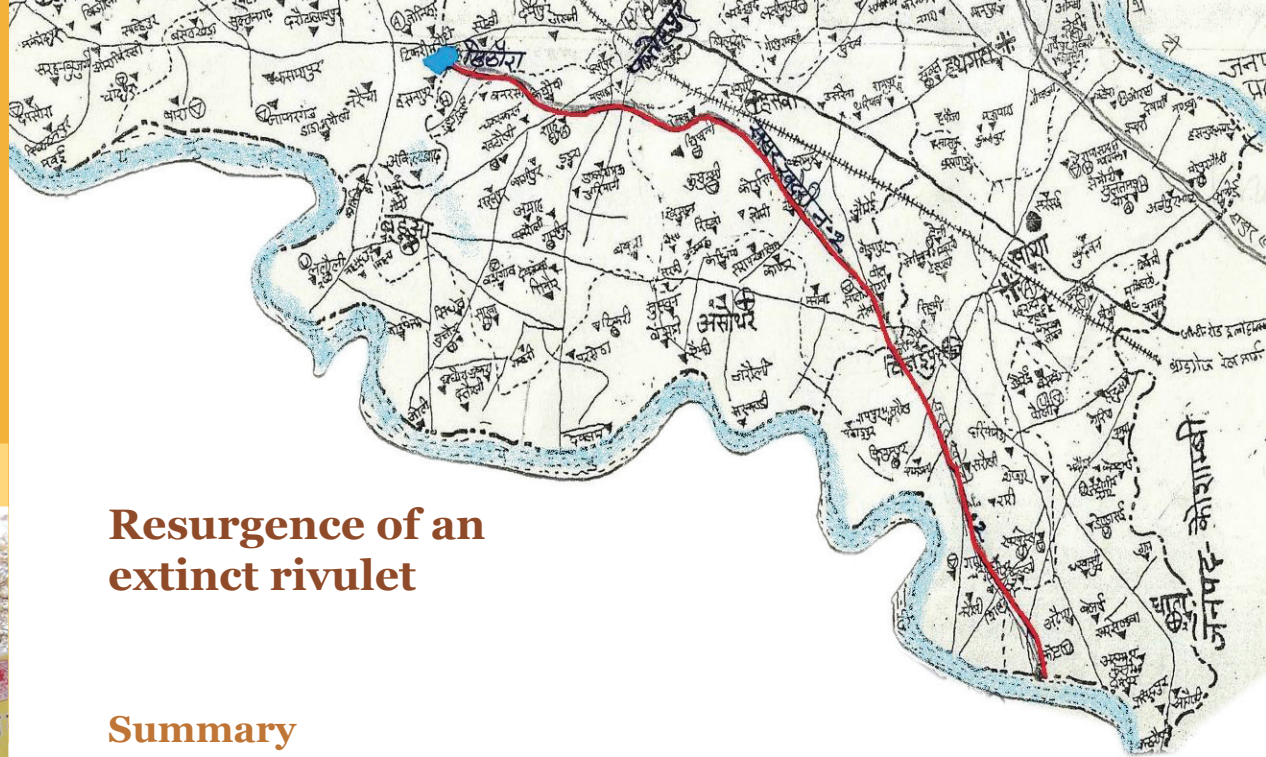




UTTAR PRADESH

Uttar Pradesh



Resurgence of an extinct rivulet

Summary

Sasur Khederi II, a defunct and dry rivulet of 46 kilometers in length in Fatehpur District of Uttar Pradesh was resurrected under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) during April-May, 2013. Enthusiastic community participation in planning and execution, apt and timely interdepartmental co-ordination, judicious mix of sound engineering and local knowledge and ardent administrative acumen of the district implementing authority have led to the restoration in the original shape and flow of the stream. This integrated water and soil conservation project not only provided gainful wage employment to 4,000 job-seekers every day for over two months, but also revived the lake Thithaura – the source point of Sasur Khederi II and saved the catchment areas from the problem of waterlogging.

The Challenge

FATEHPUR

Fatehpur district of Uttar Pradesh is situated about 150 kilometers south of Lucknow, the State capital of Uttar Pradesh. Though the district is situated in the doab region between the Ganga and the Yamuna, the inhabitants of the district used to face acute water crisis. Sources of surface water started drying up due to excessive use, encroachment and steady siltation of the natural drainage system. Two such dried up river drainage systems in the district were *Sasur Khederi I* and II. These are two distinct small rivers but they shared the name and similar problems. The immediate need was to treat the drainage system, catchment areas of the watercourse and massive de-siltation of the lake *Thithaura* – the originating point of one of the rivulets - *Sasur Khederi II*. This led to the conception of an integrated water and soil conservation project for this rivulet. The main challenges of the project were to track the course of the rivulet and to win the confidence of the community for successful completion of the activities proposed for this project.

Need for the Intervention

Acting on a remote sensing report published in 2012-13, the experts of the district resorted to a detailed water criticality analysis. Six Community Development Blocks (CDBs) of the district were found to be critical and it was semi-critical in seven others. The report also categorised four CDBs as dark zone where the ground water level could not be replenished. After the identification of problem areas, the district authorities decided to plan and execute the first phase of an integrated soil and water conservation project in these four CDBs. The prime objective of the project was to revive the *Sasur Khederi II* rivulet.





Renovation of traditional water bodies and soil and water conservation activities are permissible activities under MGNREGA. Thus, the district authorities decided to revive this 46 kilometers long rivulet that sourced from a lake in *Thithaura* village. Since the rivulet carves out its course through four blocks of the district and touches 42 villages before meeting the Yamuna, the project was aimed at providing a new life to the stream and to the inhabitants of 42 villages. The objectives of the project were to:

- restore the original shape and flow of the rivulet
- revive and restore the lake in *Thithaura* village which is the source of the rivulet
- save the adjoining villages from water logging

- de-silt the lake and ensure retention of water by making a gated check dam.
- plant trees around the source lake and the river so as to prevent further silting back.

The Intervention

The integrated project under MGNREGA was prepared by the lower Ganga Canal Division of the irrigation department. This project was discussed threadbare in an inter-departmental expert committee consisting senior officers from Departments of Revenue, Irrigation, Social Forestry, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj. As per the plan estimate made for execution of first phase of the project, Rs. 12 Crore was to be used with a labour material ratio of 75:25 to revive the rivulet *Sasur Khederi* II. The task was to revive 7.4 hectares of the lake area and 38 kilometers of the watercourse of the rivulet. Though the initial plan was to treat the whole breadth of the river among its entire length, the interdepartmental committee discussed the planned course of action. The committee decided to modify the plan to work on one third of the breadth of the rivulet which ranged between five meters to 38 meters at different places. The aim was to clear the path of the rivulet and let the rivulet take its own course. Systematic and scientific reviews were also made after the first spell of the rain to gauge the locations which required more deepening and widening.

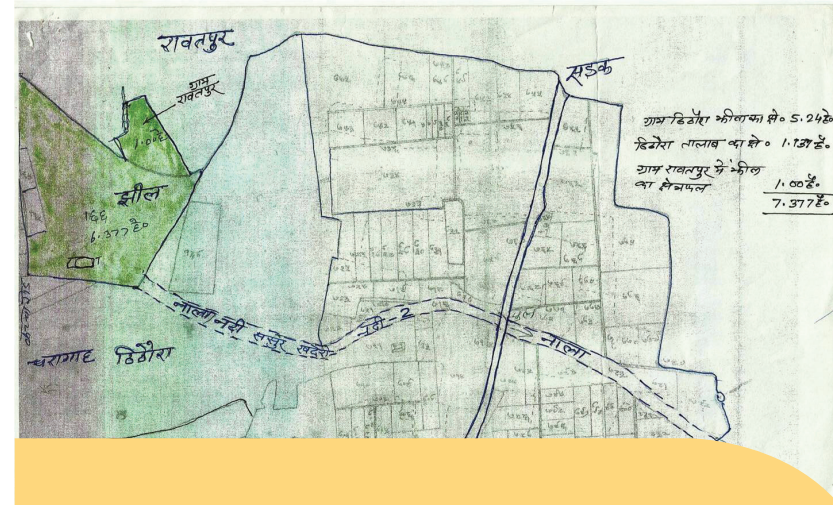
The activities under the project were taken up on a mission mode. Extensive community level meetings and discussions held in all the four blocks. *Pradhans* (Presidents of Gram Panchayats) were requested to support this

mission by motivating unskilled labourers who could come to the worksite. Block Development Officers (BDOs) organised village level meetings at every village alongside the river to sensitise the community about the benefits of this mission. To effectively disseminate the objective (s) behind this task of rejuvenating a dry rivulet, meetings and discussions with college principals, industries, social workers and media were organised regularly.

The estimated quantum of work was 500 meters cross sections with a natural gradient of 20 cms per Km. The work on the rivulet was divided into small stretches of one km each and was allotted to a team comprising of Secretary, Rozgar Sewak and Technical Assistant. At every stretch of one km, worksite facilities viz. drinking water, crèche, shade etc. were ensured. About 1,86,400 cubic meters of soil was excavated during the process of the work on the watercourse of the rivulet. This activity successfully generated 96,900 person-days. Further, about 78,200 cubic meters of mud was excavated out of the source lake *Thithaura* by generating 38,000 person-days.

Output and Outcome

The focus of this integrated project was on reducing the vulnerability and natural resource management through MGNREGA works to mitigate climate change issues. The resurrection of the rivulet has not only resulted in the generation of 1,34,900 person-days but also successfully revived the rivulet through scientific treatment of the entire watercourse. The activity has ensured sufficient water in the catchment areas by recharging the water aquifer. People have started cultivating water-intensive crops which they never did due to chronic shortage of water. The source lake of the rivulet has started retaining water. As on 16th July 2013, the lake had



90,000 cubic mtrs. of water. At one point, the discharge of water from the lake was estimated to be 600 cusecs. Today, this successful rivulet rejuvenation effort has brought in great cheers to the villagers in the catchment areas of *Sasur Khederi II* as the villages are free from the fear of getting marooned due to overflowing in the monsoon.

Source:

Verma, Kanchan; District Magistrate, Fatehpur, Uttar Pradesh: Presentation made at the National workshop on Convergence on September 17, 2013, Organized by Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, New Delhi



Ensuring Dignity and Safety for Women

Summary

Around 80 per cent of the population of Barabanki district of Uttar Pradesh is dependent on agriculture. A social sector scheme like the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), with its scale of funds and flexibility, provided a great opportunity to take up development works. Open Defecation was serious problem in the district, both from the perspective of health as well security of rural women. The district developed a model design in collaboration with UNICEF for toilets. As a pilot, toilets were taken up on mission mode. Generating awareness and demand from field through Information Education and Communication (IEC) activities was a huge part of this exercise. The district has also tried to initiate other convergence projects with the Agriculture Department, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) etc.



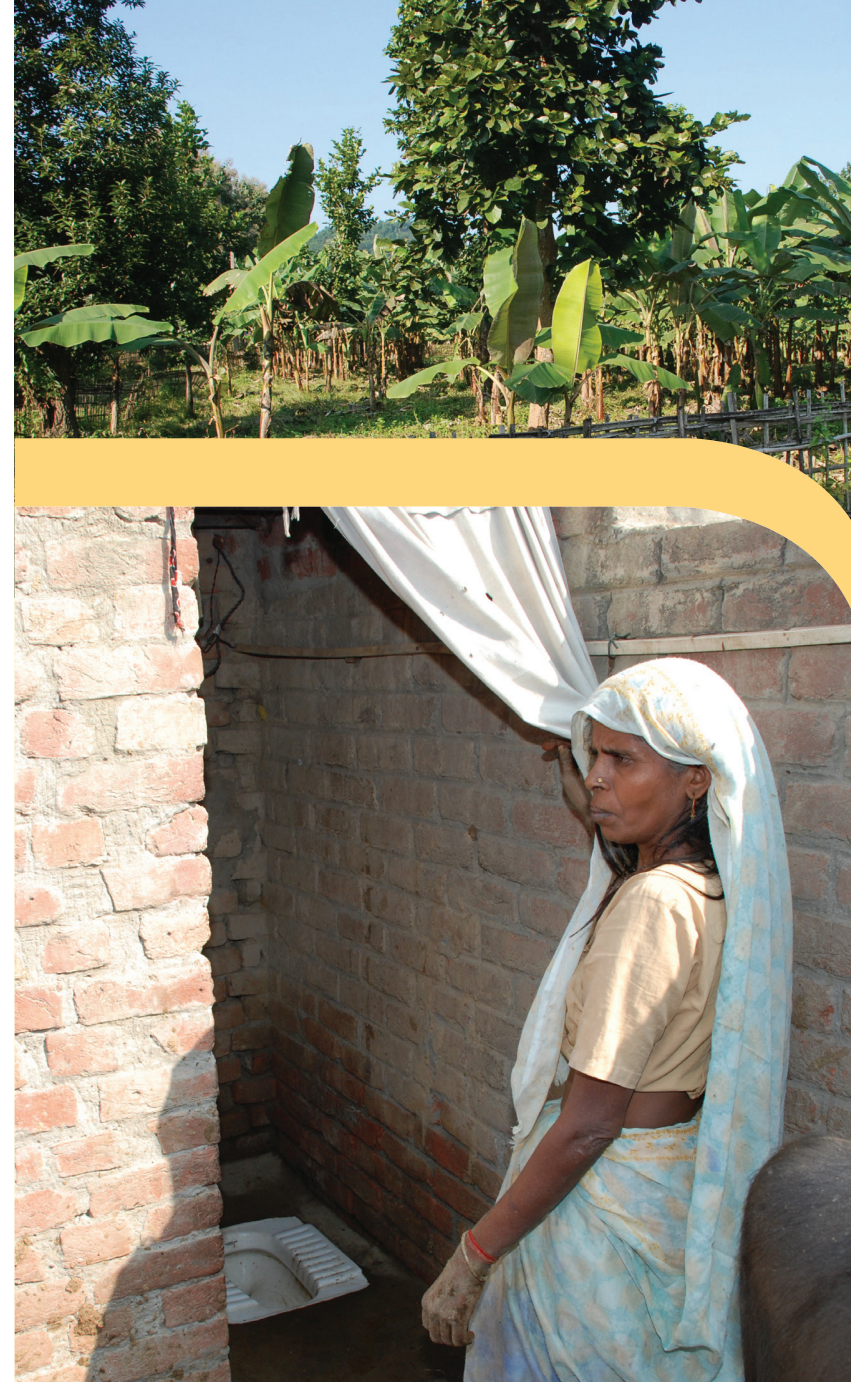
BARABANKI

Open defecation is a serious problem in Barabanki district. While the MGNREGA provides for convergence with the *Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan* (NBA) for the construction of toilets, the district administration believed it was important to ensure a good design for toilets within the unit cost of Rs.10,000 (as specified by the Ministry of Rural Development). For this, collaboration was initiated with UNICEF and a model cost structure and design for the toilet was finalized.

An intensive information campaign was undertaken in around 100 targeted villages. The campaign included rallies, nukkad natak (street plays), *Nari Swabhiman Yatras* (campaign on ensuring dignity of women). In addition to this, over 300 students went door to door in these villages distributing literature and educating villagers on the health and hygiene issue related to open defecation.

Since this was a pilot project, five Gram Panchayats (GPs) from each of the 15 blocks were selected. Toilet construction was taken up in mission mode over a two week period.

Another project to promote hygiene and sanitation in the district was also taken up in convergence with the Agriculture Department. 50 Compost units and 20 Vermi-Compost units for each GP were targeted. By concerted efforts 1413 Vermi-Compost units and 5640 Compost units have been completed. This has also given a huge fillip to Organic Farming. Further, these Compost pits also ensure that agricultural and animal waste get effectively utilised.





Apart from above mentioned initiatives other convergence programs undertaken are as follows:

- The district has already constructed 632 goat keeping shelters. A tie up for aiding the beneficiaries to finance goats through loans has been established with NABARD and local banks.
- More than 70000 person-days were created through work on major demarcation, plantation of neem, kadam, seesam, wherein the plants were provided by the Forest department etc.

Through these efforts the issues of sanitation, particularly with regard to women dignity are being addressed. The Compost units and Vermi composts have also addressed the issues of over-use of chemical fertilizers and consequently the degradation of soil. The women have also started earning by selling earthworms to other users.

The initiatives by the district show how MGNREGA can be used not only for generating employment but also for creation of tangible assets, empowerment of women, placing emphasis on organic farming, dovetailing of banking schemes for livelihood activities for women; in other words, to bring about a change in the lives of people.

Source:

S, Ministhy; District Magistrate, Barabanki, Uttar Pradesh

(Note: Right before the publication of this document, the Ministry of Rural Development took a decision to increase the contribution of MGNREGA to Rs. 5,400 for IHHLs constructed in convergence with NBA and Rs. 10,000 for IHHLs constructed independently i.e. entirely under MGNREGA.)



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