

# ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022



SAMAJ PRAGATI SAHAYOG  
VILLAGE JATASHANKAR, TEHSIL BAGLI, DISTRICT DEWAS,  
MADHYA PRADESH- 455227



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# 1. INTRODUCTION

Samaj Pragati Sahyog (SPS) started their journey over three decades ago and has grown to be one of India's largest grassroots initiatives for water and livelihood security. SPS works with its partners on a million acres of land across 72 of India's most deprived districts, primarily in the central Indian Tribal hinterlands.

## ❧ 'Work Builds, Charity Destroys' - Baba Amte ❧

SPS derives its inspiration from Baba Amte's journey of life and his fight for the cause of people who are shunned by our society's apathy. He rejected charity, believed that every human deserves a chance and that we should come and work together to build. SPS is driven by that same cause, we have been working for the last 3 decades in a region that typifies the most difficult problems of India and created a live demonstration at scale of the way such a transformational change could be brought about.

SPS's Theory of Change aims at bridging this gap with an alternative development model founded on the principles of equity, sustainability, and people's empowerment and not the conforming top-down bureaucratic approach wherein the ones who are really plagued by the pressing issues are left out and have no stakes in the development process meant for them. SPS has transformed landscapes, addressed agricultural crises, and has contributed in the making of landmark changes in the national policies which has helped us to have a colossal impact on peoples' lives. SPS believes that location-specific watershed development combined with low-cost, low- risk agriculture, other nature-based livelihoods and women-led institutions can result in sustained higher incomes and empowered communities. This approach arrests distress migration towards the metros and liberates the rural poor from the clutches of usurious moneylender-traders. Our central mandate is the empowerment of India's most disadvantaged people – women, Adivasis, Dalits and the poor, which we believe contributes to strengthening our fragile democracy at the grass-roots and can ensure that the ones at the last mile are given their due.





n our country, the ever-widening gap between the haves and the have-nots has been a long-standing concern. The power mongering forces have always had an upper hand over the vulnerable, distressed, and marginalised sections of the society. The abject poverty that the marginalised are subjected to can be credited to the fact that there is an absence of strong institutions of the poor and thus, their lesser participation in the process. We, at SPS, have the opinion that these institutions must be led by our women and other minorities. Women at leadership do great as their unflinching commitment towards a sustainable development, diverse views and perspectives, and prioritisation of health and education can pave the way for an accountable, accessible, and thus, more inclusive development.

Women-led strong institutions can open new horizons and help us ward off the constraints on our way, especially for the ones surviving at the fringes, in the remotest tribal corners, in 4 different ways:

1. They can build the capacities and enable the poor to liberate themselves from the clutches of usurious moneylenders whose exorbitant interest rates push them in a vicious cycle of 'debt' and hence, to the state of extreme poverty.
2. These strong institutions of the poor can make it possible for the most vulnerable to take advantage of the possibilities opened up by the market. A solitary small and marginal farmer has no chance when confronted by powerful forces in the market, whether as consumer or producer but a collective solidarity has the courage to fight it off.
3. Ensure accountability of government systems which are meant to serve them but instead become another source of exploitation, given their non-transparent character and functioning. These institutions can be ground-breaking in spearheading anti-corruption crusades.
4. They can channelise efforts to adequately utilise the huge political potential opened by democratic systems of representation and decision-making, especially through Panchayati Raj Institutions, which have remained dormant so far. But for us to realise this vision of a gender-justifiable world, we believe that we need to have a strong set of partnerships with communities, PRIs, people's representatives, government, academic, corporates and other NGOs so that we can make civil society action truly powerful and impactful at the same time, in India. Our problems are multidimensional and hence solutions have to be multi-pronged, layered on top of and complementing each other and scalable. They should have strong convergence with government programmes and should be able to leverage public investments. SPS's Theory of change is founded on this very ground.

Our direct interventions are mostly concentrated in about 600 villages and towns in 8 blocks of 3 districts (Dewas, Khargone and Amravati) in the States of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra). This work is not so much a model as a living laboratory of learning for others to adapt to their own areas. To facilitate this mutual learning, in 1998 we set up the Baba Amte Centre for People's Empowerment in tribal village Neemkheda, where our watershed work began in the early 1990s.

In 2021-22 the entire world was still reeling under the havoc that covid-19 pandemic had unleashed, the fear of the unknown and a feeling of hopelessness had engulfed us completely. During these unprecedented times, Samaj Pragati Sahyog had been a force to reckon with, a harbinger of hope.



Last two years have been challenging for everyone and has been a true test for the model SPS follows, and we are proud to admit that its strengths eclipsed the limitations imposed on it due to the pandemic and the resulting lockdown that threatened the foundation of our work in all the ways possible.

Our women's Self-Help Groups (SHGs) form the backbone of all our other interventions by creating a beneficiary base for our other programmes, including those on health, sustainable agriculture, livestock, and water management, and provide monetary support for these services. This year, like the last, when lakhs of people lost jobs and incomes from traditional livelihoods dwindled, our SHG federations, which follow a bank-linkage model and have a reducing rate of interest ensuring easy payback, managed to provide loans to their members and more than 50 crore savings has been done by the SHG members amidst all the uncertainty.

CIBIL Data helped us to gauge and identify the neediest households whom we could distribute the Covid-19 relief kits to with the support of our partners like Caring Friends. These relief packages also included food ration bought from the non-pesticide farmers working with us who had nowhere to sell their produce during the lockdown. This kind of financial support that helped SHG members bounce-back to normality relatively easily was amiss for the poor in our area before, as they had to rely on microfinance institutions that ran on a model of flat rate of interest.

Our Watershed development ventures have helped our people to reap benefits with some families earning the likes of Rs 80000 maximum and Rs 25000 minimum. Our Agriculture Team had adopted the idea of Night Meetings, providing relief 'Agricultural Rahat Drives' to NPM farmers.

With constraints, the Community Media Team has also produced films and podcasts this year, the outreach was feared to be limited, owing to the spread of virus in the second wave of the pandemic, but commendable work has been undertaken by the team. They have made posters, audio clips for COVID-19 sensitization campaigns. Our Entitlements, Health and Nutrition Team relayed information to our members and facilitated the process of accessing their rights and entitlements. We had slowly resumed our SHG meetings with proper social distancing norms and had also explored virtual meetings but lack of smartphones and connectivity has been a grave concern and hindered the collective decision-making process of our SHGs. Kumbaya, our social venture, had to endure tough times, but our SHG Federations and our women rescued Kumbaya by ordering A Hundred Thousand Masks. Kumbaya has also been working on the online store with Trilliant and has focused more on local area marketing to liquidate our stocks and also to give the local people a sustainable clothing option.

The pandemic has been a big challenge but a far greater teacher which has laid bare our existence and did hold the mirror to us to show us where we need to work upon and get better at. It reminded us to be grateful for all that we have and taught us more about our strengths and our weaknesses. The covid pandemic made us appreciate the strength of our self-built networks and partnerships and reinforced our faith on balance, compassion, kindness, humility and on love, the most. Love is all that drives us and our 3-decade long work, it is a choice that we make everyday and it is our biggest guiding force as we gear up to work shoulder to shoulder, respecting each other's diversities and learning from them for the cause of humanity.



## 2. WATER MANAGEMENT

### 2.1 WATERSHED DEVELOPMENT

With low and erratic rainfall, and increasingly long dry spells in between, the farmers in our work area are facing the brunt of climate change firsthand. While some farmers have access to irrigation, through dug wells and

borewells, the underlying aquifers are also not strong enough to sustain the ever-increasing demand for irrigation in the region, leading to the drying up of many sources which used to be perennial. Watershed Development has emerged as a fundamental intervention to ensure water security in such areas. Such interventions not only allow farmers to provide crucial protective irrigation during the dry spells in the Kharif season, but also help check soil erosion and surface run-off, and in the long run help recharge the underground aquifer systems, ensuring drinking water availability.

While a robust watershed intervention may increase the supply of water, SPS has strongly focused on the collective and sustainable governance of this water. This is done through written user agreements around equitable water-sharing covering demand-side issues such as hours of pumping, sequence of irrigation, cropping patterns, and watering intensities.



Sangvi Farm Pond Consructed Under IWMP At Bhikangaon



SPS strongly believes in leveraging funds for direct implementation of watershed development from government programmes like the Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and the Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP). In this regard, SPS has taken an in-principle decision to use donor funds strategically to fund the capacity building of the human resource required for leveraging such public funds, working at different levels from Gram Panchayat to District Panchayats.

## 2.2 Bhikangaon Watershed Development Programme

Under the Bhikangaon watershed development project, after regular follow-ups, reporting, and liaising with the district administration, technical and administrative sanctions were approved for 10 Gabion Structures and 3 Check Dams. The team worked in close liaison with the Janpad Panchayat & forest department for the approval of administrative sanction of watershed works under the IWMP project. It also completed the survey and estimation work to get the technical sanction for the Gabion Structures and Check Dams under the IWMP-12 project. This year, the IWMP-12 project was finally brought to completion. The team also implemented the work of 10 Gabion Structures, 3 Farm Bunding, 5 Check Dams, 2 Stop Dams, 2 Farm Ponds, and 1 Earthen Dam. However, this was during the second wave of the pandemic, and the government kept on increasing targets even then, which made it challenging for the team and community to meet deadlines.

A social audit was carried out by the team by visiting 8 different locations through which people's trust in the watershed work was strengthened. All members and representatives of Panchayats and village folk were invited. The contents of the project documents were read out to the people and discussions and resolutions on labour compensation, watershed structures, etc. were initiated.



Social Audit Being Conducted At Sangvi Village



People also elucidated the benefits they have reaped from the watershed development ventures in the area, with some families earning the likes of Rs. 80,000 at the maximum and Rs. 25,000 at the minimum. They mentioned this has been no less than a blessing in tough times like the one COVID-19 has presented. A stakeholder in this initiative, Darbar Sakaram mentioned “My family and I have saved Rs. 60,000 working as labourers at watershed development work and installed a drip irrigation system in our 2-acre land where we have planted chilies. Despite the lack of rainfall, we can expect good produce.”

To promote water conservation, structures were built in Pokharbujurg, Sangvi, Banjari, Paldi, and Pattharwada spanning 53.16-hectare farmland where farm bunding was done. 14 farm bunding structures were built and in Padalya, Sangvi, and Kholba villages, 3 ponds were renovated. The WSD team in Bhikangaon also attempted to empower women by training 15 women on the technical aspects of building gabion structures. These training sessions were unique since they were hands-on and carried out on the field. Traditionally, a ‘man’s job’ due to its labor-intensive nature, the women constructed 23 gabions after this training, a resounding success and proof of women’s strength.

A Nistar pond construction work was also completed in which, a total of 1025 person days’ work was provided to locals. The total capacity of this Nistar pond is 4200 cubic meters of water and 2-3 ha of agricultural land will be benefited through irrigation.



Ongoing Nistar Pond Construction Under NABARD Watershed Project



## 2.2.1 Structures constructed through various funds

Later, other farm bunding, stop dam renovation and earthen dam renovation activities were taken up that resulted in thousands of days of employment and lakhs worth of income generation for locals.

Table 1: Structures constructed through various funds under the Bhikangaon Watershed Development Programme

Bhikangaon Location					
Name Of Structure	Quantity	Total Expenditure	Community Contribution	Employment Generated (P.days)	Project
Gabion	8	4120545	0	26784	IWMP -12 Gov.
Stop Dam Renovation	2	1660370	20000		ABF
Farm Bunding	57000 Rm	3761101	191079		APPI-02
Earthen Dam Renovation	7	1805430	0		APPI-02
Total		11347446	211079	26784	



Women Construct Complex Gabion Structures After Training



## 2.3 Gurarda Micro WSD

The Udainagar Pragati Samait is implementing a watershed development project funded by NABARD in a 1462 ha area of three villages: Gurarda, Nimanpur, and Ratanpur. The implementation of this project has been planned out in two phases. Its first phase is CBP i.e. Capacity Building Phase, in which 10 percent of the total area will be covered. This will have a time limit of 1 year. After this, the second phase will proceed, in which the plan will be implemented on the remaining 90 percent part. On 6th August 2021, the Gurarda Watershed Project was inaugurated by the region's MLA Mr. Pahad Singh Kannoje, and the Udainagar Pragati Samiti's President Yashodabai Parmar. A Gurarda watershed committee was also formulated with 14 members, of which 10 are women and 4 are men. On 16th September 2021, a training session was also held for these members which covered the Federation's financial management, soil and water conservation, and agricultural productivity, as well as included discussions on how to increase profits for farmers through these conservation methods and soil treatment to enhance the quality of non-irrigated land. Under the Gurarda Watershed Project, 200 trees were also planted on 4 farmers' fields. In addition, a 296.5 m boulder was constructed in Dilip-Shubhan and Avtar Kedar Singh's farmlands.



Community Contribute One Day Wages For The NABARD Watershed Project



### 2.3.1 Gurarda Structures

Udainagar Location					
Name Of Structure	Quantity	Expenditure	Community Contribution	Employment Generated (P.days)	Project
Gabion	1	348474	51798	2075	Nabard CBP
Dop	1				
Earthen Dam	1				
Farm Bunding	1200 RM				
Total		348474	51798	2075	

## 2.4 PARTICIPATORY IRRIGATION MANAGEMENT

The concept of Participatory Irrigation Management (PIM) has been recognized all over the world as a tool for improving irrigation management along with the sustainability of the system. The major goal is to address the “last mile connectivity” in irrigation commands and make water accessible for the tail-end farmers. National Water Policy and State Water Policy emphasize participatory irrigation management to be adopted as an essential strategy for enhancing benefits from all irrigation projects and therefore the government has made sure of this with the involvement of all the users in water distribution and canal maintenance at the grass root level. The other major goal is the restructuring of the irrigation systems to make water management efficient. Another positive aspect of this scheme is that it provides financial assistance to the beneficiary families along with the creation of assets.

Currently, SPS is working on 3 Participatory Irrigation Management projects:

1. Kotimata Dam Project in Mahigaon village
2. Paras Dam Project in villages near Punjapura
3. Pankua 1&2 Projects in Pankua village

The Pankua project is still in the initial stages of planning and set-up, hence, no concrete details about it can be provided at this stage.

### 2.4.1 Mahigaon Irrigation Project

**Collective formation and management:** Monthly meetings, savings, and irrigation-related discussions are being ensured in the already formed water user groups at the Mahigaon Project sites. For example, the Jhirpanya water user group meets on the first of each month and the savings of the group is Rs 1500 per month.



**Construction:** In 14 hectares of land of 14 farmers, pipelines were installed to facilitate irrigation. The farmers belong to the Nirmal Satwa Water User Group. In addition, in collaboration with SPS, the WUG members met the SDM of the Irrigation Department at Bagli to request the repairing of 8 sites in the main canal, worth Rs. 150000.

**Construction of Watercourse and Main Canal Gate, Mahigaon :** The construction work of the canal gate on the main canal at Semlikheda and Mahigaon (canal leading from the main canal towards Semlikheda) was completed. Due to this, water distribution will be judicious will be distributed as its wastage will be stopped. Construction of the 2.5 km Semlikheda watercourse was also completed. Apart from this, the work of construction of the Nirmal II water course was completed. With all these efforts, additional irrigation of a total of 58 bighas became possible this year.

### 2.4.2 Paras Irrigation Project

**Collective formation:** The Paras Irrigation Project in Punjapura is supposed to benefit Bhuriyapura, Kholchipura, and Sutaripura villages through its 3 km long watercourse. In the attempt to build strong Participatory Irrigation Management processes in the region, it is important to collectivise farmers who can benefit from this watercourse and strengthen them to demand their entitlement of irrigation needs as well as the maintenance of this system. For this, Shiva Baba Nahar Prabandhan Samuh (Shiva Baba Canal Management Group) has been formed in gram Buriyapura with 14 women whose fields lie in the command area of the Paras Dam irrigation project. Similarly, Jayanti Mata Nahar Upyogkarta Pragati Samuh has been formed in Sutaripura with 20 members who have already made a saving of Rs. 600 for canal building and maintenance. Bank accounts have also been opened for some of the members and the process for others is underway. In Khardipura, “Khardipura Chak Upyogkarta samuh” has been formed with 13 women farmers where the process of generating savings and member bank account creation is underway. A canal user group has been formed in Kolyapura, with 12 women farmers who have started saving Rs. 20 per person per month. The second canal user group was formed in Khardipura in which there are 9 women farmers. With this, the formation of a total of 04 canal user groups has been completed.



Paras Dam Canal Construction Under PIM Project



### 2.4.3 Watercourse Construction and Seepage Resolution

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In the Water Course no. 3 which runs through 95 hectares of land impacting 55 farmers, an amount of Rs 40 lakh has been approved by Paraspipili Panchayat and Postipura Panchayat, which is a great example of utilization of MGNREGA funds for irrigation projects. The length of the water course is 1100m and its construction will be completed in the financial year 2022-23. In village Bhuriyapura under Paraspipili Panchayat, the concrete lining work was completed for 500 meters of the watercourse. The estimated cost of this work is Rs. 172000. This work was done by Gram Panchayat Paraspipili using the MGNREGA fund, in which quality inspection was done by the Bhuriyapura canal user group. Along with this, technical guidance was provided by the PIM team of Punjapura Pragati Samiti. There was a serious problem of seepage in watercourse number 04 in village Bhuriyapura due to which there was intensive seepage in the fields of farmers. As a result, crop production was very low. Therefore, by collective contribution of an amount of Rs. 1400 by the 12 farmers of the watercourse, the foil was put in the watercourse by them. As a result, there was no leakage problem in the wheat crop, due to which the health of the crop remained good throughout.



Irrigation Canal Being Constructed Under MGNREGA At Paraspipili Panchayat



#### 2.4.4 Installation of gates at the main canal

In the main canal of the Paras Irrigation Project, 10 gates were installed to stop the constant flow of water out of it which had caused the farmlands to become marshy unproductive patches. The groups that have been formed requested the installation of the gates which would enable them to close the gates off when water is not required in the fields.

#### 2.5 Capacity Building

On 15/09/2021, the Punjapura PIM organized a one-day training and field visit to Mahigaon Project area in order to explain PIM work better and in practice. 23 female and 25 male farmers from Kolyapura, Khardipura, and Chandupura attended a training session from 10 am to 1 pm, post which they traveled to Mahigaon Irrigation Project site to look at the process and structure to visualize the planning for their area better.



Exposure Visit Of Farmers To Mahigaon PIM Project



## 2.6 Case Study



Sanga Dehla Dada Formpond- Bhikangaon

Sanga Dehla Dada (65), a resident of Sangvi village in Khargone district has a joint family of a total of 19 members, with collective ownership of 13 acres of non-irrigated agriculture land, out of which 1 acre is a wasteland.

Majorly, Sanga Dada's family is dependent on agriculture and labor work. Due to the non-availability of water, they used to sow only monsoon crops on their agricultural land. The crop production would mostly be very low because the land had a major slope and the soil quality was not good. This made it difficult for Sanga Dada to run the whole family. Therefore, even after having sufficient agricultural land, all the people of the family worked as laborers. Every year, they worked at the nearby villages during the harvesting of wheat and for other work. Going out to work had a profound effect on everyone's health, as well as, on the education of children. However, Dada believed that if water could be made available for agriculture, then it would help improve the situation significantly.

The watershed development team of Samaj Pragati Sahyog working in the Bhikangaon location got to know about Dada's family's situation. Sanga Dada requested the team to build a pond on their fallow land to access water for irrigation. In addition, the team knew that farm bunding could increase the fertility of the soil in the fields.

Therefore, farm bunding work was done by the team on Dada's land with the APPI project. Also, with the help of the IWMP project, a farm pond of 3500 cubic meters of water storage capacity was constructed. During the digging of the pond, fertile soil was put in his farm field so that the fertility of his field could be increased. After the construction of the farm pond, Sanga Dada sowed wheat and gram for the first time this Rabi season and got abundant production and his family did not have to go out for work. This will definitely improve the family's situation to a great extent.



### 3. SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

The use of chemical pesticides in agriculture has indeed caused harmful effects on the health of human, animal, soil, and the environment. These chemicals not only pollute the soil and water but can also affect the health of farmers, consumers, and wildlife.

Non-chemical pest management (NPM) is a sustainable solution to reduce the harmful effects of pesticides. NPM techniques aim to reduce pest populations by using natural methods such as crop rotation, biological pest control, and cultural practices such as tillage, weed control, and sanitation. These methods help to create a healthy and diverse ecosystem that supports beneficial organisms and reduces the need for chemical pesticides. Non-chemical pest management is not only environmentally friendly but also economically beneficial for farmers. It reduces the cost of production and improves soil health, crop yield, and quality, leading to higher profits.

In rural areas, farmers are not fully aware of the harmful effects of chemical pest management on their health, soil, and environment. Therefore, creating awareness among farmers about the importance of sustainable agriculture practices is crucial to promote a healthy and sustainable ecosystem.

Samaj Pragati Sahyog's initiative to promote non-chemical pest management and sustainable agriculture practices is a significant step towards creating awareness among farmers. Through our program, we are not only providing farmers with the necessary knowledge and resources but also creating a platform for them to network and share their experiences.

Creating awareness among farmers is a long-term process that requires continuous efforts and engagement from all stakeholders. It is important to involve local communities, farmer organizations, and other key actors in the process to ensure that the message reaches a wider audience.

Currently, 8452 farmers from 120 villages are associated with SPS's NPM agriculture program. Out of the total agriculture land spread across seven locations (Bagli, Barwaha, Bhikangaon, Kantaphod, Melghat, Punjapura and Udainagar), total 10,731.37 Ha. Of agricultural land area is under the NPM programme. SPS has implemented a protocol of minimum 40% saturation which means that in all villages where NPM Agriculture program is under operation, it is mandatory to have at least 40% farmers practicing NPM agriculture. The purpose is to scale up the initiative, maintain the NPM protocol and avoid NPM crop contamination with chemicals.

#### 3.1 Expansion of the program

More and more farmers are joining the NPM agriculture program. In this year a total of 862 farmers with 1320.63 Ha. Of land has joined the program. Expanding the program to new locations, such as Khategaon, is also a positive step towards promoting sustainable and cost-effective agriculture.

Farmers are moving towards NPM (Non-Pesticidal Management) agriculture for a variety of reasons, including:



**Lower costs:** Conventional agriculture often relies heavily on chemical inputs like fertilizers and pesticides, which are expensive. NPM practices often, use natural and locally available inputs, which are less expensive than synthetic inputs like chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

**Improved soil health:** NPM practices can help to promote healthy soil by reducing the use of chemicals and encouraging natural processes like nutrient cycling and soil microbe activity.

**Reduced environmental impact:** By reducing reliance on synthetic inputs, NPM agriculture can help to reduce pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

**Higher yields:** Although NPM practices may not provide immediate benefits, they can help to build soil health over time, leading to more resilient crops and higher yields in the long run.

**Better food quality:** NPM practices can lead to crops that are healthier, more flavorful, and free of harmful chemical residues.

**Increased food security:** By promoting sustainable and regenerative agriculture, NPM practices can help to build more resilient food systems that can adapt to changing environmental conditions.

Overall, farmers are turning to NPM agriculture as a way to reduce costs, improve soil health, and promote sustainable and environmentally-friendly farming practices. As more and more farmers adopt these practices, it has the potential to lead to significant improvements in both agricultural productivity and environmental sustainability.



Madibai Doing Seed Treatment- Village Mansinghpura



Using Bio-Pesticide To Manage Pest Naturally



## 3.2 Major Activities Followed under the Programme

Throughout the year, the programme engages in specific activities to ensure crop production that has a better yield and is free from harmful chemicals. These include NPM seed distribution to farmers via RRPPCL, monitored land preparation, seed germination test and later on, seed treatment through bio- cultures, use of bio repellents for pest management, clean harvesting and storage, finally selling out produce to RRPPCL at higher than standard market rates. The following umbrella terms elaborate innovative natural methods that can substitute cost-intensive inputs/ procedures of conventional farming:

## 3.3 Major Activities Followed under the Programme

**“Soil Health”** is an important aspect for regenerative and sustainable crop production as well as land management. Managing soil health means implementing practices that maintain, enhance or restore the soil’s physical, chemical and biological attributes to improve its function and inherent potential for crop production. Soil health could be managed through integrated nutrient management (INM) which includes judicious application of chemical fertilizers in conjunction with organic manures and bio fertilizers.

### 3.3.1 Addition of organic manures

In order to supply balanced nutrition to the crops, enrich the soil carbon and nutrient pools, maintain and propagate the below ground biodiversity and improve the production potential of the soil, the agriculture programme promotes preparation and application of organic manures including vermicompost, NADEP compost, tank silt and liquid manure or Sanjeevak on the farmers’ field. The different types of manures are prepared with locally available wastes (farm and off farm) following the standard preparation procedures, in either kachcha or pakka structures.



Preparation Of Sanjeevak- Liqueed Manure





A Farmer Adding Silt From A Pond On His Farm

### 3.3.2 Soil Health Card



Collecting Soil Samples

Soil samples are collected from farmers' field for checking on parameters for soil health through which the soil condition comes to light. This may be compared seasonally for the same field and across NPM and conventionally farmed fields to reach conclusions for best practices. Soil samples were collected before the kharif season 2021. These were processed and sent to the Krishi Vigyan Kendra laboratory for testing. Total twelve parameters, including chemical parameters like pH, EC, SOC, available macro nutrient content, and available micronutrient content, were analyzed. Based on the analysis report, Soil Health Cards were prepared and distributed to the farmers. In this year from 185 farmers field the soil sample has been collected for testing.



### 3.4 Non Pesticide Management Practices (NPM)

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Farmer Installing Pheromone Trap



Preparing Char Chutney, A Bio-Repellent

Crop protection through NPM practices integrates several environmentally friendly pest and disease management tools and techniques. The best suited techniques for each specific crop are adopted under the programme. Besides application of bio repellents (Paanch patti kadha, chutney, Indoneem), different traps (Pheromone traps, Yellow and Blue sticky boards and T guard) are used to control the population of insects and pests. The team ensures the use of both the tools in an integrated manner at farmers' fields during the entire crop cycle.



## 3.5 Crop Improvement Practices

### 3.5.1 Seed treatment

Pests and diseases can cause significant losses in crops, and seed-borne diseases can be particularly problematic. Seed treatment with beneficial microorganisms like *Trichoderma*, PSB (phosphate solubilizing bacteria), and *Rhizobium* can be an effective strategy to prevent crop losses due to seed-borne diseases and improve crop productivity.

*Trichoderma* is a fungus that can colonize plant roots and protect them from pathogenic fungi. It can also promote plant growth and increase plant tolerance to abiotic stress. PSB can solubilize phosphorus in the soil, making it more available to plants, which can improve plant growth and productivity. *Rhizobium* is a bacterium that can fix nitrogen from the air and add it to the soil, which can improve soil fertility and health.

Seed treatment with these beneficial microorganisms can help to improve seed germination, protect seedlings from diseases, and increase crop yield. Moreover, using these bio-control agents can reduce the reliance on chemical pesticides, which can be harmful to the environment and human health. Overall, promoting seed treatment with *Trichoderma*, PSB, and *Rhizobium* can be a sustainable and effective strategy to prevent crop losses due to seed-borne diseases and improve crop productivity. In Kharif season total 5,486 farmers and in Rabi season total **2,192 farmers practiced seed treatment** as a preventive measure for seed born diseases.



Seed Treatment With Bio-Culture



### 3.5.2 Promoting Red gram as inter crop in cropping system

Agriculture is often referred to as a gambling of the monsoon, as farmers are heavily dependent on rainfall for their crops, and unpredictable weather patterns can lead to crop failures and financial losses. Practicing monocropping in agriculture can increase the risk for farmers, as they are relying on a single crop to generate their income. This can be particularly risky in the face of erratic climate conditions, as crop failure can have devastating financial consequences

Promoting red gram as an intercrop in the cropping system can help to reduce the risk of crop loss due to erratic climatic conditions, as this crop is known for its ability to sustain in extreme climatic conditions. Red gram is also a pulse crop that fixes nitrogen to the soil, which can help to improve soil fertility and health, and provide additional benefits to other crops grown in the same field.

In the previous year total **3,835 farmers** on **604.356 Ha.** Of NPM land has sown the red gram crop. Efforts have been made to increase the area of red gram in the cropping system and in this year a total of **4,412 farmers** have cultivated red gram on **975.726 Ha.** Of land under NPM agriculture programme either as main crop or inter crop.

### 3.6 Crop Varietal trial

Samaj Pragati Sahayog holds a varietal trial of different crops at farmers' plots as well as at the seed plot to predict the agricultural performance of the new varieties in the specific agro climatic region. The varietal trial across locations helps identify the best variety suited for that particular location, which can then be scaled up. The trial is conducted during both the kharif and rabi season.

This year 65 trials were conducted at farmers' fields for red gram, sorghum, maize, sesame, green gram, black gram, castor, coriander and carrot. These varieties were also cultivated in the seed plot to evaluate their performance.

### 3.7 Kitchen Garden

The organization promotes kitchen gardens under its agriculture programme as its importance is manifold. Kitchen gardens ensure inexpensive, regular and handy supply of fresh vegetables which are basic to good nutrition. As vegetables are most susceptible to pest and disease attacks, therefore for their cultivation at commercial scales, farmers spray huge amounts of pesticides. Thus, the vegetables available in markets have huge pesticide residues, degrading their nutritional value.

The concept of kitchen garden eliminates the use of chemical pesticides and people are able to continuously harvest nutrition rich, healthier, diverse types of vegetables for better health and nutrition at much lower costs, sometimes even helping supplement their income. Across locations, **198 members** during the kharif season and **102 members** during the rabi season were helped in establishing a kitchen garden to obtain healthier and chemical free vegetables.



## 3.8 Meetings

### 3.8.1 Farmers' Meetings

To enhance the participation and adoption of NPM practices by farmers, the agriculture team organizes three meetings with each of the farmers groups in each season. In these meetings the mitaans discuss specific topics with the farmers groups. The first meeting is organized before sowing in which the selection of crop, land preparation, seed availability, seed germination test, seed treatment; soil testing, etc.

are discussed. The second meeting discusses the issues of crop management, in which Integrated Pest Management (IPM), types and preparation techniques of bio pesticides and bio repellents, weeding, rouging, types of diseases and pests, several advanced crop improvement techniques and prediction of yield. The third meeting is conducted after the harvest of the crop to enable assessment of actual crop produced, profits made, marketing of the crop and planning for the next season.



A Farmer Group Meeting In Progress



### 3.8.2 Night meeting

During regular field visits, the team comes across several problems at the farmers' fields which earlier used to remain unresolved due to the unavailability of the farmers during day-time. To overcome this challenge, the team took an initiative to gather farmers at the village level during night hours (after 6 p.m.) to address the problems and to discuss several issues faced by the farmers.

The team planned to organize two meetings per week at different villages prioritizing the need during the seasons. Though some issues arose during the meetings, the initiative came out to be fruitful. Many problems were solved during these meetings and the team was able to minimize crop loss due to different external issues.

## 3.9 Capacity Building

### 3.9.1 Farmers' trainings

This year, 94 farmers' trainings were conducted during the kharif and rabi season with focus on the inputs used in agriculture, which majorly include different types of fertilizers, organic manures, bio pest-repellents and their effects, how farmers can prepare these by themselves, and how cost of cultivation can be reduced. These trainings were given by either agriculture officials or SPS' experts/professionals.



Farmers Training In Progress

### 3.9.2 Staff training

With the introduction of Trace X, a new technology based application, 35 training sessions were conducted for the mitaans and professionals of Punjapura and Kantaphod locations to make them familiar with the application. Other than this, a three days training session covering all the theoretical and practical aspects (GIS technique, soil health management, crop management, pest and disease management, post-harvest technology, storage and commodity aggregation) of the agriculture programme was organized at the Neemkheda Kendra for the agriculture mitaans and professionals.

To keep the mitaans updated about the software and bring improvement in data entry, training sessions were organized at Punjapura, Melghat, Bhikangaon, Bagli and Udainagar locations. Mr. Lohit from SHPL also conducted a training session on commodity aggregation to ensure quality production of red-gram.



### 3.10 Relief Programme

As the pandemic affected rural livelihoods severely, SPS tried to provide relief to its stakeholder population, like NPM farmers and livestock owners, through the Rahat package. For these small farmers, selling farm produce was a challenging task during the pandemic, and the package provided much-needed respite from buying costly farm inputs in the difficult situation.

There were two Agriculture Rahat drives, one during Kharif and the other during the Rabi season. The Kharif agriculture Rahat package comprised seeds of different agro-ecologically suitable crops like maize, Red gram, Sorghum, sesame, sunflower, castor, and Urad/moong, and bio-cultures for seed treatment to ensure a successful crop. 2730 farmers were covered under the Kharif package. Distributing this wide variety of seeds also served the purpose of motivating and diverting farmers towards mixed -cropping from mono-cropping.

Farmers provided with the package were selected based on the criteria that they must be actively associated with the NPM agriculture programme of SPS and must have performed well in the NPM farmer-groups. Covid-19 affected NPM farmer families were also selected. In the Rabi season, 724 farmers were covered under the package, which included seeds of chickpea, coriander, carrot, Pheromone trap, indoneem, yellow & blue sticky board and bio-cultures.



Farmers Preparing For Seed Treatment With Bio-Culture



### 3.11 Challenges faced in the program

1. As the tracex was the new tool for the mitans so they faced a lot of problems to operate it well on the field for data entry.
2. Aggregation was challenging because there was restriction on movement due to covid pandemic.
3. The lack of market and institutional linkage is a significant challenge for the farmers engaged in NPM farming without access to a reliable market and fair prices for their produce, farmers lose their interest in continuing NPM farming practices
4. There is problem to connect farmers with the government schemes related to agriculture as farmers do not have their land on their own name.
5. small and marginal farmers who do not own a significant number of livestock are unlikely to generate the raw material needed to make the inputs required for NPM farming.
6. lack of water and lack of knowledge on irrigation water management leads to yield loss to the farmer.

### 3.12 Way forwards

1. we will focus on soil health and will ramp up measurement of soil health by conducting chemical as well as biological testing of soil samples.
2. New BRCs will be established this will not only guarantee the passing on of knowledge on the preparation of the bio-inputs from readily available raw material, but will also provide an easily accessible market to our farmers for sourcing the same.
3. Post-harvest management of farmgate produce from grading, cleaning, drying, storage, to value-addition will be undertaken to ensure that the farmer gets the highest possible price for his produce.
4. Training will be given on crop water budgeting to ensure the proper utilization of irrigation water and minimize the yield loss due to improper water management.



### 3.13 Case Study

#### **Impactful effects of the Paanch Patti Kadha on insects and reduction in the cost of cultivation at Gangabai Munna's fields**

Gangabai Munna is a resident of Kevatiyapani village and member of Parvati Pragati Samuh. Gangabai has seven members in her family including herself- her five children are studying and also help her in agricultural activities. She is a landless farmer but her family cultivates the land of others by sharing the profit. Her family pays Rs. 15,000 for the 3 bighas of land area to the owners. Agriculture and unskilled labour are the only two income sources for her family. Punjapura location had arranged a 7-days' training program in collaboration with NABARD under the MSDE program.

The training was regarding the promotion of Non pesticide management practices through different environment-friendly pesticides. Gangabai also actively participated in the training and learnt about Paanch Patti Kadha, Neem ark, Kanda tonic, and char chutney, among other bio-repellants. She had grown Maize and Red gram in her farm during the kharif season. From about a month prior to sowing, she didn't use any

chemical fertilizer/pesticide in her farm. But, after a few days of sowing, Maize was infested with insects, so she made the Paanch Patti kadha about which she had learnt in the training. She prepared 12 liters of Paanch Patti kadha in just Rs. 300. If she were to buy the chemical pesticides in the same amount, then she would have needed to spend Rs. 1500-2000, so she saved around Rs. 1200 in this.

Her husband Munna, who sprayed the Paanch Patti kadha told the team how impactful it had been against the pests. So, Gangabai had not only benefited financially but also, could cultivate crops free from harmful chemicals. She also regularly shares her experience with other women farmers who are not part of the NPM agriculture programme of SPS.



Gangabai's Husband Spraying  
Paanch Patti Kadha



## 4. Self-Help Group and Livelihoods Programme

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The Women's Self-Help Group (SHG) Programme forms the bedrock of all SPS work. Most members of these SHGs belong to the marginalized- poor, Adivasis, Dalits, landless, and displaced people. A savings programme enables the poor to extricate themselves from the clutches of usurious moneylenders. These women's federations of women's SHGs are a key building block for the effective empowerment of the poor in the tribal drylands of India, giving these regions the necessary voice in the development process. These SHG federations as community institutions are the voice of the people, working in close partnerships with the government, federations, and other CSOs. SHG is not just a financial programme but it's one of the most important steps toward women's empowerment and independence.

With the use of an accounting-cum-MIS software, Pragati Mitra, and field-level software, Pragati Vistaar, SHG operations are streamlined, organized, transparent, and more efficient. The SHG Programme is the only one of its kind which shares CIBIL data with other financial institutions apart from utilizing it to ensure safe debt borrowing trends by the marginalised members of SHGs. In times of digitization, along with the use of software, SPS is looking forward to having the entire process digitised, targeting digital literacy among all of its members. This also leads to linking financial institutions to member's mobile numbers, promoting bank linkages.

Our SHGs offer their members a range of financial products including interest on savings, recurring deposits, fixed deposits, loans against fixed deposits, loans for emergencies (the veracity of each of which is carefully judged by the members themselves), collective purchase of basic needs of daily life, loans for cattle and well construction, cattle insurance, life insurance etc.

Even when the country reeled under the impact of another wave of COVID-19 at the beginning of the year 2022, SPS managed to limit the adverse effects of the pandemic on the regular functioning of the SHG programme to a large extent. Despite the challenges, we witnessed an expansion of the rights-based initiatives such as Hissedaari Sabha, social meetings at the village level, etc., and also an increased focus on livelihoods.

The year saw a continuation of the return to normalcy as the effects of the lockdown on livelihoods slowly wear off. This also led to the shift of focus of the organisation to capacity building, digitization, and constantly recovering from the damage while battling the challenges in this 'new normal'.

Currently looking over 2790 SHGs, SPS is working with 39690 members, divided into 532 villages across two districts.. The SPS believes that the money in SHGs has to be kept flowing, hence loans, savings, interests, and loans for income generation are highly promoted. At present, the total savings of all the SHGs is Rs. 54.9 Cr, while the total loan outstanding is Rs.102.65.



## 4.1 Performance indicator

### Macro Key Performance Indicators of SHGs this Year

S.No.	Indicators	Figures C. 2020
01	Total number of districts	3
02	Total number of blocks	7
03	Total number of towns	15
04	Total number of villages	532
05	Total number of SHGs	2790
06	Total number of clusters	158
07	Total number of federations	11
08	Total number of SHG members	39690
09	Percentage of SHGs linked with banks/financial institutions	91%
10	Total amount of bank/FI loan disbursed (in crores)	501.31
11	Total savings (in crores)	54.9
12	Average savings per member (in Rs.)	13833
13	Total loan outstanding (in crores)	102.65
14	Average size of loans per SHG	367917
15	Loan recovery ratio	94.6
16	Total number of individual savings bank accounts opened	35942
17	Total number of members insured	23682
18	Total number of bank linkages	2343



SHG Member Counts The Money Collected In The Meeting



SHG Member Signing Attendance Register



## 4.2 Location-Wise Data of SHG Programme

S.No.	Name of location	Villages	Group	Total members	Total Savings (in Cr.)	Corpus (in Cr.)	SHG Contribution (in lakhs)
01	Udainagar	56	187	2897	4.04	6.57	11.27
02	Kantaphod	37	225	3547	5.65	11.71	23.67
03	Bagli	51	263	4061	5.38	11.55	28.48
04	Barwah	50	212	3139	4.22	7.43	22.13
05	Dewas	0	229	2590	3.65	7.86	11.63
06	Khategaon	42	253	3631	5.05	11.77	17.73
07	Hatpipliya	41	174	2276	3.72	7.8	21.64
08	Maheshwar	30	200	2589	4.22	8.37	22.13
09	Kannod	47	208	3161	4.46	8.62	20.36
10	Bhikangaon	46	195	2650	3.14	4.63	12.3
11	Punjabura	26	138	2034	2.82	5.38	9.82
12	Satwas	36	189	2689	3.36	5.77	25.51
13	Sanawad	32	156	2281	2.88	5.69	16.99
14	Lalkheda	38	161	2145	2.24	3.02	11.43
<b>Total</b>		532	2790	39690	54.9	106.24	255.16



SHG Mitan Using Laptop For Conducting Meeting



Every Member Is Given A Receipt For Payments & Deposits



## 4.3 Covid-19: Course of Action to Deal with Impacts

### 4.3.1 Mask Distribution Drive with the Help of Kumbaya

During the first wave of covid, a shortage of supply of masks was observed due to a sudden increase in demand. Along with this, all the regular sale channels for Kumbaya were closed down, but the crisis led to setting up an amazing example of women's solidarity in the times of crisis. The women of SHG dealt with their need to have masks by ordering 1 lakh masks from Kumbaya.

Similar to the previous year, this year too masks were distributed amongst women members of our SHGs. A total of 72,900 masks were ordered by the Federations at Kumbaya Producer Company Ltd. The cost of these masks was borne jointly by SPS and the individual SHGs through its surplus.



Distributing Mask

### 4.3.2 Online Meetings

Being unable to conduct meetings was a major setback of the previous covid-19 wave, similarly this year too, it was quite difficult to conduct meetings online, but the meetings were comparatively much smoother this year than the previous one. Over a year, the mitaan sathi have learned to make use of online meetings where the meetings were held initially. During the year, the mitaan sathi successfully assisted the SHG members to attend online meetings over popular virtual platforms like WhatsApp video call, and google meet, these skills came into handy during the second wave of Covid in 2021.

### 4.3.3 Online Transactions

This was followed by online transactions through available and safe platforms. But along with this, the physical transfer of money was also conducted in smaller groups by following the protocol of physical distancing and wearing safety measures. The financial records were conducted through the internal software- Pragati Mitra. This period also marked a challenging phase to promote savings and ensure repayment of interest and loan amounts from the members as many members were facing financial crises & pressure.



### 4.3.4 Defaulter members

As known, the pandemic caused several members to face challenges in their livelihoods and incomes, hence leading to an increase in the number of defaulter members; The professionals and the mitaan sathi of the SHG programme regularly visited these members to understand the issue and find a solution over it. The programme urged the members to attend the meeting irrespective of their financial situation to find a solution to their problems through discussions with the group. Strategies were developed with the members themselves on how to navigate this situation.

## 4.4 Post-Lockdown Situation

### 4.4.1 Ayushman Bharat Yojana

It is a no-brainer that the pandemic situation led to the realisation of the lack of good healthcare facilities for poor and rural India. To resolve very few but important healthcare-related issues, the mitaan sathi across the locations took up the responsibility of Sensitization about the Ayushman Bharat Yojana; the later system was built to procure Aayushman cards. In the wake of the second wave of Covid-19, the SHG members are motivated to get themselves and their families enrolled in this scheme.

### 4.4.2 Vaccination



Covid Awareness Campaign In Villages

In the regions where SPS works, misguided hesitance towards covid-19 vaccine led to extremely poor turnout at vaccination centres. To dispel myths, counsel people, and encourage vaccination, especially after a devastating second wave, awareness drives were carried across all villages of 8 locations falling in the rural region, where the perpetration of these myths was most rampant. A quick and effective way to carry this forward was for awareness vehicles to ply in locations, announcing interesting jingles on the advantages of vaccination as well as to have eye-catching banners on all sides of this vehicle; this was done alongside a community resource person, who then cleared the doubts and myths. This initiative was done in collaboration with the federation and organisation, health and nutrition teams; Mitaaan sathi also assisted in this effort by accompanying the vehicle and addressing concerns door to door where necessary.



## 4.5 Capacity Building

### 4.5.1 PRA activity

This was followed by online transactions through available and safe platforms. But along with this, the physical transfer of money was also conducted in smaller groups by following the protocol of physical distancing and wearing safety measures. The financial records were conducted through the internal software- Pragati Mitra. This period also marked a challenging phase to promote savings and ensure repayment of interest and loan amounts from the members as many members were facing financial crises & pressure.



Conducting PRA At Khategaon Location

### 4.5.2 Digital Training

In today's world dynamic, to achieve the goal of capacity building, financial along with digital literacy is necessary. This was recognized by the Hatpipliya location, which led to taking the estimates of the existing level of awareness, and the training to fill those gaps was planned accordingly.

This was an extraordinary year that called for extraordinary coping mechanisms. The team caught up with these changing times and engaged in learning the digital ways. Money transfers via e-wallets, web-based meetings, and interactions, virtual meetings with SHG members were part of the new strategy that was devised by the programme. There was enthusiastic participation from the team to learn and adopt these new ways of working. The team conducted its review meetings virtually. It has been an exciting opportunity for all team members to cope with changing times and adapt to newer ways of communication.



The Monthly Federation meetings in a few locations were conducted virtually as well with the assistance of mitaan sathi. The programme initiated its monitoring of every SHG using the KoBo Collect app which makes it easier to record and analyse the location-level data.

### 4.5.3 Livelihood-related training

Livelihood training sessions on bangle-making were conducted under the aegis of the Bagli Mahila Pragati Samiti which saw the participation of 50 members averaging across three sessions. The first two sessions revolved around the basics of bangle-making and the third evaluation session sought to evaluate the learnings of the members from the two previous sessions.

### 4.6 Social meetings

To build the capacity of the members, the last quarter (January-March) focused on engaging with the community for capacity building; by enabling them to deal with issues that are important to them. This helps immensely in taking the next step into social strengthening.

The Self-Help Group of SPS works in a three-tier structure, i) SHG, ii) Cluster, and iii) Federation. Social meetings aim to break the clusters and decentralise the village meetings; which has resulted in increased attendance at the social meetings. Such social meetings act as a forum for members and other villagers to air their grievances, gain clarity and raise issues deemed important to them. Though the agenda of the meetings keep changing location-wise and from time to time; it still revolves around issues of social relevance. Some of the issues discussed during such social meetings are NREGA, entitlements, government schemes related to pensions, insurance, etc. For SPS, such meetings act as a platform to strengthen the integration between the SHG programme and other interventions such as Livestock, Agriculture, Health & Nutrition, etc., and disseminate information regarding the other activities carried out by the organisation.



Leadership Development Training



The attendees are given information regarding their basic entitlements and a discussion of their duties and responsibilities towards the Panchayat is also undertaken. A month after such a session, members are given additional training on how to independently go about accessing their entitlements, so that they are equipped with the necessary tools and information to put their issues and demands before the local authorities.

A wide array of topics depending on the specific need of each village and/or location were discussed in such meetings. For instance, in villages around Khategaon, active participation in Gram Sabha was discussed and members were identified to take the cause forward. At the Lalkheda location, the importance of vaccination and usage of masks was discussed while short films made on the same theme by the SPS media team were screened in the social meetings. In response to the increasing cases of Dengue in and around Lalkheda, the team also shared information about the disease such as its causes, and measures that can be taken for the prevention of the disease, etc. in social meetings. In villages near Hatpipliya, members were familiarised with the rules and regulations of banks and government schemes.

Punjabura Pragati Samiti used social meetings as a forum to discuss the lack of work under MGNREGA, and factors leading to non-participation of members in Gram Sabha meetings and used that to leverage the concept of Hissedari Sabha. Hissedari Sabha takes place at the locations where the programme of 'Entitlement' is run. A major topic of discussion at the Sabhas in Punjabura was the scheme of PDS (Public Distribution System) wherein the members received key information on eligibility, the process of application, and their entitlements under the scheme. Meanwhile, at Kantaphod location, Hissedari Sabhas were expanded to three more villages in two panchayats.

All residents of the village are welcome to these meetings. The meetings aim to empower people to solve problems on their own.



Hissedari Sabha At Kantaphod Location



## 4.7 Livelihood Enterprises Development Program (LEDP)

### 4.7.1 Climate-Smart Agriculture and Livestock Model

The LEDP at Bagli block of Dewas district tends to cover over 150 households. The project aimed to provide livelihood and agriculture security to the communities through promotion and strengthening of livestock -based production systems, in order to reduce the excessive dependency on climate and market dependant agriculture at present and also to reduce the migration distress generated by the COVID-19.

After the identification of beneficiaries, another noteworthy way of capacity building was through 'Mohalla Training Model'; it effectively benefitted in intensive participation, personal communications and practical discussions, and also helpful in preventing the COVID infection. It also resulted in saving the cost and money. Climate smart agriculture model involved promotion of organic farming, soil fertility enhancement, supporting the climate smart cropping system while supporting millets and pulses. Demonstrating the sprinkle based irrigation and promoting NPM practices. While interventions for establishing the livestock model involved fodder and food security, it also provided medical facilities.

All these interventions were targeted specifically for the SHG beneficiaries and the credit availability for the members taking up the livestock and agriculture activities was ensured in a hassle-free manner for improved outreach.

### 4.7.2 Livelihood Enterprises Development Program at Udainagar Pragati Samiti

By aiming on several noteworthy issues like mitigating livelihood challenges faced by SHG members, reducing dependence on seasonal migration, incentivizing scientific ways of livestock rearing, capacity building of 150 SHG members and Augmenting nutritional outcomes for families and increasing income of household through sale of livestock.



Bangle Making Workshop At BPS



### 4.7.3 Micro-Enterprise Development Programmes (MEDPs)

**NABARD** has been a guiding force when it comes to making financial services accessible to the unreached ones surviving on the fringes. With its ground-breaking MEDP and LEDPs interventions, it has tried to bridge the ever-widening the haves and the have-nots and pave the way for an entrepreneurial mindset amongst the poor with intent to alleviate poverty

NABARD and the federations of Dewas pragrati Samiti, Punjapura Pragati Samiti and Kantaphod Pragati Samiti have joined hands; All three federations received a MEDP grant of Rs 93,000 for 'Entrepreneurship Development'. This ultimately also led to stabilizing the members of SHG. A total of 30 SHG members were imparted with the training which was based on the theme 'How to prepare and use Bio-Fertilizers'. NABARD DDM Avinash Tiwari had graced the inauguration programme on 13 th Feb 2021. Our Federation Leaders, SPS Team members and Ajit Kelkar have been our resource persons who spoke at length about the green revolution, its merits and demerits alike in the first session and thereafter it all involved a range of topics from local and traditional practices (seed preservation, seed treatment) to bio-pests and bio-fertilizers. The basic fundamentals of Non-Pesticide Management (NPM) were also discussed and the trainees were encouraged to be a part of it, to prepare 'ghar ke khad and ghar ke dawai'. In the last session on 23rd feb 2021, all the trainees were provided with the training certificates and they shared their learning experiences, the overall response was a very positive one for the team.



NABARD Micro Watershed Project Meeting



## 4.8 Other activities

### 4.8.1 Grocery Distribution

Whilst many families were battling with the after effects of the first wave of Covid, another wave hit them with more vulnerabilities at hand. Keeping this in mind, similar to the previous year, Grocery/ Kirana distribution activities were held on larger levels this year too. Funding from different donors was utilised to distribute a package of commonly-used groceries. A grocery package consisting of sugar, oil, detergent, cumin seeds, turmeric powder, matchboxes, etc. was procured at a competitive price from RamRahim Pragati Producer Company. It has been observed that such distribution of essential groceries at highly competitive rates often below prevailing market prices is beneficial and convenient for members who are saved the hassle of haggling by themselves and transporting the groceries as the onus of transportation and obtaining quotations from various suppliers is on the Federation. While some locations conducted this as a general activity, like Maheshwar, Khategaon and Lalkheda and Bagli Pragati Samiti, Barwaha Pragati Samiti federations counted this activity as a part of COVID-19 relief efforts. Udainagar Pragati Samiti conducted the activity for over 1066 SHG members in February. The members were selected based on certain parameters like attendance, performance, timely repayment of loans, regular savings, etc. among others. These distribution drives were carried out before Janmashtami and Raksha Bandhan to help the SHG members with the cost of the celebration of such festivals. Kantaphod Mahila Pragati Samiti identified the lack of access to gas cylinders as an issue that led women to resort to cooking using chulhas which rendered them highly susceptible to respiratory diseases. Even women who had one gas cylinder would have to resort to using chulhas if the gas suddenly runs out while cooking and since refilling takes substantial time in rural areas. Hence, the Federation not only assisted members in procuring new gas connections but also assisted over 50 members in obtaining double gas cylinders for their convenience.



Kirana Distribution During Covid By UPS



## 4.8.2 Surveys

To understand whether member farmers are leveraging government schemes for farmers, surveys on understanding trends in crop loans and Kisan Credit Card ownership were carried out during the quarter in certain locations. Because the mitaan sathi have a considerably good hold on the community and have the ability to reach the last mile, the responsibility of the survey was taken up by them. SHG programme mitaan also participated in surveys and awareness drives to address vaccine hesitancy in villages of Punjapura, Udainagar, Bhikangaon, and Lalkheda under a new project- Crypto Relief Project.

## 4.9 Internal capacity building

The year also focused on building the internalised capacity of the programme at each and every level.

### 4.9.1 Training

Mitaan sathi, the Community Resource Persons act as a strength of the programme. Hence all the mitaans receive intensive training. The trainings of new mitaans were conducted at Baba Amte Center for People's Empowerment at Neemkheda in December 2021 for four days, where they received the insights into the foundation of SHG and familiarise themselves with rules and norms.

In the month of November, a six-day intensive training programme was conducted for senior mitaan along with the SHG professionals wherein training was given on accessing the software integral to the SHG programme, matters of book-keeping, and understanding financial statements and interacting with inactive groups were among various other important topics.

Focusing on finance-related aspects of SHG and accountancy, the accountants were offered a two-day training program in September 2021. It also included the revision of past workshops along with the understanding of fund based accounting. This training session was taken by Shahadat Husain, Accountant of SHG central office, and Manglesh Sharma of PSDS.

### 4.9.2 Review meetings

Two intensive review meetings are conducted every month of the year through the quarter; at every location. The agenda mainly includes performance reviews and target revisions. The review meetings were also spaces to discuss bank linkage, the correct format of cheque book usage, vouchers, and prastav patra. Preparation for audits and reviews and suggestions by auditors were also discussed in these meetings for locations that were audited.

Due to the 2nd wave of the pandemic, many personal and social uncertain issues arose that were not dealt with in the regular times. These needed to be solved through team efforts hence, brainstorming ideas. The review meetings resulted in a space where these issues could be discussed and found a solution. This also involves rewarding the mitaan with incentives which are performance based; it acts as a positive reinforcement that appreciates the efforts and encourages the performance.



### 4.9.3 Cluster revival and training



Covid Related Cluster Level Training

Cluster meetings had come to a standstill following the first wave of COVID-19 and the lockdown. These gatherings of women members of SHGs from respective clusters had been a space for discussion on social issues. These were revived in the last quarter with the primary focus on discussions regarding entitlements, COVID-19 vaccination awareness, etc. Training sessions were held while cluster objectives were also revised. The training was given through the medium of discussion, lectures, and Pico screening.

### 4.10 Case studies

#### **A Welding shop and Anitabai's aspirations**

#### **A case study of a woman's walk to Entrepreneurship**

In 2012, Anitabai joined Vandana Pragati Samuh and actively takes part in the bi-monthly meetings. Her's is the brightest hello and the widest smile in the room as she encourages other members to think beyond agricultural forms of livelihood. Anitabai's home in Bhikupura, following a long line of mud houses as one enters from the highway, is recognisable by the large shed with metal structures, scraps and machines- her welding workshop.

Anitabai and her husband, Inder, were living in a large joint family which was finding it hard to feed as many mouths, which is why the couple was forced to move out from the family home in 2015. due to the circumstances. With three children, two daughters and a son, they turned on a new leaf of life with a shaky start. At the time, Anita and Inder did not even have the money to buy essentials at the market but they did not let their hopes go dry.



Anita Operating Drill Machine



In the drylands of Central India where they live, for smallholder farmers to rely entirely on agriculture is a risky affair- with chances of drought, pest attacks, etc. In hopes to alleviate themselves from poverty, the pair decided to step into a non-farm livelihood while continuing to cultivate their small piece of land.

By then, it had been a few years since Anitabai had joined the SHG and had regular savings, transactions and presence which made her eligible for a considerably large amount of loan within criteria set by the programme. Inder had apprenticed under the guidance of Nivedita didi,

SPS's founder Sudhirfounder Sudhir bhaiya and Manharan bhaiya who does and oversees works of construction in SPS for over two decades now. She leveraged a loan of INR 40,000 to start the welding shop. Inder started taking orders as Anitabai joined hands to assist him in work that was manageable with her knowledge of the trade. Slowly she picked up the skills and was taught by Inder and now handles most stages of work effortlessly. The quality of work eing excellent at their shop, more work started pouring in, and they had to hire two young persons from poor marginalised families from nearby villages to assist them at their workshop. When the pandemic hit, as the country reeled under its effects, giant corporations as well as others, cut down jobs, moved employees to lower salary scales, and such. Meanwhile Anita andInder ensured each of their employees had their monthly salary delivered so their families didnt have to suffer. They have had their fair share of scarcity and did not wish it upon their workers.

This is just a small instance of their humility and goodness. When the bus stop waiting shed's seats were destroyed, Anita and Inder welded two steel benches for the village people without charging a penny. They have always attempted to keep the camaraderie in the village alive.



Anita Using Grinder Machine



Anita Doing A Paint Job On Thresher Machine



Anita At Her House



In February of 2021, Anitabai took out another loan of INR 60,000 from the SHG to further construct their workshop and purchase important machinery. She has been saving regularly and has wisely worked on her purse strings. In Inder words, “Paise ka toh yeh hi sambhaalti hai, humko nahi aata” (She manages the money, I don’t know how to). They continue to cultivate their one bigha of land. The crop stalks prove good fodder for her cattle although it does not suffice year round and they have to buy it off farmers with large land holdings.

Anitabai now hopes to diversify their forms of livelihood further. In 2022, they constructed a poultry shed and procured a small number of desi Satpura and Kadaknath breeds. They hope to run a successful chicken meat shop in another six month’s time although they have started selling within the village in small numbers. When her current loan is entirely repaid, in the next six months, she plans to apply for a loan again to begin work on reconstructing their house, which has a room and a kitchen and all their possessions arranged vertically. The house is in need of mends as well as extension to make room for the entire family.

Currently, one often finds threshers and trolleys in front of their workshop, as the harvesting season progresses. Behind this, Anitabai and Inder can be often found squatting on the ground, with safety goggles, as sparks fly from the metal they work on. Other times they are oiling machine parts and painting on them to ensure a longer life.

## 4.11 Challenges

Because this year has seen many drifts and has shifted its manner in many ways, none of the challenges were identical to each other. The challenges as well varied from each other during every quarter. The year has shifted in spectrums.

## 4.12 Inability to pay loans

### 4.12 .1 Due to covid-19

Because the second wave of Covid-19 hit during the initial months of this financial year, the majority of members faced difficulty in paying back their loans and interests. Many artisans’ self-employed workers in MSMEs etc took a major hit as their small businesses got shut down due to the lockdown. A large number of SHG members being labourers whose work closed down, could not cough up the required money for repayments and savings.

In the locations where the cash transaction was shifted to the online mode, many women were left out of the procedure for not having technological literacy.

### 4.12 .2 Due to Festivities

Due to some of the major festivals during the months of July to November, the majority of the members were either travelling or were busy preparing for the festivals by staying absent from the meetings; hence inability to pay interest and loans.



### 4.12.3 Due to Agriculture

Repayments in the agricultural belts are often seasonal and a major challenge in these areas is ensuring repayment throughout the year. Around 70-80% i.e. a large majority of our members have their livelihood depending upon agricultural factors, hence weather also has impacts on the SHG work. This also opens the gate to the conversation about daily wage earners, because if the weather is not in favour, then it becomes more and more difficult to hook themselves up to any of the jobs offering daily wages.

During the harvesting season, a large number of members migrated to the Malwa region or were busy in their own fields. After the Kharif season, the season of corn and soya took over. By the time onion season started, it demanded the members who provide labour to go to the fields early in the morning, continuing throughout the day. This not only adversely impacts attendance at meetings but also brings down repayment and savings at times.

### 4.12.4 Due to Migration

Migration is one of the drawbacks while keeping the SHG running smoothly. With the Kharif sowing and harvesting season at hand, a large number of members have either migrated to the Malwa region to seek livelihood opportunities. Along with impacting the attendance and quality of the meetings, this seasonal migration also brings down the repayment and savings of the groups; resulting in degrading the overall quality of an SHG.

As widely known, to take the burden off the family, many young women were married off to distant places, and due to such dire economic conditions, many families also had to migrate to nearby cities; after the second lockdown was lifted, in search of work for their sustenance. And manifestly, this affected the quality of their lives.

## 4.13 External challenges

### 4.13.1 MFI

It goes without saying that a big challenge for the SHGs is the Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs) present in the villages. We are in constant conflict with different MFIs because of the fundamental differences that exist with the MFI model.

The SPS SHG Programme has modified some of its guidelines to creatively address the challenge posed by the MFIs. The programme is also engaged in the regular distribution of the surplus generated, this is not only increasing the transparency of the programme but also gaining the trust of the members. Because of this, members are able to identify the pros and cons of SHGs and MFIs and the difference between the two institutions. The Community Media team of SPS is currently making a film on SHGs and MFIs to ensure widespread awareness about these two institutions amongst the people in the



### 4.13.2 NRLM

Another major challenge is the NRLM, which is trying to dissolve the working SHGs from the locations and is also misleading them. Many of our SHGs are in a conflict-like situation because they are not a part of the NRLM SHGs and are being told that they would not be able to benefit from different government schemes if they do not join them. The SHG team of SPS is putting in rigorous efforts to counsel our SHG members and explain the situation to the members.

### 4.13.3 Vaccination hesitancy

Just as with the disease, people in the region were scared of its prevention too: the Covid-19 vaccine. Some others were confused as to whether they were eligible to take it as they had comorbidities. Terrifying rumours surfaced during the wake of the second wave of the Covid outbreak, some of which were along the lines that vaccination kills people, that it rendered both males and females incapable of conceiving a child, and that the vaccine's sole purpose is to reduce the population, etc. The rumours in turn worsened the situation in villages.

To make people aware of the utmost importance of getting vaccinated, posters and audio were prepared, which were being used in awareness drives in various villages via vehicles hoarding the posters on both while it plays audio on loudspeakers. The doubts were cleared by the Mitaan; during these doubt-clearing discussions, many locals agreed to get the shot as soon as possible. Many claimed already having tried to get vaccinated, but due to its shortage in the region, they had to return without taking it. People were also given information on where and when the next vaccination was to take place near their village.

### 4.13.4 Challenges faced by Mitaan

Due to the scarcity of transport resources, it becomes difficult for mitaan who do not own a personal vehicle to travel remotely, which obviously takes a toll on their physical well-being and adds up to their stress. The mitaan in the organisation are from the same community itself, this allows us to reflect a representation in the community, which also makes it easier to connect and work with the focus groups. But because many senior mitaan are not completely digitally literate, it also acts as a major activity to consistently keep their spirits up when it comes to digitization.



## 5. COMMODITY AGGREGATION

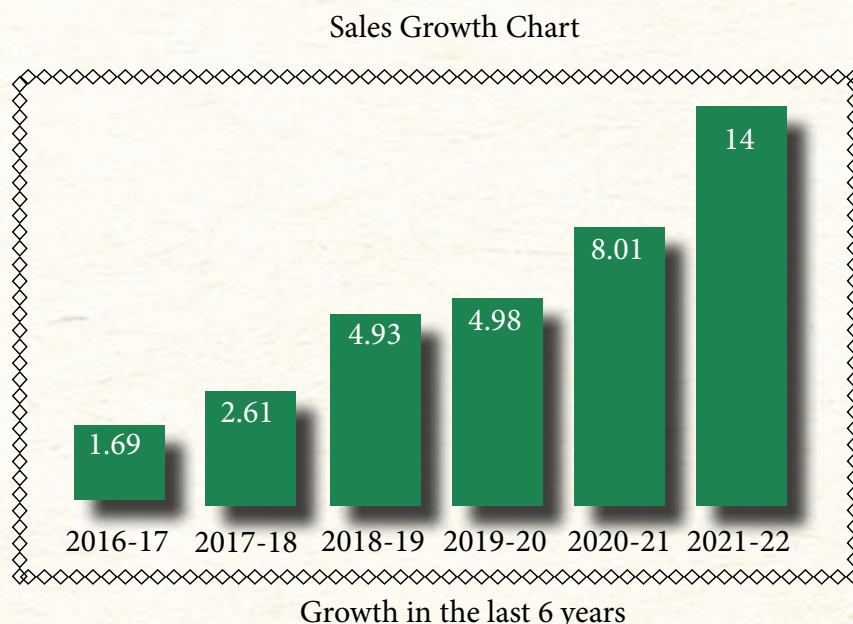
RamRahim Pragati Producer Company Limited (RRPPCL), incorporated under Part IXA of the Companies Act, 1956 (No. 1 of 1956) is owned and run by over 5800 small and marginal tribal women farmers belonging to 390 SPS-promoted Self Help Groups. RRPPCL promotes adoption of Non-pesticide Management of Agriculture (NPM) and deals in pesticide free commodities only. Our mission is to build a resilient supply chain of pesticide-free agricultural commodities. The idea of the NPM movement is to encourage sustainable agriculture while focusing on creating an identity for the produce and linking small farmers to organized markets.

The primary mandate of RRPPCL is to link small and marginal farmers with organized agricultural commodity markets. RRPPCL strives to empower the women SHG members by:

- ✦ Providing facilities to aggregate, store and sell their crops at remunerative prices.
- ✦ Giving access to high-quality, low-cost inputs
- ✦ Engaging them in profitable agricultural activity free from the clutches of traders and moneylenders; and
- ✦ Guaranteeing a market for Non-Pesticide Managed (NPM) and traditional crops
- ✦ Creating an opportunity to maintain ownership and control over a major part of the value chain of agricultural commodities.

Except maize, all the commodities were graded, cleaned, processed and packed for retail selling of their long-term partner Safe Harvest Private Limited. The long-term partnership has increased income of small and marginal farmers by more than 20% as they are offered premium rates for their pesticide -free produce.

With the support of SPS, the FPO has steered itself to achieve milestones towards becoming a sustainable and resilient producer company. Currently, RRPPCL meets all its admin expenses by itself (including all the staff salaries) and also almost all of the operational expenses are borne by RRPPCL. It has seen tremendous growth in the last 6 years in revenue as illustrated below–





## 5.1 Major Activities Undertaken By RRPPCL

### 5.1.1 Seed Sale

Seed is the most vital input in augmenting agricultural production. It becomes all the more prominent in the context of the small and marginal farmers who have almost zero possibility of expansion of area to increase the production. Therefore, it became imperative for RRPPCL to provide farmers access to good quality certified seeds at low cost on time. The seed sale details are as follows:

S.No.	Seed	Quantity (In Quintals)
01	Maize	468.51
02	Wheat	262
03	Chana Daftrai	242.6
04	Kak-2 Chana	12
05	Dhaniya	2.2
06	Carrot	0.31
07	Red Gram	50.4
08	Caster	6.85
09	Jowar	4.59
10	Urad	15.95
11	Green Gram	6.85
12	Sesame	3.21
<b>Total</b>		<b>1075.47</b>

### 5.1.2 Aggregation

In Rabi season 2021-22, RRPPCL has procured **638.7** tons of Wheat and **302** tons of Bengal Gram from over **900** farmers. Our initial target was to procure **900** tons of wheat but due to unseasonal rain at the time of harvesting damaged the quality of wheat. RRPPCL has offered 5- 15% higher than the prevailing market price. **268.7** tons of red gram was also procured in this season.

RRPPCL also aggregated **62** tons of Green Gram (moong) at **Rs 6300/quintal** along with **350** tons of maize. The procure maize was sold to Kashyap Sweetener, Tirupati Starch and Chemicals Ltd, Shakambhari.





Wheat Aggregation Village Laxminagar



Chikpea Aggregation Village Kharadi

### 5.1.3 Retail Packing

RRPPCL does retail packing for SHPL. There are 25 items that we do retail packing for the SHPL. All the packing, cleaning and sorting is done by local women. The Retail Packing hub at Bagli has employed 15 women and 5 men. RRPPCL is looking to scale up its operation.



RRPPCL Warehouse At Bagli



### 5.1.4 Milling

RRPPCL has sent Wheat for milling in the Asha Enterprise and Dal for milling in Singhal Enterprise. While milling all the NPM protocols are followed and one person either from SHPL or RRPPCL is there for monitoring purpose.



Cleaning Pulses Before Packing

### 5.1.5 Kirana Item Sales

RRPPCL is looking forward to expanding its scope of work and engaging in businesses which are in alignment with our mission of providing benefits to our women shareholders. In past year we started delivering kirana items (grocery) to members of the SPSs SHG programme at wholesale rates. Our mission is to supply quality products at cheaper rates to women SHG members on time and we expect this to lead to a positive impact on the health and nutrition of their entire family

RRPPCL sold kirana items worth Rs. 2.65 crore to Samaj Pragati Sahayog, Bagli SHGs members, Udainagar Pragati Samiti and Kantaphod Pragati Samiti SHGs members





### 5.1. 6 Packaging Hub Set Up in Bagli

RRPPCL has shifted the Packaging facility from Avantee Mega Food Park, Dewas to the Bagli Warehouse. This is being done in collaboration with Safe Harvest. In the months of December and January, proper infrastructure at the packing hub was constructed and the packing facility became operational from 10th January 2022 in Bagli.



Packaging Wheat Flour



### 5.2 Achievement

An award was bestowed upon RRPPCL in this quarter. We received the FPO of the Year - Large award by the distinguished jury of the FPO Impact Awards 2021. As stated by ACCESS Development Services “The selection is based on the organization’s extraordinary performance, effective governance and commitment to promote livelihoods of the small and marginalized.” Our Director Mirabai Kamble received the prize on behalf of the RRPPCL team.



Mirabai Kamble Represents RRPPCL  
At Award Function In New Delhi





Mirabai Kamble Receiving FPO Of The Year Award

### 5.3 Other Activities

- ✦ Company Audit was done in September and the account team handled all the auditing process successfully.
- ✦ RRPPCL put effort into strengthening its partnership with SBI and HDFC bank for accessing low cost working capital loans.
- ✦ Annual BOD's took place in the month of July,21.

### 5.4 Challenges

- ✦ The producer company is using a cold-storage facility in Indore and for milling of wheat and dal, the commodity is transported to Ujjain. These cities on an average are 70 km far from their RETAIL PACKAGING HUB at Bagli WHR. The dependency on third parties for milling and storage not only harms the integrity of NPM commodities but also heavily increases the selling price of NPM commodities.
- ✦ Difficult to access from formal financial institutions which forces access to high-cost debt from NBFCs. The formal bank shows little interest in lending to the producer company whereas private lending institutions charge exorbitant rates of interest. Due to this high cost of capital, program cost goes up making them less competitive in the market.
- ✦ Severe dearth of availability of skilled personnel to FPOs as the FPO finds it difficult to meet compensation expectations of professionals who possess management skills stands as a challenge.



## 6. LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT

Livestock has proved to be a viable and fruitful alternative means of livelihood for small and marginal farmers in the dry lands of the country. Goat rearing and poultry activities are relatively less input-intensive than farming and thus are suitable for farmers with a low or no resource base, especially in the case of landless labor and tenant farmer. Moreover, these activities allow the farmers to diversify their income stream making them less susceptible to weather shocks and other unforeseen circumstances. The Livestock Programme at SPS started with dairy farming but now it promotes other forms of livestock such as goats and poultry, as they have proven to be better suited for low-income households of small and marginal farmers who cannot afford large animals.

The Livestock Development and Support Programme has seen a successful phase of growth in the past years across eleven locations in 3 districts – Dewas, Khargone, and Amravati. With its success in the existing locations and demand has been rising from other locations as well like Khategaon and Satwas. This will be a step towards expanding our model of risk mitigation and poverty alleviation for the agrarian community.

### 6.1 Our Outreach

Livestock Programme Outreach	
Number of Districts	Dewas, Khargone and Amravati
Number of Villages	229
Total Members	8815
Total Producer Groups	342
SPS Locations	Kantaphod, Udainagar, Punjapura, Kannod, Hatpipliya, Bagali, Barwah, Melghat, Bhikangaon, Satwas, and Khategaon.



## 6.2 Healthcare services at producers' doorstep

Samaj Pragati Sahyog is providing all kinds of healthcare and veterinary services, including vaccination, deworming, neutering, treatment, artificial insemination, etc. to its all members throughout the year. Although the covid-19 outbreak had posed a big challenge for us, we had to bounce back and have been able to reach the doorsteps of our members. Our para-vets have worked really hard to reach the households so that the animals get proper treatment. The treatment service was provided based on members' demand and also managed at the time of members' regular home visits (animals were treated if found sick during regular visits).

**9504** small and large animals received treatment facilities that protected the animals from both common and critical diseases. Our para-vets visited members even when the threat of a second wave was high. **21,477** small and large animals and **26,918** poultry/chicks were provided with deworming tablets to prevent protozoal and viral/bacterial infections and to ensure the animals are healthy.

To tackle livestock mortality and to reduce the rampant seasonal disease outbreak amongst the animals, the SPS Livestock team administered vaccines to the animals. **11831** ET and **11745** PPR (goats), **5854**, HS-BQ (Cattle), and **21477** Ranikhet and Gumboro vaccines (poultry) vaccine have been administered this year.

Activities	Figures
Regular Treatment	9504
No. of ET Vaccines administered (Goats)	11831
No. of HS-BQ Vaccines administered (Cattle)	5854
No. of PPR Vaccines administered (Goats)	11745
No. of Ranikhet and Gumboro Vaccines administered (Poultry)	15550
Deworming (Small and large animal)	21477
Poultry Deworming	26918
Castration	628



## 6.3 Breed Improvement and Allied Activities

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In our work area, we saw that a majority of the livestock are low productive, non-descript, and lack adequate feed resources and health cover to enhance the milk yield, making breed improvement important. Genetic improvement has the potential to Improve overall productivity and profitability.

SPS's livestock programme has been able to sense the pulse of the age-old problem and has been working on the process of breed improvement which goes on a long way in creating better productivity traits and more efficient genetic make-up.

SPS engages in the process in a two-ways:

**A. Artificial Insemination:** Artificial Insemination is one of the ways that SPS has adopted to increase the safety of the animals and producer, increased production efficiency, and better genetics. This year, we have successfully done 260 A.I. in liaison with the government veterinary department. Our efforts have been on improving the breed of milch animals. Thus, helping the farmer to increase their incomes.

**B. Castration in Goats:** For poor families, goats are a form of blessing and are a major livelihood source. They are akin to a 'cow' for a poor person. Goats provide high-quality animal protein (nutritional security for the poor). Goats can be easily managed by women and children because of their small size and easy temperament and they can serve as a continuous source of income for the poor. Chevon, milk, kids, and manure fertilizer are the means of income from goats. Chevon demand is continuously increasing in the region that we are working in.

Castration in goats has become a routine part of the programme. It improves the quality of meat by increasing the distribution of fat, brings tenderness, avoids undesirable odours and flavour, and reduces aggression in goats. Small and marginalized farmers have been rearing goats and selling their products at festivals (Eid, Diwali, etc.) in the region and are well aware of the benefits of castration. 628 goats were castrated across locations in this financial year.

The above techniques have been beneficial for the members and they have sold their goats worth **Rs 7199873** (2021-22).



## 6.4 Poultry chick distribution, shelter facilities, and feed services

**A. Shelter facilities :** Proper housing plays a crucial role in the spread of livestock farming. It protects the draft animal from common seasonal diseases and also offers protection from predators such as dogs, cats, snakes, rats, and hunters. At SPS, the focus is on promoting low-cost shelter amongst the members and helping them with financial and technical assistance in order to construct (or renovate) night shelters, goat sheds, and free ranges for poultry. Our members make more than **60%** contribution (cash and kind) and in the case of poultry shed, it goes up to **75%** in the shelter-making process.

**B. Feed services :** A livestock's health is hugely dependent on better animal feeding habits and that's the reason why SPS is making consistent efforts to improve feeding practices in the animals. Under this service, nutritious feed & its supplement are made available to farmer members for goats, poultry, and cattle. Throughout the year, we supported members to get nutritious feed for their animals by providing them with goat feed bags, and mineral bricks for their good growth and health and for the proper functioning of their physiological system.



Distribution Of Goat, Poultry And Cattle Feed



**C. Poultry chick-distribution :** Our backyard poultry farming programme promotes 15 days old chicks of Satpuda and Kadaknath breeds and gets them delivered to farmer members at their doorstep after undergoing proper vaccination. This year, a total of 15700 chicks of Satpuda Desi and Kadaknath breeds were supplied to members according to their demand. The Satpuda chicks have characteristics like a fast growth rate (becomes ready to sell within 3 months) as compared to desi chicks (a local breed that becomes ready to sell after a minimum of 8 -12 months).

The main quality of Satpuda chicken is that it looks like desi chicken in every aspect, Because, this character member gets a fair rate of Satpuda desi breed chicken in the local market that varies between **Rs. 300 – Rs. 550** depending on their growth. Our members can earn more in a short span. Poultry chick distribution has been done this year as a relief measure for the members.

Activities	Figures
Goat Sheds	484
Poultry Sheds	363
Cattle Sheds	34
No. of Chicks Distribution	15700
No. of member Training	118
No. of Paravet Training	30
No. of AI	260
Total Value of goats sold by members	7199873



Chick Distribution



## 6.5 Capacity Building Training For The Team

To take the livestock programme a step ahead, capacity building is of extreme importance. This year, we managed to conduct veterinary training for our para-vets, and software training for everyone.

### 6.5.1 Veterinary Training for Para-vets

In the year 2021-22, 30 training sessions were organized for our para-vets (online and offline) throughout the year. This training focused primarily on the technical aspects of livestock management (health, nutrition, animal shelter, etc.) The trainees were also provided with a basic understanding of veterinary science such as blood type in animals, new drugs and their usage in treating animals, animals' anatomy, physiology, and so on. Our Government Veterinary Doctor, Bharti Sharma, and Dr. O.P. Rawat (poultry) were the trainers. The initiative has successfully built Paravets' capacity and enabled them to provide better animal health services to the members.



Para-Vets Under Going Training At CRC Sevanpani



Castration Being Done By Para-Vets



Para-Vets Vaccinating Goats





## 6.5.2 Software training

The livestock programme has moved towards digitizing all its work and is in the process of eliminating all manual data organizing and reporting work by adopting dedicated software. For the successful implementation of this plan, various training sessions were conducted throughout the year on the livestock software. The training was also provided on basic computer applications to our field staff, the para-vets, as most of them had no prior experience of working on computers.



Software Traing For Real Time Monitoring

## 6.6 Case Study

### The Story of Rukhma Didi (Zero to Hero)

Rukhma Didi's mother's house is in the village of Thana near Kataphod. Rukhma didi says that she was given all the comforts in her maternal home. When it came to the wedding in 2009, the family members, saw the educated boy and thought that he would get a job anywhere, so, Didi said yes to him and soon got married. After marriage, Rukhma Didi came to her in-law's house in Rupalipura. Shortly after marriage, Rukhma didi, her husband, and her mother-in-law were evicted by their family members over family differences.





Rukhma Didi's Poultry Sheds

Desperate for help, she went to the home of her maternal uncle and father-in-law in the village of Pandutalab. Her paternal uncle, the father-in-law, saw her dire situation and gave her a little of his land. Rukhma Didi started living on this land by building a small hut with her husband. She had no land for farming and her husband had no work either. In this situation, Didi started sewing and with the income from this work she started to finance the household.

After a few years, in 2013, Rukhma Didi started working as an ASHA worker and at the same time her husband got a job as a salesman in the company. Rukhma Didi's economic situation slowly began to improve. It became difficult to run a family of six people - mother-in-law, father-in-law, two children, Rukhma Didi, and her husband - on the income of only two people. They didn't even get their salary on time. In such a situation, Rukhma Didi and her family faced many problems. Rukhma Didi's mother-in-law was associated with the Sadabahar Pragati Group for some time. As her health continued to deteriorate, she began to stay away from group meetings. As suggested by other members of the Sadabahar Pragati Group, Rukhma Didi was suggested to join the group in place of her mother-in-law. Rukhma Didi saw this as a good opportunity to join the group and began to get involved in the group's activities together (2017).

Rukhma Didi turned to goat and poultry farming after receiving information on goat and poultry farming in the group meeting through Paravet. Rukhma didi liked the talk of the committee staff about improving their economic situation by making a profit from animal husbandry and she expressed interest in starting this work.





Rukhma Didi With Her Goats

She built a shed for raising goats and started buying small goats at a low price. At the same time, Rukhma Didi began to focus on protecting the goats from diseases and properly increasing their weight by taking proper care of the goats, after receiving constant suggestions from the paravat. Goat rearing has now become an important source of income for Rukhma-didi. In addition to rearing goats, Rukhma didi also started backyard poultry rearing. At the SHG meeting, she spoke about starting poultry rearing and proposed a poultry feed with 50 chicks with an investment of Rs 7500. Rukhma Didi received 50 Satpura breed chicks along with 50 kg of chicken feed from the chick-rearing center in Sivanpani village. After taking care of these chickens for two to three months, Rukhma Didi sold each hen at a price of 350-400 rupees and each cock at a price of **550-600 rupees**. Through this process, she saved a total of **12,000 to 13,000 rupees**. Rukhma Didi was very impressed and inspired by this achievement in just three months. To further the poultry work, Rukhma didi planned to raise both the Satpuda breed and the Kadaknath breed of chickens. Rukhma didi proposed 50 Kadaknath chickens and 50 Satpura chickens and 300 kg of chicken feed in 2020 with a total



investment of 14750. Rukhma didi found herself surrounded by many questions during the covid lockdown in the month of March – will my chickens get this disease? If my chickens get this disease, I will suffer a lot? Will people buy my chicken during the lockdown? After not getting any correct answers to these questions, Rukhma Didi courageously continued the work of poultry rearing. At the time of the lockdown, the situation became such that the market price of chickens increased. Rukhma didi sold each hen of Satpuda breed for at least 550 rupees and the hen of Kadaknath breed for 1200 to 1500 rupees. Rukhma didi earned more than 80000 rupees in three months.

Rukhma Didi says that due to poultry and goat rearing, she has always had money in her hands and has been able to easily meet the expenses of her children's education and household expenses.



## 7. ENTITLEMENTS and HEALTH & NUTRITION

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The Health and Nutrition (H&N) programme is being implemented in 198 villages of 107 Panchayats, and 2 Nagar Panchayats, in the Bagli and Kannod blocks. The programme works in consonance with state institutions including 413 primary and middle government schools, 310 Anganwadis, and 106 PDS shops in the region. Its main objective is to reduce malnutrition, and community capacity-building through rights awareness and training to strengthen the functioning of these local institutions, thus creating a contingent cycle of access to basic rights guaranteed by law for all beneficiaries.

### 7.1 Major Activities during the Lockdown

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When the MP state government imposed a lockdown on April 10, 2021, our H&N team took swift action to ensure that our program continued to function effectively. To maintain contact with the community during this challenging time, we began reaching out to people via phone calls. To ensure the safety of our team members and comply with COVID-19 protocols, we provided them with hand sanitizer and N-95 masks. Later on, we also provided them with a pulse-oximeter and thermometer, enabling them to check the preliminary condition of suspected COVID-19 patients and provide appropriate guidance. Through these measures, we were able to continue delivering vital services to the community even during the pandemic.

### 7.2 Food security during Lockdown

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In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the central government announced the distribution of three months' worth of ration to each PDS beneficiary under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana. This included 4 kg of wheat and 1 kg of rice per person per month. As part of our relief efforts, our H&N team reached out to households via phone calls to inform them of this initiative. Through our efforts, 39,203 households without ration cards or Patrata Parchi were able to receive free ration. In addition, we worked with the Panchayat to get new Patrata Parchi made for 84 beneficiary households, ensuring maximum welfare from this intervention. Later in the year, we assisted a total of 529 beneficiary households in getting Patrata Parchi made, which ensured their continued access to ration supplies.

### 7.3 Integrated Child Development Scheme

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Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Anganwadi had remained shut for a long time. In September 2020, they began opening up in the region but shut down again owing to the second wave. In this scenario, ICDS beneficiaries (including pregnant women, nursing mothers, and children aged 6 months to 6 years) were provided with nutritious meals through the distribution of 'Take Home Ration' by Anganwadi workers.



For ensuring timely distribution, the H&N team was in constant touch with Anganwadi workers and ICDS beneficiaries. Families of these beneficiaries, with special attention to malnourished children, were regularly contacted to ensure that they were able to receive the ration.



Take Home Ration' Distributed To ICDS Stake Holders

## 7.4 Interventions for pregnant women



H&N Team Training Pregnant Women At The Anganwadi



Our H&N team recognized the importance of reducing the incidence of anaemia during pregnancy by promoting the consumption of iron-rich foods, such as green vegetables, and advocating for institutional delivery rather than home births. To achieve this, our team conducted regular follow-ups with pregnant women in their homes, even during the lockdown, while adhering to all safety protocols.

Following the lifting of the lockdown, we continued to raise awareness through meetings held at Anganwadi centres, where we conducted health check-ups, vaccinations, and informed pregnant women about the 'take home' nutritious meals being distributed by Anganwadi workers. Our efforts have contributed to a total of 1860 deliveries taking place this year at government health facilities, which is a testament to the success of our program in promoting safe and healthy pregnancies.

## 7.5 Ensuring long-term food security and nutrition through kitchen gardens

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Nutritious, iron-and-protein-rich meals are essential for pregnant women and children, and home-grown green vegetables provide the most economical source. In line with this, we helped 100 households in the Bagli location plant kitchen gardens on unused land near their homes, enabling them to reduce their dependence on the market for vegetables and lowering costs. During a visit to Genda Devi's kitchen garden, we observed her successful cultivation of various vegetables, which have improved the health of her household. Genda Devi expressed her satisfaction with the outcome, citing cost reduction and improved taste compared to market-produced vegetables. Additionally, she noted that her five-year-old daughter's health has improved since consuming the home-grown vegetables. Our efforts in promoting kitchen gardens have helped to ensure that more households have access to nutritious and affordable food options.



Genda Devi's Kitchen Garden



## 7.6 Covid-19 Relief Interventions after Lockdown

Immediately after the lockdown, a lot of our funders came up with relief interventions in the form of medical equipment that had proved necessary during the pandemic, along with other interventions for spreading awareness regarding the spread of the virus. These were majorly helped by the H&N team at the respective location.

## 7.7 Oximeter Distribution to ASHA Workers

The poor health infrastructure of our region especially caused distress during the pandemic when even basic facilities like isolation centres and pulse oximeters weren't available. Add to that, there was severe fear-mongering amongst locals around the pandemic, as the second wave had reached the remotest of villages. To subdue that fear of using facilities for determining the actual condition of patients, we distributed pulse oximeters



Oximeter Distribution To ASHA Workers At Kantaphod

to ASHA workers at various locations so that they could monitor patients, provide guidance on whether they needed to be admitted to hospitals, and also help other ASHA workers monitor situations in their regions by sharing the oximeter with them. All the ASHA workers were also trained on how to use the oximeter, change batteries, and how to interpret its readings. They were also advised to sanitise the oximeter after every use. A total of 600 oximeters were distributed across all 14 SPS locations. Along with that, select SPS staff at each location, especially the community resource persons of the Health and Nutrition programme, were given oximeters and thermometers for keeping track of community health in case of a third wave of the pandemic.

## 7.8 Covid-19 Vaccination Awareness Drive

Just as with the disease, people in our region were scared of its prevention too: the Covid-19 vaccine. People thought that they would get Covid-19 if they got vaccinated against it. Some who had seen others get the shot were scared of the body-wrenching fever associated with it. Some others were confused as to whether they were eligible to take it as they had comorbidities. So, for clearing misconceptions surrounding the vaccine, and creating awareness, a vaccination awareness drive was organised across all villages of 8 of our locations falling in the rural region, where the perpetration of these myths was most rampant.



For this, a vehicle with posters and a song played on a loudspeaker on the need to get vaccinated was driven across villages, with a community resource person accompanying it and stopping wherever there was a crowd to spread awareness and clarify the community's doubts. During these doubt-clearing discussions, many locals agreed to get the shot as soon as possible. Many claimed already having tried to get vaccinated, but due to its shortage in the region, had to return without taking it. People were also given information on where and when the next vaccination was to take place near their village.



SHG Members Take Charge Of The Covid Awareness Campaign At Bagli Location

## 7.9 Crypto Project and Distribution of Oxygen Concentrators

This project, funded by the RCRC Network, was initiated to generate awareness of Covid-19 amongst locals, including children and adults, and motivate people to take vaccines against the virus. It was majorly undertaken by the H&N teams at the respective project locations, although some locations, like Punjapura, also saw the participation of the entire location staff for its success. SPS' media extension unit also contributed a major chunk of the project.

Four government health centres at Punjapura, Bagli, Kamlapur, and Udainagar were provided with oxygen concentrator machines, and batteries to support function during a power failure, keeping in mind the negligible health facilities in the region.





Federation Leaders Of Punjabura Pragati Samiti Presenting The Oxygen Concentrator With Battery Backup To The PHC At Punjabura

Villages across two locations, Punjabura and Udainagar, were surveyed to take information on the number of people vaccinated per household and to generate a dialogue around Covid-19 precautions and vaccination amongst the people. Along with that, our extension unit made some films around pandemic awareness which were screened under the project at schools, SHG meetings, farmer meetings, water user group meetings, and entitlement meetings, among others. Discussions were initiated during the screenings at schools on the importance of getting vaccinated as the government had, by then, announced vaccination for children under 18.



“Afwahon Mein Mat Aao”  
Being Screened At A SHG Meeting Behri Village



Wall paintings were made across the surveyed villages on taking the shots for Covid-19. A kirana distribution drive was also done for 2000 such households whose members had gotten vaccinated, mentioned under the kirana distribution section.



Children Watch As A Wall Is Painted At Mansingpura Village  
For Awareness Generation On The Covid-19 Vaccine

## 7.10 Activities Targeting Malnutrition Reduction

### 7.10.1 Nutritional Rehabilitation Centre (NRC)

This year, 88 Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) children across 6 locations of the H&N programme were successfully sent to NRCs with the efforts of our teammates. As a case, efforts to convince families of malnourished children at the Dangrakheda Panchayat in Bagli location had been on since last year. Since this Panchayat is cut-off from all nearby villages and towns, it is still adapting to trust their ways and people here rarely trust outsiders. Even so, after much convincing that went on for a year, some families did send off their children to the NRCs. Due to this effort, the nutrition grade of 288 children changed to normal.



## 7.10.2 Jowar Utsav



The Hatpipliya and Punjapura H&N teams organised Jowar Utsav at their respective locations to reinstate amongst the community the importance of the agro-ecologically suitable crop with high nutritional value that has been majorly replaced by HYV crops from the green revolution.

Women Prepare Jowar Dishes At The Jowar Utsav Held At The Palasi Village In Punjapura Location



## 7.10.3 Dudh Kela Karyakram

In Udainagar, in an attempt to address malnourishment with the community and the parents of malnourished children, the Dudh Kela Karyakram was relaunched in three villages- Potla, Sobliyapura and Mahigaon. In a meeting held with the community, the importance of monitoring children's weight every 14 days, nutrient-rich food intake, etc. was discussed following which 16 Severe Acute Malnourished children were brought under the ambit of this project. For 6 months these children were daily provided 200ml milk, 1 jowar laddoo, and 2 bananas to nip out malnutrition.

## 7.11 Project Adhikar

The main objective of this project is to work on the awareness and provisioning of government scheme-based entitlements to the community, especially those related to NREGA, PDS, and Pension. It currently runs in 9 locations of the Bagli, Barwah, and Kannod blocks. The project, which was started in 2020 in the aftermath of the first lockdown when several households lost their only source of livelihood to leverage state funds for community upliftment, was expanded to include higher targets and more no. of villages this year.



## 7.11.1 Creating demand for work through Rozgaar Diwas meetings

The lockdown created a difficult situation for people practising rural livelihoods as markets shut down and produce couldn't be sold. Several migrant labourers too returned to the security of their villages after years and started looking for employment nearby.

This was an opportune time to utilise the rural employment guarantee scheme as people sat home eyeing the next chance to earn during this phase of economic collapse.



Constructing A Culvert At The Paraspipli Panchayat Under MGNREGA

During the lockdown, our community resource persons, geared with protective equipment, went door to door in their own villages to create awareness on how people could access employment even then. With their enduring efforts, our team was able to start organising meetings on NREGA soon after the lockdown got lifted, during which people were informed of the correct procedure to apply for NREGA and the various provisions under the Act. These meetings then became places to take forward their application for NREGA work to the Panchayat Ghar. Platforms like Gram Sabhas, which are ideally meant to discuss village problems but are only conducted for formality's sake, were also used to bring-up issues of unemployment, NREGA, and infrastructural needs, all of which could be solved together within the village. This way, NREGA work began full-swing at most of our proposed Panchayats for the Adhikar Project in the current quarter, even helping lessen the out-migration for soya-bean harvest that is usual during the late monsoon.

We also observed that for each subsequent meeting, people began turning up in greater numbers because they started gaining trust in the scheme as long as their payments came on time, and also began understanding the nitty-gritty of the law better. It was very challenging to convince the people at first, especially those who had had the bitter experience of not receiving payment for their work, or non-acceptance of their work application by the Panchayat, but the efforts of our CRPs in talking people out of their doubts brought results.

This year, our team got 6587 new individual workers registered on job cards, **worked with 7636 families** for MNREGA, was able to generate **276434 person-days** of MNREGA work, ensured receipt of **full ration for 28218 families**, helped start **pension benefits for 577 people**, got 5595 Aayushman cards made, and helped **2031 people receive other government scheme-based entitlements**.



## 7.12 Hissedari Sabha



The First *Hissedari Sabha* Being Conducted At Paraspipli Panchayat

SPS has been committed to empowering the community by raising awareness of their rights and entitlements. The organisation believes that a community that is well-informed and empowered can advocate for itself, reducing the need for direct intervention. To further this goal, two training sessions were conducted by Mr. Shashi Bhushan of the PANI Sansthan for the H&N and SHG teams. These sessions aimed to strengthen the network of women's institutions, such as Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and their federations. To facilitate this, SPS organised “**Hissedari Sabha**” meetings, which would bring together women leaders to discuss rights-based issues with state actors.

Initially, the project was piloted at two federations, Punjapura and Kantaphod. Two panchayats from each federation were chosen to conduct the meetings. However, organising these meetings proved to be challenging in some of the villages. Despite this, the participating members have recognized the importance of these meetings and their potential to improve the relationship between state actors and the community. As a result, SPS plans to expand this initiative to all locations and make it a core objective of the program. The goal of this initiative is to create a community that is informed and empowered to demand their rights and entitlements. SPS aims to identify and train women leaders to take up issues with state actors, improving the status quo between the community and the government. This initiative is crucial for bringing about a positive change in the relationship between state actors and the community, and SPS is committed to making it a success.



## 7.13 Capacity Building and Training

A three-days training event was held for the entire staff of the H&N programme from 27-29 December 2021 at the Neemkheda Kendra. Staff from all the 9 locations where the programme currently runs attended the training, wherein all topics related to the programme's work were covered briefly for creating an understanding of the programme amongst the new team members and revising learned concepts for the older members. The training was conducted by senior staff members of the H&N and Watershed Management programmes.

### 7.13.1 Resource training

Mr. Shashi Bhushan, of SATHI Sansthan in Uttar Pradesh, was invited to provide two training sessions to H&N and SHG senior staff on building up and strengthening women's institutions (SPS-supported SHGs) so that they can demand their own entitlements over a period of time and SPS, in turn, can reduce the population's dependence upon itself. A structured plan was developed during the training which will be acted upon to realise the SPS vision of a better quality of life for the community while creating a scenario of cascading redundancy for itself.



Shashi Bhushan From SATHI Conducting A Session For Entitlements And H&N Team



## 7.14 Case Study

### Removing Suhana's hindrance in the way of proper nutritional intake

Suhana, the 11-month-old daughter of Reena bai and Arjun, was born with cleft lips. As a result, she was not able to drink milk properly. Her parents had visited several government and private medical facilities for treatment, but doctors were hesitant to operate on her because of her young age.

In this difficult situation, the Health and Nutrition (H&N) team at the Hatpipliya location came to the family's aid. They provided them with information about the Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK) and connected them with Mr. Sachin Nagar, head of the RBSK team. The RBSK team then helped the family complete all the necessary documentation for Suhana's treatment. Suhana was then referred to the district hospital in Dewas for a proper health check-up. After a thorough examination, the doctors referred her to Convenient Hospitals Ltd. in Indore for her surgery. With the help of the CHL team, a successful operation was conducted on Suhana.

After four days of post-operative care, she was discharged from the hospital. Thanks to the timely intervention of the H&N team and the support of the RBSK and CHL teams, Suhana was finally able to drink milk properly.

This case study highlights the crucial role that NGOs and government programs can play in providing essential healthcare services to underserved communities. Through their outreach efforts and collaboration with local and regional healthcare providers, the H&N team was able to make a real difference in the lives of Suhana and her family.



Suhana, Before And After The Cleft Leep Surgery



## 8. KUMBAYA

### 8.1 The Indomitable Power of Women's Institutions

In the second wave of Covid, when work at Kumbaya stopped again, all the Federations of Women stepped in once more to support and express solidarity.

### 8.2 A Hundred Thousand Masks

In July 2021, like the previous year, **72,900 masks** were ordered by SHG members worth. The order was worth Rs. **11.6 lakhs**. Production at all three centers was carried out in full swing. The order for masks gave employment to 140 producers who were hard hit by the pandemic. Kumbaya also ensured work at home for those who were unable to travel.



Cutting Cloth For Making Mask



Kumbaya Artisans At Work To Fulfil The SHG Federations Masks Order



### 8.3 Thousands of Masks

On the 4th of October, a bulk order for Kirana bags was also received from the SHG Federations. We were to complete 11,000 bags in time for Kirana distribution before Dussehra. To provide attractive and sturdy bags at a reasonable price we bought dead stock from suppliers in Indore. All four Bhavans of Neemkheda, Satwas, Bagli, and Jatashankar worked in tandem to complete the order so that the bags could be directly dispatched to the respective locations.



### 8.4 Bright Fabric For Kirana Bags

In 2021, relief came in from several fronts. Through Rang De, an anonymous donor gave Rs 1000 to each of our 140 producers. MESH (Maximizing Employment to Serve the Handicapped) provided financial support to provide ration kits worth Rs 1500 per artisan to 100 artisans in April. They also agreed to procure the ration kits from Ram Rahim Pragati Producer Company Limited, the FPO owned by women farmers, instead of purchasing them from the open market. Through the efforts of SPS, each artisan again received ration kits worth Rs 2000 in July. We also made bags out of waste fabric for carrying the ration kits.



Stitching Bags For Kirana Distribution



## 8.5 Kumbaya Exports and Designers & Brands

### Kumbaya is Working With

Through the uncertainty of another year of Covid, it was the small but regular work with designers we export to that kept our morale up and sustained our spirit. By working with designers from Sweden, Germany, UK and India the Kumbaya team is able to learn best practices, and gain exposure to new people, their culture, values and aesthetics through design.

#### 8.5.1 Slubbed Limited

is located on the isle of Anglesey in North Wales and works with men's apparel in Indian artisanal fabric. We started work with Slubbed Ltd in 2020 on a brand named **'Dypta'** and completed a small order of shirts in Malkha fabric at the beginning of the year

#### 8.5.2 Labvisby's order

always have to be ready to be shipped by March – April, as the brand is on a small island in Sweden, where their sales are from tourists only during the summer months. This year, due to Covid in April and May, we could only ship in June. It was the team's concerted efforts that the order could be completed, chasing specially woven and dyed canvas fabric from Delhi and Noida, Handloom from Bhopal, finish cutting on time, and organising a small ace team to finish the stitching.

Labvisby ordered pillowcases and bed covers again and we finished our work in the month of August. We have worked with them for 5 years now.

#### 8.5.3 Woven Studio was earlier called Rare Thread

Neemkheda Bhawan was opened with as many producers who could reach because the Laura Miles collection consisted of 9 different styles and we needed more women to complete the order on time. After we shipped this order, Laura had another order ready and this time she wanted it before Diwali celebrations. The producers, Bhawan supervisors, and the entire team worked together round the clock to complete the order in time for shipping to be delivered to London on the 12th of November 2021.

#### 8.5.4 Naushad Ali

from Pondicherry had joined hands with us in 2020; we have been stitching his designs and collections as well as the brands he collaborates with. Naushad asked us to put the orders on hold in the first quarter of 2021. Later in July, we shipped the consignment of jackets that Naushad had ordered.



### 8.5.5 Rani and Reine: Sarah Dunn's visit

Sarah Dunne is a designer based in Germany, and her brand is called Rani and Reine. She stayed with us at the Jatashankar Campus to work in close collaboration with our team. We will be working on making new patterns and samples for her spring summer collection 2022. Working with Sarah was an invaluable experience and learning - in design, and detail, in inclusive, comfortable and sustainable clothing with handwoven cotton naturally dyed or block printed by the finest artisans in the country, who were from Maheshwar to Kutch to West Bengal to Maharashtra! She also educated us about other brands and organisations doing innovative work in the field of textiles, design, natural dye, and the use of waste. Such partnerships empower our master craftsmen, and artisans by challenging, and upgrading their awareness, knowledge and skill.

### 8.5.6 Barakat Bundle

We made 1000 Flannel Kangaroo Bags and 1000 Sensory Toys for new born babies for a USA based non-profit called Barakat Bundle, who wanted us to deliver them 300 pieces at a time. After the first consignment, the person dealing with the order changed and we are holding on to the rest hoping that someone will show up to claim them.

### 8.5.7 Ikikai Bulk Order For Tote Bags

We made 500 Tote Bags for Ikikai who got us an order from an IT company.



Stitching Tote Begs For Clients



## 8.6 TRIFED Orders

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After a whole year of helplessly sitting on nearly 70 lakhs worth of unsold stock because of cancelled purchase orders from Trifed we received a few end-of-the year orders from them at the last minute in March 2021. And two small orders from TRIFED Bhopal and TRIFED Delhi in April. Whatever we have supplied to various regional offices of Trifed since March 2021 remain unpaid, except for one payment from Bhopal which has just come in after 5 months.

## 8.7 Digital Marketing with Trilliant Digital

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We had been building an online presence and working on a store since 2019. To create our own marketplace, reach out to and access the whole world, scale up, have the freedom to showcase all our designs in the way that we want, all at very low overheads, was an exciting dream. In the way Covid blanketed the world, an online store became an acute and urgent need. Last year, with the sudden resignation of the person working on digital marketing, we outsourced the responsibility to Trilliant Digital, a firm-based in Bangalore. Trilliant had the requisite credentials and were a cost-effective choice for us. However, for them to begin, it required a lot of work from us. The different kinds of work done by our team for the online store, to name a few, were:

- ✦ Preparing for a photoshoot by getting all the locations and apparel ready with footwear and jewelry for styling, coaxing and chasing anyone in the organization, including visitors, who was ready to model
- ✦ Photographing all products with models according to the requirements of an online store with the help of a photographer from SPS Community Media
- ✦ Writing product descriptions for each and every style in all our products - apparel, bags, home linen
- ✦ Making excel files of these with details and uploading them on google drive in such a way so as to ensure that the staff at Trilliant, who were not well versed with our products, or fashion or craft or women led social enterprises in rural areas, did not make any mistake
- ✦ Making measurement charts and specifying sizes, especially of different clothing styles, and working on costing sheets
- ✦ Updating a complete inventory of finished products
- ✦ Coming up with a social media calendar and creating content for Trilliant to manage
- ✦ Working on the website backend, creating content for increasing website traffic and our visibility online



- ✦ Updating the payment options like PayPal and Razorpay and including Cash on Delivery to attract more and more potential customers
- ✦ Selecting and negotiating with a shipping partner like Delhivery, who made it viable by opening a branch in Chapda, 8 kms from Bagli. Otherwise, we would have to go all the way to Indore 60 kms away
- ✦ Proof-reading and going through the entire website, checking every minute detail and detecting glitches

The first thing to happen after handing over our social media to Trilliant was that our Facebook page was hacked. The incident cost us time and shook our trust in the team at Trilliant. The Kumbaya online store was finally launched in July 2021. All the effort we had put in was not as successful as we had hoped. We did not observe much sales traction when we gauged our social media reports. While there was quite an increase in the number of visitors to our website, the conversions were mostly from our well-wishers and friends. The contract with Trilliant was not renewed in the following cycle

## 8.8 Our Online Partners: Ikigai and Habba

From both Ikigai and Habba, we have sales trickling in since the 2nd quarter of 2021-22.

## 8.9 Kumbaya's local stall set up at Neemkheda & Satwas Bhavans



Kumbaya's Local Stall Set Up At Kumbaya Neemkheda Bhavan



As the collections we had prepared for exhibitions remained unsold and Trifed cancelled its purchase orders, we were left with large amounts of garments that needed to be sold. This is how the idea of expanding local area marketing germinated. Earlier we were selling from our shop at Baba Amte Centre for Peoples Empowerment at Neemkheda, and from exhibitions held at the Women Federation meetings at all the SHG locations. The Kumbaya team decided liquidate stock by putting up stores at the Bagli, Neemkheda, and Satwas Bhavans. The product prices were reduced considerably keeping the local community in mind. In many instances at Neemkheda and Satwas, we discovered that it was an uphill task to convince

women to spend money on buying clothes for themselves, even at subsidized rates. The children's and the men's wear, especially in small and medium sizes, were in high demand and they even went out of stock.



Kumbaya's Local Stall Set Up At Kumbaya Satwas Bhavan

However, since Neemkheda Bhavan is located on the highway that connects Bagli to other nearby towns like Barwah, its vibrant presence on the roadside attracts the attention of cars passing by. On the other hand, the experience in Bagli Bhavan, right at the heart of the town is quite different. More women flocked to the Bhavan in the evening and the demand primarily plus-size clothes.

Alongside Bagli Bhavan, we rented a store right next to the Janpad Panchayat, strategically located on the main highway and where there seems to be high footfall of people from nearby villages. This store went well in the initial weeks, but as time passed, the footfall came down.

Keeping these observations in mind, combined with feedback from our local customers, we tried working on a diverse collection catering to the style and fit of the local area. However, the Kumbaya local shops did not do well. Our styles are in cotton and are perceived as too plain. Even at the lowest prices, we could compete with the glittering clothes available at innumerable fancy clothing stores in and around Bagli.



## 8.10 NABARD Livelihood and Enterprise Development Program



NABARD-Kumbaya LEDP Project, Women Working At An Adda

Kumbaya received a LEDP grant of 7 lakhs from NABARD (National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development) in March 2021, at the end of the last financial year. Our Training Sessions in stitching and embroidery were conducted in the all three training centres: Bagli, Neemkheda, and Satwas. The training was on stitching, measurement and cutting, learning new styles, and patchwork. They were also taught hand embroidery, Ari embroidery and Crochet (laces, collars, trims, etc), particularly at Satwas Bhavan of Kumbaya in the Kannod Tehsil of Dewas district. When the Omicron strain started spreading rapidly across Dewas in the month of January 2022 and our women could not come to the Bhavan by public transport, we came up with an innovative idea. We set up addas at 4 of the trainees' houses where our trainer went to train them, so that their learning was not interrupted.

## 8.11 Exhibitions (in 2021-22)

In November 2021 we were invited to an exhibition organized by **Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board (MPTB)** in Bhopal where an international conference was held on women safety and responsible tourism. This gave Kumbaya an important avenue to showcase our brand, the artisans, and the sustainable principles that inform the design of our products among the dignitaries attending.

**TRIFED** organized the annual exhibition at Dilli Haat but we did not receive an invitation and were 5 days late. After much convincing over the phone and in-person we were able to secure a stall where we could set up for the rest of the time there. The team was able to sell products worth over four lakhs rupees in a period of 9 days.

As the world was gearing back to normalcy, we participated in four other exhibitions: **Jaipur Literature Festival 2022, TRIFED Aadi Mahotsav Bhopal, Conscious Souk-Edition 2 Bangalore, and Pause for A Cause Bangalore Edition.**



## 8.12 New Professionals

Four new professionals joined Kumbaya in this period – a Senior Executive--Operations, Marketing, and Communications, a Programme Officer, an Accounts Officer, and a Merchandiser. This was a hopeful time for Kumbaya, but eventually all of them resigned from their positions before the year was over for other opportunities.

## 8.13 Fellowships

SBI Youth for India Fellows Kiran Dayal and Saras Kaushik joined the Kumbaya team to execute their own projects and simultaneously contribute to Kumbaya's vision and work.

Kiran worked on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) Awareness of the SHG women in Satwas and other locations.

Saras Kaushik's project involved capacity building of the existing artisan-producers of Kumbaya, local area marketing, including setting up local pop-up shops, chalking out new strategies, designing products and interacting with potential customers.

## 8.14 Learning How to Read and Write - Teacher's Day Special



Teachers' Day Celebrations At Kumbaya

This Teachers' Day our artisans learnt to 'read and write' from each other. Lakhan and Gabbu, both people with disabilities, along with Dhannalalji and Pushpa decided to pool resources to buy notebooks, pens and a writing board to give daily lessons to our producers.



## 8.15 Srishti Design School Visit

SPS hosted a week-long exposure visit for students who had just joined Srishti Design School. They spent a day at Kumbaya making lovely products from waste.



## 8.16 The challenges faced by Kumbaya were

### 8.16.1 Resignation of Program Officers

Narmada Guha Roy and Sunita Verma became indispensable members for the Kumbaya team as soon as they joined in early 2020, just before Covid struck. They courageously shouldered all the workload when Vikas, who would have taken over as CEO, suddenly resigned in September that year. They were responsible for the front end, dealing with clients, marketing and sales; as well as managing the backend operations. They were coordinating digital marketing with Trilliant, communicating with designers and customers, building capacities and enhancing the team's performance.

However, they found it very difficult to manage and survive the isolation and distress of two waves of Covid in a small place like Bagli. When they left, the team had no support to fall back upon until the new professionals joined and learnt the work. The second wave of Covid delayed the joining of new professionals.



## 8.17 Mentoring and Capacity Building of the Team

In the absence of experienced or dedicated professionals to monitor and guide the work, the performance of the team suffered.

To help us, we invited Imrana Khan, Director, Dusty Foot Productions, to work with the team for two weeks. Imrana has been associated closely with SPS for many years, helped Kumbaya on many marketing events, and is familiar with Kumbaya's work and context. She was new for the current Kumbaya team, but she seemed to be the ideal person to help them align with their goals, streamline daily work planning and management, sort contentious/pressing issues, bridge gaps, and help them learn the importance of effective communication.

## 8.18 CASE STUDIES

### **Reshma's Journey**



Reshma is a mother of three school-going children and works as a producer at Kumbaya Bagli Bhavan which is just a few minutes away from her home.

Reshma moved away from her in-laws' place in Punjapura to Bagli town seven years ago when her husband found a job as a driver. She used to work as a labourer in the fields of Punjapura and helped her in-laws with agricultural work. A few months after living in Bagli, her husband heard about Kumbaya and encouraged his wife to apply for training. As Reshma says, she did not even know how to thread a needle.



After five months of intensive training, she learnt how to stitch. She fell sick in between and could not work for two years, but was welcomed back to her old job once she recovered. Having lived more than half a decade in rented houses, the couple decided to build a house of their own. But amidst the pandemic, to buy a plot of land and build a house was no easy feat! The little that they had been saving was spent to make ends meet during the first lockdown when both were out of jobs.

Luckily, her job at Kumbaya came to her rescue. She has been a part of the Kumbaya Self Help Group under Samaj Pragati Sahayog's SHG programme which granted her a loan of 1 Lakh rupees to build the little house of her dreams. She could also arrange more loans worth 2 to 3 lakhs from local moneylenders at lower interest rates as they knew she was a producer at Kumbaya.

The second lockdown was harder on the family, she was not able to save up enough after spending all her savings during the first lockdown. Reshma started going to Neemkheda with other women to work on urgent orders for overseas clients. After objecting initially, her husband underwent a shift in his perspective and he whole-heartedly supported her despite her working late shifts far from her home.

The assignments on which she had worked on since July, this year, came as a relief. The work at Neemkheda was different from her work at Bagli Bhavan. Work for export is done under extremely rigorous stepwise supervision. Today, she leaves home at 9 am and travels by the SPS bus to work. After a whole day's work, she reaches home around 7pm. Her eldest daughter prepares her tiffin in the morning and the family waits for her in the evening with warm food on her plate.

With her effervescence and lovely smile Reshma Didi says, **‘Haq rehta hai bolne ka ki hum kaam kar ke kamate hai’**. (I have the right to say with pride that I work and earn).



Kumbaya Producers Receiving Kirana From SPS



## 8.19 Kumbaya Indicators: Sales in 2021 – 2022

were only Rs. 82.65 Lakhs

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<b>Table No 1: Sales Through Retail Shops and Orders</b>			
<b>S.No.</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Sales Amount</b>	<b>Percentage of Total Sales</b>
<b>01</b>	SPS Jatashankar Campus	Rs.15.34 Lakhs	18.56%
<b>02</b>	SPS Neemkheda Campus	Rs. 1.90 Lakhs	2.30%
<b>03</b>	Kumbaya Online Store	Rs. 1.20 Lakhs	1.45%
<b>04</b>	Bagli Bhawan Stall	Rs. 1.23 Lakhs	1.49%
<b>05</b>	Neemkheda Bhawan Stall	Rs. 2.36 Lakhs	2.86%
<b>06</b>	Satwas Bhawan Stall	Rs. 0.37 Lakhs	0.45%
<b>07</b>	Kriti Eco Boutique, Pondicherry	Rs. 2.39 Lakhs	2.89%
<b>08</b>	Living Consciously, New Delhi	Rs. 0.13 Lakhs	0.16%
<b>09</b>	Maya Lifestyle (Kraftwork), Mysore	Rs. 1.99 Lakhs	2.41%
<b>10</b>	MESH New Delhi	Rs. 0.06 Lakhs	0.07%
<b>11</b>	Pondicherry Design Co. (Naushad Ali)	Rs. 0.20 Lakhs	0.24%
<b>12</b>	Serenity, Bangalore	Rs. 0.68 Lakhs	0.82%
<b>13</b>	Craft Circle, Mumbai	Rs. 0.20 Lakhs	0.24%
<b>14</b>	Studio Uga, Bengaluru	Rs. 0.16 Lakhs	0.19%
<b>15</b>	Twelvebytwo Lifestyle Store, Bengaluru	Rs. 0.34 Lakhs	0.41%
<b>16</b>	SHG Federation Masks & Bags	Rs. 4.59 Lakhs	5.55%
<b>Total</b>		<b>Rs. 33.14 Lakhs</b>	<b>40.10%</b>



**Table No 2 : Sales Through Other Online Stores**

S.No.	Organization	Sales Amount	Percentage of Total Sales
01	Ikikai Lifestyle Pvt.Ltd., Bangalore	Rs. 2.35 Lakhs	2.84%
02	Rang De Habba Fair Price Market Place Foundation	Rs. 0.06 Lakhs	0.07%
<b>Total</b>		Rs. 2.41 Lakhs	2.92%

**Table No 3 : Sales Through Exports**

S.No.	Organization	Sales Amount	Percentage of Total Sales
01	Rani & Reine by Sarah Dunn Germany	Rs. 0.12 Lakhs	0.15%
02	Woven Studio by Laura Miles United Kingdom	Rs.11.29 Lakhs	13.66%
03	Labvisby, Maria Camila Jensen Sweden	Rs. 2.88 Lakhs	3.48%
04	Slubbed by Hayden	Rs. 0.43 Lakhs	0.52%
<b>Total</b>		Rs. 14.72 Lakhs	17.81%

**Table No 4 : Sales Through Bulk Orders**

S.No.	Organization	Sales Amount	Percentage of Total Sales
01	TRIFED, Bhopal	Rs. 16.10 Lakhs	19.48%
02	Trifed RO, Delhi	Rs. 4.83 Lakhs	5.84%
03	Trifed Ro, Raipur	Rs. 0.32 Lakhs	0.39%
<b>Total</b>		Rs. 21.25 Lakhs	25.71%

**Table No 5 : Honey Sales Through Retail Shops and Orders**

S.No.	Organization	Sales Amount	Percentage of Total Sales
01	SPS JS Campus, Madhya Pradesh	Rs. 1.06 Lakhs	1.28%
02	SPS Neemkheda Campus, Madhya Pradesh	Rs. 1.48 Lakhs	1.79%
<b>Total</b>		Rs.2.54 Lakhs	3.07%



**Table No 6 : Sales from Exhibitions**

S.No.	Name and Location	Sales Amount	Percentage of Total Sales
01	MPTB Bhopal 18th November 2021	Rs. 0.18 Lakhs	0.22%
02	Pause for A Cause Bangalore 29th - 30th March 2022	Rs. 1.85 Lakhs	2.24%
03	Jaipur Literature Festival 10th - 14th March 2022	Rs. 1.07 Lakhs	1.29%
04	Trifed Aadi Mahotsav Delhi 21st - 30th November 2021	Rs. 4.84 Lakhs	5.86%
05	Trifed Bhopal Haat Exhibition 21st - 30th March 2022	Rs. 0.65 Lakhs	0.79%
<b>Total</b>		Rs. 8.59 Lakhs	10.39%

**Table No 7 : Training and Production 2021-2022**

S.No.	Training and Production	Details
01	Number of Producers	83
02	Number of New Producers	13
03	Trainees	68
04	Pieces Produced	18172
05	Mask Produced	81718
06	Number of Patches from Textile Waste	3689
07	Value of Patchwork Products Made Out of Waste	Rs. 13.42 Lakhs
08	Value of Patchwork Products Sold this Financial Year	Rs. 3.14 Lakhs
09	Value of Fabric Purchased	Rs. 22.61 Lakhs
10	Value of Honey Purchased	Rs. 0.87 Lakhs
11	Total Wages Paid to Producers	Rs. 28.54 Lakhs



## 9. SPS COMMUNITY MEDIA

SPS Community Media is an in-house media unit, articulating all SPS endeavours, ideas, practices and knowledge into films in a dynamic, interactive process in partnership with the community. SPS Community Media has so far produced nearly 250 films – social documentaries, community videos and training films on watershed managements, sustainable agriculture, nature-based livelihoods, women's empowerment, health, environment, etc. Along with films, SPS Community Media has also diversified in recent times into other media contents like audio podcast stories and a weekly e-magazine. Local youth have been initiated in these media content creations, empowering them in articulating concerns of the people on the margin.

These media stories are primarily made to be shared in the villages, taking the best practices to the people, sharing experiences and new ideas.

The second year of Covid-19, for SPS Community Media, has been about exploring different kinds of multi-media formats, digital distribution platforms and organising social campaigns. The major focus was on spreading information regarding tackling various aspects of Covid-19 pandemic, creating a campaign through vans fitted with public address (PA) systems of posters, pre-recorded messages on vaccination, prevention and about facilities available for treatment. A huge part of this campaign was to design wall poster-writing to be put up in strategic places in the villages.

One of the biggest learnings for the media team during this period was that of using animation graphics as a part of its repertoire for effective storytelling and messaging in the community. Animation and graphics are an extremely powerful communication system but requires high amount of skill, production time and money. With the help of content creators from National Institute of Design (NID), SPS Community Media team not only created a large amount of media contents but also gained in empowering themselves in understanding the workflow and production techniques to produce such films. And thus, Roshni and Varsha, two of SPS Community Media members from the local area produced their first white board animation film Nirnay – a film that narrates the differences between Micro-finance Institutions (MFI) and our women led Self Help Group (SHG) program. The film was premiered through an online screening in all our 14 Federation offices where people watched the film together followed by a small discussion.





## 9.1 SPS Community Media Data (2021-22)

Media Dissemination (2021-22)		
S.No.	Particulars	Total
01	No. of Villages [Dissemination outreach]	381
02	No. of People's Groups [Dissemination outreach]	1061
03	No. of SHG Clusters [Dissemination outreach]	25
04	Interactive film screenings in small groups	2546
05	Open air Mobile Cinema Screening	33
06	No. of Aaganwadi [Dissemination outreach]	57
07	Story reading in small groups	239
08	Film screening in classroom sessions	23
09	No. of films Screened	95
10	No. of Podcast Shared	12
11	Food Dairies (Melghat Location)	06
12	No. of audience [Approximately]	18000

## 9.2 SPS Community Media Production (2021-22)

While the film dissemination was put on hold due to the Covid-19 pandemic, our team continued with media productions.

Media Production (2021-22)		
S.No.	Particulars	Total
01	Films Produced	15
02	Podcast Story Produced (TERRA TALES बदलती ज़मीन पलटते पन्ने)	04



## **Tackling Covid Sensibly**

**(4 Min 48 Sec)**



Tackling Covid Sensibly

In order to spread awareness among the residents of our area on how to manage the onslaught of COVID-19, our media team came up with a Hindi version of the animation film created by Dr. Manoj Kuriakoseke. The film depicts how instead of being afraid of the disease, one can stay at home and manage recovery from the symptoms of COVID-19 with the help of expert advice from doctors.

## **Corona Se Himmat Na Hare Episode – 1**

**(3 Min 18 Sec)**



कोरोना से हिम्मत न हारे - 1

Do Not Be Defeated by Covid is a series bringing personal stories of people who have successfully recovered from Covid-19 virus. In this episode Roopesh Nandane from Bagli, Madhya Pradesh, shares his experience of coping and winning over covid.

## **Corona Se Himmat Na Hare Episode – 2**

**(3 Min 14 Sec)**

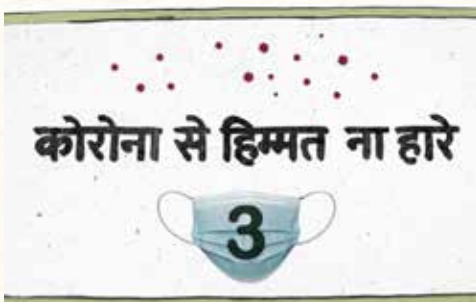


कोरोना से हिम्मत न हारे - 2

Do Not Be Defeated by Covid-19 In this episode Mukesh Verma from Bagli, Madhya Pradesh, shares his experience of coping with covid.

## **Corona Se Himmat Na Hare Episode – 3**

**(3 Min 29 Sec)**



कोरोना से हिम्मत न हारे - 3

In this episode Relubai Kannauje from village Imlipura in Udaynagar Tehsil, Madhya Pradesh, shares her experience of managing Covid fever.

## **Corona Se Himmat Na Hare Episode – 4**

**(4 Min -6 Sec)**



कोरोना से हिम्मत न हारे - 4

In this episode Upma Mathur from Barwaha, Madhya Pradesh, shares her experience of how she was able to cope with her Covid illness.





## Corona Se Himmat Na Hare Episode – 5 (3 Min -12 Sec)

In this episode Sonu Sharma from village Polakhal, Madhya Pradesh, shares her experience of how she managed to recover from Covid.

कोरोना से हिम्मत न हारे - 5

## Khanti Ki Roti (10 Min 15 Sec)



Khanti Ki Roti

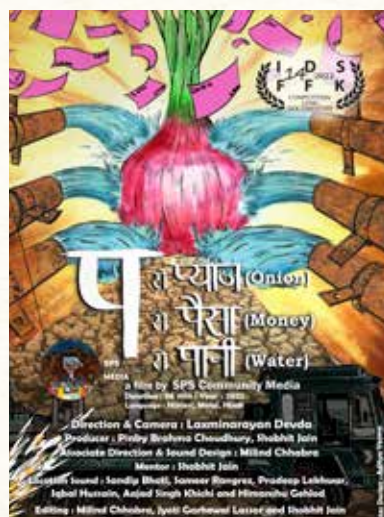
The onset of the Covid 19 Pandemic in India resulted in an exodus of rural population returning to their villages from the cities where they used to work as migrant laborers.

The film follows Sunita Bai as she finds work in the village under MGNREGA during the Covid lockdown. She narrates how she and her family were able to survive because of wages she was able to earn through MGNREGA.



## Gaar (61 Min.42 Sec)

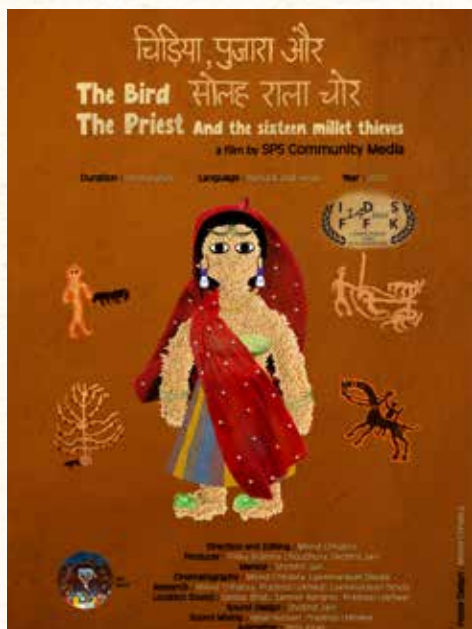
A freak hailstorm sets off a series of events in the life of farmers unfolding the vulnerability and precarious situation of those on the margin.



## P for Pyaaz (Onion) P for Paisa (Money) P for Paani (Water) (56 Min)

In the fragile hydrogeological farmlands of Narmada valley, a sizable number of affluent farmers descends from the rich Malwa plateau to take land on lease from marginal farmers at an attractive price. They grow onion, a water intensive crop for commercial purposes. While the cash income is the target for both the onion farmers as well as the landowners, what is the impact of the new practice on the depleting natural resource like water - the filmmaker follows one season of farming and the market vulnerability of the perishable cash crop of onion against the fragile landscape.





## **The Bird, the Priest and the Sixteen Millet Thieves (57 Min)**

Rala or the foxtail millet, the traditional coarse grain variety of the indigenous people of the Narmada valley is very closely bound with their culture of the Bhil community and hence has rich folklores and songs around it. Even as they use the grain in their rituals, they sing songs of the goddess of rala leaving the land in disappointment for the disrespect by the people. Interwoven with this backdrop, the film follows the life cycle of rala against the backdrop of the dwindling cultivation practice of this variety of crop. A flux of stories, legends and harsh realities, the film becomes an active observation of life here, showing the beginnings of the acute agrarian crisis plaguing the country today.



## **Jimmedari Se Hi Sabki Suraksha (5 Min 56 Sec)**

We have produced another film that is about preventing the spread of the Covid -19 virus in our village localities. “Jimmedari Se Hi Sabki Suraksha” (Take Responsibility to provide Safety). The film talks about the setting up of the isolation centers at the Village panchayat level. It also showcases the excellent work being done by the government teams who are working to stop the spread of the pandemic at the Panchayat level.

जिम्मेदारी से सबकी सुरक्षा



## **Afwahon Mai Mat Aao (Stay Away from rumours) (4 Min 46 Sec)**

In order to dispel the myths surrounding the vaccine for Covid – 19, we have produced an animation film that uses laughter and comedy as a medium to bring awareness regarding these myths. The film emphasizes on the importance of taking the vaccine instead of believing in the myths being circulated about it.

Afwahon Mai Mat Aao



## **Marketing of Pesticide Free safe foods**

This film focuses on Red Pigeon Peas cultivation without the use of any chemical pesticides. It follows the process from cultivation to harvesting, storage, processing and the importance of adherence to NPM protocol during packaging.

Marketing of Pesticide  
Free safe foods





Mat Dar Vaccine se

### **Mat Dar Vaccine Se (Don't be afraid of the Vaccine) (4 Min 09 Sec)**

This film shows the negligence that has been observed while getting the 2nd dose of the Covid-19 vaccine. It talks about the beneficial effects the vaccine has on our body once we take it.

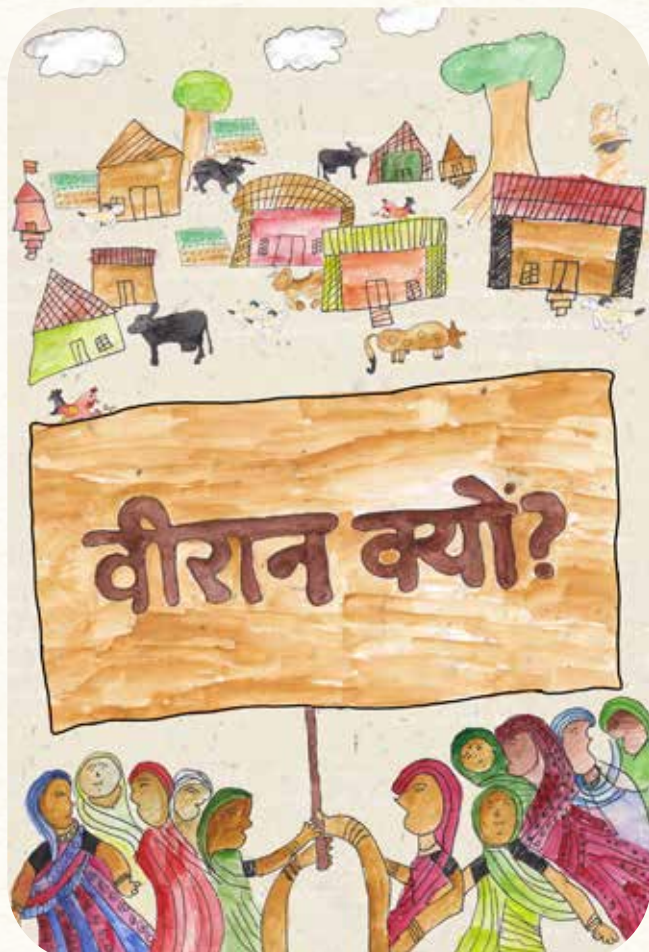


Nirnay

### **Nirnay (8 Min 57 Sec)**

This film uses white board animation to depict the stark difference between self help programs of the organization and groups under MFIs. The film also asks the audience which group they would like to be a part of. In order to join the group they should look at whether the groups really offer them help or is it being run earn a profit from them.

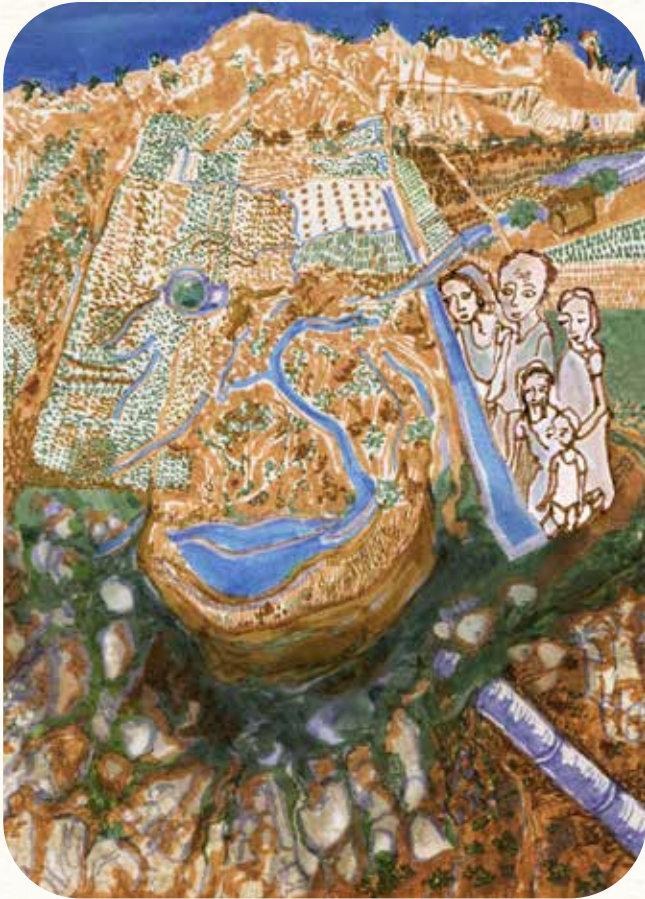
## 9.3 Audio Podcast produced under Terra Tales



### **Viraan (16 Min 13 Sec)**

This story depicts a village that has no existence on official government documents. The women of this village have found the courage to speak up about their rights after joining the self-empowerment group of the organization. The podcast talks about all the different kinds of struggles these women have had to face in order to populate their village.





### **Paani Ki Raah (18 Min 01 Sec)**

The Way of the Water - This is the story of Semli village. Although one of the biggest dams of this area was constructed near this village, more than half of the cultivable lands of this village remained arid and drought prone. Through collaborations between the people of this village and the organization, canals were built that helped bring water from the dam to the agricultural plots of the land. This is the story of the hardships that these farmers went through to accomplish this task.



### **Goura (22 Min 46 Sec)**

This story is based on the producer of Kumbaya, Goura. Goura is a differently abled woman, who was been able to take on shared responsibilities of looking after her home and parents despite her conditional challenges. This is the story of her courage, strength and determination to learn sewing to be able to contribute to her family.





### Mumtaaj (15 Min 32 Sec)

This story is based on Mumtaz didi who is a member of the Bukhardas group. She was able to strengthen her family's livelihood through her decision and sewing skills along with participation and support from the Bukhardas group.

## 9.4 Mobile Cinema Screening

In the month of November, special screenings of films to promote the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) social scheme in order to help the home-returned migrant workers to secure the lost income due to the lockdown that was imposed country wide during the Covid-19 lockdown. The screenings were organized in 12 villages through the open-air mobile cinema screening with special Covid-19 precautions. **“Khanti ki Roti”** and **“Lockdown mein MNREGA”**, the films we made were screened to spread information on the MNREGA Government scheme and to generate interest in getting work at a place where the Panchayats were resisting to start MNREGA work.

Discussions regarding the payment of late wages for labour work and other problems related to this MNREGA were initiated as a result of these screenings and the demand for MGNREGA related work increased in the villages. Along with these films, our animation film **“Stay Away from Rumors”** was also screened in each of these villages to bust the rumours and myths around Covid-19 vaccination, thus encouraging the village people in the vaccination drive.





Dhantalab Village Mobile Cinema Screening MGNREGA Films



Disucssions With Community After Film Screening



Film Screening For Covid Awareness Campaign

After a long gap of 3 months, when the spread of the Covid-19 virus reduced, the mobile cinema screenings were resumed in the month of March. Khategaon Pragati Samiti, one of our SHG federations were to implement an HDFC Bank CSR project on livelihoods. In order to involve the community as stake holders in the project, mobile cinema screenings were held in 15 villages, films that explained various on farm interventions like watershed

development, natural farming, livestock and community actions. The film screenings generated a lot of interest and excitement in the village people who asked questions like ‘Will our agricultural lands also have such farm ponds?’. ‘Will you demand money later for the work done on our fields?’ ‘Are you going to simply show us these films and leave and never come back to the village again?’ ‘Do you even have intentions of implementing these works?’ These were valid questions because the people had bitter experiences with developmental projects earlier. The implementation team present in the screenings would engage in detail discussions how the work would be implemented in a completely transparent manner. This would also be a good opportunity to introduce the implementation team and their contact details.



## 9.5 Still Photography

One of the major works that the SPS Community Media is involved in is the photographic documentation of all SPS interventions. Still photography entails telling stories of impact, change through still pictures. The idea is to capture the moment that brings to the foreground of what may have happened.

- ✦ Detailed Still Photography was undertaken for all the vaccination drive campaigns at Dewas and Khargone districts
- ✦ Still photography documentation of Community Forest Rights (CFR) initiatives for community led plantation drive over 405 hectares of forest land near Sosokheda village in the Melghat area, including aerial photography through drone
- ✦ Documenting women's participation in Gram Sabha's in Dewas and Khargone district.
- ✦ Documenting training of farmers in sustainable agriculture and their subsequent shift towards natural farming.
- ✦ Documenting village and district meetings for spreading Natural Farming system.
- ✦ Documenting watershed development work especially those undertaken under the MGNREGA and IWMP.



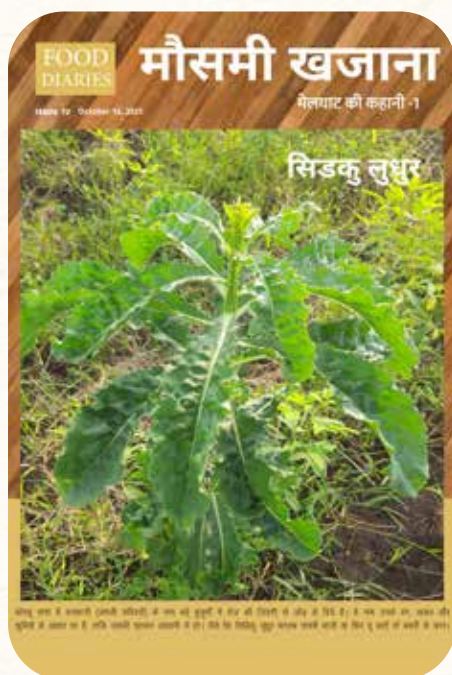
## 9.6 Covid-19 Vaccination posters and audio clips

During the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, there was a lot of misinformation that was spread regarding the vaccination: people are dying after taking it, men and women were becoming infertile and the vaccine was produced to reduce the population. This misinformation was creating an atmosphere of fear among the people. In order to dispel this fear and instill trust in the vaccination process, posters were created and audio clips were produced. The posters were mounted on both sides of the car and then with the help of the audio recording the location team travelled far and wide to dispel the myths and inspire people to take the vaccine.

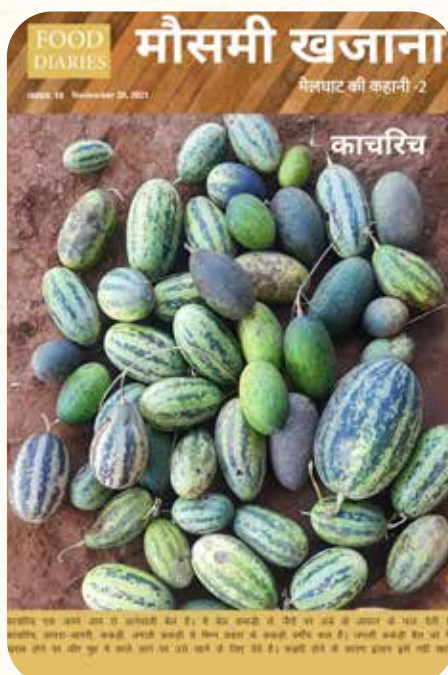


## 9.7 Food Diaries

Melghat falls under Dharani village, situated on the border of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. This location is rich in uncultivated or wild food. As a continuation of our e-magazine series Mausami Khazana Food Diary, the media team initiated the Melghat team to photo document and write about these wild edible foods. The e-magazine is circulated internally within the organization and read out in people's groups to aid in their discussions about nutrition with the people from this area. With the changing times our food is rapidly changing as well. The Melghat team wants to document these nutritious edible wild foods before they become extinct due to the onslaught of chemical agricultural practices. So far 6 new food diaries from Melghat region have been published and shared.



1 - Sidiku Ludhur



2 - Kachrich



3 - Sathula Gathula



4 - Ambadi



5 - Hetta



6 - Soso



## 9.8 Accolade

- ♦ **‘Hailstorm’(Gaar)** official selection, Dharamshala International Film Festival.
- ♦ “What’s in My Basket” (**Mahri Topli Ma Phang**) official selection, Calcutta International Film Festival.
- ♦ **‘Magical Forest’**(Jaadui Jungle) best documentary film award (joint winner) at the Golden Bee International Children’s Film Festival - 2021.
- ♦ June 2021 edition, South Asia Foreground **“Magical Forest”** (Jaadui Jungle) showcased throughout the month.
- ♦ **“Magical Forest”** (Jaadui Jungle) official selection, Labocine an online film platform that takes on the form of a monthly video magazine aiming to connect scientific thought with socio-cultural issues.
- ♦ **Terra Tales: Badalti Zameen Palatte Panne** – Audio Podcast series received the highest awards in the category of ‘Blogging and Story Telling’ section of the ‘Social Media for Empowerment’ competition.
- ♦ **“Hailstorm (Gaar)”** and **“Entrance Exam”** official selection, the Berwick Film & Media Arts Festival (BFMAF), Berwick Film & Media Arts Festival (BFMAF) North Northumberland, recognized for innovative programming and critical engagement.
- ♦ **‘School’ (Pathshala)** and **‘Jowar Gatha’** official selection, the 11th Pune Short Film Festival 2021
- ♦ **“Entrance Exam”** official selection, Berlin Lift-off Film Festival 2022





## CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION

**TERRA TALES बदलती ज़मीन पलटते पन्ने**

has been recognised as a **WINNER** for the year 2020-21 in the category

**BLOGGING, VLOGGING & STORYTELLING**

for sharing audio stories of people from rural & marginalised communities

Osama Manzar  
Founder & Director  
Digital Empowerment Foundation



Institutional Partner



Dr. Prof Peter Bruck  
Chairman of the Board of Directors  
World Summit Award & WSA  
Mobile Award

Social Media For Empowerment Award To Terra Tales

## 9.9 Capacity Building Workshop

### 9.9.1 Stop Motion Workshop

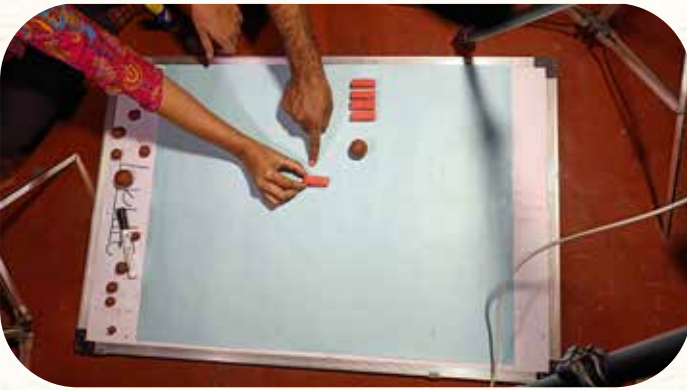
On the 7th of January, 2022 Yathi Kiran, professional animation artist, conducted a workshop on STOP MOTION ANIMATION as a part of the capacity building program. The participants were Roshni, Varsha, Saloni, and Ter Singh. The workshop went well with a lot of learning. Sharing responses of the participants regarding the workshop.







**Roshni Chouhan:** I learned about the frame rate in a video clip to depict movement. If we have to speed up action, frames need to be kept far away; And for slowing action, frames should be kept closer. I also learned about the concept of spacing and timing, Ease in and Ease out, and the software (dragon frame). I really liked the workshop and would like to learn more about it in the future.



**Varsha Ransore:** I learned about the importance of frame rate, timing, and spacing in animation, different styles of animation – one's, two's, three's, and four's. The standard frame rate is always 24 per second with most of the times animation being done on two's with 12 frames per second.



**Saloni Kaushal:** I like to watch cartoon movies a lot but I had never known that clay and mud can also be used to make animation. I learned about stop motion and practiced a bit.

**Ter Singh:** I enjoyed learning the concept of timing and spacing in stop motion.

### 9.9.2 Drawing and painting workshop

As a part of capacity building in SPS, a drawing and painting workshop was arranged for three participants, Varsha, Roshni, and Saloni. The participants took the workshop under the guidance of Akanksha Priya, a postgraduate in Textile Design from NID. The aim of the workshop was to boost the confidence in freehand drawing, understanding the basics of color theory, composition, character study, gesture drawing, and being able to illustrate stories and graphic novels in their own style. The workshop started with memory drawing as a warm-up session, followed by line drawing exercises, shapes, and composition. The medium of drawing started with pencil followed by pen, brushes and ink, and wet colors. Also, they developed characters for a story that was written by them. With each passing day, it was visible that the participants were growing more and more confident about attempting to draw and color the characters they composed for stories.





## 9.10 National Farmer Champion Fellowship

The National Coalition for Natural Farming is a collaborative platform for accelerating the spread of agroecology-based farming practices in its multiple variants, improving on existing practices, and advocating for policy change.

**“Natural Farming”** is understood by us, as the direction and process of transition towards a more local, resilient, and adaptive agro-ecology based farming.

**Lakshminarayan Devda**, a member of our media team, was chosen to write about four NPM farmers in our region for this fellowship. He wrote stories about farmers who have adopted nature-based methods in farming and continue practicing nature-based farming in the face of ever-growing chemicals inputs in agriculture. The stories truly depict the experiences of these farmers and why this kind of farming not only helps them derive a better income but also increases the fertility of the land.



# 10 . NETWORKS AND PARTNERSHIPS

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## 10.1 National Consortium of CSOs on NREGA

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### Backdrop

The National Consortium of Civil Society Organisations on NREGA is a loosely federated collective of civil society organizations that have come together to try and make NREGA a success. The consortium came into existence in the year 2008 with the initiative of Samaj Pragati Sahayog , presently operating in 11 states of central part of India working with 104 partners stretching over 87 backward districts. The consortium committed to ensuring rural livelihoods, particularly for the poorest and disadvantaged segments i.e. women, adivasis, dalits, landless, small and marginal farmers focusing on creating durable livelihood assets like land and water through leveraging NREGA funds. It is built on participatory principles, where an extra effort is made to involve the people in planning and management in partnership with PRIs and other line departments.

## 10.2 NREGA: The best opportunity of paving the way for sustainable Rural livelihoods

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The Consortium's intervention on the ground is centered on three core areas that are fundamental and lie at the base of all the challenges that the rural poor are faced with. Broadly its activities can be said to focus on drought , poverty and distress migration. The consortium seeks to address these issues through:

- ◆ Drought mitigation through effective management of land and water.
- ◆ Poverty alleviation through livelihoods skill building
- ◆ Stemming of distress migration by facilitating livelihood options.

## 10.3 Work Done and its Impact

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It was felt by the consortium partners that the first step in this direction would have to be the organization and mobilization of NREGA wage seekers so that they can act as an aware group pressing for entitlement under the Act. Continuous awareness campaign and follow up ensured that the job demand can be created on the ground. Together **1890** wage seekers committee as on date have been formed with a membership of approximately **68000** wage seekers. Awareness campaign and follow up turned the situation around. Wage seekers are now applying for works to the NREGA functionaries. In case the panchayat functionaries do not accept the application, the wage seekers are now able to approach Block for work.



People's participation is an essential component of watershed development. With commitment and conviction, people can discipline themselves for their betterment. Villagers need to contribute their stake/share (voluntary labor etc.) and feel the ownership of the project. Creating people's organization for planning, implementing, and maintenance is a must for success and sustainability.

The jobseekers committee at each village level could create a common forum for continuous dialoguing on MGNREGA and its implementation in the village. Due to the federation approach of dialoguing the grievance redressal cell became active and till end of reporting period we were able to identify bogus Job Cards and reduced fake enrolment and corruption to a greater extent. At the same time our cadre volunteers along with jobseekers federation identified migrant families that have left job cards at panchayats office at the time of their migrations and scrutinized the attendance in the master role and checked the duplicate enrolment.

The village federation uses the social map as a tool to identify left out households, migrant households and make pressure on respective panchayat functionaries to give team work under MGNREGA. In this process of our intervention the job seeker committee could reduce the distress migration to a greater extent. The community also felt that unless and until the wage seekers are organized to facilitate the implementation process of MGNREGA. They must participate in the planning and implementation process in an organized manner both at village level and panchayat level.

The jobseekers federation at panchayat level took all steps to ensure that the gram sabha meeting was organized regularly. The participation of people has increased tremendously and improvement could be seen in conducting the meetings. The jobseekers committee has taken MGNREGA programme well towards creating its own identity, building relationships with local administration and building rapport with other functional panchayats creating a wide range of awareness among the common mass.

## 10.4 NRM Focussed Micro Plan preparation

The consortium partners focused on installation of effective systems at different levels from hamlet/village to gram panchayat and panchayat samiti (block) for proper planning, execution, monitoring and smooth flow of funds. In this context, the partners thought of building a system at different levels to facilitate a village level linked to livelihood assets creation for the poor based on A major thrust of the consortium's effort has been to help the gram panchayats to develop a treatment plan (land and water) which can be implemented by leveraging NREGA funds.

NRM focused micro level planning for all **1890 operational villages** with active participation of community and PRI functionaries. Overall, detailed micro plans worth **74.68 crores** have been prepared by the partners put together in the concerned panchayats. Of these, **5.44 crores** are in the process of implementation. **Rs. 3.8 crores** have been budgeted for soil and moisture conservation and erosion control measures such as contour bund, trenches and farm bunds and so on. **Rs. 64 crores** have been budgeted for water harvesting structures for percolation and irrigation.



## 10.5 Interface with Government and PRI

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The partners adopted an approach of systemic and routine meetings between Block functionaries and wage seekers. This interface served as an effective platform for wage seekers for bringing the problems and issues in implementation to the notice of block and district administration. This helped in speeding up the process.

Through block level interface meetings between wage seekers and department officials along with PRI functionaries , following issues were raised and most of them are solved:

- ◆ Delay in wage payment for more than one month.
- ◆ Worksite facilities
- ◆ Tools not provided on worksite
- ◆ Field assistant not taking proper measurement.
- ◆ Job cards not updated
- ◆ Accident compensation not paid
- ◆ Works no being started though there is a demand

## 10.6 Research, Documentation , Advocacy and Policy Reforms

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Consortium's continuous research and analysis of different aspects of MGNREGA and providing feedback to the Rural Development Department, GoI in particular and other civil society organizations. As on date the consortium has conducted **4 major studies** on operationalisation of MGNREGA and its impact on sustainable rural livelihoods , distress migration and climate change.

## 10.7 What happened during Covid-19 and Consortium CSOs'effort

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Due to COVID-19 pandemic, India is facing a severe challenge of unemployment and reverse migration. Migrant workers are heading back to their native places in the hope of sustaining themselves better than they would be able to manage in hostile living conditions in host locations with limited work opportunities. Most migrant workers are daily-wage earners, and absence of work for extended periods makes it difficult to afford the high cost of living in urban areas. Added to this is the uncertainty around the timelines for normalization of the current situation.

At the top of the list is rehabilitation of returning migrants including provision of quarantine facilities, COVID screening, essential supplies, etc. Equally critical is to immediately provide these workers income-earning opportunities, especially to seasonal migrants who are unlikely to migrate for work soon.

Anticipating a huge exodus of migrant laborers back to their villages, there was an imminent urgency to ensure adequate employment opportunities to all those who returned.



Since agriculture is limited by its ability to employ all those who seek work. Our consortium partners decided to turn to infrastructure development under the government schemes along with the largest employment initiative MGNREGA to provide employment opportunities.

Consortium CSO partners drew up plans to enable both skilled and unskilled workers to gain employment through the following intervention like:

- ◆ Support Gram panchayats in developing a labor budget based on the demand for the wage labor at the village level for the MGNREGA work.
- ◆ Approval of various individual and community works in Gram Panchayats under MGNREGA viz. Farm ponds, farm bunds, cowshed, goat shed and renovation of existing ponds and new ponds as well

Drawing on our experience, our CSO partners put pressure on the district administration for the following reforms to effectively strengthen the role that NREGA can play in responding to the COVID-19-induced crisis.

**Prioritize Individual Benefitting Schemes :** Individual schemes such as repairing and strengthening bunds on land used for cultivation and . Additionally, schemes for building individual assets such as goat and poultry sheds, dug wells, and farm ponds were also given priority.

**Issue Job Cards:** Job cards were issued to all those who demand NREGA work, within 24-48 hours of receiving an application for the same. In cases where job cards are in the custody of middlemen, these were also reissued immediately.

**Increase The Number of Work Schemes :** Currently, there are only 2-3 work schemes running per panchayat, which is leading to the crowding of workers at worksites. To prevent this and to ensure that all willing households are able to access employment through NREGA, the number of schemes has been increased, and 6-8 schemes must be introduced in each village.

**Increase Wages:** When the PM Garib Kalyan Yojana was announced, it included a relief measure for NREGA workers: The daily-wage rate would be increased from **Rs 182 per day to Rs 202 per day, effective 1 April 2020.**

If NREGA wages are to effectively support rural households as they cope with this crisis, they must, at a minimum, be at par with states' agricultural wages. For example, the Government of Odisha has increased the daily-wage rate for unskilled manual work under NREGA to **INR 298** per day in 20 migration-prone blocks of four districts (Balangir, Bargarh, Nuapada, Kalahandi). This amounts to an additional amount of Rs 91 over and above the notified minimum NREGA wages in the state, which is **Rs 207 per day.** Other states must follow Odisha's lead, especially in vulnerable districts



**Increase Guaranteed Days of Work:** In light of the limited income-generating activities available in rural India, the number of days of work per job card should be increased from 100 person days per year to 200 person days per year.

This move was especially valuable in blocks that had a high percentage of marginal and landless farmers, Adivasi households, and where migration is high—particularly in the tribal belt of central India. Here too, the Government of Odisha has set an example, by announcing that it will provide an additional 100 days of work, over and above the stipulated 100 days work mandated under NREGA in 20 vulnerable blocks.

## 10.8 Major Learnings

Working in partnership with the community and Gram Panchayats while preparing micro plans, organizing interface with administration, regularizing social audit, implementation of NREGA works. The participation of the village community, especially the women groups have increased. The Jobseekers' awareness of their entitlement too has expanded. Further the community members are convinced about the promises the programme throws to ensure livelihood resources. Further MGNREGA is seen as an opportunity to responsibly address the issues of poverty, drought and marginalization.

The practice of applying for jobs as per the provisions in the act was not usually encouraged by the local administration. Normally before work is started, Job applications are filled-up. With increased awareness, the labor faces when they need a job apply for a job in the Rojgar Diwas and demand work. The jobseekers have learnt that they need to demand receipts with proper dates against their application.

The villagers are taking keen interest in ensuring a transparent process in the implementation of activities by G.P and in social audit. The participation of people in social audits has increased. While in non operational Gram Panchayats the social audit is conducted with a handful of close supporters of PRI members and to fulfill the quorum collect the signatures utilizing panchayat peon, in contrast in the operation G.P, it is mandatory on the part of the jobseekers to take part in social audit and match the muster roll prepared by the G.P with their own job cards.

The community realized that vulnerability that seems from distress migration can be reduced/checked if natural resource asset bases (land and water infrastructure) can be created which will enhance agricultural productivity. This can be possible if the MGNREGA fund will be utilized for NRM activities instead of road construction.

People's participation is an essential component of watershed development. With commitment and conviction, people can discipline themselves for their betterment. Villagers need to contribute their stake/share (voluntary labor etc.) and feel the ownership of the project. Creating people's organization for planning, implementing, and maintenance is a must for success and sustainability.



The community also felt that unless and until the wage seekers are organized to facilitate the implementation process of MGNREGA. They must participate in the planning and implementation process in an organized manner both at village level and panchayat level. The jobseekers federation at panchayat level took all steps to ensure that the gram sabha meeting was organized regularly.

The participation of people has increased tremendously and improvement could be seen in conducting the meetings. The jobseekers committee has taken MGNREGA programme well towards creating its own identity, building relationship with local administration, building rapport with other functional in the panchayat creating a wide range of awareness among the common mass.

**MNREGA's expansion:** Most districts of operational states of the consortium have been able to generate significantly higher levels of employment relative to previous levels. At the same time, the districts in the top tertile of out-migrant shares have expanded only **1.48 times** relative to the same period last year, as compared with the bottom tercile, which has generated **1.73 times** the person-days. Although the former districts account for **72.2%** of all out migrants, they account for only **54.8%** of the person-days generated during **May-August 2020**.

## 10.9 Research study

This covid pandemic period has highlighted the critical role played by government programs and social security measures in the economy. In the absence of regular work, MGNREGA was the alternative for vast sections of the society in rural areas, including for those who returned to villages from towns and cities.

Compared to the previous year, **10 million additional households** worked under the employment program in 2020-21. In view of the above, a study was conducted by Samaj Pragati Sahayog together with Centre for Sustainable Employment, Azim Premji University and Collaborative Research and Dissemination in collaboration with CSO partners who are part of the NREGA consortium.

The main objective of this research is to understand how well MGNREGA performed its role as a social safety net during the Covid-19 pandemic and the inter-state differences in this regard. Further, it will attempt to study the kind of assets that were created through MGNREGA during this period and their impact as perceived by beneficiaries.



## 10.10 Sampling

We will carry out a quantitative, survey-based study of MGNREGA in five states, supplemented by interviews with key informants. The states are Karnataka, Maharashtra, Bihar, West Bengal, and Madhya Pradesh. In each state 2 blocks have been selected based on whether the block has the presence of a CSO associated with the MGNREGA consortium and how the block performs on three parameters between 2017-18 and 2019-20.

These parameters are average person days of work per household, percentage of payments generated within 15 days and percentage of NRM expenditure. In each block, 5 Gram Panchayats have been randomly selected. A total of 50 households are to be surveyed in each GP; these will be randomly selected from the MGNREGA MIS. Of the 50 households randomly sampled, 35 are those households who have an active job card while 15 households are those households with inactive job cards.

So, the survey will cover a total of 250 households per block and 500 households per state. The details of the blocks, districts, and partner organizations in each state are given below.

In each block, key informants such as GP head, Rozgar sevaks, NREGA workers, computer operators, block-level officers will be interviewed.

Table 1: Details of the selected blocks and the partner organizations

State Name	Block name	District Name	Partner Organization
Karnataka	1. DEVADURGA	Raichur	Samuha
	2. BIDAR	Bidar	Outreach
Maharashtra	1. WARDHA	Wardha	Dharamitra
	2. SURGANA	Nashik	Pragati Abhiyan
Madhya Pradesh	1.GHATIGAON	Gwalior	Sambhav Social Service Organisation
	2.KHALAWA	Khandwa	Spandan Samaj Sewa Samiti
Bihar	1.CHATTARPUR	Supaul	Gramysheel
	2.PHULPARAS	Madhubani	Ghoghardiha Prakhand Swarajya Vikas Sangh (GPSVS)



## 10.11 Case Studies

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A book of case studies comprising 45 case studies on NREGA implantation have been prepared. One of the aims - to change the perception of MGNREGA. It is not just a wage-employment programme riddled with problems like wage delays, non-productive, monotonous work and administrative reluctance. It focused on three following thematic areas:

- ♦ Increase in wages , decrease in distress migration.
- ♦ Building assets, expanding livelihood options
- ♦ From wage seekers to wage planner

These case studies demonstrate how thoughtful planning and proper implementation of MGNREGA leads to fulfilling its intended objectives. Those who seek wage work locally need not have to struggle so hard to get it. The policy should guide the design and implementation in a manner that will make MGNREGA accessible to wage seekers without having to struggle for it and even in the absence of NGOs..

## 10.12 CSO partner network in three districts

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The strength of achieving strong civil society and government accountability lies in forming and continuing capacity building of the community. The CSO partner network is one of the important tools used in this project for creating such strong civil societies, who share knowledge and expertise for the cause. This project has created a platform for partners working in different vulnerable and disadvantaged areas to achieve the common goal of raising the income of tribal and backward section communities.

Samaj Pragati Sahayog (SPS), Gramin Samasya Mukti Trust (GSMT), Foundation for Ecology Security (FES) and Dharamitra are the CSO partners working together for achieving outcomes of this project. The core work is based on the activities of forming, strengthening & capacity building of vulnerable and disadvantaged communities, nurture community leaders and community institutes to create strong civil societies, empowered enough to make the state accountable and increase their state investment to increase the income of the community.

The four CSO partners from the three districts namely, Amravati, Yavatmal and Wardha came together for this project. They share expertise in watershed management, agriculture, livestock, CFR, ecological services etc. This expertise and common goals were shared with each other through meetings and training. The Corona pandemic slowed down the process in the year 2020 but we were able to arrange proper meetings and training in 2021. Apart from online meetings, a two day workshop was organized in Nagpur with CSO partners on 15 th to 16 th September, 2021. This was the first time all partners met in person and held detailed discussions on work progress, proposal goals, and training requirements.



The detailed discussion on state policy workshops and Consultation, Action Research, Common proposal development also took place. The responsibilities were decided including the team for monitoring and evaluation. This team has been regularly visiting each location for monitoring purposes.

This was important to know the progress of common goals and critically analyze the project. After their visits the observation and learning were always shared with respective partners as it was necessary for progress of the project.

### 10.13 Community Institutes

Under this CSO partner project Total **200 groups** were formed and worked within the last year, which include one of each Self help Group (SHG) federation, Gram Sabha Federation and Farmers Producer Company (FPO). In which **142, 36 and 22 groups** were formed in agriculture, Livestock and Community Forest Rights (CFR) respectively in three districts. More than **4,000** community members from the **140 villages** are part of these groups. For achieving the objective, regular meetings, training for capacity building are equally important. These meetings, training and exposure visits will be discussed in detail in the activity section.

### 10.14 Capacity building of CSO Partners

All CSO partners hold different expertise, which was utilized for capacity building of other partners. These training were mainly held at the Baba Amte peoples empowerment center, Neemkheda. These training helped in building perspective of various issues through the expertise. These themes were not only theoretically discussed but the implementing strategy and field exposure also took place.

However, due to the pandemic conditions in the country, many of these capacity building activities and training programs may have been canceled or postponed. This may have had a negative impact on the project's overall progress and the ability of CSO partners to effectively share their expertise and build capacity within the project.

### 10.15 Agriculture and RRPPCL

SPS is one of the pioneer organizations which advocate the use of Non- pesticide technique and low input sustainable agriculture. The idea behind this is to lower the use of synthetic chemical fertilizers and pesticide in the agriculture practice. As we cant reach out to the overall county , we are giving training to our partner organization on various sustainable agriculture practices. RRPPCL (Ram Rahim Pragati Producer Company) is a SPS sponsored producer company which procures commodities from smallholder farmers belonging to SHGs in the region. In the year 2021-22 NCNF(National Coalition for natural farming) , chaitram international school, npfwff- N+3F, GGGI were given training at Baba Amte Centre for People's Empowerment on the sustainable practices like soil health improvement, Intercropping , non- pesticide agriculture, the use of bio-repellent , commodity aggregation, and market linkage. The nature of the training was a mix of classroom lectures and fields to better understand the livelihood activities.



## 10.16 Watershed

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The integrated watershed management is one of the major programs of SPS. With its expertise of 30 years in the watershed management, SPS is giving training to its partner organization of various methods of watershed management and conservation. These organizations were given training on the ridge to valley process, How to take the measurement of watershed structures, Planning and implementation, Different types of watershed structures and the convergence with MGNREGA. AKRSP, GGGI, and other partner organizations participated in these training sessions.

## 10.17 Water Practitioners' Network

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The Water Practitioners Network (WPN) is a grassroots initiative to promote the adoption of a paradigm shift in water management among water practitioners including water users, civil society organizations, researchers, institutions and policy makers. It provides a knowledge-sharing platform through the identification of a range of best practices and proofs of concepts which would facilitate such a paradigm shift in the management of water resources in India.

The vision of WPN is to bring together the wisdom of a wide range of water practitioners across the country on crucial issues like demand management, water quality and groundwater protection. The network of practitioners put together form a huge repository of valuable experience of working on the theme of water as a common good. Hence, within the group of water practitioners, there is the immense possibility of cross-learning, which the network aims to facilitate. Consolidation of experiences would help various constituents of the network to think in terms of expanding and scaling up their efforts, individually and collectively.

Developing A Customized Category Of NREGA Works for Relief, Recovery And Resilience During Emergency/ Crisis Situations In Case Of Natural And Biological Catastrophes :- Is a Report by Samaj Pragati Sahayog (SPS) in Collaboration with German Development Cooperation (GIZ) is published in 2021. This report sheds light on the MGNREGA work and Relief, recovery and resilience. A systematic process has been followed to achieve the objective of this study. A series of consultations has been organized to engage the key stakeholders including CSOs, government departments, policymakers, technical support organizations, MGNREGA participants, farmers and laborers.

## 10.18 Objectives

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1. Identify the priorities related to immediate relief, recovery and rebuilding of the rural economy and raising its resilience to external shocks like COVID-19 or natural disasters.
2. Streamline existing works under MGNREGA in tune with these emerging issues and challenges of naturally occurring disasters like COVID-19. We need to find out how many activities in MGNREGA are being implemented successfully and under what circumstances can implementation be successful



3. Identify the list of new works, following from the mapping of the current priorities, which could potentially be taken up under MGNREGA in consonance with the spirit and basic principles of the Act. What are the possibilities of MGNREGA for the people of coastal regions and which kind of work can be included in MGNREGA for this area's people.

### 10.19 The major outcomes of the study

At the end of the report, a detailed list of recommendations has been developed which covers the effective planning process under the MGNREGA, identification of works through local planning, skills, fund flow and better implementation of MGNREGA. The report highlights the work identified for inclusion and prioritization. These works include Agriculture and Allied Activities, Coastal Areas & Fisheries Management, Flood-Prone Areas, NTFP Processing, Livestock Development, Irrigation Management and CAD, Health. The report gives the summary view of some of these existing works which need to be prioritized.

### 10.20 Revitalizing Rainfed Agriculture Network (RRAN)

SPS has been part of RRAN since its inception in 2009. Through interface with various state governments and central government ministries and departments, RRAN has been able to move the agenda of increased public investments in rainfed agriculture. With an attempt to pool together the accumulated learning of policy related work of the previous decade, RRAN organized a three-day convention at India International Center in February 2018. Being a member of the network, SPS played an active role in several sessions of the RRAN Convention. Dr. Mihir Shah, Secretary, SPS, gave a public address at the Valedictory function of the Convention.

The main theme of his address was that in order to bring in a paradigm shift in water, a fundamental shift in agriculture as a whole and rainfed agriculture in particular is necessary. Increased public investments and people-centered planning concentrating on neglected regions and crops can bring about a breakthrough in Indian agriculture, taking it along a path of long-term sustainability. Several other members of SPS, including community leaders, participated in the individual sessions on water, livestock, agricultural markets and millets promotion. The lessons harvested by the convention is being put together into a publication which shows the way forward in rainfed agriculture in India.

