

Muttala Village gets Purified water supply

Muttala is a remote village in Atmakur mandal of Anantapur district. AF Ecology Centre is the Project Implementing Agency for Government funded Integrated Watershed Management Project (IWMP). As part of IWMP watershed project implementation, an Entry Point Activity was taken up. The Entry Point Activity taken up was setting up of a water



purifying plant. The population of this village is about 2000 with 475 households. The village falls in gray zone of ground water table. The high fluoride content in ground water was causing health hazards. There is no safe drinking water facility in the village. Some better-off people used to buy water from private purified water suppliers from Atmakur town. And women carried drinking water for their domestic needs from bore wells which were far off, and frequent power failure added to their woes. Some women were also losing wages by spending more time in fetching water.

During the baseline survey and Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), the problem of drinking water was voiced by the villagers. Sooner the watershed committee was formed. AF staff discussed with watershed committee and they all decided to solve this issue of drinking water. Fortunately the IWMP Program has a provision for taking up an Entry Point Activity (EPA). The EPA is aimed at identifying a common need in the village and fulfilling the same by collective efforts and utilizing the funds allocated under IWMP. The Watershed committee decided to install a water purification plant using Reverse Osmosis (R.O) technology.

The feasibility study was done and a sustainable economic model was worked out. The committee collected a contribution of Rs 30,000/- @ Rs 100 per family from all the families. Entire people of the Village came forward enthusiastically to pay their contribution. A piece of common land was identified at the entrance of the village to establish the water plant. An amount of Rs 3,79,058/- was sanctioned from IWMP

project. A bank account was opened in State bank of India for financial transactions. RO water plant was installed within a month. The panchayat bore well which was not functioning was repaired and used for this purpose. The villagers took active part in the installation process. A separate committee was set up for day to day management of the plant and guidelines were set for water utilization.

Each family is given a 'monthly water usage card' which costs Rs 50. With this card a family is entitled for a maximum of 20 containers of 25 liters capacity. With this system each liter of water cost 10 paise compared to 25 paise purchased from private water sellers. An operator was appointed to look after the plant and to collect money from the users. He is paid a salary of Rs 1500 a month from the sales proceeds. The remaining amount would be used to maintain the repairs, if any. The operator reports to Watershed committee.

Now Muttala village, all the families are getting benefitted a lot from this water plant. Especially women are happy as they have safe drinking water at their reach and also it saved them from stress and a lot of drudgery. This EPA has brought the whole village together and created a very positive social environment in the village. With this, the villagers cooperated well with watershed activities and all the activities were completed in time with high quality.

Muttala Watershed is recognized as the best performing model in the state of A.P for the year of 2013-14. Finally the community participation and best use of a government program has created a lasting impact on the natural resources, agriculture as well on non-farm livelihoods in Muttala Village.