Mehgal River Basin Oral History Project
Interview Transcript

Interviewers: Alexandra Mouche and Dakshesh Gajjar

Narrator: Manji Kala

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Persons Present: Alexandra Mouche’ (interviewer)

Dakshesh Gajjar (research assistant/interviewer)

Manji Kala (Narrator)

(Allie) अली : तो तमाहे नाम शुरू छेक?
So what is your name?

(Manji) मानजीबाई : माहे नाम मानजीबाई
My name is Manji Bhai.

(A) अली : मानजीबाई
Manjibhai

(Dakshesh) दक्षेश : तमाहे जन्म कहां गए कहाँ थे?
When and where were you born?

(M) मानजीबाई : माहे जन्म अहिं सामथियाडीमां जयो छे गए आस्थे 1957 मां
I was born here in Samathiyadi and approximately in 1957.

(D) दक्षेश : तमाहे बेटाली बेटी अडी रहेछे?
How many generations of your family have lived here?

(M) मानजीबाई : अमाहे एक बेटी
3 generations.

(D) दक्षेश : तमाहे नन्दपार्वी बेटाली पस्तु तमने घाट कोय तो?
What do you remember from your childhood?

(M) मानजीबाई : नन्दपार्वामां तो... त्याहे बोल्मो रमाता ने जीलबी इंडिया रमाता ने आलबी-पीलबी ने अश्व शुं रमाता ठाक छे. डडा बो ने बो.
In my childhood... we played games like Kho-Kho, Gilli Dandiya and Ambali-Pipili. Ball games, etc. That is what I remember.

(D) डेशेश : तमारा लज्जा क्या था?
When did you get married?

(M) मंजील्लाी : लज्जा......
Marriage...

(D) डेशेश : तमारा लज्जा क्या था?
When did you get married?

(M) मंजील्लाी : १९७० मा
In 1970

(D) डेशेश : अनेक तेल्ला बाणको हो?
And how many children do you have?

(M) मंजील्लाी : बाणको.....अत्यारे १२ बाणको
Children... I have four children.

(D) डेशेश : तमें टेल्लो अत्यार पारा?
How many years of study have you completed?

(M) मंजील्लाी : अत्यार..... पांचम गुजराती भाषा मात्री.
Until 5th grade in Gujarati School.

(D) डेशेश : तमें पेटिली तेल्ली शोला थी?
How did you learn farming?

(M) मंजील्लाी : पेटिली अस्सरा आप्को करता तो अनेक जोडीने अर्थ पाड़ शीघ्रता....
My forefathers were farmers; we learned farming from them.

(D) डेशेश : तमें पेटिली टेल्ला कर्ष घी करो छो?
How many years have you been farming?
For about 30 to 35 years I have been farming.

How was the output (crop) like, when you were farming?

Back then we grew Millet and Groundnut crops.

When you began farming, what types of tools did you use?

Back then wooden tools were used.

And what kind of crops do you grow now?

Right now we grow cotton, raido (mustard), chickpea, groundnut and wheat.

What was your method of farming?

Back then there were local methods and local ploughs. Bullocks were used to plough.

Are you part of any organization?

I am a part of the Aga Khan Organization.
What religion do you follow?

We are Hindu.

Do you have any hobbies?

Right now I have no hobbies, except worshiping God.

What do you think of the Meghal River?

The Meghal River….our Aga Khan Organization has decided to revive the Meghal River between the years 2002 to 2012. We have also joined this movement.

What was the Meghal River like when you were young?

At that time there was constant flowing water in the river all the time; it never dried.

How important is water to you?

Water is extremely important.
(D) दर्श : मेंढव नटी सुकाई गई त्यांते घुंघरू?
What happen when Meghal River dried up?

(M) मनजीतबाई : त्यांते पाणी पिवाणी पत्ता तकलीक पडली गई
At that time there was a scarcity of drinking water also.

(D) दर्श : मेंढव नटी सुकाई गई त्यांते अनेक तमारा शीवन पर घुंघरू?
When the Meghal River dried up, how did it affect your life?

(M) मनजीतबाई : तकलीक तो भावू पडली गरी. असर तो भावू पडली ती हो..
And how did the dry river affect your family and village?

(M) मनजीतबाई : अभार झुंझले गायने पाणी माते ने मजुरी माते बीजा
Our family and villagers had to go to other villages for water and labor work.

(D) दर्श : अनेक सुकाई गई त्यांते अनेक असर तमारा झुंझले अने
And how did the dry river affect your family and village?

(M) मनजीतबाई : आमारा झुंझले गायने पाणी माते ने मजुरी माते बीजा
During famines at that time there were no arrangements. There were wells; from them a little

(D) दर्श : नटी सुकाई गई त्यांते तमे भेटी माते पाणी नी
When the Meghal River dried up, from were did you

(M) मनजीतबाई : त्यांते कोई व्यवस्था नोती जयांते झुंझले पडले
arrange water for farming?

(M) मनजीतबाई : त्यांते कोई व्यवस्था नोती जयांते झुंझले पडले
During famines at that time there were no

(D) दर्श : तमने पंडचाउं, शेरीटाटक, लोक--डायरोनी तमने
How did you know about pad-yatra (travelling by foot), sherinatak (street show, play) and lokdayro (public performance)?

From the Aga Khan organization when they started reviving Meghal River.

Did you participate in the activity?

I participated in sherinatak (street show, play).

Hmmm…

What effect did these activities have on you?

Lots of water was saved due to these activities. We did a play about water conservation.

How do you save water now?

We use a drip irrigation system nowadays.

How did your grandfather use water when he was farming?
At that time, bullocks were used to pull out water from the well.

(D) द्वारा : अन्याय देवी रीते करो न?
How do you get water now?

(M) मन्जीबाई : पहली अन्याय आया...अन्याय तो इलेक्ट्रिक मोटरवाले
Later on engines were used now we use electric motors.

(D) द्वारा : तबे जल बनाव पश्चिम विशे शु जालो न?
What are your methods for conserving water?

(M) मन्जीबाई : जल बनावमा होरी बंद करोले, जेकरेम बनामीले,
For water conservation boriband’s and checkdams are
आगामित संस्था साथे अमे बधा दोर गुप एक बनाम्यु गे, जोडारिने बाँधु
being built by the joint efforts of Aga Khan organized
करोले छीले
by the Meghal core group. Together we can do

anything!

(D) द्वारा : अन्य जल बनाव समीती पासे तबे शु आशा रापो न?
What are your expectations from the Water
Conservation Committee?

(M) मन्जीबाई : आशा तो अनी पासे कई नदी रापता ……
We don’t have any expectations from them…

(D) द्वारा : अंतते शु करु जोड्यले अनी चौह कई इप्न भरी?
What do you think should be done?

(M) मन्जीबाई : आ दोरीबंध कई रीते करवा ने एकु बाँधु .........
How to make Boriband’s and all that …

(D) द्वारा : जल बनाव समीती जे कर्षे करे ने देतू असरकारक
How affective has been the activities done by the Water
छे?
Conservation committee?

(M) मन्जीबाई : बीव असरकारक छे, सारु छे, कपड़ाकारक छे?
They have been very effective and useful. It’s good.

(D) देश : तमारी जीडी अपनी कोई वात जे अमने देवा मागता हो 
Is there is anything about your life that you want to tell us?

(M) मनजीवन : शु जीडीगीनी.. अवे तो आधुनिक जनानो आवी गयो, 
What about life, this is a modern era. Our life is simple.