

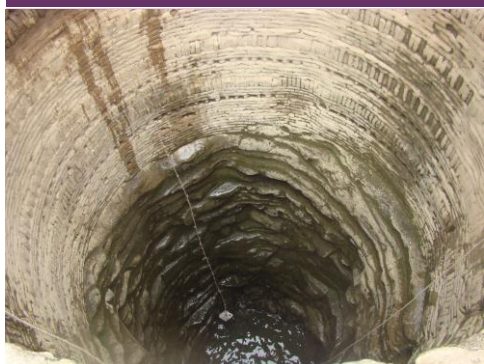
Governing extreme drought

Enabling community-based adaptation in Marathwada



EVA Policy Brief No. 4

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Climate risks and more extreme weather add considerable risks and uncertainties to rural livelihoods in the drylands of Marathwada in Maharashtra. In extreme drought situations, small farmers cannot cope on their own and require external support. Given the diversity of constraints on rural livelihoods, climate risk management needs to become integrated within all key rural sector policies; e.g., agriculture, watershed development, water resources, and non-farm employment.

A multi-sectoral and multi-agency oriented approach is required that includes coordination and cooperation between various sectors and public–private actors at different levels. Improved coordination is especially required. This can be done by strengthening village Panchayati Raj Institutions and Gram Sabhas and enabling community-based adaptation (CBA) through improved accountability, social audit, and participation.





Enabling community-based adaptation through better local governance

Decentralize the governance of climate extremes

The state (and national) drought risk management strategies need to be decentralized, and policies and plans at state levels better linked to district-level policies and plans and coordinated with private business and civil society initiatives at village level.

Undertake climate/risk and vulnerability assessments

Drought and climate risk and vulnerability assessments should be undertaken at the regional, district and/or local levels; the integration of climate risk assessment data – focusing on scarce and variable water resources – may help to prioritize investments in agriculture and watershed development and integrate and operationalize climate risk governance in sustainable rural development.

Prepare district-wise drought contingency plans and related financing

This includes drought risk management activities linked to early warning systems, at national, local and community

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Multi-level governance analysis

These policy implications are derived from empirical data collected during a two-year research and capacity-building project in Jalna district, Maharashtra:

1. A multi-level governance framework was applied to analyse the integration of climate risk management across sectors, actors, and levels

2. Methodology:

- Policy and institutional analysis
- In-depth interviews at district and village levels
- Participatory methods and household survey in nine villages





Constraints to agricultural livelihoods in Marathwada

- Small and fragmented landholdings
- Limited access to credit and market chains
- Underdeveloped climate services related to weather forecasting, early warning, risk insurance, and related advisory services
- Limited access to water for irrigation and declining natural resources — soil fertility and common-pool grazing

Enabling community-based adaptation through better local governance

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Improve climate services and early warning systems

Continue to improve weather and monsoon forecasting and advisory system and expand the system to ensure greater outreach by building links and partnerships with private and civil society service providers, improve targeting and outreach of hydro-meteorological services with regard to drought (and flood) preparedness, and reinforce local capacity building at village and block levels.

Ensure better integration of climate risk management knowledge and capacity with watershed development and agricultural approaches

This includes measures related to participatory management of scarce water resources, innovative cropping patterns, pasture production and integrated crop-livestock production, forestry management, and extension (weather forecasting, early warning, advisory services).

Reinforce Community-based Adaptation

Enhance community and local initiatives through training and financial support of SHGs, watershed development committees, farmers' groups, and linkages to committees under Gram Sabhas and the Panchayati Raj Institution system.

Improve risk financing (weather-based index insurance)

Consider ways of improving credit schemes and risk transfer mechanisms and design of catastrophe risk financing strategies. Also, promotion of risk financing as an integral part of the state's economic policy is an important component of a strategic framework for climate and disaster risk management.

Improve the operations of MGNREGS

Ensure increased efficiency in the operations of rural employment schemes such as MGNREGS, related to outreach and targeting, empowerment of women, and active participation by the Gram Sabha in developing good quality collective assets.

EVA: Extreme risks, Vulnerabilities and community-based Adaptation

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The EVA Policy Brief series presents key policy insights from field-based research conducted in Jalna district before, during, and after the extreme drought of 2012–13.



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