Mehgal River Basin Oral History Project

Interview Transcript

Interviewers: Alexandra Mouche and Dakshesh Gajjar
Narrator: Prakash Bhalagariya
Interview Dates: March 22nd, 2012
Place: Maliya Block, Junagadh, Saurashtra, Gujarat, India
Program: Fulbright-Nehru Grant 2011-2012
Date completed: March 22nd, 2012
March 22\textsuperscript{nd}, 2012

Persons Present: Alexandra Mouche’ (interviewer)

Dakshesh Gajjar (research assistant/interviewer)

Prakash Bhalagariya (Narrator)

(Dakshesh) दक्षेश : तमारू नाम शुं है?

What is your name?

(Prakash) प्रकाश : मारू नाम प्रकाशी है

My name is PrakashBhai.

(D) दक्षेश : तमारू जन्म कबां अने कमारे थयो?

When and where were you born?

(P) प्रकाश : मारू जन्म 1979 मां थयो अने लाकोदरा भातुना गावमा

My birthday was in 1979 and near Lakodara village.

(D) दक्षेश : तमारू देतेली पेड़ीदी अडीयां रहो छो?

How many generations of your family have been living here?

(P) प्रकाश : अडी अंदे पेड़ीदी रहु छु

Here, one generation has lived here.

(D) दक्षेश : तमारू नाथपणी वस्तु याह को छ?

What memories do you have from your childhood?
In my childhood I was fond of studying, but I couldn’t go anywhere. I also liked playing cricket.

When was your wedding and how many children do you have?

My wedding was in 1999 and I have two children.

How many years of study have you completed?

I have completed Bachelors of Commerce.

How did you learn how to farm?

The family taught me about farming when I was a child.
My forefathers did farming in Chorwad. I learned from them and then we started using scientific and modern technologies for farming. We made new tools, we used rickshaws instead of bullocks as it is a cheaper and modern option.

(D) दशेश : तमेळे केटेवा वरसथी पेटी करो छो?

How many years have you been farming?

(P) प्रकाशभाळ : अमेळे पंडर वरसथी पेटी करोचे छोमो?

For 15 years we have been farming.

(D) दशेश : तमेल पेटी करता त्यारे डेवो पाक बतो छतो?

When you farmed in the past, what crops did you grow?

(P) प्रकाशभाळ : अमेल पेटी करता त्यारे पाक अोजल्या वाणी बतो अमेल भुइं

When we farmed Ojal Valo in a smaller quantity. After using modern technology the output has grown 3 to 4 times. By using fertilizers like Urea the weight of the
Crops has been reduced and quality has gone down, but the quantity has increased. Cow dung fertilizers are being used less.

What type of tools did you use for farming in the past?

Back then random wooden tools were made. Tools like wooden ploughs and kos (leather buckets) to water the field. We had water but due to a shortage of tools the output was low. If people had 50 Vigah land they would cultivate only 3 to 4 Vigah.

What kinds of crops do you grow now?
Nowadays we grow groundnut, arenda, pigeon pea, chickpea, brinjal (eggplant) and chilies. We can grow all these because of the availability of tools.

(D) दालेश : तमारी पेटी करवानी रीत देवी कती?

What is your method of farming?

(P) प्रकाशभाई : पडेवा तो वरसाद आणि अप्रेव वापरून करू देवावुं

Early, when it rained, the fields would be sown. They didn’t use medicines (pesticides) nor did they know about them. And when the crop was ready they would harvest it. Today we know that if we use medicines (pesticides), the output will increase.

(D) दालेश : तमें करू संस्था साथे जोडतें अही?

Are you a part of any organizations?

(P) प्रकाशभाई : आत्मा संस्था साथे जोडतें अही बेडवूने ने बेंगा कर्यां चे करू राते पशुपालन करूं तेंनु मार्गदर्शन आपै ते पशुलो अत्य देवी राते करूं अहे मातेंनी सिंपटं कती
With Atma Organization they call the farmers and teach and to raise cattle. There was a meeting called for how to save water.

(D) दाश : तमें कम्यून घर्म साथे संकणाच्या तरीके?

Which religion do you belong to?

(P) प्रकाश : आम्ही स्वामीनारायण घर्म साथे संकणाच्या तृतीयांना

We belong to Swaminarayan religion.

(D) दास : तमें कोण शॉप छी?

What hobbies do you have?

(P) प्रकाश : मांना टिकेट रम्बवाणी शॉप छे

My hobby is to play cricket.

(D) दास : तमें मेघाल नदी विशेष एवढीच दास णारे छी?

What do you think about the Meghal River?

(P) प्रकाश : मेघाल नदी सुकावती न त्याने जेथी किंवा तापाने तापाणु पाक

वरी शक्त्य अनें ज' हेम बनें ते अझ्ह विदर अत्याच्या बनाम्यों के भाकी पक्तां

प्लेस्ज के अत्याच्या ज्या चांग नती केंद्रे तेंतु तेंतु जेथी वावणीमां भाकी ओटों ताप छे

The Meghal River should not dry up so that summer crops can also be grown. The dam built is 3 meters high and was left incomplete. Nobody is paying attention to
it and shrubs and bushes have grown and it could be a dangerous.

**(D) दशेश :** तमे नाना कता त्यारे भेषव नढी क्वेवी कती?

When you were little what was the Meghal River like?

**(P) प्रकाशबाई :** अमे नाना कता त्यारे सारी कती अनेवाली

When you were little what was the Meghal River like?

**(P) प्रकाशबाई :** अमे नाना कता त्यारे सारी कती अनेवाली

When you were little what was the Meghal River like?

**पश्चात्तर्गता आवी महीनो आवे त्यारे पाणी भेषव लेवा भोकु अनेवा पाणी मो वर्षराश वधी गयो अनेवा नढी सुधाई गई पाणी वड्कू करवु काम ते बोरीवंध बांधवा जोराइने**

It was good when we were young; 40 – 50 years ago it had constant flowing water it never dried up. From the time modern tools and machines have been used, water has been pulled out if the river and the use of water has increased and the river has dried. Boribands should be built to maintain flowing water.

**(D) दशेश :** तमारी माठे पाणी डट्टू महत्वपूर्ण हे?

What is the importance of water to you?

**(P) प्रकाशबाई :** पाणी जीवन जरुरियत छ पाणी वगर जीवी
Water is a basic necessity of life. Life is not possible without water. No matter how good your farming is, without water it is not possible so efforts should be made to save water.

(D) द्वारा: मेघल नहीं सुकाई गई त्याचे वाढण्यास फक्त कीच? 

When the Meghal River dried up, what happened at that time?

(P) प्रकाशभागी: मेघल नक्ष सुकाई गय त्याचे शिवाय पाच न चता, पण धोमाळु पाक बनायला शकायत ते डिसायला बंडूक ने जरावी बेडवी पकली जीवन घोरण्याचे नेहमु जतू। 

When the Meghal River dried up the winter crops could not be grown; only monsoon crops were grown. That is why people were poor and living standards were low.

(D) द्वारा: मेघल नहीं सुकाई गई त्याचे तमारा जीवन पर कसी असर बदल? 

When the Meghal dried up, how did this affect your life?

(P) प्रकाशभागी: अतूक असली वही शिवाय पाक न धोमाळु पाक
Income decreased and so did the winter crop and monsoon crop. Shortage of money led to low living standards. It is an agricultural region so without water farming is useless. If there is water, crops will be like gold. Farming land is fruitful. If there is water crops will be good. Without water farming is useless. It leaves a bad effect on everyone’s lives.

(D) दक्षिण : नक्षु कुत्तराड़ गर त्यारे अंतिमां भागौली अवस्था

How did you manage water for farming?

(P) प्रकाशभरी : जोर-करता नव फोटा छलां पाल पाणी आवर्त

We made water bores and dug wells but there was no water. They only depended on the monsoon crop, as long as it lasted. People broke down.
Have you participated in any lokdayro (public performance), sherinatak (street show, play) or pad-yatra (foot march)?

I have participated many times. We did Lokdayro related to the issues of water. All our friends would get together and discuss these issues.

What was the effect on your life after you took part in these activities?

These activities had a good effect on me, in 1989 I bought land and grew winter crops, after boribands
were built in 2009 there was no shortage of water. Now I have lots of water.

(D) देश: रेखा पाणी व्यवस्था तमें चूंकि करे हो?

What do you do to save water daily?

(P) प्रकाशनाराय: पाकरे नवीनित्य पूर्णत ज पाणी आपीने ही तपण प्रयोग करीसे ही आपीने शोधासांमुं ज पाणी दरियांमुं पाणी वापरो जसू नेणे रोखणारे प्रकल्प करीसे ही आपीने माह समजून करवले पडे दे विशिष्टांत आपनी पडे तो आपीने ही अने आर्थिक सहायतानी जडूर पडे तो आर्थिक सहाय्य पण करीसे ही

We don’t water the crops more then it is required. We use drip irrigation. We try to stop water that usually flows into the ocean in monsoon. If we need to educate people, we do it. If it needs financial support, we do that also.

(D) देश: तमाचा दाळा पेती माटे पाणीनो प्रयोग केवी रीते करता?

How did your forefathers use water for farming?

(P) प्रकाशनाराय: काळंची वेळा दाळा पाणीनो पेती माटे प्रयोग करता होता

रात दिवस पेतीत त्यांने विषय विषय वाळू अत्यंत तो मोटर दाळा ५० वेळ १०० विविध जमिनांना आसानी विषय वाळू चे महत्त्व करता पण साधनांनी उपलब्धता न करती
With their hands they pulled out water from the well with a Kos. They had to work day and night to water the fields. Today 50 of 100 Vighas can be watered easily with the help of a motor. Earlier there was hard work and less tools and machines.

(D) दक्षेश : अत्याधृवते जेतीमां पाशीनो उपयोग केवल रीते करये छो?

Nowadays how do you use water?

(P) प्रकाशभारी : अत्याधृवते जेतीमां पाशी माटे विभाजित पंचनो उपयोग करो रीते करी छो जेतीमां रीशा अने तेक्टरनो उपयोग करी छो रीशा बणडनो उपयोग ओळो करो तेक्टरनो जेती करो आपणे आधिक वात वाप

Nowadays submersible pumps are used for watering the farm. We keep water in the back of the tractor and use water. We use rickshaws and tractors in farming. For financial reasons bullocks are used less often.

(D) दक्षेश : जब बसाव पवित्रति विशे शुं पाण्यो छो?

What do you know about methods to save water?

(P) प्रकाशभारी : जब बसाय शेतकु दरियामां पाशी आफू जाव तेने प्रमुख करवे जोडविने बोरिनग करी तो पाशी रोके शाकाव अने पाशीनो बसाव करी शाकाव.
To save water, we should stop the passing of water into the ocean. If boribands are built, water can be stopped and saved.

What are your expectations from Water Conservation Committee?

The expectation from the Water Conservation Committee are that the dam which is being built should be completed at the earliest time possible and the wild shrubs growing around it should be removed. The trees in the dam should be removed to avoid future threats of the dam breaking down.

How effective is the work done by the Water Conservation Committee?
The Water Conservation Committee has been very effective. There has been an 83% benefit. If the dam is built then there will be a 100% chance the summer will pass well. The government has already given the money: only the dam needs to be built. Only 3 meters has been built and the work is left incomplete. If it is built for 12 meters it will be beneficial.

(D) Prakash Bhalagariya: तमारी जीवनी मी कोई नेली वात देख ले तो केवा मागता होय

Is there is anything about your life that you want to tell us?

(P) Alexandra Mouche: मारी नेली हुई के बविधायस माजास नि:शुल्क होय रोटियो पाशी दप्तरी न होय पाशी होय अने अन्य अंतर्याचे उत्पादन सांगे होय अने नाना माजासोने पेट महत्त्वी मणी २५ पाशी महत्त्वी वस्तु हे अेटेहूं पाशी अवयवा मारुं हुं

I wish that in the future no person is weak and all have food and water. If there is water and the crops are good,
poor people also get work. So water is essential and that is why I want to save it.