



STAKEHOLDERS' INVOLVEMENT FOR MAINSTREAMING UTFI IN PROGRAMS AND POLICIES

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Increased incidence and intensity of climate induced extreme events such as floods and droughts are the cause of concern as they result into loss of agricultural production, hardships, misery and huge economic losses. To address the twin problem of floods and droughts for sustainable agriculture, an innovative research concept called Underground Taming of Floods for Irrigation (UTFI) has been introduced. This concept was discussed with stakeholders including implementing partners, government agencies and civil society organizations right at the planning and design stage to not only seek their inputs but also their active and continued involvement. Piloting of this concept was initiated in Rampur district of Uttar Pradesh in 2015 after a detailed exercise for site selection. A village pond was renovated and recharge structures were installed within the pond to validate the concept and to understand technical feasibilities. Given the nature of this community owned and maintained concept, local farming community, sub-district and district level officials from the district administration, development, irrigation and agriculture and local Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) (Farm Science Centre) have been involved through the various stages of the project to bring in the sense of ownership. Periodical meetings and field visits are being conducted with local community and government agencies to share and exchange views. This has also led to convergence of National Flagship Scheme, Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Scheme (MGNREGA), for site renovation and maintenance of recharge system. This also demonstrated buying in from the community as well as development agencies. Constant engagement of the project team with senior district officials has also resulted in mainstreaming of UTFI concept in the National Flagship Program, Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY), which aims at providing access of water to each farm as this has been included in the District irrigation Plan (DIP).