

## An unending tryst with Climate Change to secure life and livelihood

**“Everyone's wells were constructed but not ours because we belong to the cobbler's caste”,  
Kashibai (Lalitpur, UP)**

My name is Kashibai. I am a resident of Biraura village of Jakhaura block of Lalitpur district in the Bundelkhand region of UP. I come from a Dalit community, belonging to the cobbler (Mochi) community. I am about 70 years old. My three sons migrated in search of livelihood. We don't even have a house to live in as my mud house collapsed in last year's



unseasonal rains. We even struggle to drink water here. This well was dug by my family because we are not usually welcomed at other water sources lying in dominant people's areas. My family and families in the neighborhood rely on this well for drinking water.

When there is drought in our villages, everything dries up, and drinking water is scarce. The taps are there in the villages dry up, and it is very difficult to meet water requirements. Due to the untouchability of Dalits in our villages, the people of the Dalit community together built this well for the settlement. Wells were built for everyone in the villages, but the well in our Dalit colony has not been built yet. The authorities tell us to do it ourselves, whereas the wells of Thakur Basti and Pandit Basti have all been reconstructed. Even during drought, they survive by drinking water from this well, but now it has deteriorated. We are forced to drink this dirty water and sometimes fall sick. No one listens to us and the village head is not helping us rejuvenate this well. Caste discrimination is prevalent in our villages. What to do, no one listens to us!

*Water scarcity is a critical issue that affects millions of people in the villages of Bundelkhand. During droughts, everything dries up, and access to drinking water becomes scarce. The taps in the villages also dry up, making it almost impossible to meet the water requirements of the locals. Moreover, the practice of untouchability towards Dalits further exacerbates the situation, depriving them of their basic right to access water.*