Impact Assessment Report
Corporate Social Responsibility

Organization Name: HDB Financial Services Limited

Project Name: Making Communities Water Secure by Improving Access to Safe Drinking Water and Increasing Availability of Water

Implementing partner: Seva Mandir

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

Category	Project Details
Project title:	Making communities water secure by improving access to safe drinking water and increasing availability of water.
Project duration:	November 2022 to October 2023
Major Stakeholders:	Village residents(farmers, women), NGO program team, implementation team, Panchayat officials, ASHA/Anganwadi workers, women from SHGs and HDBFS CSR team.
Location:	Udaipur and Rajsamand districts, Rajasthan
Implementation Agency:	Seva Mandir
Assessment Agency:	Give Grants

HDB Financial Services Limited (HDBFS), in partnership with Seva Mandir, implemented the "Making communities water secure by improving access to safe drinking water and increasing availability of water" project across 12 villages in Rajasthan's Udaipur and Rajsamand districts. The project successfully developed 5 rooftop water harvesting structures, contributing to long-term water security, repaired 3 check dams improving irrigation, restored 4 ponds to improve water retention. Additionally, 50 hectares of land were treated for groundwater recharge, 1 well and 4 borewells were restored, and 5 handpumps were repaired, benefiting multiple households. The project also included the construction of 5 storage tanks along with water stations to ensure reliable access to clean water. The project emphasized sustainability by strengthening 12 village institutions through capacity-building efforts, participatory water budgeting, and awareness programs, ensuring local governance structures continue managing water resources effectively.

Methodology

Sample Size:

- **60 interviews conducted with direct beneficiaries (Village residents)**
- **15 Key informant interviews conducted with Panchayat officials, ASHA/Anganwadi workers, women from SHGs, NGO program team, NGO implementation team, and HDBFS CSR team.**

Fig 1: HDBFS and Seva Mandir co-branding on a stone at Dhanwal village.

Fig 2: Village beneficiary fetching water.

Program Design

The project was designed as a community-driven initiative to enhance access to safe drinking water and improve water availability in water-scarce villages. The program focused on restoring decentralized water systems, implementing groundwater recharge measures, and strengthening local institutions to ensure long-term water security. The selection of intervention areas was based on water scarcity levels, gaps in government support, and community needs. The program adopted a holistic approach, integrating water conservation with livelihood generation, institutional strengthening, and capacity-building efforts to promote sustainability.

A **key aspect of the program design** was its strong emphasis on **community participation**, ensuring that local stakeholders were actively involved in planning, implementation, and monitoring. The project engaged **Gram Vikas Committees, SHGs, and Panchayats**, fostering local governance and ownership. Women played a significant role in awareness campaigns, groundwater recharge and water storage development, contributing to both water security and economic empowerment. Additionally, ASHA and Anganwadi workers were mobilized to advocate for water quality and hygiene practices, further aligning the program with community health priorities.

To ensure effective implementation and accountability, the program incorporated **structured monitoring mechanisms,** including **LFA tracking, quarterly field visits, and monthly M&E calls**. The use of digital tools like the Well Monitoring App facilitated real-time water tracking, supporting data-driven decision-making. Adaptive strategies were employed to address operational challenges, such as **land encroachment and electricity shortages**, with Panchayat intervention helping to resolve these issues. Additionally, exposure visits and participatory rural appraisals (PRAs) strengthened local capacity and increased community engagement in water governance.

The program also prioritized **equity and inclusion**, ensuring that marginalized groups had access to water resources and decision-making platforms. Infrastructure improvements, such as separate water structures for marginalized communities, handpump refurbishments, and the installation of water-efficient taps, were introduced to promote equitable access.

Program Delivery

This project, implemented by HDBFS in partnership with Seva Mandir, was delivered through a participatory and structured approach, ensuring improved access to safe drinking water and sustainable water management. The program witnessed significant community involvement, with **98% participation in water budgeting and management training and 97% in awareness events (Sammelans),** emphasizing capacity building and behavioral change.

Infrastructure interventions including community participation, such as **borewell restoration (68%), standpost installations (77%), and water storage tank construction (58%)** significantly improved accessibility to safe drinking water. While **groundwater recharge initiatives (52%), pond restoration (28%), and hand pump repairs (27%)** had a lower reach, they remain critical areas for future expansion.

The program effectively fostered repeated participation, reinforcing community ownership. **76% of beneficiaries engaged multiple times in well and borewell restoration, 74% in water storage tank construction, and 81% in hand pump repairs**.

Additionally, 68% of participants contributed repeatedly to groundwater recharge efforts, while 65% were involved in pond restoration, demonstrating sustained interest in long-term water conservation. **100% of surveyed participants rated all interventions as "very useful", validating the program's success in addressing both immediate and long-term water security challenges**.

The project also emphasized local governance and institutional strengthening, with SHG women playing a key role in groundwater recharge, water storage, and awareness initiatives. The Panchayat facilitated approvals and identified priority areas, ensuring smooth execution, though its direct participation in water governance training remained limited. The establishment of maintenance committees enhanced monitoring and sustainability. Community mobilization was further strengthened through ASHA and Anganwadi workers advocating for water quality, while Gram Vikas Committees aligned interventions with local needs. Despite strong execution, limited access to ICT materials was noted as a gap in training resources.

HDBFS ensured the structured implementation, aligning with its CSR priorities in natural resource management. The selection of water-scarce villages was guided by community needs and with GPS-based watershed planning, enhancing drinking water access. Branding visibility reinforced project ownership, and monitoring mechanisms.

Impact & Sustainability

The water conservation project has significantly improved water accessibility, agricultural productivity, and community well-being, benefiting approximately 5,000 people across 10 villages. A **100% of respondents reported enhanced water availability, impacting both household use and livelihoods**. Specifically, **97% gained better access to clean drinking water, 62% observed increased water availability for irrigation, and 78% noted improved water access for livestock, demonstrating a holistic improvement in water security.**

Beyond infrastructure development, the project has driven sustainable behavioral changes in water management. A high **98% of participants engaged in village-led water budgeting, reflecting strong community ownership**. **Additionally, 57% adopted water-efficient methods like drip irrigation** and reduced wastage, though only 10% adopted rooftop rainwater harvesting, highlighting an area for further capacity-building. Importantly, **100% of beneficiaries expressed confidence in continuing water conservation efforts post-project, indicating the effectiveness of training, capacity building, and governance structures in ensuring long-term sustainability.**

Institutional strengthening has been a key outcome, with 100% of respondents acknowledging improved village water management. The formation of water committees, integration of budgeting strategies, and increased awareness through community-led training have reinforced local governance and equitable resource allocation. Additionally, **the participation of SHG women in decision-making and water governance has enhanced community engagement and sustainability. While initial challenges included achieving consensus among community members, regular meetings and financial contributions to the Gram Vikas Fund helped overcome barriers, strengthening ownership and long-term viability.**

To sustain the impact, beneficiaries emphasized the need for continued technical training (93%), financial assistance for sustainable farming (67%), stronger water institutions (97%), and market linkages for livelihoods (72%). **With 100% of respondents recommending the project for replication in other villages, the model's scalability is evident.** Future interventions should focus on infrastructure maintenance, expanded capacity-building, and integrating real-time monitoring tools to enhance effectiveness. **The high level of participation and willingness to sustain efforts highlights the project's success in embedding long-term water security and resilience within the community.**

Fig 3: Check dam at Sakroda village.

Fig 4: Handpump repair at Dharwal village.

Introduction

HDB Financial Services Limited has partnered with Seva Mandir to support the project titled *Making Communities Water Secure by Improving Access to Safe Drinking Water and Increasing Availability of Water*. This initiative aims to enhance access to clean drinking water, improve water availability, and strengthen village institutions for the sustainable management of water resources in the identified regions.

The program objectives include:

Improve Access to Clean Drinking Water

- Restore and develop decentralized water systems, including wells, borewells, and handpumps.
- Construct storage tanks and standposts to bring water closer to households.

Increase Availability of Water

- Implement groundwater recharge initiatives, such as land development, trenching, and recharge pits.
- Repair and restore water harvesting structures, including ponds, anicuts, and roof-top rainwater harvesting systems.
- Enhance crop irrigation and livestock water availability through sustainable interventions.

Strengthen Village Institutions

- Train and empower local village groups to manage water resources sustainably.
- Conduct participatory rural meetings to assess water demand and supply.
- Organize exposure visits and awareness programs to improve water literacy and conservation practices.

This impact assessment report provides a comprehensive evaluation of the project's outcomes, analyzing its effectiveness in improving water security and fostering sustainable water resource management within the target communities.

Fig 5: Give Grants team with SHG women at Sakroda village.

Beneficiary interactions and Key Information Interviews (KIIs) were conducted in Rajasthan. Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were undertaken with the SHG Women, Panchayat Officials, ASHA/ Anganwadi Worker/ District administration, NGO Program Team, and NGO Implementation Team.

The program is in alignment with the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) outlined in the United Nations Agenda 2030.

Target 1.4
By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance.

Target 2.1
By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round.

Target 6.1
By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all.

Target 6.4
By 2030, substantially increase water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity and substantially reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity.

Target 6.8
Support and strengthen the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management.

Target 13.1
Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries.

The program also fulfills the provisions of item (iv) outlined in Schedule VII of the Companies Act, 2013.

Scope of study

Objectives

01 Evaluation of the processes employed and the quality of implementation of the project.

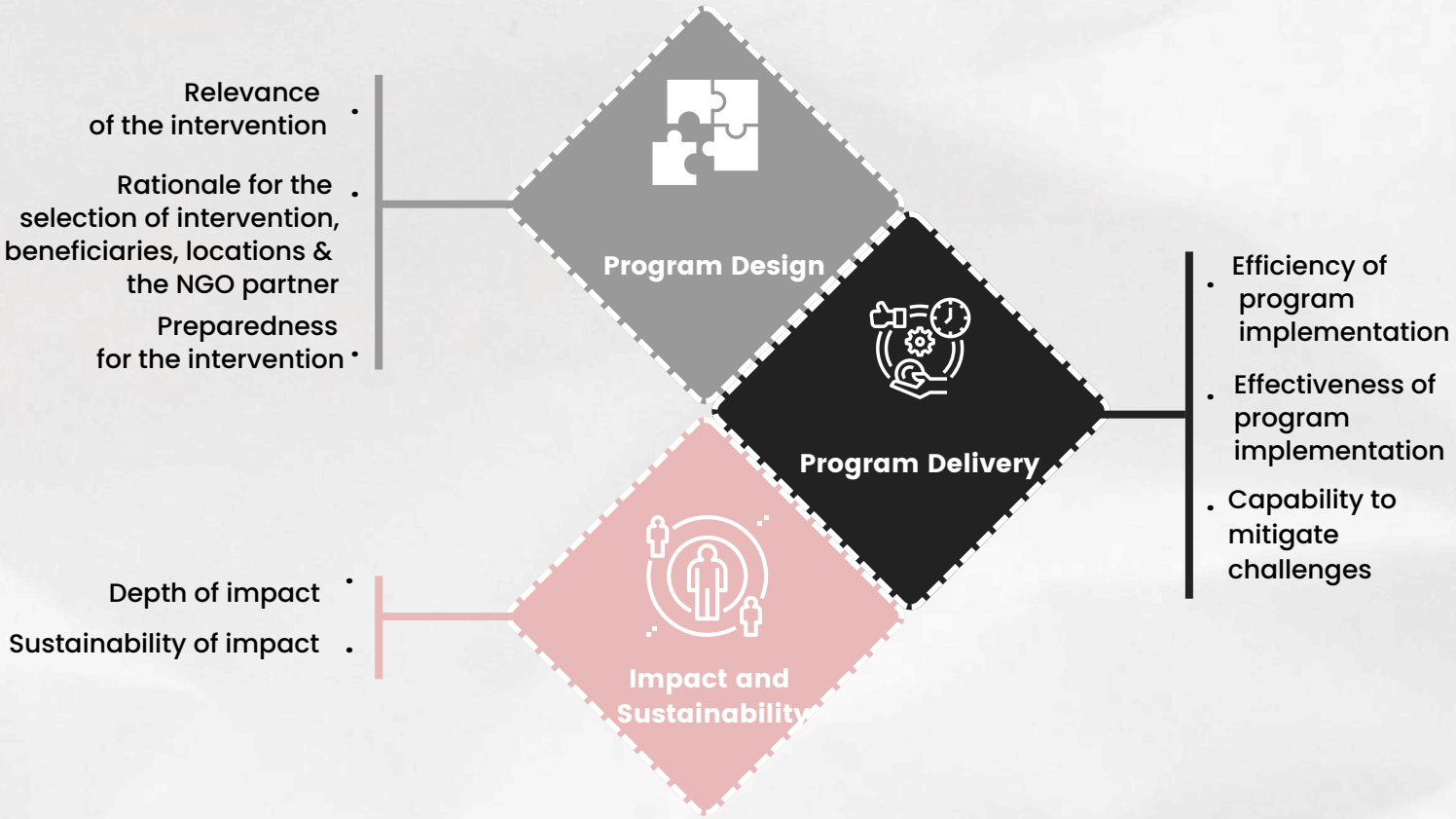
02 Documenting impact of the project on beneficiaries and other concerned stakeholders.

03 Assess the project on the goals, activities, outputs, and outcomes for achieving the overall impact.

04 Assess the project on parameters such as relevance, inclusivity, impact, and sustainability on the stakeholders of the programme.

Methodology

The three point assessment framework is used in the assessment is developed by Give Grants based on the OECD-DAC framework for impact assessment. It broadly investigates the following aspects:

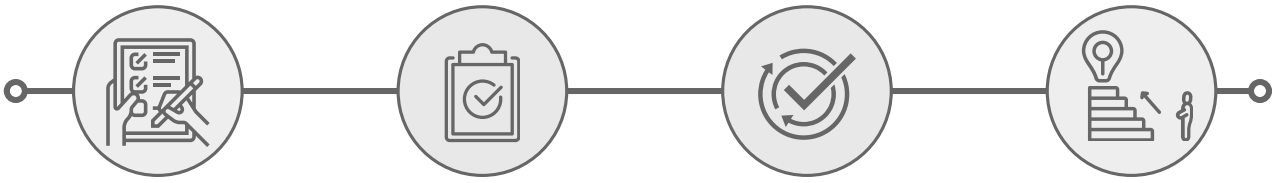


LIMITATIONS

A key limitation of the field study was the language barrier, as many community members spoke the local dialect(Marwari). Despite using translator(local SPOC), some finer nuances may have been lost in translation.

Theory of Change

The Theory of Change Framework (ToC) for the given program is illustrated below:



Input	Output	Outcome	Impact
The specific actions or processes that a program undertakes to achieve its goals and objectives.	The direct and immediate results or products of the activities undertaken.	The changes or effects that occur as a result of the outputs and activities.	The ultimate and long-term effect or result that a program or intervention aims to achieve.

Input	Output	Outcome	Impact
• Financial resource. • Technical expertise. • Community participation. • Governance and Institutional support.	• Water source restoration. • Water storage infrastructure. • Groundwater recharge & conservation. • Rainwater harvesting. • Community training & governance.	• Improved access to safe drinking water. • Increased availability of water. • Strengthened community capacity.	• Sustainable access to clean and sufficient water resources for improved health, livelihoods, and climate resilience in rural communities.

Logical Framework Analysis

A logical framework model is created against the identified ToC to reflect the identifiable indicators, means of verification, and assumptions, as given below:

	Project Summary	Indicators	Means of Verification	Assumptions
Impact	Sustainable access to clean and sufficient water resources for improved health, livelihoods, and climate resilience.	- % reduction in water scarcity - % increase in accessibility, improvement in agricultural yield.	- Baseline and end-line surveys - Project records	- Community engagement continues - Institutional support continues
Outcome	The program focuses on increasing access to clean drinking water while ensuring enhanced water availability for both domestic and agricultural use. By implementing sustainable water management practices, the program aims to improve the overall water security of communities. Additionally, it seeks to strengthen village institutions, empowering them to take an active role in governing and maintaining water resources for long-term sustainability.	- Number of restored wells, borewells, and repaired handpumps. - Number of households benefiting. - Number of water harvesting structures restored, volume of water stored, hectares treated for groundwater recharge - Number of people trained.	- Project reports - Beneficiary surveys - KIIs - Training attendance records.	- Infrastructure remains functional with community participation
Output	The program includes restoring wells, borewells, and handpumps to improve water access, alongside the installation of water storage tanks for better resource management. Efforts also focus on groundwater recharge and pond restoration, complemented by the construction of rainwater harvesting structures to enhance water conservation. Additionally, awareness and training programs are conducted to empower communities with sustainable water management practices.	- 5 wells and borewells restored, 5 handpumps repaired. - 5 storage tanks constructed. - 50 hectares treated, 4 ponds restored, 3 water harvesting structures repaired. - 5 rooftop rainwater harvesting structures built - 640 people trained, 12 village institutions formed.	- Project documentation - Field verification - Beneficiary surveys - KIIs.	- Timely execution and technical feasibility, - Adequate resources available for infrastructure - Households adopt and maintain rainwater harvesting.
Input	The program ensures financial resources for restoring water sources and storage infrastructure, along with technical expertise for implementing groundwater recharge structures. Community participation is fostered through awareness campaigns and training sessions, promoting sustainable water management and conservation.	- Number of repairs and constructions completed. - Hectares treated and structures implemented - Number of active village institutions.	- Progress reports - Site visits - Project records - Field survey - Feedback survey.	- Technical feasibility and funding availability - Community ownership of water governance continues

Sampling Strategy

75
Total sample covered

15
Key Informant Interviews

60
Beneficiaries Outreached

Key Informant Interviews

- SHG Women: 8
- Panchayat Officials: 2
- ASHA/Anganwadi Worker/ District administration: 2
- NGO Implementation Team: 1
- HDBFS CSR Team: 1
- NGO Program Team: 1

Sample Size Rationale

Purposive sampling

- The beneficiary cohort is representative of the direct interventions and includes individuals from varied socio-economic strata.
- Sample size representative of all stakeholders involved in the program.

Beneficiary Profiling

Gender bifurcation

The respondents of the study included 52% women and 48% Men. This highlights the significant involvement and impact of the initiative on women, who are traditionally primary stakeholders in household water management.

B. Age groups

37%	47%	16%
17-39 years	40-59 years	60 years and above

Majority of the respondents (47%) who participated in the survey were in the age group of (40-59 years). The involvement of beneficiaries from a broad age spectrum indicates that the project has benefited everyone. The significant representation of the other groups also underscores the broader impact of the initiative, ensuring water security for multiple generations within the targeted communities.

C. Occupation

The impact assessment study highlights the primary occupations of the sampled beneficiaries as follows:

- 85% are farmers, indicating a strong dependence on agriculture for livelihood. This reinforces the critical role of water security in sustaining agricultural productivity and rural livelihoods.
- 7% are daily wage earners, reflecting a section of the population engaged in informal labor.
- 5% are skilled/unskilled workers, representing individuals engaged in various trades and occupations.
- 3% include unemployed individuals and those working as masons, highlighting the presence of alternative sources of income within the community.

The high percentage of farmers among the beneficiaries underscores the project's significance in ensuring water availability for irrigation, and household needs.

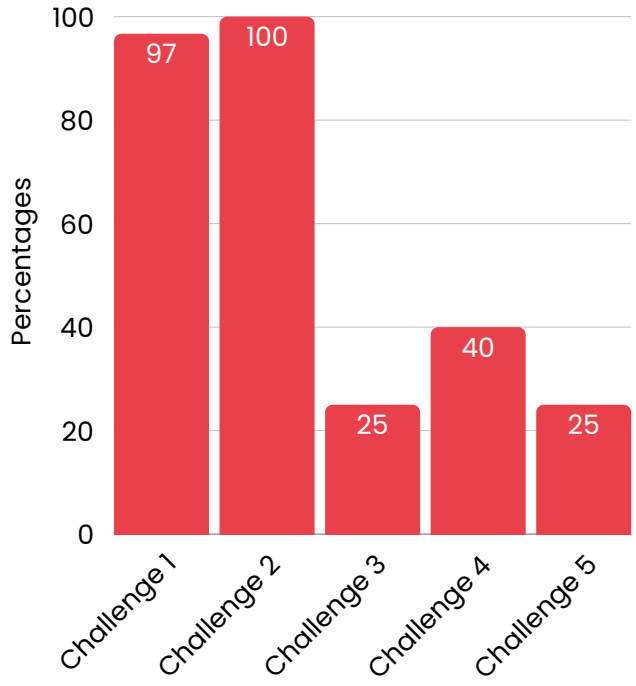
Findings & Analysis

Program Design

Strong community engagement: A key indicator of the project's relevance is the substantial community engagement observed among beneficiaries. The fact that 100% of the sampled respondents were aware of Seva Mandir and its initiatives suggests a well-established presence of the organization in the region. This level of awareness indicates that the NGO has successfully built trust and credibility among local communities over time. Such engagement is critical in ensuring the success of community-led interventions, as it fosters participation, ownership, and sustainability of the project.

Effective Grassroots Mobilization: All surveyed beneficiaries reported that they joined the project in 2021, and 100% first learned about it through village meetings conducted by the NGO/project team. This reflects an effective grassroots mobilization strategy, where information dissemination and project introduction were done through direct community engagement rather than external channels. The reliance on village meetings ensures that the project reaches those who need it most and allows for community inputs to shape implementation.

Challenges faced before the intervention



Challenge 1: Scarcity of drinking water.

Challenge 2: Poor soil moisture and soil erosion.

Challenge 3: Depleting groundwater levels.

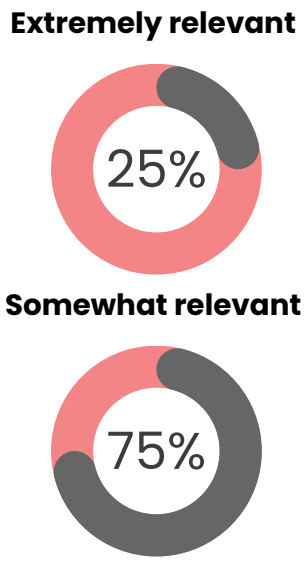
Challenge 4: Low crop yield due to water shortages.

Challenge 5: Difficulty in accessing water for household needs.

Addressing water-related challenges: The project directly tackled some of the most pressing water-related issues faced by the community. Before the intervention, 96.7% of beneficiaries struggled with drinking water scarcity, which underscores the necessity of initiatives aimed at improving access to clean water. Additionally, 100% of respondents reported poor soil moisture and soil erosion, demonstrating the direct link between land degradation and water scarcity. By implementing interventions such as well and borewell restoration, groundwater recharge, and pond restoration, the project has addressed these fundamental challenges and contributed to long-term environmental resilience.

Water availability plays a crucial role in agricultural productivity, which is the primary livelihood source for most residents in the region. The impact assessment revealed that 40% of respondents cited low crop yields due to water shortages as a key challenge prior to the project. This highlights the direct correlation between irrigation challenges and food security. Through soil water conservation measures, restoration of water harvesting structures, and groundwater recharge initiatives, the project has aimed to improve irrigation potential, thereby enhancing agricultural productivity.

Perceived effectiveness: While the project has been impactful, the perception of its effectiveness varies among beneficiaries. 25% of respondents rated the intervention as "extremely relevant," while 75% considered it "somewhat relevant." This suggests that while the project has addressed core challenges, there is room for further enhancement. Possible areas for improvement could include expanding interventions to cover more villages, enhancing irrigation support for farmers etc.

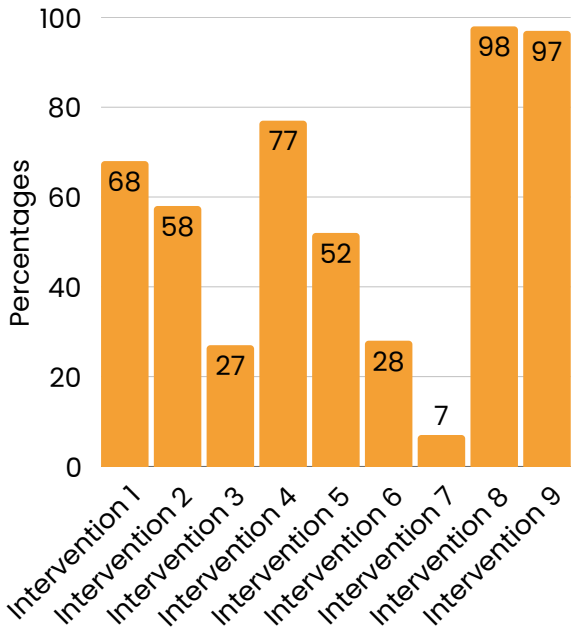


In conclusion, the water conservation project has been highly relevant to the needs of the community, effectively addressing water scarcity and agricultural challenges.

Program Delivery

The program delivery of the water conservation project titled "Making Communities Water Secure by Improving Access to Safe Drinking Water and Increasing Availability of Water", implemented by HDBFS in partnership with Seva Mandir, has been highly participatory and effective. The data from the field survey provides insights into the reach, frequency, and perceived usefulness of various interventions, demonstrating successful execution and positive community impact.

Rate of community participation in interventions under the program



Intervention 1: Well & borewell restoration.
Intervention 2: Construction of water storage tanks.
Intervention 3: Hand-pump repairs.
Intervention 4: Establishing standposts to bring water closer to homes.
Intervention 5: Grounwater recharge (check dams, trenches, recharge pits).
Intervention 6: Pond restoration.
Intervention 7:Rainwater harvesting (rooftop structures).
Intervention 8: Training programs on water budgeting and management.
Intervention 9: Awareness events (Sammelans) on water conservation.

Strong Community Participation in Key Interventions: The highest participation was seen in training programs on water budgeting and management (98%) and awareness events (Sammelans) on water conservation (97%), indicating a strong focus on capacity building and behavioral change for sustainable water management. Infrastructure-related activities, such as well and borewell restoration (68%), establishing standposts (77%), and construction of water storage tanks (58%), saw significant community engagement. These interventions directly address the region's water security concerns and enhance accessibility to safe drinking water.
Participation in groundwater recharge initiatives (52%), hand pump repairs (27%), and pond restoration (28%) suggests that while these were impactful, their reach could be expanded further to benefit a larger section of the community.

Reinforcement Through Repeated Participation: A majority of participants engaged multiple times in key activities like well and borewell restoration (76%), water storage tank construction (74%), and hand pump repairs (81%), reflecting strong community ownership. Repeated participation in groundwater recharge (68%), pond restoration (65%), and training programs (59%) highlights sustained interest and commitment to long-term water conservation.

Perceived Utility of the Program: With 100% of participants rating all interventions as "very useful", the project effectively addressed both immediate and long-term water security challenges, reinforcing its impact and community relevance.

Widespread Beneficiary Impact & Awareness: 100% of sampled beneficiaries confirmed direct benefits from the water storage solutions, highlighting the project's practical impact on water accessibility and ease of use. All respondents were aware of HDBFS's support, ensuring visibility and transparency in project implementation.

Effectiveness of Groundwater Recharge Structures: Check dams (50%) and trenches (52%) were rated as significantly improving water access, demonstrating their effectiveness in groundwater recharge. Recharge pits (33%) and restored ponds (20%) had moderate success, while rooftop rainwater harvesting (93%) showed minimal impact, indicating areas for further reinforcement.

Satisfaction & Participation in the Program: 100% of respondents were satisfied, with 25% "very satisfied", reflecting the project's positive reception. 98% attended training sessions regularly, showcasing a high level of engagement with the project team.

Capacity Building & Resource Support: 78% of beneficiaries found training extremely helpful, demonstrating its effectiveness in enhancing knowledge of water conservation and sustainable agriculture. The project significantly supported water conservation (98%) and livelihood activities (92%), indicating a holistic approach to resource management and community well-being.

Impact and Sustainability

The water conservation project has delivered tangible improvements in water accessibility, agricultural productivity, and overall well-being of the community. The project's impact is evident through significant improvements in water availability, widespread adoption of sustainable practices, and strong confidence among beneficiaries in continuing these efforts post-project.

Enhanced Water Availability: A universal 100% of respondents reported a significant improvement in water availability since the project's inception. This enhancement has benefited not only household water use but also agriculture and livestock management, directly impacting food security and livelihoods. More specifically:

- **97% of beneficiaries reported improved access to clean drinking water, addressing a fundamental health and hygiene concern.**
- **62% noted increased water availability for irrigation, underscoring the project's contribution to agricultural productivity.**
- **78% observed better water access for livestock, reinforcing its role in sustaining rural livelihoods.**

Adoption of Sustainable Water Conservation Practices: Beyond infrastructure development, the project has successfully promoted behavioral shifts towards sustainable water management. The widespread participation in village-led water budgeting (98%) is a strong indicator of community ownership and long-term sustainability. Additionally, over half of the respondents (57%) have adopted efficient water use methods, such as drip irrigation and reduced wastage, signifying a proactive approach towards conservation.

However, the low adoption of rooftop rainwater harvesting (10%) suggests a potential area for further capacity-building and infrastructure support. Encouraging greater participation in rainwater harvesting could further strengthen community resilience, particularly in drought-prone regions.

Confidence in Sustainability: A key indicator of the project's long-term impact is the 100% confidence level among beneficiaries in continuing water conservation practices even after the project ends. This highlights the effectiveness of training, capacity-building initiatives, and local governance structures established through the program. The community's active engagement in village-led water management ensures that water resources will continue to be monitored, allocated, and preserved sustainably beyond external intervention.

Scale of Improvement in Household Water Access: The extent of improvement in household water access also highlights the program's success:

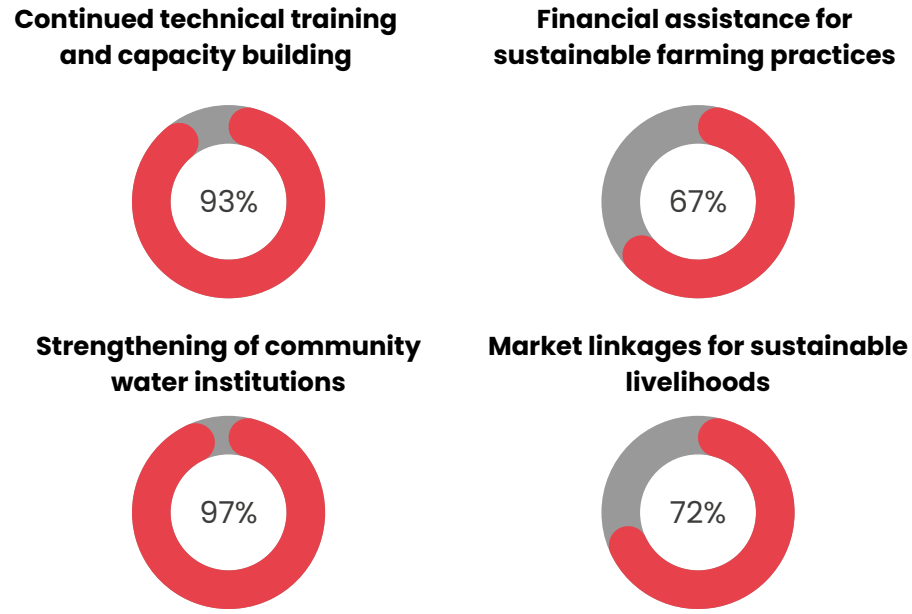
- **55% of respondents reported an improvement in water access by 26%-50%, demonstrating a substantial positive shift.**
- **40% observed an 11%-25% improvement, suggesting a moderate yet meaningful impact.**
- **Only 2% reported minimal change (1%-10%), indicating that the intervention was largely successful across the majority of participants.**
- **A small 3% experienced more than 50% improvement, suggesting that in some cases, the impact was exceptionally transformative.**

Strengthening Village Water Management Systems: With 100% of respondents agreeing that the project has contributed to better water management in their village, the initiative has clearly fostered strong institutional mechanisms for sustainable water governance. This success can be attributed to:

- The establishment and reinforcement of village water committees, ensuring decentralized decision-making.
- The integration of water budgeting strategies, allowing for equitable and efficient water distribution.
- Increased awareness and knowledge-sharing through community-led training sessions and engagement programs.

The community's continued participation in structured water conservation efforts suggests that the project has successfully embedded sustainable water management practices into local governance structures.

Areas of additional support required for beneficiaries to sustain the benefits of the project



Ensuring Long-Term Sustainability Through Capacity, Financial, and Institutional Support: To sustain the project's impact, beneficiaries emphasized the need for continued technical training (93%), financial assistance for sustainable farming (67%), strengthened community water institutions (97%), and market linkages for livelihoods (72%)—all within a proposed six-month timeline. Priorities include capacity building in water management, access to financial aid for climate-resilient agriculture, governance training for village water committees, and improved market access for farmers. By addressing these needs, the project can transition from external support to a self-sustaining, community-led water security model, ensuring long-term resilience and economic stability.

Strong Community Endorsement and Replicability: With 100% of sampled beneficiaries recommending the project to other villages, it is clear that the initiative has been highly effective and well-received. This unanimous endorsement reflects its tangible impact on water availability, agricultural productivity, and household well-being. The project's holistic approach—combining infrastructure, training, and community engagement—has created a replicable model that can be scaled to other water-scarce regions. Given the demand for continued support in technical training, financial assistance, and governance, expanding the project to new villages while strengthening long-term sustainability mechanisms will maximize its reach and effectiveness.

Minimal Challenges, Strong Community Acceptance: The project faced minimal challenges, with 97% of beneficiaries reporting no challenge. The few issues cited like trench-making in dry soil, trust-building, and community mobilization were cited by few of the respondents. The project's well-structured approach ensured high participation and ownership, though future interventions could further refine technical support and community sensitization.

Insights Gained from the Key Informant Interviews

Women SHG Members

The program successfully integrated water conservation with livelihood opportunities, institutional strengthening, and capacity building. SHG women played a key role in groundwater recharge, water storage development, and awareness initiatives. Training aligned with community priorities, enhancing participation and impact.

All planned activities, including well restoration, water tank construction, and training, were effectively executed. Skills in water budgeting and conservation were applied through wastewater reuse and trench planning using A-frame tools. Seva Mandir's support was highly accessible through regular meetings and the Gram Vikas Committee. Visible branding reinforced project ownership, and the absence of conflicts highlights strong community engagement and resource management.

The program has improved water access, governance, and sustainability. Direct household water access has reduced burdens, saved time, and enhanced irrigation for kitchen gardens. SHG women play a key role in water management, addressing wastage and advocating for better infrastructure.

Increased awareness has led to sustainable practices like water budgeting and improved storage.

Women's participation in decision-making has strengthened community engagement. While some villages still lack household water access, the program has boosted resilience, livelihoods, and long-term sustainability.

Panchayat Officials

The Panchayat played a vital role in the program's design and execution, facilitating approvals, identifying priority areas, and ensuring smooth implementation. Key interventions, such as borewell restoration, hand pump repairs, and water storage tank construction, effectively addressed water scarcity challenges. While Panchayat members received some training on water governance, participation remained limited. The establishment of maintenance committees ensured proper monitoring and sustainability. The program promoted equitable access by involving SHGs and marginalized groups in decision-making and employment opportunities.

The program has significantly improved drinking water availability, benefiting households, livestock, and agriculture. Community participation and local governance have strengthened, with active engagement in decision-making and financial contributions to the Gram Vikas Fund, ensuring long-term sustainability. However, achieving consensus among community members was initially a challenge, requiring regular meetings to facilitate discussions.

The willingness of villagers to support the initiative—both physically and financially—demonstrates strong ownership, enhancing the program's sustainability and long-term impact on water security and resource management.

ASHA/Anganwadi Worker/ District administration

The program effectively integrated local governance and community participation, with ASHA and Anganwadi workers mobilizing women and advocating for water quality. The Gram Vikas Committee aligned interventions with community needs, though limited access to ICT materials highlighted a gap in training resources. Regular meetings and Panchayat collaboration strengthened implementation.

Water security has improved through conservation awareness and rising groundwater levels, benefiting households and agriculture. Women now actively participate in decision-making. Long-term sustainability depends on infrastructure maintenance and continued community education. Addressing the need for a water treatment plant and borewell upkeep, along with replicating best practices, can further enhance impact.

Seva Mandir Program Team

The water conservation initiative was built around community-led management, engaging the Gram Vikas Committee and Panchayat to ensure effective implementation. Intervention areas were selected based on water scarcity, limited government reach, and community needs.

GPS assessments guided watershed planning and water harvesting structures, improving drinking water access and groundwater recharge.

While ICT materials were not distributed, branding was visible on infrastructure. Capacity-building at the Kaya Learning Center equipped local stakeholders for sustainable water management. The program was most effective in villages with strong institutions and active governance.

The program has improved drinking water availability, groundwater levels, and community resilience. Gram Vikas and Maintenance Committees ensure local governance and infrastructure upkeep. Long-term benefits include increased agricultural productivity and sustained water access. Impact is tracked through water availability duration in wells and agricultural output. Sustainability relies on continued community participation, regular meetings, and collaboration with local institutions.

Seva Mandir Implementation Team

The implementation team strengthened community engagement by mobilizing SHGs and Gram Vikas Committees for water security. Borewell installations and rainwater harvesting relied on active local participation, ensuring sustainability. Digital tools like the Well Monitoring App supported water tracking, but challenges like land encroachment and electricity shortages required community and Panchayat intervention. Strengthening infrastructure and expanding capacity-building can further enhance program impact.

The program has significantly improved water access, benefiting 75-80% of households across five villages.

Additionally, 60% of households have actively adopted water conservation practices such as rainwater harvesting and well maintenance, indicating a shift towards sustainable water management.

HDBFS CSR Team

The Program Design & Delivery of the water conservation initiative aligns closely with HDBFS's CSR priorities, particularly in natural resource management and sustainable development for marginalized communities. The selection of water-scarce villages was guided by the need to enhance access to safe drinking water through pipelines and standposts, ensuring direct impact at the grassroots level.

HDBFS emphasized a structured approach to implementation, relying on FES for ICT materials while ensuring branding visibility across activities. The program was designed to be community-driven, with active involvement from Gram Vikas Committees and local institutions to promote long-term sustainability. Monitoring mechanisms such as LFA tracking, quarterly field visits, and monthly M&E calls ensured accountability and milestone-based fund disbursement.

Operational challenges, such as socio-economic barriers to equitable water access, were addressed through adaptive solutions like separate water structures for marginalized groups. Mid-course corrections, including handpump refurbishments and the installation of water-efficient taps, demonstrated a responsive approach to on-ground challenges.

The integration of participatory rural appraisals (PRAs) and exposure visits further strengthened program delivery by enhancing local capacity and engagement in water governance.

The Impact & Sustainability of the water conservation program has been significant, reaching 12 villages and benefiting approximately 5,000 people. One of the most notable achievements has been the increased participation and leadership of women in water governance. Ensuring that village committee and SHG presidents are women has strengthened their role in decision-making, while direct employment opportunities within the project have further empowered them economically. Attendance records have been maintained to track and encourage women's active involvement.

For long-term sustainability, water structures have been designed to support farmers beyond the project period. Increased awareness of water conservation and management practices ensures that the community remains engaged in maintaining and utilizing these resources efficiently. Challenges such as socio-economic barriers and equitable water access have been addressed through inclusive governance mechanisms, but real-time or weekly data sharing from Seva Mandir would further enhance monitoring and evaluation.

SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS

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- Project covers multiple aspects of water security, including drinking water access, groundwater recharge, and institutional strengthening.
- Clear, measurable impacts such as restored wells, increased water storage, and community training.
- Strong emphasis on village institutions and local ownership, ensuring sustainability.
- Water budgeting, conservation training, and infrastructure restoration promote long-term impact.

WEAKNESSES

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- Continued functionality of handpumps, storage tanks, and recharge structures requires regular maintenance.
- Expanding similar interventions to more villages may require significant financial and human resources.
- While awareness programs are conducted, long-term behavioral adoption of water conservation practices is not guaranteed.

OPPORTUNITIES

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- Potential for integrating project interventions with government schemes for water conservation (e.g., Jal Jeevan Mission, MGNREGA).
- Use of smart water management systems, remote monitoring, and data-driven decision-making to enhance effectiveness.
- Encouraging local solutions and traditional knowledge can enhance water conservation efforts.

THREATS

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- Changes in rainfall patterns, prolonged droughts, or erratic monsoons may impact the effectiveness of groundwater recharge efforts.
- Village institutions need continuous capacity building to prevent mismanagement or lack of participation.
- Disputes over water usage and ownership can hinder implementation and sustainability.

Recommendations

Improve Water Security and Infrastructure

To enhance water security and ensure long-term sustainability, wells should be deepened, additional rainwater storage facilities should be constructed, and re-vegetation in grazing fields should be promoted. Strengthening maintenance mechanisms and encouraging rainwater harvesting will further support sustainable water management.

Enhance Water Quality and Access

To improve water quality and accessibility, RO systems should be installed in all water storage tanks to address high TDS levels (800) and ensure safe drinking water. Additional standposts should be set up to provide equitable access to clean water for all households. Additionally, sprinklers should be provided to promote water-efficient irrigation.

Extend Program Duration & Capacity Building

To enhance the program's impact and sustainability, the intervention period should be extended from three to five years. Technical training should be provided on site layout planning, GPS tracking, TDS measurement, and water purification methods to improve implementation efficiency. Additionally, regular awareness sessions and capacity-building workshops should be conducted to ensure active community engagement in water conservation efforts.

Annexure

Fig 6: Beneficiaries filling water in Sundercha village.

Fig 7: Give Grants team conducting beneficiary survey (village members).

Fig 8: Give Grants team conducting Key Informant Interviews with Anganwadi workers.

Fig 9: Water storage tank at Sakroda village.

Fig 10: HDBFS and Seva Mandir co-branding stone for borewell/well construction at Sundercha village.

Fig 11: Member of Give Grants in a group discussion with beneficiaries (village community).