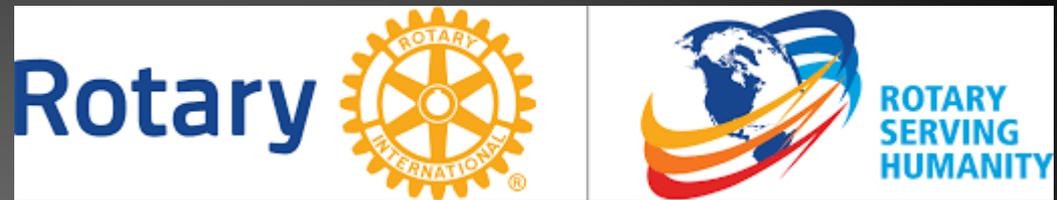




# Water Conservation

Rotary Club of Nashik

# Introduction



We, the Human mankind need water as one of our basic needs for living our lives. That too, fresh water is an integral part of our living since inception. Even though there is huge quantity of saline water available in the form of oceans, fresh water useful for living is scarce. We get it as a natural resource in the form of rain and melting of ice, both of which form the sources of the rivers and lakes.

The rivers and lakes have been our source of fresh water since ages. Man has a strong history of setting up habitats near a source of water, hence you will find most old cities and villages are on the banks of rivers. When the population of these villages and cities was less, the water was sufficient for the use of these human establishments. As the population of the world increased manifold, fresh water became scarce as man started to use water not only for his basic living but also for other various reasons such as farming, industry, Electricity generation, etc. And now at present, the situation is such that there are fierce disputes arising between, individuals, cities, states and even countries for the distribution of this precious natural resource.

This scarcity of fresh water gave rise to the need for saving of the available limited quantity of fresh water we have at our disposal. Hence over the years, the importance of Water Conservation has increased immensely and now serious efforts are being made the world over for water conservation. There are various ways for conservation of the water. Few are listed shortly below:

- ❖ Arresting of water flowing in the rivers towards the oceans, by constructing various types and sizes of dams and other methods of water shed management.
- ❖ Harvesting the rain water which flows off to rivers for use in seasons other than rainy season.
- ❖ Ground water recharge by various types of procedures.
- ❖ Construction of percolation tanks, etc.

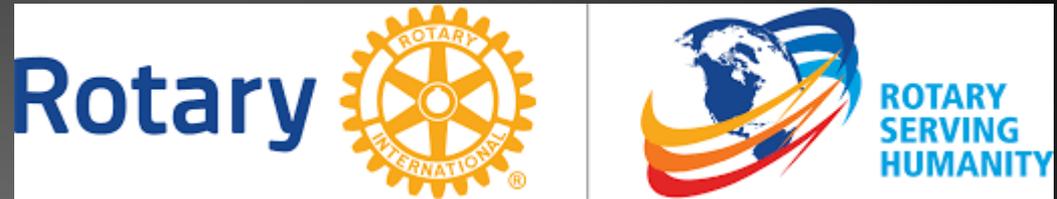
# Role of Rotarians



In India too, there are huge efforts being made in all types of methods for conservation of water since many years. Looking at the population of our country & the need of fresh water which will be needed in the near & distant future, these efforts are far too less and there is a need for a revolution for Water Conservation in various ways to suffice the needs of our future generations. We as Rotarians can play a pivotal role in starting this revolution.

Taking a cue from this thought, we a team of Rotarians at Rotary Club of Nashik have decided to work to the best of our abilities for this cause of conservation of water for the future generations of the surrounding areas of Nashik in collaboration with other like-minded organisations which are also committed for this cause.

# Background



As is the case with most parts of our country with hilly terrain, the case of almost all villages in some talukas such as Peth, Surgana, Trimbakeshwar and Igatpuri in Nashik district, is very peculiar. In these areas, there is very heavy rainfall in the monsoon season, but due to the terrain and geological strata, all this precious rainwater flows off to the low lying areas and in some cases in the neighbouring state. In spite of the heavy rainfall, these villages are left high & dry with no water left for even drinking purpose, let alone farming, etc. in the periods of summer season. As there is no water for farming or any other activity there is no work left for the youth & other earning members of these villages. Hence they migrate to the cities in the vicinity to earn a living. Such is the effect of scarcity of water, migration is common in these areas and the villages are left only with the live stalk animals and older people to look after these animals.



This situation has to change and has to change very urgently. Hence we decided, under the prestigious platform of Rotary Club of Nashik and with likeminded organisations such as Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram, Mahindra & Mahindra, etc., to focus on the area of water conservation in the villages of Peth Taluka which has a severe problem of water scarcity in summers as discussed earlier. Zeroing in on a smaller area, which is around 75 kms from Nashik, we focussed on a small cluster of around six villages called Kalampada, Lavhali, Sadadpada, Ranvihir, Kelvihir and Khokartale for working on water conservation. Also another village called Zari was selected for work on sanitation.

# Confidence Building measures

Even at a short distance of 75 kms from Nashik, the environment and the culture of the people here is totally different. People in the villages are a little sceptical and very tentative to interact with the city dwellers like us. Initially, to gel with the environment and to get the confidence of the villagers, a whole lot of different measures were undertaken. Some are listed below:

Survey of the above rural areas for parameters like population (male, female, children,) houses, fields, cattle.

- ❖ Guidance for Temple construction
- ❖ Tree plantation
- ❖ Medical Camps
- ❖ Agricultural Experiments
- ❖ Women small saving groups
- ❖ Addressing of women health issues
- ❖ Training for Honey bee keeping
- ❖ Provision of water drawers on wells, etc.

These activities were confidence building measures for the villagers. After all these activities the main focussed activity of work on water was undertaken.



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# Challenges



The terrain in most of these villages is very much hilly and has many valleys and gorges from which the rainwater flows off to the lower areas of the neighbouring state of Gujarat. We studied the whole area by physically traversing its length & width and the valleys, etc. The stratum here is mostly hard basalt rock. After much deliberation, it was observed that the best option for water conservation here is arresting the flow of this rainwater and make it available for the people in the dry season. And this objective can be achieved by constructing various types and various sizes of check dams in the valleys to arrest this rainwater. A series and combination of various types of check dams have to be constructed in a single valley for effective conservation of water. Various types include temporary dams using soil filled in bags called as “Bori bandharas”, small earthen dams, dams in stone masonry, dams in gabion walls and permanent structures like dams in concrete.

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*Thank You!*