

Khasra Migrants' Kitchen Garden

Case Study



Bhuj

December 2021

BACKGROUND

The 'Kitchen Garden' project was a concept initiated by a fellow from Homes in the City (HIC), Geeta Ben. She started this in different areas of Ward 8, went to households and provided them with information, training and technical knowledge of how to grow and sustain a kitchen garden. This model was then carried forward by the Setu team and they decided to encourage migrants to take this up. The main purpose of this initiative is to ensure that migrants and their families consume fresh fruits and vegetables. By setting up their kitchen gardens, they will be 'aatmanirbhar', lead eco-friendly lives, while maintaining their health and also make use of the extra land or terrace space that they might have.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INITIATIVE

The migrants currently living in Khasra were relocated from Bhujio in 2018 and have been living there for some time now. Setu Abhiyan finds different ways to support them and one of them being encouraging the migrants to create their own kitchen gardens to help sustain themselves. Today, one couple in the area are doing exceptionally well in terms of growing different vegetables and fruits in their area.



The couple, Jagan bhai and Kannu bai are from a small village near Indore in Madhya Pradesh and they migrated to Bhuj many years ago for work. This year, after they came back to Bhuj from their village, they brought back some seeds with themselves which they planted around monsoon. To motivate the couple and a few others who were attempting this initiative, Setu provided aid to them by providing them with kitchen garden kits. These kits were provided to 5 families and included multiple items which would help them set up and sustain their garden. Out of those who were supplied with these kits, Jagan bhai and Kannu bai have been extremely successful in growing their garden, which they are extremely proud of.

When the Urban Setu team realized that the couple is doing well, they inspired them to grow their vegetables and fruits without using any harsh chemicals and instead use home-made remedies for fertilizers, pesticides and to take care of the growing vegetation. Previously, when pests had infected their garden, onion was soaked in water overnight and that water was used to get rid of the pests.

Another natural method that is used to keep pests away, is using the ash of burnt wood. The couple's garden was also almost destroyed when they had gone home for a few days and left known people to look after their garden. Due to their irresponsibility, buffaloes came into the area and ate most of the produce. When the couple came back, they were heartbroken to see what had happened but started working on it once again.

Presently, the kitchen garden boasts of vegetables and fruits like, coriander, tomatoes, chickpeas, toor dal, corn, pomegranate, spinach, sweet lime (mausambi) and mango. The husband-and-wife love working around the garden and looking after it on a daily basis.

Jagan bhai is also a scrap dealer, he goes to collect it in the morning and after segregating it, he goes on to sell the any recyclable or useful material.



When asked what they do with the excess vegetables and if they sell the vegetables or not, the couple replied, “If we sell the produce, we’ll earn Rs.200-300 maximum, with that money we cannot make a building or something. So, it’s better if we distribute it to those who need it, at least in this way they will be able to fill their stomachs.”

Jagan bhai and Kannu bai derive a lot of satisfaction from their gardening and tending to the produce, they also plan on expanding it by growing ladyfingers and carrots in the coming months.

