

**Waste Land Area Development Initiative (WADI) by Gramin Vikas Trust (Ratlam):**  
**A Milestone Achievement towards providing Sustainable Livelihood to the Rural Tribal**



The **WADI (Waste Land Area Development Initiative)** Project, one of the flagship programme of NABARD funded under TDF (Tribal Development Fund) and implemented by Gramin Vikas Trust, Ratlam, is an initiative to promote horticulture homestead farming in rural areas. Gramin Vikas Trust at present is implementing two Organic WADI projects in Bajana Block of Ratlam district. The Project focuses on providing alternative livelihood opportunities to the rural tribal, mostly, through promotion of Fruit Plant Orchard and Vegetable farming. The Project targets to cover a total of 1000 acres / 1000 beneficiaries per WADI and is comprised of several components like Horticulture promotion, better Agricultural practices promotion, promotion of Rural based institutions (like SHGs, VDC, WA group etc.), Water Resource Development, Soil & Water Conservation and Community Health Awareness programmes, etc. The WADI programme as initiated by Gramin Vikas Trust also emphasizes on ensuring proper participation of the beneficiary community.

The roadmap for the project of developing 1000 WADIs follows plantation of WADIs in slots of 200:400:400 (per 1000 WADI project) i.e., the plantation is being done in first three years of the

project along with the other components following it. The remaining 4 years are for monitoring and community strengthening and ensuring their participation.

The development of WADI is the most important part of the projects, which includes plantation of Fruit plants, supply of Agri inputs as well as promotion of intercropping. In organic WADI-I, a total of 52 plants were given for plantation/per WADI which included varieties like Mango and Guava in the ratio of 42:10 respectively; whereas in the Organic WADI Project II i.e. WADI cum Mandap (Two-tier cropping) model, lemon plant is an additional variety along with Guava and Mango distributed, in the ratio of 20 Mangoes: 16 Guava: 8 Lemons.

The project has made a remarkable change in the lives of the rural population of the project area. Before initiation of the project, the farmers were confined to their traditional practices of agriculture as well as the waste land areas were of no use. In the past, before the intervention, the wasteland areas were inutile and even futile to support as a graze land for the livestock to the villagers. The WADI project has proven itself as a Pharos paving itinerary for the farmers to better lives through innovative initiative of promotion of remunerative orchard of mango and guava fruit plants as well as two-tier vegetable cultivation. The project also proves its singularity with development of the orchards and vegetable cultivation pockets with entirely organic basis. The organic produce from the orchard is not only providing an edge to the farmers but also acting as an inspiration of the visiting farmers to the WADIs of other villages.

The comparative view of different aspects in the lives of beneficiaries, to assess the impact of adoption of the initiative, has evinced a positive change in their economical, social and intellectual capital. The project has helped them fetch a regular income by embracing practices of vegetable cultivation, inter cropping, vermi-compost production etc. The ascension in their household income, social capital and awareness status itself explicate the impact of the WADI initiative in the lives of the beneficiary farmers.