

## Results and Proposed Activities

There are 5 result areas intended to be achieved in the life cycle of the project:

1. **Citizen are aware and mobilised on water conservation, efficient water use, bio-diversity, climate change adaptation and mitigation.**

It will be achieved through village level action plan, Sodh Yatra, Radio Program on preservation and conservation of desert ecology and conservation for building resilience. A school education program will be developed on understanding of desert ecology and bio-diversity.

2. **Improved access is developed for diverse sources of drinking water, sanitation, personal hygiene and use of clean energy at household level particularly focusing on the vulnerable section in the community.**

It will be achieved through formation and strengthening of community-based village level women collective (Jal Saheli Groups) and engagement of PRIs on water resource development using public programs.



3. **Water and ecological governance is strengthened by active participation of PRIs and community leading to enhanced financial allocation to take up local actions on management of CPRs and Climate Smart Agriculture.**

It will be promoted through capacity development of women's collectives like 'Jal Saheli Group' through cluster level 'Climate Resilience Schools' so that they can take lead role in eco-sensitive local planning, management of common property resources, water budgeting and pricing and interfacing with the gram panchayat. Village Development Plans are developed and implemented using public/govt. schemes like MGNREGA, Finance Commission recommended resources, etc.

4. **CSOs working on water and climate change develop capacities on situation analysis, community action, resource mobilization, practice diversity and accountability and skill for advocacy and policy dialogue.**

It will be achieved through capacity development on climate sensitive situation analysis, strategic planning exercises with CSOs and other stakeholders. There is provision of Small Grant Projects (SGPs) to 25 CSOs for 9 to 15 months duration (CSOs having FCRA). Each grant size would be about Rs. 7 lakh. It will be awarded after selection of applications by the committee. Each project is expected to cover about 35 villages and 7000 families.

5. **Collaborative partnership established to promote local community action, knowledge building on community adaptive practices on Climate Change concerns and increased decentralized public funding.**

To achieve this, conventions of community level water leaders will be organized covering Western Rajasthan and other parts of India for open sharing and learning. Knowledge products emerging out the actions primarily from the Sodh Yatra and annual convention of community water leaders focusing on contemporary evidences and examples of community led climate change adaptive practices.

A project advisory committee will periodically guide the project implementation. The total expected cost of the actions is 900,000 € for the period April, 2018 to March, 2023.



**Rajasthan Programme Office**  
650, Radhakrishnan Puram,  
Near Laharia Resort,  
Chopasni Pal Bypass Link Road  
Jodhpur 342 008. Rajasthan  
Tel: +91-7425858111  
Email: jodhpur\_unnati@unnati.org

**Coordinating Office**  
216, Azad Society,  
Ahmedabad 380 015. Gujarat  
Tel: +91-79-26746145, 26733296  
Fax: +91-79-26743752  
Email: psu\_unnati@unnati.org

[www.unnati.org](http://www.unnati.org)



# Marudhar Mein Jal Swavlamban

## Ensuring Water Security and Combating Desertification in Western Rajasthan



The Western Rajasthan of Thar desert region is facing challenges of soil erosion, rapid shifting of sand dunes, desertification, moisture stress, and prolonged dry spells which can be attributed to climate change. It thus has the potential of putting the agrarian economy at risk and exacerbating the problem of water and food insecurity. Western Rajasthan is part of the Thar desert falling under the arid and desert climatic zone, mostly dependent on rain-fed agriculture. Agriculture practices in Thar are showing shifting trends. Desertification is a major concern and it is making more and more lands non cultivable. This is compelling the community to shift from traditional farming practices to short term production techniques. There are signs of increasing stresses on the land and erosion of community management of natural resources particularly the nadi (small pond) and its catchments (agor), oran (community forest) and gauchar (grazing land) and other water bodies. Water intensive agriculture in desert landmass owing to Indira Gandhi Canal System has caused water logging and salinity in many places. There is increase in the intensity and frequency of heavy to very heavy rainfall events and less number of rainy days causing disaster risks and adversely affecting rain fed agriculture. The 2006 and 2016 flooding in the desert (Badmer floods) is an example of adverse impact climate change.

Dalits have been historically subjected to poor access to common services including water. They are placed lowest in the socio-economic, cultural and religious strata. Living in scattered dhans, they are physically removed from the main source of water. Women and girls end up spending a quarter of their day in meeting the minimum water needs of the family. For the poor dalit families water at home ensures accessibility to the wage market. At the time of prolonged drought, the dalit community faces increasing hardship to access water and loses its coping mechanism resulting in distressed migration abandonment of cattle and indebtedness. In every three years, two are drought periods. Access to water in the drought period can considerably de-concentrate the risks of the poor.

Scarce rainfall in the region has developed local traditional wisdom for water harvesting and management of water resources. Unfortunately, it is slowly dying out due to high dependence of single source, particularly piped drinking water and lack of community managed mechanism. There is a complete neglect in the management of common property resources (CPR), particularly traditional rain water harvesting bodies like nadis, agors, orans and gauchars. This has also adversely impacted the fragile desert ecology leading to desertification, increasing wind velocity and heat wave. As per

Rajasthan State Water Policy 2010, out of 237 water blocks in the state, 80 percent are in the dark zone. In large areas of the state, ground water is over exploited and the water table in some areas is falling down at the rate of 3 m per year. The Mukhya Mantri Jal Swavalmban Abiyan which is currently in its third phase has created and revived many water bodies invoking community level action and volunteering.

### About the Project

The Project 'Marudhara Mein Jal Swavalambhan' is supported by European Commission (April 2018 – March 2023) to enhance community action, particularly with the participation of women's groups (Jal Saheli Group) and Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) to address water security in the Thar Desert region of Western Rajasthan. The project has twin approach,

- It intensively covers 150 villages in Sindri and Patodi block covering 30,000 households.
- Through promotional activity with CSO engagement, it intends to cover additional 750 villages of 10 districts - Jodhpur, Badmer, Jaisalmer, Pali, Jalor, Bikaner, Nagor, Churu, Sikar and Jhunjhunu.

### Project Strategy

Community resilience in climaterisk agro-ecology can be best addressed with decentralised governance and active involvement of CBOs and CSOs in developing local analysis for community led action and taking up constructive role for adaptive actions like revival of CPR and efficient water use in agriculture to combat desertification.



The 10 Districts of Rajasthan to be covered in the project



District Map of Rajasthan State

### Intensive direct intervention in 150 villages

- water security and climate adaptive practices in entitlement based framework
- 30,000 households in Patodi and sindhri blocks of Barmer district

### Promotional Interventions in 750 villages through CSO collaboration

- building awareness to initiate inclusive participatory rain water harvesting, rational and hygienic water use with ecological sensitivity and access to clean energy
- 170,000 households in 10 districts

**Overall Objective:** Contribute to the enhanced adaptation and mitigation of climate change vulnerabilities in Thar Desert region of western Rajasthan

**Specific Objective:** The capacity of CSOs is enhanced, community resilience is strengthened and participation of vulnerable communities, particularly of the Dalits and women is deepened in addressing eco-system fragility and climate change concerns.

## ENHANCED ADAPTATION AND MITIGATION OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Build a Community of Local Leaders on CCA & CCM by Promoting CSOs engagement with PRIs for participation in Public Programmes

Strengthen water governance: Enhancing engagement of Panchayati Raj Institutions and Jal Saheli Groups for creation and revival of water bodies through public programs/schemes

Augment participation of vulnerable communities: Enhancing the 'agency' of Jal Saheli Groups to strengthen community managed water resources including water budgeting and pricing.