CHAPTER IV

Biographical Sketch of Anna Hazare Before He Took up The Challenge
Development of India depends on the development of the villages, of the poor, the poorest of the poor. Our ability to educate them, clothe them, house them, is directly linked to our ability to uplift them through the use of rural development techniques. If they are not taken care of nothing is going to happen by 2001. We must remember that these are the people who have been responsible for building our temples, our roads and for ploughing our fields. They have not been able to get a fair share from the system for one reason or the other. Villages which are deep rooted in superstition, traditions, will have to act if they have to be developed. This would particularly be so in a tradition bound society like ours.

In the context of rural development in India one has to identify problems and challenges of rural development.\(^1\) Some of these are:

1. Appalling rural poverty.

2. Outdated work technology in rural activities in general and in agriculture in particular.

3. Pressure of increasing population without consequent increase in job opportunities.

4. Skewed distribution of resources, and

5. Lack of infrastructural facilities.

Thus rural development with all its problems and complexities was a tremendous task.
The government on its part spared no efforts to ameliorate the rural lot. On its part the government had taken special care of rural areas and had introduced a number of special schemes for rural areas. Considering the schemes there should have been development all around but however the schemes many a times did not give positive results. This was largely because the efforts of the government were not matched by support at the grass-roots level. Any success in such cases had to be from the grass roots level using all means alongwith effective leadership.

This meant that the schemes and programmes were to be initiated by the local leaders of vision and foresight. Local leaders had an added advantage of getting the confidence and support of the villagers over the other leaders. They also qualify in gaining easy acceptance as a leader in rural areas which is quite difficult. He also has the advantage of understanding rural problems and can easily identify himself with the rural masses. If the leader is from amongst them, the rural folk look and partake in development programmes with greater confidence and they start developing a sense of belongingness.

This has been proved in various activities and there are good many success stories in our country worth mentioning.

Here is one success story led by a leader coming from amongst the rural folk by name Shri. Kisan Baburao Hazare fondly called as "Anna". He single handedly was responsible
for the total transformation of one village by name Ralegan Shindi situated in Parner taluka of Ahmednagar district, Maharashtra. Before we examine the success story in detail it would not be out of place to know in brief the life sketch of the person who was behind this success story. The author of the present study took a detailed interview of this personality and what is stated here after is the outcome of this personal interview. Some of the facts were also collected from the villagers living in this village who have a respectful awe for Shri. Annasaheb Hazare.

Kisan Baburao Hazare looks very different from the sort of person one would imagine could move men to work miracles. He is a short, thin, mild looking person clad in dhoti, kurta and topi. He looks like the quintessential peasant, the kind of person you wouldn’t look at twice. Nor does he have any background of the stuff from which leaders are supposed to be made, just a glint of purpose in the small deep set eyes, as he recounts in his thin high pitched voice his war against drought, the third and the most successful war in the life of this ex-army jawan.

The son of a poor farmer, Hazare never got beyond seventh class in school. However, he was a young man of thoughtful disposition. As the land his father owned was unproductive and there was no employment to be found anywhere near his village, the 20 year old Kisan Baburao Hazare enlisted in the army as a jawan in 1961. As a young man his fiery temper constantly got him into trouble. Once he had the Bombay police after him when he beat up a cop who had been harassing hawkers.
He was also known as a trouble maker in the army too. Soon after he enlisted in the army, he discovered that a senior officer was embezzling mess funds. Not being able to digest it quietly, he publicly questioned the officer and was posted to far off NEFA as a punishment.

"After I enlisted" says Hazare, "I used to wonder, what is the purpose of life? On one hand, I saw that there is no limit to man's aspirations and acquisitiveness: on the other, I saw Sikandar (Alexander the Great). He conquered the world but what did he take with him? Nothing. So what was the purpose of life? I could not understand it, why live unnecessarily for 50 or 60 years, why not die now? So I decided to commit suicide". Hazare even wrote a letter to his parents explaining the reason for his action. But just then he got the news that his sister was to be married later that year. As his family would be in need of money for the marriage, he decided to postpone the act until after she was wed.

The story of Hazare's transformation began in 1964, at the Delhi railway station book stall, after he purchased a book on Swami Vivekananda. Enthralled by the great sages life and by his dictum, that the noblest thing a man can do is work for the good of others, Hazare avidly began reading religious texts and biographies of social reformers. And after his escape from the Sabre jets at Khemkaran, which was a hair raising experience for him, he found a total transformation in himself.
In September 1965 at Khemkaran - An Indian military convoy rumbled towards the fighting zone. Suddenly two Pakistani Sabre jets dropped out of the sky and screamed into attack. As bombs began exploding around him, Kishan Baburao Hazare, driving a truck full of soldiers, speeded up. But when a splinter grazed his forehead, he ducked below the dashboard and jammed on the brakes with his hands. The windshield shattered and bullets riddled the man sitting next to him. The 25 year old driver tumbled down out of his truck and prayed fervently as the two sabres strafed the convoy again. When they finally disappeared, dozens of jawans lay dead. Of the few survivors, only Hazare escaped serious injuries. "You saved me, God" Hazare said, over and over again. But why? A worthy cause, he later realised lay right in front of him: The upliftment of his own village Ralegan Shind. During his annual visits home Hazare had been appalled by its steady deterioration. His survival says Hazare "was a boon granted to me by God, I felt that Kishan Hazare had died with the rest in the truck and that I had undergone reincarnation - that God had saved me because He had some purpose in mind for me". It was then that Hazare decided not to be tied down by household and children but to dedicate his life to the upliftment of others. He did not see this as a sacrifice. "It is just that I did not marry", he says, "I have a family but it is not confined within the four walls of a house. Had I married, I would have begotten two or three children and at the most would have educated them. Now hundreds will become graduates from this village and they are all my children".
Though he made up his mind in 1965, Hazare continued in the army through the 1971 war — his second "I could not have begun this work immediately," he says, "as I had no other means of livelihood". He became a vegetarian, gave up cigarettes and liquor and vowed to remain a bachelor devoting himself to public service.

Since he did not have the money, he could not leave the army just then. Yet, to qualify for a pension he had to serve for several years more, thus making his own financial arrangement much more unavoidable.

Finally in Aug. 1975, Hazare returned to Ralegan Shindi after retiring from the army with a burning resolve to transform his village. His service benefits amounted to Rs. 20,000.

The first thing he noticed was that the village temple had almost fallen into ruins. At that time Ralegan Shindi’s most distinctive features were its forty illicit distillaries that made the village a popular haunt for drunkards and gamblers. Thefts and brawls were common.

Life in the village was of abject poverty, utterly lacking in social amenities. The villagers outlook towards life was apathetic and the hope of spontaneous leadership for improvement was almost nil. Almost a quarter of the people were on the brink of starvation. They were surviving on bhakris made from hulga (horse gram). Many of them used to get food only for four to five days a week and go hungry the
rest of the time. When they got work it was to break stones at a site some 13 kms. away. Over 60 percent of the villagers had to buy food grains from other villages to last throughout the year.

Since the villagers suffered from ignorance and poverty and were indebted to the village Mahajans, their need for ready money to pay off land revenues and family burdens like marriage, sickness and also lack of bank facilities compelled them to dispose their crops at a loss. Over and above that they had the local money lender who charged exhorbitant rate of interest, since the village money lender was still the only important source of borrowing. In short, the villagers were deprived of any source of capital and credit necessary for bringing the lands under cultivation.

Successive droughts had dampened the spirit of the villagers. In 1970 and 1971 there was very less rainfall followed by the 1972 famine. There was no water at Ralegan Shindi. The streams nullhas and the wells had all gone dry. EGS schemes were undertaken at Ralegan Shindi. To retain more water thirty five projects of nullha bunding were undertaken. A site was selected for percolation tank and the work was started. The main aim of having the tank was to augment and firm up the water in the village wells. A local leader took up the contract for 9 lacs of rupees. Nobody paid any attention to what the contractor was doing, whose performance was very unsatisfactory. The percolation tank had structural deficiencies. Due to lack of technical knowledge and common sense there was loss of water due to seepage and the wells
remained dry as they were before. After two years it developed huge cracks and the rainwater could not be checked, it just flushed away. Most of the villagers due to drought had taken up work under the EGS schemes. There also they were not being paid regularly were the complaints of many, some said that the ration coupons were not being supplied. Attendance registers and muster rolls were not kept in order. Many of the workers were also being paid less than the statutory guarantee. Inadequate relief had forced many into incurring debts. Sale of cattle had become common.

With water available only during monsoon Ralegan Shindi's farmers could barely grow one crop a year and 70 percent of the villagers lived in abject poverty. Uncertainty of rainfall made agriculture very precarious, which in turn made the standard of living very low. The agricultural technology was primitive. Facilities like irrigation were nil. Electrification, transport, communication which are all necessary infrastructure for development were not adequate. Health and educational facilities were utterly lacking. Even potable drinking water was not available. Non farm occupations were not well developed. There was no encouragement to the traditional industries, institutions like banking and marketing were absent.

The villagers had no conscious desire for anything better and the hope of spontaneous leadership for improvement was almost nil. There was absence of zealous and properly oriented workers.
The people were very superstitious and fatalistic in their outlook. The traditional social customs were being followed religiously. There were many social taboos. Untouchability was deep rooted in the village. The Harijans had a separate well from which they had to draw water. Harijans were also not allowed in the village temple. Their children were also not allowed in the school. They even had a separate cremation ground.

Since Ralegan Shindi always suffered from drinking water shortage, it had put pressure on the natural environment leading to naked mountains barren and parched lands, nothing to say of agriculture.

Although elementary education was available upto 4th standard, non-enrollment, drop out was very high. Girls formed bulk of the non enrolled and dropouts. Not to think about the children who belonged to weaker sections, socially disadvantaged and economically deprived.

Water and education weren’t the only scarce commodities, but there was also shortage of social and moral responsibilities as well.

Local politics, graft, corruption, misuse of development funds were the diseases which had plagued the village. It had become very difficult for any villager to rise above this. Even the youth of the village were wayward.
The socio economic background of Ralegan Shindi was not conducive to the functioning of an institution based on democratic and egalitarian principles. There was also to be found cleavage of interests in the village itself. Ralegan Shindi had turned out to be a handy tool of self advancement in the hands of petty politicians and district officials. Their main aim however was to convert it into an anti-thesis of waste. They made themselves felt in the village by exerting great influence on the village life and thwarted progress of any kind. Nobody was genuinely interested in the progress and development of the village.

These vested interests were the real internal enemies of development and progress of Ralegan Shindi and were more dangerous and parasitic than the enemies from outside.

In fact there had been an inadequate development of non official leadership which lacked selflessness, honesty, devotion and zeal. Their main aim was to promote their own end-Financial or Political.

The Grampramukh was operating with the backing of criminals. The elections for grampanchayat were dominated by elements like caste and family. There were lots of family disputes which came out into open during Grampanchayat and Gramsabha elections. Dominant caste and family with the backing of vested interests played a very influential role in the elections resulting in unworthy people dominating the village scene. Political parties entered the election fray and created confusion, promoted homogeneous influencing
centres like caste, kinship and individual families. For these vested interests which were the real internal enemies of the village, elections generally provided a forum for more aggressive and exploiting sections of the village scene. Such vested interests took the protection of ignorance of the mass villagers and were successful in keeping the village inactive and defunct. Leadership was thus in the hands of persons who were isolating the village from urban centres and developmental activities resulting in poverty, primitive customs and traditions, paucity of resources, drought, untouchability, gambling and crime.

Because of shortage of potable water, the women had to trek miles in scorching sun to fetch water for the family. They were also treated as secondary citizens. Since the children were also required to aid in the running of household to care for family's cattle and to help in the farm work they were discouraged from going to schools.

Illiteracy was widespread in the village. Only 9% of the population was literate. Ignorance due to illiteracy coupled with imbalanced diet, dirt and filth had created virtual breeding ground for virus and bacteria. There was no medical aid centre and people resorted to traditional cures.

Meager incomes and limitations imposed by available materials and restrictions caused by environment, ideals and economy limited any developmental activity. As a whole the village Ralegan Shindi suffered from physical isolation from urban centres, paucity of resources, drought, untouchability, primitive customs and traditions, alcoholism, gambling and
crime, poverty and the most important of all a selfless, honest, devoted and zealous leader.

But today Ralegan Shindi is a village which can be looked unto. It has not only overcome drought but also paved way for social and economic development. All this did not happen overnight or by any magic wand. It was a very slow process of change, thanks to Mr. Kisan Baburao Hazare for his dedication and selfless efforts.

He very well knew that it would take years to receive the return of his labour.

The first thing he noticed was the dilapidated condition of the village temple. "If I could rebuild the temple" Hazare thought to himself, "more people might think of God and lead better lives". Whatever service benefits (amounting to Rs. 20,000) he had received, he planned to spend the same for rebuilding the village temple. He hired people and started reconstructing the temple. Few people paid attention to him at first. But as the work progressed the attitude of the villagers started changing. They became more curious as to why Anna Hazare was building the temple from his own money, instead of keeping it to himself for rainy days. Anna convinced them that the temple was being rebuilt not for himself but for the villagers themselves. This moved the villagers and some offered wood, many offered free labour. Hazare was not satisfied with these offerings, he asked the villagers to donate wood of the trees which were under dispute and had grown on the bandharas. Thus
Hazare was successful in not only solving disputes over the trees but also induced them in parting with things (donation) which the villagers had never done before. Again Hazare says, "it taught me one thing, "if you are not selfish, the people willingly come to your help and are with you".

In a way he had succeeded in changing the psychology of the people. He had made them curious. He had achieved in bringing them together on a common platform i.e. the village temple. From the very beginning, the village temple is the 'Heart' of Hazare's movement. He himself lives there, in a small room clustered with files and documents. He sees himself as a social worker - the property of the whole village and does not maintain any ties with his family (his father, mother and brothers all of whom live in the same village). He maintains his livelihood on his army pension, which now amounts to around Rs. 1000/- per month. "I am an ordinary activist", he says "I live on my pension, travel everywhere by bus and eat along with the children". It is this transparent selflessness that has endeared the villagers to their "Anna". All day long the temple is crowded with people attending prayer sessions, religious discourses and meetings.

At that time Ralegan Shindi’s most distinctive feature was its illicit distillaries that made the village a popular haunt for drunkards and gamblers. Though liquor had blighted the lives of Ralegan Shindi’s residents, Hazare soon realised that a far more important reason for the villagers misery was lack of work. He wondered what could be done as shutting down the distillaries would make several families penniless since
illicit distilling was the only source of income for them. Just then he chanced upon a newspaper article about a state government scheme that provided manual labour jobs on public work projects. He quickly rounded up about 250 villagers who badly needed work and got jobs for all of them.

Hazare thus had developed a "community" sense and a feeling of solidarity in the village propaganda against the evils like illicit distilleries. This was a part of his programme for bringing about a rapid increase in the standard of living of the villagers.

A few young men joined Hazare. They called him "Anna" big brother and listened with fascination to his dreams of transforming their village. He told them that the village had everything they wanted in itself. However, they were suffering from isolation and had no facilities of modern times. Steps had to be taken to remove illiteracy, poverty, ignorance dirt, disease and general apathy and sustained efforts had to be taken by one and all.

Anna Hazare thus realised that he had to lead the village towards initiating a process of transformation in the socio-economic life of the villagers, to begin with and to work as an engine of economic growth at a latter stage, for energizing and mobilising the available manpower resources in the village so that the semi-stagnant economy of the village could be rejuvenated and revitalised. His objective was to be achieved through -

1. Destroying of enemies of the village viz.
a. Poverty
b. Ignorance and
c. Disease

2. Generating mountains of inertia and influencing spirit of brotherliness and cooperation.


4. Giving sufficient scientific knowledge to every man in the village.

"Anna" as he is fondly called knew that any attempt to bring improvement or upgrading of village life by governmental edict or command would fail. That with sympathetic counselling, expert guidance and some financial assistance, the villagers could be led to recognise their most important, immediate and acute problems, to think about them, formulate plans for their solutions and put these plans into action. Anna realised that self-help was the key stone of village development.

His central theme was to change the villager from tradition to modernity and to make the villager worthy of his existence. This could be brought about by -

1. Full utilisation of irrigational facilities, economy in the use of water, repair and maintenance of community irrigation works.

2. Increase in the area under multiple cropping.
3. Programmes for the production of vegetables and fruits.

4. Multiplication of seeds (improved) and its distribution to all cultivators in the village.

5. Programme for compost and green manures.


7. Development of village fuel, plantations and pastures.

8. Adoption of improved agricultural practices such as soil conservation, contour bunding, dry farming, land reclamation and plant protection.


Anna Hazare considered the developmental programmes as an approach to local development, as a part of the bigger scheme of planned national development. As a process it involves a sequential and interdependent progression of changes—economic, social, political and psychological. Anna wanted to stimulate the local potential for growth in every direction. The promise was of reciprocal advance in both wealth and welfare, not on the basis of outside charity but by building on the latent vitality of the beneficiaries themselves with the minimum of outside help.

For Anna the most important thing was not the immediate material improvement like ample food grain, enough water, health and sanitation but the change in the outlook of the
people, instilling in them an ambition for a richer and fuller life and developing capacities of the individual so that he can master matters for himself.

Anna wanted the active participation of the villagers themselves, so that they could secure the fullest development of the material and human resources and thereby raise the living standard of the people.

He was appalled at the uncertainty of rainfall and consequent abject poverty with ill health and misery coupled with no conscious desire for any thing better because they had no idea that anything better was possible.

Thus he wanted to take upon himself the task of all round development. This was in other words the practical application of the principle that the central figure viz. the villager himself must be made to take great interest in himself and in his village before any results could be achieved.

He urged the villagers to change their entire outlook towards life by -

1. Including people of all communities.

2. Making spirituality the basis of every programme.

3. Practising simplicity in all the programmes to be undertaken.
On its part the government had taken special care of rural areas and had introduced a number of special schemes for rural areas which if implemented properly, Anna felt, could actually change the direction of development of the village Ralegan Shindi. Since many a times the schemes did not spell the felt needs they failed to reach the needy. To add, the work done was not at the grass roots level.

Anna however felt that mere improvement of the physical layout of the area or its human constituents or the organisation of factors of production would as such not necessarily indicate any major development in its true spirit unless a comprehensive view was taken about the matter as a whole. What was important was to develop physical pace in a manner that would enhance the spirit of harmony and also assure betterment of both the human and non human population with a guarantee to all for maximum social justice.

Further the people on the whole appeared to have drifted away from their relatively harmonious relationship with nature and the gulf of disparity between the rich and the poor appeared to be on the increase. Thus the gap which was to be bridged through the introduction of various development programmes had become wider. Naturally the question before Anna Hazare was whether the aim of his development programmes was only to understand development in terms of fulfillment of certain physical targets or to bring about a qualitative change in the standard of living of the people in general and the betterment of the poor in particular through which the differences between the rich and the poor could be bridged.
It is again well known that the programmes are well designed but there are a number of short comings. Anti-poverty programmes on their part could not alleviate people below the poverty line. However, Anna Hazare realised that unless the living conditions of the majority of the rural poor who lived below the subsistence level are improved there could not be development in the true sense. Thus it was necessary to meet their basic minimum needs. The strategy to be used to achieve these goals had to focus largely on economic growth, so that it could eliminate poverty, inequality and unemployment in the village.

A close look at the schemes in India indicates a degree of adhocism that seem to have been employed to provide direction to the schemes. What we encounter is that there is a rush to implement the schemes overlooking their adequacy and evenness in their spread. What appeared rather essential to Anna in this regard was that while evaluating any programme, its economic, socio-cultural goals were to be thoroughly understood and closely reviewed. Economic development alone without a well specified social direction instead of solving problems could further aggravate them.

Anna Hazare very well knew that development was not simply possible by borrowing models from elsewhere ignoring human and cultural factors of Ralegan Shindi’s society. It was essential that the programmes emerge out of its own experiences so that the villager’s socio-cultural compatibilities were ensured. Ralegan Shindi’s upliftment therefore had not only to emphasise achievement in production
and ensure distributive justice for the disadvantaged, the process also required to be able to stimulate the peoples creative urges in resolving their problems by striking a balance between their apparently conflicting demands.

Anna very well knew that interests and experiments of any rural upliftment demonstrate scant realisation of such social phenomena. It however needs no future evidence to justify that the nature of problems of the rural areas and their genesis are widely different. Programmes which are directed towards rural uplift which involves a deliberate but delicate mixture of human and technological factors needs careful handling. Innovations for socio-cultural development due to involvement of human factors, are largely subjective and subservient to the value considerations of the innovators. Anna Hazare therefore thought that any programme for such development required to be compatible with the existing socio-cultural values of the village.

Thus all the development attempts at Ralegan Shindi required infusing consciousness, active participation, involvement and control of people in the development process. Efforts also had to be made to seek participation by the deprived in the programmes of socio-economic change.

Anna wanted to utilise both material as well as human resources. Material means of production were to include the economic factor in development, whereas enrichment of human capital was to include uneconomic factors such as social, political, ethnic or educational background of the people who were to participate in the development tasks. The
non-economic factors were to include the quality of social life, organisational framework, caste, class, language, religion and other diversities in the growth, level of literacy etc. The development of material resources were to include in its fold the infrastructure for development regarding the availability of health centres, educational facilities, banking, marketing and storage facilities etc.

Anna Hazare wanted development in terms of quantity and quality. Thus development in terms of change in qualitative aspect and growth in quantitative aspect would secure both economic and social change. These two together would be instrumental in achieving the well being and fuller life, thus promoting a better standard of living for the people.

The strengthening of agricultural economy, development of infrastructural facilities, providing social benefits to the rural poor, elevating their standard of living were some of the objectives visualised by Anna Hazare. Each of the items individually welcome though or even all of them together would not help development adequately. What Anna wanted was to tap all the available resources of the village.

Cooperation in work and in all activities of life was repeatedly emphasised. 'Anna' wanted to make the village life full and interesting and to cover all measures such as provision of irrigational facilities, planting of trees, conservation of water and soil, supplementary occupation, education etc.
He also recognised that efforts to increase agricultural production could not succeed unless it was supplemented by programmes for ensuring minimum amenities needed for it (water, seeds, pesticides, implements etc.).

Maharashtra is subject to frequent failure of rains and the results are famines. The vagaries of monsoon are proverbial, making agriculture an extremely precarious industry. Frequency of failure of crops due to drought causes endless miseries to cultivators having no reserves to fall back upon in times of distress. To a farmer there is no calamity greater or more severe than the partial or total failure of crops.

The destruction of our water systems, the drying up of our water resources are continuing unabated, with every passing day we are heading towards a very severe crisis. The need of the hour today is that we have to move away from a civil engineer’s stress on big dams and canals to a multi-disciplinary understanding of hydrology, ecology and political economy. The fundamental principle of water management should be, to hold every drop of rain water where it falls. If it falls on a slope there should be trees on it. If it falls in fields, there should be terracing or contour bunding. If it falls in a village there should be a village pond or tank. Even today, India uses 10 percent of all the rain that falls on the land. At present there is too much stress on big systems rather than small water harvesting systems. For large parts of the country the monsoon is very erratic. The real irony of the situation is that India is one of the world’s richest countries in terms of water resources.
According to "Wrath of Nature", a publication brought out by members of parliament by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), New Delhi, the average annual rainfall is higher in India than any other country in the world, except South America. But the biggest problem with its water resources is that over three quarters of the country's rainfall comes pouring down in four short monsoon months from June to September, resulting in an extremely uneven availability of water over the year and most of it just flows away.

Thus Anna Hazare wanted to capture and retain as much rainfall as possible. Since Ralegan Shindi lays in the drought prone zone of Maharashtra state, there had to be conjunctive use of water from rainfall, surface and underground water, to sustain an optimal crop pattern and to ensure a reliable and reasonable income per hectare.

Since Ralegan Shindi had no river nearby, great stress was to be laid on irrigation through small works like anicuts, bandharas, wells and tanks. Though percolation tanks and check dams do not provide direct irrigation, they do contribute to firm up and augment supplies in the wells down stream thus facilitating irrigation.

Where agriculture land forms the body, water is a vital fluid that sustains economy. Timely supply of this vital fluid is getting precarious day by day. The rule of thumb practices had to yield place to precise and rational criteria to ensure that we develop a planned economy with regard to utilization of water for irrigational purposes.
The surface water is utilised for irrigational purpose through impounding of water in tanks and reservoirs, building bunds, weirs and regulators across the running streams and diverting water on either flanks of the streams such as anicuts, bandharas and lift irrigation from streams and tanks.

What Anna realised was that every drop of rain water had to be stored. Through conservation of surface water, the parched land of Ralegan Shindi could be watered round the year so that multiple crops could be grown.

Anna was very much for developments of ground water resources on scientific lines.

1. Surface water schemes such as diversions of small streams.

2. Rain storage in small catchment.

3. Renovating of existing tanks and hurrying of diversion works.

4. Head water tanks, percolation tanks, ahars, bundhies for conserving moisture and replenishing ground water.

They have the following advantages says Anna:

1. They can be conceived and completed quickly and handled to a large extent by cultivators themselves.

2. They need small outlay of capital and mostly use local talents and resources.
3. The utilization of irrigation potential is almost immediate.

4. Since these schemes/works are owned by the cultivators themselves they bring psychological and physical satisfaction to the cultivators.

5. Since the cultivators know fully the capacities of these works, water supply from these can be more reliable, so that they may adopt a cropping pattern to suit their needs.

6. As the utilisation of water in these cases is usually confined to the area very near to the source, loss of water in its distribution is very much reduced.

7. These are essentially people centred programmes which provide individual as well as cooperative efforts.

8. The cost per hectare of minor irrigation is lower than that of major irrigation project.

9. Ground water has the greatest advantage, i.e. it is bountiful and can be freely stored and can move freely underground. Also, the loss by evaporation and seepage both during storage and during conveyance is checked.

10. Minor irrigation works do not require a large army of men to maintain and operate.
Development of adequate and dependable irrigational facility was therefore essential to banish famine as a result of drought conditions at Ralegan Shindi. It could also play a crucial role in agricultural productivity.

Water is more valuable than land because when water is applied to land it increases its productivity six fold and renders the land to more productive use which otherwise would produce nothing or next to nothing.

Thus according to Anna the maximum run off water could be checked step by step and the remaining could be stopped by Nullha bunding, leaving no water to pass through waste wear. Trees also could be planted on either side of the terrace. Thus about 500 acres of trees could be planted on hills. The water could percolate deep inside raising the ground water level. The humus deficiency could also be reduced thus lowering the temperature, such afforestations also checks soil erosion to a great extent as the soil washed away from the hill slopes, fill the reservoirs and tanks, clog the irrigation courses and stream channels, damage their storage capacity and reduce the life of the dams constructed.

What Anna feels is that the problem of conservation is largely one of educating the farmers so that, they realise that continuous wastage of water leads to lower income and deprives them from getting them maximum benefits from water conservation.
Thus Anas programme was directed to the task of village upliftment. It was to embrace all the aspects of governmental activity in the field - the improvement of agriculture, combating of soil erosion, planting of trees, preservation of water, development of water supplies, promotion of cooperation and better marketing and peoples contribution in the form of labour and locally available materials etc.
References

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