This Maharashtra village converted a 20-acre forest into 'oxygen park'; here's how

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A Pune village surrounded by forests, Kadbanwadi battled water scarcity for years. In order to change the water situation in the area, the villagers took matters into their own hands converted an abandoned 20-acre forest into an 'oxygen park'.

Bhajandas Pawar, a retired science teacher and a former sarpanch of Kadbanwadi village, started the initiative without any government or structural backing.

With some support from environmentalists in Pune, the villagers planted 700 saplings of peepal, tamarind, jamun, bahawa, banyan, and other trees that were not part of the forest earlier. The villagers took care of the forest, watered and looked after the saplings and contributed money for maintaining the forest.

The village had suffered during the droughts in the previous decades. Pawar was also instrumental in leading water conservation efforts in the village and now, water scarcity has receded in Kadbanwadi and there has been sufficient water supply in recent years.

Kadbanwadi served as an inspiration for many other villages in the area that have adopted similar practices to protect the local environment.

In the fight against climate change, while attention is given to the actions of corporates and national governments, such small and individual efforts also significantly contribute to conserving the local environment.

While large-scale climate policies and initiatives are key to reaching the goals set out in the Paris Climate Accord, smaller actions can improve the local environment.

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