

## **S & T Application for Enhancement of Rural Livelihood: Community based Chambal Ravine+ Reclamation through Sustainable Management and Cultivation of Asparagus**

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Five ravine and forest fringe villages in the Birpur Block of Sheopur District, Madhya Pradesh were involved in DST-project implementation, which was initiated in 2002. Detailed study of these villages, in terms of their socio-economic profile, natural resource availability, community dynamics, village institution and micro-level assessment of problems has been completed with the participation of project stakeholders i.e. the local Sahariya community, NTFPs traders and forest department officials. A series of meetings were organised in all the five villages to sort out the problems related to Shatawar (*Asparagus racemosus*) regeneration, harvesting, marketing and value addition. There are Shatawar collectors (Over 350 males and about 200 women) and about 30 forestry staffs have been trained in the scientific harvesting technique of Shatawar and nursery development and processing of NTFPs for the SHGs in whole project tenure. Apart from this, a few mass awareness generation campaigns were organised in the project area to sensitise the stakeholders on conservation and management of Shatawar and its associated species like Gugguls and Neem in the Chambal ravine.

As a result of constant social engineering, field demonstration, capacity building and on job training, Shatawar collectors have started controlled extraction and subsequent conservation and maintenance activities in project villages. This has reduced the grazing menace in the area partly because of self-discipline followed by local people. Availability of fodder has been increased over the years. It has also helped in increased the quantity of Shatawar (tuberous) roots collected in each collection periods.