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HelpAge International

**Promoting older people-led community action to reduce poverty
among vulnerable groups in rural Rajasthan**

Evaluation Report

Prepared by: HEDCON, Jaipur

September 2013

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| Box 1: Brief of Project | | | |
| Project title: Promoting older people led community action to reduce poverty among vulnerable groups in rural Rajasthan, India | | | |
| Goal: Improve the socio-economic status and social integration of marginalized and vulnerable groups in 12 villages in Jodhpur and Jaisalmer districts through older people led community action | | | |
| Issues addressed: strengthening local livelihood, increase in Health care and services, Creation and development of community based models called OPAs, Strengthen older people’s capacities, | | | |
| Expected outcomes <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Increased capacity of older people and the project partner to initiate and sustain older people-led actions2. Increased access to clean and sustainable sources of water for project communities3. Improved food and fodder security for increasing resilience to droughts4. Increased income security through improved livelihoods for older people and their families5. Improved health status of older people through increased access to health care services6. Increased government and community awareness of entitlements for older people, low castes and tribal groups through advocacy and training | | Major activities <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establishment of Village Older People’s Associations (VOPAs)• Building <i>taankas</i> (water tanks) and <i>naadis</i> (ponds) to increase individual households’ and communities’ access to sustainable sources of clean water.• Build <i>khadins</i>, to maximise use of run-off in fields to water crops.• Establish and maintain seed and fodder banks• Livelihoods activities including distributing insured milch cows; setting up a cadre of paravets; forming older women’s Self Help Groups; and providing vocational trainings to SHG members.• Health related activities include training sessions for health workers; distribution of health kits; regular health clinics linked to GRAVIS’s health programme; health education sessions; and awareness raising workshops at district level on geriatric health• Celebration of international days for older people and women• Linking government representatives with eligible people on their entitlements | |
| Project Location: 12 villages in Rajasthan (8 in Baap block of Jodhpur district and 4 in Fatehgarh block of Jaisalmer district) | | | |
| Target population: 1,500 vulnerable older people (at least 55% women) and their families (7,500 people) | | | |
| Project duration | 54 months starting from June 2008 | Time of evaluation | August 2013 |
| Implementing agency | HelpAge International in close collaboration with GRAVIS | Evaluation by | HEDCON, Jaipur |
| Goal rating and justification: Largely achieved <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The activities have made very good progress in terms of expected outcomes• VOPAs established, sensitized, trained and capacitated• Older people made aware of their entitlements and linked with government• Access to water and livelihood strengthened through different asset and capacity building activities• Access to health is improved by improving capacity of VHWs and sensitization of medical professionals on geriatric health issues. | | | |

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List of Acronyms and abbreviations

| | |
|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| BPL: | Below Poverty Line |
| EC: | European Commission |
| FGD: | Focus Group Discussion |
| GRAVIS: | Gramin Vikas Vigyan Samiti |
| HAI: | HelpAge International |
| HEDCON: | Health, Environment and Development Consortium |
| IDOP: | International Day for Older People |
| IEC: | Information, Education and Communication |
| MTR: | Mid-Term Review |
| MNREGA: | Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act |
| NABARD: | National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development |
| NGO: | Non Government Organization |
| OBC: | Other Backward Classes |
| POC: | Promoting older people led community action to reduce poverty among vulnerable groups in rural Rajasthan, India |
| PRI: | Panchayati Raj Institution |
| SC: | Scheduled Caste |
| SHG: | Self Help Group |
| ST: | Scheduled Tribe |
| TAC: | Technical Advisory Committee |
| VHW: | Village Health Worker |
| VOPA: | Village Older People's Association |

Executive summary

Introduction

HelpAge International (HAI), with its partner Gramin Vikas Vigyan Samiti (GRAVIS) has implemented a project named “Promoting older people led community action to reduce poverty among vulnerable groups in rural Rajasthan, India (POC)”. The overall objective of the project was to reduce poverty and improve the living conditions of poor and marginalised communities living in the Thar Desert in Rajasthan, India. The specific objective was to improve the socio-economic status and social integration of marginalised and vulnerable groups in 12 villages in the Jodhpur and Jaisalmer districts through older people led community action. The project started in 2008 June. It is a 54 months project. The project is financially supported by European Commission.

The evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the wider and longer term impact, the extent to which planned outputs have been achieved, to draw conclusions and learn lessons from past experiences so as to improve the effectiveness of future development undertakings. The evaluation was commissioned in September 2013. In the initial evaluation meeting with the GRAVIS team, it was decided that results should to be measured on the basis of expected results and corresponding implemented activities. Accordingly, questions for evaluation were designed as per expected results and their corresponding activities. The quantitative information was provided by GRAVIS and subsequently verified by evaluator in the field through random checks and discussions with villagers, VOPA members, beneficiaries and Gram Panchayat members. The report was drafted and the findings were discussed with GRAVIS management and the final report was drafted.

Conclusion

The goal of the project as improve the socio-economic status and social integration of marginalized and vulnerable groups in 12 villages in Jodhpur and Jaisalmer districts through older people led community action was realistic and was largely achieved. The focus of the activities was on strengthening local livelihood, increasing in health care and services, improving water and sanitation access and practices, community and household resilience on drought and strengthening linkages between duty bearers and right holders. The project made very good progress in terms of implementation of its activities. The community led action through VOPAs was a good strategy to strengthen older people, provide positive engagement to older people, provide them a platform to share their voices and ensure their rights and of other vulnerable groups. The household level activities like distribution of cows with calf, construction of individual water storage and harvesting tanks called taankas and construction of farm bunds called khadins, could help people in strengthening water, food and livelihoods security. The community level activities like desilting and construction of Naadis, seed and fodder banks, and pasture land development were mainly implemented through VOPAs and could achieve desired outputs. The specific achievements are given the section on key project achievements.

Major recommendations

The money collected by VOPAs is collected in the federation of VOPAs called CPMC at district level. However, the strategy of strengthening these federations was weak. Their role clarity in management of the funds, promotion of VOPAs functions and further fund raising strategy need to be strengthened.

The efforts on strengthening VOPAs were not enough to ensure their sustainability. The management capacity of the VOPA members need to be greatly enhanced before the VOPAs will be able to function independently. This can be considered as the strategic issue and could have been technically supported by HAI as the lead implementing agency with a worldwide

experience in management of VOPAs.

For maintaining horticulture units, the major issue was of water availability. In most cases, the beneficiary of horticulture unit was also provided with a Taanka to increase water access for drinking as well as for plants. However, the provision of taankas and horticulture units were not coordinated and provided in different years of the project. This didn't allow some of the owners to ensure regular supply of water for the units and resulting in failure. Better planning could have improved the results.

The cow activity was a good intervention to ensure older people's livelihood. However, it could have been strengthened by involving VOPAs more. Conditions on the beneficiaries to return the female calf could have helped in providing more cows to persons who couldn't benefit from the intervention. Also, this could have helped VOPA in sustaining some more productive activities for sustainability.

Although, the community level activities like Naadis, fodder and seed banks have been able to achieve desired output, they have not been able to generate expected sustainable outcomes. For example, for Naadis and banks, the rules defined were not properly documented and communicated. They were not seen followed properly which may not allow for activities to continue for long term. GRAVIS need to give a special focus on their community activities in terms of ensuring sustainability and that they are implemented with a clearly defined process.

The evaluation team observed that the para-vets were not older people in many cases. Also, the training provided was one time and these vets were not provided with any promotional support and the follow-up of the activity was weak. The distances within the villages are big which also restricted people in promoting their practice as para-vet. The linkages between these para-vets and veterinary government services are weak. The given factors didn't allow this activity to become sustainable. Such activity should be followed with persistent follow-up and support.

The project was another milestone in ensuring rights of older people in the target villages. However, such projects are pilots which require promotion to influence policy level changes. Also, such projects should lead modifications in the working modalities of other like-minded organizations for mainstreaming ageing. Such efforts with clear objectives and strategy were missing. HelpAge can play an advisory role in defining advocacy objectives and strategies. Consequently, the country specific defined advocacy objectives and strategic plans can be used for fund raising and furthering the overall goals of HelpAge International.

A. Overview of the project and evaluation

1. About the project

The population of Rajasthan is over 56 million (2001) with a decadal growth rate of 28.33 percent. The density of the population in Rajasthan scores high with 165 persons per square kilometer (sq. km). The Thar Desert occupies an area of 210,000 sq. km, which is 6.3 percent of the country. Low and erratic rainfall, sparse vegetation, deep and saline groundwater, low humidity, high transpiration, strong wind regimes are the general characteristics of the Thar region. The average land holding in Rajasthan is among the highest of the country, but the productivity is among the lowest. The region is prone to disasters especially frequent droughts, and scores low in most development indicators.

Given the harsh environmental conditions, employment opportunities are very marginal. While water scarcity looms largely with frequent droughts in the desert region; agriculture and livestock rearing still remains the main occupation for about 90% of the rural population. Between 84% and 95% of the people are agriculturists, most of them being small and marginal farmers. The poorest households belong to lower caste or tribal groups. The vulnerability of these marginalized groups' increases as they are forced to live a deprived life. For example, people are forced to pay for water and/or travel great distances on a daily basis to collect it. The burden of water collection especially falls on women, and particularly older women finding it difficult to walk long distances, and girls missing out on school due to time spent on water collection. Vulnerable groups are often left out of the social security schemes because of lack of knowledge and linkages with the concerned department. The problem is compounded by health hazards caused by malnutrition, water borne diseases, work insecurity and lack of purchasing power.

Looking at the vulnerability of marginalized groups, especially older people, HelpAge International (HAI), with its partner Gramin Vikas Vigyan Samiti (GRAVIS) has implemented a project named "Promoting older people led community action to reduce poverty among vulnerable groups in rural Rajasthan, India (POC)". The overall objective of the project was to reduce poverty and improve the living conditions of poor and marginalised communities living in the Thar Desert in Rajasthan, India. The specific objective was to improve the socio-economic status and social integration of marginalised and vulnerable groups in 12 villages in the Jodhpur and Jaisalmer districts through older people led community action. The project started in 2008 June. It is a 54 months project. The project is financially supported by European Commission.

The major activities under the project are:

- Establishment of Village Older People's Associations (VOPAs)
- Building *taankas* (water tanks) and *naadis* (ponds) to increase individual households' and communities' access to sustainable sources of clean water.
- Build *khadins*, to maximise use of run-off in fields to water crops.
- Establish and maintain seed and fodder banks
- Livelihoods activities including distributing insured milch cows; setting up a cadre of paravets; forming older women's Self Help Groups; and providing vocational trainings to SHG members.
- Health related activities include training sessions for health workers; distribution of health kits; regular health clinics linked to GRAVIS's health programme; health education sessions; and awareness raising workshops at district level on geriatric health
- Celebration of international days for older people and women
- Linking government representatives with eligible people on their entitlements

2. Evaluation purpose and scope¹

¹ Annexure 1: terms of references

The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the wider and longer term impact, the extent to which planned outputs have been achieved, to draw conclusions and learn lessons from past experiences so as to improve the effectiveness of future development undertakings. This evaluation also detailed the extent to which activities reached the vulnerable people, groups and communities; and the magnitude of their effects on people's welfare. It demonstrated accountability to beneficiaries and visibility. The scope for improvement and the future scope of development in the field were also assessed and documented.

3. Evaluation process and methods

The process started with a meeting with the project team for understanding which parameters can be used and which one are difficult to evaluate. In the meeting it was decided that results should to be measured on the basis of expected results and corresponding implemented activities. Accordingly, questions for evaluation were designed as per expected results and their corresponding activities, as shown in the table below

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| Result 1: Increased capacity of older people and the project partner to initiate and sustain older people-led actions | |
| Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project management, monitoring and training - PMC established and meetings • Project management, monitoring and training - CPMC established and meetings • Project management, monitoring and training - CPMC established and meetings • Technical Advisory Committee meetings • Baseline survey • <i>Gram Sabha</i> meetings to form Village Older People's Associations (VOPA) • VOPA meetings • VOPA capacity building training • <i>VOPA/beneficiary and project team exposure visits to ADOPT project</i> | Questions and methods for measuring results <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance and role of and support from TAC, PMC and CPMC (documents required are pmc meeting minutes; cpmc meeting minutes and tac meeting minute) meeting with 2 members each of these groups • Number of VOPAs functional and their status in terms of sustainability and activities in last year of project; OPAs role in management of community interventions like fodder bank; and VOPAs achievements (documents like VOPA meetings) and questionnaire on VOPA and 2 FGDs with VOPAs • Baseline Indicators from study (copy of baseline) • Monitoring system and indicators monitored (copy of formats used and copy of data collected) |
| Result 2: Increased access to clean and sustainable sources of water for project communities | |
| Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction of 420 <i>taankas</i> (water tanks) • Construction of 2 <i>naadis</i> • Desilting of 10 <i>naadis</i> • Training for <i>taanka</i> beneficiaries | Questions for measuring results <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of people having better access to DW (List of beneficiaries of taankas, Number of training organized and Plan of trainings and its content; and case studies of the tanka beneficiaries) • Increase in availability of water in amount and months in Nadies and its average distance from HHs (Process of selection of nadies, and 2 FGDs on Contribution of community in nadi desilting and Measures taken for ensuring sustainability) |
| Result 3: Improved food and fodder security for increasing resilience to droughts | |
| Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction of 360 <i>khadins</i> • Training for <i>khadin</i> beneficiaries • Establish 12 seed banks • Distribution of organic manure, fertilizer, and bio-pesticides • Establish 420 horticulture units • Training on horticulture unit maintenance | Questions for measuring results <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in food or cash availability per HH for khadin beneficiaries (calculation of area for khadin and its construction; technical specifications, process of identification of beneficiaries and suitability of land; list of beneficiaries and total length of khadin bund and/or increase in area under cultivation) plus questionnaire on increase in harvest, sale and |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish 6 fodder banks • Establish 2 demonstration pasture lands | <p>food stocks at home</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How fodder and seed bank lead to drought proofing; (rules for its management, quantity of fodder/seeds in the bank, list of loans taken and return) and FGD with 2 fodder and seed bank each • Process of selection of HH for distribution of fertilizers, horticulture plants and how it helped in ensuring food/increased income • relevance of pasture land development, its past, ownership, process of selection, growth, and sustainability (FGD, copy of rules and regulations and management system of pasture land) |
| Result 4: Increased income security through improved livelihoods for older people and their families | |
| <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribution of 240 milch cows with insurance • Training for livestock owners • Training for paravets • Distribution of paravet kits • Formation of 36 older women Self Help Groups (SHGs) • SHGs capacity building and vocational training | <p>Questions for measuring results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved income/food with milch cow beneficiaries and their selection process (FGD, list of beneficiaries and 5 interviews of cow beneficiaries) • Increase in income/saving of SHG members (list of SHGs created, amount of money provided to each SHG, money collected by each SHG, bank linkages of SHGs, loans taken by SHGs from banks, number of income generating activities initiated by SHG members) (Number of HHs with older person and Number of HHs with OP as the primary bread winner) • Paravets number of trainings, selection of paravets, linkages with government schemes and para-health system, how many of them are active and what is done to motivate them. What consists of para-vet kits and what is planned to replace consumables |
| Result 5: Improved health status of older people through increased access to health care services | |
| <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training on provision of age-friendly care for village health workers • Distribution of health worker kit • Age-friendly health camps and health education • <i>Publication on the status of geriatric health in the Thar Desert</i> • <i>District level workshop on geriatric health needs</i> | <p>Questions for measuring results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How people's access to PHCs have improved • relevance of health camps and results • health workers trainings, number of health workers trained, result of their interventions with communities • linkages of these health workers with govt health system |
| Result 6: Increased government and community awareness of entitlements for older people, low castes and tribal groups through advocacy and training | |
| <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness raising camps on government schemes • Training on rights and entitlements for community members • Rights and entitlements information kits • Awareness generation camps on intergenerational harmony and gender rights | <p>Questions for measuring results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of training sessions organized during the whole project period • Number of persons oriented in government entitlements • Kind of schemes and entitlements in which people are oriented • Number of persons who are benefited from the entitlements |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>International exchange visit on older people led monitoring of entitlements</i> • VOPAs and Panchayat/Block officers meeting to represent older people's priorities • <i>Good practice manual on working through VOPAs to achieve water, food and income security in the Thar Desert</i> • IEC materials on older people's issues in project areas • <i>Project visibility actions: (four media events, four International Women's Day celebrations, four International Day of Older Persons' celebrations)</i> Project visibility actions: IDOP celebrations • Project visibility actions: IWD celebrations • Publication on impact assessment • Website development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A copy of right and entitlement kit • Copy of other documents produced |
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Methods

The evaluation has drawn on a variety of primary and secondary sources to assess the project's achievements, its strengths and weaknesses. Primary data includes interactions with project staff, beneficiaries, some government and health experts. The evaluation also interviewed some HelpAge International staff on their technical support and contribution to the whole project. Other key sources of information are the following documents²:

- Proposal document
- Baseline survey report
- Annual progress report
- Awareness Material generated
- TAC, PMC and CPMC meeting register
- VOPA meeting minutes registers
- SHG account books
- Publication on the status of geriatric health needs

Field methods included focus group discussions (FGDs), personal interviews, key informant interviews, direct observation during site visits and historic reviews. The evaluation team visited both the districts and covered 40% of the randomly selected villages. Secondary sources included quantitative data collected by GRAVIS, was also used³.

Triangulation is a key technique for ensuring accuracy and reliability of the information collected. The triangulation was ensued by using different sources of the information like field staff and beneficiaries; and by adopting different methods for collecting the same information. Similarly, the reports received from GRAVIS and the field information gave a good insight for verification. All the information collected and observed through difference sources was analysed, which provided findings. The findings were discussed with the GRAVIS team and subsequently conclusions were made and recommendations were prepared.

4. Limitations and assumptions

- It is assumed that the villages visited are representative of the whole project area.

² Annexure 2: List of documents reviewed

³ Annexure 3: Field visits and meetings

- It was not realistic to measure impact for some of the activities as it is too early to evaluate the impact. However, the effectiveness of the activities has been studied in relation to the activities conducted.
- This review is not a statistical exercise and some information was collected from GRAVIS staff and reports. Although the qualitative information provided by GRAVIS was triangulated from the field visit, the quantitative information couldn't be verified. It is believed that the information provided by the implementing agency was correct to their knowledge.
- The evaluation team consisted of Deepak Malik and Mahitosh Bagoria from HEDCON who have extensive experience in working with older people. Although the experience of working with older people has helped, the individual bias of the evaluators based on their experience cannot be ruled out.

B. POC's key achievements

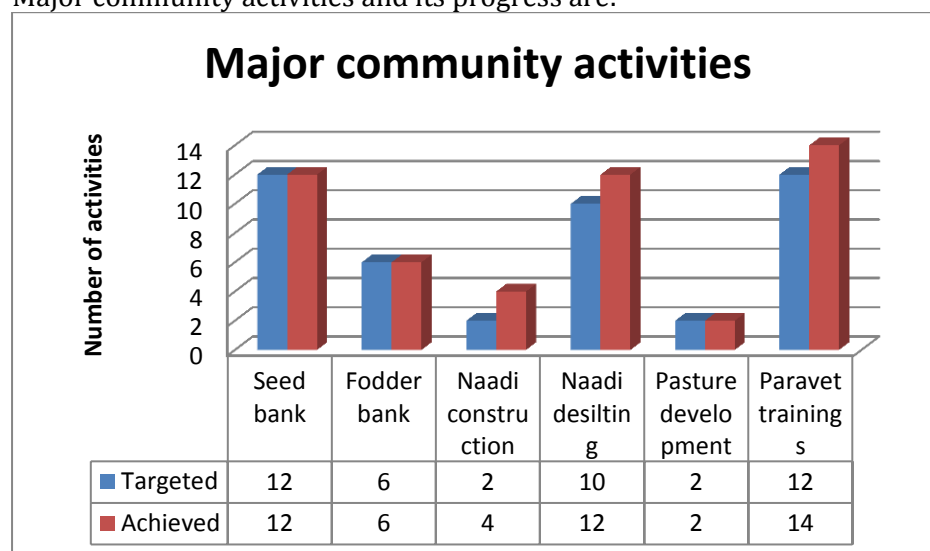
Cumulatively, over the 54 months of project period, the project could achieve⁴:

Generate awareness about OP's rights in the target villages and panchayats

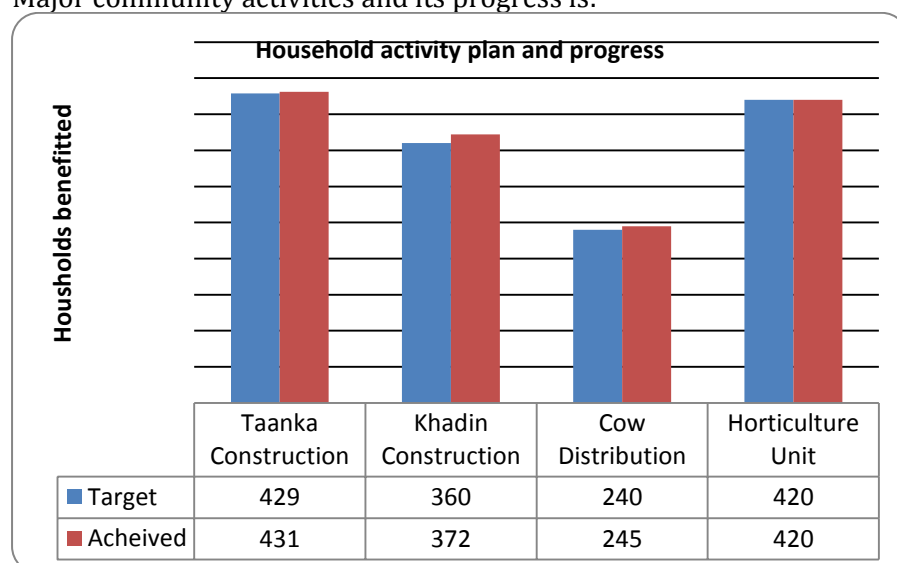
Against targeted 1500 as targeted for overall activities of the project, it could reach and benefit:

- The activities have reached to 1468 households directly through individual /household level activity including cow distribution, khadin, taanka or horticulture units construction.
- About 1000 households are directly reached from seed or fodder bank and paravet and VHW trainings.
- Temporary livelihood support provided through provision of labour work amounting about 26500 mandays only for desilting of Nadi
- 400 women joined Self Help Groups (SHGs) creating in the project
- 650 vulnerable individuals and their families were benefited through registration in one or the other social welfare scheme.
- All the twelve target village communities with community activities like desilting of naadi, outreach medical camps and pasture land development.

Major community activities and its progress are:



Major community activities and its progress is:



⁴ Annexure 4: Project plan and progress

VOPAs: All 12 villages have one VOPA each with a total membership of 2290 older persons. The VOPAs governing bodies have governing member totalling 135 of which 49 are women. These VOPAs have been able to save about INR 90,000 which is deposited in their federation bank accounts at district level.

Water Access: During the course of the project 10 community structures called Naadis were desilted and 4 Naadis were constructed. Also, to support household to be able to harvest and store water at household level, 431 structures called Taankas were constructed. Water availability through Naadis has increased from an average of four to eight months in a normal year. Water storage capacity of taanka beneficiaries has increased atleast 4 times. The money spent on water has reduced by one-fifth of taanka beneficiaries and similarly the time in fetching water has reduced to half hour from hours in a day.

Resilience building: For increasing resilience to drought activities implemented were: 360 farm bunding, 12 community seed banks, 6 community fodder banks, 420 horticulture units and 2 pasture units. Till now, seed banks helped 630 households and fodder bank benefited 234 households.

Livelihoods: 245 cattle with calves were distributed and 38 women SHGs were created to strengthen the livelihoods of the vulnerable households. This helped in increasing the income of cattle owners by about 120 GBP per annum and increasing their nutritional intake by consuming milk and milk products. About 400 women could be attached to the SHGs who have been able to collect about one million INR (GBP 10,000) so far and 54 women have been able to take internal loans from their SHG. Four vocational trainings helped above 150 women to initiate micro-businesses

Health: 54 health outreach camps were organized to provide primary care to older people and their families in the target villages. This helped – older people to go for cataract operation and – older people to get attached to DOTS program for treatment of tuberculosis. 2 trainings of 24 Village Health Workers helped them in better understanding of geriatric health and elderly care.

Social welfare through linkages: Efforts on creating linkages, awareness of rights and welfare programmes helped 650 vulnerable people and families in benefiting from government social welfare programmes.

C. Evaluation findings

5. Implementing arrangements

The local implementing agency for HelpAge International (HAI) in Rajasthan is Gramin Vikas Vigyan Samiti (GRAVIS). GRAVIS has its field offices in both the project areas which were considered as the project offices for the project. One programme Manager and two field Officers in the field offices managed the project in consultation with the Project Management Committee (PMC). PMC was a group of 10 persons, having members from all levels of project holders starting from HAI officials to some Village Older People Associations (VOPA) members. A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) has also been constituted which helped the PMC in technical aspects of the project components. This TAC has members from all relevant project fields like water management, horticulture, irrigation, veterinary, construction, community management etc. PAC and TAC meetings were organized once in 3 months for planning, monitoring, guidance and support. TAC and PMC members also went to the fields for technical and physical verification of the project interventions. The arrangement was found useful in terms of technical support and involvement of all stakeholders in the process of implementation and monitoring of the activities. The regular visits of the HAI also helped in monitoring of the activities. The project management structure is attached herewith in Annexure 5.

The project management structure also ensured maximum participation of the community. At village level, VOPAs were given the opportunity to take their own decisions with some conditions and support on the process. The monitoring was also jointly done at field level by communities and field staff. It has been found that these arrangements to involve the communities in decision making helped this project a people's owned project. This also helped in smooth implementation of activities, conflict resolution at local level and making VOPAs take charge of the community structure sincerely.

According to GRAVIS guidelines, every beneficiary makes a contribution to their intervention. This was done to ensure that the beneficiaries have a sense of ownership and responsibility for what is provided to them under the project. The contribution most of the time was in the form of labour. Although this was a general rule, it was not applicable in all cases. People were very old, incapable in some cases and for some households they couldn't devote time as they had to earn their bread daily to feed themselves. However, the contribution was ensured in most cases with some exceptions agreed in the VOPA meeting.

Scope for improvements

TAC meetings were mainly confined to Jodhpur which didn't allow for effective discussions the project faced and direct interactions. Furthermore, TAC field visit were especially limited in Jaisalmer as it was the farthest region. Regular monitoring by TAC members to both the regions could have helped in better management of the project activities.

6. Increased capacity of older people

The capacity building at field level was mainly ensured by organizing older people in a decentralized community structure called VOPAs. All the older people above 55 of age are considered as members of VOPA. The VOPA members were called to elect the VOPA committee members to ensure proper functioning and management of the association affairs. These VOPA committees had representations from all community groups, religions, caste and gender. It was made sure that women take leadership in VOPAs and participate. In total 49 women out of 135 VOPA members took leadership in these groups. These associations encouraged older people to organize, empower them to participate and to be heard in the village communities. VOPAs provided a platform for older people to share their views, grievances, experience and

knowledge with each other. VOPAs were set up in all 12 project villages⁵. These VOPAs were also responsible for selection of beneficiaries of the different project interventions. It was found that VOPA members were aware of the project, objectives and its activities. Furthermore, VOPA members had attended PMC meetings and were able to register their concerns.

Some VOPAs pursue activities other than those directly related with the project and discuss general matters of the village. VOPAs have also initiated savings activities. In all, 12 VOPAs have been able to save INR 89750 (GBP 900). These savings are derived from the beneficiary contribution to the project interventions. The funds of the VOPAs in Jodhpur district are managed by a federation of VOPAs called CPMC. The VOPA members have indicated that they will use these funds in case of calamities. The savings are deposited in a bank account. This was important to ensure that after project's completion these VOPAs continue to function for the welfare and rights of older people and their communities.

The VOPAs are participating in Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI) meetings and advocating for inclusion in government programmes and schemes. VOPA members are provided with trainings on government welfare schemes and process of registration. As a result, a number of vulnerable people and households have been able to benefit from these government welfare schemes. This has increased their voice, physical activity and recognition.

During the evaluation visits and as revealed from the VOPA meeting minutes, VOPAs were observed organizing regular meetings with the support of project staff and documenting meeting minutes. Although in most cases it was found that meeting minutes are documented by older people members themselves, but in some cases they were documented by the field staff. It shows that those VOPAs need further support to operate themselves.

Scope for improvements

Bap and Jaisalmer district villages were very far from each other and exchange or learning from each other could have been strengthened if the villages were close. Such projects should be planned looking not only at the need but also from other management perspectives.

The money collected by VOPAs is collected in the federation of VOPAs called CPMC at regional level. However, there were very few activities for strengthening these federations. Their role clarity in management of the funds, promotion of VOPAs functions and further fund raising strategy is yet not clear. VOPA members are also not very clear on the role of these federations. The current funds may allow them to function for some more time after the project ends but for sustainability, HelpAge and GRAVIS will have to support these CPMCs with VOPAs for at least two more years.

VOPAs have been able to collect some money, but all this is not enough to ensure the sustainability of VOPAs after completion of the project. The management capacity of the VOPA members need to be greatly enhanced before the VOPAs will be able to function independently. Overall, both the CPMC and VOPAs needed a clear exit strategy for sustainability. This can be considered as the strategic issue and could have been technically supported by HAI as the lead implementing agency with a worldwide experience in management of VOPAs.

7. Clean and sustainable sources of water

⁵ Annexure 6: Details of VOPAs

Water availability and access for domestic use is one of the main concerns for poor households in the region, particularly for older people. Vulnerable target households used to haul water from a distance of half to three km. With younger males out for labour work, the responsibility was shared by older or women of the house. Children also helped in fetching water and few of them were not attending school to help their parents to manage water. To reduce the drudgery of poor vulnerable households, project activities were targeted towards the development of sustainable, household and community level water harvesting structures. During the course of the project 10 community structures called Naadis were desilted and 4 Naadis were constructed. Also, to support household to be able to harvest and store water at household level, 431 structures called Taankas were constructed. Selection of beneficiary families for Taankas was done in VOPA meetings on criteria laid by older people in consultation with GRAVIS.

For desilting and construction of Naadis, 26482 person days of labour work were generated.

GRAVIS paid government minimum labour rate.

per day for the work. The per day work was quantified from the amount of silt removed from the demarcated location. The catchment area was cleaned and plants were grown on it to reduce the flow of silt in the Naadis. Fencing around the catchment was done to restrict animals entering into it. Community rules which existed long ago were also revived by VOPA members to ensure that people get back to

community management practices of such resources and ensure the cleaning of Naadi by themselves without depending on other agency's support. During the community meetings, older people narrated few of the rules as: no animals are allowed to wander in the catchment area, people are not allowed to pee or go for ablution in the catchment area, one member of each household in the community will devote one day each on amawas and gyaras (religious days according to Hindu calendar) for cleaning the Naadi and no tanker will be allowed to fill the water for commercial purpose.

Two Naadis were visited by the review team. As it is post rain period, the Naadis were full to their capacity. The average rainfall this year also helped. As per discussions with the villagers, the water is sufficient to meet the drinking water needs for an average of 8 months in a normal year. There are some rains in the winters as well, which will also help in storing some more water. People were carrying water by their camel carts and were also bringing their livestock to drink water from it. As per discussions, the main benefit will be during summer when normally water used to get finished and people had to track long distances. With good amount of water, people now will not have to travel during summer. The water is harvested and is not saline. This also will help them with assured sweet water during summer. Especially for older people, this helped them in better health. For women, it is less time and labour and for children it ensured time to play and study.

Similarly with taankas visited, they were all full. The water in the taankas was harvested from

Table: Details of Naadis desilted or constructed

| S.N | Naadi | Village | Year | Work days | Capacity (months) | |
|-----|--------------|-------------|------|-----------|-------------------|---------|
| | | | | | Previous | Current |
| 1 | JalkiNadi | Bhadali | 2009 | 1475 | 3 | 6 |
| 2 | AnnaNadi | Bhadali | 2009 | 1498 | 2 | 7 |
| 3 | GawriNadi | Bhadali | 2012 | 1398 | 4 | 12 |
| 4 | NimbaliNadi | Bhojokibaap | 2009 | 1360 | 2 | 8 |
| 5 | GawriNadi | Degavadi | 2010 | 1483 | 4 | 8 |
| 6 | GawriNadi | Ghator | 2010 | 1489 | 6 | 12 |
| 7 | BheelokiNadi | Jaitdasar | 2011 | 1500 | 3 | 6 |
| 8 | RojiNadi | Kohra | 2011 | 1501 | 3 | 6 |
| 9 | KitasariNadi | Kohra | 2012 | 2990 | New | 12 |
| 10 | DholaiNadi | Kohra | 2010 | 2975 | New | 8 |
| 11 | GawriNadi | Mandali | 2010 | 1473 | 7 | 12 |
| 12 | NagneliNadi | Nimbali | 2010 | 1502 | 5 | 9 |
| 13 | GawriNadi | Rawara | 2010 | 3003 | New | 12 |
| 14 | MegeriNadi | Sanvranganv | 2012 | 2835 | New | 9 |

the rains and not purchased. The taanka top lid was locked and as per the households it is opened only when water is fetched from it. Households visited were using this water only for drinking and cooking. For rest of the water needs, they go to nearby Naadi. Beneficiary older people confirmed that they feel healthy and have to do less labour for fetching water. They are using water judiciously so that in summer if the Naadi water is over, they will still have some water in the Taanka to drink and may be used atleast for 2 months. For rest of the time, they can buy water through tractor tankers as their water storage capacity has improved. The ownership of the taankas is mostly with older women and in some cases men. Although, this has nothing to do with land rights, but gives a sense of pride to these older women, which was very much evident in the discussions during the field visit. Older people proudly said that they feel proud to be able to contribute to family. The trainings on water management at household level has helped people in purification of water through filtration and using alum. Overall all target beneficiaries have been able to benefit from taanka as their water storage capacity has increased atleast 4 times⁶. The money spent on water has reduced by one-fifth. The time in fetching water has reduced to half hour from hours in a day. Taanka can be considered as one of the best activity for ensuring water at household level⁷.

| Table: List of Taankas | | |
|------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| S.No. | Village | No. of taankas |
| 1 | Chhipasariya | 29 |
| 2 | Kohra | 31 |
| 3 | Nimbali | 27 |
| 4 | Bhadali | 54 |
| 5 | Bhokibaap | 33 |
| 6 | Degavadi | 72 |
| 7 | Ghator | 61 |
| 8 | Anadasar | 17 |
| 9 | Jaitdasar | 28 |
| 10 | Rawara | 49 |
| 11 | Sanvraganv | 13 |
| 12 | Mandali | 17 |
| TOTAL | | 431 |

Scope for improvements

GRAVIS constructs silt catchers of three different designs and all have specific technical size specifications. However, the size of the silt catcher varied from one to another. Similarly, catchment area size was not standardized in all cases. Monitoring by field staff and TAC members could have been strengthened to make them better.

The rules for maintenance of Naadis were not seen properly followed. Animals were wandering on the catchment and polluting the water. Most of the young in the villages normally migrate to work. Although rules were drafted for management of these Naadis, gathering volunteers to work even for predefined dates was found difficult by VOPAs. The easy availability of labour through employment scheme called MNERGA which depends largely on displacement of soil may also keep the whole system dependent on external sources. Although people were confident that they will be able to manage these Naadis through community management system, the evaluation team found it difficult to consider it as a sustainable.

8. Increasing resilience to droughts

Rainfall is the only source of water in the Thar region as there are no perennial rivers in the region. The average rainfall in the region is between 150 to 250mm. There are droughts in one or the other part of the region on average for two years in five years. The intensity of drought has increased over time with indiscriminate use of available resources and change in the pattern of rainfall. With increase in droughts and its affect over people, there was a concerned need for introducing some mechanisms which can strengthen community resilience. To increase resilience of older people and their families, the project included number of household and community level interventions including seed and fodder banks, horticulture units,

⁶ The capacity of taankas is about 20,000 litres. The poor people who do not possess taankas, dig a small hole in the ground for storing water at household level, of about 5000 litre capacity, which is not even lined

⁷ Annexure 8: Visit to Taanka beneficiary

development of pasture land and farm bunding. The activities on resilience to droughts are given in the table below.

| Activity | Number of structures proposed | Number of structures constructed | Number of households reached |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Farm bunds called khadins | 360 | 360 | 360 |
| Community seed banks | 12 | 12 | 630 |
| Horticulture units | 420 | 420 | 420 |
| Fodder banks | 6 | 6 | 234 |
| Demonstration pasture lands | 2 | 2 | Yet to be determined |

One of the most successful initiatives of GRAVIS in the Thar region for promotion of soil water conservation for rainfed agriculture is farm bunding called khadins. These structures are constructed at the lower end of the sloping farm land to conserve water and use the soil moisture for cultivation. GRAVIS has been constructing such structures for over 20 years and have made remarkable changes in the traditional system for long life and for increasing the effectiveness of the system. In the course of this project, GRAVIS has constructed 372 khadins and in total has been able to increase the rainfed crop area by double, for vulnerable older people and their families. The total length of the khadin bund is 244440 feet and as per rough estimates by GRAVIS it has been able to increase the cultivable land by 9705 bighas⁸. A spill way was constructed in all the khadins to ensure that the lower end of bund is not flooded with water, and waste water can be withdrawn to the other side. The beneficiaries have been given trainings on how to manage khadins better. People were also made aware of planting the bund for protection of its walls. The beneficiaries met were able to increase the arable area and also could increase the productivity of their land upto 3 times in the khadin area. Even during the low rainfall periods, the beneficiaries could grow some grasses for fodder. There was a considerable increase in income⁹.

Sparse and negligible vegetation in the region doesn't allow people to get sufficient amount of nutritious food. It was realized that horticulture unit can be one of the initiatives to provide vulnerable the nutritious food in a sustainable manner. Plants were selected which can survive in harsh conditions and based on previous experiences technical details were decided for providing horticulture units to vulnerable households. 420 horticulture units were provided in the target villages. For every unit, plants of different varieties including pomegranate, lemon, ber and gunda were provided. Material for fencing was also provided. Trainings of the caretakers in the households were imparted on plantation, crafting, saving plants from termite and rats, and maintenance. In few pilot cases, drip irrigation systems with pitchers were installed. The overall observation of the field team is that about 70% of the horticulture units could grow well have been able to provide benefit to the households. The reasons for failure of other include the inappropriate choice of land with termite, distance between two plants, improper care and insufficiency of water for plants. The most successful plants which grew well are of gunda, ber and amla. Although people could benefit from lemon and pomegranate also but such households were found few only.

Beneficiaries not only improved access to these varieties for their household consumption but were also able to sell them. It helped in improving not only food security but also household income. It also helped older people in engaging themselves with little work which kept them happy¹⁰.

⁸ Annexure 9: Details of khadins

⁹ Annexure 10: Case study on Khadin

¹⁰ Annexure 11: Case study of horticulture unit

After droughts, vulnerable people lose their capacity to cultivate land as they need farm inputs like seeds, fertilizers, pesticides etc. This forces them to take inputs on loan which increases their vulnerability further. To increase their resilience to droughts by ensuring seed availability on loans without

interest payments for one harvest, 12 seed banks were established in the project area as shown in the table.

Local seed provided were of bajra, moong, moth, gwar, til and matira. Seeds provided were traditional and not hybrid. The stocks of the seeds were maintained in VOPA presidents' houses or any of other VOPA members. Most seeds were preserved in mud pitchers and neem leaves and ash were added to the seeds to

avoid moisture. Rules were drafted on eligibility, quantity, when and for how long people can get seeds on loan. According to the records of GRAVIS, nine out of twelve seed banks have no seeds available and all seeds are distributed. The records of distribution and return were not properly managed. No weighing instrument could be found by the evaluation team. Although in the initial stages it might have helped in securing seeds, given the situation, the sustainability of the system is threatened.

Similarly, during droughts the price of the fodder increases making it difficult for

people to manage their livestock. For small animals, people migrate to other regions for fodder but they

are forced to sell cattle at throw away prices. This also reduces their food availability. To improve the availability of fodder for vulnerable people in the target villages, GRAVIS establish six fodder banks. The fodder banks were built on personal land. The fodder was procured from the locals during normal harvest season and secured for drought years. Detail of the fodder bank is given in a table on the next page.

During the field visit, it was found that documents available were not properly managed. Also registers were not available at fodder bank and they were with GRAVIS field team. The recording system was weak. The rules laid for management and the management of fodder bank were not sufficient to ensure its continuity in the longer period.

Table: Seed Banks

| S.No. | VILLAGE | STARTED IN YEAR | STOCK (inKg.) | NUMBER OF HHS WHO HAVE TAKEN SEED | NO. of HHs WHO HAVE RETURNED SEEDS |
|-------|--------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Ghator | 2009 | 140 | 60 | 43 |
| 2 | Bhokibaap | 2009 | 90 | 40 | 19 |
| 3 | Degavadi | 2012 | Nil | 70 | 41 |
| 4 | Sanvraganv | 2011 | Nil | 62 | 33 |
| 5 | Rawara | 2012 | Nil | 40 | 26 |
| 6 | Mandali | 2011 | Nil | 15 | 7 |
| 7 | Jaitdasar | 2010 | Nil | 61 | 34 |
| 8 | Anadasar | 2010 | Nil | 23 | 15 |
| 9 | Bhadali | 2011 | Nil | 83 | 41 |
| 10 | Kohra | 2010 | Nil | 84 | 53 |
| 11 | Nimbali | 2009 | 170 | 57 | 21 |
| 12 | Chhipasariya | 2012 | Nil | 35 | 10 |

Table: Fodder banks

| S.No. | VILLAGE | STARTED IN YEAR | STOCK (in quintal) | NUMBER OF HHS WHO HAVE TAKEN FODDER | NO. HHS WHO HAVE RETURNED |
|-------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | Degavadi | 2010 | 80 | 60 | 50 |
| 2 | Ghator | 2011 | 75 | 40 | 33 |
| 3 | Rawara | 2011 | 60 | 35 | 27 |
| 4 | Jaitdasar | 2012 | 20 | 43 | 34 |
| 5 | Kohra | 2011 | 40 | 27 | 21 |
| 6 | Chhipasariya | 2010 | 80 | 29 | 20 |

To further increase the resilience of villagers in two villages two demonstration pasture lands were developed on community land. In each of the selected villages ten hectare of land was identified, fenced and drought resistant varieties of grasses were planted. Also drought resistant trees like Babul and khejri were also grown. One person was appointed by the respective VOPA for watering and maintaining the land. Rules were defined for protection of the pasture lands. It was decided that grass seeds will be collected and sold to get some money to manage the pasture land after the project ends. It was also decided that grass will be collected for the fodder bank to be used during crisis periods. Visit by evaluation team confirmed that both the pasture lands are developing satisfactorily and grasses were grown on the land. Seeds of the grasses were not collected yet and according to communities, they want to do it post harvest this year. The benefits of the pastures couldn't be documented as they are yet to be used.

Scope for improvements

Although people were made aware of the planting on khadin bunds, the efforts by people to make bund strong by planting trees was not sufficient to ensure the strength of the bund. This could have been improved by increasing monitoring and sensitization. Similarly, the usefulness of the khadin could have been improved by promoting some important trees in the khadin area like Khejri; and also by motivating people to grow local crops like Senna for better yield. Although the results were good, such drought resistance measures could have improved resilience of the households and communities.

For maintaining horticulture units, the major issue was of water availability. In most cases, the beneficiary of horticulture unit was also provided with a Taanka to increase water access for drinking as well as for plants. However, different years for providing taanka and horticulture units didn't allow some of the owners to ensure regular supply of water for the units and resulting in failure. Better planning could have improved the results.

The weak distribution and management processes for seed banks and fodder banks on distribution and management may not allow them to be sustainable. The rules established for the banks are also not sufficient for beneficiaries to return seed or fodder. There was no women's participation in the whole bank management. To make them sustainable, they could have been given to SHGs. This could have helped in earning by women SHGs and also make them a sustainable proposition.

9. Improved livelihoods for older people

To strengthen food security of the vulnerable older people and women in the target villages activities like distribution of milch cows with insurance, training of para-veterinarians and formation of women Self Help Groups (SHGs) were initiated. 245 Cattle with calf were distributed to the target beneficiary households. Beneficiaries were further supported with capacity building trainings. Provision of milch cows was found to be a good way to ensure food by providing a source of livelihood to older people who are unable to perform hard work. The cow is a very important asset for rural people. It provides them daily nutrition in the form of milk and milk products, and they derive additional income from sales of the milk products they do not consume. These beneficial effects were visible to the evaluation team during the visit. According to the rough estimates by the review team an average income from a cow is Rs. 1200 (GBP16.5). This income is generated by beneficiary for the period the cow gives milk (about 7 months in a year), and for the rest period, the expenditure on the cow is about Rs. 400 (GBP 5.5) per month. The beneficiary older people met were happy and confirmed that their health is better with consumption of milk and its products and they get some cash also from this activity. Also, this provides them some productive work and keeps them engaged for some time during the day. The provision of cows was also supported with insurance to transfer the risk. This also helped many beneficiaries whose cows got sick and died, to recover money to buy another.

This activity is expected to raise awareness about insurance. Provision of milk cow can be considered as one of the best activity for strengthening livelihood of the vulnerable households in Thar¹¹.

Women in Rajasthan rarely get opportunity to socialize as they are always busy at home. The creation of 38 SHGs has provided about 400 women an opportunity to come together and to talk to each other¹². Now they meet at designated times and periods and discuss about issues and problems which affect them. Now they get solutions of their personal problems from their members. During monthly meetings, issues of common concern like hygiene, adolescence, money lending, accounting, etc are discussed so that they understand the consequences and adopt the best practice for their households. These SHGs have increased their say in any social event in the community and in many cases act as a monitoring cell for ensuring that women get their right in the society. Some of them also got the opportunity to visit other places and see the world and understand how women can secure their rights¹³.

Women in Rajasthan in general have very less or almost no savings of their own. They were always dependent on their husbands or other males in the family for anything, even if they are working and earning. The SHG regular fund has provided them with money which they own and can use as they wish. Some of the SHGs are provided with rotational fund for initiating their own businesses. Internal loaning has been done to 54 members. Four vocational trainings were organized for some of the selected women. The vocational skills were selected based on the requests from the SHG women. These women have started their micro-businesses on cow and goat rearing, flour mills, sewing machine and petty trading shops¹⁴. Most of them are earning additional income from those skills. Some women who have not opted the skill for earning are saving money by using the skill at home. All SHGs are linked with banks and these SHG have been able to collect about one million INR (10,000 GBP). It has provided women with soft loans for their hard periods and also for strengthening their business and household conditions. The SHGs were also linked with the government Mpower scheme. This has helped them in further enhancing their skills and gets loans and enhancing their availability of cash. Overall, evaluation team found the activity as one of the successful initiatives in empowering women socially and economically¹⁵.

Two people were selected from each target village to become Para-veterinarians. This was started to provide older people with productive engagement, help increase their recognition and also help communities to have improved basic access to veterinarian services. One training of 7 days was organized for the selected para-vets. A kit with basic medicines was also provided to them. As discussed with the project team only 60% of the para-vets are active and providing basic support in their villages.

Scope for improvements

The cow activity was a good intervention to ensure older people's livelihood. However, it could have been strengthened by involving VOPAs. Conditions on the beneficiaries to return the female calf could have helped in providing more cows to persons who couldn't benefit from the intervention. Also, this could have helped VOPA in sustaining some more productive activities for sustainability.

The evaluation team observed that the para-vets were not older people in many cases. Also, the training provided was one time and these vets were not provided with any promotional support

¹¹ Annexure 11: Case study of cow beneficiary

¹² Annexure 12: Details of SHGs

¹³ Annexure 15: Record of SHG member exposure visit

¹⁴ Annexure 13: SHG wise list of micro-businesses initiated by SHG beneficiaries

¹⁵ Annexure 14: FGD with SHG members

and the follow-up of the activity was weak. The distances within the villages are big which also restricted people in promoting their practice as para-vet. The linkages between these para-vets and veterinary government services are weak. The given factors didn't allow this activity to provide expected outcomes. Such activity should be followed with persistent follow-up and support.

10. Improved health status of older people

Interventions for improving the health status of older people were focussed on age-friendly health camps and training of two older persons on every target village to become health workers. The villages in Thar are big and access to health services is poor. In the target villages 54 outreach medical camps were organized. The medical camps provided an opportunity to the communities to have atleast primary consultations with the doctors. During the medical camps seasonal diseases were diagnosed and medicines were provided free of cost. For some patients their chronic diseases were diagnosed and they were referred to district level hospital for further analysis and treatment. It also provided with some analysis of prevailing problems in the villages to the GRAVIS hospital and VHWs. Also, they could understand their primary health problems and take necessary precautions. Although, these outreach camps cannot be considered as any sustainable way to improve access of older people to health services, these medical camps served villages who never had any provision of proper health consultation.

In every village there are some health workers who provide basic medical support. These health workers are not certified and have developed their skills based on their experiences in other regions with other medical professionals. However, their skills were confined to gynaecology and seasonal diseases. They didn't have any understanding of geriatric health or age-friendly care. One training of seven days of 24 such village health workers was organized on basic geriatric care and age-friendliness of the health services. The evaluation team observed that these health workers have orientation of age-friendliness and geriatric health and they could narrate some instances where they had helped older people. However, the team also feels that these health workers could have been provided with a home-care training. That could have provided them with better scope for increasing their health business and also help older people better.

11. Improved social welfare through linkages

To ensure that rights are recognized and fulfilled, both effective governance and active citizenship are important. Government of India and the State government have many social welfare programme which to an extent show their commitment towards ensuring that rights of the vulnerable groups are fulfilled. However, they don't reach to the needy because of unawareness and lack of clear linkage between them. GRAVIS through this project worked to create a linkage between the vulnerable community members and duty bearers through VOPAs. GRAVIS organized trainings of VOPA members of rights and entitlements. It also prepared an information kit on rights of different vulnerable groups and provided those kits to VOPAs. It also organized meetings between VOPA representative and Panchayat and block officials. Some of the villagers has never even seen the Panchayat or block offices before. People could ask about the existing welfare schemes and how to register. This created a linkage between the community members and the duty bearers. GRAVIS staff further helped in required documentation through VOPAs for ensuring that vulnerable groups are included in the social welfare schemes. This helped in registering and benefiting 650 vulnerable people and their families to benefit from them. Now VOPAs know the eligibility criteria, process of documentation and registration and also they know whom to contact for registration. This helped people in improving their food security, livelihood, shelter needs, living conditions ; and above all recognition of their rights by the duty bearers. It also gave VOPAs an opportunity to help themselves and also other vulnerable groups; and also increase their recognition as a

decentralized groups in the villages. The social schemes and groups benefited from this include:

| Name of the scheme | Beneficiaries | Number of beneficiaries |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Old age pension | Older people above the age of 65 | 161 |
| Widow pension | Widows who do not have other income source | 38 |
| Handicap pension | Physically and mentally differently abled | 14 |
| Indira Housing scheme | Below poverty line households | 29 |
| CM Housing scheme | | 13 |
| Public toilets | Community | 21 |
| Bus passes | Older people, women and differently abled people | 289 |
| Astha scheme | | 2 |
| Kisan credit card | Farmers | 62 |
| BPL electricity scheme | Below Poverty line households | 16 |
| Public meeting hall in the community | Community | 4 |
| Total | | 649 |

Similarly, to increase visibility and recognition of rights of older people and women, International Day for Older People and International Women's day were celebrated every year during the project cycle. IEC material¹⁶ was developed and distributed in the target villages. Other impact and best practice studies were documented and shared with relevant stakeholders at NGO and government levels. GRAVIS website also included some details of the project for increasing visibility.

12. Accountability to beneficiaries

Accountability means providing people with the opportunity to understand and influence the key decisions which are made during the work. Accountability to beneficiaries brings important practical advantages, including: increasing the chance that activities meet beneficiaries' real priorities; increasing the sense of ownership that beneficiaries feel towards work, which improves the chance of long-term impact; supporting beneficiaries' self-respect and self-confidence and reducing the risk of fraud, or of funds being used inefficiently. For the purpose of this evaluation, aspects of transparency, participation, monitoring and evaluation were considered. Open questions were asked to the beneficiaries during field visits. Consequently, staff at field level was asked for the measures they have taken to ensure accountability. The evaluation team then triangulated the information with the processes designed to ensure the accountability. The analysis is here divided into three parts as given below

Transparency

To understand transparency of organization in managing its programmes the evaluation first worked to find if the basic information about GRAVIS and HelpAge people know, and why is it working in the area is provided to the target communities, or not. It was also important to understand which measures have been taken to ensure that information is provided. Before initiating the programme in all villages, information about the organizations were shared in group meetings. When same was checked with beneficiaries in the field, very few could tell about HelpAge or GRAVIS. People were not aware of the organizational mission, mandate, objectives or its activities. Most of them said that they know GRAVIS as a local organization and it is working through this programme for welfare of older people. People were aware of the estimates of the activities implemented in their villages, however, they were not aware of the budget or progress of the project as a whole. Villagers or to say VOPA members knew other target villages and they had met other members of their region in regular meetings. VOPA members knew about the field office as they had visited it for meetings and trainings. Although

¹⁶ List of IEC material and advocacy material is given in annexure 3

no specific strategies were found on transparency, GRAVIS working modalities helped substantially to ensure transparency. It is suggested that GRAVIS adopts some other modes also to ensure transparency like leaflets in Hindi, at the onset of every meeting a small introduction to GRAVIS, printed project details in local language pasted in the VOPA offices to strengthen transparency of the projects.

Participation

The need for stakeholder ownership through participation is important and is part of accountability. Ownership of a project by stakeholders involves ensuring the widest possible participation. Participatory approaches means that the community and stakeholders are collaborators in a project at every stage of project development. Unless the focus groups and affected populations are given an opportunity to participate in the development of interventions designed to improve their lives, they will continue to miss full benefits of any intervention. The project by GRAVIS was designed through discussions with villagers. The same was reconfirmed and checked during the baseline which also provided and reconfirmed the target vulnerable population in the target communities. The beneficiaries were selected by VOPAs based on pre-defined criteria set by GRAVIS. VOPAs also played an important role in monitoring of the progress in their villages. This helped in making VOPAs stronger and sustainable. Also, wherever possible, communities were asked to contribute towards the cost of activities implemented in the form of labour which also ensured their functional participation. Overall, GRAVIS implemented the project with good functional participation of the target communities. However, women participation in the whole process was found to be weak for social reasons, which needs a long term approach for improving their participation in the process.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring was primarily done by VOPA and field staff in the field mainly to check the output of the activities. VOPA members were asked to check if the beneficiaries have received the agreed benefit or not. The reports were prepared for outputs by the field staff. However, the monitoring was mainly confined to monitoring of output. The benefits of the interventions were not documented, which didn't allow for improvement in the projects in the whole lifecycle of the project. For example, the health workers and para veterinarians received one time training. This was documented but their benefit to the people was not monitored. If that had been ensured, more interventions to get the desired outcome could have been planned.

D. Conclusions and recommendations

This section provides the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation undertaken in September 2013 of the POC project implemented by GRAVIS and HelpAge International across two blocks of Jodhpur and Jaisalmer districts. After the field visit, the findings were discussed with GRAVIS management to get the holistic view of the results achieved and also to understand their opinion. Field staff and VOPA members were also given the opportunity to provide their views on the project. For sake of brevity and ease of further use, the conclusions and recommendations have been depicted below according to the six result statements for the POC project:

Result 1: Increased capacity of older people and the project partner to initiate and sustain older people-led actions

Conclusions

The capacity building at field level was mainly ensured by organizing older people in a decentralized community structure called VOPAs. These associations encouraged older people to organize, empower them to participate and to be heard in the village communities. VOPAs provided a platform for older people to share their views, grievances, experience and knowledge with each other. VOPAs were set up in all 12 project villages. VOPAs have been able to collect money which is in Bank account of federation of VOPAs called CPMC. The capacity building activities helped VOPAs to be able to participate in Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI) meetings and advocating for inclusion in government programmes and schemes. This increased their voice, physical activity and recognition.

Recommendations

Bap and Jaisalmer district villages were very far from each other and exchange or learning from each other could have been strengthened if the villages were close. Such projects should be planned looking not only at the need but also from other management perspectives.

The money collected by VOPAs is collected in the federation of VOPAs at regional level. However, the strategy of strengthening these federations was weak. Their role clarity in management of the funds, promotion of VOPAs functions and further fund raising strategy need to be strengthened.

The efforts on strengthening VOPAs were not enough to ensure their sustainability. The management capacity of the VOPA members need to be greatly enhanced before the VOPAs will be able to function independently. This can be considered as the strategic issue and should have been technically supported by HAI as the lead implementing agency with a worldwide experience in management of VOPAs.

Result 2: Increased access to clean and sustainable sources of water for project communities

Conclusions

During the course of the project 10 community structures called Naadis were desilted and 4 Naadis were constructed. About 27 thousand work days were generated. The desilted and new Naadies have improved the access of people to clean potable water on an average by four months per annum. It also reduced the time required to fetch the water as the water is now close to their houses and they don't have to track long distances. Water is sweet as it is harvested. Especially for older people, this helped them in better health. For women, it is less time and labour and for children it ensured time to play and study.

To support household to be able to harvest and store water at household level, 431 structures called Taankas were constructed. The visited taankas were filled with water as rains have just

finished. Households visited were using this water only for drinking and cooking. For rest of the water needs, they go to nearby Naadi. The water storage capacity has increased atleast 4 times. The money spent on water has reduced by one-fifth. The time in fetching water has reduced to half hour from hours in a day. Beneficiary older people confirmed that they feel healthy and have to do less labour for fetching water. Taanka can be considered as one of the best activity for ensuring water at household level.

Recommendations

GRAVIS constructs silt catchers of three different designs and all have specific technical size specifications. However, the size of the silt catcher varied from one to another. Similarly, catchment area size was not standardized in all cases. Monitoring by field staff and TAC members could have been strengthened to make them better.

The rules for maintenance of Naadis were not seen properly followed. Animals were wandering on the catchment and polluting the water. Most of the young in the villages normally migrate to work. Although rules were drafted for management of these Naadis, gathering volunteers to work even for predefined dates was found difficult by VOPAs. The easy availability of labour through employment scheme called MNERGA which depends largely on displacement of soil may also keep the whole system dependent on external sources. Although people were confident that they will be able to manage these Naadis through community management system, the evaluation team found it difficult to consider it as a sustainable without external funding.

Result 3: Improved food and fodder security for increasing resilience to droughts ***Conclusions***

One of the most successful initiatives of GRAVIS in the Thar region for promotion of soil water conservation for rainfed agriculture is farm bunding called khadins. In the course of this project, GRAVIS has constructed 372 khadins and in total has been able to increase the rainfed area, for vulnerable older people and their families. The beneficiaries met were able to increase the arable area and also could increase the productivity of their land upto 3 times in the khadin area. Even during the low rainfall periods, the beneficiaries could grow some grasses for fodder. There was a considerable increase in income of the target beneficiaries through this activity.

420 horticulture units were provided in the target villages. Estimated 70% of the horticulture units could grow well and have been able to provide benefit to the households. Successful beneficiaries not only improved access to these varieties for their household consumption but were also able to sell them. It helped in improving not only food security but also household income. It also helped older people in engaging themselves with little work which kept them happy.

To increase resilience of target vulnerable communities to droughts, 12 seed and 6 fodder banks from where villages can take fodder and seeds on loans without interest payments for one harvest. Rules were drafted on eligibility, quantity, when and for how long people can get seeds on loan. According to the records of GRAVIS, nine out of twelve seed banks have no seeds available and all seeds are distributed. The records of distribution and return were not properly managed. Although the strategy of GRAVIS was appropriate for ensuring fodder and seeds during difficult periods, the improper management processes of the banks have made this activity a onetime rather than a long term resilience building activity.

Recommendations

Although people were made aware of the planting on khadin bunds, the efforts by people to make bund strong by planting trees was not that impressive. This could have been improved by increasing monitoring and influencing. Similarly, the usefulness of the khadin could have been

improved by promoting some important trees in the khadin area like Khejri; and also by motivating people to grow local crops like Senna for better yield. Although the results were good, such drought resistance measures could have further improved resilience of the households and communities.

For maintaining horticulture units, the major issue was of water availability. In most cases, the beneficiary of horticulture unit was also provided with a Taanka to increase water access for drinking as well as for plants. However, different years for providing taanka and horticulture units didn't allow some of the owners to ensure regular supply of water for the units and resulting in failure. Better planning could have improved the results.

Result 4: Increased income security through improved livelihoods for older people and their families

Conclusions

To strengthen food security of the vulnerable older people and women in the target villages, 245 cattle with calf were distributed to the target beneficiaries. According to the rough estimates by the review team an average income from a cow is Rs. 1200 (GBP16.5). This income is generated by beneficiary for the period the cow gives milk (about 7 months in a year). The beneficiary older people met were happy and confirmed that their health is better with consumption of milk and its products and they get some cash also from this activity.

The creation of 38 SHGs has provided about 400 women in target villages an opportunity to come together and to talk to each other. The SHG regular fund has provided them with money which they own and can use as they wish. Women are provided with four vocational trainings. These women have started their micro-businesses on livestock rearing, sewing, embroidery and petty trading. Most of them are earning additional income from those skills with an average income of Rs 3000 per month. All SHGs are linked with banks. It has provided women with soft loans for their hard periods and also for strengthening their business and household conditions. Overall, evaluation team found that creation of women SHGs as one of the successful initiatives in empowering women socially and economically.

Recommendations

The cow activity was a good intervention to ensure older people's livelihood. However, it could have been strengthened by involving VOPAs more. Conditions on the beneficiaries to return the female calf could have helped in providing more cows to persons who couldn't benefit from the intervention. Also, this could have helped VOPA in sustaining some more productive activities for sustainability.

The evaluation team observed that the para-vets were not older people in many cases. Also, the training provided was one time and these vets were not provided with any promotional support and the follow-up of the activity was weak. The distances within the villages are big which also restricted people in promoting their practice as para-vet. The linkages between these para-vets and veterinary government services are weak. The given factors didn't allow this activity to provide expected outcomes. Such activity should be followed with persistent follow-up and support.

Result 5: Improved health status of older people through increased access to health care services

Conclusions

Interventions for improving the health status of older people were focussed on age-friendly health camps and training of two Village Health Workers (VHWs) in every target village on geriatric health. In the target villages 54 outreach medical camps were organized. The medical camps provided an opportunity to the communities to have atleast primary consultations with

the doctors. During the medical camps seasonal diseases were diagnosed and medicines were provided free of cost. It also provided with some analysis of prevailing problems in the villages to the GRAVIS hospital and VHWs. Although, these outreach camps cannot be considered as any sustainable way to improve access of older people to health services, these medical camps served villages who never had any provision of proper health consultation.

The skills of the Village Health Workers (VHWs) were confined to gynaecology and seasonal diseases. They didn't have any understanding of geriatric health or age-friendly care. A seven days training of village health workers was organized on basic geriatric care and age-friendliness of the health services. The evaluation team observed that these health workers have orientation of age-friendliness and geriatric health and they could narrate some instances where they have helped older people. However, the team also feels that these health workers could have been provided with a home-care training. That could have provided them with better scope for increasing their health business and also help older people better.

Result 6: Increased government and community awareness of entitlements for older people, low castes and tribal groups through advocacy and training

Conclusions

GRAVIS through this project worked to create linkages between the vulnerable community members and duty bearers through VOPAs. This helped people in understanding about the existing welfare schemes and how to register. This also created a linkage between the community members and the duty bearers. Overall, about 650 vulnerable people and their families are benefited from the government schemes because of this activity. It also gave VOPAs an opportunity to help older people and also other vulnerable groups; and also increase their recognition as a decentralized committed group in the villages.

Similarly, to increase visibility and recognition of rights of older people and women, International Day for Older People and International Women's day were celebrated every year during the project cycle. IEC material was developed and distributed in the target villages.

Overall conclusion

The goal of the project as improve the socio-economic status and social integration of marginalized and vulnerable groups in 12 villages in Jodhpur and Jaisalmer districts through older people led community action was realistic and was largely achieved. The focus of the activities was on strengthening local livelihood, increasing in health care and services, improving water and sanitation access and practices, community and household resilience on drought and strengthening linkages between duty bearers and right holders. The project made very good progress in terms of implementation of its activities. The community led action through VOPAs was a good strategy to strengthen older people, provide positive engagement to older people, provide them a platform to share their voices and ensure their rights and of other vulnerable groups.

GRAVIS has been working in Thar region for more than two decades. It has a network of field centers of which two centers close to the project target villagers acted as field office for the project activities. It has also been working on the rights of older people and their families for more than ten years through its fleet of workers and activists in the field areas. This helped GRAVIS in identification of clear needs of vulnerable, bringing older people together and in implementation of agreed activities.

All the field level activities were implemented through VOPAs. The household level activities like distribution of cows with calfs, construction of individual water storage and harvesting tanks called taankas and construction of farm bunds called khadins, could help people in strengthening water, food and livelihoods security. The community level activities like desilting

and construction of Naadis, seed and fodder banks, and pasture land development were mainly implemented through VOPAs. The community activities although could provide desired outputs, have not been able to generate expected sustainable outcomes. For example, for Naadis and banks, the rules defined were not seen followed properly which may not allow for activities to continue for long term. GRAVIS need to give a special focus on their community activities in terms of ensuring sustainability and that they are implemented with a clearly defined process.

The project was another milestone in ensuring rights of older people in the target villages. However, such projects are pilots which require promotion to influence policy level changes. Also, such projects should lead modifications in the working modalities of other like-minded organizations for mainstreaming ageing. Such efforts with clear objectives and strategy were missing. HelpAge can play an advisory role in defining such objectives and strategies. Consequently, these strategic plans can be used for improved programme planning, fund raising and furthering the overall goals of HelpAge International.

Annexure 1 Terms of References

1. Project details

- Name of the project: Promoting older people led community action to reduce poverty among vulnerable groups in rural Rajasthan, India
- Project period: 54 months starting from June 2008
- Project location: 12 villages in Rajasthan (8 in Baap block of Jodhpur district and 4 in Fatehgarh block of Jaisalmer district)
- Target group/population: 1,500 vulnerable older people (at least 60% women) and their families (7,500 people)
- Implementing organization: Gramin Vikas Vigyan Samiti (GRAVIS); Jodhpur
- Specific Objective/s: Improve the socio-economic status and social integration of marginalized and vulnerable groups in 12 villages in Jodhpur and Jaisalmer districts through older people led community action
- Activities are focussed on:
 - a) Increasing capacity of older people and the partner NGO to initiate and sustain older people led action
 - b) Increasing access to clean and sustainable sources of water for project communities
 - c) Improving food and fodder security for project communities
 - d) Increasing income security through improved livelihoods for older people and their families
 - e) Improving health status of older people through increased access to health care services
 - f) Increasing government and community awareness of entitlements for older people, low caste and tribal groups through advocacy and training

2. Evaluation Title

Final Evaluation of Project “Promoting older people led community action to reduce poverty among vulnerable groups in rural Rajasthan, India”

3. Assignment

GRAVIS is looking for an individual Consultant/Agency to submit an expression of interest for the final evaluation of project. The evaluation will examine the way in which the situation of older people and their families has improved following the implementation of the project activities. The evaluation will assess the impact of the project in relation to key stakeholders, the level of interest and integration of activities into stakeholder programmes and where relevant policies. The evaluation will also analyse the project to identify important lessons learnt and recommendations for future programmes.

a. Objectives of the Assignment: The objectives of the final evaluation:

- i) To make independent assessment about the performance of the project paying particularly attention of the project actions against its set objectives;
- ii) To assess how effectively and efficiently project activities attain its goal;
- iii) To provide evidence on project impacts on older people;

- iv) To identify key lessons and to propose practical recommendations for follow-up actions.

b. Evaluation criteria for this evaluation are as follows:

- i) Relevance and appropriateness
- ii) Efficiency
- iii) Effectiveness:
- iv) Impact
- v) Sustainability
- vi) Visibility
- vii) Accountability to beneficiaries

4. Methodology

To be developed by the consultant

5. Structure of the report

Final and detail reporting format will be discussed at the later stage of the evaluation. Therefore, detail work plan and other relevant things will also come out in this segment.

Annexure 2: List of documents reviewed

- Project proposal
- Baseline report
- Annual progress reports
- Staff field visit register
- Staff daily diary
- Physical activity master register
- Training master register
- CPMC meeting register
- PMC meeting register
- TAC meeting register
- News cuttings file
- PRI and government approval register
- Government welfare programs details file
- Staff monthly meeting register
- VOPA meeting records
- CPMC bank passbook

Annexure 3: Field visit and meetings

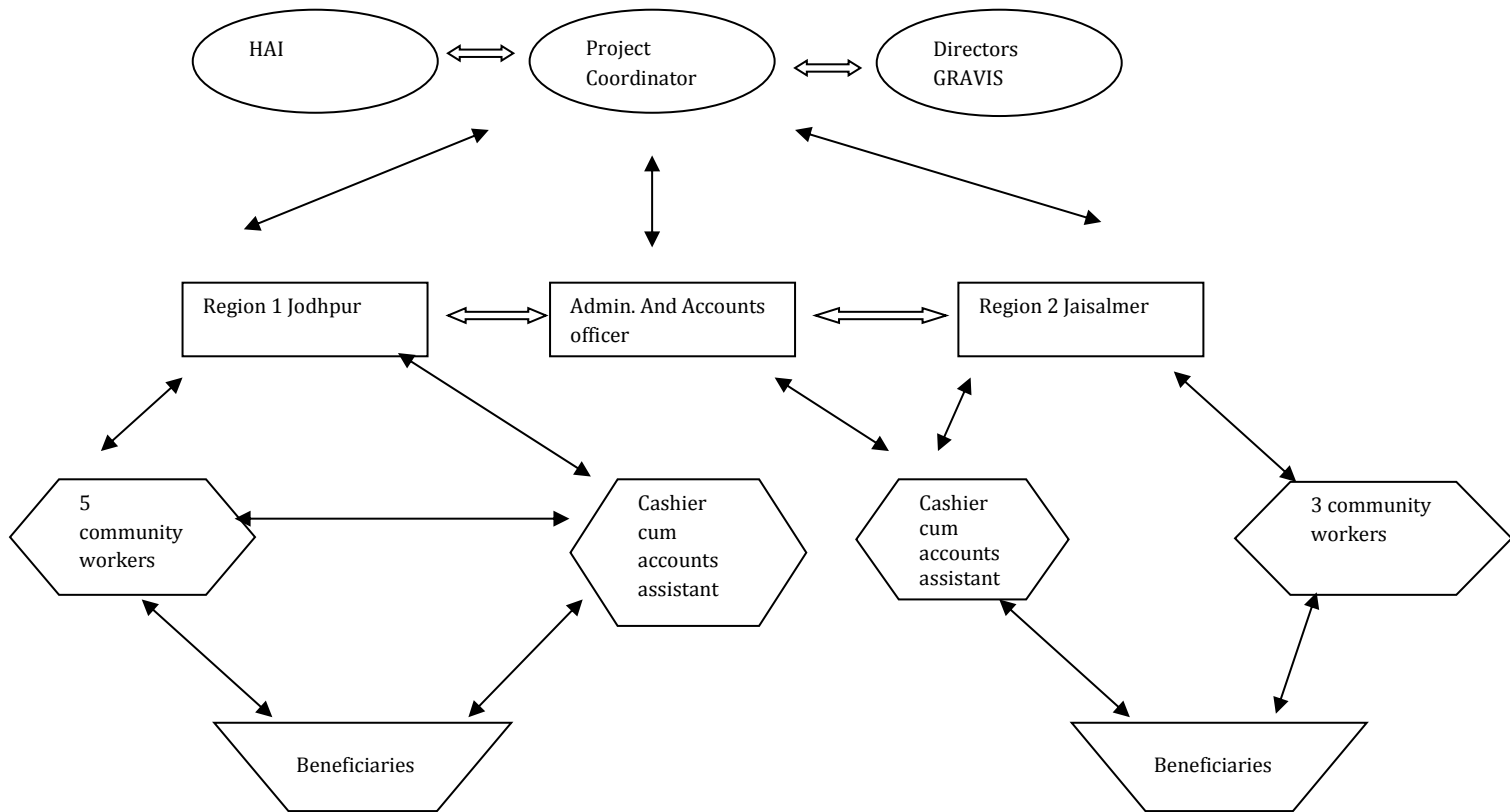
| Date | To | Meeting with | Project Staff/ Beneficiary | Discussions on |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 21 st Aug 2013 | GRAVIS Jodhpur office | Dr. Prakash Tyagi | Director, GRAVIS | Dissection on POC project |
| | | Mr. Roshan Kukreti | Programme Coordinator | Experience and challenges of POC project |
| 22 nd Aug 2013 | | Mr. J P Gupta Mrs Tara Laxman Gahlot Dr. Kalla | TAC members | |
| 23 rd Aug 2013 | Bap Field office | Area Coordinator and Field staff | | Overall project activities and About the field area and General Project related and their experience |
| | In OPR villages | Mrs Manju Lata Soni | SHG Coordinator | Women and SHGs in POC project areas |
| 24 th Aug 2013 | Anadhasar , Bap | Mrs Amtu Khatu | Horticulture beneficiary | Horticulture unit and its benefits |
| | Anadhasar , Bap | | Community meeting | General Project related and their experience |
| | | | | |
| 3 rd Sep 2013 | Bap field center | Mr. BhikhaRam, Nakta Ram and Narayan Ram | Community Worker | General Project related and their experience |
| | | Nadi | Nadi desilting and desilted | water uses and Community management and regulation |
| | Bhojokibaa p | Mr. Yakub Khan | Seed Bank and seed bank beneficiary | |
| | Ghator, Bap | Mr.Radhakishan | VHW | |
| 4 th Sep 2013 | | Mr. Laldeen Mrs Kesar devi Mrs Mumal Mr. Likhamaram Mr. Ilamdeen Mr Jamaldeen | VOPA meeting | General Project related and their experience |
| | | Mrs Moaad Khatu | Taanka beneficiary | Taanka and training on water management |
| | Jatrasar, Baap | Mrs Kesar Devi | Exposure visit | |
| | | Mrs. Kesar Devi | VOPA Meeting | |
| 5 th Sep 2013 | | Kalron office | | Documents review and dissection with project staff |
| 6 th Sep 2013 | GRAVIS sub center | | | |
| | Lakhha (Jaisalmer) | Mr. Ramesh Parihar Mr. Surndra Ratnu | Area Coordinator Community Workers | Jaisalmer project activities and day plan and General Dissection about |

| | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | | | Project and field area |
| | Kohara | SHG Meeting | Champanath SHG | |
| | | Hakimo | Tanka Beneficiary | |
| | Nimli | Mrs Eli Devi | Floor meel | |
| 7 th sep 2013 | Bhadli | Safiyat | Cow beneficiary | |
| | Bhadli | Mr. Bhai Khan, Mrs Somari devi, Mrs safiyat, Mr Ibrahim, Mr. Radhemohan, Mr satyanarayan, Mrs, Sua devi | NimbaliNadi | NimbaliNadi water uses and Community management and regulation |
| | Bhadli | with VOPA members | VOPA | For observation |

Annexure 4: Project plan and progress

| S.No. | Activity | Project Target | I year Total | II year Total | III year Total | IV year Total | V year Total | Total |
|-------|----------------------------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|-------|
| 1 | Taanka Construction | 429 | 105 | 120 | 105 | 90 | 11 | 431 |
| 2 | Khadin Construction | 360 | 90 | 102 | 90 | 78 | 12 | 372 |
| 3 | Cow Distribution | 240 | 60 | 20 | 60 | 75 | 30 | 245 |
| 4 | Horticulture Unit | 420 | 105 | 0 | 105 | 125 | 85 | 420 |
| 5 | Seed Bank | 12 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 12 |
| 6 | Fodder Bank | 6 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 6 |
| 7 | Naadi Construction | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 4 |
| 8 | Naadi Disilting | 10 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 12 |
| 9 | Paravet Training | 12 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 14 |
| 10 | Khadin Beneficiary Training | 12 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 14 |
| 11 | Taanka Beneficiary Training | 18 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 18 |
| 12 | VOPA Capacity Building Training | 6 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 8 |
| 13 | PMC Meeting | 16 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 16 |
| 14 | CPMC Meeting | 32 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 2 | 34 |
| 15 | CPMC Training | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| 16 | Exposure Visit in Adopted Areas | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| 17 | Govt Schemes awareness camps | 48 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 4 | 52 |
| 18 | Gender Awareness Camp | 48 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 5 | 53 |
| 19 | Intergeneration Awareness Camp | 48 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 6 | 54 |
| 20 | VOPA + PRI Meetings | 8 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 8 |
| 21 | Right & Entitelment Training | 4 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 5 |
| 22 | SHG Capacity Building Training | 16 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 16 |
| 23 | SHG Vocational Training | 4 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 4 |
| 24 | VHW Training | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| 25 | Medical Camp | 54 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 6 | 54 |
| 26 | International Women Day | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 4 |
| 27 | International Older People Day | 4 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| 28 | Media Workshop (Visit) | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| 29 | HorticultureBenificiary training | 18 | 5 | 0 | 3 | 8 | 2 | 18 |
| 30 | District Level Workshop | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| 31 | State Level Workshop | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| 32 | National Level Workshop | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 33 | VOPA Committee | 12 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 60 |

Annex 5: Project Management structure



Annexure 6: Details of VOPAs

| S.N. | Name of Village | Number of old age members in village | Total members in old age Organization | Total Female Members | Village Fund | Register Meeting Proceeding s (yes/no) | Financial Record (yes/no) |
|------|-----------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------|----------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | Anadasar | 164 | 11 | 4 | 6000 | Yes | Yes |
| 2 | Degavadi | 193 | 13 | 4 | 10000 | Yes | Yes |
| 3 | Sanvraganv | 135 | 11 | 5 | 3000 | Yes | Yes |
| 4 | Rawara | 215 | 9 | 4 | 20250 | Yes | Yes |
| 5 | Bhojokibaap | 149 | 9 | 3 | - | Yes | - |
| 6 | Jaitdasar | 153 | 13 | 5 | 15000 | Yes | Yes |
| 7 | Mandali | 67 | 11 | 4 | - | Yes | - |
| 8 | Ghator | 335 | 14 | 4 | 16000 | Yes | Yes |
| 9 | Bhadali | 327 | 11 | 4 | 50000 | Yes | Yes |
| 10 | Chhipasariya | 107 | 11 | 4 | 4000 | Yes | Yes |
| 11 | Kohra | 187 | 11 | 4 | 4500 | Yes | Yes |
| 12 | Nimbali | 258 | 11 | 4 | 6000 | Yes | Yes |

Annexure 7: Visit to Taanka beneficiary

Name: Mraada

Age: 75 years

Family: 7(Son, daughter in law, 4 grandchildren and herself)

Livestock: 1 goat

Village: Jatrasar(Phalodi block, Jodhpur district)

Religion: Muslim (Minoroty)

Intervention: Construction of Taanka

While sharing her story, Muraada burst into tears and said, "Life is like a rising sun. Everybody bows a head when it is juvenile, whereas setting sun is not of much importance for them. During hard times, my own son started misbehaving with me as I was of no use for the family". She used to remain very upset and depressed because of the treatment she got from her son.

Muraada is a widow with a family including a son, daughter in law and four grandchildren. Earlier her son was bearing the responsibility of the family. He was working as unskilled labourer in a mine. As the family size increased, it became difficult for them to survive on his meager earning. Therefore her daughter in law also joined the labour-work with her husband. Despite the challenges of her old age, she managed to take care of her grandchildren. What burdened her was the compulsion to fetch water a distance of 1 ½ Km daily, being the only non-working adult in the house.

In MARCH 20010, a 10*10 feet dimension Taanka was constructed in the compound of her house for collecting the rainwater. The catchment was technically well designed for harvesting the rains. The mouth of the Taanka was big enough to draw water with a bucket. It was also covered with a lid to avoid unwanted material entering into it. A silt catcher was also constructed to avoid silt. During the evaluation, the Taanka was filled up to the drain as it had just rained.

According to her, she gets water for almost whle year as they use this water mainly for drinking and kitchen. For other uses, she still travels to fetch water, but that happens mainly during summer months of April to June. The water is rain harvested and is not saline because of which she feels that family has less stomach problems that before. Because of the taanka, she has some more time to take proper rest at this old age and taking care of grandchildren has become much easier. Her family has access to good water and her son and daughter in law are relieved from the burden of their children's care. They go to earn the bread without any mental tension. She began to be treated like an asset instead of liability due to her contribution to the family's existence and survival. She was happy to possess taanka and water at her door step.

Annexure 8: Details of khadin

| S.N. | VILLAGE | NO. OF HHS BENEFITES | LENGTH OF KHADIN BUND CONSTRUCTION (IN FEET) | INCREASE IN AREA UNDER CALTIVATION (IN BIGHA) |
|--------------|--------------|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Bhojokibaap | 36 | 23400 | 1080 |
| 2 | Degavadi | 09 | 6300 | 270 |
| 3 | Ghator | 84 | 54600 | 2100 |
| 4 | Anadasar | 34 | 22100 | 1020 |
| 5 | Jaitdasar | 37 | 24050 | 925 |
| 6 | Rawara | 39 | 25350 | 975 |
| 7 | Sanvraganv | 03 | 2100 | 75 |
| 8 | Mandali | 08 | 5200 | 210 |
| 9 | Chhipasariya | 16 | 10400 | 400 |
| 10 | Bhadali | 38 | 24700 | 950 |
| 11 | Kohra | 33 | 22440 | 825 |
| 12 | Nimbali | 35 | 23800 | 875 |
| TOTAL | | 372 | 244440 | 9705 |

Annexure 9: Case study of khadin

Name :Kamu lal
Age :73years
Village : Rawra , Bap (Phalaudi block, Jodhpur district)
Religion/caste :Megwal (SC)
Intervention : Khadin

Kamu Lal lives in Rawra village of Jodhpur district. Seventy-three year-old Kamu Lal is living in the village with his three sons and a widowed daughter in law. His one son died in a road accident but his widow and her three daughters are still living with him on his 50-beghas of land.

Kamu lal recalled that before the khadin was constructed, it was impossible to produce crops. He was not able to cultivate even five bigha of his total land available. Instead, in order to make a living he had to work as a laborer. Kamu lal's khadin was constructed in 2010 in POC project. That same year there was enough rainfall during the monsoon which filled khadin low area with water. Kamu lal took advantage of this and cultivated the area where soil could retain moisture because of khadin bund. After two months it rained again and he grew jwar and gwar in 40-bighas of land. After cultivation by tractor, he got 300 Kg bajra, 150 Kg gwar as well as fodder for his livestock for the whole year. In 2011 rain was very scarce (according to him it was four *angals* rainfall i.e. about 2 inch, which is very low and generally people can not have crop until it rains up to 12 *angals*). With the limited rainfall, he could harvest 800 Kg Gwar and fodder worth Rs. 25000. According to him, because of the slooze gate, he could discard extra water from spillways, which is helpful to protect crops. He has planted thorny shrubs and Ker wood so that soil from the khadin does not erode. Although there were plants on the khadin bund, they were not sufficient enough provide good strength to the bund.

As a result of the khadin and increased income from sale of crops, he purchased two cows from which he takes six litres milk every day and has three additional calves. He said, that he has been able to come out of his harsh period and they are leading a good life.

Annexure 10: Case study of horticulture unit

Name : Amtu Khatu
Age : 60 years
Family : 14 (Husband, 3 son, 3 daughter in law, 6 grand children and herself)
Livestock : 2 Cows
Village : Anadhasar , Bap (Phalaudi block, Jodhpur district)
Religion : Muslim (minority)
Intervention : Horticulture and Cows

Introduction

The village mainly has Muslim population. Villagers have not adopted any population control measures. Most of the people have more than 5 children. The older people are mainly illiterate and almost all the boys are going to school. The children go to both Government school and *Madarsa* (religious school). The village is poor and due to less rainfall this year's harvest is lost.

Amtu lives very near to GLR (ground level reservoir), the government water source so she has no problem to provide water for her household needs. The condition of her household is very poor.

Process of intervention

The village committee selected Amtu as beneficiary for home gardens. When she was asked why he got selected he said that it was because she is old and poor, she has easy access to water and also because she had asked for the home garden.

Plants

Four kinds plants were provided to her, totaling 16 plants.

| | |
|-------------|---|
| Gunda | 6 |
| Pomegranate | 4 |
| Jujube | 4 |
| Lemon | 2 |

Taking care of the home garden

Watering the garden was not a problem for Amtu as there was an overhead tank and its overflow was coming to the field where his garden is located. The plants were sufficiently watered. It was fenced properly with two different fences: one by wire and other with bushes. The review team had to jump over to enter into the garden. All the plants were growing well except for the lemon trees. One of the lemon trees had already died.

Knowledge on project and GRAVIS

Amtu had little knowledge of the project. She knew that a village committee for a project run for old people had selected her as beneficiary. She had no knowledge of the bigger set ups like CPMCs etc.

Other observations/remarks

The growth of the garden is good

Amtu was very positive towards her home garden and was able to get fruits from her horticulture unit. Growth of lemon trees was poor and she was not very hopeful of getting them.

The problem of termite was solved by the organization providing Eldrin (Termite resistant solution).

The beneficiaries in this village were facing one more problem of rats in the gardens, which were ruining the plants.

Annexure 11: Case study of cow beneficiary

Name: Saphiyat

Age: 70 years

Family: Living with one son out of four (three sons living separately with their families)

Land: 2.5 ha

Village: Bhadli (Jaisalmer district)

Religion: Muslim (Minority)

Intervention: Beneficiary of a cow with calf and khadin

Introduction

Saphiyat lives in a remote hamlet with her family. She has a small plot of land and regular droughts have had a great impact on the family. They are very poor and land is not sufficient to give enough food for the family. The only source of livelihood is livestock rearing and agriculture. They have 6 goats that provides the family milk only for making tea.

Intervention

Saphiyat is an active community person and has also attended meetings of VOPA. Her name was recommended by the sub-committee of the village for selecting her as the beneficiary for a cow. She was asked about the availability of land for fodder and water. Her house is ½ km away from a community well. Her son brings water from there on a bullock cart. Fodder was not a big problem but the feed was supposed to be purchased. She was given the cow with a calf in March 2010.

Impact

Saphiyat was very happy and thankful for the help the organization has provided her and her family. The cow has increased their nutritional status. They get milk fat, milk, butter, and buttermilk from the cow. Earlier they used to eat Chapatti (bread) with chillies, now they eat with buttermilk, which is more nutritious. They also get cow dung as fuel and fertilizer.

Initially the cow used to give 8 liters of milk in two milking. Now it gives 4 liters. The productivity of cows keeps on changing with its pregnancy, age of calf and feeding. The cow once got ill and was treated locally by the paravet.

Her health problems like joint pain and acidity have reduced since he received the cow. He now has two calfs, one male and one female. Within one year the second cow(the female calf) will also start producing milk.

Problems

To provide the cows with feed, the family has to spend money. At the same time they are unable to sell the milk or milk products, as it is not common in the village. They spend Rs 350 for 40 kg of feed, which lasts for almost a month.

Because of her old age, it is impossible for Saphiyat to take the animals for grazing in the fields. Her son has to spend 3-4 hours daily for cattle rearing.

In drought periods fodder also becomes a problem.

Other observations

She was also the beneficiary of khadin construction of her land.

Her understanding of the project was adequate.

Annexure 12: Details of SHGS

| S.N. | VILLAGE | NAME OF SHG | TOTAL MEMBER OP MEMBERS | TOTAL SAVING | NUMBER OF LOANS GIVEN | LINKED WITH BANK (yes/no) | BUSINESSES STARTED BY SHG MEMBER |
|------|--------------|------------------|-------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 | Jaitdasar | Mohammad | 13 | 40223 | 2 | Yes | 13 |
| 2 | Jaitdasar | Allah | 13 | 40224 | 2 | Yes | 13 |
| 3 | Jaitdasar | Allah samuh | 10 | 30086 | 1 | Yes | 3 |
| 4 | Jaitdasar | Vismilla | 10 | 30086 | 1 | Yes | 3 |
| 5 | Jaitdasar | Ruksana | 10 | 37218 | 2 | Yes | 10 |
| 6 | Jaitdasar | BholeShanker | 10 | 9780 | - | Yes | - |
| 7 | Anadasar | Akbar | 10 | 15000 | 1 | Yes | 3 |
| 8 | Anadasar | Madina | 11 | 28430 | 2 | Yes | 6 |
| 9 | Boranada | Barkhat | 11 | 23495 | 2 | Yes | 7 |
| 10 | Boranada | Makkamadina | 11 | 23495 | 2 | Yes | 7 |
| 11 | Boranada | Allah Rahamtulla | 11 | 32896 | 1 | Yes | 3 |
| 12 | Sanvragunv | Sachchiyay Mata | 12 | 35604 | 2 | Yes | 3 |
| 13 | Sanvragunv | Tulsikripa | 10 | 18250 | 1 | Yes | 6 |
| 14 | Sanvragunv | Jagdamba | 10 | 14736 | 1 | Yes | 6 |
| 15 | Sanvragunv | Karni Mata | 10 | 18200 | 2 | Yes | 3 |
| 16 | Degavadi | Rahamtulla | 11 | 31277 | 3 | Yes | 7 |
| 17 | Degavadi | Mehar | 11 | 31660 | 3 | Yes | 6 |
| 18 | Bhojokibaap | Madina | 10 | 40375 | 2 | Yes | 4 |
| 19 | Bhojokibaap | Rubiya | 10 | 37825 | 2 | Yes | 4 |
| 20 | Bhojokibaap | Sai Baba | 10 | 16880 | - | Yes | - |
| 21 | Ghator | Makkamadina | 10 | 35975 | 2 | Yes | 3 |
| 22 | Ghator | Shiv sakti | 10 | 6220 | 1 | Yes | 2 |
| 23 | Ghator | Ram Rahim | 10 | 8825 | 1 | Yes | 2 |
| 24 | Rawara | Balaji | 10 | 13365 | 1 | Yes | 3 |
| 25 | Rawara | Aaima | 10 | 13065 | 1 | Yes | 3 |
| 26 | Rawara | Akta | 10 | 13880 | 1 | Yes | 3 |
| 27 | Rawara | Tanot Mata | 16 | 30010 | 2 | Yes | 5 |
| 28 | Badheri | Gulsan | 12 | 27875 | 2 | Yes | 6 |
| 29 | Badheri | Jagdamba | 10 | 21880 | 2 | Yes | 3 |
| 30 | Nimbali | KuldeviNagneli | 16 | 45181 | 1 | Yes | 2 |
| 31 | Nimbali | Baba Ramdev | 11 | 30117 | 1 | Yes | 1 |
| 32 | Kohra | ChampaNath | 11 | 29308 | 1 | Yes | 1 |
| 33 | Kohra | Shri Sindh Baba | 11 | 29308 | 1 | Yes | 3 |
| 34 | Kohra | Tanotrai | 10 | 12315 | - | Yes | - |
| 35 | Chhipasariya | Baba Ramapeer | 11 | 23476 | 1 | Yes | - |
| 36 | Chhipasariya | Devi | 10 | 21360 | 1 | Yes | 2 |
| 37 | Mandali | Karni Mata | 13 | 48575 | 1 | Yes | 2 |
| 38 | Badheri | Laxmi | 10 | 24375 | 2 | Yes | 6 |

Annexure 13: SHG wise list of micro-businesses initiated by SHG beneficiaries

| S. No | Village | SHG | No. of income generating activities | Activities | | | | | |
|-------|----------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|------------|-----|------------|----------------|------|---------------|
| | | | | Goats | Cow | Flour mill | Sewing machine | Agri | Petty trading |
| 1 | Jaitrasar | Mohammed | 13 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | - |
| 2 | Jaitrasar | Allah | 13 | 10 | 3 | - | - | - | - |
| 3 | Jaitrasar | Allah Group | 3 | 3 | - | - | - | - | - |
| 4 | Jaitrasar | Bismillah | 3 | 1 | - | - | - | 2 | - |
| 5 | Jaitrasar | Ruksana | 10 | 2 | - | - | - | 8 | - |
| 6 | Jaitrasar | Akbar | 3 | 2 | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| 7 | Andasar | Madina | 6 | 2 | - | - | - | 4 | - |
| 8 | Boranara | Barkhat | 7 | 3 | - | - | - | 4 | - |
| 9 | Boranara | Makkamadina | 7 | 4 | - | - | - | 3 | - |
| 10 | Boranara | Allahrehmatulla | 3 | 1 | - | - | - | 3 | - |
| 11 | Sanwara | Sachchiyamata | 3 | 1 | - | - | - | 2 | - |
| 12 | Sanwara | Tulsi-kripa | 6 | - | - | - | - | 6 | - |
| 13 | Sanwara | Jagdamba | 6 | - | - | - | - | 6 | - |
| 14 | Sanwara | Karni-mata | 3 | 3 | - | - | - | - | - |
| 15 | Degawari | Rahmatula | 7 | 3 | - | 4 | - | - | - |
| 16 | Degawari | Mehar | 6 | 3 | - | 4 | - | - | - |
| 17 | Bhojon ki Baap | Madina | 4 | 2 | - | - | - | - | 2 |
| 18 | Bhojon ki Baap | Rubia | 4 | 3 | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| 19 | Ghator | Makkamadina | 3 | 3 | - | - | - | - | - |
| 20 | Ghator | Shiva-shakti | 2 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - |
| 21 | Ghator | Ramrahim | 2 | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | - |
| 22 | Ravra | Balaji | 3 | 2 | - | - | - | 1 | - |
| 23 | Ravra | Ahimsa | 3 | - | - | - | - | 3 | - |
| 24 | Ravra | Ekta | 3 | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | 1 |
| 25 | Ravra | Tanot mata | 5 | 1 | 1 | 2 | - | - | 1 |
| 26 | Bandheri | Gulsan | 6 | 5 | - | 1 | - | - | - |
| 27 | Bandheri | Jagdamba | 3 | 3 | - | - | - | - | - |
| 28 | Nimbali | Kuldevi | 2 | - | - | 1 | - | - | 1 |
| 29 | Nimbali | Babaramdev | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - |
| 30 | Kohra | Champanath | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 | - |
| 31 | Kohra | Sri-Singh Baba | 3 | 1 | - | - | - | 2 | - |
| 32 | Chipa Saria | Devi | 2 | - | - | - | - | 2 | - |
| 33 | Bhadli | Karni-mata | 2 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - |
| 34 | Bandheri | Laxmi | 6 | 1 | - | - | 3 | 2 | - |

Annexure 14: FGD with SHG members

Village-Kohra,

When we entered into Kohra village, disconnected from the main road, we saw an old woman aged around 60-62 years with her granddaughter doing the embroidery on bags; we stopped by her home and amazingly said to her, “You have such a gift of making these bags more beautiful with your embroidery work.” She looked at us and replied in her local language, “Just because of GRAVIS’ efforts, I could be able to do this again in my life and earn some money.” The smile on her face and the happiness in her eyes filled us with pride. Later on many other women from nearby came to the place and started sharing their pleasurable experiences, which they got because of the GRAVIS’ initiative.

In the field visit, it was found that livelihood of villagers are dependent only on agriculture and livestock. In the case of drought, which is a regular phenomenon in the desert area, they have only one option ‘migration’. In the summer of 2010, GRAVIS presented the concept of SHGs in Kohra village. Initially women refused the concept. They thought it was some kind of project. One of the reasons was majority of women are not allowed to come out of their home and do such activity because of the tradition of veil (purda). Also, women doubted what they can do in this old age. But after convincing, making them understand about what benefits it can provide them and asking them to give it a try; a SHG named Champanath was formed with 12 women in which deposit of Rs. 50 per month (Rs. 600 the collective amount) into a bank account from each member was decided. During the regular meeting of SHG GRAVIS’ field staff found a woman doing embroidery work on her Stoll. When she was asked; she told, “I had learnt to do it in my youth.” Other women nodded collectively and told that they too know embroidery a little bit. Then GRAVIS thought of organising a training in which they can refresh their skill. When GRAVIS organised the training, young women too showed their interest in learning and joined the training. They were taught stitching and doing embroidery on pillow covers & bags in training. When GRAVIS’ staff asked them what else they could be taught then they said, “We want to learn to do it on sewing and automatic machine and trainers should come more.” It was felt with happiness that their faces have gone pale in this age but their passion not.

After the successful completion of the training, when they started using the taught skills very well, GRAVIS linked this self help group to KRIYA (In 2005-2006, GRAVIS launched a new venture called Kriya, which has brought together under a single brand all of the income generating activities of women’s Self-Help Groups (SHGs). It helps the women to establish micro-businesses and gain access to the marketing world.) and local handlooms so that they can earn some money by their skilled labour.

When asked about their earning, one woman enthusiastically said, “Every woman of SHG usually does embroidery on three to four bags in a day and earn Rs. 100 to 125 everyday from working at home. Simultaneously we can do our chores and family caring” According to them, they are now able to earn about Rs. 3500 a month, which is quite a good amount to make their survival easier in their area.

At the time of review, they had the collective amount of rupees 3000 in their bank account. Apart from gaining the financial stability, they have felt more respect from their family members.

Annexure 15: Record of SHG member exposure visit

Village-Jaitrasar

Name-Kesar Devi

Have you ever seen or heard that an old woman of Thar desert who had never sat in a train, or gone anywhere else except than her both homes; parents' and in-laws' but went abroad by air? We admit that there is no surprise in travelling by flight for many people but it looks almost an impossible thing to the villagers of Thar desert. Here we are talking about Mrs. Kesar Devi of village Jaitrasar who is now 65 years old and enthusiastically active in VOPA's meetings. She went to Dhaka-Bangladesh by air with GRAVIS and met other women who run the self group there. She belongs to Bheel community which is a tribal community, which makes it more impossible for her to visit some other country as her community is one of the most backward communities in Rajasthan and they are deprived of many things in their life. It was difficult for GRAVIS to organize for her passport and visa because of lack of documents available, language and her illiteracy. But she managed to go with GRAVIS team and see the world as given below.

It was decided by GRAVIS to give some women of the self help groups the exposure of meeting and having experience with other self help group of Bangladesh. Initially when the concept was presented in front of some women, then they all refused it by telling that they had not even visited Jaipur in their life time so how they can go to Videsh (Foreign). Basically they all were scared and stunned, even while imagining it. GRAVIS' staff tried very hard to convince them but no one got ready. At the same a woman with less fear was noticed, whose name was Kesar Devi. On the basis of facial observation, GRAVIS' staff called her close and asked, "Will you go with us on an international trip? Don't worry about yourself or your home, everything will remain fine. You will learn something. You will see other women of another country working in self help group as you are working here. Only seven days, seven days and you will be back to your home safely." She was getting excited and scared at the same time. She refused once again. GRAVIS' staff told her that Mrs. Shashi Tyagi, Secretary of GRAVIS and other woman too will go with her and she will return with very beautiful memories in her heart after 7 days. After looking silently at the faces of staff for a minute, she nodded in agreement.

After her getting ready, there came some problems. Villagers started teasing Kesar Devi and laughing at her. GRAVIS' staff had to ensure it time to time that she had not taken her step back. When it came to arrange the passport and visa for her, GRAVIS had to travel many times between Jodhpur and Jaipur. In passport office and police verification, everyone asked many questions about her motive to go to another country just on a tour as they too did not believe that she can go to another country. Somehow, after a long struggle, GRAVIS successfully got her passport and visa. Gravis told Kesar Devi about it and told the scheduled date on which the tickets were booked. But she started panicking and replied that she will not go. GRAVIS got shocked and asked her, "Why so? You were ready to go, then why you are taking your step back now?" She replied, "People in her village say that aeroplanes use to crash or people die of heart attack." GRAVIS' staff told her, "These all are rumours, don't believe in them and don't pay any attention."

On the scheduled date, she caught the train with the group of GRAVIS staff from Jodhpur to Delhi and then flew to Dhaka from Delhi. She amazingly met with other women there, learnt their working and experienced the pleasurable moments of her life. Her smiles deserved to be seen by all those people who had once said that it was impossible for her to go abroad.

At the time of review, she shared her story with the team. She told that she attends the meetings of VOPA regularly and encourages other women to be a part of such welfare programme and now those eyes which had once laughed at her have changed. In the end, she went silent after narrating her story and gave us the last words of her story, "I returned with so many beautiful memories which I still keep in my heart. This will help me in strengthening women in my community. The journey has begun."