

**Project Brief Progress Updates Report**  
**(July 2019 to October 2019)**

**Project title:**

Mitigating drought through sustainable agriculture in Bundelkhand (U.P)

**Implementing organization:**

Gramin Vikas Vigyan Samiti (GRAVIS)

**Project Area:**

Banda/Mahoba District in Bundelkhand (U.P)

**Funding Agency:**

People Progress in India (PPI) USA

- **Nutrition, food and fodder security**
- **Establishment of Nutrition Gardens (NG)**

During the reporting period of time, the establishment of nutrition gardens is carried by the community with the help of VDC in three villages.

GRAVIS idea to arrange the merigold plant on the facing area for both a good looking unit and use of the plant was welcomed by the beneficiaries. So now they are growing many different vegetables in their gardening near to their home, which ensures easy and quick availability of green vegetables all the time.

Vegetables like pumpkin, palak, spinach, fenugreek, radish, mogri, cluster bean, cucumber, etc. are now always available to be served to guests and used for cooking at home. Above that, the families are saving money because they do not have to buy these things on the market.

The community now fully aware the result of the nutritional value of the vegetable in their families. The same nutrition garden was established by other new 50 families themselves. These families for their nutrition garden vegetable seed took from the project beneficiaries, who grown the previous year such vegetables. Because they stored good quality of vegetable seed with them.

## **1.2 Establishment of Agri-Horticulture units**

In the previous years GRAVIS established 10 AHUs with the support of VDCs over the last years. The GRAVIS team provides farm trainings for digging of 2 ft. wide and 3. ft. deep pit for plantations to the Agri-Horti beneficiaries.

The 5 AHUs created this year serve with their good amount of fruits and vegetables as a base for nutrition security and extra surplus, as the crop can be sold on the market and within the villages. Hence, AHUs family's income enhances, leaving the families very much happy and with an increased reputation and leads to other families also demanding the new AHUs on their farm land.



*Guava plants plantation providing full of yield with agriculture*

### **1.3 Nutrition Education Session**

The nutrition sessions were organized in two different training sessions, which were attended by both men and women. Local medical service providers and other service providers i.e. ANM, doctors and Asha workers informed about the importance of health.

The essence of their speech to the villagers was how important a sufficient diet with seasonal fruit and green vegetables is for a healthy and wealthy life.

The resource persons explained about sowing the plants of vegetables and fruit to get a good crop without any insects or chemical influence. We want to thank everyone who participated in these sessions, as they distributed fruit and breakfast during the training.

Sr. No.	Village Name	Female	Male	Resource person
1.	Bambori	15	12	Manju Thakur
2.	Sinchora	9	17	Ravindra Singh
3.	Maheva	11	13	Ranjana Varma
4.	Baghari	12	18	Ravindra Singh

- **Introduction of contour farm bunding- *Khadin (dyke)*:**

During this reporting period we selected the 4 khadin beneficiaries for construction of contour bunds at farm level by the VDC. At the same time we observed khadin bunds constructed under this project previously and saw good results. People are very happy to harvest different type of crops in their farm field for the first time, thanks to the khadin construction. The khadin helps to conserve the moisture and stops the soil and water erosion from the field.

We talked with one of the beneficiary (*Mr. Ramavtar singh, Mr. Ranvijay Brahmin and Bardani Dhuria Jatav*) about his crop and other benefits of the khadin. He told us, that this year his crop production did double in the same area of land. When we asked him how he uses his production he said he was finally able to pay back the borrowed loan from money lenders by selling some crop and can still keep the food grain for use at his home. “This year we don’t need to purchase any more from the market for my family's consumption”, he says happily.

He also shares that the neighboring families also getting wages from my khadin through harvesting and threshing. His thanks goes to the whole project team, supporters and implementers as well as the VDC members for selecting his family and building this unique structure, that now serves the family for a long time and leaves them hunger free and independent.

## 1.5 Fencing of fields:

- **Fencing**

During this period we see the results of the fencing work done under this project last year. This is a big example for others, because these 16 farmers formed a farmers group, took initiative and did wire fencing to fully secured their farm and their inside crops from wild animal and pigs. The total land is come under cultivable about 64 hector of land. These farmers started again the crop farming because they have fenced farm now and can get good and secure crop now.

This method inspired many people and they applied it in their farms to secure farming from wild animals at all time. This problem solution increases the self-reliance of farmers.

This year we introduced and replicated this model with another group of farmers to secure their farming. We discussed within the VDC meetings about selection of farmers for fencing the farm land. During the next month the VDC will select most needy group and implement the project.

- **Renovation of community pond/Johad for sustainable agriculture through group farming with innovative techniques**

- **Pond digging Work:**

As we did the Pond renovation work last year in Sighanpur bagari village? This pond was filled by rain and is very useful for a group of 16 farmers who are very much associate with this pond. The last 5 years without a tube well and any rainwater harvesting method made it impossible to conserve moisture to the farm land, so this year, thanks to this pond water they cultivate their farm for the first time.

The 16 families are very poor and belong from SC, OBC. So Panchayats allow using pond water for farming on 1-1 bigha land to each family for all 16 families and they can use the pond water on about 4 hector of land for farming after monsoon in winter and Sumer as well. These farmers are very happy to receive the pond water to cultivate their sustainable organic farming. Now in this area people seeing this model as an transformation of the farming community.

***After renovation of Pond (Johad) under this project and now small and marginal groups of farmers taking water for Life saving irrigation for their crops***



***During renovation/construction of Johad (Pond)***



***After renovation of Pond (Johad) with rain water***

### **1.7 Introduction of village level breeding centers:**

During this period, the VDC brings the pure improved breed of bull for breed improvements in Karvai village of Mahoba district. This bull stays in Community Gaushala, where the village

development committee takes care of it. The committee decided 200 rupees charges per animal for their nutritional feed. Now this bull provides full service to the villages and ensures good breed of calves male and female, which results in lactation period now not going empty.

People see this project as an innovative imitative for farming/ pastoral community. Many farmers now start their livestock rearing again, purchase milk animals and start their milk business.

### **1.8 Seed bank and fodder bank on household level**

- **Seed Bank**

Last recent session more than 50 farmers cultivated their farm with seeds from the seed bank. This year the rains are very good and on time, so farmers also get the different crop seeds from their community level established seed bank easily on time. Since they are able to harvest good amounts of crop on their farm land, they are very happy about the opportunity to use these seed bank seeds.

All farmers decided to pay back into seed bank again to reuse the seeds after harvesting the crop and threshing. They store properly, because they are very aware about the importance of stored seed in the seed bank during training under the project. Our staff helps during the storing time of the seed banks.

### **1.9 Farm yard manure composting for bio fertilizer**

During this reporting period the three farmers prepared the composting pit at their home with the help of a team of experts.

- Mr. Suraj Singh s/o Raju Singh, age 55 , Thakur Vidhanpur vdhari
- Mr. Brijraj Singh s/o Gulab Singh, age 60, Tahur Vidhanpur vdhari
- Mr Suresh Singh s/o Sitaram Singh, age 58, Bambhori Kashi

These three compost beneficiaries started the compost making at their own and used it in their kitchen garden as well as in the crop farming area. They are very sure about the result of the compost as previously other farmers getting the benefit of the use of composting in their farms.

Now they are putting all the wastage and manure in the pit and do things as taught during training. Every 3 months they are ready to use the prepared compost from their pits.

## ***2. Diversification of water sources and availability of sustainable and safe water***

### **2.1 Education session – water quality and its purity**

During this training VDC member and other community people including children and Panchayats representatives and community leaders, mother and fathers attended this program on a regular basis. We are also including school children and Gram Panchayats into the garbage free society campaign.

Project team members explained about clean water and their benefits during meeting. After discussing, all participants fully agreed to make a recharge pit for holding this west over flow water for recharging in to the soil back. This way everyone will be protected from different diseases and the water table will increase.

GRAVIS has introducing a Bio-sand water filter (BSWF) in the village on piloting basis to see the reactions and results.



***Water recharge pit nearby hand pumps and educating people on purity of water as well as mosquitoes free area.***

### ***3. Formation of CBOs – The Village Development Committees (VDC) and Self Help Groups (SHG), and their trainings***

#### **3.1 Village Development Committee (VDCs) Field Level Trainings:**

We already formed three Village Development Committee (VDCs) in all three project villages. We organize trainings on regular basis to discuss on different topics and issues and inform about innovative technologies. The members of VDC are fully aware about the project goal and its objectives. They also know about the implementing of the different activities in project targets villages.

#### **3.2 Women Self-help Groups (SHGs)**

We formed as on date 10 SHGs in project villages and provided the training on different topic of SHGs. Mainly on the record keepings; inter loaning, repayment, trust building and linkages with banks. Each SHGs having 10 to 12 members and each member participates in the monthly meeting of the SHGs. We trained on panchsutra of SHGs. Till date there are 102 women in the 10 SHGs. They are also participating in discussion of village development and also monitor the implementation work in the field.

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