



II Edition

# Community Conference on Commons

2023





International  
Association  
for the  
Study of the  
Commons



WCW 2023 - Asia Event

# Community Conference on Commons

## Celebrating Community Stewardship

**Virtual Conference  
4th - 6th Dec, 2023**

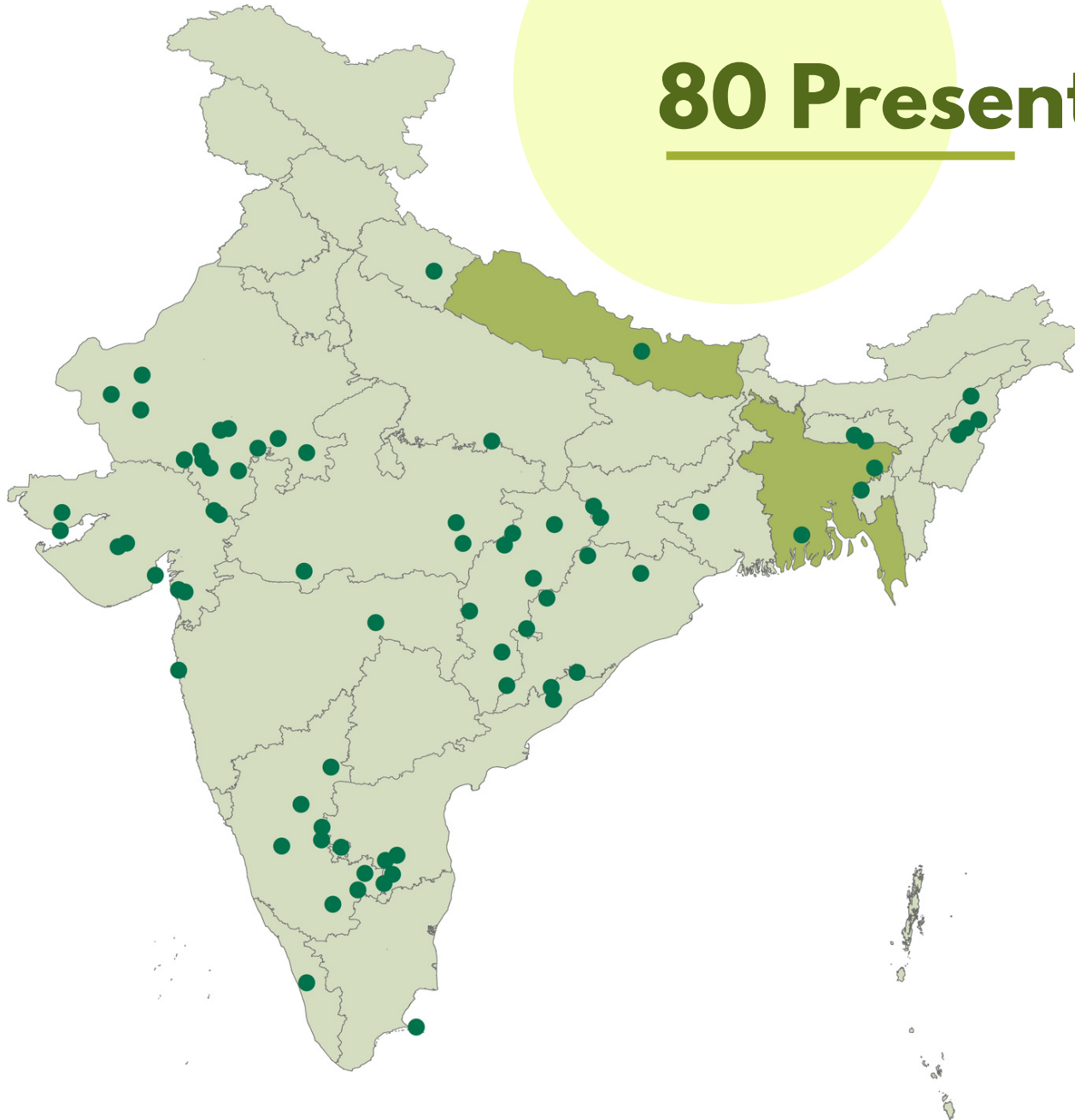
Conference Website: <https://commonsandcommunities.wordpress.com/>




On behalf of the Coalition of Partners, as part of the Promise of Commons initiative



**80 Presenters**





Commons, or shared natural resources, such as forests, rivers, pastures, groundwater, oceans, and the cultural knowledge associated with them, play a vital role in sustaining our lives. The collective human endeavour of accessing, using, managing, and preserving these shared resources has helped civilisations thrive, and continues to enrich our lives today. However, these Commons and the act of Commoning are facing a rapid decline due to various factors, with climate change exacerbating the situation. This poses serious concerns for the lives and livelihoods of vulnerable communities across the world. The relationship between communities and their practices of preserving and managing the Commons is not just of cultural significance, but also holds immense socio-economic importance. Communities across the world have collectively developed rules for the protection and governance of a range of Commons, effectively stewarding them for generations.

The diverse voices of indigenous groups, forest-dwellers, farmers, and pastoralists echo the wisdom, expertise, and deep understanding of interlinkages between resource systems and our lives. In this era of ecological crises, they are also the first responders to these challenges. Their insights have much to teach us on how we should shape our relationship with nature, while we aid their efforts to create a sustainable future in the face of climate change. It is critical now to harness their collective potential to transform the looming ‘tragedy’ threatening these Commons into the ‘promise’ they hold for our collective futures.

## Themes

- Land and Water Commons
- Commons in a Landscape
- Commons and Biodiversity
- Commons and Livelihood
- Commons and Gender
- Commons and Culture
- Commons and Food
- Struggles of Commoning



# Conference Schedule

The conference will have three parallel channels running through the morning to the evening. Participants can register to join the sessions by clicking the link given against them in the table below. After registering, the participants will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar. The deadline for registration is 1st December 2023.

Presenters will speak in the regional language of their choice. They will be supported by facilitators who will translate the discussions into Hindi or English, as and when required. The anchors will communicate in English and Hindi for the larger audience.

Channel 1 - Day 1 - 04-12-2023					
	Time	Title	Presenter	State	Facilitator
<b>Morning Session</b>  Theme: Land and Water Commons  <a href="#">Click here to register</a>	09:30 - 10:15	Welcome Address			
	10:15 - 10:30	Introduction			
	10:30 - 10:50	Collective Action for Conservation and Restoration of Pasturelands	Bherulal Dhakad	Rajasthan	Satyam OJha
	10:50 - 11:10	Seeds of Change: Cultivating Unity and Sustainability in Akdada Village	Himmat Kumar Choudhary	Rajasthan	Dimpal Kumari
	11:10 - 11:30	Sagarpali VSS Transforms Barren Hill into Lush Green Forest	Digambar Upadhyay	Odisha	Digambar Upadhyay
	11:30 - 11:50	Community Land Reclamation in Chichari Gram Panchayat	Chen Singh Uike	Madhya Pradesh	Ram Kumar Yadav
	11:50 - 12:10	<b>Discussion and Q&amp;A</b>			
<b>BREAK</b>					
<b>Afternoon Session</b>  Theme: Land and Water Commons  <a href="#">Click here to register</a>	14:00 - 14:10	Introduction			
	14:10 - 14:30	Shaping a Healthy River Ecosystem: A case study of Devagaon Village	Nanhesingh Bhavedi	Madhya Pradesh	Alok Vishnoi
	14:30 - 14:50	Restoring Hunasagatta's Traditional Kalyani Tanks	Gangadharappa H	Karnataka	Prakash Lambi
	14:50 - 15:10	Nurturing Bengaluru's Lakes: A Participatory Governance Paradigm for Sustainable Urban Resilience	Shobha	Karnataka	NA
	15:10 - 15:30	Historical Necessity & Contemporary Significance of Lakes in Sustaining Communities	Nagaraj	Karnataka	Vasudeva Murthy K
	15:30 - 15:50	Ruza Renaissance: Nurturing Agriculture in Nagaland's Arid Landscape	Vezoho Tunyi	Nagaland	Tekhe Chirah
	15:30 - 16:00	<b>Discussion and Q&amp;A</b>			

## Channel 2 - Day 1 - 04-12-2023

	Time	Title	Presenter	State	Facilitator
<b>Morning Session</b>  Theme: Struggles for Commoning  <a href="#">Click here to register</a>	09:30 - 10:15	Welcome Address			
	10:15 - 10:30	Introduction			
	10:30 - 10:50	The Story of Mahkoni Village Struggle to Protect their Forest	Rambha Bai	Chhattisgarh	Koushalya Chauhan
	10:50 - 11:10	Resilience Prevails: Totadihi's Struggle and Triumph in Forest Conservation	Duryodhan Gadmajhi	Odisha	Saswatik Tripathy
	11:10 - 11:30	Struggle of communities in asserting their rights, challenging displacement, and advocating for implementation of the Forest Rights Act	Dilharan Tekam	Chhattisgarh	Semanchal Acharya
	11:30 - 11:50	Recognition of Forest Rights: A Case Study of Bagha Community in Chhattisgarh	Prem Lal Bagh & Jagat Ram Bhag	Chhattisgarh	Reena Ramteke / Chandra Pratap Singh
	11:50 - 12:30	<b>Discussion and Q&amp;A</b>			
<b>BREAK</b>					
<b>Afternoon Session</b>  Theme: Struggles for Commoning  <a href="#">Click here to register</a>	14:00 - 14:10	Introduction			
	14:10 - 14:30	Community's Struggle for Sustainable Forest Management	Chandra Prakash Garasiya	Rajasthan	Shreya Sharma + Asha Cholaviya
	14:30 - 14:50	Struggle for Forest Governance	Narayan Jagat	Chhattisgarh	Benipuri Goswami
	14:50 - 15:10	Innovative Platform tackling CFR related concerns spanning 400sq. km.	Mohanan	Kerala	Vishnu T U and Tiju C Thomas
	15:10 - 15:30	Challenging Encroachment on Common Lands	Shambhulal Gurjar	Rajasthan	Satyam Ojha
	15:30 - 16:00	<b>Discussion and Q&amp;A</b>			

### Channel 3 - Day 1 - 04-12-2023

	Time	Title	Presenter	State	Facilitator
<b>Morning Session</b>  Theme: Commons and Livelihood  <a href="#">Click here to register</a>	09:30 - 10:15	Welcome Address			
	10:15 - 10:30	Introduction			
	10:30 - 10:50	Forest to Fortune: Empowering Women through Handmade Crafts	Susila Hansa	Odisha	Adikanda Biswal
	10:50 - 11:10	Glimpses from Jharkhand- Local Governance resulting to strengthening Livelihood opportunities	Joseph Xalxo	Jharkhand	Mr. Dheeraj Daniel Horo
	11:10 - 11:30	From Ecological Threat to Livelihood Savior	Rajendra Singh Koshiyari	Uttarakhand	Bhuwan Pant
	11:30 - 11:50	Community Forestry and Livelihood: A Story from Nepal	Bhimsen	Nepal	Bharati Pathak
	11:30 - 11:50	<b>Discussion and Q&amp;A</b>			
<b>BREAK</b>					
<b>Afternoon Session</b>  Theme: Commons and Livelihood  <a href="#">Click here to register</a>	14:00 - 14:10	Introduction			
	14:10 - 14:30	Cultivating Sustainability: Journey from Agriculture to Afforestation	Baalsingh Kodape and Birja Bai	Madhya Pradesh	Dinesh Washnik
	14:30 - 14:50	Revitalizing Rural Livelihoods: A Pastureland Triumph in Kalibhi-Badisari, Rajasthan	Panchu Singh	Rajasthan	Girdhari Lal Verma
	14:50 - 15:10	Resilient Transformation: Jhabla Watershed Project	Ramesh Meena	Rajasthan	Taruna Rao
	15:10 - 15:30	Seeding Success: Gogunda's Grass Seed Initiative	Kanta Garasiya	Rajasthan	Asha Cholaviya and Santoshi Joshi
	15:30 - 16:00	<b>Discussion and Q&amp;A</b>			

### Channel 1 - Day 2 - 05-12-2023

	Time	Title	Presenter	State	Facilitator
<b>Morning Session</b>  Theme: Land and Water Commons  <a href="#">Click here to register</a>	10:30 - 10:40	Introduction			
	10:40 - 11:00	The Emerging Role Models of Environment Protection – Narasimhappa and Venkataravanappa	Narashimappa	Karnataka	Ramesh
	11:00 - 11:20	Strengthening Livelihoods Through Cattle Pond Initiative on Common lands	Kumar	Karnataka	Bheemanaika.B.R.
	11:20 - 11:40	Restoring Ramajoganahalli's Traditional Kalyani Tank Systems through community effort	Chidambara Reddy	Karnataka	Bylappa B
	11:40 - 12:00	Collective Action for Usri Nala Check Dam Renovation	Reeta kushwaha	Uttar Pradesh	Mukesh Mandraha
	12:00 - 12:30	Building Community Ponds for better Water Availability	Rajkumar Wariwa	Madhya Pradesh	Mithun Bisen & Harhsal Boniwar
	12:00 - 12:30	<b>Discussion and Q&amp;A</b>			
<b>BREAK</b>					
<b>Afternoon Session</b>  Theme: Land and Water Commons  <a href="#">Click here to register</a>	14:00 - 14:10	Introduction			
	14:10 - 14:30	Empowering Commons: The Success Story of Thana Village in Rajasthan	Shankar	Rajasthan	Latika
	14:30 - 14:50	Efforts of Community Stewards of Gujarat towards management and conservation of forest for livelihood and fodder	Balvantbhai Rupabhai Padariya	Gujarat	Sanjay Dabhi
	14:50 - 15:10	Healthy Resilient Commons through community stewardship: the Story of Paylibahur	Milan singh Maravi	Madhya Pradesh	Alok Vishnoi
	15:10 - 15:30	Champakhenda's Journey: From Forest Degradation to Conservation Triumph	Tirnath Khillo	Odisha	Krutika Priyadarshni Mohanty
	15:30 - 16:00	<b>Discussion and Q&amp;A</b>			

## Channel 2 - Day 2 - 05-12-2023

	Time	Title	Presenter	State	Facilitator
<b>Morning Session</b>  Theme: Commons and Biodiversity  <a href="#">Click here to register</a>	10:30 - 10:40	Introduction			
	10:40 - 11:00	The Balancing Acts for Ecological Restoration	Kitborlang K Lyngdoh	Meghalaya	NA
	11:00 - 11:20	Converging for Better Environment, Lives and Livelihoods: The Case of MARFA	Mestarland Lyngdoh	Meghalaya	Khrawbok Thongni
	11:20 - 11:40	Khar's Conservation Effort for a Healthy Flora and Fauna	Yarmongba Ao	Nagaland	Repamongba
	11:40 - 12:00	Managing the Community Conserved areas towards restoration of biodiversity as commons by Sumi Naga tribe	Allo K Aomi	Nagaland	NA
	12:00 - 12:30	<b>Discussion and Q&amp;A</b>			
<b>BREAK</b>					
<b>Afternoon Session</b>  Theme: Commons and Biodiversity  <a href="#">Click here to register</a>	14:00 - 14:10	Introduction			
	14:10 - 14:30	Bunagaon: Towards Prosperity through CFR	Chabilal Netam	Chhattisgarh	Tulsi Netam
	14:30 - 14:50	Conserving Sundarbans: Community-Led Co-Management for Biodiversity Protection	Asaduzzaman Milon	Bangladesh	Abu Hena Mostafa Kamal
	14:50 - 15:10	Preserving Lawachara: Community-Led Biodiversity Conservation	Jonok Deb Borma	Bangladesh	Abu Hena Mostafa Kamal
	15:10 - 15:30	Empowering Communities in Bird Conservation: Bridging Traditional and Scientific Knowledge for Comprehensive Monitoring	Sevaram Mali	Rajasthan	Sujit Narwade
	15:30 - 16:00	Collective Action For Securing Rights over Oran's	Sumer Singh	Rajasthan	Dimpal Kumari
	16:00 - 16:30	<b>Discussion and Q&amp;A</b>			

### Channel 3 - Day 2 - 05-12-2023

	Time	Title	Presenter	State	Facilitator
<b>Morning Session</b>  Theme: Commons and Livelihoods  <a href="#">Click here to register</a>	10:30 - 10:40	Introduction			
	10:40 - 11:00	Restoring Gomalas for Strengthening Livestock Livelihoods	D.K Chandrashekh ar	Karnataka	H R Raju
	11:00 - 11:20	Renewing Commons: Gangamma's Revival of Chinnamanahalli's Grazing Lands	SMT Gangamma	Karnataka	Soma Kumara K
	11:20 - 11:40	A Village's Triumph in Commons Conservation and Water Security	Sangita Parchake	Maharashtra	Mohini Kamble
	11:40 - 12:00	Reviving Ganga Sani Banda Chalami: A Community's Triumph	K Thimmaraju	Andhra Pradesh	V Prasanna Latha
			<b>Discussion and Q&amp;A</b>		
<b>BREAK</b>					
<b>Afternoon Session</b>  Theme: Commons and Livelihoods  <a href="#">Click here to register</a>	14:00 - 14:10	Introduction			
	14:10 - 14:30	Bamboo Triumph: A Tale of Sustainable Transformation in Patrungi Village, Jharkhand	Marianus Tigga	Jharkhand	Mr. Dheeraj Daniel Horo
	14:30 - 14:50	Sustainable Ecosystem Restoration in the Eastern Ghats: Community-Led Strategies	Venkata Ramana	Andhra Pradesh	Saneesh
	14:50 - 15:10	Sustainable Livelihood for Indigenous People: A Case from Tripura	Ajoy Rupini & Binoy Debbarma	Tripura	Mansee Bal Barghava & Bhibhuti Debbarma
	15:10 - 15:30	Resilience in the Naga Hills: Tribal Women Street Vendors Preserving Livelihoods and Cultural Heritage	Imnayangla Jamir	Nagaland	NA
	15:30 - 16:00		<b>Discussion and Q&amp;A</b>		

### Channel 1 - Day 3 - 06-12-2023

	Time	Title	Presenter	State	Facilitator
<b>Morning Session</b>  Theme: Commons and Gender  <a href="#">Click here to register</a>	10:30 - 10:40	Introduction			
	10:40 - 11:00	Engaging Women in Grassland Conservation: a case from Gujarat	Kujan Kalotara	Gujarat	Manya Singh
	11:00 - 11:20	Guardians of the Sacred Forest: A Tale of Vigilance and Unity	Sulachana Juanga	Odisha	Saswatik Tripathy
	11:20 - 11:40	A Woman Sarpach's efforts towards Ensuring Livelihood Security	Bhawani Shankar	Rajasthan	Umesh Paliwal
	11:40 - 12:00	Anjna Markam - A Champion in Advocating for CFR	Anjna Markam	Madhya Pradesh	Keertan Baghel
	12:10 - 12:30	<b>Discussion and Q&amp;A</b>			
<b>BREAK</b>					
<b>Afternoon Session</b>  Theme: Commons and Gender  <a href="#">Click here to register</a>	14:00 - 14:20	Introduction			
	14:20 - 14:40	Empowering Women in Bhanasimal: The Saga of Shiva Shakti Farmers Society	Damor Jasiben Somabhai	Gujarat	Rinkal N Taviyad
	14:40 - 15:00	Story of Dolon Gorai: A Changemaker in Bankura, West Bengal	Dolon Gorai	West Bengal	Saran
	15:00 - 15:20	Jammulamma's journey towards becoming the 'Best Farmer'	Jamumulamma	Andhra Pradesh	Nagendra Prasad Parla (Kovel Foundation)
	15:20 - 15:40	Paving the Way: Nidiya Bai Marko's Trailblazing Leadership in Tikariya Village	Nidiya Bai Marko	Madhya Pradesh	Kailash Das Sonwani
	15:40 - 16:00	A Ward Panch's Effort towards Restoring Commons	Mewa Devi	Rajasthan	Pushpa Jha
	16:00 - 16:30	<b>Discussion and Q&amp;A</b>			

## Channel 2 - Day 3 - 06-12-2023

	Time	Title	Presenter	State	Facilitator
<b>Morning Session</b>  Theme: Commons and Biodiversity  <a href="#">Click here to register</a>	10:30 - 10:40	Introduction			
	10:40 - 11:00	A Transformative Journey- Correlation of Pasture Land and Biodiversity	Chandraveer Singh	Rajasthan	Umesh
	11:00 - 11:20	Community Efforts to Protect a Hill-top lake in Manipur	Andrew Luikang	Manipur	Ningduanguangliu R Panmei
	11:20 - 11:40	Nurturing Biodiversity: Inspiring Community-Led Conservation Initiatives	Babita Dhurwey	Madhya Pradesh	Purvika
	11:40 - 12:00	Bommadeverahalli's Green Graveyard Revival	D L Gurulingappa	Karnataka	Ramesh
	12:00 - 12:30	<b>Discussion and Q&amp;A</b>			
<b>BREAK</b>					
<b>Afternoon Session</b>  Theme: Commons and Culture  <a href="#">Click here to register</a>	14:00 - 14:20	Introduction			
	14:20 - 14:40	Cultural Performance by folk artist from Rajasthan	Artists: Kehta Kha, Roshan Kha, Bhuttu Kha, Moti Kha (Bikaner, Rajasthan)		
	14:40 - 15:00	Use of Traditional Knowledge against Lumpy Virus	Suresh Kuvadiya	Gujarat	Malaika Mathew Chawla
	15:00 - 15:20	Nurturing Unity through One Home - One Sapling	Mahesh Nadurmah	Gujarat	Avni Joshi
	15:20 - 15:40	Nagvanshi Gond Tribe's Symbiosis with Nature	Ramesh Hidame	Chhattisgarh	Rajendra Singh Netam
	15:40 - 16:00	Seed Festival: Cultural Reflections of Past and Present	Sonehondhar Nag	Chhattisgarh	Santosh Kumar Usendi
	16:00-16:20	Ramelha and its Story of Cultural Dependence	Sevak Lakda	Chhattisgarh	Shailendra Singh Rajput
	16:30 - 17:00	<b>Discussion and Q&amp;A</b>			

### Channel 3 - Day 3: 06-12-2023

	Time	Title	Presenter	State	Facilitator
<b>Morning Session</b> Theme: Commons and Food <a href="#">Click here to register</a>	10:30 - 10:50	Introduction			
	10:50 - 11:10	Women's Knowledge of Edible Plants in Reshamiya's Grassland Commons	Manjuben Mansukbhai Mori	Gujarat	Kujan Kalotra
	11:10 - 11:30	Organic Rice Revolution	Arika Radhamma	Andhra Pradesh	Ajjarapu Sireesha
	11:30 - 12:00	Empowering Railwa Village: A Tale of Community-Led Natural Farming	Damor Ramabhai Akhmabhai	gujarat	sanjay R dabhi
	12:00 - 12:20	Preservation of Cultural Food Heritage	Dasundi Pusam	Madhya Pradesh	Ram Kumar Yadav
	12:20-12:40	Community Nutrition Gardens in Commons: Enhancing Nutrition, Resilience and Financial Sustainability of Rural Women	Kalpana Kochle	Madhya Pradesh	Sadhma Khan
	12:20 - 12:50	<b>Discussion and Q&amp;A</b>			
<b>BREAK</b>					
<b>Afternoon Session</b> Theme: Struggles of Commoning <a href="#">Click here to register</a>	14:00 - 14:20	Introduction			
	14:20 - 14:40	Preserving Coastal Commons: Women's Initiatives in Ramanathapuram	Ebziba Buela	Tamil Nadu	Thisam Mahsana
	14:40 - 15:00	Preserving Pasture Paradise	Nirmal	Rajasthan	Buddha Singh
	15:00 - 15:20	Community's Endless effort to Safeguard Commons	G. Prabhakar	Andhra Pradesh	M. Rani Reddy
	15:20 - 15:40	Vrishabadhri Hill: A Struggle for Survival Against Gravel Crushers	Ramesh	Karnataka	Partha
	15:40 - 16:00	Legal Resolve and Community Resilience: Nagalapura's Grazing Land Champion	Rajesab	Karnataka	Khadar Basha
	16:00 - 16:30	<b>Discussion and Q&amp;A</b>			

# Land and Water Commons



## Bherulal Dhakad

Jainagar, Begun, Chittorgarh, Rajasthan

### Collective Action for Conservation and Restoration of Pasturelands

Bherulal Dhakad, secretary of Jai Shiv Shankar Gram Vikas Samiti in Jainagar, Rajasthan, is a key figure in safeguarding the village pasture in Begun block. Upholding traditional practices, the pasture is fenced with stone walls, fortified annually by community labor. Penalties ensure participation, and fees per animal contribute to maintenance. The gatekeeper is rewarded, and income is generated through the sale of Acacia leucophloea fruits. Bherulal actively engages the community in conservation efforts, including combatting invasive species like Lantana

Facilitator: Satyam Ojha



## Himmat Kumar Choudhary

Akdada, Baytu, Barmer, Rajasthan

### Restoring Pasture lands of Akdada Village

Akdada village, near Baytu, initiated a project to develop its 77.1543-hectare Jagdamba Mata Temple land into a pasture to ensure a sustainable source of food for the village's animals. The villagers, inspired by neighboring areas, formed a committee and collaborated to fence the land, remove thorny bushes, and sow Dhaman grass. Despite the vast area, they hope for government cooperation to expand the project, providing not only fodder but also protecting the environment. The village has decided against any grazing in the pasture this year, emphasizing collective responsibility for sustaining rural livelihoods.

Facilitator: Dimpal Kumari



## Digambar Upadhyay

Sagarpali (Mangaspur), Tangarpali, Sundargarh, Odisha

### Sagarpali VSS Transforms Barren Hill into Lush Green Forest

Sagarpali VSS, under Ujalpur Forest Range, Odisha, turned the bald Karladunguri hill into a vibrant forest in 25 years. Initiating conservation in 1956, a Forest Protection Committee formed in 1975. Thengapali and Muthidhana practices emerged, and with support from the Forest Department and NGO SEWAK, awareness programs flourished. Plantations, cattle-proof trenches, and alternative livelihoods reduced pressure on forests. OFSDP-II implementation further eased human impact, ensuring sustainable practices and empowering the community.



## Chen Singh Uike

Chargawn, Bicchiya, Mandla, Madhya Pradesh

### Community Land Reclamation in Chichari Gram Panchayat

Chichari Gram Panchayat, located close to Kanha National Park, witnessed unregulated grazing and over-harvesting of forest resources, such as firewood and tendu leaves, by the village communities and communities of adjacent villages in the common land of Gram Panchayat, until the land visibly deteriorated. Realizing this, the communities initiated and received a CFR claim on 14 hectares of commonlands through their Gram Paryavaran Samiti. They further passed a resolution outlining rules and regulations for the protection, management, and sustainable use of the resources.

Facilitator: Ram Kumar Yadav

# Land and Water Commons



## Nanhesingh Bhavedi

Devgaon, Niwas, Mandia, Madhya Pradesh

### Shaping a Healthy River Ecosystem: A Case Study of Devagaon Village

A meeting in Devgaon village some 35 years ago highlighted indiscriminate cutting of trees near Gaur River, causing soil erosion and water scarcity. To combat this, the community enforced no-tree-cutting bylaws along the river and other sustainable practices like building an earthen dam for water storage. Villagers' collective efforts led to an intervention by the irrigation department to build a bridge and stop dam with iron and cement gates, ensuring year-long water supply. This initiative significantly improved agriculture, livelihoods, and water access for nearby villages.

**Facilitator: Alok Vishnoi**



## Gangadharappa H

Hunasaghatta, Honnali, Davanagere, Karnataka

### Restoring Hunasagatta's Traditional Kalyani Tanks

The age-old Kalayani Tank in Hunasagatta, dating back to the Chola Empire, ensured water security and held cultural significance for the communities dependent on it. During Dasara and Shivaratri, communities perform rituals associated with the tank. The tank also provided drinking water. Neglected and silted over the years, the water holding capacity of the water body diminished. Realising this, the villagers leveraged resources from NREGS and Jalashakti schemes to restore it. The effort not only provided jobs but revived the cultural bond in the community and its water-holding capacity.

**Facilitator: Prakash Lambi**



## Shobha

Bengaluru, Karnataka

### Nurturing Bengaluru's Lakes: A Participatory Governance Paradigm for Sustainable Urban Resilience

. Using the Rachenahalli Lake case, it highlights "Jalmitra's" impactful participatory efforts since 2015, fostering community involvement in lake restoration. Qualitative findings stress the importance of community engagement, transparent communication, and shared decision-making in lake management. The paper advocates integrating participatory governance into urban planning, emphasising collaborative initiatives, policy support, and technology for effective lake conservation. Envisioning a future where participatory approaches are integral, it seeks the preservation and rejuvenation of Bengaluru's lakes for residents and the urban environment's well-being.



## Nagaraj

Kaltavargere, Koppal, Karnataka

### Historical Necessity & Contemporary Significance of Lakes in Sustaining Communities

Obalappa kere, nestled in Kallataverekere, in Koppal has been a vital resource for 2500+ cattle and diverse livestock, spanning goats and sheep, supporting neighboring villagers. This expansive 100-acre lake, crafted for agricultural and livestock water security, additionally sustains regional wildlife—leopards, deer's, and bears. Community efforts under MGNREGS revitalized the lake, enhancing its utility for locals and biodiversity. Today, it thrives as a crucial hub for diverse needs, fostering a rejuvenated ecological landscape.

**Facilitator: Vasudeva Murthy K**



## Vezoho Tunyi

Kikruma, Kikruma, Phek, Nagaland

### Ruza Renaissance: Nurturing Agriculture in Nagaland's Arid Landscape

Kikruma, a village in Nagaland with limited rainfall, tackles water scarcity using the Ruza system. Developed over a century, Ruza involves creating large ponds to collect run-off water, providing gravity-based irrigation. Communal and integrated, it incorporates forestry, horticulture, agriculture, fishery, and animal husbandry. Known as the Zabo system, Ruza is a sustainable water management practice applicable to steep terrains with scarce rainfall. The presentation will delve into the origin, details, and benefits of this indigenous irrigation approach. It will also highlight how communities have used this traditional system to deal with climatic variations.

**Facilitator: Tekhe Chirah**

# Land and Water Commons



## Narashimappa

S Gollahalli, Sidlaghatta, Chikkaballapura, Karnataka

### The Emerging Role Models of Environment Protection – Narasimhappa and Venkataravanappa

Narasimhappa and Venkataravanappa, lead the conservation of land and water resources of S Gollahalli village in Karnataka. They thwarted encroachment on collective properties, preserving 220 acres of grazing land, and 3 lakes. In 2012, they established S Gollahalli Gramam Bhivridhi Sangh, forming a village development association. Collaborating with Foundation for Ecological Security, they planted 5,000 saplings. They also overcame resistance to implement the NREGA scheme, completing a connecting canal, improving the lake, and enhancing water availability for agriculture, contributing to the village's prosperity.

**Facilitator: Ramesh**



## Kumar

Thyluru, Maddur, Mandya, Karnataka

### Strengthening Livestock through Cattle Pond Initiative on Common Lands

Thyluru faces frequent water shortages. The predominant livelihood in the village is livestock rearing. Over the years, it became difficult for communities to get water for their livestock. Kumar convinced his community and leveraged funds from MGNREGS and other sources to build cattle pond in common lands for ensuring clean drinking water in Thailuru. This effort rallied several villagers who offered their labour and resources towards this initiative. Their efforts also received support from local NGOs.

**Facilitator: Bheemanika.B.R.**



## Chidambara Reddy

Ranmajogihalli, Challakere, Chitradurga, Karnataka

### Restoring Ramajoganahalli's Traditional Kalyani Tank through community effort

Ramajoganahalli's ancient lakes suffered neglect over the years, impacting water supply. Through MGNREGS, locals revived the lake. Desiltation of the lake was carried out, as well as other restoration activities. The efforts have yielded better water storage, improvement in groundwater levels, and better water availability.

**Facilitator: Bylappa B**



## Reeta Kushwaha

Bargarh, Mau, Chitrakoot, Uttar Pradesh

### Collective Action For Usri Nala Check Dam Renovation

Bargarh village of Chitrakoot district faced water scarcity worsened by erratic rainfall and soil erosion. A community collective decision to revive existing check dam lying despairingly proved fruitful. It led to groundwater recharge and improved water availability for agriculture, crop yield, and livelihoods and addressed soil erosion resulting in positive environmental impacts. The potential of community collectiveness to garner sustainable solutions for water resource management and agricultural development is immense and is demonstrated through such endeavours.

**Facilitator: Mukesh Mandraha**



## Rajkumar Wariwa

Bagaspur, Bicchiya, Mandla, Madhya Pradesh

### Building Community Ponds for better Water Availability

Rajkumar Variya, residing in Bagaspur, Mandla District, holds the role of Secretary in the Village Environment Committee. Facing water challenges, Foundation for Ecological Security organization facilitated the committee's formation in 2014. In response, villagers, including Rajkumar Variya, offered land for a community-owned pond, addressing water access issues. This pond, established for bathing, washing, and livestock water supply, adheres to rules set in 2014. Rajkumar Variya, contributing half an acre, also took charge of fish farming, maintaining the pond's sustainability and community usage.

**Facilitator: Mithun Bisen & Harshal Boniwar**

# Land and Water Commons



## Balvantbhai Rupabhai Padariya

Siyal, Kadana, Mahisagar, Gujarat

### Efforts of Community Stewards of Gujarat towards management and conservation of forest for livelihood and fodder

Siyal village's community-led initiative for environmental sustainability and responsible forest management is commendable. They set up rules for forest protection, particularly regarding cattle grazing, reflects a proactive approach to preserving the delicate balance of the ecosystem. The experiment with planting new tree species in the forest landscape demonstrates a commitment to understand the limiting factors in the ecosystem. The decision of the Village Institution (VI) to build natural fencing around plantation plots is a strategic move. Setting rules for distributing fodder plots ensures that the benefits are shared equitably among the villagers.

Facilitator: Sanjay Dabhi



## Shankar

Thana, Bhilwara, Rajasthan

### Empowering Commons: The Success Story of Thana Village in Rajasthan

Thana, a village in Rajasthan's Bhilwara District, faced challenges in securing its pastureland. The Village Institution, formed in 2006, resolved issues of building protective structures with community contributions. Facing skepticism, the institution demonstrated trust by transparently paying for labor and generating livelihood through it. With regular efforts, they successfully secured land. Thana's pastureland governance model garnered national recognition. In 2022, they received the Mewar Ratan for outstanding work in Commons development. Key members actively share Thana's success across villages, contributing to broader awareness and learning.

Facilitator: Latika



## Milan Singh Maravi

Payli Bahur, Niwas, Mandla, Madhya Pradesh

### Healthy Resilient Commons through community stewardship: the story of Paylibahur

The transformation of the forest and common lands in Paylibahur over the past 30 years is a testament to the power of community-led conservation efforts. The initial degradation and subsequent revival of the forest through collective decisions and enforcement of rules highlight the villagers' commitment to sustainability. Some relaxation of rules led to unsustainable practices, which demonstrated the ongoing need for consistent monitoring and enforcement by the community itself. The continued dedication of the villagers towards maintaining and nurturing their shared resources reflects the importance of sustainable practices for both the community's livelihood and conservation.

Facilitator: Alok Vishnoi



## Tirnath Khillo

Champakhenda, Koraput, Odisha

### Champakhenda's Journey: From Forest Degradation to Conservation Triumph

Champakhenda village, facing forest degradation, restored it through collective effort. Though the Community Forest Rights (CFR) process began much earlier, they received CFR title over 185.50 acres of forest land in 2019. Strict regulations prohibit hunting and unauthorized activities, and communities undertake planting of native species to improve biodiversity. They also started getting additional incomes through the sale of non-timber forest products (NTFPs). Recognized as a model, they received the Prakruti Mitra award in 2023, symbolizing their journey from resource depletion to sustainable conservation success.

Facilitator: Krutika Priyadarshni Mohanty

# Commons and Biodiversity



## Kitborlang K Lyngdoh

Mawkasain, Mawsynram, East Khasi hills, Meghalaya

### Balancing Acts for Ecological Restoration

Meghalaya's agrarian economy, historically dominated by a substantial commercial forestry sector, witnessed a decline in forest cover due to the prevalent jhum cultivation. In 2019, amid the global Covid-19 pandemic, the community came together to fight environmental damage in local areas, where rivers, streams, and springs suffered effective pollution. The community decided to restore the area's natural glory, restoring barren landscapes. They also worked diligently to stop animal poaching, which saw a rise during the pandemic.



## Mestarland Lyngdoh

Mawkyrwat, Mawkyrwat, South West Khasi Hills District, Meghalaya

### Converging for better environment, lives and livelihoods: the case of MARFA

This is the story of MARFA - a fishing association founded by communities in the South West Khasi Hills District - that started with the aim of coordinating with various villages and other actors for the conservation of aquatic as well as terrestrial life, along with the well-being of the community. With cohesive and persistent efforts, the institution has been successful in ensuring naming of a Commons pond as a Fish Sancturay, with the district department and other institutions supporting their efforts in various capacities.

**Facilitator: Khrabok Thogni**



## Yarmongba Ao

Khar, Mangkolemba, Mokokchung, Nagaland

### Khar's conservation effort for a healthy flora and fauna

Khar village, situated in Nagaland's Mangkolemba Circle, employs a unique natural resource management system, dividing land into ten plots with regulated access to prevent depletion. Conservation initiatives include a designated forest reserve, a ban on hunting, and strict penalties for violations. The Community Conservation Area (CCA) is expanding, prohibiting coal mining and cultivation. Special announcements and youth volunteers enforce regulations, driven in part by the aim to reduce human-elephant conflicts. These efforts have resulted in increased wildlife populations, improved water availability, and a more favorable micro-climate.

**Facilitator: Repamongba**



## Allo K Aomi

Tsutoho Village, Satoi, Zunheboto, Nagaland

### Managing the Community Conserved Areas Towards Restoration of Biodiversity as Commons by Sumi Naga Tribe

The Sumi Naga tribe of Tsutoho village have shown an exemplary achievement in grassroots biodiversity protection through the creation of reserved places within the community conserved areas and reserved wildlife protection zones for Chinese Pangolin within the village as well as stopped the hunting practices. Thus the story is one that focuses on various adaptations of culture towards conservation of commons.

# Commons and Biodiversity



## Chhabil Netam

Bunagaon, Kondagaon, Kondagaon, Chhattisgarh

### Bunagaon: Towards Prosperity through CFR

This is the story of Bunagaon village in Chhattisgarh. Before acquiring community forest rights in the village, excessive encroachment and grazing occurred, deteriorating the forest and causing annual wildfires that led to the loss of wildlife habitat. The hunting activities exploited the forest as well. With no water sources for the animals and neighboring villages exploiting the resources, the forest faced damage from tourist littering as well. To address these issues, the villagers decided to implement regulations, initiated controlled grazing, established check dams, installed fire fines, and regulated hunting. These efforts have resulted in an improvement in wildlife and plant populations and overall environmental enhancement.

**Facilitator: Tulsi Netam**



## Asaduzzaman Milon

Sarankhola, Sundarbans, Bagerhat, Bangladesh

### Conserving Sundarbans: Community-Led Co-Management for Biodiversity Protection

The Sundarbans, a vital ecosystem in Bangladesh, confront threats like overexploitation and habitat degradation. The "Sundarbans Regional Co-Management Network" tackles these issues, with the Chandpai CMC as a standout. Covering 97,444 hectares and involving 23 VCFs, Chandpai safeguards diverse resources. It combats illegal practices, addressing wildlife poaching and destructive fishing methods. The network aims to enhance conservation through community engagement, showcasing a model for sustainable biodiversity protection in challenging environments.

**Facilitator: Abu Hena Mostafa Kamal**



## Jonok Deb Borma

Lawachara, Sylhet CMO Network, Moulvibazar, Bangladesh

### Preserving Lawachara: Community-Led Biodiversity Conservation

The Greater Sylhet CMO Network in Bangladesh focuses on preserving biodiversity in Lawachara National Park. Facing threats from resource exploitation and urbanization, this co-management initiative unites local communities across eight key areas. Lawachara's 1,250-hectare expanse harbors rare flora and fauna. The 42 members of the Lawachara Co-Management Committee aid forest protection, engaging 2,051 locals from 35 Village Conservation Forums, significantly reducing forest crimes and aiding biodiversity conservation.

**Facilitator: Abu Hena Mostafa Kamal**



## Sevaram Mali

Khetolai, Pokhran, Jaisalmer, Rajasthan

### Empowering Communities in Bird Conservation: Bridging Traditional and Scientific Knowledge for Comprehensive Monitoring

Capacitating communities to monitor various kinds of data across their landscapes helps make the conservation efforts more inclusive. By capacitating communities to collect data on bird mortality, the initiative enhances monitoring efforts. Increased mortalities from renewable energy projects underscore the vital role of community involvement. This holistic approach aims not only to develop targeted management strategies but also to build local capacity, aligning conservation efforts with community needs and sustainable ecosystem preservation."

**Facilitator: Sujit Narwade**



## Sumer Singh

Sawnta Fatehgarh, Jaisalmer, Rajasthan

### Collective Action For Securing Rights over Oran's

A resident of Fatehgarh block, Chittorgarh, Sumer Singh brought the community together for the conservation of the Orans (religious places among pastureslands). Upon realising that Orans are being acquired for developmental practices, the communities, under the leadership of Sumer Singh, collectively worked to get the Orans registered in the Revenue Record, leading to the recognition of the villagers' rights over these Commons.

**Facilitator: Dimpal Kumari**

# Commons and Biodiversity



## Chandraveer Singh

Namana, Bundi, Bundi, Rajasthan

### A Transformative Journey- Correlation of Pasture Land and Biodiversity

The positive initiatives and community-driven efforts in Namana village for the conservation and development of pasture land showcase a successful model. The involvement of the community, youth, and various stakeholders, as well as support from Ekta Gram Panchayat and the administration of Kantugram, has played a crucial role in achieving outcomes such as the successful removal of encroachments from the pasture land, construction of an animal-proof trench, forest clearing, and many more. The multifaceted approach, encompassing environmental conservation, legal awareness, and community empowerment, showcases a successful model.

**Facilitator: Umesh**



## Andrew Luikang

Sadim, Mao Maram, Senapati, Manipur

### Community Efforts to Protect a Hill-Top Lake in Manipur

Sadimlizai, a lake atop the hills of Sadim Naga Village, is a historical and ecological treasure. Surrounded by a diverse forest ecosystem, it sustains the local community with various resources while being a haven for biodiversity. Concerted community efforts, including strict regulations and afforestation programs, aim to preserve its significance. Through sustainable practices, conservation efforts, and responsible tourism, Sadimlizai stands as a symbol of harmonious coexistence between humanity and nature, showcasing the interdependence of culture and biodiversity.

**Facilitator: Ningduanguangliu R Panmei**



## Babita Dhurwey

Sotiya, Bichhiya, Madhya Pradesh

### Nurturing Biodiversity: Inspiring Community-Led Conservation Initiatives

Communities, led by Mrs. Babita Dhurwey, drive forest and biodiversity conservation, passing down knowledge. She initiated an organic nutrition garden with sack-based cultivation, the Gangaram kitchen garden model, inter-cropping with indigenous maize and baigani arhar, and eco-friendly practices. Encouraging villagers to replicate these methods, the initiative employs traditional seeds, organic fertilizers, and pesticides. Mrs. Dhurwey's experiences and community motivation for nutrition gardens will be explored in the presentation. The ultimate aim is to boost seed diversity, creating a successful community-owned seed bank in the village.

**Facilitator: Purvika**



## D L Gurulingappa

Bomma Devarahalli, Molalkalmuru, Chitradurga, Karnataka

### Bommadeverahalli's Green Graveyard Revival

Bommadeverahalli, home to 4,500 residents without a graveyard, creatively utilized MGNREGS to restore the vital space. The community's collaborative effort included tree planting, invasive species removal, and ensuring universal accessibility. This eco-restoration serves as a serene, shaded area for last rites, providing comfort and tranquility amid cool surroundings for honoring their loved ones.

**Facilitator: Ramesh**

# Commons and Livelihoods



## Susila Hansa

Badibahal, Paikmal, Bargarb, Odisha

### Forest to Fortune: Empowering Women through Handmade Crafts

Susila Hansa, a landless single woman in Badibahal, supported her family by making handmade cup plates from forest-collected sal leaves for over 30 years after her husband left her. With no initial income, she briefly worked as a laborer. The MASS organization recognized her skill and supported her relentlessly. Now, earning 500-600 daily, Susila's success inspired 20 other women in her village. They formed a producer group, earning 70k-1L annually by selling handmade cup plates, making Badibahal a hub and highlighting the best use of forest resources.

**Facilitator: Adikanda Biswal**



## Joseph Xalxo

Barwenagar, Chainpur, Gumla, Jharkhand

### Glimpses from Jharkhand- Local Governance Resulting to Strengthening Livelihood Opportunities

Experiences from the community from Barwenagar, Chainpur Block of Gumla District. Local governance through Strengthening of Gram Sabha and drafting rules. These rules outline sustainable harvesting practices, community-led initiatives for reforestation, and penalties for illegal activities that harm the ecosystem. Community's traditional knowledge and practices, ensuring a harmonious coexistence between human activities and the forest ecosystem. However, their commitment to sustainable practices and active involvement in decision-making processes positions them as stewards.

**Facilitator: Mr. Dheeraj Daniel Horo**



## Rajendra Singh Koshyari

Baja Nadila, Bageshwar, Bageshwar, Uttarakhand

### From Ecological Threat to Livelihood Savior

Initiated in 2006 by Sarpanch Roshan Lal, the village transformed its 47.6-hectare Van Panchayat through a Community Fodder Development Programme. Overcoming tree-cutting issues and forest fires, locals established a nursery, implemented sustainable practices, and appointed guards. With 22 fodder plant species, the program now produces 102,200 kgs of grass, benefiting 35 households. Villagers, empowered by the program, have embraced animal husbandry, ensuring a self-sustaining future for Baja Nadila. With a sustainable funding model, the Van Panchayat now thrives, boasting a fund of Rs. 8,000 for continued protection.

**Facilitator: Bhuwan Pant**



## Bhimsen Poudel

Makawanpur, Nepal

### Community Forestry and Livelihood: A Story from Nepal

Established 40 years ago in Baghmatti Province, Nepal, the Rani Community Forest spans 134 hectares and houses 900 households, with a total population of 5,000, of which 3,000 are women. Actively involved in community forest management, bio-gas projects, and women's income generation, the community, situated around the dominant Saal jungle, annually distributes wood to support the impoverished. Engaged in education and health initiatives, the community has received national and district-level awards, showcasing its commitment to sustainable practices and the empowerment of women.

# Commons and Livelihoods



## Baalsingh Kodape and Birja Bai

Umariya, Bicchiya, Mandla, Madhya Pradesh

### Cultivating Sustainability: Journey from Agriculture to Afforestation

Balsingh Kodape, residing in Umariya Mal village, Mandla District, Madhya Pradesh, cultivated crops on 2 out of his 3 acres of land, facing challenges due to rocky terrain on the remaining acre. With 80 households in his Adivasi (Gond) community, agriculture and forest resources are crucial for livelihood. Lacking irrigation for Rabi season farming, the once abundant nearby forest now requires a 2-3 km journey, raising concerns about wild animals. With the help of Foundation for Ecological Security organization, Balsingh planted a diverse forest on his land, promoting self-sufficiency and ecological benefits, with 414 trees today.

Facilitator: Dinesh Washnik



## Panchu Singh

Kalibhit, Badi Sadri, Chittaurgarh, Rajasthan

### Revitalizing Rural Livelihoods: A Pastureland Triumph in Kalibhi-Badisari, Rajasthan

In the remote village of Kalibhi-Badisari, Rajasthan, facing employment challenges, Rameshwar Lal Meena and local youth leaders initiated a transformative project. Through the Rajasthan Panchayati Raj Act, they formed a committee and secured Rs. 13.80 lakh from MNREGA for pastureland development. Over 38 families gained direct employment, fostering increased fodder and sustainable grazing. The community vigilantly manages the land, hiring a watchman, ensuring a thriving initiative that enhances livelihoods and empowers the village.

Facilitator: Girdhari Lal Verma



## Ramesh Meena

Jhabla, Girwa, Udaipur, Rajasthan

### Resilient Transformation: Jhabla Watershed Project

The Jhabla watershed project in Udaipur, Rajasthan, combats water scarcity in challenging terrains, aiming to transform degraded land into a more sustainable ecosystem. Implemented under NABARD's Indo-German Watershed Development Project, it focuses on soil conservation, drainage treatments, and climate-resilient farming practices. The initiative aids rainfed farming communities, emphasizing mixed cropping and improved water management for resilience against extreme weather, demonstrating holistic watershed development.

Facilitator: Taruna Rao



## Kanta Garasiya

Rawachh, Sayra, Udaipur, Rajasthan

### Seeding Success: Gogunda's Grass Seed Initiative

Gogunda Block's grass seed collection initiative achieves remarkable success through collective efforts of the community. This venture not only enhances ecological health but also economically empowers women in the community. By distributing seeds in pasturelands, it enhances fodder quality thereby improving livestock health and creates a potential market in neighbouring regions. Short-term goals include livelihood support, local seed supply, and restoring degraded lands, while long-term aspirations focus on establishing a sustainable seed supply platform for a thriving future.

Facilitator: Asha Cholaviya and Santoshi Joshi

# Commons and Livelihoods



## D.K Chandrashekhar

Haralahalli, Honnali, Davanagere, Karnataka

### Restoring Gomas for Strengthening Livestock Livelihoods

Haralahalli village in Davanagere neglected its grazing land, leading to encroachment by farmers, diminishing ecology and scarce cattle fodder. Establishing a village development committee addressed encroachment issues, prompting discussions and FIR filings against encroachers. A board, affirming government ownership, barred activities on the land. Through NREGS and Jalasanjeevani schemes, the village restored the commons, constructing cattle ponds, afforesting, and engaging in varied revitalization endeavors.

**Facilitator:** H R Raju



## SMT Gangamma

Cinnamanahalli, Pavagada, Tumkur, Karnataka

### Renewing Commons: Gangamma's Revival of Chinnamanahalli's Grazing Lands

In Pavagada's arid expanse, grazing lands are vital for livelihoods. Chinnamanahalli's encroached commons faced ecological decline until Gangamma intervened. Mobilizing the Village Ecology Development Committee, they cleared encroachments with police aid and initiated afforestation. This resulted in increased fodder, shade, and a revived communal space for recreation, marking a triumphant restoration of the commons.

**Facilitator:** Soma Kumara K



## Sangita Parchake

Mothamowada, Ghatanji, Yavatmal, Maharashtra

### A Village's Triumph in Commons Conservation and Water Security

In 2015, facing severe water scarcity and cracked agricultural lands, our village community formed the Nisarg Vyavasthapan Samiti with the help of FES. Committed to conservation, we utilized tools and technologies, capacitated by FES, for resource analysis and implemented measures like Semilunar Trenches and CCTs in our forest. Despite initial challenges, community contributions and FES funds restored a broken check dam, ensuring water availability year-round. Through united efforts, we secured our forest, land, and biodiversity, recognizing that our collective future hinges on nature conservation. The journey, though challenging, demonstrates our commitment to safeguarding our commons for sustained livelihoods.

**Facilitator:** Mohini Kamble



## K Thimmaraju

Bandrevu, Thambalapalle, Anamayya, Andhra Pradesh

### Reviving Ganga Sani Banda Chalami: A Community's Triumph

Ganga Sani Banda Chalami, near Sadhukonda, once neglected, now thrives after a transformation initiated by the Village Institution in 2022. Expanded to 12/50 meters, it reliably sustains water for 1000 cattle and fosters a diverse ecosystem, welcoming peacocks, deer, and birds. United efforts of Kanekuntalli, Kethireedy Palli, and Dattenayak Thanda communities not only resolved shepherds' water scarcity but nurtured a vital resource for wildlife, showcasing the power of communal stewardship.

**Facilitator:** V Prasanna Latha

# Commons and Livelihoods



## Marianus Tigga

Patrungi, Mahuadanr, Latehar, Jharkhand

### **Bamboo Triumph: A Tale of Sustainable Transformation in Patrungi Village, Jharkhand**

In the tribal village of Patrungi, Jharkhand, the Oraon community transformed forest wasteland into a thriving bamboo forest through the initiative of Marianus Tigga. Facing initial skepticism, Tigga's dedication led to visible changes by 1998. A committee was formed, rules were established, and the bamboo patch now serves as a sustainable source of income for the village. With a dedicated committee overseeing operations, the community takes pride in their achievement, using the earnings for village development.

**Facilitator: Dheeraj Daniel Horo**



## Venkata Ramana

Egubaboyapalle, Thamballapalle, Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh

### **Sustainable Ecosystem Restoration in the Eastern Ghats: Community-Led Strategies**

A study in Andhra Pradesh's Eastern Ghats removed unpalatable Cymbopogon grasses, comparing control, fire exclusion, and grass removal with fire exclusion treatments. Results showed the combined approach significantly increased tree abundance, diversity, and growth. The research emphasizes collaborative efforts involving community institutions, governmental, and non-governmental agencies for effective ecological management, providing a template for similar regions' sustainability.

**Facilitator: Saneesh C S**



## Ajoy Rupini & Binoy Debbarma

Khamtingbari/Bilaikang, Tripura

### **Sustainable Livelihood for Indigenous People: Case of Tripura**

With urbanisation, the huge area of land in the state under forest cover and the large tribal population are reeling under the threat of exploitation in Tripura. Two model villages of Khamtingbari and Bilaikang run a sustainable eco-tourism project with stress on conservation of indigenous knowledge and traditional art forms for sustenance of the society and generation of livelihood for the youth of the indigenous communities residing in these villages, generating jobs.

**Facilitator: Mansee Bal Barghava & Bhibhuti Debbarma**



## Imnayangla Jamir

Longjemdang, Mangkolemba, Mokokchung, Nagaland

### **Resilience in the Naga Hills: Tribal Women Street Vendors Preserving Livelihoods and Cultural Heritage**

In Nagaland's Naga Hills, Tribal women street vendors navigate challenges to sustain livelihoods and cultural heritage. This research delves into the struggles of these women, who, amidst the shift from traditional to processed foods, preserve Naga food culture. Facing transportation challenges, the study explores how they access hill and agricultural resources, emphasizing their resilience in sustaining families. The findings contribute to understanding and supporting the tribal women's efforts toward sustainable livelihoods and the conservation of cultural and natural resources.

# Commons and Culture



## Suresh Kuvadiya

Devgad, Sayla, Surendranagar, Gujarat

### Upholding community knowledge of ethnomedicine as a alternative to state mediated knowledge system

With facilitation from SEVA and Sahjeevan, the community revived the ethnomedicinal practice for addressing the cattle and goat diseases like LSD and foot and mouth disease. This was done through a collective platform that shared the elders traditional knowledge with the community youth and leaders, thus effectively reducing the pressure on the veterinary department of the government. At the same time the practice execution actively involved women and finally also helped cope with the possible economic insecurity that could have arisen from the emergency.

**Facilitator: Malaika Mathew Chawla**



## Mahesh Nadurmth

Dumas, Surat, Gujarat

### Nurturing Unity through 'One Home - One Sapling

Ecological awareness often emphasises interconnectedness. The 'One Home - One Sapling' initiative in Surat helps communities nurture 22,513 diverse plant species, fostering a sense of belonging and perpetuating traditional values. This network-based campaign encourages nurturing a sapling for a year, perpetuating unity with nature—an echo of perennial spiritual philosophies. Envisioned as a spiritual tradition, it aims to expand across the country, reflecting the deep connection to our cosmic surroundings.

**Facilitator: Avni Joshi Prkalpa J**



## Ramesh Hidame

Tendakodo, Mohla Manpur Chowki, Chhattisgarh

### Nagvanshi Gond Tribe's Symbiosis with Nature

The Nagvanshi Gond tribe, residing along the Shivnath River in the Panabarsh princely area, embraces Nag culture. Their festivals, livelihood, health, animal husbandry, and life cycle rituals center on nature. The tribe reveres nature before commencing any livelihood activities. They use medicines derived from various forest products and give special importance to some animals and birds that play the role of carriers of seeds, underscoring the tribe's deep connection with nature.

**Facilitator: Rajendra Singh Netam**



## Sonehondhar Nag

Bodaras, Sukma, Chhattisgarh

### Seed Festival: Cultural Reflections of Past and Present

The seed festivals, celebrated by indigenous communities across Chhattisgarh, are of critical cultural and social significance to the people. With a rich history of diverse communities coming together to determine the dates of the festival for their own communities, and celebrating them in their own way, the festival signifies the spirit of co-existence, community well-being and a deep connection with the dynamic nature of environment.

**Facilitator: Santosh Kumar Usendi**



## Sevak Lakda

Remhla, Lakhapur, Sarguja, Chhattisgarh

### Ramelha and its story of cultural dependence

This is the story of a community in Ramelha village's, where their culture, lives, livelihoods revolve around forests and Commons. From the time of birth to death, the Commons play an integral part in all their customs and traditions. Realising this, the community in Ramelha undertook meetings and actions for collectively sustaining the Commons.

**Facilitator: Shailendra Singh Rajput**

# Commons and Gender



## Kujan Kalotara

Reshamiya, Surendranagar, Gujarat

### Engaging Women in Grassland Conservation: A Case from Gujarat

Rabari pastoralist woman dedicated to advancing the welfare of pastoralist communities in Gujarat. Her unique role includes actively involving women in research efforts, aiming to document their knowledge and lived experiences. Her approach challenges the traditional reliance on male household heads and 'key informants' in conservation work, highlighting the often-overlooked insights and decision-making capabilities of pastoralist women. Her presentation offers insights into their interactions with grassland wildlife, all while reflecting on how her identity as a pastoralist woman influenced the research process.

Facilitator: Manya Singh



## Sulachana Juanga

Jantari, Keonjhar, Odisha

### Guardians of the Sacred Forest: A Tale of Vigilance and Unity

In Jantari village, Sulachana Juanga's swift and decisive action, along with the collective strength of the villagers, demonstrated the importance of community-led conservation efforts. The commitment of the Junga tribe to protect their sacred forest reflects a harmonious relationship. Sulachana's leadership, is noteworthy in challenging the encroachment on their sacred land. The involvement of women in the interception of the trespassers adds a dimension of gender equity and shared responsibility for protecting the environment. In conclusion, the story of Jantari serves as a powerful narrative of community resilience and determination to preserve the sanctity of nature.

Facilitator: Saswatik Tripathy



## Bhawani Shankar

Sangod, Kota, Rajasthan

### A Woman Sarpach's Efforts towards Ensuring Livelihood Security

The people of Zalimpura GP came together to resolve the issue of low availability of fodder by addressing the encroachment of their Charagah and developing physical protective measures through MGNREGS. Under the leadership of their woman sarpanch, they developed a set of institutionalised by-laws to address possible conflicts of interest. These measures helped foster their livelihood security, boosting the number of livestock by securing their fodder supply.

Facilitator: Umesh Paliwal



## Anjna Markam

Katanga Mal, Bichhiya, Mandla, Madhya Pradesh

### Anjna Markam - A Champion in Advocating for CFR

Anjna Markam's commitment to advocating for Community Forest Rights (CFR) in Katanga Mal is truly remarkable. Her dedication to empowering her community and her active involvement in Mahila Sabha highlights her focus on women's issues while understanding the significance of forest conservation and the rights of the community. It's impressive how she's successfully navigated the complex CFR claim process in multiple villages, showcasing her expertise in community-level procedures. Her emphasis on engaging with the community daily about the forests underlines her holistic approach to conservation.

Facilitator: Keertan Baghel

# Commons and Gender



## **Damor Jasiben Somabhai**

Bhanasimal, Mahisagar, Gujarat

### **Empowering Women in Bhanasimal: The Saga of Shiva Shakti Farmers Society**

Bhanasimal, a small village with a big spirit, resides a powerful force of change embodied in a remarkable woman. Jasiben has been a driving force behind the transformative journey of Shiva Shakti Farmers Society, with her profound association with the Gayatri Mahila Federation Santrampur since 2017-18. She quickly became a beacon of inspiration within her village and beyond. Understanding the power of collective voices, they actively participate in Gram Sabha and Mahila Sabha meetings. Together, they strategized ways to enhance their economic well-being through sustainable practices, focusing on forest produce, agriculture, and vegetable plots.

**Facilitator: Rinkal N Taviyad**



## **Dolon Gorai**

Kalpathar, Bankura, West Bengal

### **A Changemaker in Bankura, West Bengal**

Dolon Gorai, is a pioneering entrepreneur and livestock helper from a region deeply intertwined with communal resources. Beyond her personal triumphs, Dolon is a passionate advocate for community-driven change, empowering women across five villages and championing gender-inclusive natural resource governance. Her story exemplifies the transformative impact of recognizing gender as a catalyst for positive change within communities and offers invaluable insights for enhancing collective knowledge in the realm of Commons.

**Facilitator: Saran**



## **Jammulamma**

Chintapaka, Alluri Sita Rama Raju, Andhra Pradesh

### **Jammulamma's journey towards becoming the 'best farmer'**

In the Eastern Ghats village of Chintapaka, tribal leader Smt. Jammulamma empowered her community through sustainable Non-Timber Forest Product (NTFP) collection, natural farming, and medicinal plant cultivation. With the formation of the "Adavithalli Girijana Mahila MACS Ltd., Chinthapaka," a collective for marketing NTFPs and herbs, she transformed villagers into entrepreneurs. Jammulamma's leadership in the Self-Help Group movement and promotion of sustainable practices earned her the Best Farmer award from the Andhra Pradesh state government.

**Facilitator: Nagendra Prasad Parla**



## **Nidiya Bai Marko**

Tikariya, Mandla, Madhya Pradesh

### **Paving the Way: Nidiya Bai Marko's Trailblazing Leadership in Tikariya Village**

Nidiya Bai Marko, a dynamic women leader in Tikariya village, transformed the community by leading initiatives for water conservation and road construction. As the former president of Gram Paryavaran Samitee Tikariya, she helped initiate the deepening of a pond, enhancing water harvesting and extending supply duration. Advocating for irrigation and better roads, Nidiya Bai's efforts resulted in a road-cum-stop dam, enabling successful cultivation in 10 hectares. Elected as the village's first female Sarpanch in 15 years, she continues to champion community conservation and women's issues in Padariya Panchayat.

**Facilitator: Kailash Das Sonwani**



## **Meva Devi**

Vatera, Sirohi, Rajasthan

### **A Ward Panch's effort towards restoring commons**

This is the story of Mewa Devi, a courageous woman who grew up in harsh circumstances to work towards the well-being of her community and village Commons. After training on the capacities, roles and responsibilities of the Ward Panch through the help of Jan Chetna Abhiyaan, she nominated herself and won the part, and worked with the community to ensure restoration of the pasturelands through MGNREGS, enhancing their livelihood security.

**Facilitator: Pushpa Jha**

# Commons and Food



## Manjuben Mansukbhai Mori

Reshamiya, Surendranagar, Gujarat

### Women's knowledge of edible plants in Reshamiya's grassland commons

Reshamiya village in Gujarat's Surendranagar district boasts savanna grasslands and thorn forests, featuring diverse land uses. The gauchar land, particularly, is vital, providing seasonal edible wild plants like the immunity-boosting kankoda and winter Opuntia fruit, known as findla. Harvested by Rawal women, these plants hold cultural and dietary significance, forming part of local recipes. Amid climate change impacts, documenting nature-culture relationships and ecological knowledge becomes crucial, emphasizing the commons' role in sustaining cultural and dietary heritage.

Facilitator: Kujan Kalotra



## Arika Radhamma

Kondabaridi, PARVATHIPURAM Manyam, Andhra Pradesh

### Empowering Tribal Women: The Organic Rice Revolution

The rice center in Kondabaridi empowered 14 women from the Ekalavya 1 self-help group, processing 3,000 quintals of ZBNF paddy into high-demand organic rice, selling at Rs. 65/kg. They also marketed the byproducts, earning Rs. 1,51,950. These women transformed their lives, earning Rs. 1,08,450 profit, becoming self-reliant. Their initiative has garnered attention from multiple cities, showcasing its success in empowering indigenous communities through promoting self-sustenance.

Facilitator: Ajarapu Sireesha



## Damor Ramabhai Akhmabhai

Relva, Mahisagar, Gujarat

### Railwa Village: A Tale of Community-Led Natural Farming

In the heart of rural India lies Railwa Village, where a transformative journey began in 2013, led by an individual with a vision for sustainable agriculture and community well-being. This protagonist, recognized the potential of collective action and initiated the formation of a village organization that blossomed into a federation encompassing 70-80 neighboring villages. With the CFRR entitlement secured, the community is now poised to scale up natural farming practices.

Facilitator: Sanjay R Dabhi



## Dasundi Pusam

Batwar, Mandla, Madhya Pradesh

### Preservation of Cultural Food Heritage

In Batwar village of MP near Kanha National Park, Kodu Kutki cultivation, a traditional crop and diet, stopped due to wildlife conflict. The barren land was encroached by an aggressive invasive species. Soon, the distressed community faced a lack of fodder and access to the forest for NFP. 29 farmers collectively initiated land reclamation, cleared the invasive species, and reestablished Kodu Kutki farming. Over 60 hectares of land now thrive, preserving cultural food heritage and improving livelihoods.

Facilitator: Ram Kumar yadam



## Kalpana Kochle

Golkheda, Khandwa, Madhya Pradesh

### Community Nutrition Gardens in Commons: Enhancing Nutrition, Resilience and Financial Sustainability of Rural Women

In Golkheda village, with the intervention of SENU Project in Khandwa district, Madhya Pradesh, a Community Nutrition Garden (CNG) transformed barren land into a sustainable source of fresh and healthy food for 12 families. With the women involved in processes from planning to management, the community secured employment, nutritional security, and knowledge sharing, inspiring neighboring villages to setup 53 CNGs involving 500+ women. This gender-inclusive approach fostered women's participation in various platforms, enabling accountability and behavioral change.

Facilitator: Sadhma Khan

# Struggles of Commoning



## Rambha Bai

Mahkoni, Balodabazar, Chhattisgarh

### The Story of Mahkoni Village Struggle to Protect their Forest

The Mahakoni village community in Baloda Bazar, Chhattisgarh, faced a struggle even after securing Community Forest Rights claims on 1,830 hectares of land in 2019. The Forest Department continued cutting trees without consulting the Village Forest Right Committee. During a mass tree-cutting incident initiated by the Forest Department, the Gram Sabha, led by the women, captured the machinery as well as the felled trees for more than four days, after which the higher officials from Forest Department apologized for the incidence in writing. The Gram Sabha retained the felled trees and further assertively claimed forest resources such as Mahua, fodder, Tendu leaves, honey, etc.

**Facilitator: Koushalya Chauhan**



## Duryodhan Gadrajhi

Totadihi, Keonjhar, Odisha

### Resilience Prevails: Totadihi's Struggle and Triumph in Forest Conservation

Totadihi, a Bhuyan community hamlet in Keonjhar District, faced a land encroachment challenge from neighboring Sankarei village. With 40 households relying on agriculture and forest resources, Totadihi mobilized against the encroachment, seeking support from local authorities. After federation meetings and inquiries, the claim was legitimized, leading to the removal of encroachment from 60 acres of forest land. In 2022-23, Totadihi revegetated 28 hectares, showcasing their commitment to conservation and prompting the forest department to establish a Van Surakshya Samiti for ongoing support.

**Facilitator: Saswatik Tripathy**



## Dilharan Tekam

Bamhni, Mungeli, Chhattisgarh

### Struggle of communities in asserting their rights, challenging displacement, and advocating for implementation of the Forest Rights Act

The Achanakmar Tiger Reserve, nestled in the heart of India, became a battleground for the indigenous communities that called this lush landscape their home. The journey was marked by displacement, struggles for forest rights, and an ardent commitment to conservation. The turning point came in 2021 when the communities, united by a shared sense of injustice, formed the ATR Sangharsh Samiti. The recognition of community forest resource rights was a restoration of hope for the communities. In August 2022, the Chief Minister officially acknowledged and granted them Community Forest Rights.

**Facilitator: Semanchal Acharya**



## Prem Lal Baiga/ Jagat Ram Baiga

Bajardaad, Gaurela-Pendra-Marwahi, Chhattisgarh

### Recognition of Forest Rights: A Case Study of Bagha Community in Chhattisgarh

In Chhattisgarh, five Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) - Baiga, Birhor, Kumar, Abujmadiya, and Pahadi Korwa - reside. The Forest Rights Act of 2006, ensures specific protection for PVTGs, encompassing social, livelihood, population, traditional, biodiversity, and worship rights. The Baiga community in Gourela-Pendra-Marwahi district initiated the process to claim their forest rights. A village-level committee was formed, documentation of traditional rights was done, and verification was carried out by forest and revenue departments. After approval at various levels, the Bagha community received formal recognition of their traditional rights from the district committee.

**Facilitator: Reena Ramteke/Chandra pratap Singh**

# Struggles of Commoning



## Chandra Prakash Garasiya

Chitrawas, Udaipur, Rajasthan

### Community's Struggle for Sustainable Forest Management

The Village Forest Protection and Management Committee established rules and carried out activities for the protection and management of their forest. After initial success, the management system started deteriorating due to frequent changes in the Panchayat. There were violations of committee rules and open grazing ensued. Foundation for Ecological Security attempted to engage villagers and raise awareness about forest rights. Recognizing the threat of privatization, the committee, with women's support, held meetings and formulated new rules for forest protection.

Facilitator: Shreya Sharma + Asha Cholaviya



## Narayan Jagat

Salebhat, Gariyaband, Chhattisgarh

### Struggles for forest Governance

The Gram Sabha Solebhat in Chattisgarh resolved disputes with an adjacent village to establish community forest rights in 2020. Once the community forest rights were granted, the Gram Sabha identified six forest patches and resolute a management plan for each, which defined norms for regulated grazing and collecting Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP). The Gram Sabha also engaged in various activities such as collecting local seeds of native plants from the forest, developing a nursery, and undertaking reforestation activities. They also started fish farming in local ponds to boost the local economy.

Facilitator: Benipuri Goswami



## Mohanan

Athirapally, Thrissur, Kerala

### Innovative Platform tackling CFR related concerns spanning 400sq. km.

The community members across the 9 scattered GPs have devised Vazhachal CFR Coordination Sangham in 2014 as a management body to coordinate among the Community Forest Management Committee across locations connected to the 400sq. km. forest. They have also come up with a set of institutionalized by-laws with respect to sustainable harvesting and organized sensitization and practice oriented trainings like those on ecological monitoring. Thus showcasing an exemplary case of institutional development in overcoming the struggles of commoning.

Facilitator: Vishnu T U and Tiju C Thomas



## Shambhulal Gurjar

Banoda, Chittorgarh, Rajasthan

### It takes a united community to overcome encroachment on commons

Banoda village faced encroachment on its common land by nomadic settlers, leading to a conflict resolved by Shambhulal Gurjar's leadership. Villagers reclaimed the land through persistent efforts and formed a committee for its development. Water harvesting structures, tree planting, and sustainable management transformed the area. This grassroots initiative set a precedent for ecological conservation, establishing Banoda as a model for soil and water preservation, drawing admiration from neighboring communities and various government bodies.

Facilitator: Satyam Ojha

# Struggles of Commoning



## Ebziba Buela

Karangad, Morpanai, Thanneerootru, Olaikuda, Ramanathapuram, Tamil Nadu

### Preserving Coastal Commons: Women's Initiatives in Ramanathapuram

Twelve women from coastal villages in Ramanathapuram, Tamil Nadu, address encroachment and depletion of coasts. They delve into land and customary rights, discussing CRZ and partnering with local groups to counter unsustainable growth. Their presentation highlights the significance of coastal commons for small-scale fishing communities, spotlighting women-led mapping efforts along the Palk Bay coast.

**Facilitator: Thisam Mahsana**



## Nirmal

Nandwa, Rajsamand, Rajasthan

### Preserving Pasture Paradise

Nandwa village of Devgarh block of Rajasthan witnessed a massive encroachment of pasture land during the election season. The village's influential people seized the land and wished to use it for residential purposes. However, being aware of the benefits of the pasture land, the majority of the community opposed the move. They initiated collective action, with no bureaucratic support, to hurl the influential people from the pasture land. The struggle took some time; however, the community won the pasture land in the end.

**Facilitator: Buddha Singh**



## G. Prabhakar

B. Kadirepalli, Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh

### Community's endless effort to safeguard commons

G. Prabhakar from B. Kadirepalli village in Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh, highlights their community's efforts to safeguard commons vital for grazing and rural sustenance. Facing threats from mining and encroachment, they formed a Prohibitory Order Book (POB), the first in Chittoor district. Successfully securing their commons via demarcation and GP registration, they obtained official certificates, ensuring communal resource protection and ownership.

**Facilitator: M. Rani Reddy**



## Ramesh

Devarayanasamudra, Mulabagilu, Kolar, Karnataka

### Vrshabadhri Hill: A Struggle for Survival Against Gravel Crushers

The 1400-acre Baru Vrshabadhri Hill, a significant water source for over 25 lakes and the Palar River, sustains agricultural life in Devarayasadudra village. Initially serene, the area faced disruption when gravel crushers emerged in 2013, affecting the once peaceful landscape. Despite resistance, the Gram Panchayat permitted 10 more MSAD units. In 2020, the villagers formed an Environment Protection Committee, aided by Gram Vikas Sansthan, filed a public interest petition against the environmentally harmful crushers, leading to a court case, which is currently pending. The villagers demonstrated unity and solidarity in their opposition.

**Facilitator: Partha**



## Rajesab

Naglapur, Devadurga, Raichur, Karnataka

### Legal Resolve and Community Resilience: Nagalapura's Grazing Land Champion

In Raichur's Nagalapura, encroachment posed a threat to the traditional livelihoods tied to livestock. Recognizing the urgency, mobilized fellow villagers and sought legal aid. With perseverance and legal support, successfully engaged the Tahsildar and the Revenue Department to remove encroachments, safeguarding the land. Leading restorative efforts, overseeing afforestation and NRM programs, fostering a resilient community and revitalizing livelihoods through dedicated legal and community support.

**Facilitator: Khadar Basha**

## Contributing Organisations

- Arannayk Foundation
- ATR Sangharsh Samiti
- Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS)
- Chaupal Gramin Vikas Prashikshan Evam Shodh
- Dakshin foundation
- Federation of Community Forestry Users Nepal (FECOFUN)
- Foundation for Ecological Security
- Gandhigram Rural Institute - Deemed to be University, Dindigul District, Tamil Nadu
- Harsha Trust
- Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research, Leipzig
- Himmotthan Society
- Jattu trust
- Khoj
- Kovel Foundation
- MASS
- Mawthawpdah Area Rilang Fishing Association
- Nagwanshi Gond Samaj Sikshan awam Social Welfare Society
- Nudge Foundation
- Parisara Hitharakshana Samithi
- PHIA Foundation
- PRAKALPA YOGAM FOUNDATION
- Sahjeevan NGO
- Saurashtra University
- Sajag
- Seva Mandir
- SEWAK
- SRIJAN
- Tata Institute of Social Sciences
- WWF India
- Youth for Integration Trust/WforW
- Jan Chetna Sansthan







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