



Green Living

**Green Initiative in Talasari
and Vikramgad Blocks to
Promote Additional
Source of Livelihoods for
4000 Tribal Farmers**

March 2023

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Project Background

Green Initiative, launched with the support of Larsen & Toubro Public Charitable Trust (LTPCT), aims at creating an alternative but sustainable source of income for deserving tribal farmer families. Vrutti is the implementing agency for this project implemented in the Talasari and Vikramgad blocks of Palghar district in Maharashtra.

LTPCT and Vrutti in collaboration with block and district administrations have undertaken various initiatives in the Talasari block to improve tribal livelihood through agriculture-based interventions from 2021.

During the year 2020–21, the Green Initiative project was started to provide an alternative income to needy farmer families of Talasari and Jowar blocks. As part of this project, around 23,000 saplings of fruit-bearing trees such as cashew and mango were planted on the farms of more than 2,300 farmers in these two blocks. The project experienced a success rate of 70%.

The success of the project motivated LTPCT and Vrutti to extend the project to a large number of farmers in Talasari and Vikramgad blocks by planting fruit-bearing trees mainly cashew and mango. The initiative was aimed at providing a substantial and sustainable source of income to the farmers and their families as there are few or rather no opportunities for farmer communities to earn, other than farming.



Project Objectives

- To enhance the tribal household income of 4,000 farmer families
- To improve the biodiversity, soil and water conservation through plantation of fruit bearing trees in Talasari and Vikramgad blocks of Palghar district, Maharashtra.

Project Duration

- 1 July 2022 to 31 March 2023

Project Coverage

- The project was executed in Talawada and Malwada clusters and partly in Kurze cluster of Vikramgad.
- Solar-based lift irrigated villages that have shareholders in Talasari Adivasi Farmers Producer Company Pvt Ltd of Talasari block.

Sl.No	Location	Gram Panchayat Covered	Villages Covered	Padas (Hamlets) Covered	Farmers Covered
1	Talasari	12	16	53	2000
2	Vikramgad	11	24	54	1920
3	Schools				87
Total		23	40	107	4007

Distribution of Saplings

Mango



Vikramgad
Households - **5826**
Vikramgad
Schools - **261**
Talasari
Households - **6000**

Cashew



Vikramgad
Households - **5826**
Vikramgad
Schools - **261**
Talasari
Households - **6000**

Moringa, Drumstick



Vikramgad
Households - **3884**
Vikramgad
Schools - **174**
Talasari
Households - **4000**



Tribal smallholder farmer bats for smart and scientific agriculture

Parshuram Ragho Gowari is a tribal smallholder farmer hailing from a poor family in Khadaki village of Vikramgad block in Palghar district of Maharashtra. The 35-year-old farmer and his family members including mother, father and wife earn their living as daily wage labourers. However, their combined income of Rs 1,500 a month was barely enough to meet their basic needs including the education of Parshuram's son.

Parshuram says, "The main source of our income was agriculture but we didn't know the right way to plant trees. Hence, there was no income from agriculture. I used to get frustrated when I saw the fallow land."

With hopes of reviving his life, Parshuram enrolled himself as a beneficiary of the Green Initiative in 2022-23. Through this initiative, Parshuram and his family were given 3 cashew, 3 mango and 2 drumstick saplings as a means of livelihood.

He says, "We have received cashew and mango plants from other organisations also, but Vrutti has given me the proper guidance to nurture my plants. My approach to agriculture has now changed. I look at cashew as a commercial crop."

Along with tending to his plants, Parshuram also spends his day cultivating cluster beans and other vegetables. The improved ways of cultivation have resulted in an increase in his income to Rs 10,000 this year.

Parshuram says, "There is a lot of scope in the field of agriculture. If we adopt smart and scientific agriculture practices, the results we get will surely be higher. I want to develop my land and also develop financially with the help of Vrutti and LTPCT. Vrutti gives the right direction to poor farmers like me."

Vrutti is helping farmers like Parshuram adopt appropriate and cost-effective technological practices.

Woman farmer overcomes water shortage to raise plants

Water shortage is rife in Zari village of Palghar district in Maharashtra where 28 year-old Kalpana Mahesh Valvi lives with her husband Mahesh, mother-in-law and three children. At a time when many farmers shied away from horticulture despite Government sponsored schemes and enough space around their homes due to water shortage, a determined Kalpana has worked hard to turn the tide in her favour!

Mahesh is a fish worker and he goes away on fishing boat for six to seven months a year leaving Kalpana to take care of the family. It is Kalpana who manages the agriculture operations in the one acre of land surrounding their home besides providing care to her family.

Kalpana has no assured source of water but admirably she has nurtured three saplings – two mangoes and one cashew – that were supplied during the first phase of the Vrutti-LTPCT Green Initiative project in 2020-21.



Backed by a strong desire to raise an additional source for her family using the income earned from the three trees, Kalpana walks to the hand pump half a kilometre from her home and headloads water needed for her trees. A proud Kalpana says with a smile, “My plants have grown 7-8 feet. I will do my best to nurture them for they are my hope for the future.”

Kalpana expects that the three trees together would increase her family's income by Rs 6000 to 8000 a year.



Jayram pins high hopes on his mango plant

Jayram Dharma Masmar's great grandfathers and grandfathers have been into agriculture, and this 24-year-old from Vadawali village of Talasari in Palghar district of Maharashtra has continued his family's tradition of agriculture. Jayram has been contributing to agriculture as a labourer, and earns Rs 9,000 per month.

Jayram, who owns 1.5 acres of land, always wanted to plant trees but he was not in a financial position to buy and plant trees and so he gave up the idea.

Things changed for Jayram when Vrutti and LTPCT entered the scene three years ago.

Jayram says, "Farmers in my village have mainly cultivated paddy using rainwater only. When Vrutti realised that we were not able to cultivate second crops after the rainy season, they and LTPCT installed solar panels in our entire area, thus solving the water problem to a great extent."

Farmers in the village were also introduced to a new crop viz. chilli. Jayram says, "We were very scared initially but our fear changed into joy when the chilli crop demo was a success. After that, farmers have started planting chillies and are getting a good income."

Along with the new crop, farmers were also given plant saplings to help them earn a better income. Jayram got 3 mangoes, 3 cashew and 2 drumstick saplings, which he has planted on his land and is tending to it daily.

Jayram, who has pinned great hopes on the mango plant, says, "I am sure that I will get an increased income from the tree. I am thankful to Vrutti & LTPCT and I hope to get similar support the next year too."



Planting a lifeline



Mangesh Kakdya Dokphode of Kunj Gaythan village in Vikramgad is a busy man today as he has eight plants to raise. This tribal farmer always nurtured a dream to have a few fruit-bearing trees on his land, but could not realise it.

It was in September 2022 that Vrutti-LTPCT started an initiative to supply plants to farmers of Talasari and Vikramgad to help them earn a better income. Mangesh was one of the beneficiaries of the project.

Mangesh says, "I first got to know about the project and the distribution of plants from the Grama Sabha where Vrutti team members gave us an orientation on tree plantation. We were given training on pit digging. After the training. I understood the correct process of tree plantation and they gave us a detailed standard operating procedure."

Vrutti team members went around inspecting the digs to ensure that it was done as per the standard. Plants were distributed only to those farmers who had dug pits and after the village submitted the list of farmers who had done so.

Says Mangesh, "We received the plants a day after the list was given. I got eight plant saplings including three cashews, three mangoes and two drumsticks. I have planted them as per the training given to us."

Mangesh has also fenced the plants to protect them and keep them safe from stray animals.

The 39-year-old farmer says, "These plants are my lifeline now. I am hoping that they will take me and my family out of the financial difficulties that we are currently facing."



Sarita Shailesh Javaliya
Talasari



Santosh More
Vikramgad



Indu Suresh Ghatal
Vikramgad



Chaitya Ragha Bhagat
Talasari



Vasanti Vijay Bhagat
Talasari



Shantaram Haraji Mahale
Vikramgad



Maljula Vijay Malvkar
Vikramgad



Naresh Gond
Vikramgad

Photo Gallery



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