

Impact of Watershed Development Program on Rural Socio-Economic Conditions

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Marathwada Sheti Sahayya Mandal is the voluntary organization deeply engaged in planing watershed development programmes in hard rock region of Maharashtra State. Hitherto the programme has been successfully implemented in more than 20 mini watersheds. The present paper deals with the case study of Kadvanchi mini watershed of Jalna District, Maharashtra state, (India), duly funded by NABARD.

By carrying out detailed survey and investigation of the water shed area, soil and water conservation structures have been constructed on suitable sites from ridge to valley along with the vegetation protection treatment. Soil conservation structures include Trenching and Bunding, and the water conservation treatment includes Gully plugs and Gabions as water velocity retarding structures. While earthen nala bunds, check weirs and check dams were constructed as water conservation measures.

After completion of the whole treatment, the impact of watershed development programmes was manifested in the following results:

1. Farm labourers became land holders
2. Migrated labourers returned back to their native place i.e. Kadvanchi village.
3. A significant improvement was noticed in the crop yield.
4. Progressive enhancement in socioeconomic conditions of rural populace
5. Employment generation due to drastic change in the availability of water.