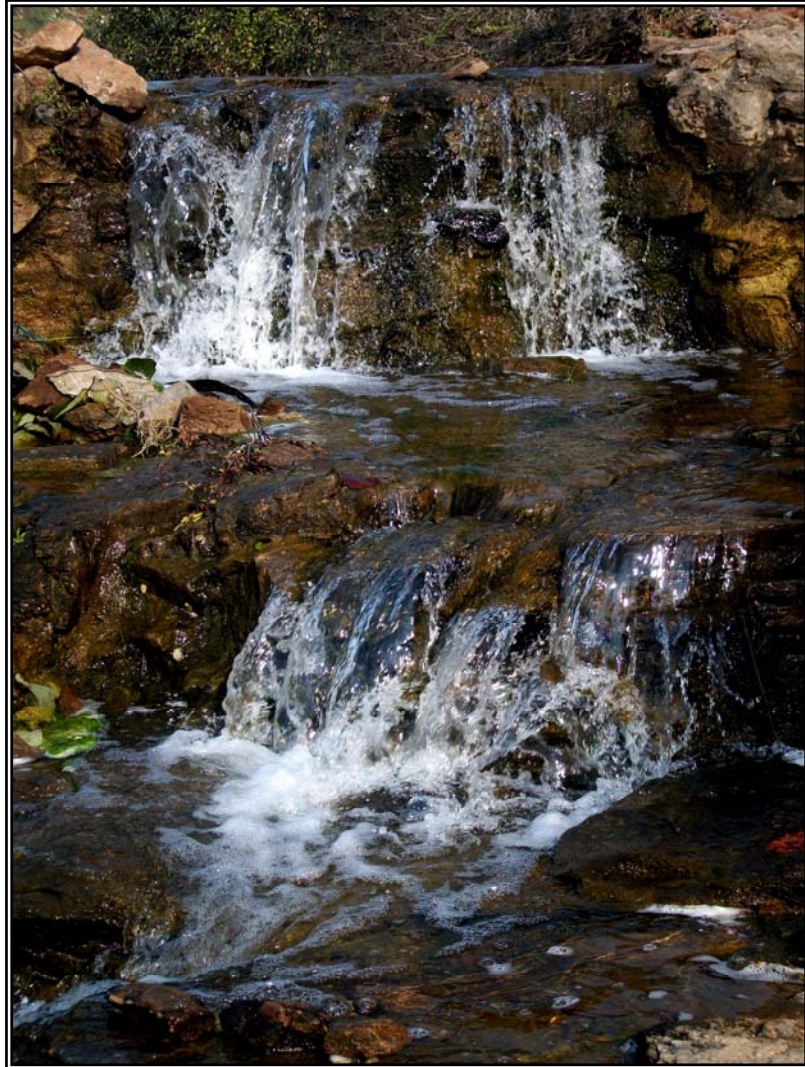


ENVIRONMENT EDUCATION PROGRAMME

BHEKARA



**Report submitted by
Dr. Leena M.**

**Report submitted to
Hanuman Van Vikas samiti, Sakroda**

**Funded by
Society for Promotion of Wastelands Development, New Delhi**

23rd January - 25th January, 2011

ENVIRONMENT EDUCATION PROGRAMME: BHEKARA

A three days EEP was held at the village school of Bhekara village during 23rd January to 25th January 2011. Different groups (76 individuals) were participated in this EEP including students, school teachers, farmers and housewives through different events and interests. Three different events were done during the three days covering the issues “what is Ecology, habitat, species association, how nature works”, etc.



To appreciate the connections between habitats and species loss, first needed to explain what makes a habitat, why habitats are located where they are, and how plants and animals are adapted to the habitats in which they live (students explained particular species and its habitat preference by essays and paintings). In other words, an understanding of basic ecology.

Each event covered key concepts essential to the comprehension of the problems affecting the habitat, are listed below.

- The climate of a habitat and the changing pattern in Bhekara and surrounding area,
- The physical and vegetative characteristics of a habitat,
- The relationship between the adaptations of plants and animals and their survival,
- The interrelationships between plants and animals in an undisturbed habitat,
- The impacts of humans on natural habitats (only village and agriculture fields based practices were covered; mining issues will be covered in next EEP),
- The relationship between an indigenous cultural group and its habitat (local community, their *Devara*¹, biodiversity around the *Devara*, seasonal dependence over the forest resources, impacts of habitat loss on local livelihoods and life, etc.)
- The ecological services provided by a natural habitat,
- Rare and endangered species issues and wrong beliefs regarding some animals and birds (cats, owls, crows, etc.)

¹ Village temples

All the activities were designed to develop skills in critical thinking, oral, written and diagrammatic communication, geology, geography, basic principles of physics and creative expression.

Day 1 (23rd January' 11):

General discussions were held with three different groups at the village school compound i.e. children group, women group, men group.

Posters of birds, insects, plants and butterflies of the area were shown the groups. It was observed that all of them were identified maximum pictures of the posters. Children were able to identify currently available birds and butterflies. But the elder groups explained about the history of the habitat and biodiversity of the area. They also explained about the locally extinct species like the two species of vulture depicted in the posters.

With the help of Mr Dharma, Ms.Hema, Mr.Prem and Ms.Geeta, PRA exercises were done with different groups. The three groups developed three dramatic maps of Bhekara environ. It was noticeable that the elements, aspects and landmarks were defined by the groups with different interests. The children group depicted

school, forest, fruit trees in village area, rivers and ponds, *Devara*, etc. The women group illustrated the water resources, the social ground- all the hamlets, agriculture fields and grazing areas in very detail. The

men group showed Bhekara forest area, neighbour village boundaries, neighbour village forest boundaries, major crops and trees available at present in the village and forest area, some areas for extension of mining in future, etc.



Day 2 (24th January' 11):

Following activities were done with the students group:

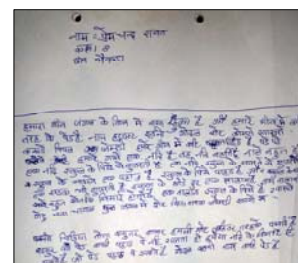
1. **Drawing competition:** the students depicted Forest (*Jangal*), Agriculture (*Khet*), Sacred places (*Devara*), Wild animals, Birds with their colours of imaginations. They are aware of the conflicts between wild and village and it can be seen in the drawing of Manjukumari showed *Rujhada*



(Nilgay) and *Khargush* (Hare) in agriculture fields. Some students revisited their *Devara* on paper with colours, where they very perfectly depicted all the major trees in and around the *Devara* in the picture. Through these pictures they explained their innocent knowledge about the biodiversity and habitat variations around their village.



2. **Essay writing:** few students were able to draw their pictures by words. They wrote about their village, village forest, agriculture, crops and fruits available in forests. Students of standard 7 and 8 were more matured and were having good knowledge about common tree and bird species and their ecology. Student Premchandra explained the habitat preference of some trees like *Khajoor*, *Aam* in plain areas near water bodies and *Godal*, *Khanni*, *Bans* at the upper slopes of hills. These students have the potential and it is essential to join these hands with a continuous programme to develop good resource managers at village level.



3. **Picture identification:** students of standard one to three were very young and not able to do painting or essay writing so they were provided the posters and to identify birds, butterflies, insects from them. They were not able to name all the insects and butterflies but they could recognize their existence in their area.



4. **Creative Art:** some students were provided craft papers and they explored a different way to express their knowledge and imaginations. Since they were doing this activity first time it took a long time to develop a village map through craft papers and showed their creativity.

There are many local techniques in the village in different livelihood groups. Such techniques can be used to develop models (wooden-clay-cloth- models to understand forestry, agroforestry, watershed, mining impacts, foodweb, energy flow, etc.) to improve the EEP to make it more practical, informative and creative.



5. **Discussions with teachers:**

Teachers are very important for the followup of EEP. All the teachers of the school were participated. They were keen to include the local environment aspects in their routine syllabus. They discussed the wrong beliefs about animals and birds (known age-old) among the local communities. Such beliefs sometimes create threats to the particular bird or animal. Some of them were explained by teachers were “crossing of cats, calls of owls and owlets during nights, calls & eyes of crows, use of tounge of hyena”. The scientific information regarding such matters provided to the group. It was felt that the EEP can play a very crucial role in awareness generation not only in ecology and environment side but in social side too.

Day 3 (25th January' 11):

The women group of Bhekara prepared different delicious recipes from wild plants growing in their agriculture fields as weed. This event was held at the anicut in open area. The fuel wood and stones for making *Chulha* were collected from the surroundings



by the women. Seventeen women, four men, two teachers and more than thirty children were present. Nine women were the main cooks



who prepared eleven recipes (table). After recipe preparation, the ecological, nutritional and medicinal value of each plant used in the recipe



was discussed. In addition to this, propagation methods of important wild plant species and preparation method of medicine from wild were also explained.



Sr	Recipe (No.of dish)	Plant name (main ingredient)
1	Sabji (6)	Chil (L*), Chana (L), Sarson (L), Merva (L)
2	Kadhi (1)	Chil (L), Chana (L)
3	Paniya (1)	Makka (flour)
4	Chatni (1)	Chil (L)
5	Roti/ Rotla (1)	Makka (flour), Chil (L)
6	Khakhara (1)	Makka (flour), Chil (L)
*: L= Leaves		

The group was very keen to do this campaign again after monsoon, as they will get more wild edible diversity in forest. Moreover, it was a knowledge exchange platform where we also prepared Khakhara dish from local wild edibles, which was unknown to the women. All the women



appreciated it as it can be a good snack for their children (children eat the biscuits and packaged local namkins as they are not nutritional and cost bearing also).

Other than wild medicines, the ayurvedic medicines especially useful in reproductive healthcare were also discussed with the women group. These medicines were provided by Dr Manoj Jain (Govt. Ayurvedic Hospital, Sakroda). EEP can provide a good opportunity to make a strong network with ayurvedic doctors and local herbal healers.



Acknowledgement

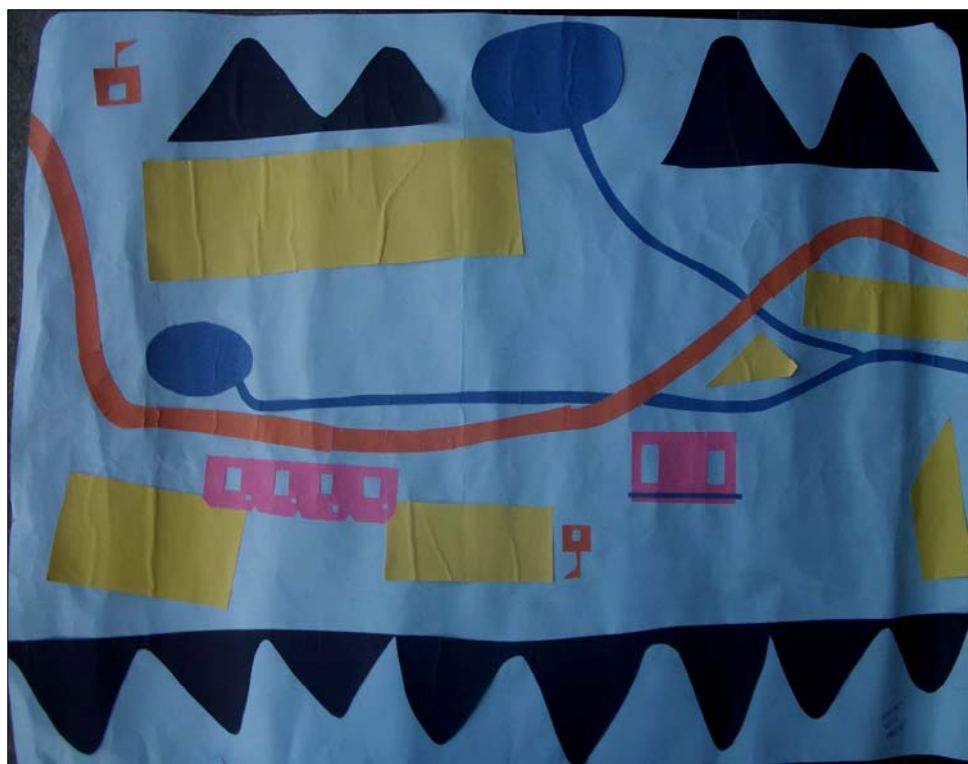
We are thankful to the Bhekara village people, village school teachers, students and women group for providing their support during the programme. The HVVS staff Mr Yadav, Mr Dharmasinh, Ms Hema and the resource person Ms Geeta at all level of their help. The Society for Promotion of Wastelands Development, New Delhi for the financial assistance.

Dr.Leena M.

Annexure 1: Participants of EEP Bhekara

23.01.2011		24.01.2011				25.01.2011			
कं. स.	सदस्य का नाम	कं. स.	सदस्य का नाम	पिता का नाम	उम्र	कं. स.	सदस्य का नाम	पति का नाम	किया गया कार्य
1	दुर्गा बाई	1	अम्बा कुमारी	देवा जी	10	1	गंगा बाई	लोगर जी	पोहा , कडी व सब्जी
2	गंगा बाई	2	लालु राम	देवा जी	8	2	मागीबाई	मोती जी	चुल्हा जलाने
3	गोरी बाई	3	चम्पा कुमारी	माधु जी	7	3	लाली बाई	सका जी	चिल कि सब्जी
4	भुरी बाई	4	लंहरा कुमारी	भेरा जी	9	4	गंगा बाई	हुडा जी	खाकरा
5	गेंदी बाई	5	पुष्पा कुमारी	तोला जी	7	5	कुकु बाई	कैसा जी	खाकरा
6	गंगा बाई	6	रतन लाल	दुदा जी	6	6	पुजी बाई	किशना जी	पाइना
7	टमु बाई	7	कालु लाल	भेरा जी	8	7	गेंदी बाई	रुपा जी	आलु चना सब्जी
8	पुष्पा बाई	8	काली कुमारी	देवाजी	6	8	कमली बाई	भेरा जी	सरसो चील सब्जी
9	नवली बाई	9	नरपत लाल	अम्बरा जी	7	9	पेमली बाई	अमरा जी	चील सब्जी
10	दल्लु बाई	10	पुष्कर लाल	अम्बरा जी	9	10	दलु बाई	उदा जी	चील सब्जी
11	खेमा बाई	11	पुष्कर लाल	भेरा जी	10	11	दुर्गा बाई	कालु जी	हेल्प कार्य
12	डाली बाई	12	रोशन लाल	अम्बरा जी	12	12	वरदी बाई	कैसाजी	खाकरा
13	अम्बा आई	13	नानका लाल	हुडा जी	13	13	खेमणी बाई	लोगर जी	खाकरा
14	लोगरी बाई	14	परस राम	लोगर जी	10	14	झुमली बाई	हिरा जी	नही
15	चैना जी	15	किशन लाल	नाथु जी	11	15	नवली बाई	विरमा जी	पाइना
16	लिम्बा जी	16	निर्मल लाल	अम्बरा जी	12	16	परता बाई	शंकर जी	पाइना
17	रामा जी	17	गणेश लाल	मोहन जी	10	17	दुर्गा बाई	पप्पु लाल	पानी लाये
18	भेरा जी	18	इन्द्र लाल	उदा जी	12				
19	रुपा जी	19	मंजु कुमारी	षंकर जी	13				
20	गगाराम जी	20	रुपली कुमारी	दडा जी	14				
21	लोगर जी	21	बैनकी कुमारी	नवल राम	14				
22	रामा जी	22	लीला कुमारी	अम्बरा जी	15				
23	अम्बरा जी	23	राधी कुमारी	किंकर जी	12				
24	मिठा जी	24	देवली कुमारी	रामा जी	14				
25	लोगर जी	25	प्रेम शंकर	लोगर जी	15				
		26	प्रकाश लाल	गलबा जी	15				
		27	प्रेम लाल	दल्ला जी	12				
		28	कमल लाल	गलबा जी	13				
		29	धर्म लाल	तोला जी	14				
		30	नाना लाल	भेरा जी	13				
		31	मुकेश लाल	वेला जी	14				
		32	तेजराम	डुलेराम जी	14				
		33	केलाश लाल	दल्ला जी	14				
		34	भारत लाल	लोगर जी	13				

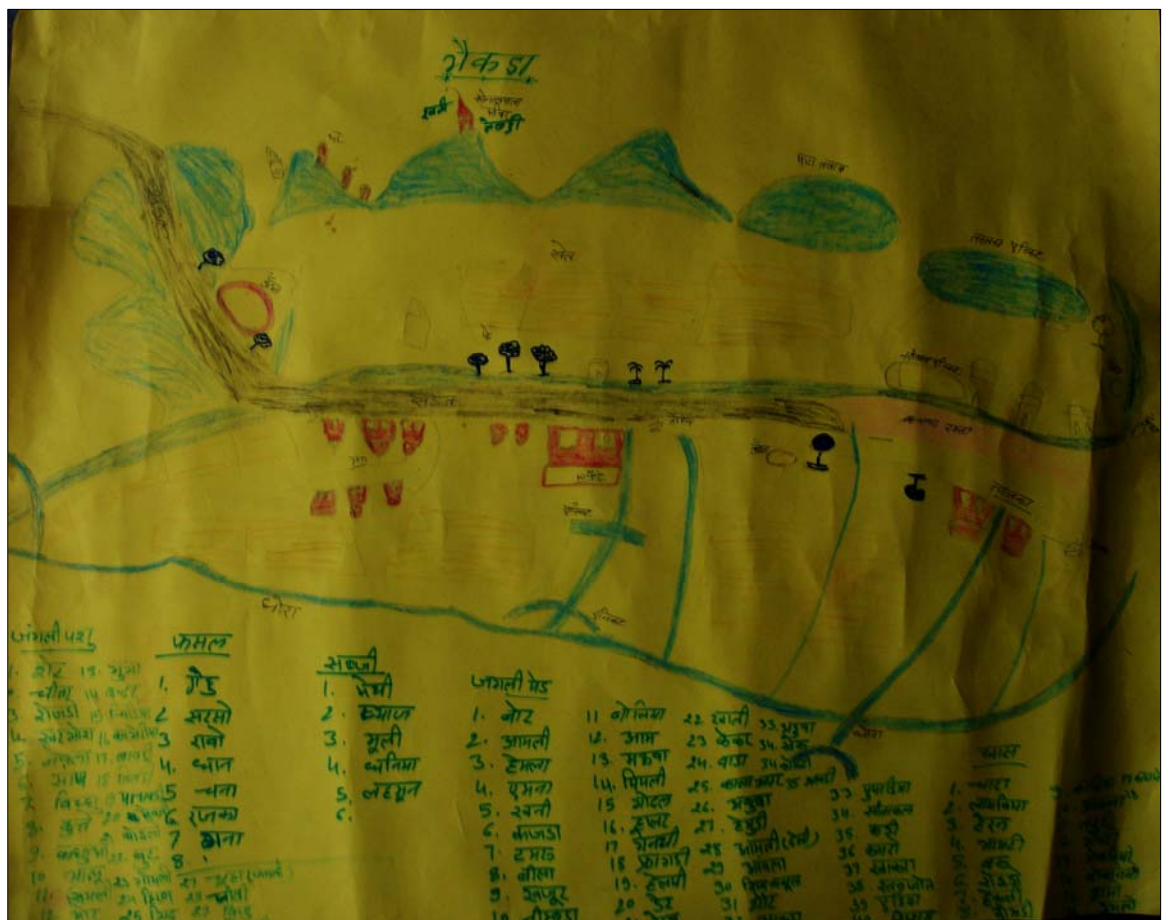
Annexure 2: Photographic glimpses of the EEP Bhekara



Bhekara village and forest map. Developed by the children group



Bhekara village and forest map. Developed by the women group



Bhekara village and forest map. Developed by the men group



