



ANNUAL REPORT 2016-17

Seva Mandir

TRANSFORMING LIVES

Our Mission

Seva Mandir's mission is to make real the idea of society consisting of free and equal citizens who are able to come together and solve the problems that affect them in their particular contexts. The commitment is to work for a paradigm of development and governance that is democratic and polyarchic. Seva Mandir seeks to institutionalize the idea that development and governance should not just be left to the state and its formal bodies, such as the legislature and the bureaucracy, but that citizens and their associations should engage separately and jointly with the state.

The mission, briefly, is to construct the conditions in which citizens of plural backgrounds and perspectives can come together to benefit and empower the least advantaged in society.





'Where there is sorrow,
where there is poverty and oppression,
where man is inhuman to man,
where there is darkness of ignorance,
it is here Seva Mandir must reach out.'

Dr Mohan Sinha Mehta
Founder, Seva Mandir
(1895-1985)



सेवा मन्दिर
सतत शिक्षा केन्द्र
SEVA MANDIR
CONTINUING EDUCATION CENTRE



Contents

| | | |
|-----|---|-----|
| | President's Foreword | 5 |
| | Overview | 8 |
| 1. | Strengthening Village Institutions | 12 |
| 2. | Developing Natural Resources | 23 |
| 3. | Clean Drinking Water and Sanitation | 36 |
| 4. | Empowering Women | 41 |
| 5. | Income Generation Cell | 50 |
| 6. | Early Childcare and Development | 53 |
| 7. | Educating the Next Generation | 67 |
| 8. | Improving Health | 79 |
| 9. | Delwara: Peri-urban Governance | 88 |
| 10. | Kankroli: A New Area | 92 |
| 11. | Child Representative Programme | 96 |
| 12. | People's Management School | 101 |
| 13. | Resource Mobilization Unit | 110 |
| 14. | Kaya Training Centre | 113 |
| 15. | Appendix | |
| | • Credibility Alliance Report | 115 |
| | • Members of Different Bodies | 118 |
| | • Programme Expenditure Statement | 120 |
| | • Donors | 121 |
| | • Financial Report | 123 |
| 16. | Glossary of Technical and Hindi Terms and Abbreviations | |

(Inner Back Cover)

An Obituary - V.B. Eswaran

Shri V.B. Eswaran, long-serving member of the Seva Mandir Board of Trustees, died on 2 September 2016. He was 88. His departure leaves us all with a sense of great personal loss.

Eswaran Sb was one of the most remarkable officers of the Indian Administrative Services and worked in many departments of rural development in Maharashtra and Gujarat, before serving in the central government at the highest levels. The example he set as a young officer of integrity and public service shaped the ethos of the civil service in Gujarat.



After his retirement from the IAS he continued public service through association with voluntary organizations, especially in the sphere of natural resources management and rural and community development. He was the chief executive, and later the chairman of SPWD (Society for Promotion of Wasteland Development) for many years. He built the SPWD into an exceptionally effective action-cum-policy research institution on natural resources.

Eswaran Sb was pivotal in persuading the Ministry of Environment to issue guidelines on Joint Forest Management and formulating the national policy on participatory approaches to watershed development. He was also actively involved in drafting the National Voluntary Sector Policy for the country.

Eswaran Sb knew Seva Mandir through its partnership with SPWD, but came much closer when he joined the NGO's board in 1994 at the behest of the then President, Mr Jagat Mehta. His administrative experience and background in rural development and finance helped Seva Mandir immensely. Under his leadership as President of Seva Mandir (1997-2003) new policies and plans were framed.

Eswaran Sb was a formidable intellect in meetings, but quite different in the field. In the field he behaved as an equal to staff and villagers alike. His curiosity and energy knew no bounds. Seva Mandir's wasteland development programme especially benefited from his input. As President and later as a member of the Board of Trustees, he nudged Seva Mandir to look beyond its immediate horizons and encouraged us to learn from other institutions and experiences. His eye for detail and good systems made Seva Mandir much more transparent and better run.

Eswaran Sb will always be remembered in Seva Mandir as a man devoted to public service and removing the blight of poverty.

President's Foreword

Seva Mandir is close to completing 50 years of work in the region of Udaipur. From modest beginnings it has grown into an institution, an institution that provides services to deprived communities in villages and small towns on a significant scale. All its efforts at providing services related to health, education, sanitation, livelihoods and protecting the environment are designed to bring people together so that they can cooperate with each other and work for the common good. At another level, it has been able to create an ethos amongst its staff members whereby they respect and learn from the knowledge and governance systems of local people. Seva Mandir takes seriously the idea that local people have their own self-critical thoughts and practices that are mindful of the environment, as well as their own democratic and communitarian practices.

Practising epistemic humility and giving local people a significant say in the design and implementation of projects has not been easy for the staff of Seva Mandir. People with professional degrees and formal education are not trained to be open to other knowledge systems, nor are they oriented to share power and responsibility with people less educated than themselves. Seva Mandir has worked hard

to create an organizational culture which disperses power and responsibility through all levels of the organization, including at the grass roots. It takes seriously the categories of thought worlds and practices of resistance by which village people give meaning to their lives and aspirations to build more just and respect-giving social arrangements.

The ability of village people to come together to work for the larger good of their communities has also been a long and difficult journey. The power structures within village communities and the powerful hold of self-interest all around has required Seva Mandir and local people to address these constraints with patience and a Gandhian attitude: 'That line of action is alone justice which does not harm either party to a dispute ¹.'

In the 1980s and '90s donors and members of the state bureaucracy were aware of and empathetic towards these difficulties and interested in encouraging a people-centric approach to governance and development. So they made allowances for slow progress in achieving development targets. As a result over time a vibrant tradition was created of village

1. Erich H Erikson (1978), Insight and Responsibility, Chapter VI: *The Golden Rule in the Light of New Insight*, Pg. 239

people coming together to build a consensus on how best they could become custodians of the common interests of their communities. It also allowed Seva Mandir to gain confidence in establishing protocols of working with villagers to ensure that they and Seva Mandir were mutually accountable for ensuring desirable development outcomes and deepening democracy.

It is ironic and unfortunate that, as village people have grown in maturity as custodians of development, the dominant discourse on development has lost interest in a vision of development that empowers local communities. In the case of the state agencies this is reflected in the Forest Department of Rajasthan's abandoning the Joint Forest Management programme, which allowed village people to jointly manage lands vested with the Forest Department and benefit from such conservation efforts. In eight years not a single Community Forest Rights claim has been approved by the state government. More than 40 such claims lie unattended at the district level. The traditions within the state bureaucracy of promoting participatory development and governance have become recessive. Most donors have also lost their appetite for institution-building grants and supporting transformations in social and power relations at the grass-roots level.

What is perhaps encouraging is the fact that, even as the interest in transformative change has abated, new opportunities for engaging with the state and corporate donors have emerged. A new central government law that mandates that 2% of corporate profits be set

aside for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) projects has provided a platform for voluntary organizations like Seva Mandir to engage with both the corporate sector and government. It offers the hope of creating partnerships between corporate houses, voluntary organizations and local communities to build a more just society.

One significant project that has crystallized in this newly opened-up field of CSR is a project to revitalize the Anganwadi Centres run by the state. This large project is funded by Hindustan Zinc Ltd. It covers five districts of Rajasthan. Seva Mandir is their NGO partner in Udaipur district. If successful, this project could provide far-reaching benefits to small children and their families, and establish the value of a participatory approach to development in the eyes of the state and corporate sector. Seva Mandir is fortunate to have many such CSR partnerships. Each project is different and provides an opportunity to engage in conversation with corporate donors in different domains of development. Each of our corporate sector partners is worthy of our deepest gratitude.

Another very encouraging feature of this year has been the research projects under way in Seva Mandir. Georgetown University has a project that looks at the question of how cooperation among village people impacts development outcomes. A project with McGill University and IFMR is looking at the impact of Balwadis on women's well-being and economic empowerment. Both these projects are part of a long-standing tradition in Seva Mandir to

encourage research as a way to review its own work and to assist in creating knowledge in the field of development.

As Seva Mandir completes 50 years of existence it may claim that its ethos is one whereby middle-class people, young and experienced professionals, young men and women from modest social backgrounds draw satisfaction from working in partnership with village people to deepen democracy and promote non-cooperation with arrangements that destroy the environment and promote injustice. Looking to the future, the key challenge will be to create ethical communities and nurture democratically minded development workers.

No words of gratitude are enough for donors who have allowed Seva Mandir to continue for so long. The exceptional efforts of the Friends of Seva Mandir in the UK and USA have introduced Seva Mandir to people living miles away from where it works and successfully sought their support.

Last but not least, thanks are owed to the staff and frontline workers of Seva Mandir, to village and urban citizens. They have shown in so many ways that the idea of creating self-governing democratic village republics need not remain the 'hallucination of a feverish mind'. Special thanks to Narayan ji, the General Secretary, and his team for the excellent work conducted over this year. My gratitude to my fellow trustees for their support and guidance. Mr. V.B. Eswaran, trustee, and past President, passed away in September 2016. His contributions to Seva Mandir were enormous. His fine intellect was

equal to his deep commitment to building a poverty-free society. Towards this end he motivated Seva Mandir colleagues as much as he enriched them with his knowledge.

My very special thanks are due to Priyanka, the Chief Executive of Seva Mandir. She has announced her desire to leave Seva Mandir in the course of 2018. She has served in many different capacities over 20 years. As Chief Executive for the last seven years her contributions have been exceptional. This report is testimony to the vibrancy of her leadership and her ability to protect the core values and vision of Seva Mandir under adverse circumstances. She has shown that it is possible to walk the tightrope between achieving high levels of efficiency, respecting the individual needs of each worker as they strive to find themselves and be useful to the organization, whilst bringing about deep social changes in society.

The trustees have chosen her successor, Ronak Shah. For the last four years he has been the Chief Executive of a company called Udaipur Urja Initiatives which was incubated in Seva Mandir. Ronak has a special interest in matters related to climate change and grass-roots initiatives to adapt to the adverse consequences of climate change. He has been associated with Seva Mandir for the last 11 years.

He will bring new ideas and energy to Seva Mandir. He will deepen its traditions of constructive work as self and social transformation.

Ajay S. Mehta
President

Overview

Every year seems a special and new year to us at Seva Mandir. It amazes me how, after nearly five decades, at one level so much of Seva Mandir is old and continuous and yet at another level there are new openings and successes, new ground, fresh challenges (and new failures) to keep us young and agile.

One of this year's 'new successes' was our partnerships with the corporates, through the CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) framework. Partnerships with corporates are not new to Seva Mandir. We have had support from some of the international business houses like Target, Monsoon, Barclays Bank, and Indian businesses like Copal India and Colgate. But CSR has brought in new partners and a new kind of relationship with existing supporters. The partnership is new on both sides and both parties come from different vantage points: perhaps understandably, these relationships can sometimes seem challenging. However, the fact that we, the corporates and NGOs, have come together suggests that we do have some common ground and that together we can enlarge and deepen that common ground, and use it to help build better and more dignified lives for the citizens of our country.

Seva Mandir's experience with CSR reached a new level this year, with somewhat mixed results so far, but there are many signs of enriching and rewarding cooperation. Larsen and Toubro (L&T), one of the leading engineering project management companies, has given Seva Mandir support for a three-year project to undertake integrated community development in Kumbhalgarh block of Rajsamand district. Seva Mandir had ventured to Kumbhalgarh in 2001 to work in the Government-World Bank collaborative DPIIP (District Poverty Initiatives Project). We had limited success in the project but stayed on in Kumbhalgarh, thanks to grants from ICCO, Netherlands, and our other Comprehensive Plan donors Bread For the World Germany and Plan International. For a variety of reasons we had not been able to bring our work in Kumbhalgarh to a level comparable with other blocks we work in. L&T's support allowed us to undertake watershed work on 5,882 hectares, improving the agriculture and allied activities of 472 households and enabling access of 543 households to clean drinking water and sanitation. More significantly, this intensive and slightly longer-term support has allowed us to nudge communities to cooperate amongst

themselves to set up and manage common resources like pastures, drinking water systems, irrigation structures, and through that deepen values of solidarity and norms of consensus-building and equity.

CSR processes are not naturally attuned to supporting the intangibles of cooperation and equity, but Seva Mandir's experience in Kumbhalgarh shows that it is possible to arrive at such a result. The process of creating space for cooperation and equity and crafting programmes and processes to achieve them, though initially painful, may be something we all want to invest in and aspire towards.

Another large CSR breakthrough has been the Hindustan Zinc Ltd (HZL)-supported Khushi programme, in which Seva Mandir is responsible for supporting and strengthening 575 government-run Anganwadis in Udaipur district. Next year the programme will expand to about 1,300 Anganwadis, which will also allow us to work in two new blocks. While the task of strengthening 1,300 government Anganwadis looks formidable, it is a splendid opportunity for us. The Khushi programme has allowed Seva Mandir to go to scale in partnership with the government. Having worked effectively in the space of young children's development through our own Balwadis, the HZL Khushi programme has allowed us to take our experience and learning to another setting and on a much larger scale. It is a challenging project, not least because we have ambitious targets in a space which we do not control, but the Seva Mandir team has risen to meet the new challenge. For old

organizations such as ours, new and challenging opportunities like Khushi are important also from the perspective of growth, renewal and expansion.

An equally ambitious programme and one pushing frontiers was the launch of the Colgate-Seva Mandir scholarship. For several years Seva Mandir has been preparing children through its village schools and residential learning camps to join government schools to pursue their middle and higher studies. Despite a large number of children mainstreamed every year, most would perform poorly in academics and a high number dropped out by class 9 and 10. This led to the idea of paving the way for such children to attend private boarding schools, giving them a chance to study in the best academic environments. Colgate has created a scholarship fund which will allow children to be educated at the Vidya Bhawan Senior Secondary School from class 8 to 12. This scholarship is a bold experiment for voluntary organizations such as Seva Mandir and Vidya Bhawan and for corporates: the challenge is how to ensure quality education is accessible to children whose families and communities have never experienced a good school and who face the multiple disadvantages of poverty, backwardness and the lack of an educationally rich environment. The scholarship programme aspires to bridge the huge learning gap that society has created for these children.

The list of such partnerships is long: RBSFI (Royal Bank of Scotland Foundation India) is supporting us to set up agro-enterprises in Kotra, the 23rd most backward block in our country; JK Tyres has enabled us to make a

small-scale entry into the new block of Kankroli, Rajsamand.

Each of our CSR relationships has had its own learnings and challenges and it is an evolving space. Seva Mandir's experience shows that it does have the potential to ensure development outcomes, but more investment is needed from both sides to make the partnership yield transformative results.

In addition to grappling with CSR, many other exciting new and old events have kept us busy this year. Moving further towards community ownership and sustainability, we have started work on federating the village-level development committees. 24 zonal-level federations and two block federations have been built. The collectivization has given the villagers new strength and vitality. The federations are being encouraged to take up social as well income-enhancement activities like trading of agricultural produce. The initial results are encouraging. In future the federations could help us move to a 'minimal-intervention' relationship in some of our field areas. Similarly our earlier work on sanitation and clean drinking water is yielding results. Annual medical expenses have gone down by 58% in areas where such work has been undertaken.

Another major step this year has been the improvement in our monitoring and evaluation systems: we hope this report will give glimpses of that.

All this work has been achieved by the diverse group of people who make up Seva Mandir. At the base there are close to 1,000 village volunteers or para-workers working as teachers in schools, care providers in Balwadis and Anganwadi Centres, in watershed and forestry programmes and managing village institutions. They receive a modest honorarium for their services. It is their hard work and sense of duty that makes the programmes of Seva Mandir efficacious in small and remote locations. At another level there are full-time Seva Mandir workers, who have been educated in local institutions and are from modest economic backgrounds. A career in the voluntary sector is not something they aspired to, but having joined Seva Mandir they have developed an affinity for our goals and values. While frustrated at times at their modest salaries and the lack of opportunities to exercise more authority, their empathy for achieving the goals of Seva Mandir is remarkable.

Seva Mandir also has a group of people who have had a professional education. Though few in number, their utility to the organization is immense. In this category there are both young and highly experienced professionals. This group carries the responsibility of bridging the world of donors and government officials with that of grass-roots action.

Melding these different social groups into one cohesive team is like conducting a large orchestra. At times there can be some

disharmony, but for the most part this diversity brings depth and effectiveness to the work of Seva Mandir. In recent years, the volume of the NGO's work has grown significantly but its staff strength has remained constant.

Amidst these and other successes, the absence of progress on the Community Forest Rights claims sometimes sapped our morale. It puzzles us that, amidst the huge environmental crisis that the world is facing, poor peasants are showing exemplary leadership in protecting their forests and choosing community forest rights over individual rights, yet the state is unable to encourage and support them. More than 150 claims of Community Forest Rights have been circulating in the corridors of government for almost eight years and not a single one has been granted. But the silver lining, even in this frustrating scenario, is that it has created an opportunity for us to further deepen community efforts at protecting forests and the environment and not depend solely on

state support. It may also be the start of a phase in which the citizen can move from being a petitioner to being an active contributor in the relationship with the state.

Seva Mandir continues to be an active, thriving, learning and exciting place, and capturing in this Overview the spirit of all that we did in a year has been difficult, but in summary the year was fulfilling and challenging.

We had one loss this year, that of our senior trustee Mr V. B. Eswaran. On behalf of all staff of Seva Mandir I pay my homage to him.

I would like to place on record my gratitude for the support of all donors, friends, volunteers, partner communities, the board and above all my colleagues and our President, Ajay S. Mehta.

Priyanka Singh
Chief Executive



Strengthening Village Institutions

In addition to solving specific problems, Seva Mandir programmes have enabled communities to cooperate amongst themselves. The programme processes necessitate villagers' coming together to make decisions and resolve any differences for the common good. Over time, Seva Mandir's programmes have led to an altering of social relations, making them less hierarchical, more equitable and non-patronage based. This has not always been the case. In

the early years Seva Mandir found it difficult to get local communities to cooperate and take greater responsibility for safeguarding and developing their common resources. They were more vertically aligned with the powerful than horizontally aligned amongst themselves. It seemed that political and social institutions had adjusted to poor governance and development outcomes. We found that the process of rural development had shifted the balance in favour

This programme aims to create an ecosystem where the positive forces of cooperation, transparency, equity, justice and responsible autonomy within the community can help lead the villages towards comprehensive development.

of state functionaries and eroded solidarity amongst the poor. On the one hand, politics, the governance of control and divisiveness had made people incapable of working for their own development, and, on the other hand, this led to the reproduction of self-destructive behaviour among the poor.

Constructive work such as running small schools and preschools or developing pastureland provided a powerful rallying point for people to come together. Each of these programmes' processes necessitated that planning and implementation be carried out collectively and transparently, thereby creating opportunities for people to learn to work together. Sustained opportunities and interaction slowly helped the communities internalize the norms of cooperation and transparent, democratic functioning. Making sure that these norms gained deep roots and were sustained beyond programme interventions required having a reason for people to meet regularly and also building their capacity for governance and management.

The Village Institutions programme was initiated for this reason with two main objectives. The first objective was the creation and deepening of norms and capacity development for the common good. Secondly, the village fund was created as a common property resource around which people could meet regularly, while also providing financial autonomy to the village.

The major components that make up the Village Institutions programme are:

- Gram Samuh, a general body of which every citizen of the village is a member. The gram samuhs elect an executive body called the Gram Vikas Committee (GVC).
- Gram Vikas Committee (GVC or Village Development Committee), responsible for leading the local development process and finding solutions to the problems facing villagers in a collective and democratic manner
- Gram Vikas Kosh (GVK or Village Development Fund), built up through contributions from the communities, and serving two critical objectives: giving the communities the ability to fund some of their needs, and also providing a reason for the whole community to meet and discuss the allocation of funds on a regular basis

Specific objectives:

- Build and enhance capacities of village-level institutions for self-governance
- Create and strengthen the management of village funds, which includes investments earning a higher rate of return, better use of funds, and record-keeping



- Deepen the inclusion of women, young people and children in community institutions
- Assess the functioning of community institutions as democratic, non-partisan institutions and share results with the rest of the organization
- Facilitate better linkages between community institutions and the panchayat and carefully study and share

This programme aims to create an ecosystem where the positive forces of cooperation, transparency, equity, justice and responsible autonomy within the community can help lead the villages towards comprehensive development.

Seva Mandir's presence in the villages:

- Seva Mandir is associated with 731 village groups at present
- 659 have a GVK, 12 more than last year
- There are 589 elected GVCs, 12 more than last year. (GVKs are often set up before GVCs, hence the discrepancy.)
- The total membership of the village groups is now 66,719, an increase of 1,920 in the last year. This includes the extension of membership to households who were not previously members of the samuh.
- The new Anganwadi project, called Khushi, allowed Seva Mandir to go to another 700 new villages which include two new blocks, Mavli and Sarada of Udaipur district

Gram Vikas Committees

GVCs have overall responsibility for village-level development and there has been considerable progress towards making them fully representative of the communities they serve.

- 12 new GVCs were set up in 2016-17
- 73 re-elections were conducted this year, including 9 long-pending re-elections;

Seva Mandir's presence in the villages

Seva Mandir is associated with **731 village groups** at present

659 have a GVK, 12 more than last year

There are **589 elected GVCs**. (GVKs are often set up before GVCs, hence the discrepancy.)

The new Anganwadi project, **Khushi**, allowed Seva Mandir to go to another 700 new villages which include two new blocks, Mavli and Sarada of Udaipur district

The **Village Institutions programme** has two main objectives. The first objective was the creation and deepening of norms and capacity development for the common good. Secondly, the village fund was created as a common property resource around which people could meet regularly, while also providing financial autonomy to the village.

Gram Samuh, a general body of which every citizen of the village is a member.

The gram samuhs elect an executive body called the Gram Vikas Committee (GVC)

Gram Vikas Kosh (GVK or Village Development Fund), built up through contributions from the communities

183 re-elections are still outstanding

- 43% of the GVCs have women office-bearers this year

Support to Peoples Initiative

All the village-level para-workers or volunteers like the Balawadi Sanchalikas and Shiksha Kendra instructors are appointed, monitored and paid by the GVCs. Seva Mandir assists the

GVCs in these tasks through its Support to People Initiative (SPI).

The objective of this social relationship is to help village volunteers be more accountable to the communities they serve. The GVCs' capacity to monitor ongoing programmes, objectively evaluate workers and make payments is developed in the process.



A Gram Vikas
Committee
Meeting meal
preparation :
The Committee
group preparing
baatis (round
dumplings made
from wheat flour)

During the reporting period GVCs received 28 SPI follow-up training courses with the main focus on increasing villagers' skills in effectively monitoring and making payment to village volunteers. The training sessions were designed to make the GVCs capable of managing on their own the development projects running in their village. Issues discussed in these sessions include loans, cash in hand, management information system updating and introduction to government schemes with a special focus on pensions.

Village Cohesion Index

The objective of the Village Cohesion Index (VCI) is to serve as a tool for evaluating the cohesiveness and performance of the village institutions in four areas: participation, leadership, resources and management.

Once every three years a sample number of GVCs are assessed on the VCI to review their status and performance on all of these parameters. It is an opportunity for the GVCs to evaluate and compare themselves with their peers and, on the basis of their findings, design an action plan.

- This year 128 GVCs were rated on a scale of 1-100 overall and in each of the parameters and then classified. This year five categories have been introduced: A+, A, B, C, D.
- 15 GVCs were rated as excellent (A+), 36 as good (A), 40 as average (B), the rest being placed in categories C and D
- The majority of GVCs have earned good ratings on the parameters of participation, leadership and management, which shows that their monitoring and maintaining norms for usage of common resources have improved

- 22 GVCs need more motivation and support in managing and developing their community resources. This will be done through follow-ups with the help of federation leaders.
- Common reasons for low performance on the resource parameter may be associated with lack of proper support from government or other agencies, changing expectations of the villagers owing to the dynamic socio-political and economic scenario of the state, and divisive politics at grass roots. Also, with Seva Mandir's increased efforts to enhance livelihoods, the reliance on common resources like pasturelands for a family's fodder needs has decreased in many places.
- It was observed that groups older than 15 years performed best in the participation and leadership components. Also in resources, GVCs older than 15 years are marginally ahead of the other groups, but GVCs which are four to seven years old have performed much better than some of the older groups.
- In the management of resources component, GVCs of four to seven years have performed best, but the oldest GVC groups (15 years) are marginally behind the others

Village Development Fund (GVK)

- 659 GVKs (592 of which have bank accounts) hold a total fund of Rs 62.2 million, an increase of 8% from last year. Most of the increase came from interest earned on fixed deposits.

- The total income in village development funds in this year is just under Rs 5 million, excluding Balwadi and Shiksha Kendra fees
- Interest from fixed deposits and savings has contributed around 59% of the total income, followed by labour work in watershed projects, which accounts for 21%
- 109 GVCs used Rs 620,227 from GVK funds for purposes like repair and maintenance of community assets and para-worker payment
- 18 other GVCs have taken out Rs 864,607 from their fund for new business ventures like marketing of agricultural produce, share purchase etc. Such amounts are recovered and returned to their GVK accounts after settlement of bills.
- 86% of the funds were used for community support and development, including repair and maintenance of community centres, pasturelands or Joint Forest Management, purchase of land for school playgrounds, and purchase of clothes for Shiksha Kendra and Balwadi children.

Zonal Federations

GVCs of geographically contiguous areas are federated as zonal federations.

In recent years, Seva Mandir has started focusing on federating the GVCs at zone and then at block level. There are multiple





objectives in building the federations: federations will promote lateral learning, collectivization for addressing issues that are beyond village level and, most importantly, the federations will allow Seva Mandir to withdraw sustainably with its oversight and motivational functions being taken over by the zone.

One zonal federation has 15-20 member GVCs. At present there are 24 zonal federations. This year re-elections were conducted for three zonal federations of Kherwara and two zonal federations of Jhadol in order to rejuvenate and strengthen them. Bank accounts have been opened for ten zonal federations, and this is under way for others. 40 zonal federation meetings were conducted in four blocks.

Topics discussed include poor implementation of government development programmes such as the Total Sanitation Campaign, discrepancies in the Public Distribution System and e-mitras (an e-governance initiative of the government of

Rajasthan to help those using government and private services), the role of federations in monitoring and managing all village development activities, problems in implementation of government welfare schemes for the community, increasing the role of federations, linkage and coordination with Seva Mandir and panchayats, participation of GVC members in meetings, the effect of influential people on group functioning, delayed re-elections, GVK token contributions from anicuts and lift wells.

Training

Capacity building is an important part of empowering communities to deliberate and make decisions on local issues and development action. To further this goal:

- Against the annual target of 70, 81 training sessions and 31 meetings were conducted for different purposes with

A village takes control of its own development needs

Rod ka Guda is a small village situated in the rocky area of Sukhar Gram panchayat in Kumbhalgarh block. This village consists of around 100 households with a population of 700. The village people have very few government services and have for a long time had problems with drinking water. Apart from working on pastureland development and some soil and water conservation work, Seva Mandir has formed a Gram Vikas Committee as well as two SHGs in the village. Recently Seva Mandir spent Rs 429,000 on construction of a water tank and pipeline for the villagers under the supervision of the GVC members. Then the GVC approached and negotiated with the gram panchayat, successfully securing Rs 100,000 towards the purchase of a pump to help them lift water to the tank.

Now the GVC is taking primary responsibility for its management and maintenance. They have devised rules, fixed a token amount of Rs 200 which each household must pay per month towards water service charges, and appointed a point person to operate the machine twice a day. The amount paid by households is being utilized for payment of the point person, electricity charges and other maintenance.

This case is notable for the collective effort and contribution of the GVC and also because they were able to persuade the panchayat to play a positive role in their development.



A GVC is not afraid to voice its concerns

The Gram Vikas Committee of Sagwara village in Kherwara block is taking responsibility for monitoring all development activities in their village. Currently there is a lot of construction work taking place, including toilet construction in individual households and construction work in the school premises in Damafala hamlet. This construction work is being undertaken by the panchayat with the help of a local contractor. During their monitoring visits the GVC found that the foundation work had not been carried out properly and that the quality of the work was questionable. GVC members held a

meeting with the school management committee and complained to the panchayat as well as the Sub-Divisional Magistrate at the district level. As a result of their continuous follow-ups an engineer was sent from Udaipur to check the quality of work. This was an eye-opener for the government and they could see that the GVC had been entirely correct in raising concerns. The construction was dismantled and the foundations deepened. The construction work was completed under direct supervision of the Gram Vikas Committee, Sagwara.



participants from GVCs, zonal as well as block federations, community and PRI members across all blocks. A total of 3,288 participants took part in these training sessions and meetings, of which 1,424 were women, 93 were children and 1,374 were men

Samuh Chetna Shivir

64 Samuh Chetna Shivirs (Awareness Camps) were organized in the reporting period, compared to 66 last year. A total of 3,180 villagers participated in these awareness camps, of which 1,268 were women and 331 were children.

The main agenda of such camps is to promote the role of GVKs and the importance of re-elections, disseminate information on government schemes such as MGNREGA, and provide information on legal entitlements like Right to Information. The participants also discussed the monitoring system and role of GVCs, Shiksha Kendra and Balwadis, timely submission of GVK income/beneficiary contributions and Community Forest Rights.

Key Issues and Challenges

- Timeliness of re-elections is a big challenge. Federation members will be

given the responsibility in the coming year of conducting pending re-elections. Consideration is being given to increasing the gap between elections from three years to five years.

- The database will be improved and there will be greater focus on measuring outreach and VCI tracking
- GVCs will be encouraged and guided to co-fund projects by increasing fund utilization and to offer their support in maintaining sustainability of assets
- There will be more engagement with non-SPI committees through the support of zonal level federations
- Implementation and follow-up of fund management plans will be carried out for all GVCs who have participated in the fund management workshops. Block federations will be oriented and trained to do the follow-ups and also train their member GVCs and zonal federations on fund management.
- Greater co-ordination between PRIs and GVC members will lead to partnering on development issues and efficient use of resources. This will be done through training involving zonal federation as well as block federation members and PRI representatives.
- Registration formalities of elected block federations will be undertaken to strengthen them as a legal entity



Developing Natural Resources

Seva Mandir's work area is characterized by a semi-arid climate, an erratic monsoon pattern, and the rugged landscape of the Aravalli ranges. While the local population has largely been dependent on natural resources for its

livelihood, many of these resources are now severely degraded. Though requiring huge public investment and community ownership, it is possible to arrest the degradation and restore the ecology.

About 73% of the land here is common, in other words under state ownership but intended to be accessible to the entire local community. The commons plays a significant role in sustaining the livelihoods of rural people, but degradation of the land and indiscriminate encroachments on it greatly reduce the benefit people derive from this land. The degraded condition of the commons, usually located uphill, also affects the productivity of private agricultural land as monsoon water running unchecked from these commons results in soil erosion, breaking of bunds and crop damage downstream. In turn, poor returns from agriculture force people to supplement their income with casual labour. Daily and seasonal migration of men in search of casual labour is therefore high, and often leads to frustration and undignified living conditions.

Degraded commons also impact livestock, genepool, availability of wild foods and other agro-forestry produce.

Climate change has added to agricultural vulnerability. Exploitation and privatization of groundwater has seen unprecedented growth in recent years. Higher economic returns are being achieved at a very high social and environmental cost. Another critical emergent challenge has been the diversification of land, or rather change in the usage of land, with productive land being used for other purposes like mining, housing and building resorts.

With the clearing of green forest spaces there has been an increase in human-animal conflict, with reports that leopard attacks and crop destruction by blue bull or nilgai (large antelope) are on the rise.

This year again the monsoon was erratic. Delayed rains meant that there was a drinking water shortage from March to June-July. The production of crops in both Kharif (monsoon) and Rabi (spring) seasons was lower than last year due to the uneven distribution of rainfall.

In this adverse climatic scenario Seva Mandir's natural resource development work has become more critical and the benefits more striking. Seva Mandir has worked to develop and manage common lands, provide sustainable watersheds and help farmers improve their agricultural yields. The effort has been to balance economic gains with environmental concerns. Seva Mandir's work has strengthened farm-based livelihoods, ensuring that farmers have food and financial security, and nurtured a demand for better, more ethical management of the common environment.

Three main objectives run through all of Seva Mandir's work on natural resource development:

- Using the commons to foster social solidarity and cooperation
- Environmental conservation with a special focus on commons
- Improving returns from farm-based livelihoods



Work on Commons

As already indicated, more than 70% of the land in Seva Mandir's working area is common land, to be used by the entire community, but in many places illegal private encroachments render them common in name only. The commons mainly consists of three types: pastureland (or grazing land) owned by the village panchayats, revenue land owned by the Revenue Department, and forest land owned by the Forest Department.

Pastureland development

Seva Mandir supports the communities in undertaking negotiations and dialogue to free the commons from encroachments. In most cases persuasion through dialogue, which could be quite long drawn-out, is sufficient to restore the commons. But sometimes, depending on the background and need of the encroaching families, compensation is offered to them. Seva Mandir then supports the community in building a boundary wall, undertaking soil and water conservation work and plantation of the pastureland. The communities also devise management systems to protect the sites and share the proceeds of the pastureland equitably amongst themselves. The fodder from the developed pastures is of immense value to these families. The process of restoration also brings the community together and adds to its cohesiveness.

In the last year:

- Against a target of developing 207 hectares (ha) of pastureland, afforestation and protection work was completed on 416 ha

- A total of 14,880 saplings were planted on both old and new pastures
- Grass was harvested from 1,743 ha on 92 pasture sites
- Over 1.2 million kg grass was harvested from these sites, and shared between 4,800 families
- Assuming a rate of Rs 4 per kg, the monetary value of this grass would be around Rs 4.8 million
- Rs 247,000 was contributed to the respective GVK funds
- 53 of the 73 pastures developed in Badgaon were better protected and managed than the remaining 20 pastures. 3 of these 20 pastures were rehabilitated through community action.
- Fodder was available for 9.21 months in Kumbhalgarh, 9.25 months in Badgaon and 9.12 months in Kotra, against the target of 8.14 months, 8.27 months and 6.6 months respectively.

Work on Forests

Seva Mandir and its partner communities could not play a direct role in developing new forest sites, as permissions from the Forest Department were not received.

With the support of Van Utthan Sansthan (a federation of forest protection committees), 40 claims under Community Forest Rights (CFR) have been pending with the government for almost eight years. (The original number of claims was 76, but after rejections 40 are still in pipeline.) No progress has made on them and they are still pending with the government.



However, not giving up the idea of forest protection, Seva Mandir and Van Utthan Sansthan adopted a strategy of strengthening the community movement for forest conservation at the grass roots. The aim is to help village communities affirm a sense of responsibility for harmonizing conservation and management of their common forest resources.

Under this strategy, the following activities were pursued during the last year:

- Pending CFR cases were followed up: 40 cases at District Level Committee (DLC), 28 at Sub-Divisional Level Committee (SDLC) and 64 at panchayat level. 64 new cases were prepared at village level.
- Meetings at block, cluster and village level were organized to strengthen community protection and management of common forest resources. This approach involved work at two levels. Firstly, the local Forest Protection Committees (FPCs) were asked to have a fresh look at recent threats like encroachments, forest fires, unregulated harvesting of non-timber forest products (NTFPs), logging of trees, and threat to wildlife in forest areas previously developed under Joint Forest Management (JFM). Secondly, work was carried out to build capabilities of the new groups which have become associated with Seva Mandir and Van Utthan Sansthan (VUS, an autonomous



registered federation of FPCs, formed by Seva Mandir, which works in the area of forest management, development and community forest rights) during the course of the CFR movement. All these groups were motivated to discharge the responsibility for protecting and managing the forest areas in the absence of receiving CFR titles or sanctions under JFM.

- Two representatives participated in a national-level workshop held in Delhi in December last year. They described their continued efforts on JFM and CFR, and outlined the issues and problems faced by the villagers in bringing CFR cases to a successful conclusion.
- Following the above strategy during the period under report three workshops for FPCs and village groups were organized at Jhadol. These workshops were attended by over 100 participants, including representatives from JFM, DLC and SDLC villages. Issues relating to protection, management, socio-economic conditions and institutions were discussed. Villagers mapped their forest areas, indicating the current situation of the sites. In terms of protection, issues like the condition of boundary walls, ways for FPCs to guard the forests, grazing by livestock and incidence of forest fires were discussed. People also deliberated at length on the ecological health of the forests, including types of flora and fauna present. Variables like survival of planted trees and the state of naturally regenerated trees were also documented. Detailed discussions were

held to address the issue of encroachment in the developed forest area. In addition, no new encroachment was reported after enactment of FRA (Forest Rights Act) 2006. Other subjects included: current status of institutions, regularity of village group meetings, collective actions in emergencies such as people coming together to extinguish a fire or averting the threat of illegal tree felling by timber mafias. Availability of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) across all the sites was also recorded. Discussions were also held to explore the possibility of organizing the groups around collection and marketing of MFPs. People also deliberated on development works needed in the villages, like construction of water-harvesting structures or connecting roads.

- In a special session information was provided on the PESA (Panchayat Extension to Schedule Area) Act, and the newly enacted Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act 2016, and their possible repercussions on the future fate of forest governance in the region
- In the workshops villages prepared plans to overcome lacunae. A calendar of activities and clarification of roles and responsibilities were also prepared. As a follow-up, village-level meetings were held. There was overwhelming support for local women's group members. Jhadol block and Natural Resource Development programme teams along with VUS members played a critical role in this effort. We also received direct support from Forest Department and Police Administration.



Watershed Development

The major portion of Seva Mandir's working area is covered with barren rocks and hills which are part of the Aravalli mountain range and were at one time well stocked with forests. Farmers in our work area must cope with a semi-arid climate, erosion-prone hills and irrigation of just 20% of productive land. In this context conserving soil and water can contribute

significantly to the environmental health of the area and aid in agricultural productivity. To address these problems Seva Mandir undertakes watershed development activities as a precursor to strengthening livelihoods. Seva Mandir has so far helped develop sustainable watersheds in 37 villages covering an area of 12,075 ha via soil and water conservation work through building bunds,

loose-boulder gully plugs and check dams, land levelling and vegetative measures such as grass seeding and plantation of local forest species.

This year:

- Against the target of developing 640 ha through soil and water conservation activities, watershed development work was carried on over 661 ha at 4 sites
- In addition to soil and water conservation work, plantations, horticulture development, animal vaccinations and agricultural training were undertaken in the watershed areas

Jhabla watershed was in the concluding round of its Final Implementing Phase (FIP) this year. The following were the major activities carried out in the period:

- 1 rooftop water-harvesting structure was built, which has helped increase water availability by 3 months at household level. To improve availability of clean drinking water two wells were lined and parapet wall construction work continued in the reporting period.
- Seeds of grass and tree species were sown on the mounds built over dug trenches
- 500 saplings of useful local tree species were planted on the treated non-cultivable land of 25 farmers
- 83 farmers planted 456 fruit saplings
- 1,159 head of livestock (both small and large ruminants) were vaccinated and treated in the seasonal livestock camps in May 2016
- In an agricultural innovation, the trellis method of vegetable cultivation was followed by five farmers

- 20 backyard poultry were distributed to each of 20 families
- In spring, high-yield wheat and gram seeds were distributed to farmers, who were also given training in seed culture, preparation of compost pits and irrigation methods
- With the help of NABARD, 7 farmers from Jhabla participated in a workshop on 'Zero Budget Natural Farming' methods
- A grass depot was built at Jhabla for storage of grass and seed
- Well-deepening and repair work was carried out, helping 25 families access water for drinking and for cattle
- To minimize the use of wood as fuel, improved stoves, which are more efficient than indigenous 'chulha', were distributed to 53 households

Observed effects of the project:

- Rivulets and streams now keep flowing till May
- 80 farmers say productivity of maize has increased from 200 to 300 kg per bigha after watershed activities
- The trellis method of vegetable cultivation has yielded 2,462 kg of vegetables. Farmers earned Rs 83,010 by selling vegetables through this intervention.
- Jatropha seeds sown in 2010 and 2011 have started fruiting. These plants are providing vegetative cover and binding soil. The harvested seeds are providing increased income to villagers. Local farmers are also collecting and marketing seed of puwad (a local weed, cassia tora). This intervention is being taken up

by the members of women's SHGs, so helping women to achieve greater financial independence.

Kumbhalgarh watershed: A comprehensive watershed development project is under way in Kumbhalgarh, involving a range of activities including development of both public and private land. In addition to this, new water-harvesting structures have been built and old structures rejuvenated, and agricultural production enhancement activities carried out. Details of soil and water conservation activities are given below:

- 314 gully plugs were developed across the drainage lines and Loose Stone Check Dams (LSCDs) built in a 193-ha area. These will improve recharge of groundwater in 30 wells. By improving soil and water conservation, these LSCDs and gully plugs will enhance productivity of cultivable and non-cultivable land for 800 farmers.
- Farm bunds were built across 171 ha farmland, covering 700 households. 3,200 running metres of continuous stone contour bunds and 314 farm bunds were also built in Gundi Ka Bhilwara village, against the 300 targeted. These activities are expected to improve groundwater level in 75 wells.
- 179 ha non-cultivable land was developed through watershed treatment activities

Badgaon watershed: A watershed project was initiated in Badgaon block this year. Soil and water conservation activities were

carried out on 155 ha of land. During the reporting period:

- 266 LSCDs were built
- Farm bunding was carried out on 55 ha of farmland for 137 households in Majam and Jogiya Ka Guda villages
- Contour trenches and contour-stone bunding were provided on 35 ha

Increase in cultivable land

Interventions in soil and water conservation (SWC) help to convert wasteland into arable land, which results in an increase in the area under cultivation. SWC in these watershed areas has led to the following increases in area under cultivation per farmer:

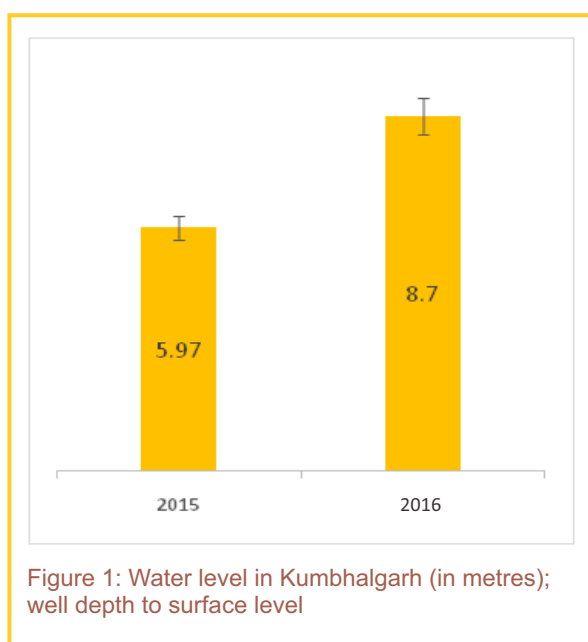
Kumbhalgarh: from 0.32 ha to 0.43 ha

Badgaon: from 0.5 ha to 0.7 ha

Kotra: from 0.75 ha to 0.89 ha.

Increase in water levels

Another long-term impact of SWC is to increase the water level in the watershed area. So far, intervention on SWC, along with a favourable monsoon in 2016, has resulted in an increase in water levels in Kumbhalgarh from 5.9 metres (Nov '15) to 8.7 metres (Nov '16), as measured from 44 observatory wells. The 2016 monsoon produced 2.47 metres of rainfall against an average of 1.82 metres. Here, SWC work has helped arrest water run-off and improved the water-holding capacity of soil even during high monsoon rainfall.



Water Resource

Development

In addition to water resource development in watershed areas, the following additional projects were undertaken:

- 7 new water resource structures were constructed in Kotra, Jhadol, Kumbhalgarh and Badgaon blocks (against a target of 2)
- 9 old water resource structures were repaired and rejuvenated in Kotra, Kumbhalgarh and Badgaon blocks
- 3 spring tanks were built in Kumbhalgarh block to channel water to agricultural fields
- Work on 3 lift irrigation systems was completed this year on sites including Dehri and Gura villages of Kotra block

Agriculture

93% of the rural population of Udaipur district are farmers, but only 4% of their crop is grown for sale. Most are unable to grow food to last them all year round. Agriculture is thus an essential component of food security, and there

is great scope to improve farming livelihoods through better access to irrigation and more efficient farming practices.

So, alongside physical development activities on land and water, Seva Mandir tries to support the rural population through agriculture and allied activities in order to improve food security in the region. Seva Mandir has also worked with farmers to improve agricultural yields by promoting eco-friendly best practices, such as communal seed banks with improved crop varieties, diversified vegetable cultivation, vermicomposting and livestock health camps. It should be stressed that most of the agriculture work is being undertaken in areas where work on water augmentation has either been done in the past or is ongoing.

A volunteer is experimenting with developing a mobile app to track individual farmers' vegetable cultivation. The app will also be a means of sending information about pest attack or any other advice.

In the period under report:

- Activities were undertaken with 1,163 new farmers and follow-up done with 2,283 wadi farmers
- Horticulture plantation was taken up with 244 farmers who planted 4,630 fruit tree saplings including mango, lemon, sapota, guava and amla. To replace fruit trees that were planted last year but which had died, 43 farmers replanted 160 saplings in Badgaon, while 709 wadi farmers from Kherwara replanted 5,000 mango saplings. Under the programme this year training was provided to

farmers on a package of practices like layout, digging of pits and planting techniques. More than 150 wadi farmers out of 1,000 harvested fruits this year.

- About 400 families benefited from vegetable cultivation this year. The average net income of those farmers who sold their farm surplus was Rs 2,000 (approx.) per season in all the blocks. This year vegetable production registered an increase of 71% in Kotra as a result of Seva Mandir's intervention. In addition, farming families have started consuming vegetables on a regular basis, which was not the case before.
- 13,289 livestock were vaccinated, thus reducing animal sickness. Livestock mortality has reduced by 90% in Kotra block (according to an internal survey).
- This year, more focus was given to increasing the productivity of existing cultivable lands by introducing new agronomic practices and organic farming. 678 farmer households benefited from certified seeds including those of wheat, gram, mustard and pea. New technology for System of Wheat Intensification (SWI) has been introduced in 5 farmers' fields in Kherwara block. 16 seed banks operated in Kotra, Jhadol, Kherwara, and Kumbhalgarh blocks.

1,297 farmers took 3,098 kg of different seeds from the seed bank.

Food security

Of the 1,217 households surveyed, the impact on food availability and agricultural income through our livelihoods intervention was as follows:

Kotra: Farm-produced grain availability has increased from 5.27 months to 9.03 months. Pulse availability has improved from 1.25 months to 4.45 months. Similarly, vegetable availability has increased from 1.5 months to 3.61 months for all families and 5.51 months for vegetable nursery farmers.

The figure below shows the food security scenario of grain, pulse and vegetables for 444 families in months.

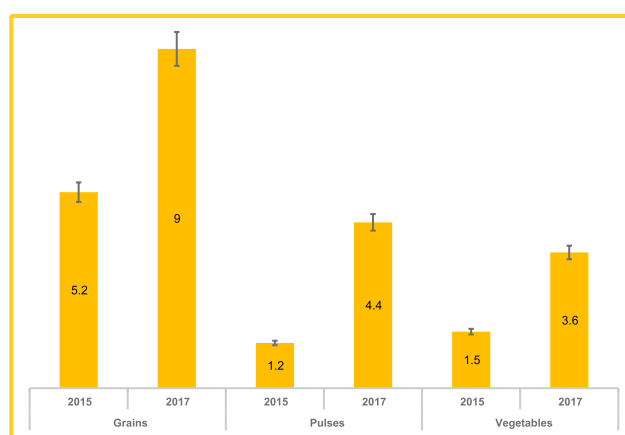


Figure 2: Food availability in Kotra (in months)



Kumbhalgarh: Food security in Kumbhalgarh has improved over the past two years. Farm-produced grain availability for all households has increased from 7.12 months to 8.87 months.

Badgaon: Here too food security has improved over the past years. Farm-produced grain availability for all households has increased from 6.62 months to 7.33 months, while pulse availability has improved from 1.73 months to 2 months and vegetable from 1.1 to 3.16 months.

Livelihoods

Interventions in the farm-based livelihoods programme have improved the earning potential of farmers from agricultural activity over the last year.

Kotra: The average annual agricultural income has increased from Rs11,472 to Rs 35,586 for all farmers, and Rs 43,577 for farmers under the livelihood programme. Motivation of the farmers to adopt the use of quality seed (composite), bio-fertilizers, bio-insecticides, vermicompost units and farmyard manure (FYM), protective irrigation to assure Kharif/Rabi crops and cash crops were a few of the interventions that contributed to food security and income growth at family level.

In Kotra average wheat productivity is 32.44 Q/ha. In Majam the average is 27 Q/ha.

Kumbhalgarh: The average annual agriculture income has seen a 15% increase from Rs 10,953 to Rs12,885.

Crop productivity

Agricultural training and new techniques in agricultural practices have improved wheat productivity in the region. In Kumbhalgarh this year, with the help of favorable monsoons, wheat productivity has increased from 12.38 quintals per ha to 37.84 Q/ha.

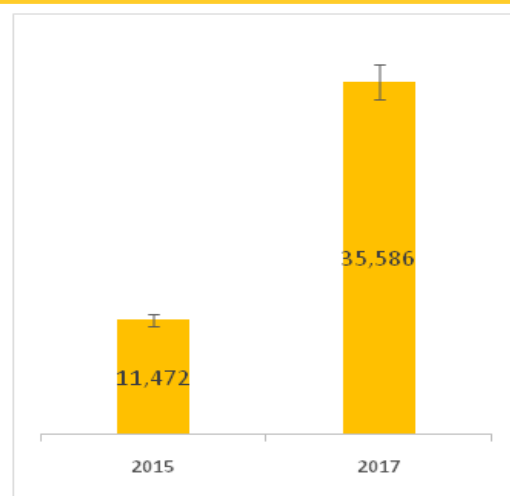


Figure 3: Annual household income from agriculture in Kotra (INR)

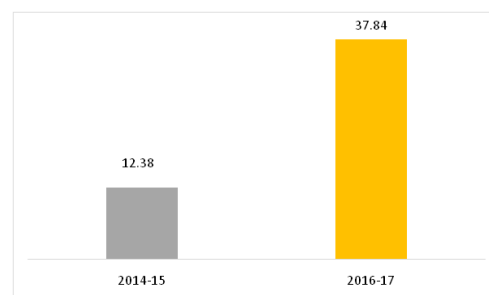


Figure 4: Wheat productivity in Kumbhalgarh (in quintals per ha)

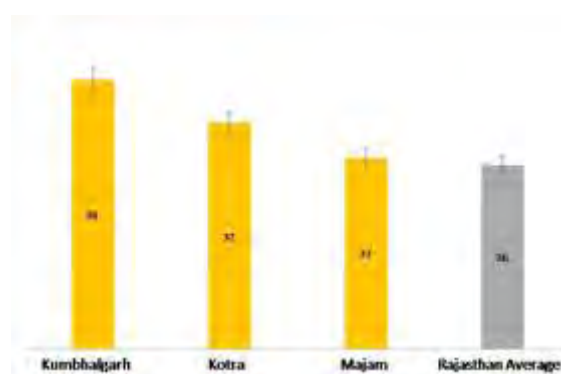


Figure 5: Wheat productivity in Seva Mandir work areas as compared to state average (in quintals per ha)



Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act

MGNREGA is a government initiative to provide employment via development activities. Seva Mandir is among the few NGOs in Rajasthan since 2011-12 to have been selected as a Project Implementing Agency (PIA) for MGNREGA activities. We fulfil this role in Udaipur and Rajsamand districts.

The activities undertaken under MGNREGA include pastureland development and de-silting of water-harvesting structures, land levelling, vegetable cultivation and toilet construction. Work under MGNREGA has slowed down over the years for many reasons, including delayed government approvals and loss of interest by communities as a result of delayed wage payments.

159 projects have been carried out under the programme this year, including:

- 145 projects of an individual nature under the Harit Dharaa project (a government rural development programme), eg land-improvement works like levelling, bunding to make land more productive
- On the fields of 44 farmers cemented water channels from water source to agricultural fields were constructed

In this period Seva Mandir has been involved in 421 projects under MGNREGA.



Clean Drinking Water and Sanitation

The lack of clean drinking water (CDW) and sanitation continues to be a serious problem in Seva Mandir's work area. Though in recent times the government's focus on sanitation has

increased the provision of toilets, the sources of drinking water are far from homes and it is often the women who are subjected to the drudgery of fetching water from these sources.

Predictably, poor availability of clean drinking water and sanitation, coupled with unsanitary practices, leads to a high incidence of disease and undernutrition.

The lack of clean drinking water has largely been due to depletion of groundwater, which in turn has led to reduced water sources and contamination. Contamination of water is often the highest in homes, due to lack of appropriate hygienic practices.

Even though CDW and sanitation go hand in hand, the reasons for poor sanitation are more complex: inability to build toilets due to cost is definitely a reason, but lack of appropriate technologies, low availability of water, families attaching low priority to these matters, old practices, and inadequate sewerage are some of the other contributing factors.

In 2014 the Indian government launched Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, a national campaign to eradicate open defecation by 2019, the 150th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's birth. The aim is to provide sanitation facilities to every family, including toilets, solid and liquid waste disposal systems and an adequate supply of safe drinking water. The government's goal of making all villages open-defecation free (ODF) is unquestionably a laudable one, but, given the magnitude of the problem and the size of the government machine, attention to detail and closer attention to human factors like behaviour change are often missing.

Seva Mandir has continued to contribute to this national agenda, which was initiated long before 2014, with a special focus on creating appropriate and simple technology for CDW and sanitation, helping set up sound management norms at household and community level, and helping people change their behaviour and practices vis-à-vis CDW and sanitation.

Clean Drinking Water

CDW has been ensured to households through a mix of interventions which include:

- Repair of wells and building of linked tanks to allow chlorination
- Candle filters
- Repair of handpumps

Under this programme we have been able to reach 1,051 families, against a target of 240 families, in this reporting year. Availability of drinking water has increased for participating households during periods of acute water shortage in summer months.

- 13 wells were restored and 65 tank systems constructed, benefiting 1,051 families
- 42 hand pumps were repaired and 27 wells deepened to help 660 families
- Following liaison with panchayats, 26 handpumps were repaired which ensured CDW for 539 families
- 65% of the 63 installed drinking water systems are being used well, with partial use of the remaining systems. Some of the tanks and wells could not be used in summer.
- Nearly 54% of total households who were provided with candle filters use them regularly
- 90% of women/girls and 66% of men/boys who belong to user households have reported less drudgery in fetching water as CDW is now within 2 km of their homes
- 38% of households reported a substantial decrease and 47% households reported a moderate decrease in the incidence of water-borne diseases, especially among children below the age of 5

In addition to the above work on CDW, efforts were made to provide relief to 660 households facing a water crisis in the summer months.

Midline study conducted in April 2017 on usage of CDW: Kumbhalgarh

A survey was conducted with 298 families of Kumbhalgarh block, one of the blocks where CDW systems were created. Families benefiting from CDW systems reported a decrease in the prevalence of disease and health expenditure. The average health expenditure of these families has decreased from Rs1,801 to Rs761. 90% of users reported overall quality of water as good, against 71% in the baseline, 2015.

Challenges and our efforts to overcome impediments

A high proportion of built CDW systems (30.77%) remain non-operational or unused. This is a matter for grave concern. In a recent survey the reasons were identified as follows:

- In monsoon months water pumps become submerged, so water pumping to the storage tanks is temporarily halted
- Some systems have stopped working due to lack of maintenance or the breakdown of management systems
- In many villages new borewells are being drilled. The households are now collecting drinking water from these borewells and tank-based systems become unused.

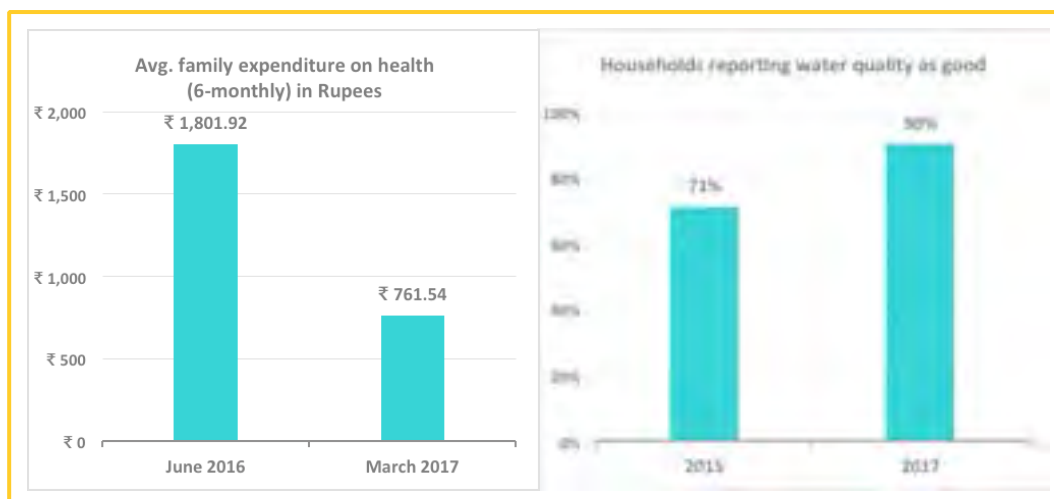
Sanitation

With a view to increasing sanitation coverage, Seva Mandir is working with two kinds of toilet designs: Ecosan toilets and twin-pit leach toilets. Ecosan toilets are desirable in water-scarce areas as they use little if any water and turn waste matter into odourless manure for agriculture. Their design has now been adapted to take further account of the needs of women and older people and to reduce construction costs. The twin-pit toilets, which require minimal maintenance, can only be used in areas where the water table is sufficiently low to avoid groundwater pollution, and are only constructed in Kumbhalgarh block where water availability is slightly better than in the other blocks in which we work.

During the year 132 toilets were built, 102 of them Ecosans. To date, Seva Mandir has facilitated construction of 1,037 toilets, of which 779 are Ecosan toilets. Our field reports suggest that 65% of the toilets are being used regularly.

Impacts of Sanitation (Ecosan)

- 95% of women, 89% of men, and 86% of elderly people in the user families use the toilets, but only 11 % of children
- Women have benefited the most because safety and privacy issues have been addressed





- 92 Ecosan user families have started utilizing processed excreta and urine as organic manure
- Average percentage of households practising open defecation in the programme area has reduced by 64%

The toilets have been particularly useful to women, especially pregnant women. In selected villages, toilets are built with bathrooms attached, which is particularly beneficial to menstruating women as now they can have both privacy and hygiene.

The following section gives an account of issues associated with the use of toilets and our efforts to address these.

- A major obstacle to the use of Ecosan toilets is the inconsistent level of behavioural change within households. Children under five and adult men still do not use the toilets regularly, either because of preference, or because their

How an Ecosan works

The Ecosan toilet keeps dry and wet waste separate. One pan is used until the tank below is full; that pan is then closed and the other used while the collected dry waste, treated with ash or sand, turns to odourless manure. The liquid waste can be used as pesticide.

design may make Ecosan toilets harder for children to use.

- Many households are apprehensive about the manual removal of compost from the filled chambers, as handling of human excreta is still considered a taboo. So a lot of our time is spent encouraging families to open the chamber and extract the manure.

Applying a behavioural approach to promote latrine usage and maintenance in rural Rajasthan: pilot project in collaboration with Behavioural Insights Team, UK, and Sutra Consulting, Bhubaneswar

497 households (HHs) were surveyed in four villages of Udaipur district which had been declared ODF. Major findings included: 20% of the HHs did not have latrines despite villages being declared ODF, and 43% of the HHs which had toilets did not use them. Water accessibility and availability was the major barrier, followed by feelings of disgust, smell, comfort, pit-emptying worries and incomplete toilet structures.

A pilot was initiated to tackle three key barriers: inertia, toilet experience and lack of agency. We conducted focus group and individual HH discussions. A commitment device in the form of a poster was designed where the HH had to pledge to use the toilet and also a usage calendar where they could indicate the number of members using the toilet. The second intervention was introducing 'small improvements' like bucket and mug, cleaning brush, soap, air freshener and solar lights. Both the interventions were carried out with 31 HHs and 29 of these have started using the toilets.

To ensure effective monitoring of the programme and to increase the usage of created assets, an interdisciplinary Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) team has been set up comprising representatives from the various programmes as well as field staff. Two capacity-building events were organized for this team.

Through interactive meetings and training sessions, participating families were persuaded to use and maintain the toilets. The Gram Vikas Committees (GVCs) and para-workers were also trained to develop norms to ensure usage of toilets by households and to follow up regularly on built toilets.

Masons were also trained in design and technical aspects of toilets to ensure that they are well built.



Empowering Women

In Seva Mandir's work area, women play a major role in sustaining families and communities, in addition to their domestic responsibilities. They are engaged in agriculture and allied activities, and also seek casual labour near their homes. Since most women are illiterate, they can only undertake unskilled and semiskilled work, which

reduces their chances of earning a reasonable income. Traditionally women have not been involved in many entrepreneurial activities, which further restricts their opportunities. As sources of income are limited, there is considerable need for credit in these areas, but very few means of securing it. As a result

women mostly borrow money from traditional moneylenders, usually at exorbitant rates of interest (typically between 60 and 120% per annum), and most of their income goes towards repaying their loans.

The status of women has changed considerably in the last few decades in rural Udaipur region. Yet the change remains inadequate. Illiteracy in Seva Mandir's work area is still high: the average female literacy rate in Udaipur district is 48%, while in those areas where Seva Mandir works it is as low as 26%. Women continue to face violence, with more female foeticide and trafficking of young women than before, while domestic violence continues to be prevalent.

But even if the change is inadequate, it is nevertheless meaningful. Women are more confident, more visible in social and political spaces, and young women in particular are aspiring to a better education and more autonomy, and striving for a better future for themselves and their communities.

Seva Mandir's engagement with women and their communities over the last five decades can be seen as at least partially responsible for the change. The Women's Empowerment programme seeks to enhance the status of women through a variety of interventions, described in subsequent sections. Working in collaboration with women, men and their communities, the programme tackles multifaceted inequality at each level in order to cultivate more just and gender-equal relations, norms and practices. By helping women run well-governed and self-governed institutions such as the Self-Help Groups (SHGs), the programme also develops solidarity, governance and management capacities among women.

Social Empowerment

A primary aspect of Seva Mandir's work towards women's empowerment has been the creation of an array of public spaces where women can participate confidently. These collectives are platforms for mutual support, mutual learning, solidarity building and interface with external stakeholders. They have enhanced women's confidence and awareness of issues surrounding violence. In many areas these collectives have successfully raised and addressed issues of violence including spousal violence, sexual harassment, witch accusations, female foeticide, infanticide and trafficking, along with property disputes. Furthermore, women's negotiation skills have improved so that they are able to deal with the issues of violence and discrimination effectively and strategically using non-violent means.

The women's collectives have also led to the emergence of many women leaders. Many of these leaders, who are experienced and respected in the community and have been trained by Seva Mandir, are elected representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions, work as Self-Help Group accountants, run Balwadis, work as healthcare providers, support women in accessing social security schemes, and ensure effective implementation of government development programmes.

Women's groups and cluster associations

Seva Mandir introduced women's solidarity groups in the mid-1980s to encourage women to step out of their homes to meet regularly, especially important given that they could not at that time attend group meetings with men. This has resulted in a strong membership of women in groups in Seva Mandir's working area. At present there are 670 (665 last year) women's groups with a membership of 10,986 (10,675 last year).



While the women's groups were very successful in resolving village-level issues, there were some issues that needed higher-level resolution, either at the panchayat or block level. So women's groups in geographically contiguous areas were federated as cluster associations. Currently there are 47 cluster associations. These associations continued to meet regularly and have raised around 106 issues related to

SHGs, livelihoods, violence, payments under MGNREGA, early childcare, sanitation, social security schemes, functioning of PDS, clean energy mechanisms, etc. During the reporting period 16 residential training courses were held for 579 women cluster leaders. Discussions focused on gender, violence, trafficking, youth relationships and government schemes.



Women's Resource Centres

Some of the women's groups and cluster associations showed exemplary leadership in resolving problems faced by women. In order to strengthen this initiative and give women a structured space for resolving the problems facing them, especially violence, Women's Resource Centres (WRCs) were started in 2006.

The WRCs are run by experienced and trained leaders who offer effective and sensitive help to women facing violence, by involving different stakeholders, including the police, government officials and caste panchayats. The WRCs provide much-needed space for women to deal with issues which are difficult for them to raise in their communities, notably gender-based discrimination and violence. Here they can come together with their peers to voice their suffering, seek support from one another, and unite to challenge gendered violence and

economic inequality. These centres are especially important given the often ineffectual, time-consuming and costly processes associated with bringing cases to the police or courts.

- Currently 11 WRCs are run and managed by 39 local women leaders and a total of 204 women approached WRCs for support this year
- The total number of cases brought to WRCs for resolution in this period was 268. Of these 75% have been resolved and 25% are ongoing.
- Of the 268 cases registered in the current year, 63% were of spousal and family-based violence, 17% cases of violence against young girls, 7% property disputes, 2% witch accusations, and 11% belonged to other categories such as robbery, personal conflicts or damage to crops.

Vimala rescued thanks to women and villagers

The leaders of the 6 SHGs at Dob, Nevaj and Atwal villages of Jhadol block meet every month. In their October meeting, the issue of a missing girl, Vimala from Dob village, came up. The girl's mother, who is also a member of an SHG, explained that Vimala had been missing for 12 days.

Vimala's father had reported her missing at the police station, but no action had been taken. Seva Mandir staff and women leaders informed Childline. After mediation by Childline, the police began to investigate. They interrogated all of Vimala's family and friends. In the meantime, women leaders and family members regularly sought progress reports from the police. Finally, one of Vimala's friends told the police that she had suspicions about Ram Singh, a young man from her village. Police discovered that Ram Singh, his friend Mohan Singh and a woman from Gogunda had sold Vimala to a man named Prem Singh for Rs 300,000.

The police finally arrested Ram Singh and others of Gogunda village. After further investigation, they discovered that Vimala was in Sumerpur, Pali district. Police rescued her from Sumerpur in December 2016, three months after she went missing.

Strengthening capacity of women leaders

16 residential training courses were held for the women leaders of cluster associations. 579 women benefited from these courses, mostly aimed at building women's understanding of gender, violence, social security schemes, trafficking, relationships involving underage women, and the importance of women's collectives. These sessions have helped enhance women's confidence and also their knowledge and skills.

Creating an enabling environment for women

As an effort towards creating an enabling environment for women, regular dialogue was held with men and boys in the communities. The specific efforts were:

Community sensitization:

- 8 training sessions with 470 (up from 170) caste panchayat leaders were conducted to sensitize male leaders on violence against women and how polygamy and land selling affect women's lives. Other issues covered were trafficking and the 2015 Rajasthan Prevention of Witch-Hunting Act.
- 612 young people benefited from 15 training courses of 3-5 days, based on gender, life skills and reproductive health. As part of the session on menstruation, the girls were also taught to make sanitary pads from cotton cloth.

Celebration of international fortnight for the elimination of violence against women:

16 consultations were carried out with 1,086 community members. As a result, 5 cases of violence against women were reported, of which two were referred to the Short-Stay Home.

Short-Stay Home

The Short-Stay Home (SSH) is a shelter for women victims of violence. It helps rehabilitate and support women and girls facing different forms of violence by providing shelter, medical and legal aid, counselling services and educational support to children staying with their mothers. It is an integral component of Seva Mandir's strategy to deal with violence against women and is therefore a very important intervention.

- The SSH provided refuge and shelter to 91 women with 59 children (76 newly registered and 15 existing)
- 20 other women and 4 men approached the SSH only for counselling support
- Of the 76 women who were given shelter in this period, 38% were from the rural areas and the rest from urban areas. 44% of women belonged to the SC/OBC category, 34% from tribal communities, and the rest from other castes. The data shows that women from all sections of society are facing violence and coming forward to speak out against it and seek respite. 66% of women approaching the shelter home had some education.

As a result of prolonged harassment and violence, most women coming to the SSH are depressed, so various activities are undertaken to help them overcome this. These include yoga classes, self-defence, craft work, drawing, reading and writing, running a kitchen garden. A volunteer who is a clinical psychologist also worked with them and gave some useful advice. Other volunteer support for the SSH has been regular and valuable. Women were also given training to help them gain employment. A crèche is being run in the shelter to enable the residents to seek work outside the shelter.

Research on women's issues

A grant to go deeper into women's issues allowed Seva Mandir to launch its first Rama Mehta Fellowship. Two women fellows were selected to study within the broad area of 'Gender and Society'. Mahira Sheikh from Udaipur documented 50 individual cases of domestic violence as experienced by women while they were growing up, as well as after marriage, in two urban slums of Udaipur city.

Reetika Revathy Subramanian, a former journalist from Mumbai, looked at experiences of violence in Madri village and conducted a study on trafficking in Kherwara block.

The main findings from the documentation of incidences of domestic violence:

- Of 50 women interviewed, 28 were Hindus, 22 Muslims; 12% under 19 years, 62% 19-30, and 26% over 30. 82% of the women had some education.
- 82% of the women were married: 54% were married before 18; 28% women married at 15 or below
- 46% of women were not employed; the rest did stitching work, ran small shops, were domestic workers (12%) or did handicraft work through Sadhna (6%). 38% knew little about their family income.
- 94% had faced some form of violence: 46% for 10 years and 22% for 11 to 15 years. 76% said that since childhood they had not been allowed to go out of the house.
- 26% said that they were married against their will. All of the married women said that they faced spousal violence. 10% said that their husbands forced them to have sex.

The main findings from the study on 'Trafficking in Kherwara':

The study on 'Trafficking in Kherwara' was carried out in Sagwara, Bawalwada, Patiya, Jhunthri and Kojawara villages. The data was collected through conversation/consultations with various stakeholders and leaders, involving 15 households, 22 local women, and 11 local men, 2 WRC leaders, schoolteachers, Sarpanch, local police, members of civil societies, journalists and the Human Trafficking Unit, Udaipur.

The study indicated that the girls who have been trafficked were aged 14-17 years, school

TRAFFICKING IN KHERWARA BLOCK, UDAIPUR



A Study on the Causes, Chains and Consequences
Reetika Revathy Subramanian



SEVA MANDIR

dropouts or unschooled, belonged to tribal and other backward castes and came from poor families. In several cases the trafficked girl was one of many daughters, or her parents had died, or the father was alcoholic.

The girls were mostly trafficked for marriage, and mostly to Ahmedabad (70%), followed by Idar, Mehsana, Vijaynagar and Himmatnagar in Gujarat, besides parts of Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Mumbai and Uttar Pradesh. A very small number were sent to Udaipur city, south India and the Gulf. The girls were trafficked through agents (who might be family members, teachers, marriage bureaux, shopkeepers, panchayat workers, police constables etc.). The rates for a trafficked girl varied from Rs 50,000 to Rs 300,000. In some cases, it was as low as Rs 10,000.

The study found that local families don't normally marry their daughters to men who are older than 20-25, poor/landless (in comparison to them), uneducated/unskilled, disabled or widowed. So such men find it very difficult to find brides locally. It becomes easier, cheaper and more convenient for them to 'purchase' a young bride rather than spend money on a wedding and other costs. In other cases, the skewed sex ratio makes it difficult for the boys/men to find women from their own community.

The police officials from Kherwara police station reported that nearly 70% of girls and young women from Kherwara tehsil fall into the trap of 'love' and elope with someone they barely know. Since there was an element of consent involved, albeit uninformed, the police found it very difficult to differentiate between cases of consent and cases of non-consensual exploitation.

A very important factor in this process is education. The principal of Sagwara Government Higher Secondary School said that most students took off to the nearby townships or cities during their vacations for work in order to make money. Since there were only six teachers for 650 students, it was practically impossible for the school to keep tabs on the children. For instance, there were cases where, of 30-odd youth taken to nearby BT cotton fields, not everyone returned to their village. Since there was no proper headcount, several cases went unreported. Furthermore, within Kherwara tehsil, the Bal Sanrakshan Samiti (Child Protection Committee), a body of senior officials from the local gram panchayats who attend to the needs and rights of students, exists only on paper. According to news reports, only three of the 321 Samitis are currently active and functional.

Economic Empowerment

While social empowerment of women has long been an area of prime focus for Seva Mandir, it was realized that there was a need to enhance the capacities of women to bring about financial independence and security. Self-Help Groups (SHGs) were set up with the main purpose of helping women save and apply for credit, as well as providing them with a chance to meet regularly.

Promoting savings and credit activity:

- There are 670 Self-Help Groups at present, of which 532 have savings accounts
- The net owned fund of 670 SHGs up to March 2016 is Rs 92.6 million, an increase of 25% over the last year
- Total savings (compulsory and voluntary) are Rs 83.2 million, compared to Rs 66.3 million in the last period

- Of the net owned fund, cash at bank is 18% and cash in hand 2%, with the rest out on loans. Cash at bank remains the same, but cash in hand has declined by 1 point in the last year. This indicates that there has been a small improvement in credit intake in the groups.
- The efforts towards strengthening capacity of SHGs continued in this period. 75 campaigns were carried out

Sheetal defies caste customs to earn a living

Sheetal Devi, a middle-aged woman, lives in Bagundra village in the Kankroli area. She comes from a highly patriarchal family, which abandoned her after the death of her husband. She and her two children were left with a small patch of land as their only means of financial support, which was not sufficient to fulfil their basic needs.

Seva Mandir started work in her village this year. Initially Sheetal attended the awareness campaign on savings and credits and Sadhna, and then became a member of the SHG formed in her village.

Being a Rajput and a widow, it wasn't easy for Sheetal to come out of her house or attend meetings or training, as this is against the traditions of her caste. But she realized this was a golden opportunity to earn and save for the future of her children, so she went ahead. She started saving through her SHG and enrolled in stitching and patchwork training offered by Sadhna. Today, she is not only saving for a brighter future for her children but has also secured an alternative livelihood for herself. Her dedication and this opportunity have helped her overcome many barriers and become a confident woman.

for SHGs, with 2,319 women participating. They focused on performance indicators, formation of new SHGs and opening bank accounts.

- In urban blocks during this period a federation of 154 SHGs was formed, with a current total of 3,068 members. Regular monthly meetings were held with discussions focusing on membership, fund raising, norms and processes. To establish the federation fund, the federation leaders decided to contribute Rs 300 per SHG per year from loan interest and Rs 100 per year per member.

Supporting other income-generating initiatives:

- For the past six years, 75 women from 4 villages in Jhadol block have been involved in fisheries work in 3 dams. During this period they sold Rs 24,055 worth of fish.
- 59 women from 9 SHGs of Kak Mandara took out a loan of Rs1.9 million from the GVK fund, which has been used to purchase land, carry out land levelling, purchase livestock, for social purposes, and getting mortgaged assets back. 50% of the loan amount has been repaid by the group.
- In SHG meetings in Kankroli block, women showed interest in taking up embroidery and patchwork and flower cultivation. Four exposure visits for SHG members were organized to the Sadhna centre at Delwara. SHG members interacted with local women associated with Sadhna, learnt about merchandise cutting, the steam process, taking work home, submitting the final product, and payment mechanisms. Later, meetings were held in villages to introduce the

work of the cooperative, and Sadhna training was started at three different centres. 94 women registered, of whom 54 completed the training. Two out of three training batches concluded in the month of April; one continues. Women artisans in two locations have started getting work orders from Sadhna.

- Two two-day training courses were held for 79 SHG women in Kankroli on flower cultivation. These women will receive further field training before the monsoon, so that they can begin growing flowers.

An SHG offers life-saving support

Surekha lives in Khakan, Magwas village of Jhadol block. She has four daughters, and her husband works as a daily wage labourer. She has been a member of Jyoti Mahila Samuh since 2013.

Surekha's eldest daughter, who is ten and in 4th grade, was diagnosed with a heart problem. She was admitted to Geetanjali hospital, Udaipur, for an operation. Before the operation, doctors asked Surekha to arrange for a supply of blood from the B+ blood group, as it was not available in the hospital. Surekha didn't have enough money to buy blood or for other expenses, so she called her husband to ask him to help arrange money. He visited neighbours and relatives but none were able or willing to help. Surekha then spoke to her SHG leaders and asked for an emergency loan of Rs 10,000. The women went to the bank the very next day and gave the money to her husband.

Surekha says: 'The operation was successful and my daughter is healthy now. The SHG group members are very happy that they helped save my daughter's life and I will always be grateful to them.'

Urban SHG federation

In this period, a federation of 154 SHGs from the urban block was formed. At present 3,068 members are associated with it. A study was carried out with 60 women from 30 SHGs of 10 clusters to understand their credit needs. The findings were as follows:

60 women had taken out 72 loans amounting to Rs 5.2 million. 92% of the women took out a loan from their own SHGs and the rest from banks, Micro-finance institutions (MFIs) and other sources. In terms of loan amounts, 39% came from SHG loans, 19% from moneylenders, 27% from banks (mainly for housing), 8% from relatives, 4% from other SHGs and 3% from MFIs. Women reported that the banks charged 12-24% interest per annum, MFIs 24-30% and moneylenders 24-60% per annum. This compares with the 1-2% a month charged by SHGs.

When asked about their credit need in the next six months, 41 women (68%) said they would need a total amount of around Rs 9.3 million and 19 women (32%) said that they wouldn't need credit in the near future. Of the 41 women needing credit, 25 said that they would like to take it at a 12% rate of interest and 16 said that they would be happy to take it at 12-18% per annum. They also said that they would prefer to take loans either from their SHGs or through banks. The data indicates that credit needs among women from urban areas are very high and that it will not be possible for women to meet this need through their SHG funds. Therefore, the urban federation of SHGs should aim to form a relationship with one or more banks to mobilize more funds to meet women's credit needs.



Income Generation Cell

As part of Seva Mandir's Natural Resource Development and Self-Help Group programmes, several income-generating activities have been started, some of which have yielded relatively small but nevertheless significant additional incomes at decentralized

levels, while others have needed scaling up and more specialized backup in order to realize their full potential. The Income Generation Cell (IGC) was set up in May 2012 with the objective of strengthening such activities.

Dal Mill

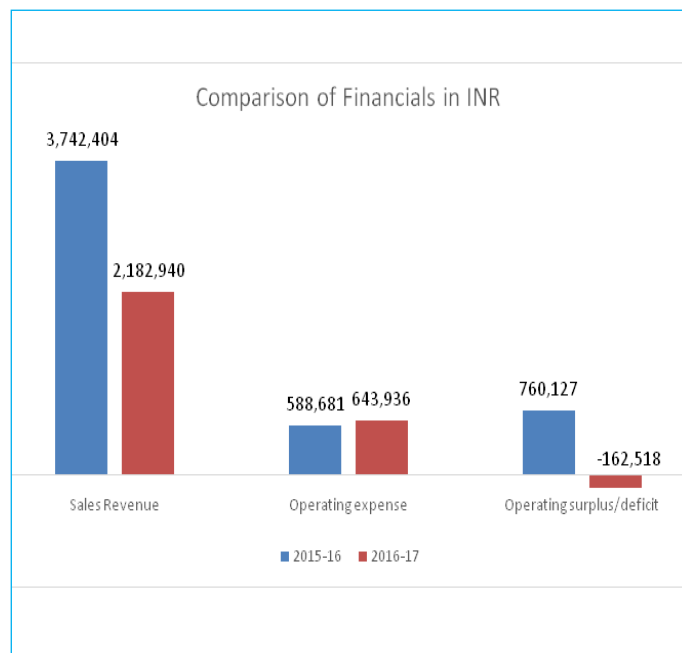
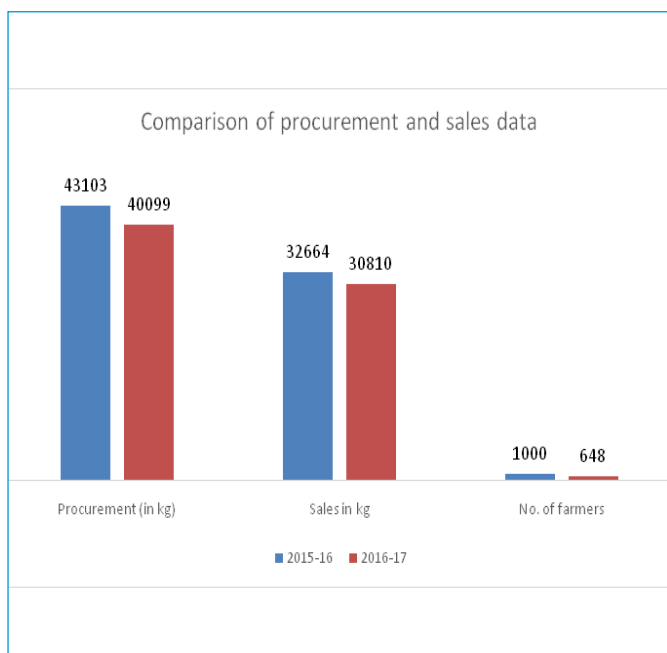
The dal mill, Nala Bachat Samiti, the IGC's major activity, was set up in 2011 and has made considerable progress in the last six years. The mill procures organic pulses (dal) from local farmers at competitive but fair rates and sells the dal after processing it. It is expected that the profits (once achieved) will be distributed to the farmers, but even before this happens the mill is beneficial to the farmers by giving them a fair price for their produce, on their doorstep, and thereby raising the market price in the area. The farmers who deliver their pulses to the dal mill save at least Rs 250 per 100kg of raw material.

This year the dal mill has incurred huge losses due to the catastrophic crash of dal prices in the

market. However, most of its clients have continued their alliance with the cooperative running the mill by placing repeated orders.

This year the mill produced 40,099 kg of dal from 648 farmers. By the time of this report, 30,810 kg had been sold at a small surplus, with the rest due to be sold in subsequent months. While the dal mill has certainly helped the farmers in the region by giving them a fair price at the local level, it is still not self-sustaining. In order for this to happen we need to increase the scale of operations, upgrade our machinery and acquire a new storage warehouse. Efforts are under way to achieve all of these goals.

The following figures show financial data for this year and the previous year.



Developments undertaken to aid the functioning of Dal Mill

A new decentralized model of procurement has been tried, involving the GVCs of Kotra, Jhadol and Kherwara blocks, with the aim of strengthening the functioning of the dal mill. In this model the GVCs have procured lentils from the farmers and delivered the produce to the dal mill. The GVCs have been paid the actual prevailing market price of raw pulses, plus a commission of Rs 3 per kg to cover the procurement cost of the GVC and a margin for conducting the activity.

Activities involving Women's Self-Help Groups

Fisheries

The fisheries programme was started in Jhadol block with five women's Self-Help Groups (SHGs – see previous chapter) in 2009. Four of them continue with their fishing and this year the programme made a good income compared with last year, especially at the Mohd Phalasiya pond. The total income from the four ponds was Rs 154,055 this year.

Washing powder production

This project involves a few women in Shishvi village buying and combining mild chemicals to make washing powder. The powder was tested in an ISO-certified laboratory in Delhi and the results were very positive. The washing powder has eco-friendly properties and is eligible for ISO 4955:2001 certification. In the last year a total of 1,100 kg of washing powder was produced. Each woman involved in this activity has received Rs 1,000 from the surplus after deducting all expenditure, as well as wages

(paid by the SHG) of Rs 75 per day, this being a half-day activity.

The project has gradually been empowering the women from SHGs and helping them demand transparency as they take more ownership. A comparative analysis of the cost of the raw materials will be carried out as a step towards increasing profits on future sales.

Udaipur Urja Initiatives (UUI) Producer Company Limited

UUI is a recently formed social enterprise which aims to enhance the access of rural communities to clean energy technologies and to trading mechanisms for local agro-produce. The thrust of the enterprise is improving the lives and livelihood sustainability of its members.

UUI has been successful in reaching out to 15,523 rural families through its efficient cookstoves project. These cookstoves use less than half the fuelwood used by traditional stoves and produce significantly less harmful gas and particulate matter. The reduction in greenhouse gases through use of these new stoves has allowed UUI to enter into carbon finance partnerships with two organizations to date, Bread for the World (BFWD) from Germany and Infosys from India.

Families and community institutions can become members of UUI by investing or by purchasing the cookstoves. By the end of March 2017, UUI had 15,529 members in 150 villages spread across 5 tehsils in Udaipur district. A total of 107 women were engaged in promotion, distribution and monitoring of cookstoves. Another 18,500 families are set to become members.

By the end of March 2017 UUI had been able to save 34,151 tonnes of CO₂ emissions. A Duke University (USA) study showed that a family saves three working weeks of time annually in wood collection.



Early Childcare and Development

In Seva Mandir's work area adults, both men and women, have to work in order to sustain their family. As a result children, including infants, are often left unattended or in the care of older siblings who are also minors. The children lack adequate care, nutrition, safety or a stimulating environment at home or outside -

all essential for their development in their formative years.

An internal study conducted in 2015 on nutrition among children below five in rural communities in Udaipur district indicated that 67% of children are underweight. This is very

high in comparison to state and national data. A survey conducted by the government of India and UNICEF in 2014 shows that 34% of under-fives in rural Rajasthan and 32% of under-fives in India are underweight.

The government-run Anganwadi centres, known as Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) centres, run for only four hours a day, and services provided at these centres are only available to children in the age group three to six. This leaves parents without any day-care provision for under-threes.

Given the lack of adequate day-care facilities publicly provided for younger children, Seva Mandir has set up day-care centres, known as Balwadis (literally, children's orchards), providing preschool education for children from three to five, and health and nutritional support to children from one to five. The Balwadis are located in hamlets which are not serviced by the Anganwadis. Seva Mandir facilitated 218 full-day Balwadis in Udaipur and Rajsamand districts in the year 2016-17.

The main objectives of the Balwadi programme are as follows:

- Ensuring safe, loving and stimulating day care
- Ensuring children's overall cognitive and physical development, school preparedness, health and nutritional care
- Enabling caregivers, especially women but also older siblings, to work or attend school
- Enhancing the community's contribution to health and nutrition and its ability to provision for good day care and preschool education for young children

Seva Mandir has continued to build on each of the components of its Balwadi programme, refining them over the years, to take into account the needs of children and their communities.

Balwadi Activities

Day-care

In the reporting year 218 Balwadis were run across 182 villages, providing care for 5,465 children. Of these, 2,892 were girls and 2,573 boys. In this period five new Balwadis were opened and 27 poorly functioning centres were closed. The Balwadis provided support to 3,653 mothers, enabling them to work without worrying about their children.

Preschool education

Seva Mandir has designed an activity-based, child-centred curriculum to address the preschool needs of children between three and five years old. The curriculum is being followed at all the Balwadis and helps prepare children for school. By the time they leave the Balwadi to join formal school the curriculum has helped ensure that they have learned social skills and developed their cognitive skills. The children are also trained in personal hygiene.

- Sahayikas (assistants) have been appointed in Balwadis which have a large number of children between one and two years, largely to assist in the care of the younger children. Currently 21 centres have Sahayikas.
- 1,114 children (out of 1,118 passing out from Balwadis) enrolled in schools. 472 girls and 432 boys joined government and private primary schools. 109 girls and 101 boys joined Shiksha Kendras run by Seva Mandir (see chapter on Education).

New components were added to the curriculum this year and in order to gauge its impact on children's learning levels an assessment of 466 children aged four and five was carried out. The results indicate that 53% (247) children fall into grade A, 30% (141) in grade B and 17% (78) are in grade C. The assessment shows that the age-appropriate, child-friendly and structured nature of the curriculum is helping prepare children for school more effectively than earlier versions.

Health and nutrition

- In all 218 Balwadis children were provided with two meals a day, one hot cooked meal and one ready-to-eat meal. Children also received supplementary nutrition in the form of micronutrients, vitamin A supplements, and also deworming medicine.
- All children in Balwadis were given supplementary nutrition with a nutritive value of approximately 462 calories and 17-20 grammes of protein. This amounts to one third of the total calories and half of the total protein requirement of children aged between one and five years.
- The nutritional status of the children attending the Balwadis was tested twice in this period, in September 2016 and March 2017. The results for 2,303 children indicate a significant improvement in nutritional status. The percentage of malnourished children in Balwadis dropped from 30% to 9% in the year 2016-17.
- 151 malnourished children were referred for treatment: 40 children to

Solar fans in Balwadis make life more comfortable

The Balwadis, which operate in rented buildings, are quite dark during the day, and in summer they become extremely hot. Most of the villages in which Seva Mandir works do not have electricity.

In an effort to address some of these problems, Seva Mandir has provided fibre roofing sheets to let more light into all Balwadis. We have also installed solar lighting systems in 15 Balwadis, providing energy for a bulb and a fan during the seven hours the Balwadi is open.

The Sanchalika of Sagwada Damafala Balwadi says, 'This has made a big difference to the children and to me. In summers we used to have to get water from the handpump and bathe the children so that they could sleep. They also used to be disturbed by flies and mosquitoes. Now that we have a fan in the Balwadi the children are able to sleep peacefully.'



the district Malnutrition Treatment Centre (MTC) and 111 children to other government and private hospitals

- Immunization of children was carried out at 45 Balwadis through Seva Mandir camps and 167 Balwadis through government camps. This year, immunization could not happen at 6 Balwadis (for reasons such as lack of government services and staff able to access these remote rural areas).

Birth registration

In this period efforts towards registering children's births were continued. 663 children in 37 Balwadis received birth certificates.

Sanchalikas

Attendance and remuneration

Sanchalikas' presence is monitored through date- and time-stamped photos, and their payment is linked to their presence. Each Sanchalika is provided with a camera to take pictures of the children with her three times a day, with a gap of two hours between the first and the second photograph, and a gap of four hours between the second and the third photograph. On the basis of their regularity and length of stay, assessed by these pictures, they are paid their monthly honorarium. In 2016 Seva Mandir introduced a provision of two months' paid maternity leave for its female para-workers, including Balwadi Sanchalikas. Last year 23 Sanchalikas took advantage of this leave.

The Sanchalika has to run her Balwadi for a minimum of 22 days a month, the base payment for which is Rs 3,875 per month, and an incentive is given if the centre functions for

more than the designated 22 days. A valid working day is one where the Sanchalika works for at least six hours and there are ten children in the first photograph, and 15 in the second and third photographs.

The camera-monitoring system is admired by many, and this year the district government visited Seva Mandir to understand the system



so that they could replicate it. Whilst the technology for assessing attendance is easily understood, what is not often understood or discussed is the need for a strong institutional setup and a motivated cadre of workers in order to ensure the success of attendance monitoring systems.

Training

- 2 training sessions for Sanchalikas from 78 new Balwadis were held to cover the preschool curriculum
- 1 refresher training course was held for 134 Sanchalikas from existing Balwadis



- 1 training session was held for 35 master trainer Sanchalikas to strengthen their capacities in relation to the preschool curriculum and enhance their skills in providing support to underperforming Sanchalikas
- In all the training sessions the Sanchalikas were given advice about dealing with sexual harassment and Seva Mandir's child protection policy, in addition to early childcare issues
- Cross-learning visits were held in which 43 Sanchalikas from well-functioning Balwadis visited 80 underperforming centres, and 46 Sanchalikas from underperforming centres visited 22 well-performing Balwadis

In addition, grading of Sanchalikas was conducted in March 2017 using written and oral examinations to test their knowledge of different aspects of early childcare and development. 192 out of 218 Sanchalikas participated in the grading process. The results indicate that 19 Sanchalikas are in Grade A (with 44 or more out of 55 marks), 46 in Grade B (33-43/55), and 127 in Grade C (below 33/55). Based on the grades, specific inputs will be provided to Sanchalikas in the bi-monthly meetings. Sanchalikas in C grade will be given extra support and time through monitoring visits and training.

Deepening Community Ownership

Involvement of Village Development Committees

All the Village Development Committees (GVCs) continued to play an important role in addressing issues related to the functioning of Balwadis. Communities have provided centres for the running of Balwadis in 21 locations. In Jarraya

and Rod ka Guda Balwadis of Kumbhalgarh block, for example, the committee contributed Rs. 7,000 from their funds and community members contributed Rs 3000 in the form of labour to repair the centres.

Involvement of parents

599 parents' meetings were organized by the Sanchalikas (76% of the target number). As a result of earlier efforts to raise awareness, 446 parents from 92 Balwadis are now regularly visiting government Anganwadis to collect the take-home nutrition provided by government for all children between seven months and three years.

The parents of children attending Balwadis contributed Rs 639,799 (84% of the total expected fees) in 218 Balwadis. This is up from 80% in the last reporting period. In addition to fees, parents at 62% of Balwadis also contributed in kind – providing fuelwood, wheat, vegetables, cleaning utensils, toys, as well as labour for cleaning and collecting water at the Balwadi.

Communities supporting Balwadis

The Balwadi at Suvali village, Jhadol block, was run in a very small room, due to lack of any other space in the village. The Sanchalika raised this problem in the community meeting and the community leaders talked to the Sarpanch. The Sarpanch visited the centre and was very impressed with the support it was giving to the 25 children enrolled there. Following his visit the Sarpanch gave permission for the Balwadi to use the community centre and the Balwadi moved to its new premises in September 2016.



Research Studies and External Linkage

Research to evaluate impact of Seva Mandir's childcare programme

Last year Seva Mandir participated in a three-year action research study on 'The influence of affordable daycare centres on women's empowerment in India' in collaboration with Centre for Microfinance (CMF), Institute for Financial Management and Research (IFMR), and McGill University.

This research was carried out in 160 locations and involved opening Balwadis in 80 locations using randomized control trials. The objective of the research was to look at the impact of Seva Mandir Balwadis on women's empowerment. Empowerment was captured through various dimensions like women's freedom of movement, involvement in household decision-making, views and attitudes towards gender issues, and experience of domestic violence. As part of the action research a baseline survey of 3,177 mothers was conducted, along with qualitative interviews with parents, and anthropometric data was collected on 5,000 children from one to five years. The women's baseline captured economic status, work profile and the immunization status of children. The main findings were as follows:

- 3.3% of children below six years go to government Anganwadis
- 85.8% of children stay at their own home or at the homes of relatives/friends
- The nutritional level of children is very low: 69.4% of children are underweight, 69.1% are stunted and 31.9% are wasted
- 23.9% of children have received complete immunization

The midline study was carried out by the IFMR team from June to October 2016. 3,043 mothers were interviewed. The results of that study are currently being analysed.

As part of the action research, an advisory committee has been constituted. The purpose of this committee is to provide input to the research aims, raise awareness about the problem being studied, and maximize the uptake of research results during and after the study has been completed. A total of 12 members from International Development Research Centre, IFMR, McGill University, Seva Mandir and other NGOs (Child in Need Institute, Calcutta, Basic Health Care Trust, Udaipur, Action Against Hunger) have participated.



Anganwadi Project

Hindustan Zinc Limited (HZL), as part of its CSR commitment, is working on improving the well-being of young children and signed an MOU with the government of Rajasthan to work with Anganwadi centres (AWCs) located in five districts of Rajasthan. HZL decided to partner with one NGO in each of its five districts in order to strengthen the Anganwadis. Seva Mandir was chosen as partner for Udaipur district.

This project, known as 'Khushi' (meaning 'happiness'), aims to strengthen the efficacy of AWCs to improve the health and well-being of children below six years of age. As part of this project we worked with 575 Anganwadis in Girwa and Jhadol blocks and Udaipur city in the

year 2016-17. The project involved interventions on five components : supplementary nutrition, preschool education, health and hygiene, gap filling of basic supplies and monitoring.

From August 2016 the project team regularly monitored the AWCs to assess how they were functioning. The team collected data using a checklist and relayed it through mobile phones using KOBO, an open software. The number of AWCs which were regularly open remained high. In the first quarter (April-June 2016) all AWCs in Jhadol, Girwa and Udaipur city were monitored. It was found that 87% of them were open regularly, rising to 94% in the fourth quarter (Jan-March 2017).

Infrastructure

Out of 573 AWCs monitored in Udaipur district only 17 could be classified as being in good condition, 261 were in poor condition, and the remaining 295 AWCs were in fair condition, needing basic repairs and renovation. 200 of these 295 AWCs are in Jhadol block. Leaking roofs and walls are a common problem, making the centres unusable for children. These issues have been raised with the government, the panchayat and the community. So far nine centres have been repaired as a result of our persuasion.

In addition, with the support of the local community, 21 AWCs (7 in Girwa block and 14 in Jhadol block) moved from rented buildings to government school buildings, leading to improved hygiene and cleanliness at the AWCs. Additionally, 8 AWCs in Debari and Zawar were repaired, renovated and made attractive by adding wall paintings.

Brownfield Nandghars: As part of HZL's Nandghar project 20 Anganwadis in Udaipur district will be upgraded into Brownfield Nandghars (literally, homes for young children). This model transforms existing Anganwadis into Nandghars equipped with state-of-the-art infrastructure including access to e-learning, clean water, sanitation, perennial solar power supply and nutritious food. These Nandghars will also be seen as places for mothers to come and meet each other, and some programmes will be run for farmers.

Two Anganwadi centres, in Padakhadri and Bhensrakhurd, have already been converted into Nandghars. The work on the remaining 18 centres chosen for the upgrade has started and will be completed by the end of the current year. The completed centres were inaugurated by Minister of Women and Child Development, Government of Rajasthan, Mrs. Anita Badhel.



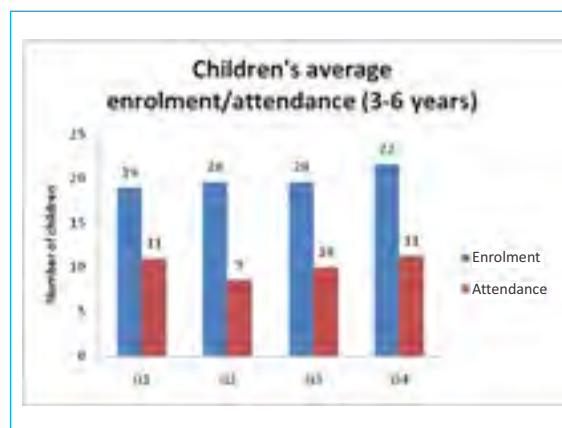
Attendance and retention of children

The Khushi team monitored the attendance of staff and children over the year. They found that enrolment of children aged three to six years increased each quarter, but remained at around only half of the number enrolled. The average enrolment of children was 19, which rose to 20 in the second and third quarter and further rose to 22 in the fourth quarter.

In order to understand how long the children stay at the AWCs, Seva Mandir randomly selected 60 AWCs for monitoring. These centres were monitored twice a day, using blind monitoring, so the monitor did not know in advance which centre he or she had to visit. The monitor's duty was centrally generated on a random basis. Each centre was visited once a month and attendance of children was checked at 10.30 a.m. and again at 1.30 p.m. The centres' timings were 10 to 2. An activity-based attendance mechanism (i.e. using records of children's activities rather than registers) was used to check attendance.

This monitoring started in January 2017. The findings in 60 AWCs visited are below.

- 95% of centres were open in January 2017, falling to 88% in March 2017
- Morning attendance was slightly low. Only 38-39% of the enrolled children were present in March 2017, compared with 39-41% of children in January 2017. Overall attendance of children throughout the day was less than 50%.
- Both workers (the Anganwadi worker and her assistant) were present at only 21 out of 60 centres in March 2017
- In January 2017, 81% of children stayed for three hours while in March 2017, 90%



of children stayed for three hours. The data shows that most children who come are staying in the Anganwadis for three hours a day.

- Of those children who stayed for three hours, only 19 % of them were regular over a period of 3 months

Regularity of children is critical for both preschool education and nutrition, so there will be increased focus on that.

Other efforts included increased frequency of monitoring visits to centres, home visits, meetings with mothers and PRI, centres made attractive for children and brought closer to their homes. As a result of these efforts, 12 AWCs saw an increase in attendance of between five and 15 children.

Staff attendance

The attendance of staff (Anganwadi worker and Sahayika) was monitored throughout the year and attendance of both staff at the same time was found to be low. Both staff members were present in only 46% of centres in Q1, rising to 48% in Q4. At other times centres were run by only one of the two staff

Preschool learning in AWCs

Preschool education could be a powerful lever for increasing children's engagement at the AWCs. It is important that the project staff and AWC workers (AWWs) understand that preschool education is about creating engaging opportunities for children so that their cognitive, physical and language development happens as part of a natural process.

For this reason training in preschool education was held for a total of 528 AWWs across 11 batches. The training sessions focused on preschool education, how children learn, stages of child development, activities to encourage child development, pre-number concepts, health, hygiene and nutrition. The training was conducted in partnership with Vidya Bhawan Society (an educational institution in Udaipur).

As a result of ongoing mentoring support by Seva Mandir and Vidya Bhawan, the AWWs were found to be performing the prescribed preschool education activities as per the timetable in almost all AWCs in March 2017.

Health and nutrition

As a part of a comprehensive baseline study of Anganwadis, anthropometric data (measurement of weight and height) was collected for 2,066 randomly selected children up to five years old to find their nutritional status. More than half of the children were found to be stunted or underweight, while 34% were found to be suffering from wasting. In comparison to rural Rajasthan, the nutritional status of children from two blocks of Udaipur district is very poor.

| Indicators n=2,066 | 6 months to 3 years | 3 to 5 years | Total (6 months to 5 years) | <5 Rural Rajasthan |
|-----------------------|------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| (All data in %) | | | | |
| Underweight | 60 | 63 | 61 | 34 |
| Severely underweight | 29 | 25 | 27 | 12 |
| Stunted | 5 | 60 | 57 | 39 |
| Severely stunted | 27 | 31 | 28 | 19 |
| Wasting | 38 | 29 | 34 | 15 |
| Severely wasted | 14 | 7 | 11 | 3 |

Source for Rural Rajasthan: The National Family Health Survey (NFHS), a large-scale, multi-round survey conducted in a representative sample of households throughout India



The Nandgarh in the Debari area of Girwa is a magical place. There is a slide outside as well as other enticing toys, and inside the centre the walls are freshly painted with images attractive to children. There is a large flat screen on the wall (turned off unless the Anganwadi worker decides to show the children some selected programmes appropriate to their ages), books, games and toys, and the whole place is spick and span inside and out.

What shines through above all is the enthusiasm and warmth of the Anganwadi worker (AWW) and her assistant. While the AWW leads activities, the assistant goes to help any children who are not participating. There are 25 girls and 12 boys enrolled and they are now coming regularly. Which child could resist this child-friendly place?

The AWW tells us that, whereas, before, she used to have to go and collect the children to come to the Anganwadi, now parents are delighted to send their little ones. She can feel the difference in both children and parents now that they have this beautiful new centre and such exciting activities to take part in every day. This enthusiasm is reflected, she says, in the fact that the children are now coming to the centre neat and clean – a big change from before. They also have smart new uniforms, given as part of the project. An inspection of the kitchen shows a well organized and clean area, with clean new utensils, a water purifier (possible because this newly refurbished centre has electricity) and the walls show charts of the food to be served each day.

There is a clean toilet (with a water tank) outside the classroom, and the AWW is planting a garden to the side of the building. The children themselves tell us how much they love coming here. Even one boy who has only been coming for under a month says he loves it. They celebrate various festivals together – Holi, Diwali, Republic Day but also Christmas.

Interestingly, an observer might think, based on what can be seen in the Anganwadi, that this village is more prosperous and more developed than others around, but in fact it would appear that this is not the case. But the attractive surroundings and active engagement of children and parents with the purposeful activities taking place inside seem to be lifting the whole area to a new level of hope and aspiration.



Tackling malnourishment:

- The nutritional status of these children was shared with the AWWs and they were asked to promote centre-based care by adding extra oil to the children's food and providing food more frequently during the day
- Along with this, AWWs were asked to give parents advice with help of the ASHA (government health worker) appointed to the centre and refer them to the nearest Malnutrition Treatment Centre (MTC). As a result, with the support of ASHAs, 54 children from 39 centres were referred to Udaipur and Rishabdev MTC centres. 15 of these children were admitted and 39 were sent home with medicine. So far, 51 children have improved to normal status and 3 children are still undergoing treatment.
- Maternal and Child Health Nutrition Day (MCHN) was celebrated at all 575 AWCs. Mothers were invited to discussions held by project staff, ANMs (nurses) and ASHAs, and subjects included nutrition, breastfeeding, antenatal and postnatal care, child health, cooking methods. Local recipes were also demonstrated to mothers to encourage healthier eating.
- 70% of food is prepared at the AWC and efforts to enhance nutritious food are made by providing a variety of local nutritive recipes. Efforts were also made to strengthen Village Health, Sanitation and Nutrition Committees. At 78 AWCs records of such a committee were found in registers but all were inactive due to lack of government funds. During the coming months more details will be collected and efforts made to reactivate the committees.
- Mothers' meetings/recipe trials: a lack of appropriate weaning food is a major reason for malnutrition, so discussions were held with mothers to help them understand what children need

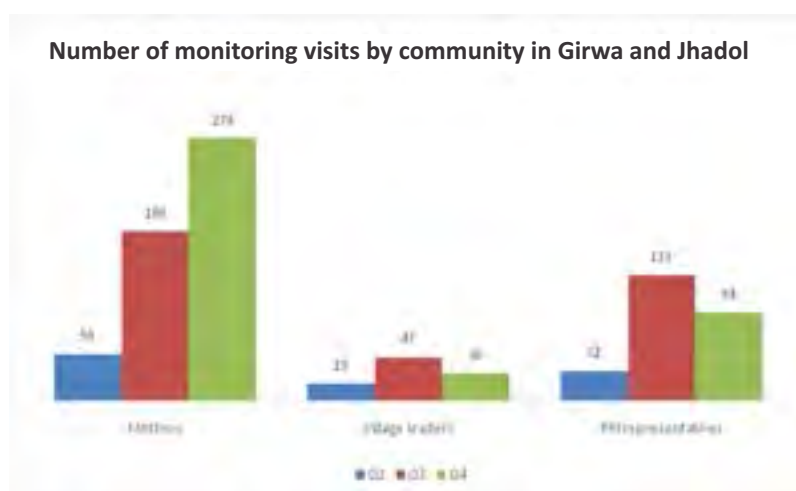
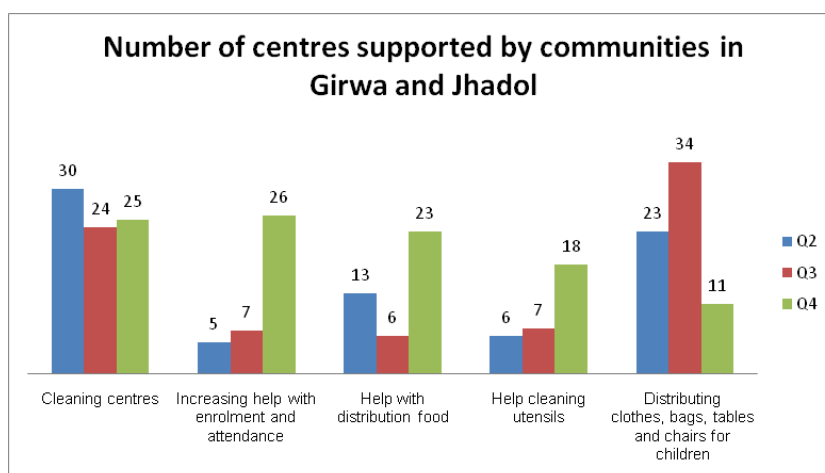
Changes recorded:

- Improvement in handling and distribution of food at 92% AWCs in Q4 compared with 86% of AWCs in Q2
- Food cooked properly and in adequate quantity at 85% of AWCs in Q4 compared with 88% AWCs in Q2. (Only food cooked at the AWCs was observed, and in many centres it is prepared elsewhere, hence smaller numbers.)
- 92% of AWCs looked neat and clean in Q4 compared with 44% in Q2
- Children washing hands before and after eating food at 91% of AWCs in Q4, up from 86% AWCs in Q2

Community engagement

In an effort to engage communities in strengthening Anganwadis, mothers' meetings, and meetings with village leaders and panchayat functionaries were held.

- 160 community meetings with parents were held in Q4 as compared to 72 in Q2. As a result of these meetings, parents of children from 26 centres in Girwa and 10 centres in Jhadol have started to drop their children at the centres and collect them in person.
- During the reporting period, 101 panchayat meetings were held in Girwa and Jhadol with PRI representatives. As a result of these meetings, many centres were provided with utility items such as uniforms, stationery, woollen clothes for children by the Sarpanches of different panchayats.
- In the last year, the community has provided immense support to centres through their services and also in kind. The graph above shows the kind of support received from the community towards the improvement of these centres.



- As a result of regular interaction with communities, 402 Anganwadis were visited by community members,

including 278 visits by mothers, 30 by village leaders and 94 visits by panchayat representatives in Q4



Educating the Next Generation

In Seva Mandir's work area children face hurdles in accessing quality education. Despite steps taken by state and several non-state bodies, including the progressive Right To Education Act, government schools in remote and disadvantaged areas continue to operate in conditions of severe neglect, with high rates of teacher absenteeism, poor pedagogical methods, inadequate teaching materials and

infrastructure, and, above all, an apathetic atmosphere.

A large number of teachers' posts are vacant (25% in Udaipur district) and those who are appointed prefer to be posted in or near the urban centres. The few who end up in remote areas do not attend regularly and teacher absenteeism is a chronic problem in most

remote rural areas. All of these factors lead to the erratic functioning of schools, uninspiring teaching and lack of comprehension amongst pupils, which eventually results in children leaving school. In Seva Mandir's work area there is huge poverty and a child's time has a very significant opportunity cost. Once a child has left school he or she begins to work, and it is then almost impossible to bring that child back to school. Moreover this also deters other children from attending school.

In this context Seva Mandir's education programme seeks to reach the most vulnerable children who are out of school. The programme has evolved and adapted in recent decades as the organization's understanding has deepened and the context has continued to change. In Seva Mandir's early years the demand for education was limited, but now many more people aspire to help their children access higher education.

As the government has not been able to keep pace with these rising aspirations, private schools (often of very substandard quality) have crept in. But there are still many pockets of vulnerability where neither the government nor the private sector has filled the gap. Seva Mandir is largely present in such areas.

To improve access to quality education for children in the age group 6-14 years Seva Mandir implements different educational interventions according to the demand and need of the targeted communities. These interventions are Shiksha Kendras, Residential Learning Camps, Youth Resource Centres, Scholarships to ensure continuity of education and Activity Centres at government schools.



The objectives of Seva Mandir's education programme are:

- To ensure access to quality education for rural and tribal children aged 6-14 years
- To help communities plan for and access quality education
- To give young people the skills, opportunity and confidence to play an important part in their and the community's development
- To inform education policies and practice through research and sharing experience



Shiksha Kendras (SKs)

Shiksha Kendras (SKs) or bridge schools are often single-teacher schools running in remote hamlets where no other schools are available. They operate in rented spaces with a local teacher teaching 25-30 children aged between 6 and 14. They aim to help pupils acquire basic skills in Hindi and maths, and to motivate children to enrol in government or other schools to continue their education.

The job of making SKs high-quality education centres has been a long one for Seva Mandir,

the communities and Seva Mandir teachers. The teachers themselves have had little education and very few role models to inspire them to provide a quality service. In the early years these teachers were unable to provide quality education and they did not even come to work regularly. But thanks to a combination of sound academic training, good management systems, motivation, creating an ecosystem of accountability and autonomy, and the input of experts in the field, above all with belief in the local teachers, the Seva Mandir team has

helped the SKs' modestly educated, modestly paid teachers begin to see themselves as trustees of their pupils' future.

To identify pupils' progress Seva Mandir has defined four learning levels from 0 to 3. Level 0 is when a child enters the SK and can barely read or write. The child has attained Level 1 when she or he can read and write short words, do simple counting and identify some numbers. When a child can start reading, understand simple sentences, write small/incomplete sentences and do basic counting and simple operations like addition and subtraction with small numbers, she or he is placed in Level 2. By level 3 children can read and understand simple texts, express themselves by writing a group of sentences and understand the concepts of multiplication, division, etc.

- This year 160 SKs educated 6,300 children, 46% of them girls
- 17 underperforming SKs were closed, and 5 new SKs opened
- Of the 160 SKs, 126 have 1 instructor, 29 SKs have 2 instructors and 5 SKs have 3 instructors
- Thus 199 instructors for 6,310 children brings the Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR) close to the desired level of 30:1 across the SKs
- This year 30% of the pupils in SKs were newly enrolled, compared with 31% in 2015-16. In this period 48% of new admissions were girls, a 6% rise on last year.
- Girls' enrolment has increased across all blocks and is close to the 50% mark
- With 45%, Kotra block has the lowest ratio of girls entering SKs. However, 5 years ago, only 35% of new admissions in Kotra were girls.
- 57% of new admissions in Badgaon were girls, the highest across the 5 blocks


- In the annual evaluation of May 2016, a total of 5,242 children, compared to 5,095 last year (including 43% girls), sat the exams. 32% achieved Level 3.
- 1,303 children went on to enrol in other institutions to continue their education. Nearly 68% of these children were enrolled in Class 5 and 6, the highest rate in the last 5 years.



To understand the impact of SKs, a survey was conducted in Badgaon and Girwa blocks. The focus was on the current status of children who had completed SKs in the past 10 years.

- Of 1,594 children surveyed, 1,019 (64%) had continued their studies; 42% of them were girls
- Of the children who continued their studies, 782 (77%) were studying in grade 6, and over 42% were girls

While it is heartening to note that 64% have continued their studies, the fact that almost 40% have discontinued is challenging. Seva Mandir's efforts at bridging gaps at the primary education level have been very useful, but children face the same problems of lack of quality teaching once they go into higher classes in government schools. This is a challenge that we need to address in the coming years.



Teacher's Day was celebrated with 188 SK instructors, eight Residential Learning Camp teachers, 14 Youth Resource Centre facilitators and four Activity Centre instructors at our Kaya Training Centre.

Capacity building of instructors

Seva Mandir has been investing in increasing the efficiency of SK instructors through training, the World Teacher Exchange programme and bimonthly meetings.

Teacher's Day was celebrated with 188 SK instructors, eight Residential Learning Camp teachers, 14 Youth Resource Centre facilitators and four Activity Centre instructors. The objective of the meeting was to conduct an assessment of the teachers for future capacity building. Teachers also discussed prevention of sexual harassment, child rights, first aid and safe drinking water practices.

The World Teacher Exchange programme, facilitated by Edukans, Netherlands, provides for Dutch teachers to travel to different countries and help local teachers improve their skills. In our case the programme facilitates professional and informal exchanges between education professionals from the Netherlands and Seva Mandir's SK instructors.

This year's 13-day programme included SK visits, workshops and implementation of new teaching/learning methods. The programme was divided into three phases: observation, teacher training (workshops) and implementation of learning.

During the reporting period, 33 instructor meetings were held across the five blocks. Discussions were held on teaching techniques, the attendance and performance of children, and camera monitoring. Sessions on Hindi, maths and English were held to improve instructors' capacity.

Community participation

During the reporting period 95% of the expected fees have been collected, a slight decrease compared with last year when it was 98%. But if we look at overall fee collection at the SKs over a number of years it is increasing both in terms of regularity and amount. In the case of Jhadol block, parents wanted to purchase better quality uniforms, and were willing to contribute to do so. The fees collected were 22% more than expected. This is one of an example of community awareness and ownership of the Shiksha Kendras.

Progress despite the odds

10-year-old Priyanka lives in Baghpura village of Girwa block. After her mother died following an illness, her father remarried and abandoned her. She went to live with her maternal uncle, a mine labourer in Udaipur. With only the uncle earning and four children to support, the household was struggling financially.

Priyanka had never been to school before, but she came to Udaipur with her uncle to enrol in Class 3 of a government school, the appropriate level for her age. Unfortunately she soon dropped out because she was far behind the rest of the class.

In July 2016 her uncle enrolled Priyanka in Dagal Bhatda SK. Despite a daily walk of 4 kilometres, she was a keen and regular student. In September 2016, a new SK was opened in Retda village, just 1 kilometre from Priyanka's home. She is now in Level C and can read a few words and count to 20.

Though Priyanka is keen to study, she often has to take time out to help at home. But she is inspired and motivated. She intends to complete her SK education and later stay at a hostel so that she can go to a school outside of the village.





Residential Learning Camps

Many children cannot attend school full-time because they must contribute to their family's income by working. As a response to this problem, Seva Mandir started Residential Learning Camps in 2002. These are a series of three 60-day camps held throughout the year

teaching basic mathematics, literacy and hygiene to out-of-school children. The camps offer accelerated learning with one instructor to ten children. In addition to formal studies, sports, community living, leadership, teamwork, hygiene, cultural activities, nutrition and health are important components of the camps.



The camps' focus has always been on out-of-school children. These children were mostly engaged in cattle grazing, domestic and farm work, and a few were engaged in paid labour.

This year:

- 271 children from 33 villages participated in the camps
- 30% had never attended school
- 53% had been to school but then dropped out
- The rest were enrolled in schools but were irregular



Since the introduction of computer classes in Level B last year the children have become confident in using them. Now they use computers for independent study to reinforce learning in Hindi, English and maths. In this period children have continued to learn sports and exercises with a professional physical education instructor.

Every year, 15-20 students from St Christopher School, Letchworth UK, visit Seva Mandir. They expose the children to new skills and experiences by leading workshops in arts and crafts, music, drama, English and mathematics.

Seva Mandir has opened a new library at the camp, which is equipped with storybooks, poems and short story posters. Many students now like to spend their break times reading and exploring the library.

Scholarship programme

In 2010 Seva Mandir set up a scholarship programme to address the rate of dropouts amongst children who had attended the Residential Learning Camp. The teaching and care provided in the camp motivated children to attend regular schooling and about 70% of them joined schools after the camp. But, soon

enough, financial circumstances would catch up with them and they would drop out.

Our scholarship programme was introduced to compensate families for the loss of children's income when they are in school. An amount equal to the child's earning is given to the family as a motivating factor. The scholarship programme is now in its fifth year and 83 (40%) of children have continued their education.

While this scholarship programme made good headway in allowing 83 children to study up to class XII, it was found that the children attending government schools were not learning much and slowly dropping out. So a new scholarship programme has been introduced which will allow children to pursue their education in a high-quality private boarding school in Udaipur.

This new scholarship programme, to enable former SK and/or RLC pupils to study in Vidya Bhawan Senior School (VBSS), Udaipur, was initiated in the academic session of 2016. VBSS is an NGO-run, private, co-educational school with the philanthropic goal of providing quality education with equal opportunity to the children of disadvantaged families. 33 children

(18 girls and 15 boys) from rural and tribal areas and from urban slums were selected and enrolled in the school through this Seva Mandir Colgate Scholarship initiative.

Seva Mandir keeps a close track of the learning outcomes of every child. 32 out of 33 children successfully completed their first year in school. Regular contact and counselling is being maintained to motivate the one child who dropped out.

In the coming year, 13 new children will join VBSS under the Seva Mandir scholarship programme.

Youth Resource Centres

The Youth Resource Centres (YRCs) were started in 2005 to meet the rising need for a dialogue with rural youth. YRCs allow young people to address issues such as communalism, gender bias, education, migration and health. The project tries to make young people

A sporting idol for girls

Jhadol is a remote block with a largely tribal population. Here, one YRC is changing the life of girls through sport.

Soniya Kumari is now a sporting idol for girls in Bhamti. And it's all thanks to Prakash, the facilitator at Bhamti YRC. Soniya showed a great talent for volleyball, but her school was not equipped to support her. Prakash, a keen volleyball player himself, recognized Soniya's talent and went out of his way to help her flourish. He began to coach Soniya and other girls at the YRC. With time, Soniya mastered the game. Prakash then took her to compete at events around the villages, even playing against boys.

Thanks to Prakash's support, Soniya's confidence grew and grew. Prakash started taking her to school tournaments. Today Soniya plays in the Girls' District Tournament and the State Tournament. She is motivating other girls to follow in her footsteps.



sensitive to these issues and encourages them to tackle them through individual and community efforts.

- This year 18 YRCs were used by 2,000 young people
- Across all blocks, young people participated in training in health, education, vocational skills, governance, sports, arts and crafts, among other subjects
- New quarterly meetings helped facilitators to plan and share their experiences

Activity Centres

Government schools cater to large numbers of rural and poor children, but as a result of various constraints they are not able to do justice to their pupils. For this reason Seva Mandir has been supporting the teaching in government schools through activity centres.

During school hours the centres offer children in classes 1-8 (so aged 6-14) alternative ways to learn through activity-based methods which include special teaching material, interesting texts, storybooks and worksheets. The centres also offer classes after school hours to children who need them.

- The centres aim to improve children's academic performance in school and also reduce the number of dropouts

- They are run for marginalized populations in urban areas
- The parents are generally not literate and thus unable to help children with their academic studies
- There are five activity centres and one tuition centre

Bal Samuhs

We run Bal Samuhs (children's groups) in the slums of Udaipur city to offer children after-school coaching. By providing support, Bal Samuhs aim to improve children's academic performance and reduce dropouts. Here too, the parents are generally not literate and are therefore unable to help the children with their studies.

- This year a total of 194 children (110 boys and 84 girls) from 130 families were reached through 11 Bal Samuhs
- 95 (49%) of these children are from government schools and 99 (51%) from private schools. The number of children from government schools has increased significantly from last year's figure of 32%.
- This year the collection of fees is 85%

77 parent-teacher meetings (PTMs) were organized at these centres. The PTMs are becoming more regular and more parents are attending, which shows an increase in awareness of the importance of education in the community.



Improving Health

Seva Mandir's health programme works to bring a change in health practices and care-seeking behaviour through education, awareness and the experience of quality services. The programme has created a cadre of community-level health workers to increase local knowledge and promote preventive healthcare. It has also

partnered with government, researchers, donors and others to find solutions to some of the entrenched problems, such as lack of obstetric care, undernutrition, anaemia and lack of complete immunization of children. Solutions have been found for some of these problems and efforts to remedy the others continue.



Maternal Health Programme

In 2005, with the launch of its National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), the government made institutional delivery a priority and introduced incentives to boost demand. It also launched ambulance services so that women from remote areas could reach the government hospitals to give birth. All these measures have had a considerable impact. In Seva Mandir's field areas institutional deliveries jumped from 7% in 2004-05 to 13% in 2005-06, the year of Janani Suraksha Yojna launch. In subsequent years the proportion of institutional deliveries has continued to increase, reaching 59% in 2016-17.

While this is indeed a considerable overall improvement, there are still pockets where these interventions have not made much meaningful difference. Some villages are too remote and the roads too bad to allow easy access for ambulances, the Primary and Community Health Centres (PHCs, CHCs) are far away and do not have round-the-clock obstetric services, and most CHCs are not equipped to handle surgery or complications. The village sub-centres lack infrastructure and their opening times are unpredictable.

All these factors make a woman nervous of approaching a hospital, and even more so when it comes to the district hospital, which is the only well-equipped hospital, but is large and far away. At the community level, mindsets and myths surrounding diet and nutrition affect women's health. Given the difficult terrain and way of life, even in advanced pregnancy women are forced to undertake hard physical labour in routine jobs like fetching water and fuelwood. Tribal households are nuclear and scattered over hills, so a pregnant woman may often be alone or with only children while her husband migrates for work.

In this scenario, the Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs), who are trusted in the communities, play a critical role. Recognizing this, Seva Mandir has been working on training the TBAs for more than two decades.

The TBAs help change community mindsets with regard to nutrition, rest and other care necessary for pregnant and lactating women, and act as a bridge between the women and the health services. They help women and their families negotiate the labyrinth of hospital, take quick decisions on where to take women in case

of complications, and save time which is otherwise wasted in running from one hospital to the other. Even when a woman has reached a health centre, especially at the primary level, there may not be a trained team and the TBA often proves to be of critical importance there as well. And, through all this, she is a source of comfort and psychological social support to the woman.

The TBAs have established a personal rapport with the ambulance and other transport services so they are able to ensure that women reach an appropriate hospital in time. By recognizing complications, counselling family members and accompanying women to the hospitals, the TBAs have saved the lives of countless women and remain the primary providers of maternal healthcare in most remote villages. Given that there has been some improvement in the provision of healthcare at least in some places, and also changes in community behaviour in several areas, Seva Mandir is now thinking of concentrating its maternal health efforts in those areas that need it most.

During the year:

- 277 TBAs were working in 196 villages
- These TBAs helped 5,072 women give birth safely
- TBAs conducted 2,068 deliveries at home and facilitated 3,004 institutional deliveries
- TBAs referred 1,335 pregnant women with complications to hospital: 1,136



(85%) during pregnancy, 133 (9.9%) at the time of delivery, and 66 (4.9 %) post-delivery

This year witnessed four maternal deaths: major reasons were jaundice, puerperal pyrexia with anaemia, anaemia with postpartum haemor-rhage, and one sudden death, cause unknown.

Training and exposure

Refresher training was conducted to increase the capacity and expertise of TBAs, with the aim of reducing maternal and child death rates in the region. This year's participation was 90% compared to 79% last year. A gynaecologist provided training in care during pregnancy, delivery and post-delivery, complications, neonatal care, and family planning methods. A nutrition expert highlighted the role of diet during pregnancy. Immunization, sanitation, and hygiene practices were also discussed.

Village-level meetings

In 2016-17 village-level meetings for pregnant and lactating mothers were facilitated by TBAs. 24,594 participants took part in 1,958 meetings, an average participation of 13 women per meeting. This period saw a 42% increase in meetings and a 50% increase in women's participation in meetings compared to the previous year.

The following points were discussed during the meetings:

- Care during pregnancy and after delivery
- Importance of immunization for pregnant women and children
- Importance of family planning and the different methods available

Postpartum haemor-rhage

Postpartum haemor-rhage (PPH) is recognized as a major cause of maternal death, a fact borne out by verbal autopsies in our area. In order to avert PPH deaths a select group of the best-performing TBAs in Kherwara and Girwa blocks have been given misoprostol to administer to women after home deliveries.

This year 53% of the women who gave birth at home (512 in Kherwara and 218 in Girwa block) received misopristol, compared with only 20% the previous year.

Child Health

It is widely accepted that deprivation during childhood can have an adverse long-term impact on a child's well-being. The status of neonatal and infant health in Udaipur district has been extremely poor for many years. Along with environmental conditions like the lack of clean drinking water, toilets or nutritious food, there are also behavioural patterns which affect children's health: an absence of basic things like colostrum feeding, exclusive breastfeeding, keeping the baby warm, clean and safe, proper weaning, hygienic handling of the baby's food. Seva Mandir's field experience suggests that changes in behavioural practices can lead to significant results with respect to children's health.

Bal Sakhis are young women selected from the villages and given intensive training so that they can work with new mothers on childcare and health.

- This year 99 Bal Sakhis gave care to 4,088 children (up from 3,677 last year)



- These children were intensively measured with growth-monitoring tools by Bal Sakhis, and mothers were given appropriate counselling based on the results
- A challenge for this programme has been child deaths: 37 deaths were reported this year, compared to 31 in the past year, the most common cause being diarrhoea

Training

65 out of 73 BalSakhis received refresher training in September 2016, 7% more than last year. The focus was on strengthening their counselling skills and knowledge of child health. Three review meetings were held at which

training was given in subjects that it had been observed Bal Sakhis were most in need of. Bal Sakhis were engaged through group presentations, discussions, role play and games in the training.

A group of 17 Bal Sakhis and four staff members were taken on an exposure trip to the Malnutrition Treatment Centre (MTC) in Chittaurgarh, one of the best in Rajasthan.

Immunization Programme

A 2003-04 study by Abdul Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) of Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Seva Mandir and Vidya Bhawan revealed that the rate of complete immunization among children aged 12-24

months was as low as 2.66%. The reasons were poor supply of healthcare, especially preventive care, and low demand for immunization. So Seva Mandir and J-PAL implemented an action research project to try to improve immunization levels among children by addressing both demand and supply-side constraints. The action research was undertaken in cooperation with

A cool head saves lives

Parivi village in Jhadol block is one of the most remote of Seva Mandir's work areas. The village lacks basic healthcare facilities, and the nearest Community Health Centre is 20 km away. Seva Mandir provides health services through its Bal Sakhis and Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs). Omli Bai is a TBA who has been trained by Seva Mandir to handle complicated cases and she has saved the lives of several women and children. One such case is that of Kesari Bai.

Kesari was pregnant with her first child when she contacted Omli Bai. Omli took charge of her health. From the start of the pregnancy she helped her with formalities like registering with the Anganwadi (one of the mother- and childcare centres run by the government), opening a bank account, timely immunization and regular check-ups.

When Kesari went into labour it was 2 am and raining heavily, so her family called the emergency ambulance to take her to the Community Health Centre at Jhadol. But the bridge had collapsed because of the rains, making it impossible for the ambulance to reach Kesari's home. The family turned to Omli Bai for help. She came immediately and, after checking the young woman's condition, decided to deliver the baby at home. Kesari's baby was born soon after. The mother and the child are healthy and the whole family is grateful to Omli Bai for her prompt and skilful help.

the district government.

The immunization programme dramatically increased child immunization rates in the hamlets where it was implemented, with villages which had both reliable camps and incentives showing a significant increase in complete immunization to 38.3%. Based on these encouraging findings, Seva Mandir initiated its immunization intervention in 68 hamlets in April 2007.

This year Seva Mandir was compelled to reduce the number of camps because of high turnover of nurses and the low quality of incoming nurses, as that was affecting the quality of the camps. As a result, this year 762 camps were run in 62 locations, down from 1,024 camps in 108 locations last year.

- 5,541 shots were administered
- 3,579 children were immunized
- 806 children completed their immunization (one more than last year) despite the number of camps being reduced by 32%
- 2,401 children suffering from common ailments such as fever, cold, cough, diarrhoea and skin infections were treated
- The camps also provided antenatal services and immunization to 2,446 pregnant women. While the number of camps decreased by 32%, the decrease in women registered is just 11% compared to the last reporting period.
- 1,124 women completed their immunizations

Research on addressing undernutrition

Given the high prevalence of malnutrition in the area, an action research project, Integrated



Nutrition Project, has been initiated to find solutions. Plan India and Plan Japan are providing technical and financial support. The study is being conducted at two locations in Rajasthan: Bikaner with the NGO Urmul, and Udaipur with Seva Mandir. In Udaipur the research is taking place in 20 locations. The project aims to deepen knowledge of health and nutrition, as well as to create demonstration models to improve supply and reduce infrastructural gaps so as to improve the nutritional status of children in the target area.

As part of the research, an integrated set of interventions is being carried out and their impact studied. In this period, interventions undertaken included:

- Strengthening the capacity of staff, community mobilizers and the

community in maternal and child health and nutrition

- 668 children aged 1-5 provided with nutritious meals and micronutrients in 25 full-day Balwadis

306 malnourished children were identified of whom 66 had Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) and were referred to the Malnutrition Treatment Centre, Rishabdev. Balsakhis gave advice to parents of the remaining children and regularly followed them up.

Other activities included:

- Training for staff, Bal Sakhis and Balwadi Sanchalikas on infant health and systematic data collection
- 866 pregnant and nursing mothers took part in demonstrations and training in

Indra and the MTC save Mamta 's life

The Malnutrition Treatment ward at the Community Health Centre, Rishabdev, 12 km from Kherwara block, has been open since April 2016. Only a few-block level hospitals have malnutrition treatment centres (MTCs). Seva Mandir, with the help of Plan Japan, Plan International and government reactivated the MTC at Rishabdev. It is run by two nurses, a cook and one member of support staff. In this period, 59 children received treatment, referred through Bal Sakhis and government health staff.

Indra, a Bal Sakhi, has been trained by the Integrated Nutrition project team. She persuaded one family to send their severely malnourished child to the MTC. The mother did not know about the ward and was afraid of taking her child there. Indra reports that the child was left at home and neither given colostrum nor exclusively breastfed.

10-month-old Mamta was admitted weighing 5.3 kg, much less than the expected weight of 7.5 kg, and with a mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC) of 11.2 cm compared with an expected MUAC of 12.5 cm. She was in a very poor condition overall, and was suffering from fever and diarrhoea. She was given cereal-based therapeutic feed, and the nurse gave her mother advice about the frequency, consistency and variety of food the baby needed. She stayed there for 8 days and at discharge her weight was 5.5 kg, MUAC 11.4 cm and length 67.5 cm. The mother gave her healthy nutrition at home with support from her family. Mamta has since been taken for two follow-up visits, and her weight and MUAC have continued to increase.



how to prepare nutritious meals for their babies

- 1,107 women took part in WASH training. An improvement has been noted in washing hands, safe water storage, and food hygiene. In 14 Balwadi locations toilets were constructed to ensure sanitary facilities for children and see the impact on the health of the children there.
- 6 village events were organized to create awareness among communities regarding hygiene and sanitation, both factors contributing to malnutrition ● 515 women participated in meetings for Breastfeeding Week
- A one-day Swasthya Samelan was held to celebrate the achievements of the project and create further awareness of malnutrition. 395 community members and Seva Mandir staff participated.



- A two-day exposure visit to Mumbai was organized to learn from the good practices of other NGOs
- 883 immunization shots were given to children under 2
- 447 children were given Vitamin A, iron and zinc supplements 538 women received antenatal and postnatal care
- 10 health camps were organized, which supported 336 pregnant women, nursing mothers and children

Adolescent Reproductive Health Programme

It is imperative that young people of both genders are equipped with knowledge about reproductive and sexual health, but this is often not the case.

This programme lays special emphasis on building the capacities of our youth facilitators who then conduct one-day awareness camps with their peers through the Youth Resource Centres.

Across the 18 centres, the trained facilitators reached 1,374 youths. Female engagement was 65% and male 35%, indicating a growing awareness of and engagement with these issues among young women. Training sessions and workshops were held on reproductive and sexual health, menstrual hygiene (including making sanitary napkins), illegal abortions, and issues such as early marriage and female foeticide.

Referral Health Centre

The Referral Health Centre in Kojawara continued to provide medical care and medicines on a no-profit no-loss basis. During the reporting period a total of 1,667 patients were treated for general problems at the RHC, only around half the number of last year. The visiting doctor worked only for six months and later stopped, resulting in a smaller number of patients receiving medical care.



Delwara: Peri-urban Governance

Delwara is a qasba or semi-urbanized settlement some 30 km away from the city of Udaipur. With a population of about 6,000, Delwara had clogged drains, scattered garbage dumps and contaminated wells, but also a wealth of rich cultural heritage sites including

step-wells, temples and an 18th-century palace (now a luxury hotel).

In 2005 Seva Mandir, in partnership with the residents of Delwara and with the support of National Foundation of India and Sri Dorabji

Tata Trust, began work on water and sanitation, heritage conservation and restoration of public spaces, a solid-waste management system, youth engagement and livelihoods, along with formation of a women's forum and Self-Help Group. The backbone of all this work was the formation of the Nagrik Vikas Manch (NVM) or Citizen's Forum, which comprises 36 members, two elected representatives from each of the 18 mohallas or neighbourhoods of the town. The objective was to put civic participation and ownership at the heart of Delwara's development process.

In the last twelve years much ground has been covered in specific sectors in Delwara. This year has seen a number of training sessions, youth and community meetings and activities to help continue the process of development.

Recent Progress

Sanitation

Over the last couple of years Seva Mandir has helped the communities construct toilets: 233 so far. There is minimal open defecation now in Delwara and 35% of the toilets were built through the support of the NVM and Seva Mandir. Five toilets were repaired along with maintenance of the sewage system at Bhil Basti.

Town cleaning and waste management

Over the years Seva Mandir has been able to make considerable progress in cleaning the town. At present there are nine Arogya Mitras (sanitation workers), seven of whom clean the streets, while two ride cycle rickshaws and collect solid and liquid waste from households. The Arogya Mitras dump the waste at the solid-waste management site, where it is segregated and recycled, then processed into vermicompost and sold to local farmers. There is still a need for considerable improvement in segregation and composting work.

76% of Delwara's waste is collected by these Arogya Mitras. There has been considerable improvement in quality of work done by this team of sanitation workers, and the beneficiaries in Delwara have acknowledged the efficient work they do, especially at the time of monsoons when they maintain cleanliness in the streets, ensuring fewer blocked drains. All the Arogya Mitras belong to the caste that was considered untouchable, but now in Delwara, along with professional respect, we are seeing a dissipation of this caste difference and more social intermingling of the Arogya Mitras.

Youth Resource Centre

Delwara has an active YRC. It has conducted vocational skills training for young people. In recent years courses have included beauty therapy, mobile phone repairing, driving, computer skills, English lessons and tailoring. In this way the YRC also provides a space for young people from different socio-economic groups to come together.

The YRC organized two months of skill development training in the fields of beauty therapy, henna treatment and tailoring which were attended by 53 young women. Similarly 18 young men were enrolled in Vidya Bhawan Polytechnic College to enhance their vocational skills. The YRC is responsible for the Community Heritage Walks.

Activities and Visits

Voluntary labour programme : To focus attention on cleanliness, voluntary labour, shramdaan or community work was carried out by 60 students from Harvard Business School who also visited the Sadhna facility centre located in Delwara



The Women's Forum is an important part of the NVM but poor attendance had made it difficult to hold regular meetings. Last year women from Delwara were taken on an exposure visit to Kumbhalgarh. This proved helpful and motivated women to reorganize themselves. Women's forum meetings were held regularly every month and ensured greater attendance and more active participation. 14 new savings groups have also helped motivated the women of Delwara.

Other events organized by Seva Mandir included street theatre performances, film shows and exhibitions on sanitation and hygiene and related behavioural practices.

Relations with the Panchayat: Work in Progress

Consistent efforts were made to strengthen our ties with the panchayat, including extending cooperation in the implementation of works carried out by it. The panchayat invited Seva Mandir and the NVM to be a part of the committee monitoring works it carries out. There was some frustration when, despite the crucial role played by the NVM and Seva Mandir in constructing 233 toilets, which enabled Delwara to be declared open-defecation free (ODF), the panchayat disregarded the efforts of the NGO and took all the credit when the town was granted the status of ODF Panchayat. It is a source of encouragement, however, that the town's citizens noticed this and made clear their view that Delwara owes its clean status very largely to the work of the NVM and Seva Mandir.

The Delwara Heritage and Community Walk

The Delwara Walk started as a project to generate local jobs and publicize the development work accomplished together by Seva Mandir and Delwara's people over the past 25 years. It has, however, had a wider impact. During the research and training stage a group of young people together with a volunteer researched the town's 18th-century palace, thousand-year-old Jain temples, step-wells and other historical sites. But, unlike other heritage walks, this one went beyond physical heritage to ask and answer questions about women's rights, access to water and toilets, caste discrimination, livelihoods and other aspects of Seva Mandir's work. For example, the group asked residents of the tribal neighbourhood about the impact of having a toilet for the first time, visited a livelihood training session run by the textile cooperative Sadhna, and explored the many ways a water tank has dignified living conditions in the community (by eliminating the 2-3 hours of daily drudgery involved in fetching water from afar).

The Walk has had clear benefits in enabling people to take responsibility for their community. Seva Mandir staff shared experiences accumulated over long years in the community, and dozens of other Delwara residents had a public outlet to air their opinions and debate the development work and social changes in their town. The guides themselves learned an enormous amount about their town and explored their identity as citizens of Delwara in multiple new ways. For example, because of the Walk, the Muslim members of the guiding class visited the town's Jain temples for the first time, and a high-caste Rajput guide interacted at length with members of the tribal community as he never had before. The young guides also flexed their political agency through the Walk, for example when they presented to local government officials on the neglect they had discovered at the town's waste management site. Now that the guides are keepers of their town's history and social inheritance, the ultimate goal is for them to pass this knowledge, and sense of responsibility, on to others - not only visitors to Delwara, but also members of the local community. In this vein Walks are being organized with Delwara's school children so that they too can begin to learn about and take ownership of the development of Delwara. During the reporting year 187 paid walks and 28 free walks were organized, raising a total of Rs 135,000.





Kankroli: A New Area

This year Seva Mandir started work in a new location called Kankroli. It is located about 68 km north of Udaipur and forms a twin city with Rajsamand. With the support of JK Tyres, Seva Mandir has begun work in two areas: socio-economic empowerment of women and improving access to clean drinking water. Our

work aims to bring benefits to over 3,500 people in nine villages of Kankroli.

Before work commenced, a baseline survey of 1,986 households in 9 villages was completed. The following sections detail the progress in the two main programme components.

Women's Empowerment

- 23 Self-Help Groups (SHGs) have been set up in the 9 villages, against a target of 18
- 12 campaigns were organized in all 9 villages to explain the benefits, procedures, rules and regulations of SHGs

Training

Accountants: six women accountants appointed to help run the 23 SHGs took part in training. The economic situation of women was discussed, followed by training in keeping accounts: how to handle a cash book, registering records, matching the day book and trial balance.

SHG leaders: residential training courses for SHG leaders focused on the current

socio-economic and political situation of women in society, and how their situation can be improved by linking them to the SHGs and Sadhna (an offshoot of Seva Mandir, now an independent enterprise in which women produce stitched garments and home furnishings, thus giving them a welcome income). A session on government schemes was also organized. Women were introduced to the rules and regulations governing SHGs and were also given leadership skills training.

Financial literacy: the training, open to all women associated with SHGs, focused on understanding the need for and importance of savings, how one can save money, the difference between necessary and unnecessary expenditure and how one can curb extra spending. It also focused on household budgets, different savings and insurance schemes, banking procedures and accounting.





Income generation: the aim of the training was to introduce livelihood enhancement activities to the SHG members, including vermicomposting, floriculture and vegetable plantation. The techniques, benefits and methods of market linkage were discussed with women.

Sadhna: various meetings were held in villages to introduce the work of Sadhna, training for seamstresses, benefits etc. Later, Sadhna training courses were started at three different centres in Tasol, Bangundada and Bandiavada villages.

In the beginning, 94 women registered for training but only 54 women continued the training. Ten of the women are not part of any SHG. Following their training, women artisans will be able to take hand-work involving stitching and embroidery to do at home and earn on a piece-rate basis.

Clean Drinking Water

Facility creation

- As targeted, 3 wells have been restored, 2 borewells and 5 connecting water tanks have been constructed
- 13 handpumps have been repaired, significantly more than the target of 5

Community meetings

Eight community meetings were organized in eight villages in which 268 people participated. Discussions were held on water-related issues, WASH and the details of the project, site selection and beneficiary selection.

Training

Technical: technical training on well restoration and water tank construction was given to masons and local villagers. Four masons and 14 village leaders from Dhayala (Sanchlayi), Mundol (Narvalai), and Bhil Basti participated.

Community Mobilizers: training for community mobilizers/para-workers was conducted in Kumbhalgarh and Tasol, in which all five para-workers participated. The mobilizers are mainly involved in developing linkages with community and organizing village meetings. The para-workers received training on Seva Mandir's work on clean drinking water, the process of water tank chlorination, filtration etc. An exposure visit to Kumbhalgarh was organized for community mobilizers.

Community exposure visit: an exposure visit was organized to Vanadar and Haraj villages in Kumbhalgarh where work on clean drinking water has already been carried out. 39 people from nine villages participated and learned about the usage and management norms of constructed facilities.

Community management: two training sessions on water distribution and management norms were set up. Discussions were held on drinking water distribution, electricity consumption, chlorination and cleaning of tanks.

Support from panchayats: It has been a huge achievement that the local village panchayats have come forward to support the development projects undertaken in their community. At various places, including Mundol, the pipeline and distribution system for the new clean water supply has been supplied by the panchayat.

Similarly in Khatmla village, the panchayat came forward to offer its support and provided a pipeline, electric motor and electrical connection for the water facilities constructed in their village. In Vasol, beneficiaries have together taken responsibility for arranging the pipeline, electric motor and electrical connection.



More power to women

SHG women have been linked with the clean drinking water project as well. The women have taken responsibility for the maintenance of the water tanks, which includes collection of the maintenance fee paid by families, chlorination of the tank and repairs. This has given them more power and a sense of responsibility.



Child Representative Programme

Since 2005 Seva Mandir has received support from Plan International to help the organization incorporate the idea of child-centred community development (CCCD) into its holistic integrated development framework.

The Child Representative programme pioneered a new kind of funding relationship combining Plan International's child-centred

sponsorship approach with Seva Mandir's community-centred development approach. A new cell was formed to serve as an interface between the two organizations, and the process of integrating the frameworks of these two organizations has continued to evolve very successfully.

In this programme children called child representatives are chosen to represent the status and concerns of all the children in a village. Plan raises funds for the benefit of all the children in the village by finding sponsors for the child representatives. This process has enabled us to study the impact of our work on the children of this area.

- 132 villages comprising 512 hamlets were selected across 5 blocks for the Child Representative programme
- In the initial stages children in the age group 3-8 were selected as child representatives; they graduate from the programme once they reach 18
- There are currently 4,611 child representatives

Child-Centred Community Development

The Bal Manch:

The Bal Manch or Children's Forum was created in villages since children do not usually have space or opportunities to express their views or explain the problems they face. The key objective of the Bal Manch is to create that space and enable children to use it meaningfully.

So far 98 Bal Manch have been established, up from 68 in the previous period. A total of 3,164 children actively engaged with the forums this year, a 10% increase on the previous period.

In the meetings children have voiced their concerns over the lack of clean drinking water, lack of toilets in school, dangerous open tanks and other issues, and were helped to write proposals and follow up with the relevant authority. At meetings the children discuss issues such as child labour, hygiene and child marriages, and learn about their rights.

Training and activities of Child

Representative programme

- To enhance child representatives' participation in the programme, training sessions and workshops were conducted. 38 children took part in workshops on child rights and protection, health and hygiene, and the importance of children's forums.
- 3 Bal Melas (Children's Fairs) were held in which 769 children took part. They were organized to encourage children's participation and to create awareness of child rights and protection, and Childline (see box)
- A Bal Sammelan was organized in the child representative village of Asarivada in Kherwara block. There were plays about education and child trafficking, and children identified child protection issues in their respective areas and gave presentations on them. Children visited information stalls to learn about WASH, road safety, adolescent health and personal hygiene, clean energy and vocational guidance. 250 children participated.
- National Girl Child Day was celebrated with meetings and other special events where children learnt about child rights, especially related to child marriage and its prevention. 35 girls participated.

Child Protection

In order to prevent child abuse, Seva Mandir has worked with children and adults. Training in child protection was carried out with parents, community members, including office-bearers of Village Development Committees, and grass-roots level workers dealing with and accountable for child protection.



Children win a victory

In Jogion Ka Guda village in Badgaon block the girls of the Child Representative programme were forced to drop out of education. Their village school only goes up to 8th class, and for secondary education children have to travel to another village 5-7 km away. Whilst boys were allowed to make the journey girls were not.

The child representatives brought up this issue during a meeting of the children's forum. The block leader and the members of Women's Resource Centre consulted the girls, their parents and the Village Development Committee. To help the girls get to school, an auto-rickshaw was organized, and each family contributes Rs 150 a month per child towards it. Six girls are now able to travel together safely to school and attend regularly.



Childline

This is India's first 24-hour free emergency phone helpline for children up to 18. It was established in collaboration with the Ministry of Women and Child Development and Childline Foundation. Seva Mandir has been operating Childline in Udaipur since 2002. The service offers protection to homeless, lost and abused children.

This year:

- Childline handled 3,569 calls
- Childline also helped rescue 350 children from exploitative working conditions, 17 from being forcibly married and 30 from an unsafe environment at home



The following key efforts were made to sensitize the community with regard to child protection issues:

- 40 Balwadi instructors were trained in child protection issues
- 57 zonal workers and block leaders participated in refresher training in child protection and sponsorship
- 26 Seva Mandir staff members took part in a child protection course organized by Plan in Jaipur
- A further two participants from Seva Mandir attended a three-day workshop on Child Protection organized by Plan
- Child representatives were appointed as members of their respective Village Development Committees, and during the meetings child protection and child rights were discussed





People's Management School

The People's Management School (PMS) was set up to help Seva Mandir become an important centre for learning, research, monitoring and evaluation, capacity building and nurturing the context in which Seva Mandir operates.

PMS has three main cells: Research, Monitoring and Evaluation; Capacity Building; Social Environment.

Research, Monitoring and Evaluation Cell

Research

During the year, PMS anchored and participated in the following studies:

Impact assessment of Seva Mandir: Seva Mandir, in collaboration with Georgetown University, USA, is carrying out a research project to

understand the impact of the NGO's work on community governance. The objective of the study is to understand Seva Mandir's impact across a broad range of its intervention villages, looking at village characteristics, village infrastructure, village institutions, common resources, employment and migration, government programmes, empowering women, conflict resolution, public infrastructure, service delivery and afforestation.

The experts are in the process of completing the analysis and will have preliminary results by August 2017, ready for presentation to the senior management and board members of Seva Mandir.

External Evaluation

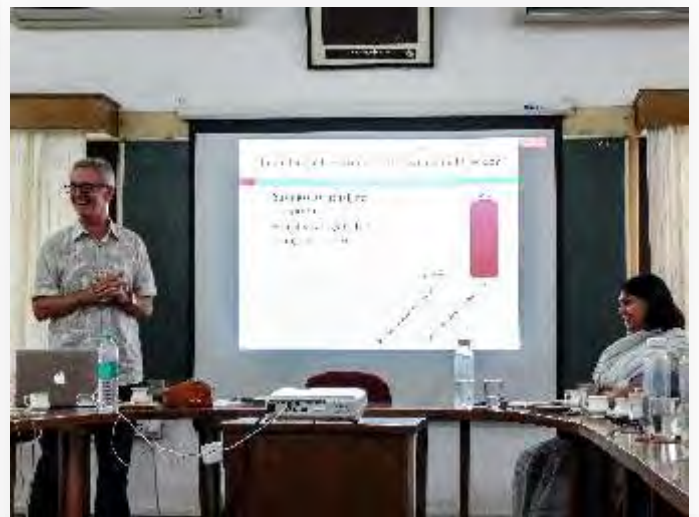
Institutional Evaluation, July 2016:

A high-level team of international development experts and academicians, Yamini Aiyar, Isabel Guerrero, Jason Silberstein and Michael Walton, from IMAGO Global Grassroots carried out a strategic review of Seva Mandir at the request of its management. The team assessed Seva Mandir's past, present and potential future strategy on the basis of extensive consultation with the extended management team, existing documentation and field visits.

The experts believe that Seva Mandir is at an important juncture, driven by a significant change in the environment in which it works, including substantial changes in the funding context and







'As an organization, Seva Mandir has an impressive alignment between its core values, its organizational practices and structural features, such as human resources. In particular it has an unusual good balance between consensual, participative, supportive ("feminine") and more target- and data-oriented ("masculine") organizational practices. This is an important strength, and needs to be maintained in the face of two challenges: significant staff turnover, and shifting demands from the external environment.'

changes in the nature of the state's engagement in development work and its stance vis-à-vis civil society.

The team concentrated on three areas: village institutions, education and gender. Their key recommendations for these areas were as follows.

Village Institutions:

- Rigorous monitoring should track long-term outcomes and the impact of new programmes
- The NGO needs to give a more effective account of its own achievements by creating multiple sustainability indicators

Education:

- Use longitudinal data, which will both contextualize data and allow Seva Mandir to make much stronger claims about the quality of its schools

Gender:

- Women's substantive participation in meetings could benefit from more assertive facilitation tactics by Seva Mandir's zonal workers
- Gender-specific data needed in determining whether girls are experiencing equitable educational outcomes beyond basic access

About Seva Mandir, they noted that: 'As an organization, Seva Mandir has an impressive alignment between its core values, its organizational practices and structural features, such as human resources. In particular it has an unusual good balance between consensual, participative, supportive ("feminine") and more target- and data-oriented ("masculine") organizational practices.

This is an important strength, and needs to be maintained in the face of two challenges: significant staff turnover, and shifting demands from the external environment.'

They recommended having clear career paths for young people and targeting streams for external recruitment that could help reach a better balance. They also found that Seva Mandir needs to adjust its strategy to the changing context.

Programmatic Evaluation, November 2017:

Another programmatic evaluation was conducted this year. It was commissioned by the donor, Bread for the World, and the evaluators were Monica Banerjee and Adil Ali. The main findings of the evaluation are:

- The emphasis on constructive work by Seva Mandir is based on the principles of collectively addressing common problems through dialogue and engagement of everyone, without leaving the marginalized sections.
- The investment by Seva Mandir in getting people together to collectively analyze, prioritize and address issues is visible in all locations showing the ownership of the community over the programmes that are being implemented currently through financial support from various sources.
- It is the manner in which the work is rooted at the community level that forms the bedrock of all of Seva Mandir's work, starting with issue identification and continuing with planning, monitoring, implementation and supervision over para-workers providing the identified services or facilities.
- The selection of project interventions is actually done with the intention of its

ability to mobilize people to collectively address problems.

- Mobilizing community for constructive work seems to go hand in hand with articulation of rights at the field level. The rights are not just limited to demanding accountability from the duty bearers of the state but also in addressing traditional community arbitration and decision forums (jati panchayats) or addressing issues of rights of women at the community, household and personal levels.

Monitoring reports

Strengthening programme monitoring and evaluation systems to take account of the changing context and requirements has been an area of priority, and PMS has supported the programme units with this process.

During 2016-17, PMS assisted different programmes in conducting midline reviews and other impact studies, on the following indicators.

NRD:

- The production of food crops for consumption of households who live in the catchment area of watershed management programme to be increased by at least 4 months.
- 80% of households to move from unprotected water sources to protected sources, such as water tanks, filters, etc., and all members to start making use of their toilets by the third year

WCD:

- Net owned funds of SHGs (to meet emergency credit needs of women) to increase by 30% pa

Education:

- 30% of the children enrolled in Shiksha Kendras (SK) and Residential Learning Camps (RLC) to reach Level A (equivalent to grade 3) every year

VIP:

- 70% of the community institutions to follow norms set for management and equitable distribution of benefits from common resources, such as village pastures, forest lands, village funds, Balwadis, water sources etc. in 3 years

Maternal Health:

- 60% of registered women to receive all antenatal and postnatal care every year
- 70% of all diagnosed complications (with TBA present) during pregnancy, delivery and postnatal period to seek qualified health care every year

Child Health:

- Weight for age to improve in 40% of children under 5 every year

Social Environment Cell

Internship and volunteering

During the reporting period the programme hosted a total 193 volunteers and interns, 115 of them women.

Some of the universities from which interns were hosted this year include IRMA, TISS, Azim Prem University and IIT-Delhi in India, and Yale, Duke, National University of Singapore and Norwegian University of Science and Technology from other countries.



Besides institutional linkages, relationships with corporates such as Colgate continued, and employees came for grass-roots exposure of about one month.

This year also saw increases in the number of non-institutional foreign volunteers from the United States, United Kingdom, Sweden, Denmark, Mexico, Germany, Poland and Spain, along with many volunteers from different states in India.

This year Seva Mandir hosted nine State Bank of India Youth for India fellows, and one recipient of the India Fellowship.

An induction programme was held in January with 28 new employees from different blocks and units, and 10 fellows. There were sessions

focusing on different aspects of the development sector and development as a whole.

Visit of Baroness Shirley Williams

Baroness Shirley Williams, one of the longest-serving women British parliamentarians, and currently Professor Emerita of Electoral Politics at the John F Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, visited Seva Mandir from 5 to 8 April 2016.

Baroness Williams is a patron of the Friends of Seva Mandir UK and has provided immense support to their fund raising efforts. During her visit two round tables were organized on the topics Women in Leadership, and Politics and Development, with over 40 external and Seva Mandir representatives participating in each.

Two field visits and a press conference were organized for her.

Other visits

19 visiting groups were hosted involving 560 people from India and abroad, from research institutes, educational institutions and different NGOs.

- Seva Mandir and 5 other NGOs hosted 41 students for five days under IIM-Udaipur Rural Immersion programme. This was a Summer School programme for Future Leaders and was organized by IIM-Udaipur in collaboration with Duke University.
- Seva Mandir hosted 15 management trainees from Colgate Palmolive India Ltd. This was undertaken as a part of Colgate Management Trainees, Bank Leadership Programme. The trainees worked with NRD, Education, Udaipur Urja initiative, and Health units for exposure in development sector.

Public lecture

On the eve of Seva Mandir's Institution Day (19 April), a public lecture was organized in collaboration with the Mohan Sinha Mehta

Memorial Trust and Vidya Bhawan Society.

Srikanth Nadhamuni, a technologist and social entrepreneur, gave a lecture on Public Good Governance and Technology.

Capacity Building

In recent years it has been felt that there was a strong need to support the organization's staff in adapting to the changing development context at community level as well as macro-policy level. The training cell is therefore engaged in capacity-building activities to assist staff in enhancing and building new skills, and in deepening understanding of development issues

Zonal workers' training

PMS organized capacity-building workshop for all 58 zonal workers (13 women, 45 men). Major themes included leadership, report writing and time management skills.

Workshops

Six workshops were organized, focusing on improving skills: leadership with special focus on the importance of communications; proposal and report writing; case studies. Other workshops were organized on fundraising, photography and computer skills.



Rafe Bullick Memorial Foundation

The Rafe Bullick Memorial Foundation (RBMF) was founded in 2004 in memory of Rafe Bullick, a former Seva Mandir volunteer who died in Dafur while serving with the Save the Children Fund. The Bullick family hopes that by continuing the work Rafe started among the needy and the disadvantaged, peace and justice may be brought to the lives of at least some people in some parts of the world.

The foundation, set up within Seva Mandir by Rafe's family, supports young, needy people in the fields of health and education, road safety, and also at the school for the deaf, dumb and blind in Udaipur.

Under the RBMF Scholarship fund, aid was given to 32 needy students, and loans to three students for education.

Other Activities

Library and Documentation Centre

Seva Mandir's public library was open for 351 days last year and the average daily attendance has been 151. A total of 30 new books and 53 reports were added.

50th anniversary celebrations

The unit has been tasked with anchoring Seva Mandir's 50th anniversary celebrations, which will mark the achievements of the past half-century and create opportunities to plan for the future. Celebrations will begin in September 2017 and continue until the actual anniversary in March/April 2018, and the intention is to encourage participation from all quarters – staff, stakeholders, volunteers, donors – and of all ages.





Resource Mobilization Unit

For almost two decades Seva Mandir was fortunate in having a donor base that supported its Comprehensive Plan (a three-year plan covering work across all the programmes). More than half of the organization's receipts were allocated to this Comprehensive Plan, allowing us the flexibility to innovate, experiment and respond according to the needs of the community. But this type of giving has slowly and gradually been overtaken by more project-based funding. In addition, some of the traditional institutional donors have moved away from India.

In order to help Seva Mandir adjust to rapidly changing funding scenarios, a dedicated Resource Mobilization unit (RMU) was set up in 2007.

The trend towards a changing donor profile continued in the reporting year. The RMU team helped the organization meet its funding requirements thanks to a combination of new and existing donors.

The setback in the year was that one of our important Comprehensive Plan funders decided to phase out its contributions from next year. We will therefore need to raise increased untied funding from next year in order to meet our Comprehensive Plan commitments. Failing that, we will have to make greater efforts to find ways of ensuring that the funds we do raise can be used to help us deliver on the Comprehensive Plan goals.

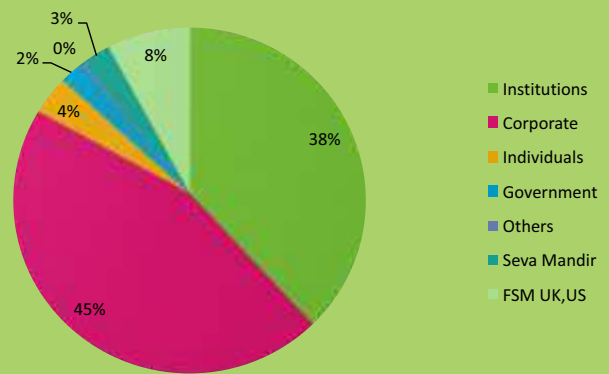
On the positive side, this year saw a major contribution from CSR funding. Indeed the increased budget and sources are only due to CSR funding. Its share in Seva Mandir's total funding is 45% and by next year it will reach 50%.

Online Donations

Recognizing the increasing opportunities of online donation portals we have established Seva Mandir's presence on these platforms to cater to our resource base. After a drop in online donations in the last period, this period has seen a healthy increase in this type of funding thanks to focused efforts and a rethinking of strategy.

We have participated in various campaigns and challenges on the Give India and Global Giving websites, which has required constant work to produce frequent updates and reports. This year we began using new online platforms, Ketto and Ammodo. We made 12 short films to convey to donors the impact of Seva Mandir's work, and one film won awards in two categories at the YES Foundation film awards.

Funding Scenario : 2016-17



CSR: An Emergent Category

In 2014 the Ministry of Corporate Affairs introduced legislation requiring large companies to spend 2% of their profits on CSR.

This has had a mixed impact on Seva Mandir. While this CSR spending has and will continue to increase expenditure in the development sector, so far most of it seems to be through companies' own foundations and government funds. At the same time we are seeing signs of a trend towards corporate-NGO partnerships aimed at alleviating poverty and tackling related challenges. Seva Mandir is fortunate to have been able to forge some such relationships.

During the year, many significant CSR partnerships were forged. Hindustan Zinc Limited partnered with Seva Mandir and four other NGOs to strengthen the government Anganwadi centres. This partnership has allowed Seva Mandir to work closely with the government and work at a much larger scale of 575 Anganwadis.



JK Tryre's CSR has allowed Seva Mandir to venture into a new geographical area of Kankroli. Colgate, with whom Seva Mandir has not till now had a very meaningful and close partnership, launched a new scholarship for education of needy children.

Friends of Seva Mandir

The Friends of Seva Mandir UK and later the Friends of Seva Mandir US were established to raise individual and institutional funds for the organization in their respective countries. Both groups continue to raise critical funding support for the organization. These contributions are mostly unrestricted funds, which increases their value and allows Seva Mandir to respond quickly to community needs.

Other Activities

Next year Seva Mandir will celebrate its 50th anniversary. As the anniversary approaches, we are planning special fundraising campaigns to meet specific organizational requirements such as a staff welfare fund, talent recruitment programme, and an IT upgrade.



Kaya Training Centre

Seva Mandir's training centre, the Dr Mohan Sinha Mehta Rural Training Centre, is located in Kaya village, about 20 km from Udaipur.

The centre was built as a learning retreat for Seva Mandir and a training space for villagers, and has facilities for board and lodging. One of the main uses of the centre is housing the children's Residential Learning Camp (see chapter on Education) for six months of the year.

This year 96 institutional training courses were held in Kaya in which nearly 32,000 people participated.

During the year major repair and infrastructure renovation has been undertaken, and we are also taking steps to make Kaya a no-plastic zone.

Appendix and Financials

Credibility Alliance Norm Compliance Report 2016 - 17

Identity

- Seva Mandir is a Voluntary Organization registered under the Society Registration Act 1958, (Reg. No. 149/1967-68 dated 12.02.1968) and also registered in Rajasthan Public Trust Act, 1959
- Seva Mandir's Constitution is available on request
- Seva Mandir is registered u/s 12A of the Income Tax Act, 1961
- All individual & corporate donations are also eligible for exemption u/s 80-G. The exemption u/s 80-G is available vide their letter No. AA/Udi/Judicial/2010-11/3586 dated 14.03.2011
- Seva Mandir is also registered under Foreign Contribution Regulation Act 1976 to accept any foreign donations & grants vide Registration No. - 125690002, dated 11.02.1985

Name and address of the Banker

1. State Bank of India, Main Branch, 23-C, Madhuban, Udaipur 313 001, Rajasthan (FCRA Account), and
2. Union Bank of India, New Fatehpura, Udaipur 313 001, Rajasthan (for Indian money).

Name and address of the Auditors

1. M/s D.S. Babel & Co., Chartered Accountants, 101- Saral Plaza, 285-286, M 1 Road, Bhupalpura, Udaipur 313 001, Rajasthan

Mission

Seva Mandir's mission is to make real the idea of a society consisting of free and equal citizens who are able to come together and solve the problems that affect them in their particular contexts. The commitment is to work for a paradigm of development and governance that is democratic and polyarchic. Seva Mandir seeks to institutionalize the idea that development and governance should not just be left to the state and its formal bodies, such as the legislature and the bureaucracy, but that citizens and their associations should engage separately and jointly with the state.

The mission, briefly, is to construct the conditions in which citizens of plural backgrounds and perspectives can work together to benefit and empower the least advantaged in society.

Governance

Details of Board Members (as on 31 March 2017)

| Name | Sex | Age | Position on Board | Occupation | Meetings attended |
|--------------------------|-----|-----|-------------------|--|-------------------|
| Shri Ajay Singh Mehta | M | 63 | President | Mr Mehta retired as Executive Director, NFI. He was a member of State Planning Board, Government of Rajasthan. | 2/2 |
| Shri Mohan Singh Kothari | M | 81 | Member | Ex-Chairman, Udaipur Division, World Wide Fund for Nature, India | 2/2 |
| Smt Neelima Khetan | F | 55 | Member | Vice President CSR, Hindustan Zinc Ltd. | 2/2 |
| Ms Pamela Philipose | F | 63 | Member | Director, Women's Feature Service | 1/2 |
| Ms Rajni Bakshi* | F | 58 | Co-opted Member | A Mumbai-based freelance journalist and author who writes about social and political movements in contemporary India | 2/2 |
| Ms Sunita Nadhamuni* | F | 51 | Co-opted Member | Director, Technology at EMC ² | 1/2 |

* Co-opted Women Members are elected for a term of 2 years

- The Seva Mandir Board met twice in the Financial Year 2016-17, on 19 May 2016 and on 21 October 2016
- Minutes of Board Meetings are documented and circulated

Accountability and Transparency

- No remuneration, sitting fees, or any other form of compensation has been paid since the inception of the Organization to any Board Member, Trustee, or Shareholder
- The following reimbursements have been made to Board Members:
 - Travelling expenses: Rs 68,717 (for attending Board Meetings)
 - No other reimbursements have been made to any Board Member, Trustee or Shareholder
- Chief Executive's remuneration: Rs 1,080,000 (per annum)
- Remuneration of the three highest paid staff members (per annum):
Rs 1,080,000, Rs 896,659, Rs 722,994
- Remuneration of lowest paid staff member (per annum):
Rs 72,000

Staff details (as on 31 March 2017)

| Gender | Paid Full-Time | Paid Part-Time | Paid Consultants | Paid Volunteers | Unpaid Volunteers |
|--------|----------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Male | 185 | 0 | 12 | 24 | 49 |
| Female | 97 | 0 | 4 | 30 | 90 |
| Total | 282 | 0 | 16 | 54 | 139 |

Distribution of Staff According to Salary Levels (as on 31 March 2017)

| Slab of gross salary (in Rs) plus benefits paid to staff (per month) | Male staff | Female staff | Total staff |
|--|------------|--------------|-------------|
| Less than 5,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 5,000 – 10,000 | 35 | 24 | 59 |
| 10,000 – 25,000 | 112 | 52 | 164 |
| 25,000 – 50,000 | 32 | 19 | 51 |
| 50,000 – 100,000 | 6 | 2 | 8 |
| Greater than 100,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Total Cost of International Travel by Staff during the year (31 March 2017)

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Name | Mr Ronak Shah |
| Designation | Chief Executive, Udaipur Urja Initiatives Producer Co. Ltd |
| Destination | USA |
| Purpose | To attend workshop of Imago Global Grassroots |
| Gross Expense (Rs) | 234,712 (by our sources only) |
| Sponsored by external organization | No |

Members of Different Bodies

2016-17

President: Shri Ajay Singh Mehta

Chief Executive: Smt Priyanka Singh

General Secretary: Shri Narayan Lal Ameta

Board of Trustees

- Shri Ajay Singh Mehta
- Shri Mohan Singh Kothari
- Smt Pamela Philipose
- Prof. Janat Shah
- Smt Sunita Nadhamuni
- Smt Neelima Khetan
- Ms Rajani Bakshi

Finance Committee

- Smt Priyanka Singh
- Smt Sunita Nadhamuni
- Shri Manoj Agarwal
- Shri Anubhav Ladia
- Shri Joginder Bajaj
- Smt Poonam Bhatia
- Shri Shailendra Tiwari

Executive Council

- Shri Ajay Singh Mehta
- Shri Mohan Singh Kothari
- Smt Pamela Philipose
- Prof. Janat Shah
- Smt Sunita Nadhamuni
- Smt Poonam Bhatia
- Shri Sachin Chaturvedi
- Shri Suraj Jacob
- Shri Shailendra Tiwari
- Smt Vandini Mehta
- Shri G.L. Maheshwari
- Shri Prabhu Lal Meena
- Shri M. Yakub Khan
- Smt Renu Tiwari
- Smt Priyanka Singh

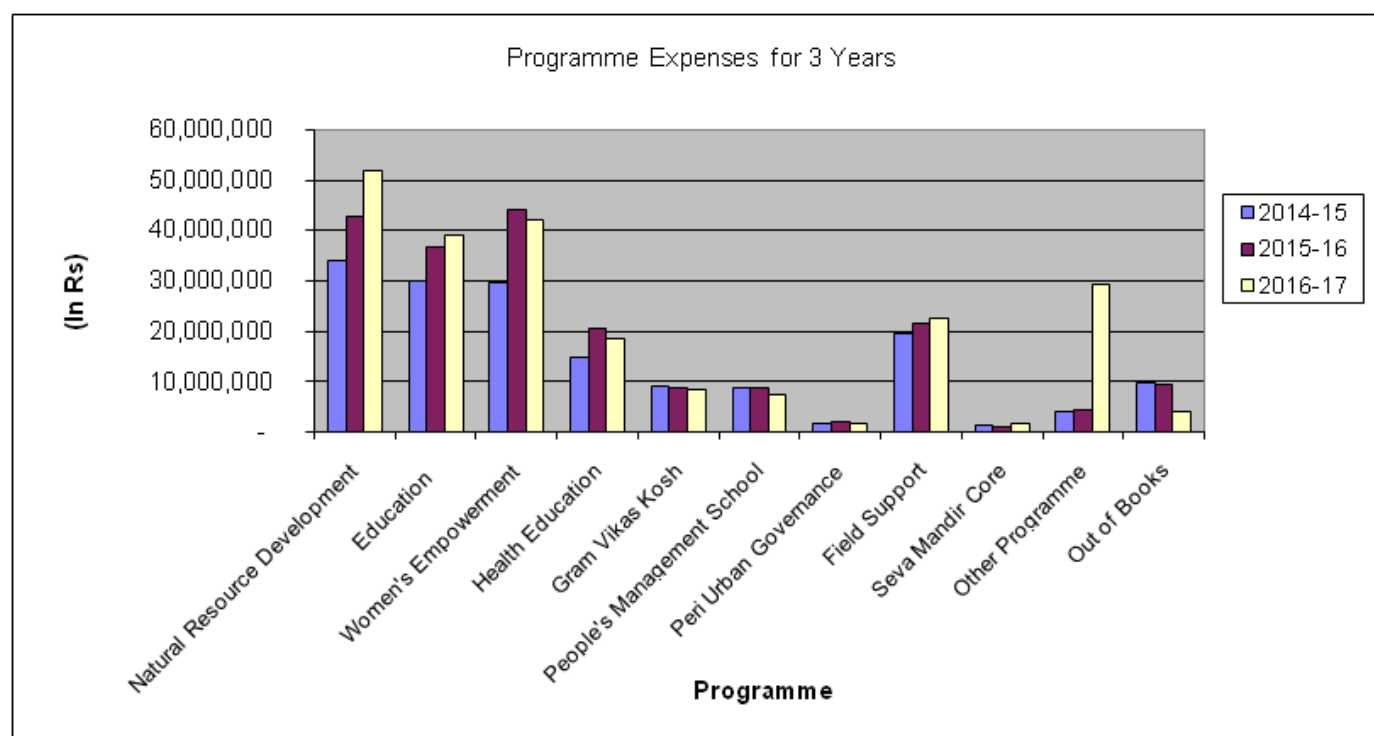
Advisory Committee

- Shri Ajay Singh Mehta
- Shri Kunal Bagla
- Smt Seema Shah
- Shri Shrey Desai
- Shri Prasoon Kumar
- Shri Anand Jha
- Smt Aditi Gupta
- Shri Chris Wiscarson
- Smt Lakshmi Jain
- Shri Shiv Narayan Menaria
- Shri Shiv Singh - Jhadol
- Shri Dootaram - Kotra
- Smt Aiju Bai - Kotra
- Smt Kamla Bai - Kherwara
- Smt Vani Bai - Girwa
- Shri Shiv Singh - Badgaon
- Smt Lakshmi Bai - Badgaon
- Shri Prem Singh - Kumbhalgarh
- Smt Chanda Bai - City Block
- Shri Bhur Das - Delwara
- Smt Poonam Bhatia
- Smt Priyanka Singh
- Shri Shailendra Tiwari
- Shri Sanjiv Jain
- Sushri Ratan Paliwal
- Shri Narendra Jain
- Smt Alka Bhardwaj
- Smt Angela Jacob
- Shri Madhav Tailor
- Shri M.Yakub Khan
- Shri Kripa Shanker Joshi
- Shri Gulab Nur Khan
- Shri Ranjeet Bijarnia
- Shri Narendra Thakur
- Shri Jagdish Bariwal
- Sushri Varsha Rathore
- Smt Laxmi Thakur
- Smt Kiran Pandey
- Dr Kusum Lata Mathur
- Smt Aarti Shah
- Smt Riddhi Shah
- Sushri Rimjhim Pandey
- Smt Megha Jain
- Shri Ronak Shah
- Smt Renu Tiwari
- Shri M.S.S. Ranawat

Programme Expenditure Statement 2014-15 to 2016-17

(inRs)

| PROGRAMME | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | TOTAL |
|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Natural Resource Development | 34,100,879 | 42,817,523 | 51,987,484 | 128,905,886 |
| Education | 29,997,200 | 36,842,423 | 39,117,876 | 105,957,499 |
| Women's Empowerment | 29,823,123 | 44,177,539 | 42,123,497 | 116,124,159 |
| Health Education | 14,928,188 | 20,578,771 | 18,537,862 | 54,044,821 |
| Gram Vikas Kosh | 8,981,867 | 8,665,061 | 8,593,439 | 26,240,367 |
| People's Management School | 8,760,427 | 8,730,330 | 7,263,297 | 24,754,054 |
| Peri-urban Governance | 1,804,010 | 2,096,617 | 1,691,904 | 5,592,531 |
| Field Support | 19,615,749 | 21,659,426 | 22,500,429 | 63,775,604 |
| Seva Mandir Core | 1,404,300 | 1,067,122 | 1,737,138 | 4,208,560 |
| Other Programme | 4,147,780 | 4,269,431 | 29,183,829 | 37,601,040 |
| Out of Books | 9,714,000 | 9,435,000 | 4,165,000 | 23,314,000 |
| Total Expenditure : | 163,277,523 | 200,339,243 | 226,901,755 | 590,518,521 |



Our Donors and Supporters

Institutional Donors

- AGEH Germany
- Ammodo
- Ananda Trust
- Asha for Education, USA
- ASSIST (Asia Society Social)
- BFSS, UK
- Bread for the World (BfdW-EED), Germany
- CAF India (Oracle), New Delhi
- Canada India Village Aid Assocn, Canada
- CEC Hyderabad (ICCO)
- Central Social Welfare Board (SSH), New Delhi
- Childline India Foundation (CIF), Mumbai
- Colgate Palmolive India Ltd, Mumbai
- D Mart, Mumbai
- Edukans Foundation, The Netherlands
- Friends of Seva Mandir UK
- Friends of Seva Mandir USA
- Geisse Foundation
- Give India, Mumbai, India
- Global Giving UK
- Global Giving USA
- Hindustan Zinc Ltd, Udaipur
- ICRA Ltd
- IGWDP – NABARD
- IIM Udaipur
- International Initiative Impact Evaluation
- Jagat S. Mehta's Legacy Grant
- Janaki Devi Bajaj Gram Vikas Sanstha Trust, Pune
- JK Tyre & Industries Ltd
- Larsen & Toubro Ltd, Mumbai
- Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd, Mumbai
- Mahindra World City, Jaipur
- Max India Foundation, New Delhi
- McGill University, Canada
- MGNREGA, Udaipur, India
- Ministry of Panchayati Raj
- Monsoon Accessorize Trust, UK
- NABARD Wadi Project
- Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan – TSC, Udaipur
- Noragric Norwegian University, Norway
- Oaknorth Global India (P) Ltd
- Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd, New Delhi
- Plan International (India Chapter), New Delhi
- Rafe Bullick Memorial Foundation
- RBS Foundation, Mumbai, India
- Saint Christopher School, UK
- SITE, Sweden, US
- SSA Infosystem Pvt Ltd
- Target International, USA
- Target Sourcing (I) Pvt Ltd
- Vedanta Foundation
- Waterloo Foundation
- Yatra Foundation, Australia

Individual Donors

- Aamir Jamal
- Abhey Pareek
- Agronic Food Inc.
- Alok Pradhan
- Anita Sharma
- Anjan Samanta
- Ankur Garg
- Anubhav Ladia
- Anup Digarse
- Archana Singvi
- Arti Vora
- Ashish Sarupria
- Bakhtaver Suresh Mahajan
- Bitthal Dass Damani
- Capt. Raghav Raj Singh
- Darina Allen
- Dhruv Agarwal
- Dr Shilpa Goyal
- Flickers Project Pvt Ltd
- Gautam Khetwal
- Gunjan Doogar
- Harpaal Singh
- Hitendra Bhargava
- Jennifer Jeanne
- Jet Airways (I) Ltd
- Jnduth Kendra
- K. Arun Kumar Rai
- K.L. Bapna
- Kavita Shekhawat
- Laxmi Jhala
- Laxmi Thakur
- Leesa Mohanty
- Library Members
- Manas Tyagi
- Meredith McLaughlin
- Monika Jain
- Narayan Lal Ameta
- Neelima Khetan
- Nitish Thakur
- Pankaj Ballabh
- Peter Patel
- Pramila Nambiar
- Prasanth Vankayala
- Priyanka Singh
- Prof. Janat Shah
- Rajendra Pandwal
- Rajesh Vora
- Rakesh Nair
- Ravi Ramchandani
- Robert
- Rosaleen Mulji
- Rudrakshina Banerjee
- Ruud V Meulenbroek
- Saberi Shakir Hussain
- Sahil
- Sandy Gwee
- Shamdasani Foundation
- Simon Laird
- Subodh Mishra
- Sumit Gupta
- Sunil Sayal
- Suraj Jacob
- Treutner Erhard
- Usha Rani
- Vijay Jayarama Murthy
- Vikas Sharma
- Vineeta Base
- Vineeta Bose
- World Learning India Pvt Ltd
- Yogesh Kumar Wadwa

Balance Sheet and Audited Statements 2016 - 17

(In lacs)

| CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET AS ON MARCH 31, | | 2017 | 2016 |
|---|--|--------------|--------------|
| SOURCES OF FUNDS | | | |
| Corpus and Endowment Funds | | 1,330 | 1,287 |
| Reserves Fund | | 541 | 475 |
| Capital Fund | | 645 | 592 |
| Specified Funds | | 422 | 392 |
| Total | | 2,938 | 2,746 |
| APPLICATION OF FUNDS | | | |
| Fixed Assets | | 645 | 592 |
| Investments | | 1,808 | 1,566 |
| Net Current Assets | | 485 | 588 |
| Total | | 2,938 | 2,746 |
| INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING ON MARCH 31, | | 2017 | 2016 |
| INCOME | | | |
| Grants and Donations | | | |
| A. Grants | | 2,202 | 1,716 |
| B. Donations | | 30 | 48 |
| Interest Income | | 199 | 192 |
| Other Income & Development Support Fees | | 8 | 5 |
| Total | | 2,439 | 1,961 |
| EXPENDITURE | | | |
| Development Program Expenditure | | 1,935 | 1,650 |
| Development Support Expenditure | | 231 | 225 |
| Total | | 2,166 | 1,875 |
| Excess of (Expenditure) over Income | | 273 | 86 |
| Net excess of unspent/overspent balances carried to Balance Sheet - Difference over last year balances | | 65 | (66) |
| Allocable surplus | | 208 | 152 |
| ALLOCATION | | | |
| Transfer of interest earned to various Funds | | 39 | 40 |
| Capital Fund (Acquisition of Fixed Assets) | | 61 | 34 |
| Transfer to Corpus Fund | | 40 | 25 |
| Other transfers | | 68 | 53 |

Previous year figures regrouped and rearranged correspond to the current year figures.

Contact Information:

Chief Functionary: Priyanka Singh

Address: Seva Mandir, Old Fatehpura, Udaipur, Rajasthan.

Phone: 0294-2541041, 2450960, 2452001

E-mail: priyanka.singh@sevamandir.org / info@sevamandir.org

Auditors: M/s D.S. Babel & Co., 101 Saral Plaza, 285-286, M-1 road, Bhupalpura, Udaipur, Rajasthan

Phone: 0294-2422289

Glossary of Technical and Hindi Terms and Abbreviations

- Anganwadi: government-sponsored mother- and child care centre
- Anicut: dam
- ANM: Auxiliary Nurse Midwife
- ASHA: Accredited Social Health Activist, government health worker
- Bal Manch: Children's Forum
- Bal Sakhi: woman trained by SM to provide care to children 0-5, identify problems and refer cases for further treatment as appropriate
- Bal Samuh: Children's Group
- Balwadi : literally children's orchard, SM-run preschool
- Bigha: approx. 1/3 acre
- Block: administrative division of a District
- Caste Panchayat: non-government decision-making body set up by a community along caste lines
- CCCD: Child-Centred Community Development
- CFR: Community Forest Rights
- CHC: Community Health Centre
- Cluster: group of panchayats
- Comprehensive Plan: SevaMandir's three-year plan covering work across all the programmes to be funded by unrestricted donations
- ECCD/E: Early Childhood Care and Development/Education
- FD: Forest Department
- FPC: Forest Protection Committee
- Gram Panchayat: small village group below panchayat level
- Gram Sabha: Village Assembly
- Gram Vikas Committee (GVC): Village Development Committee
- Gram Vikas Kosh (GVK): Village Fund
- Gram Vikas Samuh (GVS): Village Development Group
- HH: Households
- ICDS: Integrated Child Development Services scheme, the largest government scheme for young children
- IFR: Individual Forest Rights
- JFM: Joint Forest Management
- MGNREGA: Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, a government initiative to provide assured employment via development activities prescribed by the panchayats
- Mohalla: neighbourhood
- MWCD: Ministry of Women and Child Development
- NABARD: National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development
- NRD: Natural Resources Development
- Nagrik Vikas Manch (NVM): Citizen's Development Forum
- ODF: Open-defecation free
- Panchayat: village-level elected government body
- Panchayati Raj: system of three-tier governance in which the panchayat is the basic form of administration, followed by an elected body at block level, and finally at district level
- PDS: Public Distribution System, a government-sponsored chain of shops distributing basic food and non-food commodities to the needy at very low prices
- PHC: Primary Health Centre
- PRI: Panchayati Raj Institution, an institution operating under the system described above
- Pradhan: head of the Panchayati Raj Institution at block level
- Quintal: 100 kg
- Revenue wastelands: land belonging to the Revenue Department but not under cultivation, and not pastureland or forest
- Sadhna has its roots in Seva Mandir, was registered as an independent Mutual Benefit Trust in 2004 and is now a self-sufficient, small-scale unit producing handcrafted products. It is owned by its artisan members.
- Sahayika: assistant to a Sanchalika in a Balwadi
- Samiti: group
- Samuh: group
- Sanchalika: woman trained by SM to work with young children in the Balwadi in her local area
- Sarpanch: head of the panchayat
- SHG: Self-Help Group, a women's group set up by SM to provide credit and savings
- SC/OBC: Scheduled Castes and Other Backward Classes, officially designated groups of historically disadvantaged indigenous people in India
- Shiksha Kendra (SK): a bridge school run by SM to provide quality education to out-of-school children between the ages of 6 and 14 in remote rural hamlets
- Shivir: camp
- Support to People Initiative (SPI): an SM programme to improve accountability and responsibility of GVCs in running, monitoring and evaluating village projects
- TBA: Traditional Birth Attendant, midwife trained by SM
- Village Cohesion Index (VCI): a scale developed by SM to measure the status of institutions based on 4 indicators - participation, leadership, management (of resources, funds etc) and decision-making
- Wadi: orchard
- WASH: water, sanitation and hygiene
- Vidya Bhawan: educational organization in Udaipur which runs a number of schools and colleges; founded by SevaMandir's founder
- YRC: Youth Resource Centre
- Zonal Federation: a federation of the elected members of GVCs within one field area whose task is to ensure supervision of development issues in a group of neighbouring villages. Their focus is on issues pertaining to larger populations.
- Zone: SM subdivision of a block



www.sevamandir.org



Follow us on For Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/sevamandir/>



Follow us on Instagram

<https://www.instagram.com/sevamandirat50/>



Seva Mandir

Old Fatehpura, Udaipur, Rajasthan, India

Tel: +91 294-2451041/2452001/2452002

Fax: +91 294 2450947

Credits

Published by : Priyanka Singh, Chief Executive, Seva Mandir

Editing : Felicia Pheasant

Compilation : Varsha Rathore, Anshul Bhatt

Photos : John Pheasant, Manish Shukla

Publication and Layout : Kavita Shekhawat

Printed at : Choudhary Offset Pvt. Ltd., Udaipur