PROGRAMME AREAS OF AKRSP (INDIA)

GUJARAT

BHARUCH, SURAT, NARMADA, TAPI, NAVSARI and DANG districts are some of the poorest areas in the state of Gujarat. A very poor tribal community lives on undulating and degraded land that was once heavily forested. Dangs has one of the highest tribal populations (98%) of any district.

JUNAGADH, PORBANDAR, JAMNAGAR, GIR SOMNATH and DEVBHOOOMI DWARKA districts face problems of groundwater depletion and salinity ingress on the coast; these adversely affects livelihoods and health with poor drinking water quality. Multi-caste and multi-religious communities are struggling to sustain their livelihoods.

SURENDRANAGAR, RAJKOT and MORBI districts are amongst the most drought-prone districts of Gujarat. Most of the villages in these districts face an acute scarcity of water.

MADHYA PRADESH

KHANDWA, BARWANI, BURHANPUR, KHARGONE and DHAR districts in Madhya Pradesh are home to marginalized tribal populations who live in poverty because of a degrading natural base.

BIHAR

MUZAFFARPUR and SAMASTIPUR districts in flood-prone Bihar are low in Human Development Indices (HDI), have very low literacy rates. Migration to the urban areas is a key source of livelihood.
PARTNERS IN OUR ENDEAVOUR IN 2015

• Aga Khan Foundation
• American Indian Foundation
• Arghyam Trust
• Australian Consulate-General
• Axis Bank Foundation
• Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
• Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)
• Coca-Cola Foundation
• Collectives of Integrated Livelihood Initiatives (CInI)
• C&A Foundation
• CottonConnect
• European Commission
• Gruh Finance Limited
• Hans Foundation
• Heifer International
• Hilton Foundation
• Hivos International
• Hindustan Unilever Foundation (HUVF)
• John Deere Foundation
• Marshall Foundation
• Microsoft Corporation
• NABARD (Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar)
• Quest Alliance
• Rizwan Adatia Foundation
• Tata Trusts
• United Phosphorus Limited
• Water Aid
• Departments/ Units of the Government* of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar
  • Tribal Development
  • Rural Development Department
  • Water and Sanitation Management Organisation (WASMO)
  • Irrigation Department
• Gujarat Agro Industries Corporation
• Sardar Sarovar Nigam Limited (SSNL)
• Gujarat Green Revolution Company
• Gujarat Livelihood Promotion Company (The Gujarat unit of the National Rural Livelihood Mission)
• Agriculture Department
• Forest Department
• Tourism Department
• Ministry of Non-Conventional And Energy Sources (MNES)
• Small Farmers’ Agri-Business Consortium (SFAC)
• South Asia Pro-Poor Livestock Promotion Programme (SAPPLPP) (an NDDB-FAO initiative)

Research Partners
• Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS)
• Centre for Integrated Development (CFID)
• Development Support Centre (DSC)
• Global Fund for Community Foundations, South Africa
• Gujarat Institute of Development Research (GIDR)
• Indian Natural Resource Economics Management Foundation (INREM)
• Institute of Rural Management, Anand (IRMA)
• International Water Management Institute (IWMI)
• Vrutti - Livelihood Resource Centre
• Research in Rain Fed Areas, RRA Network
• TERI University
• Society For Promoting Participative Ecosystem Management (SOPPECOM)

Network Partners
• Aga Khan Development Network
• Sajjata Sangh
• Pravah
• Working Group For Women and Land Ownership
• Coastal Salinity Prevention Cell (CSPC)

Communication Partner
• Charkha

* Most government funding is from Government of India schemes which are co funded by the state government
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VISION

AKRSP (India) can contribute in India to the creation of an enabling environment in which rural people can identify their needs and priorities and with professional support, organize themselves to improve the quality of their lives.

- His Highness the Aga Khan

MISSION

AKRSP (India) exists to enable the empowerment of rural communities and groups, particularly the underprivileged and women, to take control over their lives and manage their environment, to create a better and more equitable society.

VALUES

- Empowerment
- Equity
- Transparency
- Collaboration
- Professional Excellence
- Responsive to Change
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Nasser M Munjee  Chairperson
Ashish Merchant  Director
Bakul Virani  Director
Isher J Ahluwalia  Director
Kasim Ali F Merchant  Director
Madhu Sarin  Director
Pradip Khandwalla  Director
S B Ravi Pandit  Director
Venu Srinivasan  Director*
Wajahat Habibullah  Director
Tom Austin  Ex-officio Director
Apoorva Oza  Secretary

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Ashish Merchant  Chairman
Bakul Virani  Member
Bhupinder Gupta  Member
Apoorva Oza  Member
Alok Krishna  Secretary

AUDITORS

Statutory Auditors  M/s Haribhakti & Co Mumbai
Internal Auditors  M/s Talati & Talati Ahmedabad
Todi Tulsyan & Co. (For Bihar)

BANKERS

State Bank of India, Navrangpura Branch, Ahmedabad
State Bank of India, Vadaj Branch, Ahmedabad
Axis Bank, C.G.Road, Ahmedabad

* completed his term in August 2015
It is such a pleasure to be here on an occasion like this. It is also nostalgic; I would like to call it AKRSP (India) 30 years on. It’s not old, it’s young. We are growing. I would like to use this occasion as a tribute to our first CEO, Mr. Anil Shah, because I think we owe him a huge debt of gratitude for having sown the seeds of a culture, of a method, of a team and of a programme, the essence of which still remains. I think he did a wonderful job.

It is also a good time to acknowledge our previous Chairmen, Dr. Kurein and Dr. I.G. Patel, who had those values which have been amply illustrated in terms of what AKRSP (India) is all about, as these have very much become a part of us. When Dr. I G Patel took over the board from Dr. Kurien, he brought a different flavor to the board but it was progressive and we saw a massive transformation during that time. Our board member Dr. Kamla Chaudary and Mr. Anil Agarwal were also giants in their field and contributed greatly towards the development of the organization in the initial years. The board has evolved since then and now you are seeing faces on our board which are keeping AKRSP (India) relevant to the times in which we live.

Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) also did a huge service to us during the first ten years of our development. It was a real support and an intellectual source in terms of development. Their influence was very large and we are very grateful to them for what they did.

And finally I need to thank His highness, the Aga Khan for creating AKRSP (India) on his 25th anniversary as a leader of the Ismaili community.

I welcome you all to the 30 years of AKRSP (India). This tribute is to all of you because you have made AKRSP (I). It is not us, it’s not me not the Board. We sit and we think, we guide but the work is done by the extraordinary talents of all of you. I have seen this in the field, the dedication, the sort of efforts that go into the field and more important than anything else is passion. I can feel the passion you feel for the community that you work with. That is the critical element, the emotional bond. You are doing something of great significance. I am very proud of each one of you. You are really part of fabric of AKRSP (India) and you are what it is all about. The culture that has been built within AKRSP (India) is profound and I think the culture has to be nurtured, has to be built and its occasions like this that help to build that culture of AKRSP (India) as a family. We are all One. We all work in different geographies but we all have same principles of operations, principles of integrity, principles with which we operate that what’s very crucial. It is that fabric that keeps AKRSP (India) together. So again my very warm congratulation to all of you for having got this far and we have got
much further to go.

For many years we were an organization which had small budgets. Our key areas of work were Rural Livelihoods, Water Resource Development, Natural Resource Management, Joint Forestry Management, Tribal Development and Coastal Salinity problems. The focus on gender sensitivity came in later when we started involving women much more in our work in terms of village level institutions and ground level institutions.

In the 2000 decade, we expanded to Madhya Pradesh as it was much poorer than Gujarat and then in Bihar as it was much worse than anywhere else. So it is these harder areas that AKRSP (India) got into emboldened by the sort of support it got from its donors.

AKRSP (India) has grown from a small single state organization with smaller funds to a large multi-state organization with huge funds in the past 30 years. We have learnt a lot of lessons all the way as AKRSP (India) is a learning organization. We learn with what we do. We internalize our learnings. We are constantly reinventing ourselves. We are about action, about learning by doing.

AKRSP (India) has now reached a level where it needs to rise beyond where it is. India has over the years figured out the answer of ‘What to do’? We need to now figure out the ‘How to’ part of the question now. AKRSP (India)’s success lies in the fact that it is a people’s organization. It engages with people, it is a bottom-up organisation. We now need to take these ingredients, the lessons learnt at the policy level. It is ultimately government’s role to set up the overall rules under which the entire system of business and civil society operates.

We need to design customized solutions to specific rural development problems. As Amartya Sen has said ‘The assessment of development progress should not be made in terms of income or resource possession’. We need to move beyond end resource possession and move towards valuable individual human capabilities. The core idea is that people’s freedom to achieve well-being is of primary moral importance. It may be possible for people, whose expectations and aspirations are at a poor level, to be equal to those with same aspirations and expectations at a rich level. There is no reason why you need to gravitate from one to another but the level of happiness can actually be equivalent.

What is of importance therefore is that at the end of the day, how we are leaving communities in terms of capability and not only in terms of income or resources.

AKRSP (India) needs to examine carefully the philosophical underpinnings of what we are doing now and what might be done as we move forward to the next 10 years. AKRSP (India) needs to be transformative in order to achieve speed and scale.

We have to now find a way in which the work that we are doing can actually can be expanded and packaged in a way that is simple, scalable and it can be done with speed. We have to think of new and innovative ways to scale up our work. We need to continuously reinvent and rethink in order to improve upon our existing methods, to make them better, to make them simpler. We need to be passionate while dealing with our own staff in the same way that we are while dealing with communities. We need to have a strong value system. One intrinsic value which encompasses all the six values of AKRSP (India) is ‘Caring’. It is necessary to have a caring mindset. Because if you care, you don’t need money, you just need your soul. Caring for the people around you, caring for the constituency you are serving, caring for the nation, caring for your neighbor. So let’s have a caring organisation full of integrity and full of fun. You should enjoy what you are doing. You must have humor, enjoy yourselves, and interact with people beyond your immediate boundaries.

AKRSP (India) has exciting times ahead. As it has been said by a famous philosopher Seneca, ‘If you do not know to which port you are sailing, no wind is favourable.’ So we must figure out over the next ten years, how are we and where are we headed and therefore are we pointing our sails in the right direction. It is a long challenging agenda; as a Board we will work on it. We are very excited by the fact that there could be huge potential, given all that has been achieved in last 30 years. We have high hopes that we can contribute much more to India than we have done so far. We need it, the country needs it and you’ll enjoy doing it.

Thank you, very much

Nasser Munjee
(Chairman)
His Highness the Aga Khan has a vision for development which is best captured by the quote “There are those who enter the world in such poverty that they are deprived of both the means and the motivation to improve their circumstances. Unless they can be touched with the spark which ignites the spirit of individual enterprise and determination, they will sink into apathy, degradation and despair. It is for us, who are more fortunate, to provide that spark.”

In 1983, he completed 25 years as the Aga Khan and when he visited his followers in Gujarat, they gifted him a purse, which he used to form the corpus of the new organisation called the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (India).

AKRSP (India)’s assessment of the development sector, and the role of NGOs in India was that, while rural communities in India had many problems like low incomes, poor health and education; the key strengths they possessed were their natural resources (land, water and livestock) and their own wisdom and desire to improve the quality of their lives. Their major weakness was the divided nature of the society, with gender, caste and class inequity leading to conflicts and degradation of common resources. Building on these strengths was the key to their development. Hence, AKRSP (India) decided to focus on enhancing incomes by improved Natural Resource Management through village collectives. Therefore it would work directly at the village level, not with individual households but after forming village level organizations.

AKRSP (India) was also clear that in a vast country like India, the NGO could never replace the state, and the government, with its large number of schemes, would always be the major ‘development actor’. These government schemes did not work because they were top-down, and hence setting up models of participatory development was the key role AKRSP (India) could play. Since Gujarat offered a wide range...
of contexts, it was decided to set up field teams in three different socio-geographical regions: multi-caste coastal plains of Junagadh, tribal hilly regions of Bharuch, and the feudal, drought-prone, semi-arid region of Surendranagar (these could offer lessons for three out of the six agro-climatic zones in the country).

In 1994, AKRSP (India) received recognition for its initial years of work when it was granted an eight year project on Community Management of Natural Resources by the European Union. During first two decades, it choose to work only in Gujarat, setting up models of participatory watershed, irrigation, forest management, agriculture extension and alternate energy amongst others. It also evolved approaches to nurture community based planning (it was the first, along with MYRADA and a few others, to start Participatory Rural Appraisal -PRA) and multi-purpose village organizations (the Gram Vikas Mandal and the Mahila Vikas Mandal). Scaling up, using local human resources led to the identification of Extension Volunteers - trained village youth who would extend the technology at the village level (this is now the key to most development programmes by external agencies). Many of these pilot initiatives led to policy changes, at the National and State level. Professionals who left AKRSP (India) spread these ideas and practices to many other parts of India, and, in a few cases, even abroad.

By the beginning of the 21st century, India and therefore, Gujarat started changing and AKRSP (India) decided to reflect and develop a plan for its work for the next decade, i.e., the years 2001 to 2010. The orientation and expansion of AKRSP (India) was greatly helped during this period by a 10 year project grant received from the European Commission.

In Gujarat, AKRSP (India), reflected on its past work, and decided to focus on regional issues like coastal salinity, drought, poor groundwater management,
under-utilised canal irrigation systems, poor agriculture extension along with land degradation in tribal regions and lack of income options for landless tribal communities, which were the underlying causes for poor life quality of rural communities. Based on these, it evolved a thematic approach; and shifted from an “only” Natural Resource Management focus to a sustainable livelihoods approach. The major difference was that it was now looking at a wider range of interventions to improve livelihoods, compared to the earlier approach which was primarily focused only on natural resources as an answer.

AKRSP (India) decided to “spread its wings” and expanded to neighbouring Madhya Pradesh in 2004. Madhya Pradesh has the largest tribal population in the country and ranks first on the “food insecurity” index. Till date, work has consolidated well and agriculture development remains the key goal in the tribal regions where it works. Collaboration with the Government is well established; and (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural employment Guarantee Act) MGNREGA based watershed work offers lessons for Gujarat and Bihar.

Gaining confidence from its first venture outside Gujarat, AKRSP (India) decided to move into the “heart of rural poverty” in India, and started work in Bihar in 2008. Bihar is a state which is typical of many in eastern India, ranking low on almost all indices of human development, i.e., income, health, education and infrastructure.

Meanwhile, experiences of the Aga Khan Development Network in many of the poorest regions of the world showed that many of the assumptions of development theory were not really valid. For example, increased incomes did not translate automatically into better health and education, or tolerance. There was a “supply deficit” in many regions. Also, wherever there were multi-input interventions (livelihoods, health, education) the multiplier in many cases was high. Hence, AKRSP (India) decided to pilot a Multi-Input Area Development (MIAD) approach in two districts of flood-prone North Bihar.

AKRSP (India) has grown from a small single state organization with smaller budgets to a large multi-state organization with larger budgets in the past 30 years. A great transformation has occurred in the
modus operandi of grant making. Wherein initially AKRSP (India) had received few large grants spread out over 8-10 years from International/multi-lateral agencies, which have in the last decade shifted their focus to least developed countries; AKRSP (India) now receives a large number of smaller grants spread over relatively shorter project duration varying from 1-5 years. These have led to an increase in administrative and operating hassles as these multitudes of donors, all of whom have different expectations and requirements have to be managed effectively. Also with the advent of the new Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) regime, many new corporate foundations are venturing into development arena. AKRSP (India), like many NGOs is struggling to explain to donors that transformative work and community institution building requires time and patience, and cannot be achieved with micro-detailed management of projects.

Despite so many challenges, AKRSP (India) has firm belief that current time is suitable for launching programmes which can be transformative for rural areas and lead to quantum jump in quality of lives of the poorest living in the country.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Setting the Foundation (1985 - 1990)</th>
<th>Establishing an Identity (The 1990's)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Starting new Spear Head Teams</strong></td>
<td><strong>Water, Land and Forest</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starting field offices in Netrang,</td>
<td>The main programme areas in this</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chotila and Veraval</td>
<td>decade were watershed development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and afforestation. Great amount of</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>work was done with collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Early Programmes</strong></td>
<td><strong>Participatory Irrigation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The early programmes were focused</td>
<td>Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on ensuring irrigation to farmers</td>
<td>Initiated work in participatory</td>
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<tr>
<td>through lift irrigation, percolation</td>
<td>canal irrigation by formation of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tanks etc.</td>
<td>canal irrigation societies of farmers who will</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>be users of the canal water. It was</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>due to these efforts that GoG passed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a resolution promoting PIM in 1995</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>JFM policy influencing</strong></td>
<td><strong>New Mission Statement</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Persistent efforts by AKRSP (India)</td>
<td>AKRSP (India) formulated a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to involve communities within the</td>
<td>participatory mission statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forest protection and benefit</td>
<td>based on the vision of His Highness,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sharing framework led to GoI issuing</td>
<td>the Aga Khan</td>
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<tr>
<td>JFM (Joint Forest Management)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>guidelines in 1990</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>**His Highness visit to field</td>
<td><strong>Women in Development</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>areas**</td>
<td>From focussing on natural resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>His Highness visited programme</td>
<td>management the organization shifted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>areas for the first time since AKRSP</td>
<td>to a more inclusive approach by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(India)’s inception. He wrote these</td>
<td>including ‘Women in Development’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>words in the visitor’s book – ‘...my</td>
<td>Programme to its portfolio.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>admiration and warm congratulations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>for the exciting work being done</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and results achieved... my best</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wishes for the future’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participatory Approaches adopted</strong></td>
<td><strong>Participatory Forestry</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participatory rural appraisal which is</td>
<td>Two villages received Indira Gandhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a tool for village development</td>
<td>Priyadarshini award for forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>planning, adopted</td>
<td>protection. The villages also reaped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>benefits of forest protection in form of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>grass/fodder harvest and bamboo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>harvest</td>
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### Spreading its Wings (The 2000's)

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>New Geographies</strong></th>
<th><strong>Earthquake Relief Work</strong></th>
<th><strong>Coastal Salinity</strong></th>
<th><strong>Disseminating Knowledge</strong></th>
<th><strong>Drinking water Supply systems</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initiated work in tribal dominated districts of Madhya Pradesh in 2004, flood prone districts of Bihar in 2007 and tribal dominated Dangs district in Gujarat in 2010.</td>
<td>After the massive earthquake in 2001, AKRSP (India) initiated earthquake relief work activities like construction, food support etc.</td>
<td>Persistent efforts made to halt or reduce impact of coastal salinity ingress through various interventions. Revived the drying up Meghal river in Junagadh. Set up Coastal Salinity Prevention cell.</td>
<td>Two training centers set up in Gujarat to share the lessons learnt through years of field interventions with other organizations, government departments etc.</td>
<td>Worked extensively to provide drinking water to drought and salinity affected areas of Gujarat. Pioneered successfully Rooftop rain water harvesting structures for drinking water. Started Water testing laboratory at Sayla, Gujarat to address water quality issues.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Responding to Needs (2010 onwards)

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Primary Education</strong></th>
<th><strong>Skills for Youth</strong></th>
<th><strong>Solar Energy</strong></th>
<th><strong>Sanitation</strong></th>
<th><strong>Goat Rearing</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work on education started in Bihar and Gujarat. Focus on Early childhood development, School improvement program, Right to Education and Integrated child development.</td>
<td>The skill development programme christened as Yuva Junction reaches out to rural youth by skills training and providing for opportunities of gainful wage or self-employment.</td>
<td>The alternate energy programme focuses on reducing energy deficit in rural areas. Promotion of solar lanterns, decentralized solar lighting systems is being done on a entrepreneurship model to promote sustainability. Solar pumps are being promoted for irrigation.</td>
<td>Furthering the nation's commitment of becoming ODF free, AKRSP (India) is focused on improving overall health and hygiene of field areas by inducing behavioural change among communities and by building sanitation units.</td>
<td>Goatery is increasingly being promoted for landless and small landholding families. Pashu Sakhi's or village level para vets are trained locally to provide for basic veterinary services, which not only reduces mortality but provides an livelihood to women.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
AKRSP (India)’s development approach has two main goals. They are, organising people for collective action, & addressing rural inequities. Keeping these goals in mind, it undertakes the following interventions & activities:

**Alternate Energy**
- Biogas
- Windmills
- Solar Lighting Systems
- Acrylic sheets

**Savings and Credit Groups**
- Self Help Groups
- Community Based Savings Groups

**Non-Farm Livelihoods**
- Animal husbandry
- Bamboo crafts
- Skill building & Placement (Yuva Junction)
- Tailoring Centers

**Forestry**
- Joint Forest Management
- Farm Forestry

**Agriculture**
- Promotion of Biopesticides and Organic compost
- Horticulture
- Creeper vegetable cultivation
- Input supply
- System of Root Intensification (SRI )
- Vermicompost
- Crop Protection Tower
- Group wire fencing

**Water Resource Management**
- Lift Irrigation
- Small & Large Water Harvesting Structures
- Micro Irrigation Systems
- Group wells
- Participatory Irrigation Management
- River Basin Management

**Soil and Water Conservation**
- Land Levelling
- Contour Bunding
- Deep Ploughing

**Education**
- Early Childhood Development Centers (ECD)
- Learning Support Centers (LSC)
- Family Literacy
- Learning Enhancement Programme (LEP)

**Vadvai**
- Capacity Building
- Exposure Visits
- Advisory Services
- Deputing Staff

**Research and Communication**
- Studies on Field Implementation
- Research
- Documentation and dissemination
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DETAILS</th>
<th>ACHIEVEMENT IN 2015</th>
<th>CUMULATIVE TILL 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coverage</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages/Tolas (no.)</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>2033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households (no.)</td>
<td>25921</td>
<td>218172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village Institutions (no.)</td>
<td>1511</td>
<td>10312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Institutions (no.)</td>
<td>975</td>
<td>6182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sustainable Agriculture</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable Agriculture Practices (hh)</td>
<td>4753</td>
<td>20077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System of Root Intensification (hh)</td>
<td>2673</td>
<td>25257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agri Input Supply (hh)</td>
<td>6844</td>
<td>52983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agri Equipments (hh)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Private Land Development</strong></td>
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<td>Vegetable Cultivation (hh)</td>
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<td><strong>Water Management</strong></td>
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<td>Check Dams and Irrigation Tanks (no.)</td>
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<td>Water Use Efficiency Devices (ha.)</td>
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<td><strong>Common Land Development</strong></td>
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<td>Joint Forest Management (no. of villages)</td>
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<td>Dairy (hh)</td>
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<td>Pashu Sakhis (Paravets) trained (no.)</td>
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<td>58</td>
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<td>Veterinary Services provided (hh)</td>
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<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
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<td>RTE Awareness Villages</td>
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<td><strong>Skill Development</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of people trained</td>
<td>1417</td>
<td>27919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of people placed</td>
<td>828</td>
<td>4182</td>
</tr>
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</table>
During 2015, agricultural initiatives like SRI (System of Root Intensification), Amrit Krishi, vegetable cultivation and intensive intercropping gained further momentum with 2,601 households adopting SRI technique, 1,188 households implementing Amrit Krishi, 1,984 households undertaking vegetable cultivation and 1,071 households opting for intensive intercropping. More than 900 farmers (majority of them cotton farmers) took up Drip irrigation. Agri input supply has been provided to 6,777 households. Further, 800 households initiated dairy activities to add to their family income.

Under watershed initiatives in tribal regions, variety of activities including 67 gabions, 87 boribands, 254 bore wells and 239 well deepening were ensured to provide for better irrigation facilities.

583 new community institutions have been formed. The members have been working responsibly addressing issues of social concerns. The governance work in tribal Gujarat has now matured with 4 citizen information centres and mobile based information services reaching out to 50 plus panchayats.

Providing for potable drinking water has been scaled up through construction of 28 DWSS (Drinking Water Supply Schemes) in Dangs and 365 RRWHS (Roof Rain Water Harvesting Structures) in coastal Gujarat. The water testing laboratory in Mangrol and Sayla ensured water quality through regular testing of the water sources. 3756 sanitation units were constructed to make villages open-defecation free. Work on school sanitation was also piloted.

During the year, Yuva Junction Centres trained 1001 rural youth on computer, soft skills, and various trades. 760 rural youth availed placement services provided by the Centres.

EVENT UPDATE

Two major events were organized in Gujarat:

1. Globally renowned conservation agriculture expert, Dr. Amir Kassam visited AKRSP (India)’s programme areas to encourage farmers for adopting conservation agriculture.
2. Patdi Lift Irrigation Structure was inaugurated by Irrigation Minister, Mr. Govindbhai Patel in presence of District Collector, District Development Officer, Directors of State Departments, President of District Panchayat and various other local dignitaries. AKRSP (India)'s efforts in such remote areas were appreciated by all present. The structure, constructed over Purna river with irrigation area of around 25 hectares shall benefit 55 beneficiaries, who earlier had no access to irrigation.
During 2015, 188 villages have been covered through various interventions. The key focus areas have been enhancement of agricultural and goatery based livelihoods, renewable energy and institution building. Household sanitation was initiated in response to the high demand from the women's groups.

5,209 farmers have been reached through various agriculture activities. 500 farmers have taken up organic cotton cultivation, 1,188 households have undertaken vegetable cultivation, 328 farmers have adopted Amrit Krishi and 207 farmers have practiced intercropping. Nearly 41,000 saplings have been planted for farm forestry.

In 2015, AKRSP (India) initiated a community-led model to increase the adoption of energy efficient, renewable energy products in remote rural areas of Madhya Pradesh. One key gap was the availability of lighting for students, and hence, in partnership with IIT Mumbai, 10000 plus children were provided with solar lamps, assembled by local villagers.

5,940 families have been benefitted through the governance programme. Their basic documents like (caste certificate, ration card, opening of bank account etc) have been ensured and they have been able to avail benefits of government schemes. 249 new community institutions, largely self-help groups and farmers groups, have been formed and 151 shg's have taken up a range of enterprises.

**Event Update**

Two major events were organized in Madhya Pradesh
a. A workshop on Conservation Agriculture was organized where experts like Dr. Amir Kassam and Mr. Yeshpal Singh Saharawat made presentations and many NGO's and government staff attended. Participants from nine organizations shared their views on conservation agriculture.

b. A workshop on “women land right” was organized. A two member team from WGWLO (Working Group for Women and Land Ownership) had visited a few NGOs in Madhya Pradesh to explore their interest in the issue of women and land. The interest levels exhibited prompted veterans like PRADAN and WGWLO to organize the workshop and to highlight the legal framework, practical strategies and other nuances of the subject. 52 representatives from various NGOs, government organizations and activists enthusiastically participated in the workshop.

As an Income Generation Activity, SHG members of Dedtalai cluster (Madhya Pradesh) initiated papad making. SHG group with poultry farming in Balwadi cluster.
Skill development has struggled in Bihar because local jobs are not easily available, especially in the retail sector. This year, the sewing/stitching centres set up for young girls ensured that many girls started their own enterprises while the retail training provided placement. Overall 129 youth earned enough to support their families. A commendable initiative was taken to open small centers (hub and spoke model) with the help of the community in the remote areas where our trainers visit to reach out to poor students who cannot afford the transportation costs to the main centres.

Agriculture interventions included scaling up of vegetable cultivation with more than 1,045 farmers, promoting amrit krishi with 3,107 farmers, and organic farming with 166 farmers.

During 2015, AKRSP (India) extended its presence in Bihar by reaching 64 new villages / hamlets and forming 679 community organisations. The interventions which scaled up during the year were water and sanitation, alternate energy and community institutions. 12 new Mini Drinking Water Supply Schemes were started and to ensure water quality, 1115 water samples were tested at the mini water testing laboratory. The sanitation programme grew substantially: 4557 sanitation units were constructed.

To further promote the use of alternate energy, 4,677 households accessed solar lights and work on piloting solar pumps for irrigation was initiated. Local Entrepreneurs were encouraged to set up shops promoting solar products so that villagers have access to a range of products.
Event Update
Three major events were organized in Bihar:

1. Status of ‘Open Defecation Free Panchayats’ were celebrated at two locations – Harpur Saidabad (Samastipur) and Paigambarpur (Muzaffarpur)

2. Inter school level event had been organized at two government schools of Muraul block in Muzaffarpur district to celebrate the Global Hand Washing Day. The activities included a drawing competition, interactive session and a ‘Prabhat Pheri’ (rally). The objective of the celebration was to promote good sanitation behavior and better hygiene practices amongst children. Over 150 children enthusiastically participated in the celebration.

3. The World Toilet Day was celebrated by launching “Mera Shauchalaya Mera Swabhimaan” theme. Over 5,000 women members of the various SHGs participated in the rally emphasizing on the need for sanitation units and correlating it with the dignity of women.
India is home to around 1.2 billion people (Census 2011) and it is estimated that more than 21 percent of them live below the poverty line (Planning Commission of India, 2013). A large section of the population, especially those belonging to the bottom of the socio-economic pyramid, lack access to clean, safe and reliable energy sources. Nearly 300 million of the population in India is deprived of access to electricity, and nearly 160 million households in the country primarily rely on fuels such as diesel, kerosene, fire-wood, dung-cake, charcoal and agricultural residue for their energy needs (Census, 2011). Realizing the importance to address this issue AKRSP (India) has initiated several interventions since its inception. In the initial years, biogas plants have been promoted, with a variety of innovative design options to suit geographical contexts as well as reduce the implementation cost. AKRSP (India) has been promoting solar lanterns for rural households in Madhya Pradesh and Bihar for the past few years. In 2015, the solar programme has really leapfrogged with the help of many innovations.

During 2015, two Decentralized Off-grid Solar powered micro grids providing basic lighting and mobile recharge services have been piloted in two tolas of Bihar, which proved cost effective and has been well received by the community. Encouraged by the success, the system has been scaled up in nine hamlets. A total of 300 households in Bihar now have light in their homes.

The system has 40 watts capacity and is shared by four households. It meets low voltage power requirement for domestic purposes like basic lighting (one of two 3-watt LED bulb per household for 6-8 hours a day) and mobile phone charging facility.

In 2015, one of the most exciting developments has been the successful piloting of solar pumps in all three states. The adoption of solar pumps has been slow due to the high cost involved in the initial setup of the system. The solar pumps were thus promoted with farmer groups (wherein per farmer cost share reduces substantially).

Bihar team has tried an innovation of using the same solar pump for both Irrigation and drinking water purposes, while in Madhya Pradesh; the solar pump is being used for irrigation purposes and has been integrated with home lighting, which provides basic lighting to all its beneficiaries.

Solar energy being harnessed to meet both irrigation and drinking water needs in Bihar
AKRSP (India) has been working with rural communities to provide access to potable drinking water, and in partnership with the government and donors, had succeeded in getting drinking water at the doorstep for more than 50,000 households. Water testing results showed a high amount of bacteriological contamination; largely because of lack of drainage and open defecation in most villages. Individual sanitation had been piloted in a few villages, but scaling up had been a constraint even though women felt it was a priority for better health and privacy. The high priority and incentive provided by the government provided an enabling environment, and hence AKRSP (India) could respond to the women’s demand and scale up this initiative.

While work in Gujarat and Bihar was more than a year old, the tribal areas of Dang and Madhya Pradesh were new. Because these villages have more common land, it was assumed that community demand would not be high. However, reality proved to be different and after triggering exercise, and extensive training on behavioural change, demand in Madhya Pradesh and Dangs has also picked up; with women’s groups at the forefront of motivating others for a cleaner village.

In Bihar, AKRSP (India) was selected to be one of the agencies to implement the Namami Gange scheme, wherein villages on the banks of the ganges were to be made Open Defecation Free so as to reduce the faecal load on the river. AKRSP (India) is facilitating sanitation in the blocks of Samastipur districts. Overall 8500+ toilets in 150 villages have been completed; with many villages having >90% coverage. AKRSP (India) monitors progress in terms of village coverage rather than absolute number of toilets constructed. Village committees monitor whether toilets are being used; and in villages where water is scarce, this has been addressed. Since AKRSP (India) has a large drinking water programme; priority is given to villages where access is also addressed.

School sanitation is essential to achieve ODF, but as a detailed survey of 500+ villages showed, in majority of schools sanitation units are non-functional because of water availability or poor infrastructure quality. Since new infrastructure is cost-intensive, AKRSP (India) has prioritised sanitation for girl students and piloted a community-owned approach in 11 villages with financial support from corporates.

Facilitating household sanitation requires a high amount of liaison with the government, as the incentive of Rs 12000/toilet is provided under the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (Clean India Initiative) of the government. Training masons for ensuring quality, and villagers to coordinate with the panchayats is also part of the programme.

In tribal areas, availability of bricks and cement is difficult and expensive. AKRSP (India) has piloted other building material like bamboo and cement blocks to reduce costs and improve efficiency. In Bihar, space is a great constraint, and families use common walls to save costs and space. Necessity is the mother of invention, and communities and field staff are addressing locational challenges with many technical innovations.

The major focus of the sanitation programme has been to induce behavioural change in community members through mass awareness generation drives, street plays, student rallies, etc., through training for awareness among women, adolescent girls and community regarding personnel hygiene and sanitation practices. Intensive construction of sanitation units was also done along with awareness generation activities.
Empowerment is a continuous process and is best understood by the actions of those empowered. AKRSP (India) seeks to empower rural communities through collectivization as well as promotion of individual enterprise. Leadership development is a key component of this process. AKRSP (India) has found that collectives which have been empowered to manage one theme; whether it is financial services or drinking water or agriculture development, gradually apply the experiential knowledge to resolve other problems they face, whether it is education or government entitlements. On the other hand, overloading community organizations with the objectives of the promoter at the initial stages reduces their effectiveness and self confidence. The key is to start slowly, and surely, and then provide space to them to grow faster.

AKRSP (India)’s approaches promote communities’ ownership of the change processes, ensure better management of resources and ensuring sustainability. Building self-reliance is at the heart of the organization’s approach, and this is achieved through various kinds of inputs – training, exposure, handholding support, encouraging institutions and enterprises to make their own decisions.

Institutions promoted by AKRSP (India) generally fall into two broad categories:
- Institutions such as the Village Development Committee (VDC), river basin core group that have “public” functions at community level and are meant to represent the interests of the entire village or regions’ population, and
- Self Help Groups (SHGs) that have “private” functions, and reorient the personal interests of their members. Examples of the latter are Producer Company, Users’ Group and Lift Irrigation Society amongst others.

The institutions are further divided by two other categories:
- Membership based institutions
- Representative based institutions

All institutions which have public functions are representative based, wherein leaders provide their time voluntarily, solely to do some good work for the society. While, institutions with private functions are membership based. Herein leaders and members, both get benefits. They start with one activity (savings and credit) and as they mature, they start addressing different issues concerning members. Sometimes, institutions like SHGs also get opportunities from external environment (like government).

Working With Panchayats AKRSP (India) has continued to strengthen its working rapport with panchayats. Pani Samiti are a part of panchayat and once project gets over, repair and maintenance is done by Panchayats. In Madhya Pradesh, the large scale work done under MGNREGA scheme is done through Panchayat. Further, the organization has augmented its Gramin Sushasana Pariyojana – a project wherein villagers are encouraged to attend gram sabhas and also are motivated to discuss their problems with Panchayats. AKRSP (India) also facilitates process of micro plan at panchayat level.

**EMPOWERMENT THROUGH FINANCIAL SERVICES**

AKRSP (India) promotes and supports self-help groups, largely of women, which follow a gradual path towards addressing the changing needs of their members. From initial focus on savings and access credit (rotational and bank), they take up issues of basic entitlements (widow and old age pension, job cards etc.) and then enterprises (collective and individual). Over time, many federate; at village and block level so that they negotiate better with the government agencies and the market.

With the government also promoting/supporting self-help groups under the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), many groups are linked to NRLM and access schemes/revolving funds. Many are also linked to the agriculture extension unit of the Government.

One major concern for AKRSP (India) has been the excessive focus on credit, especially bank credit by external agencies. This has undermined the savings focus of the communities. AKRSP (India) believes that enhanced savings creates greater self-reliance and reduced risk for the poor. To promote a savings led approach, AKRSP (India) has piloted a SHG plus approach in Bihar where savings are flexible, annual
Civil Society Development & Governance
AKRSP (India) APPROACH

Livelihood Enhancement
- Agricultural and allied livelihoods
- Agri Inputs
- Petty trades & Micro Enterprises

Empowerment & Entitlement
- Collective Action
- Improved governance
- Enhanced identity of women
- Enhanced social standing
- Accessing Rights & Entitlements

Financial Security
- Mobilization
- Group formation
- Saving
- Credits
- Bank Linkages
- Reduced Dependence On Money Lenders

Share-out is encouraged and book of accounts are simple and user-friendly for the largely illiterate members. A study comparing the savings rate of the various self-help groups shows that the SHG plus approach has led to annual savings / member, which is substantially (4-10 times) higher than the typical, fixed monthly savings approach.

Average savings / group has gone up substantially in the SHG plus groups as members realise that increased savings yield higher credit (as credit is proportional to savings in these groups) and the share-out concept allows greater dividend from the savings (interest income of credit is shared out).

### SHG + v/s SHG approach

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<td>2000</td>
<td>3063</td>
<td>3899</td>
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<td>SHG Bihar (25 groups)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SHG MP SCALE (1138 groups)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SHG MP NABARD (457 groups)</td>
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<td>SHG IWMP (82 groups)</td>
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### Comparison of Saving rate of SHG + and SHG (in Rs.)

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<th></th>
<th>SHG + Bihar (250 groups)</th>
<th>SHG Bihar (25 groups)</th>
<th>SHG MP SCALE (1138 groups)</th>
<th>SHG MP NABARD (457 groups)</th>
<th>SHG IWMP (82 groups)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Growth in savings rate of SHG + groups per member (Rs.)</td>
<td>916</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comparison of Saving rate of SHG + and SHG (in Rs.)</td>
<td>3063</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>3899</td>
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Bank linkage continues to be a challenge in Bihar, while in Madhya Pradesh, progress has been substantial. New mechanisms like NABFINS are proving helpful in remote areas of Madhya Pradesh. Micro-finance programme enabled women to start various livelihood activities like tailoring units, paper plate making, goat rearing and dairy. Many women benefited from other petty trade activities started through availed loans from SHGs. Some of the SHGs are now moving towards forming agriculture producer companies to access competitive markets for agricultural inputs and farm output.

At the end of the year 2015, AKRSP (India)'s microfinance programme has the following status:

- Out of 4969 groups, over 2000 women SHGs have been operating in self-reliant mode and most of the services required by these groups are provided by the federations
- Total savings of 2969 groups, which are currently facilitated through AKRSP (India) is INR 669 lakhs
- Total outstanding loan of groups is INR 723 lakhs
- Outstanding bank loan is INR 270 lakhs while during the year total loan extended by banks was INR 410.5 lakhs

During the year, 762 new SHGs were promoted across all geographies taking the total numbers of SHGs promoted to 4969.

Savings activities by Self Help Group's have empowered women with financial cover for contingencies.
“Civil Society [is] a realm of activity which is neither government nor commercial, institutions designed to advance the public good, but powered by private energies” – His Highness the Aga Khan, Enabling Environment Conference, Afghanistan, June 2007.

There are two types of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) promoted / supported by AKRSP (India):

A. CSO’s owned by community members: Many apex level institutions (also known as Federations) promoted by AKRSP (India) are working to provide services to the villagers who are not members of the institutions. These have now grown into independent civil society organisations with their own identity.

B. CSO’s owned by NGOs: Along with other organisations, AKRSP (India) has promoted new networks or NGOs to address public needs not addressed so far, or which it cannot address alone. It also actively supports NGO networks which provide services to NGOs and CBOs

A. Federations of community organization: For the last few years, AKRSP (India) has been withdrawing its support in terms of financial and day to day hand holding from the various women’s federations as well as area-based federations (like salinity and river basin federations). Initially, these federations were working for members only but they grew and matured, they started addressing issues with larger societal concerns. There have been instances when the federations have addressed issues, which are not within the purview of AKRSP (India). In 2015, the sagbara federation continued its work on improved local governance while the mangrol federation worked actively towards accessing sanitation units for its members. Three stages of an AKRSP (India) promoted federation becoming an independent CSO:

[B] AKRSP (India) had also ideated and along with other NGOs, formed the Working Group of Women and Land Ownership (WGWLO), which works for access to land ownership for village women. WGWLO works with other NGOs, women’s federations and local governance structures to change this at field and policy level. WGWLO in 2015, set up swa-bhumi kendras (women’s land ownership centres), one of which was with the Sagbara women’s federation.

Another CSO ideated and promoted with other organisations is the Coastal Salinity Prevention Cell (CSPC) which works in the salinity affected villages of the Gujarat Coast. CSPC has expanded its work substantially in the water resource and agriculture themes. Work on dairy, a critical livelihood for small and marginal farmers, has been initiated. Water and Sanitation remains a core intervention and work on sanitation expanded substantially this year.

AKRSP (India) also works with NGO networks (promoted by other NGOs) working on agriculture (Sajjata Sangh), media advocacy (Charkha).

CIVIL SOCIETY PROMOTION

STAGE 1
Replacing roles played by AKRSP (India)

STAGE 2
Taking up activities for members which were not done by AKRSP (India)

STAGE 3
Taking up activities for non-members and larger society and influencing programmes at block/district level
**IMPROVED LOCAL GOVERNANCE**

AKRSP (India), along with Development Support Centre, is implementing a local governance project in 96 panchayats in 5 districts of Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. The focus is to improve local governance by enabling rural citizens, through timely information and support, to access government schemes and entitlements. Strengthening the local panchayats and helping them develop village development plans has been a key goal.

To operationalise this, there are three strategies:

1. Setting up Nagrik Soochna Kendra (NSK), a citizen Information Centre, which villagers can visit and access information and support
2. Training Nagrik Mitra (NM), Friends of citizens, who visit the villages and understand the problems of villagers related to governance and suggest ideas to solve these. A majority of NM's are women
3. Reaching out through mobiles and radio to villagers about government schemes, gram sabha etc.

Some examples of how panchayats have done bottom up planning and follow-up

- Khokhra Umar – library for youth for career support
- Kundimamba – water storage and piping system to prevent wastage
- Maykheda – Drinking water facility for one hamlet of village with contribution from citizen and panchyat
- Kantalu - Water facility for animal

**Total Outreach:**

- Outreach to **37259** persons (54% female), out of which **14605** persons directly through NSK and NM while other through campaign and mobile radio. Cumulative reach is **58287**.
- **Access of benefit: 3812** persons in current year and **17908** persons cumulatively.

**Overall achievements are as below:**

- Well established NSK in all 6 blocks – total **14605** no of persons facilitated by 7 NSK through different mediums
- Mobile Radio programme – reaching to **10884** mobile numbers and active listenership of **7200** persons;
- Digital Sahyog camp for basic documents and other schemes – total **19 camps**, more than 1500 citizens benefited
- Total 3812 citizen got benefits of different schemes and services with NSK support
- Training on local governance, Government structure and schemes for PRI and CBO – total **29 training, attended by 1905 persons**
- A folder which has a checklist of all documents villagers need (aadhar card, bpl card, caste certificate etc) has been prepared and shared with citizens.
- Women participation in gram sabha has increased – 37 gram sabha; 2188 women participated
IMPROVED LOCAL GOVERNANCE

- Tracking of applications and pressure on government ensured pension payment to 187 citizens worth of Rs 1.81 lacs was released after delays of more than one and half years.
- Operational problems of citizens in accessing government schemes been resolved – Biometric problem, District level verification process for widow pension, problems related to pending UID (agencies have not completed the tasks)
- Newly elected block representatives started demanding for information and training support from AKRSP (India)
- Panchayat planning shared with other panchayats and government officials
- AKRSP (India) and DSC involved in VDP preparation training for PRI and government officials under 14th Finance commission
As agriculture has been the main source of livelihood in the programme areas of AKRSP (India), and hence, interventions were aimed at strengthening the same and enhancing income from the activity. In the early years, the focus was more towards soil and water conservation work, investing in protective irrigation infrastructures and agriculture development. To make the interventions environmentally and institutionally sustainable, they were carried out through the medium of village institutions. Gradually, the emphasis has been shifted towards reduction of external inputs like inorganic fertilizers, pesticides, water as well as lessening of vulnerability through promotion of diversified cropping such as fruit and vegetable crops. Also, critical farm implements and tools are facilitated for resource poor. In a nutshell, agriculture development at AKRSP (India) has three major goals:

a. enhanced food and nutrition security  
b. enhanced and sustained agriculture incomes  
c. reduced risks for farmers who battle weather, pest, animal (grazing by wild ungulates) and price risks

Promotion of Conservation Agriculture

In 2014, Conservation Agriculture had been introduced in Madhya Pradesh wherein agricultural practices are adopted to improve the soil quality through organic content. With the success of the pilot phase, the concept has been promoted in Coastal Gujarat and Bihar. Six demonstration plots have been made with groundnut crop in Coastal Gujarat and 14 in Bihar, while 80 farmers practiced Conservation Agriculture in Madhya Pradesh. The positive results have been apparent and visible.
An impact assessment study was undertaken in Madhya Pradesh this year to assess the impact of conservation agriculture. The 14 CA plots piloted in 2014 were compared against control (conventional) plots after completion of 1 year of implementation. The key highlights of the study are as under.

**Impact of CA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>CA Before</th>
<th>CA After</th>
<th>Non CA Before</th>
<th>Non CA After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Soil moisture</td>
<td>19.41%</td>
<td>17.79%</td>
<td>23.46%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organic Matter Content</td>
<td>0.55%</td>
<td>0.95%</td>
<td>0.39%</td>
<td>0.68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yield</td>
<td>33.54</td>
<td>33.61</td>
<td>33.54</td>
<td>33.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nitrogen Fixation</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>420</td>
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<td>420</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phosphorus Fixation</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potassium Fixation</td>
<td>384</td>
<td>384</td>
<td>384</td>
<td>384</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Wadi plantation has been a boon for marginal farmers. During the year, SRI (System of Root Intensification) has been scaled-up. Despite unfavorable weather conditions, 2673 farmers have practiced SRI to yield higher produce. To enhance the understanding and sensitize farmers on agricultural practices, a one-day workshop had been organized with 73 village volunteers in Dangs programme area.

With three-fold objective of enhancing income, inclusion of nutritional products in the diet and reduction in vulnerability, vegetable cultivation and horticulture has been promoted with small and marginal farmers. Within vegetable cultivation, need based variety of interventions have been designed to reach larger number of beneficiaries. During the year, over 600 farmers undertook vegetable cultivation and nearly 2540 farmers were reached with Landless Gardens in Dangs, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar.

The bio-pesticides, Amrit Pani and Amrit Khad are amongst the newest innovations by AKRSP (India). Since past three years, they have been replacing chemical pesticides and fertilizers amongst the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Carbon Sequestration Potential</th>
<th>290.97 g CO₂ per annum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost of Prod. Savings in Maize</td>
<td>9.38% per acre</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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beneficiaries and are fuelling AKRSP (India)’s drive to promote sustainable agriculture. With the positive influence of the bio-pesticide, more and more farmers are adopting it. 4623 farmers have adopted Amrit Pani – Amrit Khad in 2015. Self help Groups have come forward to jointly promote the products.

Knowledge of relevant farming techniques is a must for having an optimum yield. Hence, knowledge sharing through agricultural demonstrations is a perpetual practice at AKRSP (India). The demonstrations are need-based. In Dangs, greater yam (rich in carbohydrates) has been demonstrated to 37 farmers. In Netrang, Green Gram of Virat and Meha variety have been demonstrated to 60 lead farmers. In Madhya Pradesh, 206 demonstration plots of intercropping system, one of agricultural crop POP demonstration and 17 for soybean intensification have been initiated.

Marketing For Green Gram
Marketing support for green gram was facilitated with a Bangalore based Non Pesticide Management Food Processing Company. In the pre-marketing NPM testing, the green gram samples qualified through 98 types of pesticide tests. Subsequently, 33 metric tons of green gram worth of INR 30 lakhs have been marketed and farmers have got premium price for their crops at the village level.

To provide comprehensive facilitation, agri-input supply and marketing support interventions are also undertaken. During the year, agri-input supply has been provided to 6444 farmers.

Better Cotton Initiative (BCI)
AKRSP (India) is imparting intensive trainings to cotton farmers in order to enable them to adopt better cultivation practices for increasing profitability though reduction in usage of chemical fertilizers, pesticides, irrigation water, improving health and safety aspects and preventing child labour in cotton harvesting. The project is operational in 35 villages in Morbi district. Nearly, 7461 ha of lands under cotton cultivation in these villages is being benefitted through the project. During the year, extensive training has been imparted to more than 3460 farmers on various cropping techniques (like border crops, inter crops), vermi.

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Organic Cotton Initiative
A novel initiative of organic cotton has been introduced in Madhya Pradesh. Various awareness activities and training have been undertaken in the 24 project villages to mobilize farmers for adopting organic cotton. During the year, 303 farmers have taken organic cotton as main crop and 197 farmers have taken it as second crop.

Item: Promotion of Soil Testing
During the year, 638 Soil Samples have been tested at various locations across AKRSP (India). Soil Testing helps farmers to understand the nutrition status of their soil and appropriately analyze the need of nutrients to enhance crop production. In Madhya Pradesh, 179 farmers opted for soil testing.
61 per cent of the net sown area in India is rain fed and 84 per cent of the rural poor live in India’s rain fed areas. The reality of an Indian rain fed farmer’s life is characterized by marginal soils, undulating terrain, remote locations, uncertain rains and high dependence on multiple sources of livelihoods. Substantial public investment has been made in irrigation. However, this investment has gone into promoting intensive use of fertilizers, seeds and other inputs and price support systems. Further, these have also resulted in falling ground water levels, declining soil productivity, degradation of commons and increasing costs of inputs which have in turn led to stagnant incomes and entrenched poverty in rain fed areas. AKRSP (India)’s interventions focus on both the aspects: recharging of ground water and managing the surface water.
Surendranagar is a drought-prone region. Jadavbhai, a resident of Kherana Village located about eight kilometers from Chotila Block, used flood irrigation for his crops. In 2014, his crop failed due to scarcity of water. While his income was badly affected, his brother did not get the crunch as he had adopted drip irrigation in his farm since a couple of years. Jadavbhai got convinced of the benefits of drip irrigation in water scarce area and approached AKRSP (India) for a loan under Drip Pool Fund Project and installed drip in his farm. Due to drip system Jadavbhai could,

a. Utilize his full four acres of land (area under irrigation increased by 100 per cent) for sowing
b. Do intercropping (thus increase nutrition intake value of his family members)
c. Increase income (compared to earlier years, he has sown in two more acres of land with less water)
The interventions in Water resource development are context specific and hence vary from one region to another. A variety of interventions are undertaken to ensure soil and moisture conservation in varying geographies. In coastal Gujarat, 264 hectares of land have been made brought under watershed to prevent water logging and top soil from turning saline. In Madhya Pradesh, an integrated watershed approach is being executed comprising of structures like farm bund, farm pond, gabion, boulder check and nalla plug amongst others to improve the soil quality and ultimately augment the productivity is ongoing in 20 Micro watersheds. Collectively, nearly 123 hectares of land has been treated during 2015 to curb soil erosion, augment ground water recharge, and conserve moisture in the fields. Also, five new check dam / stop dam have been constructed covering a command area of 25 ha. Apart from physical execution of structures, several trainings, workshops, video shows have been organized to ensure capacity building on topics of Soil and Water Conservation. In Dangs, 813.18 Ha of land has been treated, majority of this being through farm bunds.

**Patli Lift Irrigation Structure**

Apart from construction of low cost structures, a Patli Lift Irrigation Structure has been constructed in Dangs. The structure had been inaugurated by the Irrigation Minister of Gujarat State in presence of District Collector, District Development Officer, Director of ST department, President of District Panchayat and various other dignitaries from government departments.

To supplement irrigation, variety of interventions including bori bandhs, well deepening / widening, recharge bore wells, farm ponds, sunken ponds and
check dams are undertaken. Figuratively, twenty check dams have been built/repaired and 87 bori bandhs have been constructed, and 277 existing wells have been deepened. In Bihar, eight Group Irrigation systems have been installed directly benefitting more than 500 farmers. These low cost irrigation schemes have been assuring irrigation facility in more than 200 acres of land. The group irrigation systems have facilitated farmers to grow crops (mainly vegetables) in all seasons.

Motivating Results of Assessment of Watershed Interventions In Dangs

An assessment was carried out to assess the impact of watershed interventions done in previous years. The results highlighted:

a. Reduction in migration – 69 percent

b. Average increase in income – INR 4,601 (through Contour bund) due to crops grown on the bunds and trenches

c. Average increase in income – INR 5,628 (through Nala Plug) due to the increased land under cultivation.

The promotion of protective irrigation devices like sprinkler sets have been a boon for farmers in water scarce areas. More than 233 sprinkler sets have been provided in 2015. The Drip Pool project, launched in Sayla and Chotila blocks of Surendranagar and Jasdan block of Rajkot district in 2011, for improving the productivity of cotton crop by reducing water footprint further reached 1,194 acres of land (belonging to 277 cotton growing farmers) during 2015. Under the drip pool fund, 204 farmers (covering 375.5 acres of land) have been given interest free loans of more than INR 5.50 lacs for installing drip irrigation system on their lands.
The intervention was designed with special focus largely on the marginalized and landless tribal, though it has had targeted approach for poorest households in Coastal Gujarat, also. Neither dairy nor goat rearing has the potential to be the primary source of income; yet it has been a source of additional income and nutrition for underprivileged communities of Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. From knowledge sharing, capacity building, veterinary services to infrastructural support for goats, efforts have been made to touch the entire eco system.

Goat Rearing

Since the initiation of the goat rearing programme in 2014, it has become one of the major activities under the animal husbandry portfolio in Madhya Pradesh. This programme has reached 5412 households this year.

Under this programme, a village level platform was created to facilitate knowledge sharing known as the Goat Rearer Groups. These groups are now actively working with goat rearers. In 2015, the goat rearing groups federated themselves into a larger apex body which they have christened ‘Nimar Bakaripalak Group’.

A membership fee of Rs. 500 was collected per member and deposited the total membership fee of Rs. 75,000 in Bank of India account in the name of the federation. This amount will be used by the goat rearers to promote collective marketing of their animals.

The real success of the goat rearing programme in MP has come in the form of Pashu Sakhis, who are village based women trained in basic preventive veterinary services. They serve as community-based animal health workers in villages. They are key extension workers for knowledge dissemination, vaccinations and de-worming of goats and poultry. One of the salient features of the Pahsu Sakhi model is that, all primary health care services for the animals are now available for 24 hours to the goat rearers of the village. 36 Pashu Sakhis and 7 Murgi Sakhas have been trained and are working as village level para vets. During the year 1876 households received benefit of first aid treatment at home while 1836 households benefitted from veterinary camps.

Goatry Eco System

Firstly, groups of landless and marginalized farmers are formed….
Reviving Indigenous Breeds

AKRSP (India) had also organized Berari breed show during the goat rearers samelan in which 400 goat rearers participated. In addition to the sammelan, a competition session were organized on the importance of best breed, cost-effectiveness in the selecting best options, need of the same and future perspective of the creating better breed options in the local area.

Experiences from SAPPLPP Supported Goat Pilot

In 2014, a targeted intervention for reducing mortality rate, improving community knowledge and improving provision of health care services was initiated in partnership with South Asia Pro-Poor Livestock Policy Programme (A joint initiative of FAO and NDDB). The project area was 10 villages for 18 months period in Jhimiya block of Khargone district. The key highlights of the project are stated below:

- Reduction in mortality rate from 35% at the initiation of the project to 8.34% which is more than 50%
- 605 goats were sold with a total value of 36.5 lakhs. Due to efforts put in Market development, which included listing goats on olx.in and organizing a village Haat, in the lead up to Bakri Id last year, maximum price was fetched during August and September 2015.
- The goat population increased more than 2.5 times from 2886 to 7518.
- Established a Berari breeder association to increase community knowledge base and thereby conserve indigenous breed
- Azolla cultivation to provide nutritious home grown feed to goats.
- Low cost goat housing model developed by AKRSP (India) is recognized by department of animal husbandry, government of India. Government issued goat housing guidelines to all states based on this model.
YUVA junction was designed to provide skill upgradation to rural youth to open the myriad avenues of non-farm livelihoods for them. It is estimated that by 2022, India would require 119 million additional skilled workforce to sustain its economy (NSDC Skill Gap Report, 2012). Rural population contributes 71% to the total workforce of India. This means that upskilling and orientation of rural youth towards a fruitful career is the need of the hour. Under the Yuva Junction program, comprehensive efforts are made at various levels to adequately train the aspiring rural youth in specialized skill sets to enable them to procure gainful employment thus placing them higher on the skills and employability ladder.

“Yuva Junction” beginnings started in year 2007 with the initiative called “Computerji... jode Duniya se” with an intention to bridge the urban and rural divide by making technology accessible to rural youths through computer training. It also aimed at providing information needs on government schemes, career oriented information. Over the period, this programme metamorphosed into “Yuva Junction” in year 2012 which strives to “Inform, Educate and Employ”. True to its tag line, this initiative is aimed at empowering the community specially the rural youths by providing information about various government schemes, jobs, career opportunities and then educate them to ensure skill based training and helping them to get employment in various organisation.

Yuva Junction aims to create a constructive milieu for the youth in their formative years and offers them with skill sets to enhance their skills to make them employable in the market in semi-urban and urban settings. In 2015, the standardization and formalization of three more Yuva Junction Centres in Bharuch and Narmada districts and establishment of a new Yuva Junction center at Dangs was completed under DDU-GKY programme of the Government.

The YUVA junction program in Bihar is yet in a nascent stage and hence focuses on training students in IT and retail. It also provides basic computer literacy education to children. In 2015, a total of 292 people were trained in IT of which 154 were below the age of eighteen. Bihar is an evolving economy and hence jobs are scarce. Hence it is extremely important to equip youth with self-employability skills. In 2015, 76 girls were given training in Sewing and Design to enable them to start their own enterprises.

A Migration Support Center was started in Ahmedabad to provide transitional support to first time migrant girls. This center provides initial accommodation support, counselling services and informational and logistical support to the placed girls at very nominal rates until they receive their first pay check. This initiative has reduced attrition greatly. In 2015, this center reached out to 50 girls.

Salient Achievements

- In Gujarat, a total of 1001 students were trained, out of which 760 were successfully placed.
- The skills training in Bihar enabled 61 rural youth to start up their own enterprises.
- The overall female participation in the program was 41%.
- Interventions expanded to border villages of Gujarat.
- A migration support centre was started at Ahmedabad to provide transitional support to placed youth.
**OUTREACH 2015 (Gujarat)**

**Gender**
- Male: 40%
- Female: 60%

**Profile**
- Other: 20%
- SC: 36%
- ST: 44%

**Training and Placement**
- Students trained: 1001
- Students placed: 760
  - Placement Rate: 75%
  - Average Salary: Rs. 6790/

*Others’ category in the Profile graphs above includes minorities*

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**Where there’s skill there’s a way**

Rangiben is the eldest child in her five member’s family. They all reside at Nanifokadi village in Surat district. Her father is a landless labourer and only earning member in her family. The family’s annual income was less than Rs. 15000 per year. This income was insufficient for her family to fulfill their basic needs. So, in a situation where they have to struggle for food and clothing, education was an alien thing for herself and her siblings. But Rangiben’s inquisitive nature and her will to do something different led her to Yuva Junction’s Employability Programme. After successful completion of the training, she got placed in Eureka Forbes at Rs. 6000 per month. She learnt quickly at her first job and these skills help her secure a new job at Dheeraj Son’s with a salary hike raising her pay to Rs. 8000 per month. She sends more than half of her salary back home. The smile on her father’s face was precious when his daughter gifted him a motorbike.

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**Rangiben Vasava’s family posing with motorbike, which she had bought for her father**

**Rangiben Vasava working at Dheeraj Son’s**
The main objective of the Water and Sanitation (WATSAN) interventions is to ensure sustainable access to the rural population that does not have access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation facilities. Efforts are made to educate people, reduce water contamination, cease unsafe hygiene practices, increase accessibility to safe drinking water and thereby reduce drudgery. To ensure sustainability of these interventions, the organization encourages community ownership, an entrepreneurial approach and government linkages.

Drinking Water

To increase accessibility of drinking water, need-based infrastructural support is being provided to communities. In South Gujarat, Drinking Water Supply Schemes and wells have been ongoing to ensure water management and distribution; whereas in Coastal Gujarat and Saurashtra, RRWHS (Roof Rain Water Harvesting Structures) are being promoted to provide non-saline, potable drinking water. In Bihar, the concept of COMDWSS (Community Owned Mini Drinking Water Supply Structures) has gained momentum. There has been a significant rise in number of women taking the ownership for maintaining COMDWSS as it has substantially reduced their drudgery to fetch potable drinking water. During the year, following structures have been constructed to augment accessibility of drinking water in programme areas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structures</th>
<th>Programme Areas</th>
<th>Total Units</th>
<th>Number of Benefitting Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COMDWSS</td>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RRWHS</td>
<td>Coastal Gujarat</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DWSS</td>
<td>South Gujarat</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1855</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Along with accessibility, emphasis is laid on the ‘quality’ of water as well. The quality check is ensured at the source as well as the consumption level. During the year, water samples from 1171 households (56 in Gujarat and 1115 in Bihar) have been tested. The same sample is tested at specific intervals over a period of time to ensure that proper preventive / curative measures are being undertaken. The test reports have been shared and necessary measures have been discussed with the families. Further, awareness generation activities have made people realize the direct correlation between quality of drinking water and their health bills.

Sanitation

A great thrust has been given to promoting Open Defecation Free villages. Sanitation interventions have gained importance over the last year. The programme focuses on providing infrastructural support as well as community mobilization efforts to induce behavioral change. It is a community led program – planned and driven by them. The success of the programme depends upon acceptability and adoption of improved hygiene and sanitation.
AKRSP (India) APPROACH
Water and Sanitation (WATSAN)

1. Community awareness
   - Water testing and follow-up measures
   - Behaviour Change Communication

2. Education
   - Toilets
   - Community Owned Drinking Water Supply Scheme
   - Roof Rain Water Harvesting Structure (RRWHS)
   - Hand pump platforms and repairs
   - Drainage Systems

3. Institutions
   - Pani Samitis
   - WATSAN Committee
   - Panchayats

practices by the community.
Thus awareness generation has been a relentless activity in the past year. Community Institutions have been formed and their capacity building has been ensured through trainings and exposure visits. Existing Self Help Groups (SHGs) have also joined the movement and are actively pursuing the cause. Mass awareness activities (including rallies, wall paintings, video shows, group discussions etc) have been done to simultaneously reach villagers, teachers, school students as well as government officials.

This approach has helped in scaling up the coverage and as a result, a total of 8415 sanitation units have been constructed during the year. A encouraging result of all the awareness efforts has been that two gram panchayats in Bihar have been declared ‘Open Defecation Free’ by the PHED department of Muzaffarpur and Samastipur districts.

### Sanitation Units Constructed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Number of Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>3756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>4557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8415</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Katthad Kalluben Ashok, a dynamic SHG member (from coastal Gujarat area) came forward to convey the importance of sanitation and hygiene in her village. Ambedkar Bachat Mandal, has also been inspired by Kalluben. They have announced credit at meager interest rate of 1 per cent for constructing sanitation units. They have also shown readiness to provide labour help.
Riding high on the success ratio of 2014, 15 nurseries (six in Dangs and two in Navsari, 3 in Madhya Pradesh and 4 in Bihar) have been initiated to raise nearly 1,10,000 saplings. The variety of saplings includes custard apple, drumstick, guava, kher, subabul, bamboo and papaya. Nursery sites were carefully chosen with scope for irrigation facilities. Also, in Dangs, Bauhinia seeds were planted in-between saplings to revive the depleting food ingredient from tribal diet and provide as nutritional supplement.

For farm forestry, over 1,08,000 saplings were planted with farmers in Madhya Pradesh and Dangs. Apart from these, in the Dangs programme area, 118 Jack fruit saplings were also procured from private nurseries and distributed to the beneficiaries for plantation in farm boundaries.

Joint Forest Management (JFM) interventions gained further momentum during 2015. Regular dialogues have been made with the respective forest committees to increase the protection area under forest reserve. 3 more villagers (especially youth) have been mobilized to take the responsibility of patrolling the forest areas in Dangs programme area protecting an area of 355 hectares. Several exposure visits have also been hosted at immersion sites in Netrang to promote the need and importance for Joint Forest Management.

Along with increasing the green cover, income generation activities are also being promoted. To encourage collection of NTFPs, poly sheets of 20 ft X 12 ft were given to 100 members to help collect Mahuva flowers without dust and dirt. Also, efforts are being made to create linkages with the forest department for collective selling of such NTFPs.

In Madhya Pradesh, plantation work has been completed in 476 hectares (spread across 35 villages in four blocks) of land and necessary convergence has been ensured with government departments, individual beneficiaries, gram sabhas, panchayats and other agencies to generate demand and undertake process planning. The plantation has been on both, private as well as common land. A variety of species like teak, neem, bamboo, mango, amla and custard apple amongst others have been planted. Over 800 households will be the direct beneficiaries.
The main objective of AKRSP (India)'s work in renewable energy has been to reduce energy deficit in rural areas through interventions that have the potential to reduce drudgery of women and children (from collection of fuel wood and dung), provide pollution free environment, and provide domestic light; thus, having an overall impact on the livelihood of people.

This year few activities which were initiated and gained popularity are village energy centers, decentralized solar powered micro grids for domestic lighting, solar powered integrated domestic lighting cum community based irrigation and drinking water supply systems village energy centers, community mobile phone charging units etc.

The community led model for solar energy reached 60 villages across two districts of Bihar. Two energy Groups have been formed (with 18 members each) to conduct regular meetings, form business strategies and manage transactions amongst others. The Groups have also opened bank accounts to undertake payment transactions. Consistent training is being imparted to social entrepreneurs for enhancing their marketing skills and making renewable energy reach wider corners. Further, two energy centres has been established wherein various communication and demonstration materials have been exhibited.

Smokeless Chulas have been piloted in Madhya Pradesh programme area while a low cost local design of cook stove has been developed for Bihar project area and women entrepreneurs are trained for the promotion of this stove. While in Dangs an individual on ‘fellowship’ from State Bank of India (SBI), while exploring possibilities to reduce drudgery of women in Dangs, initiated promotion of smokeless chulhas in the villages of Waghai cluster. At an individual level, 30 such smokeless chulhas have been promoted. However, the positive impact is creating a ripple effect amongst the communities. The chulhas have substantially reduced the consumption of fire wood as well as cooking time.

In a novel initiative, two hybrid (solar + electric) pump systems have been established to provide water for irrigation as well as drinking purposes. These systems irrigate 55 acres of land (185 beneficiaries) along with providing drinking water supply to more than 210 households. Also, 2 solar pumping systems have been installed in Madhya Pradesh providing irrigation to 24 acres of land (16 beneficiaries). One of these systems has been integrated to provide home lighting services to its beneficiaries.

• More than 70 local entrepreneurs worked for the distribution of more than 16000 solar lanterns, 400 cook stoves and energy product awareness drives
• 17 energy centers for product demonstration and repairing services
• Entrepreneurs and women's SHG's sold solar products to 16000 households
• 9 low income hamlets in Bihar accessing electricity 100% through low-cost decentralized micro-grid lighting systems

Smokeless chulha have substantially reduced the drudgery of women members
AKRSP (India) believes education is the backbone of society. It is the movement from darkness to light. Lack of (adequate) education is one of the key reasons for inter-generational poverty and to break the vicious cycle, the best alternative is to infuse the ‘need’ and create the ‘want’ for education amongst the rural communities. The roots of this process might be bitter, but the fruits shall surely be sweet. AKRSP (India)’s education intervention is multi dimensional. It is subjectively designed to cater specific requirements of the communities. In Gujarat, the programme focuses on remedial learning and school governance through its Learning Enrichment Programme. In Bihar, emphasis has been laid to strengthen the Early Childhood Development Centres.

GUJARAT
During 2015, the education programme in Gujarat expanded to 150 villages with focus on:

a. Running special remedial classes for children with deficits in government primary schools referred to as the Learning Enrichment Programme (LEP)
b. Ensuring school governance (including awareness campaigns on Right to Education (RTE) Act)

A. LEARNING ENRICHMENT PROGRAMME (LEP)
LEP has been initiated to enable students of Class III – V (in target communities) with remedial learning and achieve age-appropriate learning standards. A total of 525 students have been enrolled in LEP classes across 15 villages of Sayla and Chotila blocks in Surendranagar district.

Highlight: Nearly 500 of the enrolled children have completed two-levels of LEP curriculum
LEARNING RESOURCE CENTRE (LRC)

LRC have been initiated in four villages of Chotila and Wankaner blocks (of Gujarat) wherein Learning Enrichment Programme classes are conducted in the morning. The BalMitras (Volunteer Teachers) and coordinators were especially trained for helping the children with the sessions.

B. SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

Intensive efforts were ensured to increase enrollment of children in schools. A variety of initiatives including poster and pamphlet distribution, mobile exhibitions (at temporary booths / tents erected for mass awareness) and meetings with School Management Committee Federations amongst others were undertaken to lay emphasis on Praveshotsav – school enrollment. Regularly organized BalMelas have been a source of enthusiasm for students as they get an opportunity to widen their learning horizons through creative pursuits. Furthermore, trainings were conducted in 10 villages to acquaint Citizen Educators with their roles and ensure requisite capacity building. To increase community’s participation in the school governance, an innovative measure of social audit of learning has been introduced. For the social audit, Village Education Registers have been prepared in 118 villages with thorough details about the schools, teachers, students, drop out ratios, students with special requirements, migrating families, respective school management committees etc.

BIHAR

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT (ECDs) CENTRES AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME

In Bihar, the objective is three-fold:

a. to capacitate children and bridge the learning gap vis-à-vis age
b. motivate the community to accept the government schools
c. encourage the government schools to adopt the teaching-learning methods practiced by AKRSP (India).

Early Childhood Development Centres (ECDs) are designed to facilitate cognitive, physical, social and emotional development for children in the tender age group of three to six years. This year 1458 children availed benefits of 40 ECD centres. During 2015, extended support has been received for ECD programme. The project baseline has been successfully undertaken and four new Resource Centres for ECDs have been established. Through rigorous procedures, team members in various capacities have been selected and trained for their respective involvement. Latest Teaching and Learning Material (TLM) has been procured to ensure all-round development of the children. Capacity building of the new team and consistent quality control for their working has been ensured via regular (every month) review and planning meetings.

In a recent evaluation of the project, parents reported positive changes in their children’s level of interest in school, their homework habits, and their confidence in their ability to learn. Furthermore, government teachers at five of the 15 partner schools have begun to adopt LEP’s teaching-learning materials and child-centered techniques in their own classrooms. This “mainstreaming” of LEP’s effective approaches has multiplied its impact on students in rural Gujarat and ensure the benefits of the project are sustained.
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME (SIP)

The objective of SIP is to strengthen the existing government primary school education system. To do so, a range of activities were undertaken during the year which included:

- Selection and Orientation of Resource Teachers
- Meetings with Education Officials (at various government hierarchical levels)
- Cluster Resource Meetings
- Drafting of School Development Plans (68 schools have submitted their plans)
Research, Monitoring and Documentation:
During the year, the major focus of the Research unit was on carrying out baselines for new projects including the Cotton projects in Sayla and MP, Governance projects in tribal south Gujarat and MP, documenting stories of change across all three regions, managing midterm reviews, evaluations and internships. In addition, the team also anchored the design and development as well as implementation of information systems for reporting and monitoring outputs in Dangs, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar programmes. Thus the monitoring team helped coordinate the design of the mobile telephone based MIS which is being operationalized in Dangs on a pilot basis. In MP the team implemented a drop box based MIS based on learning from the Dangs team which helped streamline information flow for reporting on multiple projects through the year.

Monitoring and Evaluation of projects:
A Quality monitoring of the skill development work in the study centers funded by Gujarat livelihood Promotion Company was also taken up during the year in partnership with National institute of rural development [NIRD, Hyderabad]. The work helped in keeping track of the quality of education being imparted in the centers and the regularity of teachers as also the use of the resources being provided in the best possible way by the students. The CCTV camera footage also helps in the monitoring of classes.

As the Dangi vikas Project is in the third year of implementation mid-term evaluation was done by a third party to assess the progress of the project against the results expected. Eight days of field level data collection was done where primary data was collected through household survey tool and FGD’s at village level. To facilitate the process results were compiled and presented to the evaluation team. Continuous communication and coordination was done to finalise the report with IFMR. Further, an extensive assurance audit conducted by Ernst and young Water for public good project.

To commemorate the occasion of 30 years of operations, the organization came out with special 30th anniversary editions. These included AKRSP (India) in action, a retrospective of 30 years of field implementation through annual reports, Water for livelihoods and health, which documents the interventions related to water resource development and drinking water and Reminiscences ‘Yaadein’ of AKRSP (India) alumni, in which X-AKRSPians share their experiences.
The Madhya Pradesh team conducted concurrent monitoring twice in the year in June and October. All the middle level managers participated to conduct the same.

Documentation and Research: The research team collaborated with Tata Institute of social sciences to carry out a scoping research on climate change impacts on agriculture in coastal Gujarat and with SOPPECOM to review the Participatory irrigation work in Dangs and Navsari projects. Furthermore, collaboration was also done with Harvard Business School’s Professor Alnoor Ebrahim on a research project titled “Measuring Social Change: Designing Metrics that Matter”. Prof. Ebrahim visited AKRSP (India) and gave a talk to senior managers and had one to one discussions on the issue of metrics for different verticals within AKRSP (India). He then visited the Sayla programme area and field office to gather some data. This research is likely to result in a Book in the near future with AKRSP (India) as one of the case studies.

Two members from the team also presented research findings/papers in two seminars - one was entitled: “Field crop vulnerabilities to climate change and the promise of conservation agriculture” – this was presented at the international conference on “Meeting Equity in Climate Change: Paris and the post 2020 Agenda” organized by Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. The second paper was titled: Forest based Livelihoods, Malki Practice and Forest Rights Act in Gujarat: The Case of Adivasis in the Dangs. This was presented at the National Development Convention on Resources, Institutions and Development organized by the Gujarat Institute of Development Research, Ahmedabad.
Vadai aims at attaining following objectives:

- Enabling organizations for effective and better implementation of programs by incorporating grassroots learning (of AKRSP (India))
- Disseminating lessons learnt through field demonstrations
- Building capacities and providing handholding support to other development organizations
- Influencing government policy through advisory services and capacity building

The unit has been on a self-sustenance mode by recovering all administrative and operational costs. During the year 2015, it trained around 4,000 people (including community members, government officials, fellow colleagues from development sector etc.). Along with government assignment, Vadai was also engaged in providing its expertise to various Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) units.

Capacity Building

- MoRD has initiated Integrated Participatory Planning Exercise (IPPE-2) under MGNREGA scheme. Vadai was involved in the IPPE and was assigned Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh to assist the state rural department in the training of IPPE and field support. Accordingly, IPPE training programmes were conducted for both Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh.
- This year saw the strengthening partnership with Water & Land Management Institute (WALMI) for PIM training Programme. PIM trainings for new members of Water User Association (WUA) and leadership training for existing WUA were organized. The major training programs organized were related to PIM this year.
- Training programmes for Reliance Foundation started last year and continued this year as well.

Vadai is the knowledge resource and services' unit of AKRSP (India) and came into being in 2002. From that time onwards, it has been striving towards accumulating and disseminating the grassroots learning of AKRSP (India) through various ways and means.

Vision

To facilitate wider outreach of the demonstrated community based approaches for livelihood enhancement by disseminating its grassroots learning at the local, state and national level.
where the trainings were provided on Watershed, institution building, leadership social audit, etc.

- SHG training for DEEP trust were organized by TLRC, Netrang. The training topic was related to member awareness, internal credit, etc.
- Vadvai has been allotted five districts to provide training support Under Integrated Watershed Management Programs (IWMP). During the period, some of the new training programmes conducted were Effective communication Skill and IEC; Advanced Training for Trainers, Technical trainings for watershed planning, convergence for watershed, agriculture production system, etc.
- A capacity building programme on Participatory Rural Appraisal was organized for Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDI), Gandhinagar.
- Exposure visits were organized for N M Sadguru Water And Development Foundation, Dahod, IRMA, Anand, Deepak Foundation.

New Initiative

IPPE-II has been a good initiative by Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India and five master trainers of Vadvai took forward the cascading capacity building efforts in Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh

A different kind of training programme was facilitated by Vadvai team members with Aatapi Seva Foundation for male and female farmers to explore and understand identity as farmers, right based approach, entitlements along with agriculture and allied issues. Unlike typical farmers training programme, here focus was more on understanding identity of a farmer and taking pride in that than only learning agricultural practices.

Advisory Services

Vadvai undertook the assignment of preparing “Assessment and Intervention Plan of Land and Water based Livelihood Activities in 14 villages of Mandavi and Mundra Taluka in Kutch District” for Coastal Gujarat Power Limited (CGPL) and Tata Power Community Development Trust (TPCDT). To fulfil the objective, an assessment of existing situation in the area of land and water based livelihood activities is being done and based on the assessment, an intervention plan is being formulated. Given the locality of Kutch, animal husbandry has been playing a crucial role in supplementing the livelihood of the people and therefore it has also been studied to make pragmatic recommendations.

Vadvai team member provided services to prepare training modules of barefoot Technicians under MGNREGA programme which was anchored by ANSSIRD Institute, Mysore.

Direct Field Support

SAGARBANDHU project supported by CSR unit of Coastal Gujarat Power Ltd (Tata Power's subsidiary) continued in its third and final phase. Under the project, Vadvai has made interventions towards the betterment of fishing community members. The members have been organized into SHG groups and revolving fund has been extended to them to undertake income generating activities. The infrastructure facilities developed under the previous phase have been operationalized. The capacity of VDAC has been built to actively participate in the village development activities.

Vadvai has been recognized as State and National Level Resource Organization for Integrated Watershed Management Programs in Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh, National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) in all NRLM states

Clientele of

- Tata Power
- Reliance Foundation
- Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh Rural Development Department
- WALMI (Water & Land Management Institute)
- Ambuja Cement Foundation
- Deepak Foundation
- DEEP Trust
- Aatapi Seva Foundation
## Utilization Head wise 2015

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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<tr>
<td>Programme Cost</td>
<td>523.94</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital Cost</td>
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<td>1.5</td>
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<td>Outreach Cost</td>
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<td>0.5</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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## Utilization Location wise 2015

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<td>Saurastra</td>
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<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
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<td>Bihar</td>
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## Utilization Source wise 2015

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<tbody>
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<td>Corporate Donor / Indian Donor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Govt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Contribution</td>
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<td>AKF</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revenue Income</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corpus Interest Income</td>
<td>37.10</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>567.98</strong></td>
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</table>
Training and capacity building of staff members is a concurrent activity at AKRSP (India). The organization has developed a training module in-line with concepts of Management. It has also announced a Management Development Programme (MDP) - for staff across categories - to achieve strategic goals like development of “management” as one of its core competencies; facilitation of analysis for various activities within the organization through the common language of management and empowerment of staff and community leaders with management tools to ensure a better future.

TRAINING

During the year, various structured trainings (including in-house as well as external trainings) have been organized. While majority of them were in-house trainings like orientation (for new joinees) and subject-specific trainings for middle management, following trainings have garnered much enthusiasm from the participants.

- Training was organized on sexual harassment awareness for Central Office staff. External resource person – Ms. Poonam Kathuriya facilitated the workshop
- Internal sexual harassment committee did same sexual harassment awareness training with Bihar team. Training for other field teams has been planned for the year 2016
- One day interaction on ISO certification was done with Vadvai and administration team of Sayla and Netrang by external resource person, Mr. Sunil Karkare
- One day interaction was done by HR team with Gujarat team on ‘performance review’ with special emphasis on importance of performance review, understanding of the format and technique of sharing feedback
- Two days’ workshop on ‘village institution’ had been organized with senior management

Location wise staff strength

- Bihar, 38
- Co, 35
- Sayla, 30
- MP, 87
- Gadu, 55
- Netrang, 40
- Dang, 57
CELEBRATING 30 GLORIOUS YEARS OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT - A SNAPSHOT

To commemorate 30 glorious years of AKRSP (India)'s rural development work, an event was organized at IRMA during December 10 – 12, 2015 in presence of entire work force, board of directors along with Dr. Yoginder K Alagh and Mr. Pratap Amin as Guests of Honour.

The three-day event was full of fun and frolic with a mix of cultural and sports activities along with various experience sharing and walking down the memory lanes. Folk dance performances like garba, diangi and korku tribal added to the vibrancy of the event. Special musical performances in tribal dialects and situational dramas were well appreciated by attendees.

The highlight of the event has been the ‘empowered' community members sharing their experiences and impact of AKRSP (India)'s efforts in their own words. Their confident presentations and twinkling eyes were proof of the transformative effect that AKRSP (India) has had on their lives. Along with interactive story telling, six short audio-visual films (each covering a 5-year timeline) focusing on AKRSP (India)’s journey were showcased. Further, 'The Water Book' depicting AKRSP (India)’s work on water was launched at the event.

Overall the event has been a ‘lifetime experience' for one and all...
Madhya Pradesh team performing a tribal Korku dance

The BDD and guests trying their hand at the gujarati garba

The exuberant and acrobatic staff presenting the folk form of Dangi dance

The participants receiving awards from the chairman and CEO

Enthusiastic community leader, from Saurashtra, sharing the impact AKRSP (India) has made on her life and community

Matt Reed, the CEO of AKF(India) talking about the broader AKDN network’s work
Group photo: Alumni and guests

Tinni Sawhney from AKF (I) honoring a community leader

Full house with entire AKRSP (India) staff in attendance

The Launch of the WATER BOOK highlighting AKRSP (India)’s work in water sector during the 30 years

In Action – Game of tug war

The Winning Moment – Netrang Team won the volleyball tournament
### ADDRESSES

**CENTRAL OFFICE**  
AGA KHAN RURAL SUPPORT PROGRAMME (INDIA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 9th – 10th Floor, Corporate House, Opp. Dinesh Hall, Off. Ashram Road, Ahmedabad-380 009 | Tel: 079-66312451/61, 27541678  
Fax: 079-66312471 |

**OTHER OFFICES IN GUJARAT**

- Sayla (Surendranagar)  
- Netrang (Bharuch)  
- Gadu (Junagadh)  
- Ahwa (Dangs)

**MADHYA PRADESH FIELD OFFICE**  
AGA KHAN RURAL SUPPORT PROGRAMME (INDIA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Details</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| HIG-7, Scholar Den School Road, Dindayalpuram Colony Khandwa (M.P) – 450001 | Tel-Fax: 0733-2249292  
Email: mp@akrspi.org |

**OTHER OFFICES IN MADHYA PRADESH**

- Niwali (Badwani)  
- Balwadi (Badwani)  
- Khalwa (Khandwa)  
- Panchana (Khandwa)  
- Dedtalai (Burhanpur)  
- Zirniya (Khargone)

**BIHAR - CENTRAL OFFICE**  
AGA KHAN RURAL SUPPORT PROGRAMME (INDIA)

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<tr>
<td>C/o Dhirendra Prasad Singh, Chakkar Maidan, Near North Bihar Agro Agency, Muzaffarpur, Bihar 842001</td>
<td>Tel: 0621-2223355</td>
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</table>

**OTHER OFFICES IN BIHAR**

- Muzaffarpur  
- Sakra  
- Pusa
Today the meghal river runs strong after its revival by AKRSP (India) with support of the community.
This year showed us that 2 years of poor rainfall can definitely plunge rural India into a crisis. Increasing and conflicting demands – drinking water and sanitation, agriculture, industry, urbanisation, recreation etc. coupled with a poor water recycling system and reduced water storage (surface and groundwater) has ensured that any rainfall deficit becomes difficult to cope with. Villagers and towns face drinking water crisis (even though drinking water is less than 5% of the total water use) and agriculture growth plummets. With agriculture itself depending on debt funding for its growth, such a crisis leads to farmer suicides on a scale not seen earlier. While drought is largely associated with the quantity of water, what is not realised is that even the quality of water consumed by people and cattle becomes unpotable. Villagers either source water from ponds, or tap deep borewells where the water has chemical impurity (fluoride, chloride, iron etc.) which affects their health. More than 60% of the illness in rural areas is caused by water-borne diseases.

Back-to-back drought resulting from consecutive monsoon failures are becoming a reality for India. In 2015-16, a quarter of the country was affected by drought. The severity of the 2015 drought can be gauged from the fact that 254 out of 678 districts have been affected. Among the worst hit are regions like Marathwada in Maharashtra and Bundelkhand in UP. As Down to Earth shares; drought-prone area of the country has increased by 57% since 1997. We need to ask ourselves why we have come to such a situation, and what are the lessons we have learnt over so many years which can help us be more resilient.

Community based water management has been a core theme of AKRSP (I) over the last 30 years; and it has evolved context specific technologies and community organisations and entrepreneurs to sustain the interventions. There are many villages which have become drought resilient due to the integrated interventions done by AKRSP (I) in collaboration with private donors and the state governments. Villages who are part of river basin management, or integrated watershed programmes have learnt how to manage erratic and low rainfall, and conserve water when it is available.

The cover page therefore shows the range of interventions in different contexts; percolation tanks, check dams with bori-bunds, gated check dams, communities placing bori-bunds on their own during monsoon, solar pumps providing energy for pumping where electricity is scarce, and women accessing potable drinking water at their doorstep in Bihar.

One unfortunate reality over the recent years is that funding for water harvesting has reduced and is now supported by very few donors. The assumption amongst private donors is that government programmes like MGNREGA and IWMP (Integrated watershed management programme) would provide the high capital costs which water harvesting requires and therefore they would focus only on extension and community mobilisation for agriculture and drinking water. Poor governance in some districts has affected such state investments, and they remain vulnerable to drought. So work on water harvesting and small-scale irrigation faces a paradox; it is too small for state funding and too large for donor funding. There is a need to evolve innovative financing mechanisms (part grant, part loan/community contribution) to scale up the interventions. Over these years, many of us, including communities, know what needs to be done; it is now the execution of balancing water supply and demand which is needed.