

COMPLETE PROJECT REPORT

2020 - 2023



PRESENTED BY
Paani Foundation

Satyamev Jayate Samruddha Gaon Spardha

1. Introduction

The Satyamev Jayate Samruddha Gaon Spardha (Prosperous Villages Competition) was launched in 2020 to inspire well-performing Water Cup villages to adopt a more comprehensive approach towards uprooting drought. The mission of this competition was to go a step beyond water conservation, and also on community-led water management and environment restoration.



The thought process behind launching this competition was as follows:

The unyielding efforts of all the villages who participated in the Water Cup from 2016 to 2019 created over 550 billion litres of water storage capacity in the state. Several villages drastically increased their water conservation capacity.

However, as water availability increased so did its usage.

In some villages, the area under water-intensive crops grew, and the rate of water extraction shot up. With indiscriminate and unmanaged water usage, human-made drought struck again in some villages, as summer approached. This reality made it clear that working on water and soil conservation alone would not and cannot insulate a village against drought. Moreover, the crisis of climate change further exacerbated agricultural uncertainties and drought.

Therefore, after consulting with several experts and veterans in the field, Paani Foundation took the critical step of ending the Water Cup after August 2019, and started work on launching the Samruddha Gaon Spardha.

A total of 944 villages nominated themselves to participate in this competition. They were all eligible for this competition based on the quality and consistency of their work done in the Water Cup held from 2016-19.

In December 2019, an introduction to the Samruddha Gaon Spardha was given to over 60 members of Paani Foundation's team, comprising Regional Co-ordinators, Taluka Co-ordinators and members of the Mumbai and Pune offices. This three-day training and discussion was held at the Snehalaya campus, in Ahmadnagar district.

2. Training Programme

For the Spardha, a residential training programme was created from scratch, focused on aspects necessary for demand management of water and environment restoration. The core driving principle of this training was to foster a deep, emotional and concrete understanding of how ecological resources are shared resources and how they can be nurtured in a sustainable way, to benefit both - the environment and the village community. The training also focused on climate change - its causes, impacts and way forward.

In Jan-Feb 2020, our school programme, Nisargachi Dhamaal Shala, was also conducted in Zilla Parishad schools in the villages participating in the spardha. Students were sensitised on our place on this planet, the importance of co-existing with other elements, sharing natural resources as a community, and climate change. Via this programme, we reached **30,000 students** across **800 government schools** in the villages.

In the first week of February, a pilot of the four-day residential training on demand management and ecological restoration was conducted with over 70 team members of Paani Foundation. This was hosted at the training centre at Ralegan Siddhi in Ahmadnagar district, and served as a fantastic learning and team building opportunity.

In the remaining three weeks of February, 107 Social and Technical Trainers were trained to conduct the four-day residential training, and were allocated talukas to work in, starting March. Simultaneously, towards the end of February, this training was piloted with 30 villagers from 5 villages. The training modules were refined and finalised after this pilot, with relevant feedback incorporated.

In February and in early March, our team also worked to set up 16 fully functional training centres.

Each centre accounted for:

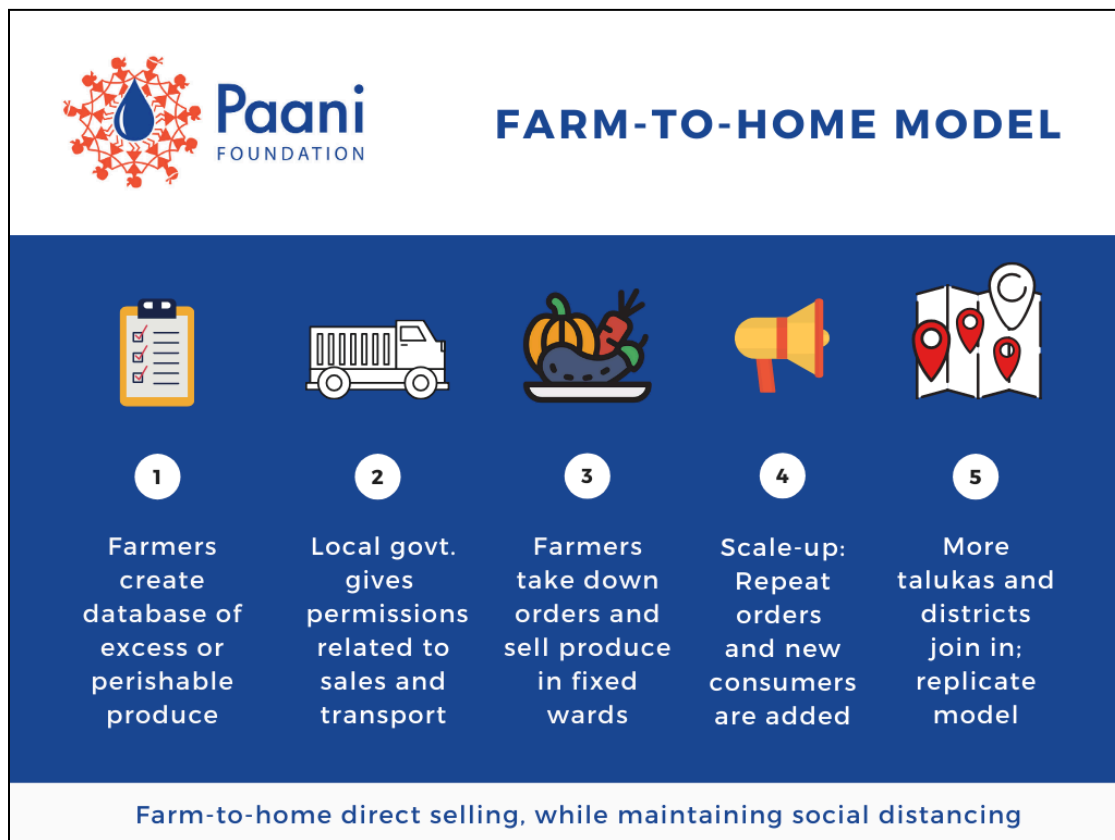
- Safe, hygienic and comfortable living quarters for all
- Safe and hygienic washrooms for all
- Training halls big enough to accommodate at least 50 people
- Outdoor spaces to carry out physical games and activities
- Facilities in terms of storing training material
- Feasibility of resources in terms of field visits
- Comfort and feasibility of the host village

All centres were scheduled to host simultaneous trainings starting March 13, 2020. The planning had been to host almost 5,000 villagers from over 1,000 villages in the months of March and April. However, the training had to be postponed, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic starting to spread in India, around mid-March.

3. Empowering Farmers and Labourers in the Pandemic

The lockdown towards the end of March 2020 gripped several farmers in an unforeseen crisis. Despite agricultural services being essential in the lockdown, farmers faced a disruption of supply chains and increased market uncertainty. Truck owners were not as accessible as earlier to ferry produce, middlemen offered unfair prices, and migrant labourers working on farms were forced to return home. As a result, several farmers were left with the clock ticking on perishable produce. Many also had excess grains or pulses, or were anxious about the upcoming harvest.

As word reached Paani Foundation's Chief Advisor, Dr. Avinash Pol, this unprecedented challenge began to transform into an unprecedented opportunity. Under Dr. Pol's guidance, starting with Satara, several villages executed a farm-to-home delivery model for perishable produce. The Paani Foundation team helped farmers secure access to customer contacts and co-ordinated with the local government for transport and other permissions. Farmers helped each other harvest, load and sell produce, and found confidence in this shared success. The removal of middlemen ensured a win-win scenario economically. Farmers got more of their hard-earned due, while customers get more reasonable rates.



On day 1, farmers in four vehicles drove down from Nhavi Budruk village (Water Cup 2018, Koregaon taluka 2nd prize winner), and flagged off this innovative model. As days passed, sales

picked up with the customers' growing trust. During Ramzaan, farmers in Satara were selling over 4 tons of fresh produce every single day, without the help of a single middleman. The success of the Satara model inspired farmers in other talukas associated with Paani Foundation to experiment with similar models.

To sum up some successful initiatives:

- **Socially Distant Farmer's Market in Akola district:** In Barshitakli taluka, Paani Foundation's team worked with the agriculture department, police department, ATMA society, and revenue department, to set up a farmer's market.
- **Nhavi Budruk Farmers Become Lakhpatis:** In the month of April 2020 alone, farmers in Nhavi Budruk village, from where this model started in Satara, collectively earned a total of Rs. 11,91,580. This was a result of direct-to-consumer selling in Satara district.
- **Farm-to-Home Model in Akola district:** 17 villages participating in the Samruddha Gaon Spardha sold 652 quintals (65,200 kg) of produce in Akola city, in just the first month of the lockdown. This was done direct-to-consumer, without the support of a single middleman.
- **Farmer's Market in Girgaon Mumbai:** Farmers from Karjule Harya village in Parner taluka (Ahmadnagar district), set up a small market in a housing society in Mumbai's Girgaon area. In each visit, produce worth Rs, 40,000 was sold in less than a day. Within just a few trips, farmers collectively earned over Rs. 5 lakh! Inspired by this, women from an SHG in a nearby village, also sent items made by them, to be sold alongside fresh produce. Their snacks, pickles and bhel mixtures were a big hit.
- **Farm-to-Home Initiatives in Sangli:** In Atpadi taluka, Sangli district, five villages were engaged in farm-to-home initiatives. From these, farmers from Jambhulani village, a participant of the Samruddha Gaon Spardha, found customers in Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, Chinchwad and Pune. In just eight trips, they sold Rs. 6,37,650 worth of produce.
- **Success in Marathwada:** With the farm-to-home model, farmers from nine villages in Khultabad and Phulambri taluka, collectively achieved earnings of Rs. 11 lakh 80 thousand! Paani Foundation's team co-ordinated with the ATMA department to secure necessary permissions and a list of housing societies in Aurangabad city, where fresh produce could be sold twice a week.

At the heart of Paani Foundation's work in Maharashtra, is fostering social unity and empowering citizens to solve their own problems with entrepreneurial zeal. The work done as part of the Water Cup has created a culture that re-inforces the power of co-operation over competition.

This farm-to-home model was fuelled by the same principles, combined with the effective use of technology.

In Photos: The Farm-to-Home Model in Action

1. Farmers set off from Nhavi Budruk and sell their produce in Satara city:



2. A glimpse of the socially distant farmer's market set up in Akola district



3. Farmers from Jambhulani make vegetable kits, to sell to customers in Sangli district:



4. Farmer's market set up in Girgaon, Mumbai:



Relief for Migrant Labourers: Watershed Management Amid Lockdown

As India went under lockdown, several villagers originally from areas such as Melghat (comprising Dharni and Chikhaldara talukas), were forced to undertake arduous journeys back home - via multiple means of transport, and on foot. Moreover, residents needing to find work in cities, found themselves stuck at home, with no means of employment.

With the aim to ease the situation to the extent possible, Paani Foundation's on-ground team took this matter to the BDO, tehsildar and officers in-charge of MGNREGA in the region. Within a few days, with the paperwork in place, several labourers found work in their own villages.

In Chikhaldara and Dharni, under the MGNREGA scheme, over 2,300 workers were engaged in watershed management and environment restoration efforts - such as watering saplings, building CCTs, loose boulder structures, compartment bunding, etc. Similarly, hundreds of other villagers found work in their own villages, in other talukas participating in the Samruddha Gaon Spardha. Paani Foundation's team co-ordinated multiple such efforts across 39 talukas.



Daily wage labourers in Mehriam, Chikhaldara taluka (also the village which won a taluka prize in Water Cup 2018). All workers ensured they wore masks, practised social distancing and sanitized their hands.

4. Adapting to COVID - Digital Trainings and Webinars

Webinars and Capacity Building Workshops

In June and July 2020, we conducted online trainings and webinars via Zoom on (i) Scientific methods for sapling plantation, (ii) Making easy and portable rain gauges at home, and (iii) Measuring rainfall, which are all critical aspects of work before and during the monsoon months. A total of 1,762 villagers attended our series of trainings on scientific methods of sapling plantation, while a total of 861 villagers attended our training on rain gauges and measuring rainfall.

Post the training on sapling plantation, villagers planted saplings on the occasion of Ashadhi Ekadashi and Guru Purnima. This week was also the time of the Krushi Sanjivani Saptah, launched by the Govt. of Maharashtra, to boost farmers' efforts and update them about the latest innovations in agriculture. In Barshitakli taluka, in collaboration with MSRLM UMED, villages associated with the Spardha carried out the 'One Woman One Tree' initiative, where women united and decided to nurture one tree each.

Across many villages, rain gauges were also prepared and installed.



Apart from these, 13 capacity building webinars were also hosted for Paani Foundation's team members in June and July. Many of these were in co-ordination with government officials, and focused on understanding aspects of government schemes relevant to the Spardha. The rest of the trainings were conducted by in-house and external experts on topics like well measurement, importance of creating grass nurseries, increasing productivity in fruit orchards, etc.

Some experts who led these webinars are: Mr. Bipin Jagtap (CEO of Khadi Gramudyog, Mumbai); Mr. Ganesh Deshpande (Deputy Director of Vairan Vikas Dept., Pune); MSRLM UMED's State Mission Managers, and Shri Bhalerao of the State Fruit Production Department.

Additionally, three training sessions on scientific methods of watershed management were conducted by team Paani Foundation for government officials. Attendees included the Deputy CEO and BDO of Solapur district, Panchayat leaders, MGNREGA officials, Gram Sevaks, etc. The total number of participants across these three trainings was 244.

Digital Trainings

As the lockdown progressed and Maharashtra emerged as one of the worst affected COVID states, we took a critical step to ensure that the core aspect of our work, i.e., training, could continue.

Our team worked on digitising our training programme, and rigorously tested content with the aim of creating the same impact online. Activities, games and materials were redesigned or created from scratch, keeping in mind the socially distant and online nature of the training. The digital trainings were launched starting September 30, 2020.

Between September 30, 2020, and January 2021, four phases of the online trainings were conducted.

- Phase 1 focused on welcoming the villagers to the Samruddha Gaon Spardha, inspiring them to think about the village of their dreams, and familiarising them with the marking guidelines of this new competition.
- Phase 2 focused on water management. Via an interactive model, it introduced villages to how groundwater is a shared resource. By establishing how the water extraction from one well impacts another (sharing the same aquifer), it proved that water management requires community decision making.
- Phase 3 furthered the learnings of Phase 2, and focused on the importance of regular well measurement, how to measure wells and register the data.
- Phase four of the training focused on training Taluka Coordinators (TCs) to conduct a census of all wells and borewells as well as a survey of crops planted during Kharif, Rabi, and 12-monthly seasons. The TCs trained jalmitras in the village to then do this activity.

5. Mini Spardha 1

Since the timelines of the Samruddha Gaon Spardha and COVID overlapped starting early 2020, it was difficult to maintain sustained levels of excitement on ground. Therefore, once the first wave had subsided, we launched the first 'Mini Spardha' as part of the larger competition. This mini competition was hosted from December 2020 till February 2021. It gave the villagers measurable targets to achieve in a fixed period of time, and created a spurt of enthusiasm on ground. This spardha accounted for a total of 120 marks. There were no cash prizes, but whichever village would score over 70 would receive a small trophy as a symbol of recognition. Out of a total of 944 villages, 594 villages scored 70 or more marks, and got the trophy.

Some of the key aspects the villagers worked on were:

- Water management and saving (For Rabi and annual crops 2020-21)
- Well and borewell census and survey
- One round of well measurement (Post monsoon 2020)
- Record / Report of crops sowed (For kharif, rabi and annual crops 2020)
- Survey of existing watershed structures
- Installation of rain gauges and maintaining rainfall records
- Increasing tree and forest cover + Land allocation for protected grasslands

On March 22, 2021, World Water Day, we hosted a digital felicitation ceremony for all of these villages. Later in the year, on-ground felicitation ceremonies were also hosted at the taluka level, which were presided by the Collector of the respective district. For the digital ceremony, Mr. Uddhav Thackeray, then Hon'ble CM of Maharashtra, was the chief guest. Maharashtra's Agriculture Minister at the time, Shri Dadaji Bhuse, and the then Minister of Soil and Water Conservation, Shri Shankarrao Gadakh, also joined. Mr. Sitaram Kunte, then Chief Secretary of the Government of Maharashtra, was also present. Collectors from 18 districts joined virtually, along with representatives from each one of the 594 villages. The event received coverage on popular Marathi news platforms such as Lokmat, TV9Marathi, ETV Bharat, Krushi Pandhari, etc.

Impact in Numbers:

Total no. of views on Paani FB + YouTube (Full event + Video snippets)	760,000+
Total no. of views of the 'Majha Katta' episode on ABP Majha (on FB and YouTube)	82,000+



Outlook
THE NEWS SCROLL

22 March 2021 Last Updated at 10:21 Pm | Source: PTI

World Water Day: Maharashtra CM praises Paani Foundation

Mumbai, Mar 22 (PTI) It is possible to create prosperous villages through teamwork and affinity towards a scheme, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray said on Monday as he referred to the "Satyamev Jayate" competition of Paani Foundation.

Thackeray made the remarks on the occasion of World Water Day at an event of the foundation, started by actor Aamir Khan and his wife Kiran Rao.

बिज़नेस स्टैंडर्ड
Wednesday, July 28, 2021 12:28 AM English हिंदी

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होम >> जिंस >>> खबर

महाराष्ट्र में जल संचयन की सीख दे रहा पानी फाउंडेशन

जगदीश चालके / मुंबई March 23, 2021

विश्वजल दिवस के अवसर पर मुख्यमंत्री निवास पर सत्यमेव जयते समृद्ध गांव स्पर्धा में भाग लेने वाले विजेता गांवों की घोषणा हुई। इस मौके पर पानी फाउंडेशन के संस्थापक आमिर खान, उनकी पत्नी किरण राव और पानी फाउंडेशन की टीम भी मौजूद थी।

AIR News Pune
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#जागतिकजलदिन पाणी फाउंडेशनच्या सत्यमेव जयते समृद्ध गाव स्पर्धा (पहिला टप्पा) गौरव सोहळा मुख्यमंत्री उद्धव ठाकरे यांच्या उपस्थितीत संपन्न. कृषी मंत्री दादाजी भुसे, जलसंधारण मंत्री शंकरराव गडाख, पाणी फाउंडेशनचे संस्थापक आमिर खान, किरण राव उपस्थित होते.

CMO Maharashtra
@CMOMaharashtra

जागतिक जल दिनाचे औचित्य साधून पाणी फाउंडेशनच्या सत्यमेव जयते समृद्ध गाव स्पर्धाचा गौरव सोहळा मुख्यमंत्री उद्धव ठाकरे यांच्या उपस्थितीत संपन्न झाला. पाणी नियोजनाचा हा संस्कार गावाला आणि महाराष्ट्राला समृद्ध करणार असल्याचेही मुख्यमंत्री यावेळी म्हणाले.

Translate Tweet

6. Water Management and Crop Planning

As a part of the training of the Spardha, we hosted sessions on community management of water as well as on (i) Conducting well and borewell surveys and (ii) Measuring well water levels before and after major cropping seasons, as well as before and after the monsoon. This understanding supported villagers in making data-informed decisions, on aspects such as (i) Which crops to grow considering the water availability (ii) How to ensure availability of drinking water throughout the year and (iii) How to create a water budget that the village can follow and maintain.

Post this training, villagers across 734 villages set off to measure the water levels of 10 representative wells in the village. This was probably the largest bottom-up, decentralised activity of this kind undertaken in rural Maharashtra.

In the year 2021, three rounds of well water measurement were undertaken.

The first round was in Jan-Feb 2021, just after the Rabi season.

The second was in May-June 2021 - before the monsoon and after the summer crop had been taken

The third round was in Oct-Nov 2021, post-monsoon and after the Kharif crop season

The Paani Foundation app supported villagers in keeping a firm record of this data. Our team also analysed the data for each village, and provided them with an 'X-Ray Report' on their water usage. This report broke down the findings in a succinct way, displayed historical and current water usage trends, and arrived at how 'water healthy' a village is. It served as a ready reckoner for a village which supported them in creating or tweaking their water budget, and making informed decisions on the viability of their crop and/or allied farming activities for the season.

In Numbers (From Oct-Nov 2020 till Oct-Nov 2021):

No. of villages which participated in well measurement activities	734
No. of unique wells measured	7,359
No. of times the water levels of these wells were measured	18,649

After conducting the well water measurements, and surveying wells in a village, the logical next step was to check if the crops being taken were in line with the water availability in the village. In Feb-March 2021, 600 villages took up the mammoth task of surveying all common crops grown (for Kharif, Rabi and annual seasons - 2020-21). They recorded the area under cultivation for that crop, as well as the type of irrigation (drip, sprinkler, or flood).

This exercise helped villagers determine (i) How much water their farms consumed each season (based on crop water requirements published by WALMI) and (ii) Whether they should make a switch towards more water-efficient crops.

This exercise was also crucial for the Paani Foundation team because it helped us determine:

- All commonly grown crops in our areas of engagement
- Water availability v/s crop pattern in our areas of engagement
- Possible value addition opportunities
- Possible opportunities to work with experts for best practices for some crops

An X-ray report was also sent based on the crop survey. It enabled villagers to plan for the Kharif cropping season, as it provided recommendations for water management, climate change resilience, best cultivation practices, etc.

खरिपातील पाणी नियोजनाची आठ सूत्रे

1. गावातील किती खातेदारांकडे खरिपात संरक्षित सिंचनाची सोय नाही हे शोधण्यासाठी सर्व खातेदारांचा एक सर्वे करा.
2. गावकऱ्यांसोबत चर्चा करा आणि एक कृती आराखडा तयार करा ज्याद्वारे खरीप हंगामात प्रत्येक शेतकऱ्याला काही प्रमाणात तरी संरक्षित सिंचनाची सोय असेल याचा पुरेपूर प्रयत्न व्हावा.
3. प्रत्येक शेतात बांधबंदिस्ती होईल यासाठी एक मोहीम राबवा.
4. खरिपातील BBF पेरणीचे क्षेत्र वाढवा.
5. खरीप पिकांचे नियोजन करताना आंतरपिकांचे नियोजन करायला विसरू नका!
6. सारखेच पीक घेणाऱ्या शेतकऱ्यांमधील सहकार्य वाढवा. गटशेतीला प्रोत्साहन द्या.
7. बारमाही पिकांबाबत ग्रामसभेमध्ये चर्चा व्हावी आणि त्याबद्दल काही धोरण तयार करावे.
8. जलबचतीच्या साधनांचा वापर/ क्षेत्र वाढवा.

Recommendations of 8 best practices to manage water usage for the Kharif 2021 season

7. First Offline Training Since COVID

A 2021 highlight was a one-day offline training organised across 39 talukas. For the first time after 1.5 years, people from different villages physically congregated for the training, met with each other, and participated keenly in all the in-person activities.

778 villages out of 944 participated in this one-day offline training. A total of **6,024** villagers attended.



Washing a trainee's feet - a warm gesture of welcome and of breaking social barriers



Following COVID protocol - Every trainee's temperature was measured before entering the training centre. They also sanitised their hands, and were given masks if needed.



A training in progress



In all our trainings, games and activities act as ice-breakers, get crucial messages across without lecture-baazi, and make the sessions fun and immersive.

Here is a breakdown of some other key trainings organised with the villagers:

On Amrut Pattern Cotton Sheti Shala (Online)	10 farmers engaged every week + their progress monitored
Samwad Yatra with women SHGs (Offline)	3000 women across 75 villages engaged
On using an Excel-powered water calculator to measure the usage of water in the village	2735 villagers across 547 villages engaged
On record keeping and maintaining a farmers' diary	8596 villagers engaged across 813 villages
Meeting and discussion on X-ray report 2	2646 villagers engaged
On non-pesticide farming (Gram Sheti Shala)	30 farmers engaged every week + their progress monitored

Here is a list of the internal team trainings organised in 2021:

- Offline training of trainers (On how to conduct the the villagers' one-day training)
- Online training on best practices of bamboo plantation
- Offline training on water management (using the water calculator + conducting the Gram Sabha)
- Offline workshop of field team to discuss the journey of the Spardha
- Offline training of new taluka co-ordinators
- Online training of field team on MIS (internal reporting system)
- Online training of field team on farmers' diary
- Online training of field team on crop income-expense survey
- Online training of field team on Ideal Watershed Planning

8. Soyabean Sheti Shala

On May 20, 2021, we launched our largest digital training initiative yet - the Soyabean Digital Sheti Shala (Soyabean Digital Farming School). This was a week-by-week digital training on the end-to-end cultivation of soybean, which overlapped with the actual season of cultivation. We received an overwhelming response for this initiative - a whopping **46,316 registrations** in just 18 days! The word was spread via Paani Foundation's social media, WhatsApp groups and networks on ground. No paid media strategy was adopted to achieve these registrations.

Out of the 46,000+ people who signed up, it is noteworthy that 34,588 farmers belonged to talukas which are not a part of the Satyamev Jayate Samruddha Gaon Spardha. We also received 16 registrations from Karnataka and 2 from Telangana. As the Shala progressed, we also had people from other states such as Gujarat joining us.

Our taluka-wise crop survey had shown that soybean is the most cultivated Kharif crop. Therefore, we launched our farming school with this crop, with the determination to make best practices readily accessible.

Key Aspects of the Digital Sheti Shala:

1. **Weekly Updation and New Content:** New training videos were released every week - covering all cultivation aspects in detail.
2. **LIVE Interaction and Viewing:** A YouTube LIVE was conducted every Sunday, with Mr. Aamir Khan, Ms. Kiran Rao, Mr. Satyajit Bhatkal, core team members of Paani Foundation, and experts from Maharashtra's top agricultural universities, such as the Universities of Rahuri, Akola and Parbhani.
3. **Connecting Directly with Experts / Interactive Q&A:** Villagers received a platform to post their questions on chat, and heard live from experts.
4. **Taluka-wise WhatsApp interaction:** We created 197 WhatsApp groups to share video links, key information, as well as address questions. These were all managed internally by team Paani Foundation.
5. **Partnership with Experts:** All videos were vetted by experts from Rahuri and Parbhani.

#डिजिटल शेती शाळा
उद्घाटन
बनूया सोयाबीनचे चॅम्पियन शेतकरी
प्रमुख उपस्थिती
आमिर खान
किरण राव
तसेच
श्री. एकनाथ डवले
सचिव, कृषी
महाराष्ट्र राज्य
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<https://www.youtube.com/paanifoundation>

अॅडमिशन तर झालं, आता शाळा सुरू
सोयाबीनची डिजिटल शेती शाळा
पहिले लाईव्ह (Live) सत्र
४ जून २०२१, सकाळी ११ वाजता
<https://www.youtube.com/paanifoundation>
#टेन्शन घेऊ नका. हसत खेळत शिका.

A Glimpse of the Sheti Shala in numbers:

Total no. of Sheti Shala registrations	46,316
Total no. of Sheti Shala LIVES	13
Total views on the videos of the LIVES	2,49,509
Total no. of Sheti Shala training videos	23 (20 in-depth videos + 3 shorts)
Total views on training videos	124,706
Total views on all Sheti Shala videos (Training + LIVES)	374,215
No. of total live chat comments, questions, reactions	5000+
Net increase in YouTube subscribers within 1.5 months of launch	13,300
No. of WhatsApp groups created for farmers to interact with each other, and share questions for experts	197

Experts and stakeholders who joined the LIVE sessions include:

- Mr. Eknath Dawale: Secretary of Agriculture, Maharashtra Government
- Mr. Sharad Gadakh: Director, Mahatma Phule Krushi Vidyapeeth, Rahuri
- Mr. Vilas Shinde: Founder, Sahyadri Farms
- Dr. Anil Durgude, Soil Scientist, Mahatma Phule Krushi Vidyapeeth, Rahuri
- Dr. Hemant Vasekar: CEO, Maharashtra State Rural Livelihoods Mission
- Dr. Sachin Mahajan: Plant Pathologist, Kasbe Digraj, Sangli
- Dr. Rajiv Ghavde, Plant Pathologist, PDKV, Akola
- Dr. Nita Khandekar: Acting Director, ICAR - Indian Institute of Soybean Research
- Dr. Nandu Kashiram Bhute: Asst. Entomologist, MPKV Rahuri
- Mr. Shankarrao Totawar: District Superintendent Agriculture Officer (Washim), and Divisional Joint Director of Agriculture, Amravati
- Dr. Milind Deshmukh: Soyabean Breeder, Mahatma Phule Krushi Vidyapeeth, Rahuri
- Mr. Srikrushna Gangurde: Managing Director, Avey Broilers
- Dr. Rajendra Jadhav: Asst. Prof. of Entomology, Soybean, AICRP
- Mr. Vasant Rao Naik: Marathwada Krushi Vidyapeeth, Parbhani

SOYAWIN COMPETITION

Gamifying Digital Trainings

In an attempt to increase engagement and incentivise participants to watch the training videos carefully, we created an exciting and unique 'SoyaWIN competition'. We created a digital form with questions based on a few videos. Every participant was sent the form. Interested participants watched the videos and answered the questions. From every district, 3 winners were chosen - who were given innovative and useful prizes, as well as certificates signed by Mr. Aamir Khan.



The poster is blue with white text. At the top center is the 'Pani Poshan' logo. Below it, the title 'सोयाwin शेतकरी स्पर्धा' is written in large white font. Underneath, it says 'सोयाबीन शेतीबाबत प्रश्नांची उत्तरं द्या आणि जिंका प्रत्येक जिल्ह्यात किमान ३ पारितोषिके आणि विजेत्यांना प्रमाणपत्र'. There are three columns for prizes: 'प्रथम पारितोषिक' with a bicycle weeder image and label 'सायकल कोळपे', 'द्वितीय पारितोषिक' with a sticky trap image and label 'कामगंध सापळे', and 'तृतीय पारितोषिक' with a lure trap image and label 'चिकट सापळे'. At the bottom, it provides the link 'https://cutt.ly/soyawin' and the dates 'ही लिंक १ जुलै स. १० ते ८ जुलै स. १० पर्यंत खुली असेल'.



Winners were given interesting prizes such as a cycle weeder, sticky traps and lure traps. These implements help keep off weeds and insects, and boost the growth and health of the crop.

SoyaWIN Competition in numbers:

No. of total participants	2262
No. of participants who qualified for digital certificates	855
No. of district Rank 1 holders	64
No. of district Rank 2 holders	95
No. of district Rank 3 holders	132

Glimpses of Change:



Pushpa Godse from Pengiri village, Sangamner taluka, learned about lure traps and sticky traps, and installed them as a natural method of managing insects and pests.



Rameshwar Gite from Wadzire village, Sinnar taluka, worked on seed treatment before sowing, and expects a great harvest. He learned about seed treatment from the Sheti Shala.

Links of the Sheti Shala videos:

Training Videos:

1. [Video 1](#): Introduction
2. [Video 2](#): Pre-Cultivation
3. [Video 3](#): Seed Selection
4. [Video 4](#): Preparation for Pest Management
5. [Video 5](#): Record Keeping
6. [Video 6](#): Seed Treatment
7. [Video 7](#): Sowing
8. [Video 8](#): Preparing Organic Fertiliser (Jeevamrut)
9. [Video 9](#): Using Organic Fertiliser (Jeevamrut) Appropriately
10. [Video 10](#): Introduction to Spraying Liquid Fertilisers
11. [Video 11](#): Weed Control
12. [Video 12](#): Introduction to Integrated Pest Management (IPM)
13. [Video 13](#): Getting to Know Different Types of Pests / Insects
14. [Video 14](#): Making Organic Pesticides from Neem and other Trees, for IPM
15. [DIY: Making Bird Perches](#)
16. [DIY](#): Making Sticky Traps
17. [Video 15](#): Using Pheromone Traps and Sticky Traps (IPM)
18. [Soybean Cultivation Calendar](#)
19. [Video 16](#): Water Management
20. [Video 17](#): Trichocard
21. [Video 18](#): IPM - Organic Pesticides
22. [Video 19](#): IPM - Chemical Pesticides
23. [Video 20](#): Harvesting, Threshing and Storage

LIVES:

1. [Inauguration: Soybean Digital Sheti Shala](#)
2. [Film Screenings with Aamir](#)
3. [Question Hour 1](#)
4. [Question Hour 2](#)
5. [Question Hour 3](#)
6. [Question Hour 4](#)
7. [Question Hour 5 and Introducing SoyaWIN](#)
8. [Question Hour 6](#)
9. [Question Hour 7](#)
10. [Question Hour 8](#)
11. [Question Hour 9](#)
12. [Question Hour 10](#)
13. [Question Hour 11](#)
14. [Question Hour 12](#)
15. [Question Hour 13](#)

Based on the response garnered by the Sheti Shala, the Paani Foundation team also created a book. This compendium contained (i) Messages from the key government officials as well as (ii) Answers from experts on the 320 questions which were discussed in the live sessions and on the WhatsApp groups. Take a look at the book here.

9. Sapling Plantation Drive

Before the monsoon in 2021, villages participating in the Spardha had worked on nala widening and deepening. These nalas had also been de-silted to let rainwater percolate. Starting August 2021, a massive plantation drive was carried across 39 talukas of Maharashtra to plant bamboo saplings on the banks of these nalas and streams. This was done because cultivating local vegetation along the banks of nalas allows for water conservation while preventing soil erosion.

Bamboo was chosen because it has a wide root structure and thus possesses the capacity to hold soil firmly. Bamboo also becomes the base for creepers and vining / climbing vegetables to grow effortlessly. In three years, it can be harvested for economic gains as well. It also holds the power to multiply quickly on its own, creating a dense, natural fence which can prevent erosion of the banks of nalas and hence prevent silt accumulation.

Therefore, the aim was:

1. Prevention of soil and water loss
2. Prevention of land deterioration
3. Increase in groundwater level
4. Access to an economically viable commodity for the gram panchayat

A total of 1,50,000+ bamboo saplings were planted across 39 talukas, and a total of 1,00,000+ saplings of other varieties were also planted. All of these saplings were made available to the villages at no cost, through partnerships with the social forestry department, government nurseries, NGO SayTrees, NGO Rainmatter Foundation and NGO Bharti Foundation.



10. Restoring Grasslands - nutritious and palatable green cover

Over the past many years, several nutritious and palatable grasses have been endangered in Maharashtra. The reason? Over-grazing, mismanagement of pastures and human overuse.

The availability of nutritious grasses is directly linked with the income of farmers engaged in animal husbandry. This is because a better diet for livestock leads to an increase in the quantity of milk, thus boosting their business. Due to this reason, model villages like Hiware Bazaar and Ralegan Siddhi have prohibited open grazing and made protected grasslands compulsory.

In order to replenish these nutritious grasses, in September 2019, Paani Foundation had created a three-acre grass nursery in Purandar taluka. In a period of just 5 months, each root slip had multiplied. In 2020 and 2021, farmers in Samruddha Gaon villages were sensitised on the power of nutritious grasses, and creating protected grasslands. Many of these obtained root slips for free from the Paani Foundation nursery in Purandar and started working on grasslands.



11. Mini Spardha 2

From November 1, 2021 till February 10, 2022, we conducted another Mini Spardha which focused on crucial aspects such as use of water saving tools, well water measurement, crop planning and implementation, farm record keeping, etc.

All the aspects covered in this competition amounted to a total of 210 marks. Out of the participating villages, 719 scored non-zero marks. And 592 villages scored an impressive total of over 135 marks. This performance made all these 592 villages eligible to receive a trophy as a symbol of recognition.

12. Creation of Films

One of the key strengths and guiding principles of Paani Foundation has always been to use effective communication to inspire social change and transformation. At the heart of our communication strategy and material have been our films. For the Samruddha Gaon Spardha, our team created a series of popular videos which focus on demand management of water and ecological restoration. These videos were scripted in co-ordination with agriculture experts, and were vetted by them as well.

Here are some links:

1. [Silage](#): How to make silage at home and beat fodder shortage
2. [Lamkani Case Study](#): How one village restored nutritious grasses and achieved prosperity
3. [Record Keeping for Farmers](#): Effective usage of the Paani app section on maintaining a farmer's diary
4. [Amrut Pattern](#): A successful experiment on increasing cotton yields
5. [Rain Gauge](#): DIY video on making a low-cost rain gauge at home
6. [Maujilal Case Study](#): A story of a farmer whose smart and innovative cropping pattern ensures he earns every month ('A field that pays a salary')
7. [Guidelines for Tree Plantation](#): Scientific and best practices for plantation - a video which was released prior to the mass plantation drives starting August 2021
8. [The Power of Drip Irrigation](#): The origin story and benefits of drip irrigation in terms of economics, water and soil conservation
9. [Miyawaki Magic](#): The possibility of creating a fast-growing forest, boost rural biodiversity, and create a thriving ecosystem in the village

10. [The Vermicompost Method Explained](#): A cost-effective, environment-friendly and natural manure created by a farmer's best friend - the earthworm! This is a manure created via decomposition of organic material. It boosts soil fertility, and if taken up as a serious business, it can lead to high incomes with a low capital expenditure.
11. [Preparing Green Manure](#): A DIY on 'growing manure' in your own field. It is a scientific low-cost, home solution to drastically improve soil health, fertility and prosperity.

13. Unlockdown

In the second half of 2020, as the Govt. of Maharashtra further reduced COVID restrictions, we sent our field team to work in their respective talukas. This was done after making provisions for health insurance amounting to Rs. 2 lakh per employee, covering hospital expenditure. We also created and distributed ID cards across the team.

A comprehensive online training on how to initiate field work in this time was conducted for the entire team by the core team of Paani Foundation. This training also focused on necessary preventive measures as well as best practices to keep in mind.

In 2021 too, as the second wave eased, the team was sent back to their talukas after closely monitoring the situation on ground. Each time, field work was started only after necessary permissions from the Collectors and the local administration.

14. Mahila Samwad Yatra

Towards the end of 2021, a Paani Foundation team led by women trainers, set off on a mission to engage with rural women and women-led SHGs. The purpose was to inspire women to become entrepreneurs and gauge their interest in starting a sustainable, local enterprise. In Nandurbar Motala, Arvi and Chikhaldara, where cowdung is available for cheap, our team spoke about setting up vermicompost enterprises. 116 women started their entrepreneurial journeys after these meetings. In 2022, one group, from Motha village in Chikhaldara village, even sold 1.4 tons at Rs. 8 / kg to NGO SayTrees.



15. Government Support and Partnership

- **Participation by CM, State Ministers and Collectors in the Mini Spardha 1 Felicitation Ceremony**
- **Participation of team Paani in labor budget and annual action plan of MGNREGA scheme:** The taluka coordinators of Paani Foundation visited almost all villages across 39 talukas and sensitized them about including the work related to agriculture and natural resources in the annual action plan under MGNREGA.
- **Appreciation by the Ministry of Jal Shakti:** The central Ministry of Jal Shakti as well as Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat (Union Minister of Jal Shakti), appreciated Paani Foundation's work on social media, and lauded the people's movement against drought in Maharashtra. Mr. Aamir Khan replied to both messages. Such acknowledgement is greatly motivating, and shows that the work done is being nationally recognised.



Kiran and I would like to thank the Ministry of Jal Shakti, on behalf of every member of Paani Foundation, for acknowledging our efforts 🙏.

Thank you for highlighting this people's movement against drought in Maharashtra. This would not be possible without the support of our donors, and every Maharashtrian who has contributed to this effort, and has been a part of this journey 🙏.

Your kind words fill us with hope and strength. We remain steadfast in our efforts, and are humbled to be working alongside thousands of water heroes in Maharashtra.

Thank you 🙏

- **Meeting with the CM:** In February 2021, Shri Uddhav Thackeray, then Hon'ble CM, and Shri Eknath Shinde, then Minister for State Urban Development, met with Mr. Aamir Khan, Ms. Kiran Rao and Mr. Satyajit Bhatkal to get an overview about the water conservation work done since 2016 and learn more about the Spardha. The CM shared his appreciation and offered his support for the Foundation's work.

16. Impact in Numbers - Jan 2020 to Feb 2022

- No. of villages participating: 944
- No. of talukas covered: 39
- No. of districts covered: 18

- Participation in digital trainings:
 - Training 1 - 808 villages
 - Training 2 - 773 villages
 - Training 3 - 621 villages
- No. of villages that participated in a 1-day offline training (Sept-Oct 2021): 778
- No. of total villagers who participated in this offline training: 6,024

- Well measurements and well census:
 - 36,237 wells counted
 - 24,395 borewells counted
 - 7,359 unique wells measured at least 2 times
 - No. of times the water levels of these wells were measured: 18,649
 - 734 villages participated

- No. of unique villages that did a crop survey: 600 | No. of crops surveyed: 93
- No. of X-ray reports sent decoding the data on well measurements and crop surveys: 550+

- No. of saplings planted: 2,00,000+
- No. of villages with protected grasslands: 568

- Soyabean Sheti Shala (2021)
 - No. of registrations: 46,317
 - No. of training videos made: 23
 - No. of live sessions conducted: 13

No. of questions answered in depth: 290

No. of WhatsApp groups to handhold farmers: 197

- Published a book on the Soyabean Sheti Shala, compiling all Q and As, launched by Former State Minister of Agriculture, Shri Dadaji Bhuse.

- Measures to inspire and increase women's participation

No. of women SHGs engaged in conversation about SGS and livelihoods: 210

No. of talukas covered: 10

Laying the Foundation for the Satyamev Jayate Farmer Cup

In 2021, Paani Foundation carried out four farming experiments to test what happens when farmers have (i) Access to the knowledge on best farming practices (SOPs), (ii) They actually implement these practices, and (iii) Receive hand-holding through this process. Can such an initiative boost productivity and income, and reduce farming costs?

Experiment 1:

This was the Digital 'Sheti Shala' or 'Farming School' for best practices on the most cultivated crop in Maharashtra - soybean. After participating in this 'school', many farmers almost doubled their productivity and many experienced a reduction in the cost of cultivation. A detailed summary of this has been given above.

Experiment 2:

We worked with a group of 24 farmers in Satara to grow residue-free chickpea. The farmers received knowledge and field support through the entire process and breeder seeds were acquired for this experiment from Rahuri University. The impact was that many of the farmers' yield increased to about 10 quintals per acre, more than double the average of the village.

Experiment 3:

We worked with 14 women farmers in Aurangabad district to grow residue-free vegetables. These farmers also received knowledge and field support through the entire process. They used best practices such as green manuring and micro-irrigation as well. The women found that the cost of cultivation had reduced and the quality of the produce improved.

Experiment 4:

We worked with 14 farmers in Aurangabad district to grow cotton using a pattern called the Amrut Pattern of cultivation. Trainings with the farmers were specially held for this over WhatsApp and Zoom. The farmers recorded 11+ quintals of produce per acre, higher than many in the village.

All of these experiments proved the hypothesis we had started with. By this time, early 2022, the third wave of the pandemic (Omicron) was abating, and there was a pressing need to work on livelihoods after the two very tough years of COVID. Working on livelihoods would also motivate farmers to work on managing natural resources in a more efficient manner, which was the overall goal of the Samruddha Gaon Spardha.

Therefore, from February-April 2022, we laid the foundation of a new competition on livelihoods, and created the marking system, tech infrastructure (app), and guidelines for the same.

The Satyamev Jayate Farmer Cup

Overview

In May 2022, we launched the Satyamev Jayate Farmer Cup - a competition to do the best work in sustainable agriculture and boost livelihoods. In this competition, farmers are required to form crop-specific collectives which then compete against each other to lower costs, improve productivity, increase profitability and move towards sustainable farming.

But why collective farming?

This is because several case studies have shown that the lone farmer cannot face the myriad problems posed by agriculture. However, united as a collective, farmers' strengths multiply and they can achieve the impossible. Farmer Cup 2022 proved this. Several stories emerged of farmer collectives emerging victorious in the face of natural calamities, debts, market uncertainties, low prices, etc.

The role of Paani Foundation in this competition was to motivate farmers to form *gats* or farmer collectives, impart knowledge and train the farmers in the complex task of institution building.

Participation Numbers and Eligible Crops:

A total of **1,516 farmer collectives** comprising **39,005 farmers**, farming over **63,000+ acres** of land participated in this competition. These collectives were formed for the first time, specially for the Farmer Cup. Of these, 42 were all-women groups. These collectives could compete to grow any one of 36 major Kharif crops. The participating farmer groups were formed to grow 26 of these crops, some examples being soybean, cotton, pigeon pea (tuar), green gram (moong), black gram (urad), vegetables, maize, etc.

Prizes and Timeline:

Like the Water Cup, the Farmer Cup also came with attractive cash prizes. In 2022, the first prize at the state level was Rs. 25 lakh, the second prize was Rs. 15 lakh, and the third prize was Rs. 10 lakh. There was also one prize for the best performing group in every taluka, which was Rs. 1 lakh each.

The competition started in May 2022, and ended on January 31, 2023. The judging process took place in February 2023, and the prize distribution ceremony was held in March 2023.



Who was eligible to participate in the Farmer Cup?

- Farmers from villages in the 39 talukas which were a part of the Samruddha Gaon Spardha (2020-2022)
- Farmers with a group of minimum 20 members, farming together on at least 25 acres of land.

What was the marking system like?

The competition was for a total of 200 marks. The primary components of the marking system in 2022 were:

- Knowledge (30 marks)
- Production Process (30 marks)
- Sustainable Practices (30 marks)
- Sale (30 marks)
- Farmer Collective as an Institution (80 marks)
- Total = 200 marks

Farmer Cup Trainings

In April-May 2022, a 2.5 day residential training was conducted for the Farmer Cup, with the aim of empowering farmers with the skills and mindset to start off on the path towards prosperity. The residential training introduced farmers to group farming, and via games, films and activities, showed why it is the key to tackling most agricultural issues. This training happened across 93 batches and 9 training centres. A total of 4,318 farmers were trained.

The key topics of this training were:

- Power of collective farming
- Elements of a successful farmer collective
- Power of farming SOPs
- Natural pest management
- Record keeping and basics of financial literacy
- Growing residue-free food

Two Notable Films:

- **Case study of Mr. Vilas Shinde and Sahyadri Farms:**

In 2021, our team created a feature-length film on the journey of India's largest farmer producer company (FPC), Sahyadri Farms, and its Founder, Mr. Vilas Shinde. Mr. Shinde is a grape farmer himself, who fought poverty and several odds stacked against farmers to create a business which has made multiple farmers millionaires. The film showed how the foundation of the FPC lay in group farming, and inspired the trainees to dream of a prosperous future.

- **Animated film on natural pest management:**

Our team also created a humorous and engaging animated film on the 'How Tos' and benefits of natural pest management. This film featured our animated mascots, Chatur Rao and Chatura Tai, who fight off a pest attack with the help of a scientist. The film was made in consultation with the Centre of Sustainable Agriculture.

Participants called this training "Invaluable" and "Life Changing", as many had never looked at farming as a science and as a business. This training opened up a new path for the trainees who went back to their villages and contributed in forming the groups which eventually participated in the competition.



A group photo after a training batch concluded



Women at the training

Digital Sheti Shalas

After the successful pilot of the Soyabean Digital Shala in 2021, we launched similar digital schools for 28 major crops in the year 2022. A total of 140 live sessions were conducted. The shala remained a free-of-cost knowledge sharing platform to connect farmers directly with agricultural experts.

Key Aspects :

- Sheti Shalas are crop-wise Zoom sessions on agricultural best practices
- SOPs for each crop are made available by experts for the farmers
- Farmers can ask questions to experts in real-time, at no cost
- Farmers can go live from their fields and show progress on camera
- Each session is hosted on Zoom, and live-streamed on YouTube
- The recordings on YouTube are available 24/7 for repeat or later viewing
- A team of 60+ scientists was set up specially for this initiative by our Knowledge Partner, Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth, Rahuri



Participants attending a Digital Sheti Shala. The shala is being projected via Zoom and villagers have gathered to join.

Farming SOPs in Action

Owing to the trainings and Sheti Shalas, hundreds of farmer groups started using standard operating practices (SOPs) in agriculture to cultivate their crops. The use of these SOPs led to higher yields, higher savings and higher incomes! Some of the SOPs practised were:

- Ploughing in the afternoon sun (to expose pest cocoons which would perish in the harsh sunlight or be eaten by birds)
- Making bio-pesticides such as neem ark and dashparni ark
- Usage of natural pest management methods - such as installing sticky traps, pheromone traps, light traps to capture pests
- Seed treatment
- Testing seed germination capacity
- Sowing with a BBF
- Manual or cycle deweeding instead of using chemical weedicides

Apart from practising these SOPs, farmers did two other important activities which led to a drastic reduction in cultivation costs:

1. Irjik or Joint Labour

Farmers offered labour in each other's fields to perform 1 or more agricultural activities. This led to a drastic decrease in labour costs and also addressed the issue of labour shortage. Moreover, farmers felt an increased sense of friendship and kinship by offering labour together and helping each other out.

2. Joint input purchase

Farmers bought farm inputs as a unit and therefore succeeded in getting bulk discount from shopkeepers. Their bargaining power increased.



Minimising Chemical Use

Chemical use in farming is harmful for the health of farmers, consumers and the planet. Chemicals are also expensive and increase production cost. Yet, the farmer is often left with no choice due to lack of awareness. The Farmer Cup trained farmers in the alternative - Natural Pest Management. Homemade pest traps and natural pesticides were used in abundance. Farmers saved in thousands and many collectives cultivated residue-free crops.

124 farmer collectives got samples lab tested at TUV Nord India Pvt. Ltd., and passed as per the FSSAI guidelines! No residues were detected in their produce.



A screenshot of a report which certifies produce as residue-free and a farmer making dashparni ark and also teaching his children



Farmer uses a hand deweeder and women install sticky traps and pheromone traps

Storage, Marketing and Value Addition

Farmer collectives were sensitised on availing storage facilities via the State Warehousing Corporation and Panan Mandal. Trainings were also conducted on the basics of value addition, as well as how to look for markets. The Paani Foundation team also facilitated several exposure visits for the farmer collectives. Farmers visited agriculture exhibitions and fests, toured Sahyadri Farms (India's biggest FPC), and visited fields of other progressive farmers.



A cotton farmer collective visits a ginning unit in Gopuri, Wardha (famous for its cotton production since pre-Independence times).



Farmer collectives visit Punjabrao Deshmukh Krushi Vidyapeeth in Akola, where a Paani Foundation poster exhibition was held.

TV and Social Media

The Farmer Cup journey was documented in a robust manner on TV and social media. Fortnightly episodes of our TV show, 'Toofan Aalaya' were watched by lakhs on leading Marathi news channel, ABP Majha. The show covered topics such as participation of women and children, success stories in terms of SOPs, impact stories of improved productivity and incomes, etc.

Our social media channels too continued engaging rural as well as urban audiences on different aspects of the Farmer Cup.

Social media numbers at a glance:

- 8.89 million people reached
(People who saw at least one post about the Farmer Cup. They could have seen more as well.)
- 11.1 million video views
- 5 lakh+ engagements
(Comments, shares, likes, reactions)



Impact on Savings and Productivity

In Farmer Cup 2022, a total of 1516 groups participated in the competition. The competition was for 200 marks. From the participating groups, 128 groups comprising 3150 farmers received 100+ marks. These were the groups whose data was also verified by the Paani Foundation team via (i) Physical verification of bills (ii) In-person interviews and (iii) In-depth online interviews. Upon analysis, it was evident that these 128 groups had saved on cultivation costs and experienced massive jumps in productivity. This is the real impact of the Farmer Cup, beyond all the prizes.

1. No. of groups whose data was verified: 128

2. Total acreage of these groups: 4487.46 acres

3. Savings on farming inputs (due to joint input purchase)

Area in acres	Total Amount Saved (INR)	Per Acre Savings (INR)
4487.46	6014310.05	1340.25

4. Savings due to Joint Labour or Irjik

Area in acres	Total Amount Saved (INR)	Per Acre Savings (INR)
2480.11	8397164	3385.80

(For Irjik - The data is from 72 out of 128 groups as the rest have entered incomplete data for the same. Also, the acreage here is lesser what is mentioned above as this is only that area on which irjik has been done.)

5. Increase in Productivity

Increase in Productivity			
Crop	2022 (Quintals)	2021 (Quintals)	% Increase
Soyabean	11.36	7.22	57.34%
Cotton	9.59	6.35	51.02%
Toor	7.24	5.29	36.86%
Udid	6.66	3.45	93.04%
Bajra	11.78	5.07	132.35%
Maize	29.62	22.82	29.80%
Tomato	228.32	212.72	7.33%
Potato	78.35	36.84	112.68%

(For productivity - Data from 118 out of 128 groups)

6. Increase in Per-Acre Revenue and Profit

Increase in Per-Acre Revenue and Profit			
2021 - Gross Revenue Per Acre	2022 - Gross Revenue Per Acre	Increase in Revenue Per Acre	% Growth in Revenue Per Acre
56713.50	86049.05	29335.55	51.73%
2021 - Profit Per Acre	2022 - Profit Per Acre	Increase in Profit Per Acre	% Growth in Profit Per Acre
31423.08	65364.17	33941.09	108.01%

It is noteworthy that profits have increased disproportionately to the increase in revenue. Why? Because of increased efficiencies. On one hand, costs have decreased significantly, and on the other, productivity has increased.

Common reasons attributed to record increase in profit:

- Removal of middlemen - farmers being able to sell direct to consumer due to high demand after residue-free certification
- Increased productivity from the same plot of land
- Exports and selling to other Indian states / cities
- Farmer groups are recognising and tapping into growth opportunities

Farmer Cup 2022 Award Ceremony

The prize distribution ceremony of the first ever Farmer Cup was held on 12th March, 2023, in Pune, at the The Shiv Chhatrapati Shivaji Sports Complex in Balewadi. Parivartan Shetkari Gat from Wathoda village, Warud taluka, clinched the first prize of Rs. 25 lakhs. Chitra Nakshatra Mahila Gat, an all-women group from Khultabad taluka won second prize of Rs. 15 lakhs, while the third prize was jointly bagged by Unnati Shetkari Gat from Ingoli and Jay Yogeshwar Shetkari Gat from Jalgaon. Both the third prize winners won a prize of Rs. 5 lakh each. Forty-two taluka-level winners won Rs. 1 lakh each.

The prizes were given to groups who did excellent work in implementing best agricultural practices, practising residue-free farming, lowering cost of cultivation and improving productivity.

The Chief Guest for this event was the Hon'ble Deputy CM of Maharashtra, Shri Devendra Fadnavis. Many luminaries from the fields of business, politics and arts also joined the ceremony. The highlight of the event was a "Powada" (folk song and dance), chronicling the journey of the farmer groups. This 35-minute Powada, written and conceptualised by team Paani, featured acclaimed musicians, dancers and singers, and received a thunderous applause and standing ovation from the audience.

Shri Devendra Fadnavis, congratulated all the participating farmer collectives in his speech. He emphasised on how collectivisation in farming is the key to tackling inflation, climate change and market uncertainties. He also urged the collectives to look beyond subsidies, and focus on creating self-sustaining and profitable farmer producer companies.

Paani Foundation's Founders, Mr. Aamir Khan and Ms. Kiran Rao also congratulated the farmers in their speeches. Mr. Khan appreciated the unity of the farmers and encouraged them to participate in Farmer Cup 2023 with even more gusto. Ms. Rao specially mentioned the contribution of women farmers and young farmers who participated in the competition.

Mr. Vilas Shinde, the Chairman of Sahyadri Farms, shared his thoughts on the importance of farmer producer companies. In a conversation with Mr. Khan, Padma Shri Popatrao Pawar spoke about the importance of farmers' unity.



Vision for 2023

In 2022, the Farmer Cup was open to around 1,000 villages across 39 talukas. Starting 2023, we have opened up the competition to around 4,000 villages and Gram Panchayats. We have also taken steps to address the feedback we received in 2022.

	2022	2023
No. of villages the competition is open to	1,000	4000
No. of trainees who participated in the residential training	4,300+	8,200+

Farmer Cup 2022 was a competition purely between farmer collectives. At the village level, there was limited participation by the Gram Panchayats (unlike the Water Cup). In 2023, to increase enthusiasm and ownership at the village level, we announced a prize for gram panchayats as well. The gram panchayat whose village has the most no. of collectives with a certain threshold of marks will be awarded Rs. 5 lakh.

Prizes in Farmer Cup 2023:

Category	Amount
State-Level Winners	First prize: Rs. 15 lakh Second prize: Rs. 10 lakh Third prize: Rs. 5 lakh
Gram Panchayat Prize (Two prizes, based on population size)	Medium Population Size: Rs. 5 lakhs Large Population Size: Rs. 5 lakhs
Best Women Collective	First prize: Rs. 5 lakhs Second prize: 3 lakhs Third prize: 2 lakhs
Best Collective at the Taluka Level	Rs. 1 lakh per taluka

Come 2023, we will be strengthening and scaling up all our key pillars.

- **Mobilisation of Farmer Collectives:** In 2023, we are mobilising farmers from a much larger pool of villages, many of which will need to be introduced to the purpose and advantages of the Farmer Cup. To spread the word about Farmer Cup 2023, starting

January, we presented our work across several agricultural exhibitions in Maharashtra. In addition we have been working closely with UMED to mobilise more women farmers.

- **Scaling Up Training:** In 2022, we hosted the 3-day Farmer Cup residential training for 4,300+ farmers, across 95 batches. A total of 9 training centres were made functional for the same. In 2023, we doubled the training centres and hosted this training for a total of 8,200+ farmers across 169 batches.
- **Hiring New Trainers:** In 2023, we recruited a fresh cadre of trainers to facilitate the trainings as well as the follow-up work in the talukas. At least 15 new trainers were recruited.
- **One-Day Field Trainings:** Starting May 15, at regular intervals, we will conduct one-day trainings on ground after the farmer collectives have been formed. This will sensitise new collectives on the power of unity, how to discover better markets, basics of value addition and financial literacy, and the importance of entrepreneurship and leadership. We are also hosting a special training programme for **'Farmerpreneurs'** or farmers from leading groups who have the potential to be entrepreneurs and lead their collectives forward. This training will empower farmers to approach farming like a business, think in an entrepreneurial way, and lead their group to economic prosperity.
- **Widening the Scope of Sheti Shalas:** We also aim to conduct Sheti Shalas for more than 26 Kharif crops (as per demand from the farmers), as well as include allied livelihood opportunities such as animal husbandry, sericulture, horticulture etc.
- **Media and Communication:** We will continue making films on important aspects of farming in a sustainable manner, and continue promoting the films we have made in 2022. We will also work on strengthening our digital communications team and strategy, to bolster our digital presence as well as relationship with various stakeholders.
- **Adoption of SOPs:** Through trainings, sheti shalas and regular sharing of best practices via PDFs and short videos, we will continue encouraging farmers to put SOPs in action. The marking system of Farmer Cup 2023 will continue incentivising this.
- **Encouraging Collaboration Between Farmer Producer Organisations:** We will work on strategies to encourage FPOs to form larger collectives which could leverage economies of scale for input purchase, technology and knowledge as also for better value realisation.

ANNEXURE: List of 39 Talukas

Region	District	Taluka
Marathwada	Aurangabad	Khultabad
	Aurangabad	Phumlambri
	Aurangabad	Waijapur
	Beed	Ashti
	Beed	Kaij
	Beed	Dharur
	Beed	Beed
	Beed	Ambejogai
	Nanded	Loha
	Hingoli	Kalamnuri
North Maharashtra	Jalgaon	Amalner
	Jalgaon	Jamner
	Nandurbar	Nandurbar
	Nandurbar	Shahada
	Ahmadnagar	Nagar
	Ahmadnagar	Parner
	Ahmadnagar	Sangamner
	Nashik	Sinnar
Vidarbha	Akola	Akot
	Akola	Barshitakli
	Amravati	Chikhaldara
	Amravati	Warud
	Nagpur	Narkhed

Vidarbha	Buldhana	Motala
	Wardha	Arvi
	Washim	Karanja Lad
	Washim	Mangrulpir
Western Maharashtra	Pune	Purandar
	Pune	Baramati
	Satara	Koregaon
	Satara	Khatav
	Satara	Maan
	Sangli	Atpadi
	Sangli	Jat
	Sangli	Tasgaon
	Solapur	North Solapur
	Solapur	Karmala
	Solapur	Barshi
	Solapur	Madha