

## **Milestones of work for the coming year - 2010-11**

### **Focus of work**

The overall purpose of the work, will be to strengthen natural resource-based livelihoods and improve food, water and income security of the participating farmers.

The plan below represents the three broad areas of work I will be involved in, over the next one year. This will also be the overall direction and approach I will take over the next 3-5 years, based on what has emerged in the last one year.

### **1. Direct work with farmers in Dungarpur**

Building on the rapport achieved with local farmers in Manatgaon (Chundawada, Bicchiwada block, Dungarpur) over the past year, work on a 1-2 water harvesting structures will be initiated in this year, impacting about 5-10 families each.

Mobilising atleast 40-50% community contribution towards the cost of these structures will be the basic tenet of the work. This contribution can be in the form of labour, locally available material or even cash / livestock donations. This will be however difficult to achieve in the initial phase, as people have been used to work with zero or very minimal contribution, in programmes of the Government and other voluntary development organisations (NGOs). The remaining cost of the works taken up, will be supported by Sambhaav.

It is expected that after the initial few structures built which will act as a model, and after the people have seen its impact and understood the process of work, more and more people will come forward and hence spontaneously the work will increase in its scale both within the village and in nearby villages.

Considering the main principle of water harvesting, which is "catch water where it falls", work will also be initiated in the 1-2 villages, which are upstream of Manatgaon village, after the initial models set up.

In the technical details - that is the type of structure and its design based on the local geography and social aspects of the work, as well as funds for the physical works taken up, there will be support from Sambhaav and their team members who will visit and stay in the local villages to help out, as well as constant dialogue with the local people to work out the details.

Apart from the work in Manatgaon, and the expected spontaneous spread to the nearby and upstream villages, a rapport building process (similar to what I had been doing in Manatgaon, over the last one year) will be initiated in 2 new villages in the district. No activity will be taken up in the next one year in these villages, and the focus will be simply to visit the villages periodically, to understand the situation and know the people there.

### **2. Work with farmers / pastoralists in other regions of Rajasthan**

Sambhaav at present, works directly in Jaisalmer, Barmer, Nagaur, Alwar, Jaipur and Dausa

districts of Rajasthan, and through its network of fellows and partner organisations, supports work in Gujarat, Uttarakhand, Bihar, West Bengal and Maharashtra. The focus of the work is primarily water / environment conservation.

As part of the partnership with Sambhaav, to learn about and do work on water, I have been visiting their work in other parts of Rajasthan, and spending time with team members there over the last one year.

I made the first visit to Jaisalmer in January 2010, and resumed visits after I returned to Rajasthan from the home break. Between July 2010 - till date, I have made 5 trips to their work areas in Jaisalmer, Alwar, Dausa in Rajasthan and Kutch in Gujarat, as well as Bharatpur and Pushkar (Ajmer) to observe the local water harvesting systems there.

These visits will continue roughly at the rate of one a month, ranging between 7-14 days per trip. The focus of the trips will be learning by observing as well as by participating in the work each team is doing there. For taking part in joint work, the focus is likely to be the regions I visit the most often and where the work has been established for a while - namely Jaisalmer, Barmer and Alwar, while the visits for observing work, will span a wider geographical range including Rajasthan but also other states.

For understanding the quantum of work taken up under this task, in the 6-monthly reports, I can list all the visits I have undertaken and what I have observed, as well as the details (structures worked upon and the impact) of any joint work I have taken up at any place.

### **3. Research and documentation work on water / environment**

Closely related to task #2, is taking up research and documentation work on related aspects of the work. Primarily this will involve:

1. Collecting and studying notable content on water / environment / development - Some of these will be referred to by Sambhaav, and others discovered through relevant offline and online sources.
2. Documenting work happening on the ground, on how communities have managed their local water / environment resources and the technical / social details of the same - This will be through the visits being taken up as described in task # 2, and will include collating photos, videos, case studies, blogs, maps and data.

This task is being taken up in collaboration with Arghyam Trust, who partner with Sambhaav for their work. The notable content collected and produced as part of this effort will be showcased on the India Water Portal (an Arghyam initiative), which is a web-based platform for communicating with and between people who have an interest in water issues in the Indian context.

For understanding the quantum of work taken up under this task, in the 6-monthly reports, I can list all the notable content that has been collected or produced. The details of the visits made

towards fulfilling this task, will figure in task #2.

**Time Allocation**

Roughly my time per month, will be divided between these three tasks - ie about 7-10 days each, apart from time at home. Tasks 1 and 2, and part of 3, are all field-based where I need to stay out of home day and night, while some part of task # 3, involves desk work, which I can do while at home.

There are likely to be other tasks that I work on - such as participating in related events, meetings etc. All of these too, will be broadly related to the above three work areas.