

### **7.3 Institutional Distinctiveness**

Quality oriented higher education for rural youth is one of the distinctiveness of Phaltan Education Society and Mudhoji College. Our college is situated in the draught prone region of eastern part of Satara District Maharashtra. It is a partially hilly region with agriculture to be the main base. Due to topographical conditions, and scarcity of rains, water conservation and its proper utilization is the need of this region.

The NSS unit of our college has been working in this area for the last two decades. It has received the Indira Gandhi Best NSS Unit National Award in 1994. It was the result of continuous efforts taken by college in multiple activities run by NSS unit. Keeping line with the need of region and the mission of society the NSS unit has continued its journey in fundamental work of water conservation. Since the academic year 2017-18 the college has organized special State Level Camps participated by 300 students from all over Maharashtra. This activity continued in 2018-19 and 2019-20 also. These camps are special of 14 days ( 10<sup>th</sup> May to 23<sup>rd</sup> of May every year ) and separate from the regular camps of seven days. For this the college received special grants of Rs. 1, 35,000 per year from the affiliating university. These camps are supported by the village community as well as the Movement of Pani Foundation run by veteran actor Amir Khan.

The first camp was organized in a small village in hilly region Bhosare from Koregaon Tehsil. NSS volunteers achieved remarkable success in undertaking 'Nala Bunding's' (Earthen dams), farm tanks, CCT , contours bundings, soak pits, composting. It succeeded in creating dams containing two crore liter water. Bhosare stood second in Maharashtra in Pani Foundation Competition and won prize of Rs. 50,00,000.

The second camp held in 2018-19 in two adjoining villages Gopuj and Ganeshwadi in Khatav. Apart from works of water conservation this camp concentrated on composting, saving natural habitats with support from villagers and Pani Foundation. Gopuj stood third at Tehsil and won prize of Rs. 5,00,000. While Ganeshwadi stood first and won prize of Rs. 10,00,000.

The third State Level special camp was held at Shindi Khurd Taluka Man. It is in hilly areas having 1442 hectares of land. With different dams of water conservation 48 water sources have been locked. It helped in storage of water as well as well recharging. It ultimately helped to increase underground water level. This village won the second prize in Pani Foundation Competition of Rs. 50,00,000.

Apart from region based work of water conservation these camps had remarkable impact on the local village people. They helped in creating social awareness regarding all issues related to water through rallies, invited lectures by expert and visits by dignitaries including Hon. Shri. Sharad Pawar (Former Union Agriculture Minister), Amir Khan, Kiran Rao, Retired Commissioners Prabhakar Deshmukh, Chandrakant Dalavi, Tanaji Satre, MLAs from this region, Office Bearers of Phaltan Education Society as well as faculty, staff of the college.