing water scarcity.



Bundelkhand region

The project was conceived to meet three main objectives:

1. Help the beneficiaries better manage water resources
2. Reinforce their skills and capacities
3. Diversify their sources of income

As with all our projects, we opted for a participatory approach, to help beneficiaries better absorb the new methods and techniques, and ensure the project continues to exist for a long time after Rain Drops departure.

2. Follow-up of the project

Improving water management

Project	Number	Objective	By the end of 2018
Constructing water harvesting ponds (a traditional Indian method)	12 ponds built	Replenish groundwater; irrigate 52 hectares of land; develop fish farming.	Still in use
Installing sprinklers or drip irrigation	For 80 farmers	React to the growing water scarcity by installing water-saving irrigation systems.	Sprinklers used by 28 farmers; drip-irrigation used by 42 farmers.

Tree planting	5 810 trees planted	Contribute to reforestation; improve and diversify the families' diet.	3 578 survived (62%).
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M. Babu Adiwasi of Lasahi in front of the pond Rain Drop constructed for him

Strengthening communities' capacities

Project	Results
Workshops on entrepreneurship, women and farmers' rights, sustainable farming, hygiene and sanitation as well as instruction on value-added agricultural products.	Three groups of women developed vegetable gardens to diversify their families' diet and sell the extra production at local markets.
Helping women to write and submit applications to receive goats, through a governmental program promoting rural employment for women.	8 women received 6 goats for breeding.

Sudha Devi from Guruha village takes care of her goats



Diversifying means of incomes

Activities	Number	Goal	By the end of 2018
Introducing farmers to enhanced agricultural practices: SRI (System of Rice Intensification) and SWI (System of Wheat Intensification)	16 training sessions	Increase agricultural productivity	70 farmers still using SRI and/or SWI.
Teaching farmers how to diversify productions, and introducing vegetables along with traditional crops (rice, wheat, lentils, and potatoes).	94 farmers	Foster food security and diversification; ensure more stable revenues in case of a crop's failure.	33 farmers are still engaged in agricultural diversification (i.e. 35%, which doesn't take into account production diversification by planting trees).
Building chicken farms	30 henhouses	Improve diet; bring additional income.	12 chicken farms are still in activity.

Further development

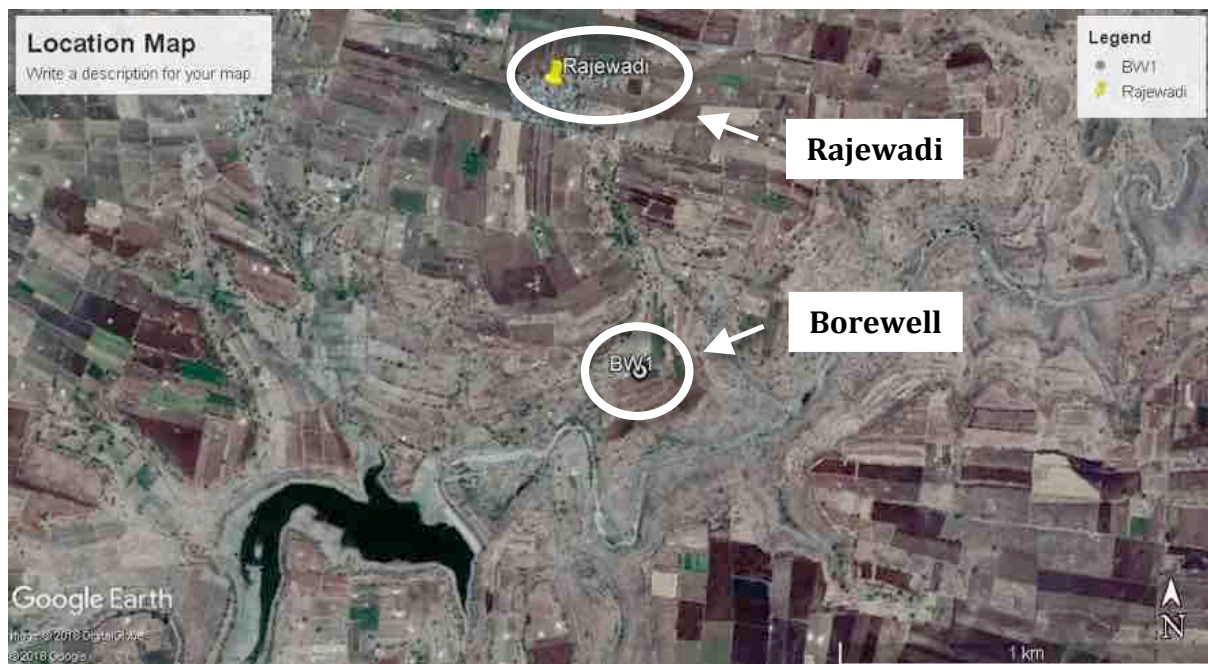
1. Project with Aquassistance

At the end of 2017, we asked Aquassistance, a non-profit organization specialised in water management (with whom we had already collaborated) to assist us in the first stage of a clean water adduction project we wanted to implement in Rajewadi village. They were in charge of running some specific tests to make a technical assessment of the situation.



Measuring the tube well's pressure

In October 2017, Pierre Chaou, Chief Project manager at Aquassistance, went to Ambajogai to identify which groundwater tables would have a sufficient flow to provide water for the whole village. We identified a drilling site that could supply the whole village of Rajewadi in drinking water. We then identified the locations for 6 fountains as well as a 7th in the school. We will also build a water tank to store the water coming from the bore well and connect it to the fountains.



Air view of Rajewaid and surroundings, with the borewell located south of the village

In April 2018, Aquassistance came to Rajewadi again, this time for a pumping test to assess whether the borewell's flow was sufficient to satisfy agricultural and domestic needs. The pumping test's results concluded that the drilling had a sustainable yield of 5,6 m³ per hour, for more than 12 hours a day (i.e. 67,2 m³/day). We also estimated the need for drinking water of the whole village to amount to 14 m³ per day.

This led Aquassistance to assert that the capacity and yield of the identified borewell were sufficient for use as a sustainable source of drinking water.⁵ Excellent news for Rajewadi villagers !

In addition to improving their general health, a better access to clean water will help them gain time and increase their wellbeing. Indeed, villagers currently spend an average of an hour and a half each day to fetch low quality drinking water (almost 9 trips).⁶



Work in progress for the pumping test



After the availability of the water was confirmed, we tested its bacteriological quality, which was, fortunately, good for human consumption.

Villagers have formed a water committee to manage the water and make important decisions regarding its access and distribution. The next phase will be to draw out a technical plan of the needs to make the project a reality and obtain the funds necessary to implement it.

⁵ From Aquassistance's assessment report, May 2018.

⁶Assessment of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Situation, Rajewadi Village, Ambajogai Block, Maharashtra, 2018, Survey ordered by Rain Drop and executed by Fight Against Hunger Foundation India.

2. Ramesh Chandra's tree nursery in Bargarh

In 2012, Rain Drop created a nursery in Bargarh, in Chitrakoot district (Uttar Pradesh state). Ramesh Chandra is the current manager and owner of the nursery, and he works with added zeal and passion as each year passes.

His interest in our training, and his enthusiasm for learning have led him to experiment with grafting mango, lemon, and guava trees. These represent most of his sales.

This year, he planted 2 609 new trees (see below).

He owns the only nursery in a 100 km radius, and a growing number of farmers come to him for the quality of his saplings.

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 labour- and water-intensive.



Uttar Pradesh state



Saplings in Ramesh's nursery

Common name	Mango	Lemon	Jujube	Guaya	Bael	Amla
Scientific name	<i>Mangifera Indica</i>	<i>Citrus limon</i>	<i>Ziziphus zizyphus</i>	<i>Psidium Guajava</i>	<i>Aegle Marmelos</i>	<i>Phyllanthus emblica</i>
Properties	fruit	fruit	fruit	fruit	fruit	fruit
Number of trees planted	112	621	297	366	38	175

Common name	Eucalyptus	Jackfruit	Promogranat	Karonda	Total
Scientific name	<i>Eucalyptus Globulus</i>	<i>Artocarpus heterophyllus</i>	<i>Punica Granatum</i>	<i>Carissa Carandas</i>	
Properties	wood	fruit	fruit	fruit	
Number of trees planted	46	525	294	135	2609

3. Tuljapur Project (Rain Drop India)

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 required our assistance to overcome the growing drought and harsh economic conditions. Rain Drop India was put in charge of the project, with Rain Drop's support: we helped them search for funding (leading to a financial partnership with Apollo Tyres Foundation) and implement the activities in Kamtha, Apsinga, and Kati, three villages located around Tuljapur (in Osmanabad, also declared « drought-affected district » by the state of Mahārāshtra in 2018).

We went to Kamtha and Apsinga in March 2018, in order to get a better idea of the project's developments and, if needed, suggest areas for improvement to Ashok Sarwade.

The Tuljapur project has two main objectives: preserving natural resources by guiding the villagers towards efficient water and soil management, and promoting social and economic independence of women.



Our community-based approach means emphasizing the implication and collaboration of the beneficiaries, at every stage of the project. We invite them to become the initiators and makers of the activities, by forming groups of farmers and groups of women, or asking them for a financial contribution.

The following activities were implemented:

- **Awareness-raising campaigns and training on the following topics:** sustainable water management, safe consumption of water, sustainable and biological farming practices, and soil testing (in 2018, 8 trainings were performed, gathering 679 participants).

The farmers Ramdas Maske, Pradip Shenge, Sambaji Kendre, Dilip Shendage and Anil Kendre, explain how useful Rain Drop's awareness-raising campaigns and trainings have been:

« Thanks to Rain Drop's trainings, we understood why we had to really think about our water situation and crop-planning. For many years, we followed the same crop patterns, but now we realize it was not efficient. The awareness-raising campaign also made us accept the pond-digging work and the watershed structures: we used to see them as a waste of cultivable lands and therefore money. »

- **Sustainable management of natural resources:** two water harvesting ponds built in Kamtha, 2 966 trees planted for 156 families, and 4 demo plots set up to instruct on the benefits of drip irrigation.



in one the demo plots in Apsinga.



Tukaram Deshmukh in Kamtha, speaks of the water harvesting ponds:

"Before the pond was constructed, I could only farm traditional crops – soy and arhar - in Kharif season (May – October). Thanks to the pond, I planted tuberoses on a half-acre, which provide me with regular income. One harvest gave me 87 000 rupees (1 070 euros), whereas with soy it was only 26 000 rupees (320 euros). This year, I introduced drip-irrigated papayas on one acre. I hope to get 25 papaya trees; it is currently worth 175 000 rupees (2 150 euros). My revenue in 2018 was 3 times higher compared with 2017! I could buy a new bike and a cow: I sell its milk at the local market. All these changes happened thanks to the pond."



Tukaram Deshmukh in Kamtha, in his papaya field, which getting mature (see left picture)

- **Strengthening women's capacities:** 13 Women Gram Sabah organized, livestock farming activities developed (3 goats were given to 33 women, 17 chicken farms were built, and 3 600 chickens delivered), biological vegetable gardens grown, and workshops for SHGs set up.

Trainings and workshops for SHGs	Number of sessions	Number of participants
Training on leadership and entrepreneurship	2	90
Information session on government schemes and programs	1	45
Workshop on proposal writing to receive loans	1	32
Technical training (food processing, packaging, sales)	2	49
Visit of a food-processing plant	1	33
Training on livestock and cattle management	2	110
Total in 2018	9	359



Women gram sabah in Kati village



Ayasha Shekh feeds her chicks

Mrs Mangal Kambale in Apsinga talks about goat breeding:

« I have been a widow for 8 years. Since my husband died, I have had very few resources, and no monthly income. I earned some money when Apsinga farmers needed an extra pair of hands, but it's only seasonal work and they often paid me late. Now, thanks to my goats I engaged in my own full-time business. I went to the training and gained knowledge on how to breed goats; I feel more confident for the future. I started with 5 goats, and my ambition is to reach 25 by the end of 2019. I am not destitute anymore; if I need money to raise my children, I can always sell a goat. »

- **Diversifying means of income:** development of seasonal income-generating activities during summertime, when there is no farming work.

Village	Business	Workers	Average revenue
Kati	Tailoring shop	12 women – each of them being specialized	3 000 rupees (37 euros) /month per woman, 5 000 (62 euros) when it's wedding season.
Apsinga	Noodle making	6 women	Daily revenue: 800 rupees (10 euros).
Kamtha	Papad (thin fried pancake) making	5 women	Daily revenue: 800 rupees (10 euros).



In front of the overlock machine given by Rain Drop India (Kati)



Papad makin (Kamtha)

4. Project in Togo

We have initiated a new project in Togo, together with our partner OPED-Togo. At the end of 2018, we obtained funds from the city council of Grasse and l'Agence de l'Eau Rhône Méditerranée Corse to launch the first stage of the project: the feasibility study.

The study started in January 2019, in 10 villages of the maritime township Amoussimé district, Yoto region (1h30 away from the capital Lomé). We aimed at clarifying the needs of villagers and the most appropriate solutions in the areas of safe drinking water, sanitation and sustainable farming practices.

Conclusion

The year 2018 was deeply affected by a worrisome lack of rainfall; nonetheless it was a year filled with both new activities and rich follow-ups.

There is no doubt that 2019 will be as interesting a year as 2018. Indeed, we are about to reach a new milestone in our organization's development, with our involvement in a new continent – Africa. As for our commitment to India, our goals will be first to develop additional sustainable water-management projects, and second to continue to implement activities that encourage communities' capacity building.

A year to look forward to for Rain Drop!