

SAMRAKSHAN TRUST ANNUAL REPORT 2002 - 2003



Samrakshan Trust
Vijeypur Subdivision,
District Sheopur
Madhya Pradesh, India

Registration number:
2872 of additional
book IV, Vol. no. 2777,
dated 19/8/1999

Head Office:
E-314, Anand Lok,
Mayur Vihar Phase-1,
New Delhi 110091 India

PART ONE THE ORGANISATION

Vision and Mission

Samrakshan in Sanskrit means protection or conservation. Our guiding principle is to find paths for humankind to live in harmony with nature. Samrakshan works for conservation of biodiversity through promotion of equitable and sustainable livelihoods for remote rural communities subsisting in or around bio diverse areas of India. Samrakshan believes that successful conservation is predicated upon participation of the community in efforts to protect and regenerate the natural resource base, such that they can share equitably in the gains accruing from such regeneration.

Forest-dependant local communities compete with wild flora and fauna in drawing sustenance resources from forests. The focus of Samrakshan's work is on engaging the communities in activities that promote efficient husbandry of locally available natural resources. Samrakshan promotes conjunctive use of available resources to raise agricultural productivity by improving the water regime, introducing sustainable irrigation and boosting soil productivity, thereby limiting the deleterious impacts of these communities upon wild habitats.

The Kuno Project

Samrakshan's field intervention is located in the villages surrounding the Kuno wildlife sanctuary in district Sheopur in the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh. Samrakshan has been working since 1999 with the tribal villages displaced from Kuno sanctuary as a consequence of the ambitious lion reintroduction programme of the Government of India. During 1999-2001, Samrakshan focused on assisting the displaced villagers in accessing rehabilitation benefits through information dissemination and intensive liaison with government agencies. From 2002 onwards, Samrakshan has been working with the villages surrounding the sanctuary on livelihood security issues, with special focus on soil and water conservation and sustainable agriculture.

The trajectory of work undertaken by Samrakshan is linked intricately to the different stages of relocation of villages from the Kuno wildlife sanctuary. By mid-2002, almost the entire population of the original villages inside Kuno sanctuary had been shifted to the relocation site by the sanctuary management, and in the face of three consecutive rain failures, the displaced villagers were struggling to maintain their grasp on an increasingly precarious farm-based livelihood. In view of the lacunae in the rehabilitation package, and the inability of the forest department to come up with a holistic and long term plan for sustainable rehabilitation of the community, Samrakshan began working directly with the community to create a model of sustainable development situated in the existing context, and in tune with the mindset and practices of the Sahariya.

Target Area and People

Our work is located in village Agraa in the Vijeypur subdivision of district Sheopur Kalan, in the state of Madhya Pradesh. The nearest town is Vijeypur (26 km), and the villages we work in are linked to Vijeypur by a fair weather road. Our work in particular targets around 20 villages (comprising nearly 1400 families, or about 7,000 people) that have been relocated from the nearby Kuno wildlife sanctuary and resettled around village Agraa, where the Samrakshan field office is located. Over 90 per cent of the population of this region consists of the Sahariya (a primitive tribal group notified as a Scheduled Tribe). We focus especially on households that have faced the most serious disruption of livelihood, and are highly dependent on common property resources and the surrounding forests.

The Sahariya tribals, who have been the prime focus of Samrakshan's interventions in this region, have historically inhabited the belt along the Rajasthan-Madhya Pradesh border. Traditionally almost completely

dependent upon forests for survival, the population of this group has declined with the decline in forest area in their range. Being forest-dependent for meeting their livelihood needs primarily through food gathering and hunting, the Sahariya have undertaken marginal agriculture to meet a part of their livelihood needs, particularly for items that cannot be directly obtained from the forest. Thus agriculture has predominantly been rain fed and precarious as far as livelihood security is concerned. It has been argued that a large proportion of the Sahariya are either first or second-generation cultivators. Over time, however, the community's dependence on agriculture has been rising with decreasing access to forest based livelihood sources.

The Samrakshan Team: Field

Syed Merajuddin: Meraj has been associated with the Kuno initiative since his days as a student in Ramjas College in the University of Delhi. From helping as a volunteer during his student days, he has now moved on to become the leader of the field-team for the Kuno initiative. From his base in village Agraa (the field center), he coordinates the soil and water conservation, sustainable livelihoods and agriculture, health, participatory rural appraisal (PRA), and media outreach activities of the organization.

Nimesh Ved: Nimesh joined the Samrakshan field team in October 2002, having given up an established corporate sector job to follow a career he found more meaningful. He now administers all the projects and puts his management skills to effective use for creating and maintaining the organization's field-level systems.

Ritesh Pandey: Ritesh has been associated with Samrakshan's Kuno project since December 2000. He has extensive previous experience of working with the Sahariya tribals of Madhya Pradesh, and brings to the field team his valuable skills of community mobilization for agriculture improvement. He also provides vital administrative support to the field office.

Prabhat Kumar: A young graduate in Instrumentation Engineering from the prestigious Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, Prabhat has joined the Samrakshan team in August 2003 to take on the challenges of making education meaningful for adivasi children in the Asha Shalas of Samrakshan. He brings to the team dynamism and a zeal to nurture the minds of young children and help them to learn to ask questions and find the answers through a meaningful process of learning.

Village-level Workers: In addition to the field team, Samrakshan also engages young people from the local community as village-level workers, who assist the organization in its projects and programmes. The extensive knowledge of these workers has often proved invaluable to the field team in making vital decisions.

The Soil and Water conservation Initiative: The two village-level workers for this initiative are Dayakishan Kushwah and Rajesh Kushwah. DK and Raju, as they are fondly called, are a daily presence at the field center of Samrakshan in village Agraa, and the team relies implicitly on them for ground level trouble-shooting for a range of problems.

The Agriculture Initiative: The village-level worker responsible for agriculture is Ramlal Adivasi, the reticent and soft-spoken but extremely intelligent young man from village Palpur. Ramlal was previously in charge of the Asha Shala at village Dehri, but has been shifted to the agriculture project since February 2002 for his vital inputs relating to community mobilization and grassroots monitoring of the agriculture project.

The Education Initiative: A dedicated team of young men handpicked from the local community runs the eight Asha schools of Samrakshan. They also help with activities like baseline data collection, monitoring of specific project activities, health initiatives and watershed and agricultural extension work among the community. This cadre is the backbone of all mobilization efforts of Samrakshan and a crucial link between the field team and the community. The members of the Asha team are:

Name of Teacher:	Name of Asha Shala:	Villages Catered to:
Naresh Jatav	Cluster 1: Badi Khajuri	Badi Khajuri
Baisram Adivasi	Cluster 2: Jakhoda	Meghpura, Jakhoda
Maniram Adivasi	Cluster 3: Silpura	Chapret, Silpura, Gorde
Srilal Kushwah	Cluster 4: Chak	Pairst Kushwah, Chak, Dangpura
Rakesh Kumar Yogi	Cluster 5: Khallai	Khallai, Chhoti Khajuri, Barrer
Kailash Chandra Adivasi	Cluster 6: Durreddi	Durreddi
Naresh Adivasi	Cluster 7: Ahirwani	Ahirwani
Santosh Kushwah	Cluster 8: Laddar	Laddar

The Samrakshan Team: Delhi

Asmita Kabra: Asmita is a founder-trustee of Samrakshan, and is engaged in planning, coordination, documentation, fundraising, networking, and advocacy aspects of the Kuno project. She is a lecturer in Economics at Delhi University, and is involved with the Kuno project in an honorary capacity, specializing in issues relating to environment and sustainable development.

Arpan Sharma: Arpan is one of the founder-trustees of Samrakshan, and works from Delhi on planning, coordination, documentation, fundraising, networking, and advocacy aspects of the Kuno project. He has been involved with the project since 1997, when he researched people's participation in the relocation of villages from Kuno sanctuary. He is involved with the Kuno project in an honorary capacity, and is presently engaged in independent research in Delhi, specializing in issues relating to environment and sustainable development. He is, at present, actively involved in setting up the Garo Hills initiative in Meghalaya.

PART TWO THE STRATEGY

The Paradigm

Samrakshan holds that the current development paradigm suffers from some inherent limitations, which dilute the focus on equitable and sustainable development and urgent alleviation of chronic poverty. Firstly, the objectives of economic development (defined in terms of alleviation of income poverty) and conservation of natural resources and biodiversity are seen as mutually exclusive and conflicting, resulting in difficult policy solutions like 'exclusionary conservation' or 'environmentally damaging development'. Secondly, growth and development are posited largely in terms of increase in income, and may have nothing to do with the need for direct improvement in the lives of the chronically poor. In this formulation, chronic poverty and the resultant erosion of fundamental human rights come to be viewed as a 'residue' or by-product of the process of development, rather than being viewed as a direct violation of the very idea of development and human rights. Thirdly, the current paradigm requires imposition of development from above, since there is nothing in the formulation of the mainstream idea of development that necessarily requires empowerment of and participation by the poor in decision-making. Indeed, increments to 'development' can theoretically be achieved even when the poor are simply passive recipients of welfare doles from the state.

In this backdrop, Samrakshan's work was initiated with the conviction that it is non-viable and unfair to force from above (in the name of conservation and sustainable development) a generalized, inappropriate and unsustainable model of resource-depleting farm-based livelihood on a community like the Sahariya of Kuno sanctuary. The isolation from the mainstream of such communities, and the severe and chronic poverty they have experienced for several generations makes it extremely difficult for them to move out of poverty by recognizing, articulating and fighting for their rights and collectively evolving an alternative development strategy that is sustainable and equitable.

Accordingly, an appropriate development paradigm for such a community should be based on:

- Reconciliation between the objectives of poverty alleviation and conservation of the natural resource base
- Focus on livelihood security of resource poor households, as opposed to growth in money income alone; and
- Emphasis on participation of the community in evolving site-specific livelihood strategies, instead of imposition from above of standardized and packaged development solutions

Therefore, intensive work needs to be done with the chronically poor towards re-creating community based institutions that would lead the process of

- (a) **Collective introspection**, which would help the community to identify and prioritize its main problems, and to pinpoint the forces pulling it into chronic poverty
- (b) **Participatory planning**, which would help the community to generate locally relevant solutions to its problems
- (c) **Training, capacity-building and exposure**, which would help the community to learn from workable best practices, and to imbibe and fine-tune the skills needed to implement these in their own context
- (d) **Implementation of community and self-help based solutions**, which would break the "culture of poverty", re-establish the faith of the people in their ability to raise themselves to a higher level of 'functioning' and 'being', and reclaim the spaces lost to them in the course of their historical marginalisation

Samrakshan's Interventions: The "Software"

Samrakshan believes that any poverty-alleviating technological intervention must be implemented through appropriate institutions that are community based and fully participatory. This is critical for allocation of scarce resources towards development of social infrastructure that generates maximum social returns, and also to keep tab on the end uses of the infrastructure so created. This is also necessary for ensuring that the resources created are managed effectively over time, and that benefit sharing is equitable and socially just. It helps to fine-tune the development strategy in line with specifics of the particular village in question, keeping in mind local conditions such as soil, rainfall, topography, forest type, landholding pattern, social structure, crop regime and so on. Samrakshan has learnt that for the alleviation of chronic poverty, it is not sufficient to provide the poor with just forward and backward linkages related to their livelihood (for instance, access to credit). Indeed, a very important input relates to linking the poor sideways with others who share their concerns, and with whom their relationship is non-exploitative and based on mutual trust.

The main institutions that Samrakshan helps to form in villages include:

Village level institutions: Samrakshan usually initiates its interventions after the formation of fully participatory village-level community based institutions, which are encouraged to own the ultimate responsibility for planning, implementation and monitoring of all collective programmes in each target village. The village institution is responsible for fixing the frequency and agenda of its meetings, the nature and scope of development activities to be undertaken, allocation of available funds between multiple needs, maintaining of accounts for these activities, dissemination of information among the community, and eventual social audit of all funds spent for the development of the village. The aim of each institution is to leverage maximum funds for the development of the village from various sources, optimize use of funds to cater to the most pressing needs of the village, and ensure equitable benefit sharing. The samiti typically engages in some small savings to enable building of a corpus fund, which can be used for financing collective or individual activities.

Samrakshan's work is based on the premise that investment in the development of appropriate institutional mechanisms is critical to the success of any initiative for alleviation of chronic poverty. This is because the phenomenon of poverty carries with itself an excess baggage in the form of a "culture of poverty". This prevents individuals affected from looking ahead and planning their activities in an effective manner in order to escape from chronic deprivation. The development of appropriate institutions or "software" is thus crucial, as these institutions can then guide and monitor collective self-help efforts without driving the poor into a dependency syndrome vis-à-vis the state or local non-government development agencies.



A village meeting in progress at night

Sub-village level institutions: Self-Help Groups or SHGs are the other key institution that Samrakshan is catalyzing the formation of. These are formed at a more disaggregated level, and are typically collective thrift and credit groups of between 10 and 20 members, usually women. It has been established through the pioneering work of organizations like Myrada that formation of self-help affinity groups, with management of credit as their major (but not their only) function, is among the most effective methods for rekindling the spirit of community action, especially among the poorest people living in remote rural areas with little or no access to the formal welfare machinery of the state. Working through SHGs helps to ensure that:

- The ownership of all development activities lies firmly with the beneficiary group, so that non-priority activities

are not undertaken and available funds are optimally utilized

- Infrastructure created through collective action is also maintained collectively
- Funds pumped into development activities benefiting individuals are circulated repeatedly among the target group through successive cycles of lending and repayment
- Funds for development activities benefiting groups (as opposed to individuals) are generated through the common fund of the SHG (consisting of savings, other dues collected from members and interest earned on credit), and by creation of linkages with formal agencies like banks and government departments

Samrakshan's Interventions: The "Hardware"

The institutions of the chronically poor need a range of support services like health, literacy, networking support, inputs for dryland agriculture, and inputs for promotion of off-farm income earning opportunities. In the course of its activities, Samrakshan found that the three main impediments to economic security of the chronically poor in the Central Indian drylands are:

- a. Poor quality and low productivity of agricultural land
- b. Lack of facilities to protect their crops from rain failure and from depredation by cattle and wild animals
- c. Lack of fodder and drinking water for livestock and cattle

For tackling these problems simultaneously and in conjunction with each other, the appropriate technological inputs or "hardware" must include:

1. **Soil and water conservation** including water-harvesting, erosion control and soil enrichment activities
2. **Adoption of a dryland cropping system** involving both annual arable crops (foodgrain, cash crops and fodder) and perennial crops, including agro-forestry.

These technologies provide a key to sustainable dryland development and employment generation, and thereby to escape from chronic poverty for communities subsisting in drought-prone spatial poverty traps. Given the dry / semi-arid agro-climatic conditions, low average rainfall and depleting forest cover of the central Indian region, overall livelihood security and food security are linked intricately with access to natural / common property resources.

Therefore, a plethora of chronic poverty-related problems can be addressed through the following initiatives:

- Improvement in water regime through rainwater harvesting using soil and water conservation techniques like field bunding, contour bunding, construction of tanks and check dams for improving soil moisture, assisting ground water recharge and increasing availability of drinking water for cattle

- Introducing protective irrigation through open wells or direct lifting from water harvesting bodies, or through other methods like drip irrigation, so as to insulate the kharif crop against erratic rainfall and to enable cultivation of the rabi crop



Men and women farmers on an exposure visit to the Agriculture College at Gwalior

- Creation of community pastureland and fuel wood plantations, as well as planting of fodder species on field bunds, to improve access to fodder and farmyard manure
- Enhancement in soil productivity and soil nutrient levels through soil conservation measures and the use of locally available biomass
- Introducing modifications in the cropping pattern and crop mix (a combination of annual arable crops and perennial crops including agro-forestry) to maximize yield given prevailing topographical and agro-climatic conditions
- Measures for protection of existing crop from cattle and wild herbivores through creation of common stone boundaries of the agricultural land of a village, to help the poor in retaining whatever crops they are able to grow in the existing conditions. This also reduces pressure on surrounding common property resources from biomass extraction for creation of temporary fences for individual fields.

PART TWO THE STRATEGY

Sustainability

The Kuno initiative of Samrakshan was formally initiated in September 1999, preceded by almost a year of baseline data collection and research on the ongoing village relocation. The sustainability of the initiative can be viewed in terms of:

Social elements: Since Samrakshan works with the community through participatory institutions and indigenous technology, it is likely to have a long-term impact stretching beyond the tenure of the organization itself. Moreover, Samrakshan invests heavily in training and capacity building of the community, so that the spread effect of its work continues to widen, and so that eventual withdrawal of the organization would not jeopardize the sustainability of the work it has initiated.

Institutional and Financial elements: Samrakshan is concentrating on creating community institutions (like Village Development Committees, Self-help groups, water users' associations and so on) that can eventually gain recognition from the state and form linkages with the financial and institutional networks of the government, resulting in long run sustainability. Moreover, the savings and credit activities of these institutions would help them to form a revolving pool of resources and assets that can continue to be used for development work within the village, without having to depend on external sources of support.

Ecological elements: Samrakshan's work is based on more efficient use of locally available resources, and on participatory regeneration of degraded land by community institutions for improved local availability of biomass, thus making for long-term ecological sustainability of the initiative.

Gender Concerns

Women are a special focus group for Samrakshan, and each livelihood intervention is designed in a gendered fashion so that women are able to articulate and address their special needs.

- Self-help groups of women are being formed to encourage small savings and credit activities to meet consumption and production needs of the poorest families in a non-exploitative manner
- The agriculture pilot project focuses especially on the training and capacity building needs of women farmers, who carry out various specialized tasks on the farm
- Self-help groups of women would also form the backbone of the emerging medicinal plants initiative
- Samrakshan's education initiative focuses especially on the literacy needs of the girl child
- Interventions designed to improve access to fuel and fodder are focused again on special needs of women, whose work burden has increased drastically due to relocation because of lower availability of wood and grass

PART THREE MAIN ACTIVITIES

Village-level Livelihood Interventions

Multi-pronged livelihood interventions are being planned and implemented in participation with villages, focusing on activities like soil and water conservation, improved cropping practices, soil nutrient enhancement, crop protection, provision of irrigation and field bunding. These activities are geared towards improving agricultural output and productivity by checking soil erosion, enhancing soil quality and soil moisture, enhancing fodder availability, reducing pressure on common property resources, increasing cropping frequency and reducing dependence on purchased inputs like fertilizers, pesticides and tractor-based ploughing.

Training and Capacity-building in Sustainable Agriculture

To introduce the tribal farmers to sustainable methods of organic farming, a pilot project has been initiated with 10 farmers selected from 10 different villages, to demonstrate techniques of sustainable dry-land agriculture using a methodology derived after careful study of similar exercises being carried out by other organizations. Under this pilot project, the selected farmers are being provided with technical and financial assistance, along with intensive training and exposure to help them transfer the agricultural methodology to their own farms. Samrakshan has provided initial funds for this initiative, but over time, the farmers are expected to generate their own savings, and form a self-help group to which they would repay this amount. The selected farmers are being trained to act as community-based trainers who would help to disseminate their farming techniques to other farmers in their own villages. They would also help to initiate other SHGs in their villages, and their farms would serve as demonstration plots. Over time, Samrakshan plans to establish a small, self-sufficient demonstration farm of its own, where cutting edge techniques of sustainable dryland agriculture would be displayed in a cost-effective manner.

Medicinal Plants Cultivation Initiative

A pilot project has been initiated for involving self help groups of tribal women in cultivation of medicinal plants for the dual purpose of augmenting family income, and reviving disappearing indigenous knowledge about the healing properties of locally available plants. Towards this end, a nursery-cum-demonstration plot has been set up at Samrakshan's field centre, which would provide training inputs as well as saplings of medicinal plants for use by interested SHGs. The focus of this initiative is on systematic cultivation of a matrix of locally available, known, useful and marketable species of medicinal plants. The aim of the initiative is first to revive local use of traditional medicines, and eventually to enhance the household income of the cultivators through sale of the medicine plants with or without further processing and value addition. Again, intensive training and capacity building are envisaged to promote this initiative among women SHG members, and among interested male farmers.

The Education Initiative

Nearly 400 tribal children attend the 8 schools run by Samrakshan in the displaced villages to provide access to primary education to children who are not covered under the state education network. The education initiative is an integral part of Samrakshan's long-run strategy of community mobilization and development of life skills, through which local communities can reclaim decision-making power to impact their own development, which they are presently marginalized from.

The challenge before Samrakshan in this poverty-ridden region is to overcome the indifference of the community to education of their children. In their struggle to cope with economic deprivation and social and political marginalization, the people tend to give greater priority to children doing domestic chores, taking care of younger siblings and earning money for the family. In such a scenario, the poor performance of the few government schools that exist in the region has added to the apathy of the community towards education, and strengthened their perception that sending their children to schools would not be of much use in breaking out of the poverty trap in the long run. In this scenario, the Samrakshan schools are striving to create a live example of education as an interactive and joyful process of learning, which would equip children with basic life skills required to cope with and overcome the challenges of chronic poverty.



Young students at an Asha school run by Samrakshan

PART FOUR IMPACT

Immediate Impact

The most obvious impact of Samrakshan's work has been in terms of securing the Kuno wildlife sanctuary for eventual translocation of a pride of the endangered Asiatic Lion from Gir National Park in Gujarat, where its last free-ranging population is found presently. Kuno sanctuary has been selected as the best potential site for lion reintroduction, but unless the livelihood security of people dependent on the sanctuary was taken care of, chances of success of lion reintroduction were remote. Our work has helped to improve the conservation potential of Kuno Wildlife Sanctuary in a socially just manner, through recreation of livelihoods in villages that have been displaced from the sanctuary. Through these activities, the sanctuary can be prepared for receiving and sustaining in a manner that precludes human-wildlife conflicts.

Additionally, sustainable practices supported by Samrakshan, like stone fencing of village agricultural land, have reduced the recurring demand for biomass (extracted from local forests) used for creating dead-fences around individual farms. Promotion of organic farming and soil and water conservation has contributed to sustainable improvement of the habitat.

Broader Impact

In order to understand the broader impact of Samrakshan's work on biodiversity conservation, it is important first to describe some of the threats faced by wild habitats in central India, the site of Samrakshan's ongoing Kuno intervention. Dry deciduous forests of central India, along with being repositories of a wide diversity of wild flora and fauna, are also home to some of the most marginalized communities in the Indian subcontinent, and perhaps even the world. For most part, these communities depend on biomass for meeting their livelihood needs, an engagement through which they compete with wild flora and fauna. The most significant challenge to conservation in about 90 per cent of wild habitats stems from sustenance use activities of local communities. Juxtaposed against commercial and so-called development activities that are increasingly threatening India's PA network, such sustenance needs are in some senses the most legitimate ones and therefore deserve priority attention. Based on such a diagnosis of conservation needs, Samrakshan evolved a strategy of effecting conservation by addressing the livelihood needs of communities living in the vicinity of bio diverse areas and accessing biomass. By helping such communities improve natural resource husbandry practices, Samrakshan's interventions create a cushion between users and the bio diversity supermarkets that surround them. If adequate buffers can be created, it is conceivable that the pressure on forests will be reduced. The work that we have been able to do so far has amply demonstrated that such buffering is possible using the approach that we have evolved.

Fighting Poverty

Samrakshan has contributed to fighting severe and chronic poverty in the region through:

- Continuous assistance for two years to around 1200 displaced families spread over 20 villages in accessing the resettlement and rehabilitation package of the government
- Successful livelihood regeneration for over 100 families in 2 villages through formulation and implementation of participatory micro-plans
- Effective drought relief in 5 villages through provision of regular wage employment during the critical summer months
- Successful demonstration of dry-land agriculture techniques in 10 villages through the agriculture pilot project

- Literacy skills in one year to over 400 tribal children enrolled in the Samrakshan schools
- Over 500 beneficiaries of the health camps held by Samrakshan in 2003

Change-making

Many identifiable changes have been brought about in the region as a result of Samrakshan's work:

Community Mobilization and Institution building

- The formation (in 5 villages) of viable community-based institutions that would assist gradually in organizing and mobilizing the village community, discussing village-level problems and finding solutions to the same in an organized manner
- Initiation of small savings and micro-credit activities in 3 villages through self help and affinity groups

Drought-Relief and Drought-proofing

Drought relief and long-term drought proofing activities were initiated during August-September 2002, through community-managed construction of soil and water conservation structures. Ten such structures have been constructed in 5 villages, which have enhanced water availability for the human population and livestock, apart from assisting in recharge of the water table.

Sustainable Livelihoods

- A multi-pronged livelihood intervention has been made in village Barrer, including soil and water conservation, improved cropping practices, soil nutrient enhancement and field bunding. These activities are expected to reduce soil erosion and improve agricultural output and productivity by nearly 2 to 3 times, along with having provided wages to the villagers during the severe drought in 2002.

- A livelihood intervention involving around 80 tribal families has been carried out in village Agraa. Construction of 11 irrigation wells was completed in July 2003 in village Agraa with a high degree of community contribution, and along with the crop protection measures initiated in this village in 2002, this is likely to enhance agricultural output in this village by 200 to 300 per cent.

- A pilot project has been established with 10 farmers selected from 10 different villages, to demonstrate techniques of sustainable dry-land agriculture using a methodology derived after careful study of similar exercises being carried out by other organizations.



Irrigation well under construction at Village Agraa

- A pilot project has been initiated for involving self help groups of tribal women in cultivation of medicinal plants for augmenting family income and reviving disappearing indigenous knowledge about the healing properties of locally available plants.

Education

Nearly 400 tribal children attend the 8 schools run by Samrakshan in the displaced villages to provide access to primary education to children who are not covered under the state education network.

Emergency Medical Support

Medicines are provided to needy individuals to supplement the state run Primary Health center, and two medical camps were held in 2003 for emergency support to the displaced villages.

PART FIVE PARTNERSHIPS

The following organisations have provided technical support to the Samrakshan field team over the past three years:

BAIF Development and Research Foundation for training in cultivation of medicinal plants

MYRADA, Chitradurga (Karnataka) for training in formation of viable community based institutions

Agriculture College, Gwalior for support with agriculture improvement activities

Samaj Pragati Sahyog, Madhya Pradesh, India (training in watershed development techniques and general guidance with community mobilisation)

Centre for Environment Education, Pune (technical support to the watershed and soil conservation programmes, and assistance with developing an environment education package)

Wildlife Trust of India (assistance with components dealing with the larger lion reintroduction programme).

Jnana Prabodhini, Pune (agricultural improvement)

Prayas, Pune (agricultural improvement)

SOPPECOM, Pune (watershed management)



Samrakshan Trust

Email: info@samrakshan.org

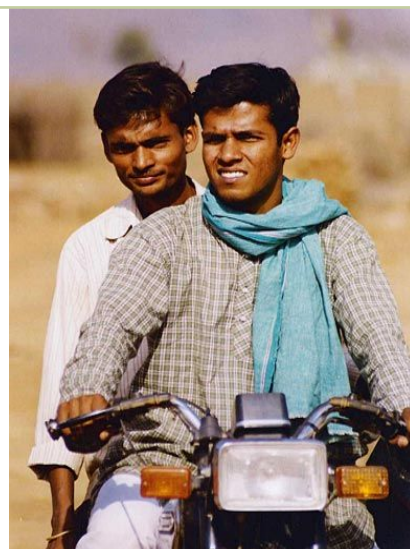
Web site: www.samrakshan.org

Field Office:

Village Agraa, Tehsil Vijeypur,
District Sheopur - 476332
Madhya Pradesh, India

Head Office:

E-314, Anand Lok, Mayur Vihar Phase-1,
New Delhi 110091, India
Tel. (011) 22795088
Fax. (011) 22751907



Samrakshan team members at work