

## Rajgarh takes water harvesting lessons from Sehore



District officials from Rajgarh in Madhya Pradesh recently visited the neighbouring Sehore district to study the latter's water harvesting interventions funded by ITC Foundation and successfully implemented by Vibhawari - a non-profit organization that promotes sustainable development in both rural and urban areas of the country.

Among the 26-member team that visited Sehore on 12th August, 2019 were central government officers – Ms. Surinder Kaur, Director, CWC, Ministry of Jal Shakti (Block Nodal Officer) and Mr. Pradeep Kumar, Scientist-NIH (Technical Officer). Others in the team were government officials, PRI members, farmers and engineers.

The visit was a part of the Jal Shakti Abhiyan, their mission being to study the water situation in Rajgarh and initiate interventions in water conservation and rainwater harvesting; Renovation of traditional and other water bodies/tanks; Reuse, borewell recharge structures; watershed development; and Intensive afforestation.

**Water conservation structures studied:**

- **Trenches:** These low cost structures made in fields were proving to be very useful in water harvesting and in preventing soil erosion.
- **Gabion:** A gabion is semi permeable barrier, made of boulders in a mesh of steel wires and anchored to the stream bank, to slow but not stop the flow of storm water in a small watercourse to promote water infiltration to groundwater and help prevent soil erosion.
- **Community Pond:** In Satpipaliya village, villagers renovated an old pond and are now using water from it for all household purposes. To manage the pond, a 'Village Development Committee' was formed. Village community can use the water for household uses such as washing clothes, bathing and for cattle to drink – for a small fee per household. Irrigation from the pond is strictly prohibited.
- **Stop Dam:** About 60 years old, the Stop Dam in Ramnagar village was in a pathetic condition and badly in need of renovation, owing to lack of maintenance over the past 3 years. However, with financial support from ITC and technical support from Vibhawari, the stop dam was renovated and is now being used for irrigation in Ramnagar and other nearby villages.



#### Comments from participants of exposure visit:

“Today we visited Ichawar Block and observed trenches and other water harvesting structures. I will construct the same in our Gram Panchayat,” Mr. Mohan Lal Nagar, Sarpanch GP- Bhatkheri Block- Sarangpur, Rajgarh.

“We are facing severe water crisis in our village. If I make similar structures in my village, it will greatly help in agriculture,” Mr. Balu Prasad Nagar, Farmer, Village- Khajuriya Hari, Block- Sarangpur, Rajgarh.

Piramal Foundation has been supporting JSA water conservation initiatives across 12 districts in the country. In Rajgarh, discussions with the district administration and central officials had revealed that there was a great need for water conservation structures. To address the need, the Foundation realized that officials, engineers, farmers and PRI members need to be exposed

to such structures and sensitized about their benefits. In order to provide a practical orientation to this, the exposure visit to Sehore that had good water conservation structures was organised.

