

QUARTERLY ACTIVITY UPDATE

GUFTAGOO



*Chalo, Sab Milkar is
Guftagoo ko Dilkash Banaye*

“MANZILE AUR RASHTE KABHI ASAAN NAHI HOTE – UNHE SARAL BANANA PADTA HAI.”

life never stops surprising you. The quarter was rich in lessons. In Chhattisgarh, Samerth began engaging communities in weekly haat bazaars—meeting people in the marketplace where they buy essentials and sell locally produced goods. This approach supports a circular economy: minimal footprints, low emissions, and direct livelihood linkages that reduce consumption pressures. The simplicity of needs and the dignity of local trade underscored why this model matters for inclusion, gender awareness, and more meaningful lives.

A strategic conversation with donors moved from purpose to possibility, reimagining traditional mechanisms to position funders as partners in enabling government collaboration. At the CORE (Context, Objectives, Requirements and Examples) — a framework guiding efforts such as energy transition and decarbonisation work in Kutch, which proved insightful and productive.



In Ahmedabad, the urban/rural (Kasindra village) programme marked a confident handover after seven years of work in education, child-friendly pedagogy, SHG-led women’s leadership, and adolescent health. Local stakeholders — including village representatives and multiple departments — are now prepared to sustain and scale these gains, a classic case of community-led sustainability.

Kutch Water Alliance (KuWA) convened NGOs from across Rapar block of Kutch to map water challenges facing vulnerable communities and to build collaborative synergies among stakeholders. Without water, nothing else follows — what is life without love or thirst, friends?

As the financial year closed, the team executed rigorous due diligence and met tight deadlines to ensure a smooth wrap-up. Hip hooray to every team member.

Gazala Paul
Managing Trustee

FOREWORD



This edition of Guftagoo brings together voices, experiences, and learning's from the ground that reflects the interconnected realities of climate, livelihoods, education, and community resilience. As we look back at the first quarter of 2026, what stands out is the strength of communities navigating change with determination, and the collective efforts to support them through integrated and context-responsive interventions.

Stories like that of Kabripathra Nursery remind us that development challenges are not isolated, they are layered and require solutions that are both systemic and community-driven. In this context, our efforts have focused on strengthening sustainable livelihoods, natural resource management, and local resilience, while ensuring that communities remain at the center of planning and action.

At the same time, building strong foundations for children remains a core priority. Through our Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) initiatives under Aagaaz, we are working closely with Anganwadi centres and the ICDS system to create nurturing, play-based learning environments and support school readiness with focus on joyful learning, caregiver engagement, and smoother transitions from Anganwadi to primary.

As we move forward, the learning's from this quarter encourage us to deepen our focus on integration: across sectors, systems, and stakeholders. Whether it is linking education with nutrition, livelihoods with natural resource management, or community efforts with government systems, our approach continues to evolve towards building holistic and sustainable models.

We hope this edition of Guftagoo not only documents our journey but also inspires continued dialogue, reflection, and collective action towards building stronger, more resilient communities.

Samikshya Singh

Thematic Expert - Education

CLIMATE CHANGE, TRIBALS, AND BUDGET 2026–27: WHOSE DEVELOPMENT ARE WE FUNDING?

-Deepak Biswas

Ratiya Bai Maravi, a 65-year-old tribal woman, lives with her family in Chuinala village of Kabirdham district, Chhattisgarh. Nearly a decade ago, they were forced to leave their ancestral village in the hills—an area without roads, electricity, or access to drinking water. Today, they live closer to Bodla town, not out of choice, but necessity—so they can reach a hospital in times of emergency.

Her family owns just 2.5 acres of rocky, sloping land where only millet can be grown. In her backyard, she cultivates small amounts of gram and pigeon pea. But in recent years, even these modest harvests have become uncertain. Irregular rainfall and changing climate patterns have made farming increasingly unreliable. Forests, once a lifeline, are no longer dependable. Amla trees have stopped bearing fruit for the past five years.



To survive, her family migrates seasonally to work in sugarcane fields and jaggery units between November and February.

Reflecting on the past, Ratiya Bai says, “Earlier, we got everything from the forest. Whatever we bought from the market was cheap. Now, we depend on the market for almost everything—and it is all expensive.”

Her story is not an isolated one. It echoes across India’s tribal regions, where communities that have contributed the least to climate change are facing its harshest consequences. Declining forest produce, erratic rainfall, crop failures, and forced migration are becoming the new normal.

At a time when these vulnerabilities are deepening, one would expect strong policy support. Yet, the Union Budget 2026–27 tells a different story.

Several key schemes that could strengthen climate resilience among tribal communities have either seen negligible increases or significant cuts. The allocation for the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana has increased by a mere 0.6%. The Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana has been slashed by 25.4%, and the Watershed Development Fund has been reduced by 0.2%. These are not just numbers—they represent missed opportunities to conserve ecosystems, improve water security, and stabilize rural livelihoods.



Equally concerning is the 0.3% reduction in the crop insurance budget compared to 2025–26. For small and marginal farmers, especially in tribal regions, crop insurance is often the only buffer against climate-induced losses. Weakening this safety net increases their vulnerability.

The stagnation in the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi and the sharp reduction in the PM Vishwakarma Yojana allocation to 32.1% further compound the issue. Many tribal households depend on traditional crafts and artisan work for income. Reduced investment in these sectors risks pushing them deeper into economic insecurity.

Perhaps most alarming is the 19.2% cut in spending on pollution control. Tribal communities, who have historically lived in harmony with nature and contributed minimally to environmental degradation, are now bearing the brunt of rising pollution and climate stress.



This raises a fundamental question: whose development are we prioritizing?

Budgets are more than financial documents—they are statements of intent. They reflect what a nation chooses to value. When allocations for climate resilience, sustainable agriculture, and environmental protection shrink, it signals a troubling disconnect between policy priorities and ground realities.

If India is serious about inclusive and sustainable development, it must place its most vulnerable communities—especially tribal populations—at the center of its climate and economic policies. Strengthening local livelihoods, investing in ecosystem restoration, and ensuring social protection are not just welfare measures; they are essential strategies for long-term resilience.

Ratiya Bai's voice is a reminder that climate change is not a distant threat—it is a lived reality. The question is whether our policies are listening.

SAMERTH CHARITABLE TRUST, GAGODAR – KUTCH

ANIMAL VACCINATION SUPPORT

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT LINKAGE INITIATIVE

As per the direction of the Veterinary Officer of Rapar Taluka, Samerth Charitable Trust provided support of 5,000 Sheep Pox vaccines. As a result, a total of 5,000 small livestock — comprising 4,605 sheep and 395 goats belonging to 16 pastoralist (Maldhhari) families of the Vagad region — were successfully vaccinated. This initiative ensured that vaccination was administered before any disease could break out among the small livestock.



BREED IMPROVEMENT TRAINING PROGRAMME



Currently, the Rapar Veterinary Officer has been conducting Breed Improvement Training in our project villages. Training sessions were organized at a total of 7 locations — Vakra, Sursar Vandh, Jillar Vandh, Varanu, Rapar Bazar Samiti area, and Mevasa — covering 107 pastoralist families. The training focused on why good-breed livestock are essential, and what care must be taken to maintain and improve the breed quality.

Key Outcomes at a Glance

- 5,000 small livestock vaccinated (4,605 sheep + 395 goats).
- 16 pastoralist families covered under vaccination drive.
- 107 pastoralist families trained in breed improvement.
- 7 locations covered for breed improvement training.
- Strong linkage established with government veterinary department.



AGRICULTURE & LIVELIHOOD

BACHUBHAI MADEVA KOLI (SMALL & MARGINAL FARMER)

*BHUTESHWAR VANDH, KIDIYA NAGAR PANCHAYAT, RAPAR TALUKA,
KUTCH, GUJARAT*

Background & Challenge

Bachubhai is a small and marginal farmer from the Koli community of Bhuteshwar Vandh, Kutch. His family depended solely on castor and cotton farming for 4 years, but poor yields left income limited. Lack of knowledge about alternative crops, organic farming, and market-oriented agriculture kept his livelihood options restricted.



Partner Contact & Intervention

In 2025, Samerth Charitable Trust's field team met Bachubhai during a community-level dialogue. Recognizing his interest in new farming, the team encouraged him to adopt vegetable cultivation. He was taken on an exposure visit to Bhutkiya and Vallabhpar, where experienced local farmers shared detailed knowledge on vegetable farming. Samerth staff provided seeds of Brinjal, Chilli, Tomato, and Okra along with 500 kg of Jeeo-Green organic fertilizer and a 200-litre barrel for preparing Jeevamrut (bio-liquid fertilizer). Regular on-field guidance was provided on land preparation, pest control using Jeevamrut, crop management, weeding, and timely inter-cultivation.



Key Outcome

Total net income of ₹13,720 from vegetables – a major leap from single-crop farming. Improved food security, daily household expenses, and soil health through organic methods.

Sustainability

Bachubhai plans to expand vegetable acreage and continue organic farming. The low-cost model is easily replicable for other small farmers in the Vagad region.

Key Learning

Organic vegetable farming boosts income while improving nutritional security and land health. Consistent field guidance and exposure visits are key catalysts for change in marginal farmer communities.

“WHEN OPPORTUNITIES GROW AT HOME, MIGRATION STOPS AT THE ROOT.”

FROM MIGRATION TO SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD: A SUCCESS STORY OF CHHATTARSINGH

Inspiring Transformation: -

Chhattarsingh S/o- Sundarsingh a 38-year-old resident of Ghanikhunta village in Bodla block of Kawardha district (Chhattisgarh), once struggled to sustain his livelihood locally. Due to limited income opportunities, he was compelled to migrate since from last 11 year to Maharashtra, where he worked in factories under difficult conditions to support his family. recognizing his vulnerability, Samerth Charitable Trust selected Chhattarsingh as a beneficiary under its vertical farming initiative. With timely seed support, training, and guidance, he was introduced to innovative vertical farming techniques, enabling him to utilize his small piece of land more efficiently. Initially hesitant, Chhattarsingh gradually adopted the new method with dedication and interest. with continuous effort and support, he successfully established a productive vertical garden. The technique not only increased his agricultural output but also optimized space and resources.

Today, he is able to generate a stable income from his own land. The need for seasonal migration has significantly reduced, allowing him to stay with his family and invest more time in farming activities. His confidence has grown, and he has become an inspiration for other farmers in his community.

Chhattarsingh journey reflects how targeted interventions and sustainable agricultural practices can transform lives. His story stands as a powerful example of how innovation at the grassroots level can reduce migration and promote dignified livelihoods. This has not only improved his economic condition but also enabled him to stay with his family. Migration is no longer a compulsion for him. Apart from practicing vertical farming he also started collecting Non- Timber Forest Products (NTFP) and engaging in value addition activities. By processing and selling these forest products, he has created an additional source of income, further strengthened his livelihood and reduced dependency on migration. “From a endless journey of migration to a life of dignity at home- chhattarsing made the change possible “

“Empowered farmers don’t migrate—they cultivate their future where they belong.”



"FROM SOIL TO PLATE, A NUTRI GARDEN BRINGS NUTRITION CLOSER TO EVERY HOME."

SUCCESS STORY: FROM FOREST DEPENDENCE TO NUTRITIONAL SELF-RELIANCE

Narbadiya Dhurve, a 45-year-old woman from the Gond tribal community, resides in the remote village of Komo under Mudghusri Jungle Gram Panchayat, Bodla block of Kawardha district (Chhattisgarh). Like many families in her village, her livelihood was primarily dependent on forest produce and seasonal wage labor. Due to irregular income and limited access to diverse food, her family often faced nutritional challenges, especially in accessing fresh vegetables throughout the year. Recognizing these challenges, Samerth Charitable Trust, through its focused intervention on nutrition and sustainable livelihoods, introduced the concept of Nutri Gardens in the village. As part of this initiative, Narbadiya was supported with ten varieties of seasonal vegetable seeds, along with basic guidance on land preparation, sowing techniques, and organic methods of cultivation. Initially, Narbadiya was unsure about the outcomes, as she had never cultivated such a diverse range of vegetables before. However, with continuous motivation and handholding support from the Samerth field team, she prepared a small patch of land near her house and began cultivating vegetables such as spinach, okra, brinjal, tomato, and other seasonal crops.

Within a few months, her Nutri Garden started yielding fresh and healthy vegetables. This not only improved her family's daily diet but also ensured regular availability of nutritious food for her children. The dependency on market purchases reduced significantly, leading to savings in household expenses. Encouraged by the positive results, Narbadiya also began sharing surplus vegetables with neighbors and occasionally selling them within the village, generating a small additional income. Her success has become a source of inspiration for other women in the community, who are now showing interest in adopting Nutri Gardens.

Today, Narbadiya Dhurve stands as an example of how a simple intervention, when combined with community participation and proper guidance, can bring meaningful change. Through Samerth's initiative, she has not only strengthened her family's nutritional security but also gained confidence and recognition within her village.

This transformation reflects the broader impact of Samerth's efforts in promoting nutrition-sensitive livelihoods, empowering tribal communities towards self-reliance, and building resilience at the grassroots level.

"Seeds of change, when sown with support, grow into sustainable livelihoods."



TRANSFORMING BARREN LANDS INTO WATER BANKS: RAINWATER CONSERVATION INITIATIVE IN SAHASPUR LOHARA BLOCK (KABIRDHAM) .

In Samerth Charitable Trust working area Sahaspur Lohara Block of Kawardha (Kabirdham) district, a meaningful step toward sustainable development and climate resilience has been undertaken through rainwater conservation and Natural Resource Management (NRM) works. These activities were implemented under the MGNREGA scheme with the participation of local communities and in coordination with the concerned Gram Panchayats. Samerth Charitable Trust, through the High Impact Mega Watershed Project 2.0 (HIMWP 2.0), provided technical facilitation and field guidance during the Planning process.



Before Intervention (Site Layout)

The initiative reflects a collaborative approach where government schemes, community participation, and technical support have come together to address local water and land management challenges.

The implementation process included layout planning, site identification, basic field surveys, leveling, and documentation, along with regular coordination with Panchayat representatives and community members. The HIMWSP 2.0 team of Samerth Charitable Trust provided technical guidance and field-level support throughout the process, ensuring effective implementation and community ownership of the interventions.



After Intervention work of contour trench

During the financial year 2025–26, A total of 4,975 contour trenches were constructed across the project area. Based on standard estimates, these structures have the potential to conserve approximately 5.3 million liters of rainwater, which can help improve soil moisture conditions and support ground water recharge over time.

In Gram Panchayat Gangpur, 2,511 contour trenches were constructed across approximately 15.48 acres of land, generating about 2,564 person-days of employment under the MGNREGA scheme.

Similarly, In Gram Panchayat Badaudakala, 2,464 contour trenches were developed on approximately 13.70 acres, generating around 2,485 person-days of employment.

Overall, the interventions covered about 29.18 acres of land across the two Gram Panchayats. These efforts highlight how watershed-based activities can simultaneously contribute to environmental restoration and rural employment generation.

Beyond employment creation, the contour trenches are expected to support several ecological and environmental benefits, including:

- Conservation of rainwater
- Reduction in soil erosion and surface runoff
- Improvement in soil moisture conditions
- Enhancement of groundwater recharge
- Productive use and gradual restoration of degraded land
- Creation of sustainable livelihoods for the community

The role of Samerth Charitable Trust in this initiative was focused on technical facilitation, field guidance, and documentation support, while the implementation of works was carried out under the provisions of the MGNREGA scheme by the concerned authorities and Gram Panchayats.

As part of future planning, plantation activities may be undertaken around the treated areas, subject to the availability of resources and necessary approvals. Such efforts can help increase green cover, strengthen soil stability, and improve water retention in the landscape.

Over time, these combined efforts are expected to contribute to improved natural resource conditions, reduced water stress, enhanced green cover, and strengthened rural livelihoods in the region. What was once largely underutilized land now has the potential to gradually evolve into a more productive and resilient landscape through collective action and sustainable resource management.



With Communities, PRI members and Samerth charitable trust (HIMWP2.0) Team

WATER, WOMEN, AND WILLPOWER: THE STORY OF KABARIPATHRA

By- Ritesh Shende

Seven years ago back in 2019, a Kabaripathra, a Baiga village consisting of 23 household in Bodla block of Kabirdham district, was facing continuous hardship in terms of productivity, infertile land, acute water and continues migration. The village is the border to the Madhya Pradesh and resides in the buffer's periphery of Kanha Tiger Reserve. Only in the monsoon, the fields turned green and the nearby nala filled with water. But as winter passed, the water slowly disappeared & by summer, the nala dried up, wells lost water, and farming became extremely difficult with no options to cultivate second crops. Agriculture depended only on rainfall and most families could grow just one crop in a year including millets (Kodo, Kutki) and paddy. When water and fodder became scarce, families from Kabaripathra, Shambhupiper and Bokkharkhar adjacent to the Kabaripathra village were migrating near Mahalighat River in Madhya Pradesh with their cattle in search of work and survival during 3-4 months in summer while others were migrating to the jiggery factories in Bodla. Here, the migration was not a choice but was a necessary to live.

During this difficult phase, Samerth Charitable Trust began working closely with the community mostly from the Gond and Baiga. The samerth started focusing on understanding the root cause of distress instead of starting with construction work. Through detailed village meetings, resource mapping, and discussions with the Shambhupiper Gram Panchayat and the people of Kabaripathra, it became clear that water scarcity was the main issue affecting agriculture, livestock, income, and migration. With this, the organisation involves the active involvement of the Shambhupiper Gram Panchayat and strong participation from villagers to prepare a step-by-step plan. Later the plan was approved in the Gram Sabha and works got sanctioned in convergence with government schemes to mobilise resources. The overall planning was focused on treating the land and then constructing water structures in a connected manner.



Hence the organisation introduced a clear plan for water conservation and management. The idea was simple but systematic in its core to treat the land from the upper areas to the lower areas so that rainwater could be captured, slowed down, and stored within the village.

This approach ensured that water would not just flow away but would recharge the soil and groundwater. The catchment area of more than 410 hectares of land was considered while treating the land in Kabaripathra during 2019 to 2022.

In regards with this 1 Check dams and 2 gabion structures were built across seasonal streams to slow down flowing water and increase groundwater recharge in 2021. Accordingly one recharge pits was constructed near ponds to strengthen percolation in 2021 and then 2 large ponds were constructed at suitable locations in 2022 followed by 16 farm bunding and land levelling works were also completed to prevent soil erosion and improve water retention in fields. All these structures were carefully placed so that they could support each other on creating a complete water management system rather than isolated works.



Gradually, visible changes began to appear 2024, The nala started retaining water for longer months till March And wells did not dry up as early as before. Also, the groundwater levels improved directly benefiting soil moisture in field and crops. The people of Shambhupiper and Bokkarkhar says that the nala began holding water through a year bringing a sense of security to the village. As the availability of water improved the migration from the village reduced. Families from Shambhupiper and Bokkarkhar are no longer migrating to Madhya Pradesh with their cattle during summer as the water is sufficient for the livestock. As a result of improved water availability farmers from the areas started growing second crop and also adopted agroforestry practices and bamboo plantation on the farm bunds and farm boundaries which was resulted from the land levelling work. Such practices not only strengthened soil conservation but also created additional income opportunities for the future.

Alternately, the ponds created under the water conservation plan also opened new livelihood options. Since water remained available throughout the year, the village as collectively started fisheries in the ponds. The fish rearing activity are generating extra income and improving nutrition for families. Today, the ponds have become productive assets for the village.

At the same time, Samerth is supporting regular community meetings, trainings, and exposure visits to villagers on landscape restoration activities including capacity building of SHG women and community in large. These activities strengthened the confidence and capacity of women's Self-Help Groups which are now thinking beyond savings and internal lending. With collective confidence, the SHG approached the Gram Sabha of Shambhupiper and requested barren land on lease for livelihood activities. After discussion, the Gram Sabha agreed and signed a 10-year Memorandum of Understanding with the SHG, where the women established a nursery and vegetable farming unit. Assured water availability from the regenerated water system made year-round cultivation possible.

The nursery supplied saplings for plantation and agroforestry activities, while vegetable cultivation provided steady income. Till 2025, the women collectives have earned 3.74 lakhs of rupees. Their financial independence increased their confidence and participation in village decision-making. What was once barren land have become a productive space managed by women of Kabaripathra.

Infrastructure development also played a crucial role in the transformation. Like, the construction of a bridge between main roads to school have improved year-round connectivity. As a result the children who earlier struggled to attend school during monsoon could now go regularly and hence education became more stable and accessible.



The transformation of Kabaripathra happened step by step with a clear vision on water conservation work by Samerth and active involvement and support from the community and panchayat. The people of Kabaripathra contributed labour, participation, and ownership henceforth the land was treated, water was conserved as a result agriculture was improved and migration reduced. Followed by fisheries started with villagers and women collectives, who also running nursery as enterprise in the lease land followed by children's access to education.

Kabaripathra's journey shows that when thoughtful planning, strong community participation, and institutional support come together, lasting change becomes possible. Water conservation became the starting point, but the result was a complete transformation of livelihoods, confidence, and dignity in the village.

SAMERTH INNOVATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

1. EMPOWERING WOMEN, STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES: INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATION

During the quarter, International Women's Day was celebrated on 8 March 2026 at Matoda Primary School with the inspiring theme "Give to Gain – Empowering Women through Support, Education, and Opportunity strengthens the whole society." The event brought together Self-Help Group (SHG) women from Moraiya, Palwada, Sari, and Matoda villages, along with Anganwadi and ASHA workers, educators, and community leaders.

The celebration began with a warm welcome to participants, followed by reflections on the importance of honoring women in society. Speeches highlighted how women's empowerment through education and opportunity is not only a matter of justice but also a catalyst for community progress. Educators and SHG members shared personal experiences of transformation—greater confidence, improved financial literacy, and stronger family roles—since joining collective groups.



The program created a vibrant atmosphere of dialogue, experience-sharing, and solidarity. Discussions centered on women's health, education, economic independence, and social rights, while mothers were encouraged to ensure their daughters continue schooling beyond Grade 8. The event concluded with a call for unity and cooperation, inspiring women to strengthen their role in society. As a token of appreciation, casserole gifts were distributed, symbolizing respect and encouragement.

This celebration was marked by enthusiasm, participation, and inspiration, leaving a lasting impression of collective strength and progress.

Impact

The International Women's Day celebration exemplifies how community-driven initiatives foster women's empowerment, education, and resilience. By strengthening SHGs and encouraging girls' education, the program advances equity, inclusion, and sustainable progress—showing that when women rise, the whole society moves forward together.



2. BUILDING BETTER SCHOOLS. CREATING BETTER FUTURES.

Access to quality education goes beyond classrooms—it depends on safe infrastructure, clean drinking water, reliable sanitation, digital tools, and spaces where children can learn and play with dignity.

With this belief, Samerth Charitable Trust, supported by PPG Asian Paints, has strengthened infrastructure across multiple primary schools in the Sanand and Daskoi Blocks of Ahmedabad Rural, directly improving the daily learning experience of hundreds of students.

Improved Sanitation Facilities

New sanitation units for girls and boys were developed at Matoda, Tajpur, Visalpur and Kasindra Kumar Primary Schools, ensuring hygiene, safety, and dignity for all students.

Safe Drinking Water & Cooling Facilities

RO plants and cold-water coolers were provided to Matoda, Kasindra Kanya, Kasindra Kumar, Tajpur, and Visalpur Primary Schools—helping safeguard student health and well-being.



Knowledge Beyond Textbooks

Newspaper and magazine stands were provided at Kasindra Kanya Primary School to encourage reading habits, curiosity, and awareness.

Safer School Grounds

Paver blocks were laid at Kasindra Kumar Primary School, improving accessibility and safety for students. Additionally, a mid-day meal shade was built at Matoda Primary School, providing shelter and comfort for students during meal times.



Sustainable Energy Solutions

Solar panels have been installed at Matoda, Kasindra Kanya, and Kasindra Kumar Primary Schools, ensuring reliable power while promoting clean and sustainable energy.



Playgrounds That Encourage Growth

Swings and slides were installed at Matoda, Kasindra Kanya, Kasindra Kumar, Tajpur, and Visalpur Primary Schools—supporting physical activity and joyful learning.

Administrative & Digital Enablement

Office operations and digital readiness were strengthened through the provision of essential resources, including a printer at Kasindra Kumar Primary School and computer tables at Visalpur Primary School—supporting both academic and administrative efficiency.



Digital Learning Support

Smart TVs have been added to Kasindra Kanya and Kasindra Kumar Primary Schools to encourage interactive, modern, and engaging classroom learning.

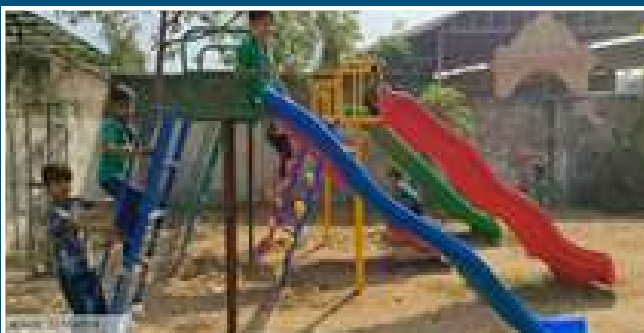
Improved Learning & Storage Facilities

Library cupboards were installed at Kasindra Kumar and Tajpur Primary Schools, creating organized and accessible reading spaces.



Impact

Each of these efforts reflects a shared commitment to strengthening school ecosystems, enabling children to learn in environments that are safe, inclusive, and future-ready. Together, these small steps are driving meaningful change, transforming lives and communities—one school at a time.



SAMERTH TALIM KENDRA

BREAKING BARRIERS: FARHAN'S JOURNEY OF LEARNING AND CONFIDENCE

Farhan is a 14-year-old child with special needs who faces mental challenges. Earlier, he struggled greatly with studies and daily life activities. He could not sit properly to write, had difficulty recognizing words and letters, and was unable to identify money clearly. Using an ATM machine or recognizing currency notes was extremely difficult for him. Counting prices and understanding letters posed constant challenges, and his attention would wander quickly, preventing him from completing tasks consistently.



Through regular guidance, patient practice, and activity-based learning, Farhan's life began to change positively, step by step. He was taught how to wait, trained to read and recognize simple words, and gradually learned to identify ₹10, ₹20, ₹50, and ₹100 notes along with their value. He now understands what an ATM machine is and why it is used. Most importantly, Farhan has become much calmer than before, listens to instructions, and is able to maintain focus on activities for longer periods of time.

Farhan's journey teaches us that with patience, trust, and the right support, even the seemingly impossible can be made possible.

Farhan's progress demonstrates how consistent guidance and inclusive teaching methods can transform challenges into achievements. His journey is a reminder that when children with special needs are given patience, encouragement, and opportunities, they not only gain confidence but also inspire communities to believe in the power of possibility.



KIOSK AND HAAT BAZAR AWARENESS INITIATIVE IN BODLA, PANDARIYA, AND LORMI BLOCKS.

– Organised by *Samerth Charitable Trust*

Recognizing the importance of haat bazaars as vibrant community gathering spaces, Samerth Charitable Trust organized kiosk-based awareness activities in the haat bazaars of Bodla and Pandariya blocks in Kabirdham district and Lormi block in Mungeli district. These local markets attract people from many surrounding villages, making them ideal platforms for sharing information, promoting dialogue, and encouraging community participation.

The kiosks served as interactive spaces where community members learned about the importance of commons, such as forests, grazing lands, rivers, and village ponds. These shared natural resources are essential for sustaining rural and tribal livelihoods, particularly for communities like the Baiga (PVTG) and Gond, who depend on forests and common lands for fuelwood, fodder, minor forest produce, and cultural practices. The sessions highlighted the need for collective responsibility in protecting and managing these commons for long-term sustainability.



The awareness initiative also focused on the restoration and sustainable management of natural resources. Community members were encouraged to undertake activities such as plantation, water conservation, soil and land restoration, and protection of village forests and water bodies. These efforts can help restore degraded lands, improve water availability, and strengthen climate resilience in the region.

In addition, the kiosks provided information on relevant government schemes, particularly programs such as MGNREGA and other rural development initiatives, which support natural resource management, employment generation, and livelihood enhancement. Community members were informed about how these schemes can be used for restoring commons and improving village-level infrastructure.

The initiative also emphasized the role of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in strengthening livelihoods and women's empowerment. SHG members were encouraged to utilize haat bazaars as local marketplaces to sell agricultural products, forest produce, and small-scale enterprises developed through group initiatives.

Overall, the kiosk-based awareness initiative organized by Samerth Charitable Trust effectively transformed the haat bazar into a platform for learning, awareness, and collective action, helping communities understand the value of commons, access government schemes, and promote sustainable livelihood opportunities.



WATER BRINGS DIGNITY, SAFETY, AND HOPE.

In Narsar Vandh, a hamlet under Jatawada Panchayat in Rapar block of Kutch district, access to safe drinking water had long been a daily challenge for families living close to the Rann. Most households depend on farming and livestock, and the community has traditionally relied on seasonal water sources and conventional storage systems.

To respond to this need, SAMERTH, with support from Mukul Madhav Foundation, facilitated the installation of a new water storage tank and pipeline system. The effort was designed to improve reliable access to drinking water for the community.

The intervention did not stop with the installation of the structure. Based on recommendations for long-term sustainability and safety, additional protection work was carried out around the water storage tank.

A one-meter PCC base was constructed around the tank to create a clean, stable, and durable platform. This helped reduce erosion, prevent water stagnation, and lower the risk of contamination around the water source.



Fencing was also installed around the tank to protect the structure from animals and to keep children safe from unsupervised access. A main gate was added so that regular cleaning and water filling could continue in a controlled and safe manner.

For the community, this was more than a physical structure. It became a symbol of care, responsibility, and shared ownership over an essential common resource. Residents appreciated the work as an important step toward safeguarding their drinking water source for the future.



The impact of the intervention also encouraged further local action. At the request of residents, Jatawada Gram Panchayat extended support through the 15th Finance Commission Grant, with an investment of Rs 2,52,000. Through this effort, the old 20,000-litre water storage tank was repaired and the pipeline was extended by 800 meters to reach the remaining households in the hamlet. This development marked an important shift in local participation and confidence. It showed that when communities are able to voice their needs and institutions respond positively, meaningful and lasting change becomes possible.

Throughout this process, the SAMERTH team provided technical guidance, coordination, and quality supervision. The journey of Narsar Vandh shows that sustainable rural development is not only about building infrastructure, but also about building trust, ownership, and resilience within the community.

AWARD & RECOGNITIONS:

Iqbal Baig, Founder & COO at Samerth Charitable Trust, received this certificate for participating in the 5K Water Run on March 20-22, 2026, as part of World Water Day activities in India. The event, powered by Thirst Foundation's RUNBLUE initiative and signed by Mina Guli—founder of Thirst Foundation and renowned water advocate celebrates contributions to global water awareness and wetlands conservation.

World Water Day occurs annually on March 22, organized by UN-Water to highlight freshwater issues and support SDG 6 for sustainable water management. In 2026, India's events emphasized themes like "Water and Gender" and "Industry for Water," with runs and conclaves promoting community action.


- Completed 5K run from March 20-22, aligned with UN observance.
- Recognised for global "Run for Water" and Wetlands efforts.
- Presented by Mina Guli via RUNBLUE, Thirst Foundation's campaign.

This participation aligns with Baig's expertise in rural water projects at Samerth Charitable Trust.



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