

“Harvesting elixir of life – Water in the desert to quench thirsts of people and cultivable land”



**Azim Premji
Foundation**

A Quest Towards Collective Action for Freedom & Development

Overall Objective: Ensuring water security to 774 families for drinking and 633 farmers for protective irrigation purposes, and developing newer coping mechanisms for the reduction of vulnerability of the marginalized 4377 families by learning and adopting new knowledge in improving livelihoods. Engaging with various government programs and social security schemes to benefit additional 2742 families for generating better opportunities, and building people institutions.

Objective 1: Availability of the good quality drinking water facilities to families living in hamlets of the intervention area.

The proposed intervention aims to address various aspects of community development and sustainable agriculture. For the enhancement of drinking water facilities, 774 families are set to benefit, ensuring year-round accessibility to water. Concurrently, water quality and safety will be improved through practices like water testing. Samerth has been actively engaged in 40 Gram Panchayats (GPs) and 73 hamlets. In the ongoing effort, 20 GPs and 41 hamlets have been identified for making villages water-secure. Notably, 7 water storage tanks have been constructed, and 2 wells have been renovated to further bolster water accessibility.

Gist of 2 phases: In Phase 1, we successfully developed 29 water storage tanks, and in Phase 2, we facilitated the establishment of 7 additional water storage tanks. Across the 36 structures, our outreach has impacted a total of 3,987 individuals, with 3,421 in Phase 1 and 566 farmers in Phase 2 benefiting from these initiatives. We established a total of 25 drinking water wells in the first year, and an additional one in the second year, collectively providing access to clean water for 1,678 families. Of these, 1,633 families were covered in the first year, and 45 families in the second year.

Samerth has facilitated the construction of 40 ponds in the first phase of the project and one pond in the second phase, impacting a total of 3,469 families. Specifically, 3,346 families were reached in the first phase, and an additional 123 families have benefited in the second phase. The water ponds established in Phase 1 have provided support to 93,435 cattle, and in Phase 2, 450 cattle have benefitted, bringing the total to 93,882 cattle with access to drinking water.



Water Storage Tank



Water Testing

Action Plan against Object 1:

Our strategic action plan involves the construction or renovation of water infrastructure to enhance water availability within the community. This includes the installation of 30,000 liters of water storage tanks, strategically connected to the Narmada and other water supply/resource networks. This initiative aims to address water scarcity issues and improve overall water accessibility.

To ensure the success, active involvement and support from the community institutions are imperative. We plan to activate Water User Committees that will play a crucial role in processing applications and conducting follow-ups. This community-driven approach ensures that the water-related initiatives align with the needs and preferences of the local communities.

Furthermore, we are engaging and capacitating the Village Water Health and Sanitation Committee. This committee is responsible for overseeing the distribution, management, and maintenance of drinking water structures, as well as enhancing the sources of drinking water. By empowering local committees, we aim to create a sustainable and community-led system for ensuring clean and accessible drinking water and good governance around water.

In alignment with the government's Jal Jeevan Mission Program, our action plan also focuses on operationalizing and contributing to its objectives. This involves collaborating with government initiatives to maximize the impact of our efforts and work towards achieving common goals.

Additionally, our plan extends to the improvement of existing water sources. We intend to desilt, clean up, and renovate dug wells, enhancing their functionality and cleanliness. This step contributes to the overall improvement of water infrastructure, promoting a healthier and more sustainable water supply for the community.

Objective 2: Developing water resource for the irrigation purpose, which will help farmers to take second crop, improve income of the farmers and MGNREGA work for the development of water- based assets.

In APF Phase 1, farmers cultivating a second crop witnessed an increase in income, as indicated below. Additionally, 61 irrigation structures were constructed or renovated. In the current phase, 17 structures have been constructed, and the water made available was utilized for irrigation by 345 farmers.

The farmers successfully cultivated crops such as cumin, cotton, mustard, and castor. Due to improved water availability, the acreage under cultivation has increased by 29%, leading to a significant rise in income by 29%. Additionally, the number of participating farmers has increased by 24%.



Bhuteshwar pond



Cumin Farm



Action Plan against objective 2: The Enhanced Support to Livelihoods initiative encompasses a multifaceted approach aimed at uplifting farmers and promoting sustainable agricultural practices. One key facet involves linking farmers directly to markets, enabling them to garner better value for their produce. Concurrently, the initiative focuses on elevating horticulture practices, with an emphasis on both increasing productivity and ensuring the quality of yields.

Approximately 1,500 farmers are coming together to aggregate their crops, including cumin, cotton, and Isabgol, with the aim of securing better prices in the market. Additionally, this collaborative effort involves the conservation of seeds for future seasons, ensuring sustainable agricultural practices and fostering long-term resilience within the farming community.

Additionally, special camps are conducted to address deworming and vaccination needs, contributing to the overall health and well-being of livestock.

Recognizing the pivotal role of soil health in agricultural success, the initiative incorporates education on soil health through initiatives such as moisture and carbon testing, along with the promotion of bio-supplementation techniques. Pastureland development in 110 acres of land is another crucial aspect, with a commitment to enhancing the functionality of user committees and encouraging active community participation in the management of pasturelands. This initiative will assist 2,000 cattle herders in fulfilling their fodder requirements.

Undertaking 10,000 plantation work, the program establishes fodder banks and facilitates linkages, while simultaneously forming groups for coordinated management and protection of these vital resources. The regulation of grazing rights is prioritized to ensure sustainable usage.

Objective -3 : Enhancing livestock rearing practices, advocating integrated farming, implementing Package of Practices (PoP) for climate resilience, and creating new opportunities for improved livelihoods.

Pastureland development is a crucial component, ensuring fodder availability for 407 marginalized community members during the peak of the summer season. Initiatives include the removal of invasive species in 189 acres of pastureland and the cultivation of Jowar in 11 locations. This effort will benefit 1448 families dependent on these pasturelands, catering to the fodder needs of 7469 cattle.



Action plan against objective 3: To further augment the knowledge and skills of participants, exposure training in pastureland development is arranged in collaboration with Urmul Trust, Bikaner. By implementing these diverse strategies, the Enhanced Support to Livelihoods initiative seeks to create a holistic and sustainable framework for the improvement of livelihoods in the agricultural sector.

We plan to focus on addressing the shifting rainfall patterns and proactively explore climate-resilient crops and methodologies to minimize their impact. This involves introducing initiatives such as horticulture, establishing fodder and seed banks, and implementing mixed cropping systems that support the integrated development of agriculture, horticulture, and fodder production



Objective 4: Capability enhancement of local cadre on various livelihood activities through training and creating leadership in village institutions through collectivization

The training sessions have provided valuable support, with 1022 participants benefiting from 40 sessions that covered a diverse range of themes. Participants were exposed to crucial topics such as Leadership, Organic Agriculture, Horticulture and Vermicomposting, Water Management, Kitchen Garden, Cattle Rearing, Cash and Credit, as well as Deworming and Vaccination. These training initiatives have equipped individuals with essential knowledge and skills across various domains, fostering a comprehensive understanding of key subjects related to sustainable agriculture and community development.

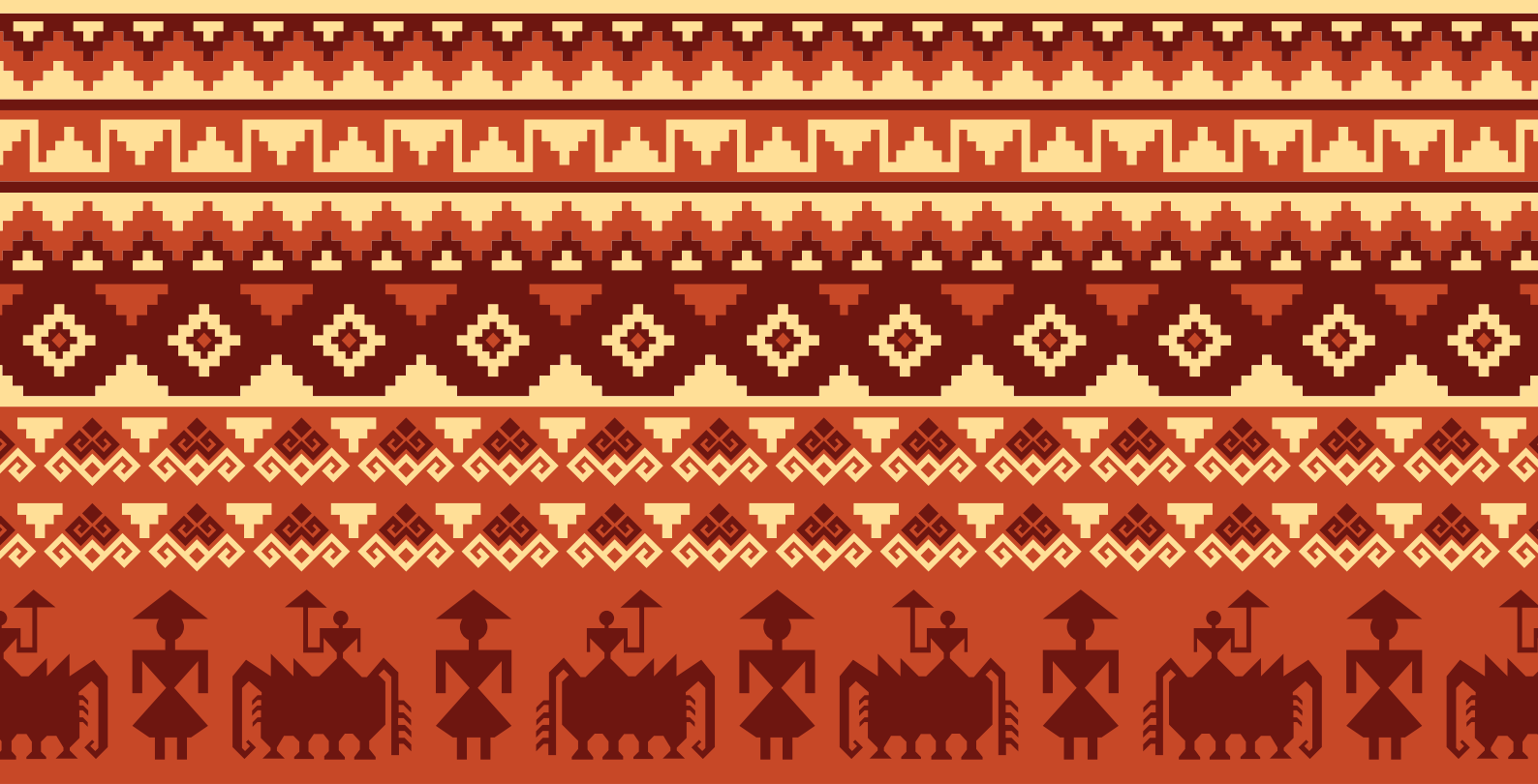


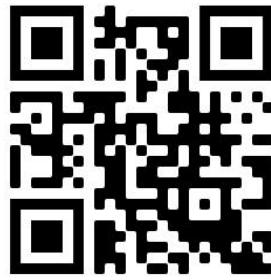
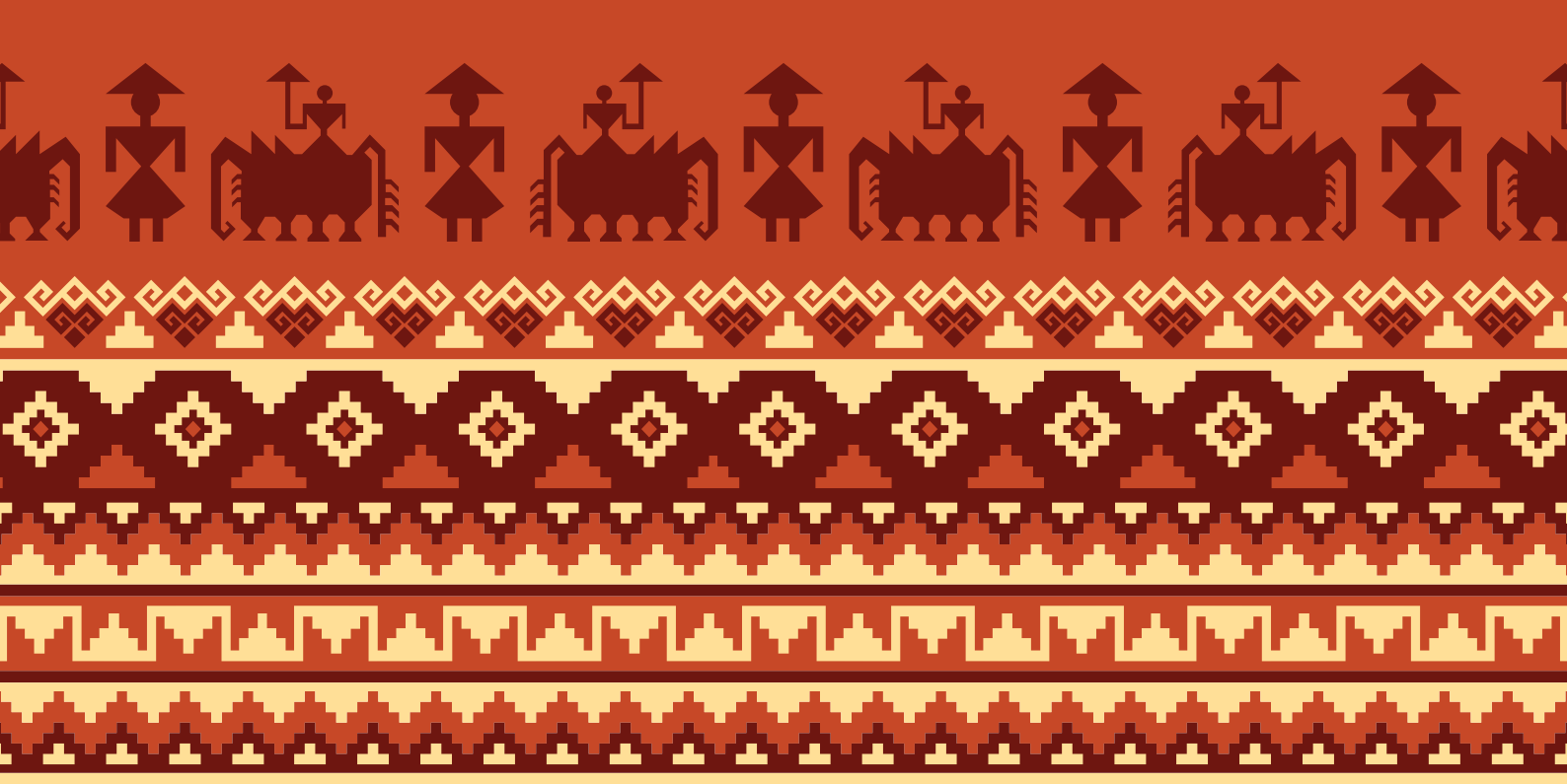
In 40 training sessions, a total of 1022 community members were introduced to Leadership aspects , Organic Agriculture, Horticulture and Vermicomposting, Water Management, Kitchen Gardening, Cattle Rearing practices, microfinancing .



Action Plan against objective 4

The training and capacity building process will continue and the emphasis will be on:

1. **Good Agricultural Practices:** Emphasizing the reduction of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, integrated farming, horticulture, seed management, water management, and resource management.
 2. **Cattle Rearing Practices:** Including seasonal timing for deworming and vaccination, and adopting good practices for cattle rearing.
 3. **Leadership training** focused on improving literacy, mobility, access to banking services, nomination in user groups and electoral bodies, registering complaints, and raising issues through collectivization. Examples include advocating for improvements in drinking water storage and facilities, as well as strengthening institutional building.
 4. **Gender and Equity:** Participants gained understanding and learned strategies to bridge the gender gap. This included promoting inclusion in user groups and encouraging greater independence
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