



सत्यमेव जयते

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

SGP The GEF  
Small Grants  
Programme



# GLIMPSES *of* ACTIVITIES

SGP INDIA OPERATIONAL PHASE 5



**CEE**

Centre for Environment Education





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# GLIMPSES *of* ACTIVITIES

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SGP INDIA OPERATIONAL PHASE 5

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### MESSAGE

I am pleased to introduce this booklet titled "Glimpses of Activities" which highlights community initiatives marked through the fifth Operational Phase of GEF UNDP Small Grants Programme in India. The programme could initiate and demonstrate community led innovations, approaches and technologies that could minimize the adverse impacts to the global environment. By giving more emphasis on Land Degradation, Climate Change and Biodiversity Conservation, more than 380 NGOs and CBOs had been engaged in community consciousness building on low carbon lifestyles, conservation based livelihood activities and sustainable agricultural practices. With successful projects in more than 17 states of India, the emphasis has been laid up on eco-friendly and sustainable livelihood measures and demonstration of innovative rural technologies for upscaling.

SGP contribution in India have given way to economic and social benefits, community self-reliance, expanded local market and job creation. This has further led to synergy between various stakeholders including public and private agencies.

The booklet portrays the changes and reflections experienced at various levels. More than 70% of the project beneficiaries are women and their problems are addressed through various SGP supported innovation across India. Drudgery of women, especially in the remote villages, was reduced due to the installation of energy efficient cook stoves, bio-gas plants etc. The project enabled the women communities to be self dependent with better decision making skills and capacities.

As we are moving towards the next operational phase, this booklet will serve as an inspiration for future sustainable and community oriented actions.

Smt. Manju Pandey  
Joint Secretary,  
and GEF Operational Focal Point  
Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change  
Government of India



## PREFACE



The GEF UNDP Small Grants Programme seeks to support initiatives, which demonstrate community-based innovative, gender-sensitive, participatory approaches that lead to reducing the threats to the local and global environment problems. The Programme has been working extensively in the area of Biodiversity Conservation, Climate Change Mitigation and Combating Land Degradation with emphasis on eco-friendly livelihood measures.

The GEF UNDP SGP is sourced with a belief that global environmental problems can only be addressed adequately, if local people are involved in planning, decision making and sharing roles and responsibilities at all levels. The programme, under the auspices of the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of India, and UNDP, has been carried out since the year 2000 with CEE acting as National Host Institution (NHI). During this period, over 443 community-based innovative projects have been undertaken through more than 380 NGO partners. The main focus of this programme is in the areas of biodiversity conservation, combating climate change and preventing land degradation.

We have successfully completed the present phase and our moving to the next phase of its operation. In the Operational Phase Five, 112 community-based projects have been undertaken through CBOs and NGO partnerships across India. These projects have benefitted the lives of over one lakh people and brought more institutional capacity to the organisations and lead actors to come out with concrete actions for landscape and biodiversity based livelihood for the tribal communities and marginalised farmers. The projects have tremendous potential for scaling up and adaptation in different contexts in India and in other developing countries.

The booklet titled 'Glimpses of Activities' reflects a few such remarkable community initiatives undertaken through the selected projects across India.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. V. Sarabhai'.

Kartikeya V. Sarabhai  
Director, CEE





## FOREWORD

The Small Grants Programme (SGP) was launched in 1992 by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other implementing agencies to assist developing countries to protect the global environment through local actions. The Small Grants Programme demonstrates that with a small amount of funding, communities at the grassroots level can make significant difference in their livelihoods and the environment.

The GEF-UNDP SGP is working in over 125 countries worldwide. The programme is designed to generate local action and initiatives by empowering civil society organisations and vulnerable communities, including indigenous peoples and women. The SGP supports community projects that have global environment benefits while improving livelihoods and reducing poverty, as well as promoting gender equity and the empowerment of women.

In India, SGP kickstarted in 1996. The Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), Government of India and UNDP together administer the SGP through the Centre for Environment Education (CEE). A total of 443 community-based projects have been undertaken through more than 380 NGO partners in India. The main focus of the programme is the areas of biodiversity conservation, combating climate change and preventing land degradation.

In the SGP's fifth operational phase, 112 projects have been successfully completed in partnership with various government and private stakeholders. Through this initiative, for example, 100,000 hectares of land have been brought under sustainable land and resource management (SLRM) within the landscape of the Indian Himalayan Region, Western Ghats and the arid and semi-arid regions of India. About 1,13,000 metric tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> have been reduced through promotion of low carbon lifestyles in the targeted landscapes. The programme has equipped women and tribals with better decision-making skills and capacities.

This booklet titled 'Glimpses of Activities' is an attempt to share the portraits of such significant community-driven actions by SGP partners across India. We hope these stories will spark more change driven by the communities that are most affected.

*Preeti Soni*

Dr. Preeti Soni  
Chief - Climate Change, Resilience and Energy  
United Nations Development Programme, India



# AWARD AND RECOGNITION

## PADMA SHRI BABULAL DAHIYA



Image taken from [www.vikalpsangam.org](http://www.vikalpsangam.org)

Shri Babulal Dahiya has been awarded with *Padma Shri* for his work and efforts in the field of agriculture. He has led an SGP project as a director of **Sarjana Samajik Sanskritik Evam Sahityik Manch** and worked for the restoration of various paddy varieties most of which are endemic to Madhya Pradesh. Through his work in agro-biodiversity, he has been widely acknowledged as a down to earth practitioner, being felicitated with the India Biodiversity Award by the Madhya Pradesh Biodiversity Board in 2011. He worked on the protection and the conservation of the environment with the help of traditional knowledge. Through the

SGP, he has aided the conservation of natural resources and strengthening the tribal communities in 30 villages of Parsmania Pathar, Satna district, Madhya Pradesh. The village communities have built capacity on conservation of medicinal plants, developing nurseries, conservation of traditional seed varieties and marketing linkages. Through the interventions, more than 65 traditional rice varieties were conserved with the help of community participation.





## SGP INDIA

Funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Small Grants Programme (SGP) supports initiatives that demonstrate community-based, innovative, gender-sensitive and participatory approaches. The 5th Operational Phase of the SGP programme focused on the thematic areas of Biodiversity Conservation, Climate Change Mitigation, and Combating Land Degradation. The programme is being implemented by the UNDP Country Office, overseen by the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of India. It has been operational in India since the year 1996 and the Centre for Environment Education (CEE) has been the National Host Institution since the year 2000. With a saga of 22 years, by adopting conservation-based people-led approach, SGP demonstrates a mosaic of land uses and community practices across the rural landscapes that provide sustainable livelihoods while generating global benefits in terms of biodiversity conservation, reduced greenhouse gas emissions and increased carbon storage.





## SGP INDIA

During this journey, over 443 community-based projects have been undertaken through CBO and NGO partnerships across India. These projects have also benefitted the lives of over 6,00,000 people. The projects are designed to abide by the SGP motto of “Think Globally, Act Locally”. SGP India, reached out to local communities in remote areas, with focus on supporting innovations; capacity building of local NGOs; facilitating horizontal and lateral networking amongst local CBOs and NGOs; documenting field experiences and leveraging resources from various government and private agencies. This book comprises photo stories of a few selected impactful SGP projects across India. The publication will also be a source of inspiration and learning for other SGP partners and various stakeholders.

Dilip Surkar  
Country Programme Manager

Jaison Varghese  
Programme Coordinator



# MAINSTREAM BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

By focusing on the thematic area of Biodiversity Conservation, in the 5th operational phase of SGP, nearly 1,00,000 hectares of landscapes and seascapes were sustainably managed. Measures were incorporated to conserve biodiversity through local level policy framework. This approach led to the better equipment of local leaders and planners to come up with innovative and locally appropriate biodiversity conservation practices. The conservation of endangered plant and animal species was achieved through community participation. The component aims to improve the sustainability of community-managed landscapes by integrating biodiversity conservation into local level decision making. Key outputs include; development of community level, sustainable land use regimes that integrate biodiversity conservation objectives equipping local leaders and planners with the required tools and methodologies such as PRAs, village meetings, Biodiversity Registers etc. that enable biodiversity monitoring and evaluation. Through the programme, market mechanisms were developed for sustainable use of biodiversity and natural resources.



*Panchayats (local self governments) incorporate improved management practices into village level planning for community managed landscapes and seascapes enhancing mosaics of land uses and improving biodiversity conservation.*





Community-led tools and methodologies have been developed for biodiversity mapping, monitoring and evaluation. The Panchayats have incorporated sustainable management practices into their village development plans. For example, they have introduced biodiversity registers, capacity building for village forest management committees, and provisions for indigenous communities for NTFP based livelihood activities.





More than 2000 Women Self Help Groups are currently engaged in biodiversity-based livelihood activities. Through SGP, the institutional capacities of the women collectives have been strengthened and they are connected to credit facilities for starting eco-friendly micro-businesses. For example -- women are engaged in aquaculture, bee keeping, and handicraft businesses.





IUCN Red Listed species such as Vechur Cattle (*Bos indicus*) and Guggal (*Commiphora wightii*) have been conserved through community participation. Education of indigenous communities about medicinal plants and their conservation and propagation has also been carried out. SGP has focused on the conservation of Sacred Groves in North East India, which has been recognized as an Indigenous Community Conserved Area.







More than 246 biodiversity-based livelihood products such as honey, apricot oil, food products, and handicrafts were marketed by NGO and CBO partners and nearly 40 products given brand names and certification. Through SGP, the partner NGOs are guided in the areas of brand building, collective trademarks, and product certification under the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).





# COMMUNITY INITIATIVES



**APOWA** dealt with the education of selected villages regarding the degradation of mangrove cover in the Bhitarkarnika region of Odisha. The project was successful in creating 14 hectares of Mangrove forest through the collaborative efforts of village council members. There was also an effort to promote ecological and hydrological restoration methods which was not only economical but also efficient in its approach. Mangroves have a high potential to reduce climate change-induced threats, particularly cyclone

storm surges; simultaneously they provide livelihood resources for local ecosystems and communities. Mangrove coverage checks soil erosion which occurs due to flooding, and also helps in increasing marine biodiversity.



**CENSFOOD** has its outreach in the Nubra Valley. This NGO dealt with educating the locals about the conservation and sustainable use of bio-resources that are local to the valley. With the help of women's participation, they prioritized growing Rosehip berries and the use of portable solar cookers. The project also provided a sustainable source of income to the womens SHGs which were directly involved in the collection and segregation of Rosehips. Approximately 1000 kilograms of Rosehip were coll-

ected and dried with the help of three solar driers. The women of tribal vil-lages were facilitated to form SHGs and were trained on collection and processing of Rosehip seeds, followed by packaging, labelling, and market-ing of the product in collaboration with Line Department and their vil-lage *panchayat*.







There are numerous varieties of paddy available in India - as a result, **LOTUS** has dealt with certain local and endangered varieties. They prioritized the preservation of paddy varieties through the utilization of traditional farming practices. Additionally, seed banks were promoted and farmer producer organizations were established. They were successful in attaining a Geographical Indication tag for a local variety of paddy known as 'Boka Chaul.' The operation and maintenance of the threshing floor, seed bank, and seed monitoring was carried out by The Farmers Co-Operative Society - which is the apex co-

mmittee of Farmers Club and women SHG members. The society led the conservation, processing, and marketing of traditional paddy varieties through sales outlets and sharing the profits amongst its members.



The depleting reef formation became a cause for concern to the local fishing community of Cuddalore district. Subsequently, **PLANT** began educating the locals about sustainable fishing practices with the help of artificial reefs. These reefs were made of concrete blocks. These blocks are able to facilitate the regeneration of the reef structure and thus help in bringing back old fauna. The project was successful in enhancing the livelihood of fishing communities as well. The reefs enhance fishery resources and

enrich the coastal biodiversity for the sustainable harvest of fish and prawns by the marginalized fishermen in Tamil Nadu, India. The combined benefits of reefs are -- conservation, fuel saving, and better economic returns for poor coastal fishermen. PLANT deployed 200 artificial reefs in Cuddalore and Northern Chennai in 2014 and 2017 -- which has benefited more than 600 fishermen households.







Mangrove coverage in the Krishna Wetlands was diminishing due to the change in climatic conditions of the region. As a result, **PPSS** began educating the locals in different methods through which the restoration of the mangrove could be achieved. Mobilized and organized Forest Conservation Committees undertook participatory mangrove restoration of 30 hectares of land and its sustainable management. They also developed plans involving communities and the forest department for better management of mangrove coverage. 50 hectares of degraded land was restored through community participation in collabor-

ation with the forest department where mangrove nurseries were developed and maintained.



**PUPA's** interventions in West Bengal facilitated in improving the agro-biodiversity in the coastal areas of Sundarbans which were affected by salt water intrusion during Cyclone AILA in 2009 and afterwards. The project promoted conservation and sustainable utilization of indigenous agro-biodiversity resources, particularly salt-tolerant varieties of paddy and empowering the farmers with organic farming techniques. 1787 women SHG members and 914 farmers from 31 villages in the Pathar Pratima and Sagar blocks were benefited. Nearly 102 traditional varieties

of paddy including 15 varieties of saline-tolerant ones were cultivated in 535 hectares of land. More than 200 hectares of land was brought under improved land use and climate-proofing practices through the organic farming interventions. The farmers were trained on tree-based cultivations and integrated farming systems.







Through their intervention, **SPIKAP** aimed at the conservation of the ancient indigenous Sacred Forest, hundreds of community/village forests, and large tracts of private forests were conserved in the West Khasi Hills district in Meghalaya - through the participation of the *Khasi* tribal communities. Majority of these forests, especially the Sacred Forests, are believed to be over 500 years old and can be described as a national treasure trove for biodiversity. The project aims at conservation and regeneration of the flora and fauna that are indigenous to these forests to mitigate the impact of climate change. SPIKAP has also assisted in the installation of

smokeless *chullas* for the families residing near the sacred groves, as well as promoted green house farming among the women SHG. Income generating activities such as horticulture, floriculture, livestock rearing, and bee-keeping were promoted. Smokeless cooking stoves were introduced to check the pressure on forests with nearly 500 households and encouraged community contribution. Sustainable Non-Timber Forest Produce helped in reducing the major cause of forest degeneration.



**SUJAGRITI** helped in the conservation and preservation of medicinal plants endemic to Madhya Pradesh with special emphasis to the *Guggal* plant. The project aimed at the reclamation of ravines through endogenous technology and the conservation of local biodiversity in Morena District in Madhya Pradesh. The project uses endogenous measures which are both engineering and vegetative for the achievement of land reclamation. *Guggal*, a species that is endemic to the region is threatened by extinction both because of habitat loss as well as unsustainable harvesting pra-

ctices. Nearly 70 hectares of land had been reclaimed by the community through *Guggal* plantation and they executed a participatory approach for nursery plantation of the plant. The nurseries were provided with standardized produce for planting stock with locally available resources.







**THA** aimed at the conservation of threatened medicinal plants through eco-restoration and kitchen gardens. Medicinal plant-based micro-enterprises were developed for health and livelihood security in Bilaspur district in Chhattisgarh. Forest and community gardens were identified for the planting of 12 threatened medicinal plant species. Over one million seeds / saplings were planted in the forests, villages, fallow lands, orchards, farm bunds etc. 100 youth were trained in sustainable traditional healing practices for healthcare purposes as well.

The value addition and marketing of the herbal medicine was carried out for rural healthcare security. They conserved 11 locally endangered species of medicinal plants through sustainable extraction and seed propagation practices. Herbal medicines are being marketed under the tag of *Nishtha Herbs* and different products based on the herbs have been created.



The **Vechur Conservation Trust** promoted the conservation of Vechur cattle, one of the species in the IUCN Red List. The initiative was to educate farmers about conservation of the species through promotion of pure breeding and vaccination. The organization also carried out bio-metric tagging of Vechur Cattle for the purpose of authentication, identification, data collection, and traceability. There was also an initiative to promote products derived from cattle such as

*ghee*, dung, distilled *gomutra* and milk. The Vechur cow is suitable for a farmer who cannot afford sophisticated management but at the same time requires milk for household nutrition security. More so, this breed of cows fit into the scattered habitation pattern of Kerala homesteads with small land holdings.







The project implemented by **WEEDS** aims at sustainable development through agricultural practices and conservation of medicinal plants among the *Kanikaran* tribal group in Kanyakumari district of Tamil Nadu. Promotion of beekeeping practices along with cultivation of pepper, ginger, and turmeric have been achieved through the establishment of medicinal plant nurseries. Two units for micro white pepper extraction have been set up in 20 villages in Melpuram block of Kanyaku-

mari district. Marketing outlets have been arranged for the products made by the women SHGs. Village monitoring and evaluation committee conducts meetings with the panchayat members and tribal group leaders to review the progress of the initiatives.



# CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION

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Under the theme of Climate Change Mitigation (CCM), SGP India focused in technology transfer. The programme provided more than 55 grants to promote the demonstration, development, and transfer of innovative low-carbon solutions and practices at the community level, such as micro-solar power and fuel-efficient stoves, which would also lead to investments in renewable energy and reduced Green House Gas emissions. Nearly 1,13,000MT of CO<sub>2</sub> emission have been reduced through the use of energy-efficient technologies such as smokeless stoves, solar cookers, and briquettes and also through climate-resilient agricultural practices.



*Nearly 1,13,000 metric tons of carbon emissions reduced through a range of energy efficient technologies and practices which resulted in enhancing the livelihoods of the rural communities.*



# COMMUNITY INITIATIVES



**CTRD** in partnership with AIRBUS Corporate Foundation promoted more than 300 biogas plants to reduce the usage of firewood among the tribal groups in Tamil Nadu. The project objectives were to introduce sustainable alternative energy sources to conserve local woodlots; and to demonstrate biogas as a low-cost potential technology solution. By installing biogas plants, each household saves about 8-9 kilograms of firewood per day for nearly 280 days in a year

and thus avoids deforestation in the local areas. Nearly 2600 MTs of CO<sub>2</sub> has been checked in the duration of the project.



The **CORE** demonstrated sustainable improvement in quality of 1000 rural families in Cuttack block through promoting resilient, low-carbon construction (fly ash) for better environment and livelihoods in rural Odisha. They facilitated the construction of 1808 toilets and 200 houses with fly ash bricks in partnership with Water and Sanitation Mission, Government of Odisha - with the aid of *panchayati raj* institutions. This has helped in reducing 4527 MTs of CO<sub>2</sub>. In addition, 10,300 MTs of soil which otherwise

would have been used for other construction related purposes, have been saved by making use of fly ash bricks.







A briquette is a compressed block of combustible biomass (rice husk and charcoal in this case) which is used instead of wood in remote areas for cooking and heating purposes. **ZICORD** makes efforts to empower women by promoting their enterprises through SHGs in the production and marketing of goods from their respective businesses. These groups are known as Energy Producer Groups (EPGs). The project strengthened rural women's societies for fuel-efficient energy production through pyrolysis and briquetting and addressed the drudgery and health issues being faced by the tribal women and children in rural Manipur. By promoting biomass briquettes and stove-based

entrepreneurship among 14 Women Energy Producer Groups (WEPGs), ZICORD enabled the tribal women of Manipur to be self-sufficient and economically stable. Thus, their quality of life is enhanced and they are able to invest in their children's education. Male Energy Producers Groups (MEPGs) manufacture the stoves and sell them through the marketing outlets being managed by the WEPGs. 14 WEPGs are able to produce 30,000 biomass briquettes and 20-30 energy-efficient stoves every month.



With the support of local *panchayat*, **Samarthak Samiti** ensured that tribal honey collectors could procure wild honey through eco-friendly ways, without destroying the honeycomb. Through its partnership with private agencies such as **Wells for India** and **Christian Aid**, and government agencies such as **TRIFED**, it has raised more than Rs. 25 Lakh as co-financing. Through their partnership, 482 tribal families were trained on eco-friendly wild honey value chain and other tree-based livelihood activities. A total of 700 honey collectors were trained and were given tool kits. Samarthak Samiti has further worked on the processing and marketing of the collected honey and currently sells it under the

brand name of 'Desert Greens'. This high quality product has received tremendous response from its buyers. The mobile marketing outlet (Tempo Traveller van) is an excellent platform for marketing. A company named **Samarthak Producers Company Limited** (SPCL) was formed in 2011 to provide a common collection and marketing platform which managed the entire honey value chain.







**STD** set up 3 women SHG pine needle briquette production and storage units in Mandi, Himachal Pradesh; Luxmi SHG with 12 members at Talhar, Vaishnavi SHG with 14 members at Punerdhar & DurgaBhawani SHG with 10 members at Tikker. They have been linked to Himachal Gramin Bank at Nagwain by opening a savings account with initial contributions by its members. 70 tons of pine needles have been collected and about 60 tons had been converted in to char & briquettes. The CO<sub>2</sub> emission reduction achieved was 184 MTs. The innovation has helped to reduce the pressure on 1549 hectares of pine

forests thus conserving the forests. Availability of cleaner fuel, and reduced forest fire incidents are the major advantages of the project. Numerous man hours have been saved by switching to cleaner forms of fuel, as compared with time spent collecting firewood from forests.



**KHAMIR** helped to organize more than 157 Rabari women to strengthen their traditional eco-friendly spinning activities in Gujarat. The project aimed to study and understand the pastoral crafts and skills to process the local resources in order to fill gaps to make them ecologically sustainable and to revive relations between artisans and pastoral communities for mutual benefits and supporting biodiversity while reducing carbon footprint. The project introduced new

forms of suitable technologies for spinning, carding, and combing for wool processing. The project enhanced income levels of artisans and pastoral communities by generating more value for their work. The women members of the pastoral communities were the core participants and beneficiaries as they were given priority for income generation activities which would help them revive their skills and save money.







Through setting up plastic recovery centre in partnership with Municipal Corporations, **Sarthak** has mainstreamed nearly 2000 Sarthak Karmis (waste collectors) in Bhopal and similarly 2,500 waste collectors in Indore. The Sarthak Karmis are directly engaged and institutionalized under SHGs through the SGP. They were able to recycle plastic which was otherwise burnt in the open. Additionally, their efforts resulted in plastic bags being collected and processed in cement plants and reduced nearly 5,000 MTs of carbon emissions from burning of plastic waste. They demonstrated the technology of recycling plastic waste and further conv-

erting it into granules which can be used for road construction, manufacturing of cement, etc. In partnership with Hindustan Coca-Cola Beverages Private Limited, the project has been replicated by UNDP in an additional 11 cities across India.

For their intervention in waste management, Sarthak received the Swachh Bharat Mission Excellence Award in 2016 and The Earth Care Award in 2018.



SGP project built the capacity for more than 1200 poor women heads of households from the Scheduled Castes to create sustainable livelihoods based on the sustainable use of forest resources. Women organized themselves into Women Saving and Credit Groups (WSCGs) to plan and carry out commercial activities using readily available natural resources. Since becoming an SGP grantee partner in 2004, **JAGRITI** has organized 123 WSCGs with more than 1,228 women members and a total accumulated bank savings of over INR 24.9 Lakhs. Jagriti has linked these groups to local banks to establish savings

accounts and improved access to credit facilities. **Mountain Bounties** provides marketing facilities which was initiated by JAGRITI through which the women farmers get justifiable prices for their produces. The web portal of Mountain Bounties is [www.mountainbounties.com](http://www.mountainbounties.com). Drudgery of women got reduced since they started to use the energy- efficient household equipments such as solar cookers, smokeless stoves and water heaters. Women's household economy and quality of life became more resilient, as their drudgery reduced and income earning opportunities increased.







The project implemented by **Koraput Farmers Association** (KFA) aimed at generating electricity through the means of Micro-Hydro Projects (MHP) and providing electricity to 500 households of two remote villages that belong to the *Kondhs* community which is a Primitive Tribal Group (PTG) in India. The MHP committees were formed at village level and they built their capacity in management, repairing, and maintenance of the MHPs. The committee consisted of skilled and trained youth who were engaged in the above activities. Two sites: *Badamanjari* (30KW) and *Narayan Patna* (10KW) ensured the reliable distribution of power. A rice flour mill was set up to cater to the

needs of 11 nearby villages, and the revenue collected was put into the servicing and maintenance of the MHP. With the coming of the MHP, the usage of kerosene reduced which thus reduced the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the atmosphere.

The KFA developed a community based agro-forestry model through which the adverse effects of shifting cultivation (slash and burn) was addressed. This model promotes three tiered terrace cultivation with three different crops: timber plantation (upper layer), horticulture (middle layer), and agricultural crops (lower layer).



The project under the guidance of **Vishwadeep Trust** worked for developing a climate friendly and sustainable practice for post harvest management for the enhancement of income of tribal communities in the Takmachik village in Leh district of Jammu and Kashmir. The project included the introduction of solar dryers for the purpose of cooking and drying apricots. This reduced the LPG consumption rate for the households in the village. The idea of using these wooden and portable solar dryers and cookers was well received by the families, as it was economical and energy efficient. The formed SHGs imparted training about alternative means of livelihood such as apricot processing and marketing, sewing,

knitting, and eco-toy making with special emphasis on the usage of yak wool. Nearly 67 families became beneficiaries under this project. Many farmer workshops were held which gave importance to the use of organic farming. Further market linkages were facilitated which helped in selling of rural products both in India and abroad by using the online portal by the name of *Guna Organics*.







The main aim of **CHARDEP** was to check the rate of climate change by monitoring the escalating dependence on fossil fuels in rural households and to contribute to the economic development of rural society by offering an affordable and renewable alternative to the domestic fuel requirement. The beneficiaries mentioned were all women and they had a major role in decision making. Through the project, fuel collection was made easy as the families were helped in increasing their livestock through technical guidance and support provided by the NGO. Awareness programs were conducted for the beneficiaries on climate change and its implications, energy efficiency, and renewable sources of energy.

Through Chardep's intervention, 107 biogas plants were constructed and are operational in Kanyakumari District of Tamil Nadu. 60 women SHG members were trained as biogas plant technicians and they engage in maintenance work of the biogas plants for the beneficiary families and villages. Fodder grass cultivation was demonstrated in 75 plots through the project.



The women SHG that was being coordinated by **AVANI** was engaged in pine needle collection for three to four months in a year, after which, they set up a 28 kilowatt pine needle based bio energy plant in Bana Village of Uttarakhand. The gasification plant uses the pine needles to generate a combination of gases that can be used as a replacement for regular engine fuel. The gases that are generated from the gasification plant are called producer gases and they are mainly composed of carbon monoxide (CO), hydrogen (H<sub>2</sub>), and a smaller percentage of methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) and carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>). When the gasification plant is running, the complete

operation is composed of different unitary processes: a reaction based on pyrolysis, a centrifuge separation, a cooling process, and multistep filtration. Village youths were trained on operation and maintenance of the plant and Avani Bioenergy provided a trained person to support the team to operate the plant. The project could take initial steps and plan further action towards addressing social and environmental challenges such as; unemployment and migration of village youth, and loss of forest green cover and biodiversity due to forest fires.





# COMBATING LAND DEGRADATION

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SGP focuses on community-based initiatives in improved agro-forestry and community-based water management practices and linkages to the forest department, local district, state and national governments. The project also focuses on the causes of desertification and supports community efforts to augment ground water resources through rain water harvesting, and improved soil and moisture conservation techniques. Model community-based initiatives by Women SHGs and Joint Forest Management Committees for restoration of degraded forest and community level models for ecosystem-based alternative livelihoods are initiated especially in arid and semi arid regions of India.



*More than 1 lakh hectares of land brought under sustainable land and resource management through land based SGP interventions.*



# COMMUNITY INITIATIVES



In the project area, the practice of shifting cultivation is observed mostly on slopes greater than 30 degrees where it causes serious problems of soil erosion and landslides. The shifting cultivation also became a major concern as it was associated with deforestation of Karlapat forest reserve sanctuary and loss of biodiversity in the region. **Arambha** promoted sustainable land use practices amongst the tribal communities of, in, and around the Karlapat Wildlife sanctuary in Kalahandi district, Odisha. The project has created an

impact in reducing the shifting cultivation (slash and burn) which was prevalent in Kalahandi area. During the 2 year duration of the project, it was noted that the shifting cultivation was reduced by 162 hectares in the project villages. 200 hectares of land have been brought under SALT (Sustainable Agroforest Land Technology).



Based in Banka District of Bihar, **Gram Sathi** helped in improving land productivity through improved water management, agricultural practices and resource generation for sustainable land and livelihood practices. They also helped rural communities to bring nearly 350 hectares of land under sustainable management through traditional practices on agriculture and fisheries. The project aimed at the prevention of land degradation through watershed source development for livelihood promotional agricultural development. Nea-

riy 250 women SHGs were formed and started accessing credit linkages. Approximately 500 acres of land has been brought under sustainable agricultural practices via renovation of the ponds and check dams.







**GVNML** aimed at creating an adaptable environment for coping against the adverse effects of climate change for 2100 families from Dudu Block, Jaipur District, Rajasthan. The traditional practices of making *chauka* (Square Ponds) was emphasized which helped in the restoration of degraded pastures, recharging ground water quality. 120 community members were provided training on the different techniques of traditional watershed practices. Around 500 families were motivated to self develop with improved investment capaci-

ties, infrastructure, and improved decision making processes which are taken by village members with the support of the government. 15 hectares of land was developed, maintained, and sustained by 3 community groups as well.



With the help of the **Kheti Virasat Mission Trust**, community training centers were set up for Natural Farming and Ecological Action. They organized 197 Farmers Field Schools (FFS) mainly for women farmers. Nearly 1772 farmers benefitted from FFS. The events that were organized were in close association with the village communities. Women farmers were organized under SHGs and supported to set up 3,500 kitchen gardens. With this initiative, 754 progressive farmers are now practising organic farming. Manure preparation and pest co-

ntrol management was done with the help of cow dung and biowaste produced from fruits and vegetables. There has been a 50% decrease in water consumption since the shift to organic farming. Exclusive workshops were conducted by KVMT which talked about the implications of straw burning. This resulted in nearly 325 farmers discontinuing the practice.







Based in Jharkhand, **Manav Vikas** promoted sustainable use of natural resources management by arresting land degradation across 10 villages of the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTGs) of Hazaribagh District. Manav Vikas also helped in the rejuvenation of the ground water table, and through the project, helped in recharging 50 wells and in the construction of 20 new wells. They brought more than 750 hectares of land under watershed activities such as earthen bunds, stone bunds and gully plugs in the villages. 135 farmers were successful in cultivating potato, tomato, coriander etc with the help of water that they got from the ponds. Nearly 6 defunct ponds and 4 check

dams were also rejuvenated. The project also included 153 hectares of land used for farm bunding and land leveling in 10 villages and 23 hectares of agricultural land. SHGs were also facilitated to receive services from the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) scheme, Government of India.

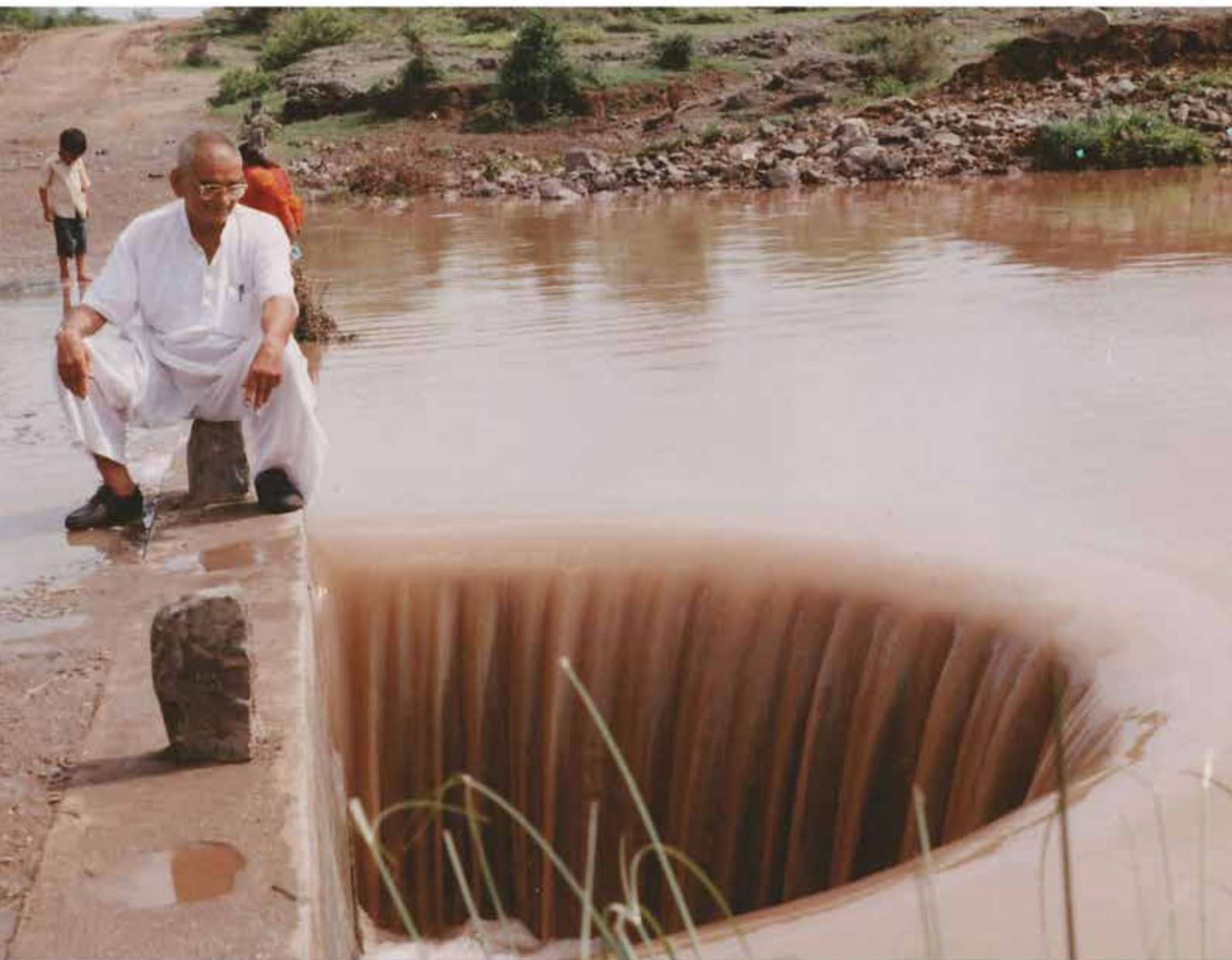


**PeeKay Tree** promoted alternative energy sources, gender-sensitive enterprises to check and reduce emissions. The project promoted climate-friendly farming practices among the 100 coastal households in Kerala to strengthen agro-biodiversity and to augment the income and employment at the farm household at community level through gender-sensitive enterprises. They established 117 green farming models of different size ranges (0.4-1.0 hectares). They promoted women-run food processing units and vegetable marketing outlets and goat breeding units. 150

rural youth, both men and women, belonging to 150 SHGs were trained to function as local leaders in propagation of sustainable agricultural and livestock practices. Skill development training was organized to improve the skill and knowledge of the community through training modules. 20 training, awareness sessions, and seminars were conducted for an average of 500 villages to promote gender-sensitive rural enterprise for income and employment generation.







The **Vruksha Prem Seva Trust** dealt with land use in the Fofal River Command Area Development. The NGO protected land from degradation through water harvesting measures. Nearly 1,500 hectares of land experienced a 30% hike in productivity through check dam constructions and composting activities. Upon completion of the series of check dams, it was expected that rain water could be stored on nearly 85 hectares. Both men and women were equally involved in the process of project planning, execution, and implementation and were liable for equal share, benefits, and wages. Through the continu-

ed engagement in SHGs, the women experienced greater participation in decision making processes. The entire construction was done with the help of local people's participation under the supervision of the NGO. The community participated in the planting of trees near, and around the project site.



**We Care Society** introduced around 80 aerobic composting units. These compost pits generated approximately 1200 tons of compost, wherein each ton replaced 4 tons of chemical fertilizer. The Farmers replaced at least 500 kilograms of urea on 1 hectare of land with the help of compost, which further resulted in the improvement in soil health. With the help of Better Cotton Initiatives (BCI), more than 4,000 cotton farmers were assembled under the BCI network. They also reduced the impact of water pesticides on human and environmental health by using manure. 25-30 farmers were

involved in the formation of Farmer Field Schools (FFS) which provided an opportunity to learn hands-on methods of agricultural practices. Farmers were motivated to produce better cotton and increase profitability through improved productivity, fiber quality, etc.





**GREEN HAAT** Green Haat is a platform for the SGP partners to interact with potential buyers and various other stakeholders. Under the guidance of the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEF & CC), Global Environment Facility, United Nations Development Programme, Small Grants Programme and the Centre for Environment Education, Green Haat promotes an intrinsic link between the people, biodiversity, and their livelihoods. It strengthens the bond between biodiversity and local communities who directly depend on nature and nature's products for their livelihoods. It believes that biodiversity can only be conserved if the communities utilize the local resources available to them in a sustainable manner. Naoko Ishii, the CEO and chairperson of GEF, had inaugurated one such event in the year 2017.





# CAPACITY BUILDING

A total of 35 Guidance-cum-Capacity building workshops were organized in Operational Phase 5 of the GEF UNDP SGP in India. The overall objective of the workshops was to build the capacity of the NGO head or the point person in the SGP focus areas. It also dealt with project cycle management, community co-financing and funding and SOPs of the Small Grants Programme. Through these workshops, the NGOs who required individual attention and hand-holding support were capacitated to complete their project meaningfully and in time.



Government of India encourages bee-keeping among rural farmers. As per the direction from Prime Minister's Office, GEF/UNDP Small Grant India team organised capacity building workshops for the farmers engaging in beekeeping. SGP has organised workshops in three different locations: [1] Yavatmal, Maharashtra, [2] Shillong, Meghalaya and [3] Udaipur, Rajasthan to provide a detailed insight on the beekeeping activities, process, techniques, importance etc. The workshop built the capacity of 132 farmers in bee-keeping activities and promoted more small business in the NTFP sector.







The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) is a nodal agency in the administrative structure of the central government for the planning, promotion, coordination, and overseeing the implementation of India's environmental and forest policies and programmes.

[moef.nic.in](http://moef.nic.in)

[moef.gov.in](http://moef.gov.in)



The Global Environment Facility (GEF), established on the eve of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, is a catalyst for action on the environment - and much more. Through its strategic investments, the GEF works with partners to tackle the planet's biggest environmental issues. The funding also helps reduce poverty, strengthen governance, and achieve greater equality between women and men.

[www.thegef.org](http://www.thegef.org)



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The Small Grants Programme (SGP) is a corporate programme of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) since 1992. SGP grantmaking in over 125 countries promotes community-based innovation, capacity development, and empowerment through sustainable development projects of local civil society organizations with special consideration for indigenous peoples, women, and youth.

[www.sgp.undp.org](http://www.sgp.undp.org)

[www.sgpindia.org](http://www.sgpindia.org)

**CEE**

Centre for Environment Education

Centre for Environment Education (CEE) was established in August 1984, as a Centre of Excellence supported by the Ministry of Environment and Forest, Government of India. It has a mandate to promote environmental awareness nationwide. CEE develops innovative programmes and educational material, and builds capacity in the field of education and communication for sustainable development. Since 2000, CEE has been the National Host Institution for implementation of the GEF UNDP Small Grants Programme in India.

[www.ceeindia.org](http://www.ceeindia.org)