HIMMOTTHAN

HIMMOTTHAN
An Initiative of TATA TRUSTS

ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

Himmotthan

[*Himm-otthan*] verb
Upliftment of the people of the Himalayas

It was formed with the belief that challenges & opportunities of mountain communities are different and have to be addressed sensitively by keeping the community especially the women at core.

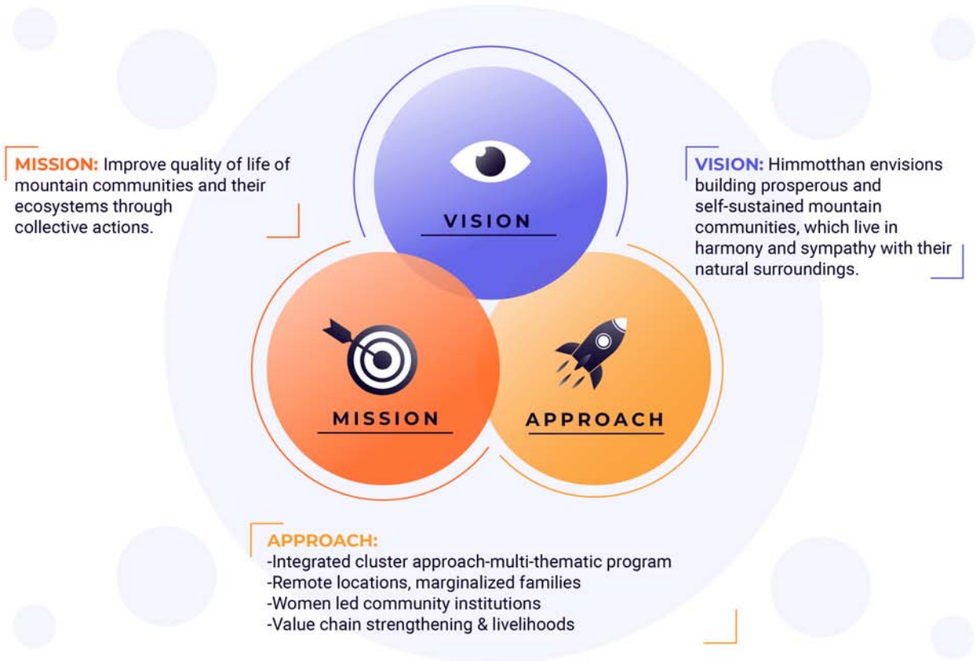
Content

About Himmotthan

Himmotthan has been working with Himalayan communities for nearly 2 decades. Our work revolves around creating integrated development models for mountain communities, interweaving interventions around education, water, agriculture and livelihoods.

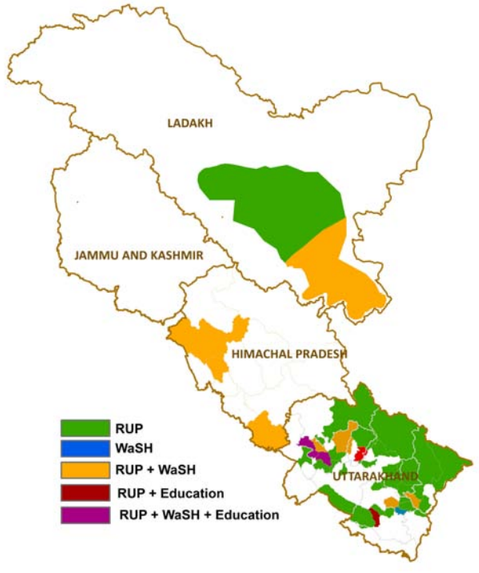
The organization has consistently adapted to the evolving needs of communities, shaped over time by factors such as socio-economic trends, technological advancements, and environmental changes.

Himmotthan is working on strengthening livelihoods, the water conservation and supply as well as education and training with a view to ensuring long-standing, sustainable change on the ground.



Coverage

2/1 Number of States/UT	**16** Districts	**54** Blocks
2,180 Villages	**271** Employees	**40 Crore** Budget
86,000 Intensive Households	**60,500** Extensive Households	



Sustainable Development Goals

Key Interventions

NRM

- Common land plantation
- Ecosystem services
- Spring-shed management
- Water source management

Women led Community Institution

Livelihoods

- Agri & allied value chain
- Climate-resilient farm practices
- Financial inclusion
- Livelihoods, social enterprises

Social Mobilization

- Primary: FLN, physical literacy, library
- Secondary: IT skills, life skills, career counselling, skilling

Agriculture · Communities · Education · Livestock · Skilling · WaSH

Key Achievements

Gender Inclusion

- 44,500 women organized into self-help groups
- 5,600 self-help groups formed and nurtured

Financial inclusion & Rural Entrepreneurs

- Rs 14.86 crore financial inclusion by SHGs members
- More than 3,000 community resource persons trained
- 700 rural entrepreneurs prompted

Education Initiative

- 12,772 students outreached
- 500 teachers trained
- 41 functional libraries established

Climate smart Agriculture interventions

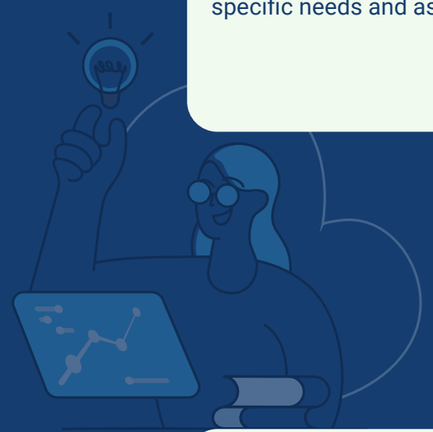
- 16.23 ha area covered under fruit tree plantation
- 233 ha area covered under fodder plantation
- 163 ha farms cultivated with improved technologies or management practices

Water Conservation & Management

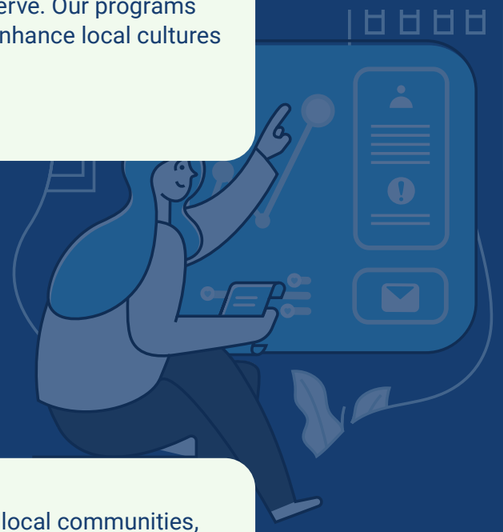
- 952 ha spring catchment area treated
- 23,440 household access to potable drinking water through functional tap connectivity
- 320 water committee/ pani samiti (VWSCs) formed/ strengthened

Values and Priorities

1. Community-Centered Approach
Our initiatives are community-driven, ensuring that local voices are heard, and solutions are tailored to the specific needs and aspirations of the people we serve.



2. Respect for Local Cultures
We honour and respect the traditions, knowledge and practices of the communities we serve. Our programs are designed to complement and enhance local cultures rather than replace them.



3. Empowerment
We believe in empowering individuals and communities by providing the tools, skills, and opportunities needed to achieve self-sufficiency and improved quality of life.

4. Collaboration
Partnership and collaboration with local communities, government and other stakeholders are at the heart of our approach. We work together to identify needs, design solutions and implement programs.

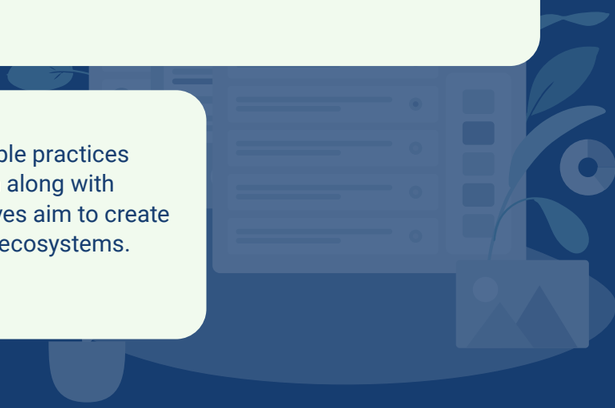
5. Innovation
We embrace innovative approaches and technologies to solve complex problems related to livelihoods and environmental sustainability. Continuous learning and adaptation are key to our success.

6. Integrity
We conduct our work with transparency, accountability, and ethical integrity. We are committed to using our resources responsibly and ensuring that our actions align with our mission and values.

7. Inclusivity
We strive to be inclusive in all our efforts, ensuring that our programs benefit all community members, regardless of age, gender, or socio-economic status. We prioritize marginalized and vulnerable groups in our interventions.

8. Resilience
We focus on building resilience within communities, helping them to better withstand and recover from economic, environmental, and social challenges.

9. Environmental Stewardship
We are dedicated to preserving and protecting the natural environment, recognizing that healthy ecosystems are foundational to sustainable livelihoods.



10. Sustainability
We are committed to promote sustainable practices that ensure long-term economic growth along with environmental preservation. Our initiatives aim to create enduring benefits for communities and ecosystems.

Chairman's Note

It is my privilege to present Himmotthan's 16th Annual Report for the year 2023-24. Over the years, Himmotthan has expanded its footprint to over 2,100 mountain villages across 16 districts in Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, and Ladakh.

The Himalayas, often referred to as the "Water Towers of Asia," provide a vast array of ecosystem services that sustain not only the millions who reside within these majestic ranges but also the billion or so people who live downstream. While our primary focus remains on the mountain communities, we must remain cognisant of the broader regional framework in which we operate and be mindful of the ecological footprint of our interventions, recognising their impact on downstream communities.

Sustainable and remunerative mountain livelihoods are at the heart of our mission and encompass the bulk of our interventions. In recent years recognising the criticality of water, major initiatives have been developed around water conservation and aquifer recharge, as well as supply side interventions. Additionally, education and building foundation literacy remains a priority area.

These are times of significant social transformation. While rural outmigration continues at a high rate, driven by the allure of more comfortable lives and opportunities in the plains, there is a contrasting trend where people from the plains increasingly seek the tranquillity of the mountains. This dichotomy has led to depopulation in the inner Himalayan villages, while the more accessible parts of the outer Himalayas have become congested with holiday homes and tourism infrastructure.

Traditional farm-based livelihoods remain the backbone of the rural economy, but emerging service-based industries and peri-urban growth are becoming increasingly important sources of employment. Our interventions must acknowledge and adapt to these shifts. Mountain agriculture, once primarily subsistence-focused and centred on local consumption, is now evolving into a market-based activity. Consequently, developing entrepreneurship and institutions that create processing and marketing linkages for local produce is more relevant than ever.

Our focus on integrating local aspirations with regional and governmental priorities continues to drive our interventions forward, and this report details our efforts in this direction. Looking ahead, it is imperative that we build and strengthen partnerships and collaborations. By leveraging the skills and expertise of the mature development sector, civil society organisations, and entrepreneurs in the region, we look forward to amplifying our impact.

We thank our partners and our donors for their support and look forward to strengthening relationships.

Rajesh Thadani (PhD)
Chairman, Himmotthan Society

Himmotthan's Governing Board

Ms. Vibha Puri Das

Chairperson
Ex. Secretary, Govt. Of India

Dr. Rajesh Thadani

Member
(Chairman: 1st May 2024 onwards)
Expert – Natural Resource Management (NRM)

Mr. Deepak Sanan

Member
Ex. Addl Chief Secretary, Govt. of Himachal Pradesh

Ms. Amrita S Patwardhan

Treasurer
(Ex-Officio Tata Trusts Nominee), Head of Education, Tata Trusts

Mr. Ashish Deshpande

Member
(Ex-Officio Tata Trusts Nominee), Chief Financial Officer, Tata Trusts

Mr. STS Lepcha

Member
Retd PCCF, Govt. of Uttarakhand

Ms. Aparna Uppaluri

Member *(Jan-June 2024)*
(Ex-Officio Tata Trusts Nominee), Chief Operating Officer, Tata Trusts

Govt. of Uttarakhand

Member
Ex-Officio, Govt. of Uttarakhand

Mr. Arun Pandhi

Member
(Till Nov 2023)
(Ex-Officio Tata Trusts Nominee), Director – Program Implementation, Tata Trusts

Dr. Yashpal Singh Bisht

Member
Secretary (Ex-Officio), Regional Manager, Tata Trusts
Executive Director, Himmotthan Society

Lehdo village in Sham valley, Ladakh

Key Highlights and Takeaway for FY 2023-24

The Himalayan region is known for its stunning landscapes and diverse ecosystems. Farming systems here are not just a means of livelihood but a way of life deeply intertwined with the cultural and social fabric of its people. The mountainous terrain and varied climatic conditions present unique challenges and opportunities for agricultural practices.

Over the past few years, we have been focusing on the region's future needs and trying to streamline our interventions accordingly. The focus was initiating a few pilots, upscaling the well-accepted and high-impact interventions, assessing the work done, and designing new projects based on the learning.

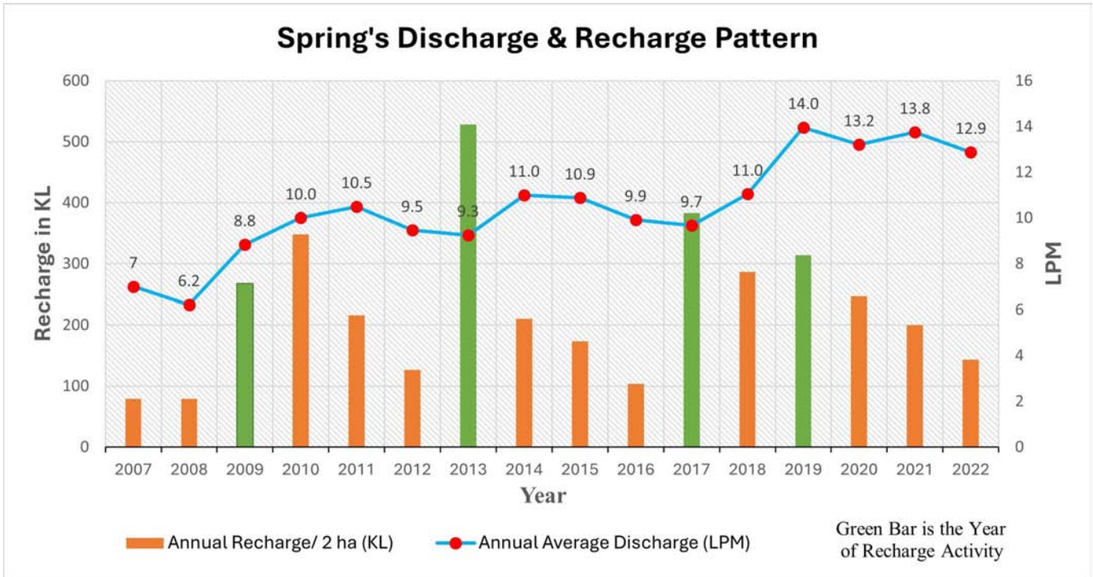
1. Emphasizing on Conserving the Essential – Water

In central and western Himalayas, farming system linkages are closely interrelated, and mountain communities have been utilizing water and land resources for their subsistence for millennia. However, in recent decades, the intricate balance among these three components has been in peril, primarily due to a shortage of water resources to meet the demand of a growing population. Climate change has further aggravated the environmental problems. Consequently, in pursuit of food security and better livelihoods, people tend to migrate to urban areas, resulting in further abandonment of cropland and resources.

Considering the challenge, Himmotthan Society and its Implementation Support Agencies (ISA) initially started work in Uttarakhand in 2002 through an integrated approach focusing on drinking water, sanitation, hygiene and water security. Later, it expanded into Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh, successfully implementing 299 water supply schemes, 408 rainwater harvesting tanks (RWHT), 11,832 sanitation units, 1,000 spring-shed treatments, and 292 WaSH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) programs in schools, which have benefitted more than 24,000 households.

Currently, Himmotthan is implementing two flagship programs, one ensuring better service delivery through supporting the government's Jal Jeevan Mission and the second ensuring better demand through the spring-shed programme. Overall, 750 villages have been targeted, around 320 water users' committees have been strengthened from taking up future operation and maintenance tasks, 5,000 plus members were trained on various WaSH aspects such as water quality and O&M, and around 344 catchments were treated that covered 900 ha.

Moreover, Himmotthan is undertaking action research on Spring Discharge Pattern with active participation of local communities. The spring discharge behaviour with artificial groundwater recharge (2007-22) in Chureddhar village of Tehri district of Uttarakhand is being monitored closely. The findings indicated that a 17% growth is recorded when the community undertook de-siltation work every alternative year, and around 8% negative trend is shown on spring discharge if de-siltation was being done at an interval of three years. Hence, it is important to ensure community participation since inception, and ownership of natural resource management should rest with the gram panchayat.



Spring discharge behaviour with artificial groundwater recharge (2007-22), Chureddhar village of Tehri district in Uttarakhand.

**(Note: The recharge candle of 2013 is exceptionally high because of heavy rainfall.)*

2. Prioritizing Food and Income Sovereignty in the Mountains

It is known that the mountainous regions are a home to a wide variety of plant and animal species, many of which are not found elsewhere. Local food systems often rely on this biodiversity, which contributes to ecological stability and resilience. Himmotthan's agriculture programs are designed with an underlying of intention of building food sovereignty among the mountain communities. Its projects prioritize environmental stewardship, social justice, democratic decision-making, and promoting biodiversity. Hence, the projects are implemented via Producer Groups and Self-Help Groups, empowering the local communities.

Designing the projects in accordance with field realities of migration, fallow lands and climate change, promotion of horticulture using modern techniques is seen as a promising intervention for the promotion of livelihoods.

2.1. Reaping the Fruits:

High-density orchards for temperate fruits have been introduced across Uttarakhand, with rejuvenation of old orchards and establishment of new ones. Standardised package of practices has been introduced across project sites. The work under high-density orchards has intensified over the years. In 2023-24, around 146 villages spread across the districts of Chamoli, Uttarkashi, Rudraprayag, Nainital, Pithoragarh, Pauri Garhwal and Tehri Garhwal were introduced with these orchards of apple, peach, plum, walnut, lime and mango, depending on their elevation. Around 32,201 saplings were planted in approximately 16.23 ha. The 257 farmers mobilised through the projects have been grouped into producer groups and made members of FPOs to help them sell the produce collectively for better price realisation.

The program aims at strengthening the ecosystem required for the state to lead in fruit production. This includes establishment of nurseries for the supply of quality planting material, supply of low chilling spur varieties suitable in the current climate, collaboration with various research institutes for the supply of good clonal rootstock, and transfer package of technical practices to the farmers. Along with this, farmers were trained on integrated pest management techniques in orchards for higher production through application of sticky and solar light traps, and use of forest soil to enhance soil fertility through humus.

Ladakh, on the other hand, established apricot orchards that need rejuvenation by training farmers on cutting and pruning, and via introduction of modern ways of orchard management. The concerning issue with apricot production in Ladakh has been negligence in providing good inputs, resulting in low-quality fruits, and absence of systems to contain losses during the post-harvest period. The introduction of regular trainings on orchard management and decentralized solar dryers resulted in better produce and farmers earning Rs 650 per kg during the project from the earlier Rs 250 per kg. The FPO has been able to get a better price realization for the produce.

2.2. Protecting the Crop:

Agriculture is impacted by ingress of wild animals in farmland that leads to destruction of crops. It has become imperative to introduce measures to reduce the farmers' misery. In Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, chain fencing was introduced as a simple measure to combat the menace of wild animals.

Twelve villages in Hamirpur district of Himachal Pradesh were taken under the project. Around 14,500 sq m of land was fenced under the project supported by HDFC. In Sujanpur block, around 300 kanals of land adjacent to the forest was left unattended due to constant attacks by wild animals. As much as 30-40% of the crop loss was attributed to these attacks. Today, a simple intervention of 1,000 m of fencing helped the farmers increase their maize yield to 12 tons. Mustard cultivation also saw an increase. A farmer produced 100 kg of mustard from protected three kanals of land. In Jadipani and Thauldhar clusters of Uttarakhand, around 10 ha of land was taken under fencing under the IVDP project supported by Titan.

2.3. Backward Linkages in Honey value chain:

One of the crucial aspects of honey value chain is availability of bee colonies to boost production. There are multiple interventions on honey production and training of farmers, but availability of bee colonies has always been an issue. In this context, Himmotthan had planned bee breeding centres in selected clusters. These centres will not only provide bee colonies but will also be a point of hands-on training on technical aspects of colony division and swarm capturing.

The first established centre is at Narendranagar in Tehri district and the second one is at Ramnagar in Nainital district, both in Uttarakhand. These breeding centres are owned and managed by the local producer group. The centres have started with 20 boxes, aiming to artificially multiply the bee colonies.

2.4. Making Badri Ghee a Household Name:

Himmotthan has been focusing on promotion of local breeds of livestock. One such project is Focused Livelihood Development Project (FLDP) supported by HDFC in Joshimath in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district. Around 50 villages are taken under the project. Rural households in the region generally rear local cows known as Badri Cows for their subsistence needs. Due to the location of remote and marginalized villages, it is difficult to transport surplus milk from the villages to nearby towns for marketing. Villagers occasionally sell home-made ghee to meet out their financial requirement.

Most of the households in villages rear 2-3 local cows, of which one cow usually is in the milking stage. Daily milk production is around 3-4 litres per household. The monthly production of ghee is around 3 kg, which they consider for sale. The common practice for butter making is churning of curd to separate the cream. On average, on churning around 200-300 gm of butter is produced. The butter is processed further, and 4-5 churnings result in around 800-1,000 gm of ghee.

Himmotthan has started collection of butter from remote locations to reduce transportation cost and process the butter in batches at a centralized processing unit for quality ghee production. Different steps for quality control have been followed from butter production at the household level to butter collection from villages and its transportation to the processing unit. Himmotthan has conducted breed tests for Badri Cows for A2 Beta Casin from Vaikom, Kerala.

The ghee unit is managed by Kalpganga Krishak Utpadak Swayat Sahkarita that has its members as active suppliers of butter for ghee production. Presently, butter is being collected from three clusters comprising 42 villages. On average, 100 kg butter is collected from these clusters every month. Butter is collected four times in a month depending on quantity in different clusters. The collected butter is stored in a deep fridge till the ghee is processed. During the year, the FPO purchased 1,100 kg of butter that was processed into 800 kg of ghee.

3. Focusing on the next generation/ Reimagining learning spaces

Himmotthan has piloted projects in both primary and secondary education. The secondary education program focuses on establishment of e-learning classes and is more focussed on infrastructure. The education initiative in Uttarakhand was rolled out in 665 schools across four blocks of Chamba, Jaunpur, Augustmuni and Kotabagh in the districts of Tehri Garhwal, Rudraprayag and Nainital. It aims to reach 13,000 children.

The project focuses on building the Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) of children, aligning it with the goals of the government's NIPUN Bharat Mission. FLN refers to a child's ability to read and understand simple sentences and solve basic maths problems by the end of class 3. These are critical gateway skills that help children learn meaningfully in higher classes and help them acquire 21st century skills that are imperative to succeed in the long run. Under the project, Himmotthan reached out to 300 schools directly with support to strengthen FLN. We established interactive and child-friendly libraries, activated school management committees and held regular sessions around literacy. The focus was on building capacity of teachers in all the above aspects for the sustainability of the program.

Himmotthan believes that thoughtfully designed school spaces according to a child's perspective can help hasten their learning and build more interest. These spaces are important for schools in the mountains. Regular print material found easily in the markets of the plains, such as magazines and newspapers, are not easily available in the mountains. This limits a child's exposure to regular print material that help in building their reading capabilities. In such a scenario, good libraries in schools where children spend most of their day is one of the ways to increase their exposure to varied literature.

For most rural children in government schools, a library is a significant part of learning in the context of non-literate home backgrounds. A library envisioned in the program is a space where lively discussions around books, storytelling and other activities are encouraged. These activities also help students develop foundational literacy and writing skills. It is important that children are exposed to good contextual literature designed to develop their curiosity so that they explore various stories and topics.

Himmotthan considers libraries in schools more than mere reading spaces. It is a medium that connects rural mountain children to the world. The program has established 300 such vibrant and active libraries that are managed by trained children's library management committees.

4. Artificial Glacier and Diversion-based Irrigation

Artificial glaciers could be a sustainable solution for the problems of water scarcity fuelled by climate change, which is a clear danger in India's higher reaches. The glaciers of the Hindu Kush Himalayas, which feed a number of Indian rivers, are retreating at a mean rate of about 14.9 metres per annum. That implies that glacier meltwater will continue to decrease.

For Himmotthan, setting up artificial glaciers in Leh, the larger of Ladakh's two districts, was a matter of priority. While around 20% of Leh's inhabitants have access to water from the Indus river, the rest rely on streams and springs from glaciers at altitudes of 6,000 metres or more.

Over time, 13 artificial glaciers have been built by local communities with Himmotthan's help. Water from the glaciers today irrigate more than 1,800 acres of cropland across Leh, serving the farming needs of some 1,200 households, while providing water for 60-70 days every year in the 120-day crop cycle.

This is a high-impact design. With each embankment able to store up to 2 million litres of water, the artificial glacier's storage capacity can be as high as 50 million litres, depending on temperature, topography and the velocity of the stream water.

The challenge with the project lies not in construction as much as in maintaining the artificial glaciers and proper distribution of water through diversion channels. Himmotthan is trying its best to revive the traditional wisdom of checking the water flow along the streams, revival of reserviours (zing) and proper distribution of water through diversion channels and wise use of water resources.

5. Moving towards Ecosystem Services and Climate-Smart Practices

Over the past few years, Himmotthan's interventions are moving towards strengthening the ecosystem services and climate-smart practices. Himmotthan has integrated carbon reduction interventions into its multifaceted projects, recognising the critical nexus between environmental preservation and community well-being. Himmotthan programs lead the way in developing methodologies and other tools to unlock the carbon reduction potential by adopting smart interventions such as climate-smart agriculture (CSA), afforestation programs (smriti van and common land plantations), natural resource management (spring-shed management, artificial glaciers, etc.), sustainable use of renewable resources and beekeeping, among others.

Climate-smart interventions such as adoption of pulses and millets (C4 crops) in rainfed conditions and post-harvest management practices with 16,000 households from 254 villages have improved crop production and availability of surplus produce. Efforts will continue to expand the introduction of climate-resilient varieties of pulses, millets and other crops. Establishing mountain seed banks and ensuring farmers have access to high-quality, climate-resilient seeds will further strengthen agricultural resilience.
Promoting decentralized renewable energy systems further reduce dependence on fossil fuels and boost energy security in rural areas. An increase in the deployment of solar-based water-lifting schemes and other renewable energy solutions (>200 solar dryers, 15 solarization of community led processing facilities and enterprises, four cold storage, 10 solar lift irrigation cum drinking water schemes, etc.) has provided an enabling environment for green energy penetration in rural areas.

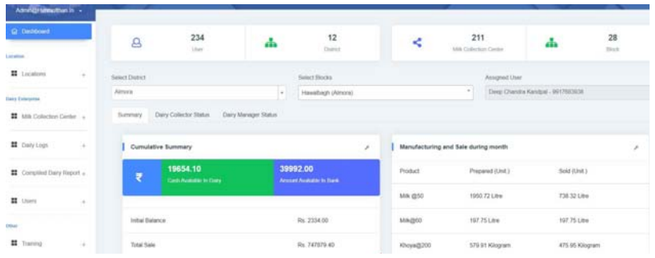
Over 3,800 ha of common lands have been brought under afforestation to ensure a steady supply of animal fodder. Introducing climate-resilient fodder varieties and improving livestock management practices can reduce the vulnerability of livestock to climate change. Efforts continue to rejuvenate natural springs and protect water sources. Implementing community-led spring-shed management programs and promoting rainwater harvesting at the household level will enhance water security. There must be a focus on increasing the number of artificial glaciers to provide a reliable water source for irrigation. By continuing to build on these interventions and embracing innovative approaches will increase community resilience to climate change, support sustainable livelihoods and contribute to global efforts in mitigating the climate emergency.

6. Initiating Digitization and IT Management

Himmotthan's work is spread over a vast geography with tough mountainous terrain. As a result, timely data collection from the field has always been a challenge. To overcome the situation, Himmotthan is swiftly tending towards digitalization.

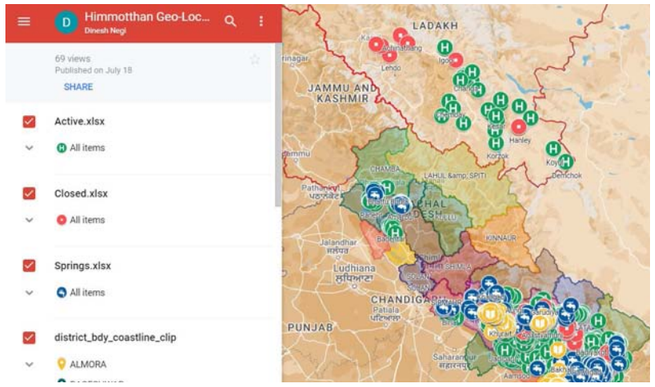
6.1. Micro-Dairy Management Mobile App:

The prime focus of Himmotthan has always been to provide sustainable livelihood options to rural households by linking them with the market. Currently, 29 micro-dairies led by women's federations are collecting milk from distant villages for sale in nearest peri-urban markets. Earlier, micro-dairies were facing a problem in proper data tracking at different stages from milk collection and testing to marketing. Himmotthan has provided a mobile-based application through which these dairies can now track all relevant data. This has also promoted digital payments as most of the farmer payments are being done through bank accounts.



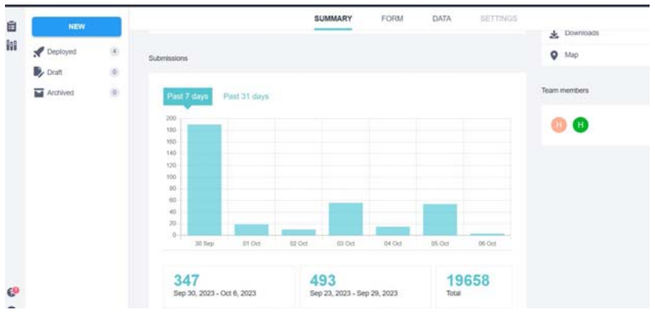
6.2. Geo Tagging – Online GIS:

Rolling out an effective planning based on geographical locations plays a vital role in rural development, especially in mountainous areas. Himmotthan has initiated geo tagging in more than 1,800 project villages. An inventory of 750 treated springs along with 640 schools are being maintained online on Google Maps. The online GIS directly provides a clear insight of Himmotthan's outreach with its major interventions.



6.3. Artificial Insemination and Progeny Tracking Mobile App:

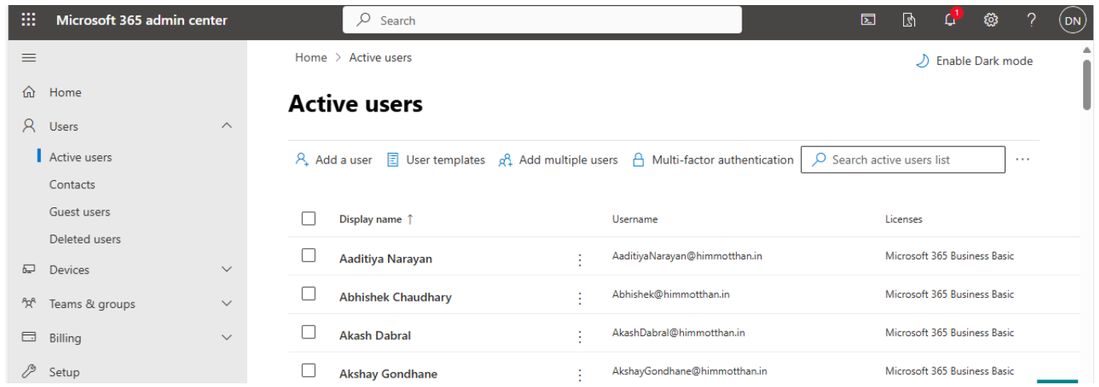
The prime focus of Himmotthan has always been to provide sustainable livelihood options to rural households by linking them with the market. Currently, 29 micro-dairies led by women's federations are collecting milk from distant villages for sale in nearest peri-urban markets. Earlier, micro-dairies were facing a problem in proper data tracking at different stages from milk collection and testing to marketing. Himmotthan has provided a mobile-based application through which these dairies can now track all relevant data. This has also promoted digital payments as most of the farmer payments are being done through bank accounts.



6.4. Microsoft Cloud for Non-profit:

With expansion of project areas, Himmotthan's manpower has also increased. It needed a cloud-based solution to strengthen its employees' technical capabilities. Official email IDs, online meeting apps and other technological staff solutions were required However, a non-profit organisation like Himmotthan could not meet the financial requirements for availing such facilities for every employee.

Microsoft Cloud for Non-profit has supported Himmotthan by providing a technical grant, under which 300 licences of Microsoft business basics was given to Himmotthan free of cost along with multiple other cloud-based solutions. Due to this grant, Himmotthan was able to provide official email IDs to its staff along with other online apps.



7. Project Endline Assessments and Way Forward

Financial year 2023-24 was also important as it saw closure of three crucial projects. It also undertook detailed reflections on the project journeys and designing of new projects on the learning. Livelihood Skills Uttarakhand, a flagship program in collaboration with the Rural Development Department of Uttarakhand, implemented USRLM in five blocks intensively with a special focus on promotion of skilling and livelihoods through financial inclusion. The project was implemented with 25,000 households, aiming to increase income to Rs 1 lakh by end of the project period. A study suggested the ongoing process of Cluster Level Federations (CLF) to be strengthened by creating model CLFs as emersion sites. The project had pushed for good uptake of livelihood activities. However, robust loan monitoring needs to be introduced. Business models with provision of new technologies will have to be brought under focus. Most importantly, the organisation will have to continue leveraging its strength of convergence and partnership.

This led to designing of a new, more exhaustive program called Gender Inclusive Livelihoods through Financial Inclusion in Uttarakhand. The project is being implemented in seven blocks with 27,000 households with a focus on livelihood enhancement through promotion of multi-commodity FPOs and best practices in community mobilisation and financial inclusion through model CLFs.

The Leh Livelihood initiative covered 4,000 families living in 40 villages of Ladakh by promoting land-based economy and social enterprises. The project has main interventions around strengthening of the apricot value chain, artificial glaciers, local handloom and off-season vegetable production. An independent assessment by PwC has shown overall positive impact on the quality of life via higher farm production and collectivised selling of the produce that fetched better prices of the much-improved produce. The off-season vegetable production though promising intervention needs stronger marketing channels. The efforts put in water management saw significant results in reducing the time spent on irrigation and better yields.

The endline evaluation of Mission Pulses - Uttarakhand program was conducted by CMSR to evaluate the project's implementation and measure its impact on the targeted beneficiaries by assessing the project's achievement on its outputs and outcomes. The other objectives of the assessment were to capture the learning and build upon them for future interventions under the mountain agriculture system for the benefit of farmers. The agency has applied a mixed method of quantitative research with 95% confidence interval and 3.5% margin of error combined with qualitative data collected through FGDs and KIIs with two knowledge partners. The assessment study revealed that the project has made significant improvement in the livelihoods of rural communities by addressing key challenges, strengthening agriculture value chains and leveraging partnerships. The project has laid a foundation for sustainable agricultural development in the region.

A new project titled Maximising Himalayan Agriculture Initiative (MHAI) was approved by Tata Trusts for a period of five years from October 2023 to September 2028 by engaging 35,000 farming households across 16 mountain clusters of Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh. The project is designed to strengthen identified agriculture and allied value chains and upscaling of successful models in new geographies to increase outreach, economies of scale, productivity and market linkages, which will be anchored by strong community institutions. The project is being implemented in 800 villages of 20 developmental blocks spread across 12 mountain districts of Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh.

Additionally, as co-funding, the Himmotthan Society was able to secure support from Sustainable Livelihood Programme of Axis Bank Foundation for two states and one UT. One of the key objectives of the project is value-chain development of seven major products, including pulses and nutri-cereals, high-value crops, seed production, orchards and nurseries, beekeeping, apricot and agri-allied with backward and forward integration. A few more years of interventions will help Himmotthan in leading multiple value chains to their sustainable conclusion through a strong partnership mode.

Chapter

Ladakh

01

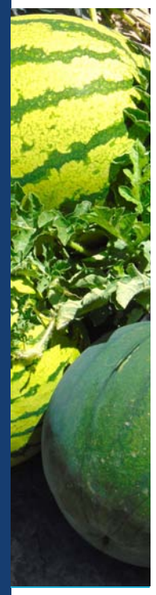
Project Details - Ladakh

S.N.	Project Name	Thematic Area	Project Duration	Project Funder	Financial Outlay (Rs. In Lakh)
01	Formation of Vegetable Farmer Producer Organisation in Leh district	Agriculture	Apr 2019 - Mar 2024	NABARD	11.44
02	Formation of Apricot Farmer Producer Organisation in Sham valley of Leh district	Agriculture	Apr 2019 - Mar 2024	NABARD	11.07
03	Spring-shed based Watershed Development Fund in Sakti village of Leh district	Water	Apr 2019 - Mar 2024	NABARD	42.68
04	Centre of Excellence for Research and Documentation of Agro-processing and Livelihoods in Tribal Areas of Leh district	Livelihood	Jan 2020 - Dec 2023	MoTA	69.94
05	Leh Livelihood Initiative Phase 2	Livelihood	Aug 2020 - Sept 2023	Tata Trusts	150.00
06	Demonstration and adaptation of Solar Apricot Dryer and Apricot Harvesting Nets in Lower Sham Valley of Ladakh	Agriculture	Oct 2020 - Mar 2024	NABARD	15.71
07	Establishment of Rural Mart in Leh	Livelihood	Apr 2021 - Mar 2024	NABARD	4.95
08	Establishment of Rural Mart in Nyoma, Changthang	Livelihood	Apr 2021 - Mar 2024	NABARD	4.95
09	Focused Rural Development Project, Ladakh	Livelihood	July 2021 - Jun 2024	HDFC	528.13
10	Women Empowerment through Skill Development of Artisans in Changthang, Ladakh	Livelihood	Sept 2021 - Mar 2024	NABARD	11.39
11	Enhancing Adaptive Capacity of Farmers to Overcome Effect of Shrinking Glaciers on Agriculture in Changthang Region of Leh District	Water	Oct 2020 - Mar 2024	NABARD	10.94
12	Maximizing Himalayan Agriculture Initiative (MHAI)	Agriculture	Oct 2023 - Sept 2028	SRTT	588.00
13	Integrated Drinking Water Project in partnership with Jal Jeevan Mission	WaSH	Aug 2021 - June 2024	SRTT	140.00
14	Integrated Spring-shed Management Program in the Central and Western Himalayan Region	WaSH	Jan 2022 - Dec 2025	EGF	140.00

Overview

Himmotthan Society has been implementing the Leh Livelihood Initiative in Ladakh since April 2018. The Project Management Unit (PMU) in Leh is responsible for planning, designing, execution and reporting of project activities. The overall project coordination and management is done by the Himmotthan's head office in Dehradun.

The Leh Livelihood Initiative is primarily funded by Tata Trusts with co-funding from NABARD, National Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation (NSTFDC), Ministry of Tribal Affairs and HDFC Bank Parivartan. In financial year 2023-24, there are 11 ongoing projects under the initiative.



Aim and Objectives

The aim of the initiative is to improve the living condition of 4,000 families residing in 40 villages of Ladakh by promoting land-based economy and social enterprises that will ultimately lead to sustainable development of the region.

The key objectives are as follows:

- Value chain development of three key products that include apricots, wools and vegetables.
- Forming and nurturing 60 farmer groups, two Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) and establishing self-sustainable social enterprises and a Centre of Excellence (CoE).
- To ensure assured irrigation to smallholder farmers through innovation, appropriate technology and people's participation.
- To promote decentralised renewable energy and solutions for economic upliftment of tribal farmers and nomads.

Project Location and Target Group

The project is being implemented in the Union Territory of Ladakh. Himmotthan Society has selected 40 villages spread across 10 administrative blocks of Leh and Kargil districts for implementation of proposed activities. The project has directly benefitted more than 4,000 tribal families in four clusters (Lower Sham valley in the west, Changthang in the east, Kharu in the central region and Nubra valley in the north) with a total population of over 20,000.

In 2023-24, Himmotthan reached more than 2,000 households in 30 revenue villages across 10 blocks in Ladakh.

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Livelihood Programme

The project focused in developing and nurturing self-reliant FPOs through training and capacity building and providing extension services to farmers and artisans.

Nurturing of Apricot FPO

The project aimed at enhancing the quality of life for over 300 apricot growers through formation and strengthening of a FPO for post-harvesting and processing, and also to facilitate expansion, growth and profitability of the business through branding and market linkages.

a. Marketing of fresh apricots by FPO:

Apricots were graded according to shape, size, texture and tenderness. An amount of Rs 115 per kg (including cost to farmers @ Rs 110/kg and Rs 5 per kg as profit margin to the FPO) was agreed upon. In partnership with DJ Export Private Limited, 30.19 tons of fresh apricots were marketed collectively from 128 farmers in eight villages to domestic and international markets last year, resulting in a business turnover of Rs 34.72 lakh.

b. Marketing of dried apricots and apricot oil:

The FPO undertakes organised marketing of dried apricots and apricot oil. In the last financial year, 2 tons of dried apricots was marketed in local and national markets through B2B and B2C models. In total, the FPO has done business worth Rs 11.80 lakh from dried apricots and oil.

Sham Valley Apricot Producer Cooperative Limited was declared the winner of CII FPO Excellence Awards 2023 under the Market Linkage Category.

Nurturing of Vegetable FPO

The Vegetable FPO has provided an institutional platform for addressing the gaps in forward linkages to vegetable marketing. The FPO has enabled aggregation of the produce and demand that has added value in production and marketing.

In August 2023, approximately 8 tons of green peas were sold through a Kashmiri wholesaler in Leh, which resulted in a turnover of Rs 3.35 lakh for 83 families in Rong valley of Kharu cluster with a small profit margin to the FPO. It would have been more than that, but due to a natural disaster (flashflood) in Mandi in August 2023, a consignment was stuck. Being a perishable item, it could not reach its destination in time, resulting in a financial loss.

Natural Water Resource Management

The aim of the project was to improve the adaptive capacity of farmers in Ladakh in overcoming the effects of depleting natural glaciers on the farm sector through integrated water resources development that will directly benefit farmers in the region.

a. Artificial Glacier:

It is a simple, cost-effective and unique technique for harnessing and conserving water in cold and high-altitude regions. It is built at a higher elevation (>4,300m) but at a walkable distance from the village. Stone embankments are built at regular intervals, which impede the flow of water, making shallow pools. The process of ice formation starts in late November and continues for three months. Later, a huge reserve of ice accumulates on the mountain slope aptly termed as an artificial glacier.

b. Water Reservoirs:

Five water reservoirs (locally known as zing) were repaired and renovated. Each reservoir caters to 20-30 households, depending on the size of the village.

c. Diversion-based Irrigation Canals:

Sixteen irrigation canals were renovated through excavation, widening and concrete structures. These helped in timely and adequate supply of irrigation water to the farms.

Wool Craft Promotion

Pashmina produced in Ladakh is one of the finest fibres in the world. It is mainly found in colder regions of Changthang (> 4,300m). Each goat can produce up to 300 to 400 gram of pashmina fibre in a year, which is extracted using a comb when the temperature becomes warmer in June and July.

a. Product Development Centre or Common Facility Centre:

Eleven product development centres were established in Changthang for value chain development of pashmina and sheep wool.

b. Artisans Skill Development:

Twenty two women were trained as master trainers and these certified master trainers went on to train 180 artisans in their respective villages.

Improved Solar Greenhouse

The project aimed at improving the diet and nutrition of the community by growing fresh vegetables around the year. It works on the principle of solar radiation, collection and heat storage. For a passive solar greenhouse to work effectively, it must receive at least six hours of sun in a day. The size of a greenhouse is 50 ft by 24 ft.

Ten pasive solar greenhouses were built during the reporting period. Each greenhouse can produce up to 1,000 kg of vegetables when used throughout the year.

Solar Apricot Dryer

Himmotthan and its partners have experimented with different designs of solar apricot dryers over the past few years. In a protected cage type dryer, there is a tin sheet as a roof and all other four sides are covered with GI mesh wire. The dryer is 7 ft in height, 6.5 ft in length and 6.5 ft in width. There are mainly two models of solar dryer with varying drying capacity of either 24 trays (or 168 kg drying capacity) and 48 trays (336 kg drying capacity). Drying took 10 days on an average. Once dried, the trays were emptied and filled with fresh supplies of apricot. This process is repeated until the entire lot is dried.

» Thirty five solar dryers were installed, producing 4.7 tons of 'A' quality dried apricot. The realised price of apricot increased from Rs 300 to Rs 650 in the past three years of project intervention.

Pilot on Solar Dryer

Himmotthan in collaboration with Punjab Agricultural University in Ludhiana has designed a new model of forced circulation solar dryer appropriate for drying apricots in Ladakh.

» Two units of TATA-PAU Solar Dryers were installed for demonstration and training in Achinathang. The dryers were studied by field staff for efficiency and effectiveness. Different drying methods were tested to understand how best to use it and what improvements are required in the design.

Capacity Building Programme

To ensure proper and effective running and management of the programme, it is essential to provide farmers with training and provide them with exposure visits to build the capacity and competencies of communities and project staff.

a. Training Programme on Training of Trainers:

A four-day training programme on ToT was organised for 22 project staff from July 24-27, 2023. It was facilitated by ASK Training and Learning Private Limited.

b. Two-day Training Programme on Community Institution Development:

A two-day training programme on Community Institution Development was organised from June 1-2, 2023. The workshop was facilitated by Tata Trusts officials. It was attended by 12 project staff and 21 community members representing the apricot and vegetable FPOs and women SHGs.

c. One-Week Exposure Visit to SKUAST and CITH in Kashmir:

One CEO, three board members and four project staff visited Kashmir valley in September 2023 for a training-cum-exposure visit to SKUAST-K and CITH to learn about improved farming methods, orchard management, quality planting materials, pest management and post-harvest technologies, etc.

Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WaSH)

Background

Ladakh is characterised as a cold and arid region where annual precipitation is about 100 mm per year. Glacier meltwater is the only source of irrigation for more than 80% of local farmers, according to the District Statistical Handbook 2014-15. Less than 20% of the population fulfil their irrigational needs from the river in villages on the banks of the Indus. More than 60 villages and hamlets are facing severe shortage of water for irrigation, especially during the sowing season in April and May. The region used to receive snowfall twice as much as it receives now. However, in recent times, the region has observed decreased and untimely snowfall, and retreating glaciers.

Key Areas of Intervention

With a view to enhance project interventions to achieve improvement of water availability, Himmotthan has taken steps to have the Natural Water Resource Management as the central theme of our ongoing developmental initiative in Ladakh.

The project entitled “Integrated Drinking Water Project in Multiple States in partnership with the Jal Jeevan Mission” was funded by Tata Trusts for two years from September 2021 to August 2023 with no-cost extension till June 30, 2024. A total of 33 villages were selected in four administrative blocks of Leh district for implementation of proposed activities. The project directly benefitted 3,750 families in two clusters (Changthang in the east and Kharu in the central region) with a total population of over 16,000.

The second project entitled “Integrated Water Security through Participatory Springshed Management in the Indian Himalayan Region” was funded by Eicher Motor Limited for three years from October 2022 to September 2025. It is focussed on spring-shed management as a tool to boost water security.

Key Objectives

- To restore the ecological balance by harnessing, conserving and developing water resources through spring-shed management.
- To undertake comprehensive scientific assessment on water supply and demand gap and promote water security through adoption of spring-shed management approach.
- To promote management of water at the lowest appropriate level through decentralised and integrated water resource management by water users groups (WUGs) or community institutions.

Key Achievements

- 3,750 households got access to portable drinking water through functional tap connection.
- 76 training and capacity building sessions were conducted, which included Information Education & Communication (IEC)-Behaviour Change Communication (BCC) to the community, including WUGs on design, implementation and management of spring-sheds.
- 719 Village Water & Sanitation Committees (VWSC) or Pani Samiti members were trained on various WaSH aspects.
- 134 Water Quality Monitoring and Surveillance Committee (WQMSC) members were trained in water testing using Field Testing Kits (FTK).
- 33 water management systems were created in 33 villages, benefiting 3,750 households.
- An artificial glacier was constructed in Tarchit of Rong Block for irrigation during the critical sowing months of April and May. Approximately 40,000 sq m of ice reservoir was created through the intervention, resulting in 11 million litres of water. This traditional but scientific approach helps address water scarcity and supports agricultural activities.

Idea Incubation, Innovation and Studies

Action research and documentation of tribal families and their livelihoods with a special emphasis on apricot and vegetable farming, agro-processing and agri-allied activities were carried out under the initative. The research focused on new farming practices, technological interventions and innovative approaches.

Video documenation of Leh Livelihood Initiative

Himmotthan Society hired a film production company called ‘Story People’ for developing two short films on Ladakh programme.

A 4-min film on Leh Livelihood Initiative - https://youtu.be/FqoeUT2_vjk
A 10-min film on Leh Livelihood Initiative - https://youtu.be/SvPE11suSUY

In-situ assessment of an artificial snow reservoir (snow barrier embankments) at Tarchit village in Ladakh was carried out using a high-end handheld global positioning system (Garmin 66sr), non-contact laser measuring device and customized density measurement kit for its dimensional and volumetric quantities. The area of the reservoir is computed to be 39994 sq m. Considering the check bands height of 3 ft and snow ideal density factor of 0.5, the maximum capacity of the ice reservoir was calculated as 18.29 million litres of water equivalent. The actual storage is estimated as 11.23 million litre water equivalent.
A review has been undertaken by the GB Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment - Ladakh Regional Centre.

Case study : Group farming in Takmachik

The watermelons of Takmachik village in Ladakh's Sham Valley region have developed quite a reputation. "They are so sweet that people think we have added sugar to them," says Tashi Dolma, a Takmachik resident who grows the fruit. "But our watermelons are grown entirely organically, which is what gives them a different taste. There's no question of adding sugar."

The watermelon crop here is also bountiful, mainly because it is cultivated by many. Ms Dolma is part of a group of 10 women who have been growing watermelons as part of a group farming initiative introduced in the area in 2016 by Himmotthan Society, an associate organisation of the Tata Trusts.

Five self-help groups, comprising about 35 women, are involved in the watermelon cultivation in Takmachik. Each of these groups selects a fallow plot of land, leases it from the owner for Rs.5,000-6,000, and starts growing watermelons. It's a long-duration fruit — it takes from April to October to mature — and the women divide the farming tasks.

They plant the seedlings and take turns to water the crop, with two women attending to it every other day. Come harvest time and they get together to manage a bunch of tasks before taking the watermelons to the market to sell.

Financial responsibilities are shared by the group: the cost of leasing the land and purchasing seedlings and the plastic mulching sheets that nourish the crop. The Trusts, through Himmotthan, have made these available at subsidised rates and facilitated a package of practices for the cultivators.

Proceeds from the sale of the watermelons are divided equally among members of the group. In recent years, when there has been a bumper crop — this is becoming common with improved farming techniques — Ms Dolma's group has managed to get around Rs.65,000 for one harvest. About half of this is split equally and the remaining is set aside for future expenses, including 'exposure visits' to learn better farming techniques and such.

There are those who have done better still. A 12-woman group led by Phurbu Dolma, also from Takmachik, earned Rs.85,000 from a recent harvest, selling the fruit at Rs.50 a kilo. The rewards are attractive, but there are benefits as well as risks in watermelon farming.

Success story : Artificial glaciers

Farming in such a region would be impossible were it not for the springs and streams of glacier meltwater that sustain Ladakh's population. Unfortunately, climate change is manifesting itself here too, affecting what used to be a settled way of life as 'glacier retreat' — a phenomenon caused by rising temperatures and decreasing snowfall — threatens lives and livelihood.

The fallout is a mounting scarcity of water during Ladakh's summers, and at the receiving end of it are farmers such as Padma Sangdup, who hails from Sakti, a village of about 370 households in Leh district. "The flow of water in our village's irrigation canal would fall between April and July because meltwater from the glaciers was insufficient," says Mr Sangdup. "We had to fetch water from a subsidiary canal 2km away."

Things have got better for Mr Sangdup and Sakti ever since an artificial glacier was built to help the village community get a measure of water security. Supported by the Himmotthan Society, the artificial glaciers initiative involves the construction of glaciers over nearby streams.

These glaciers are, essentially, a series of stone-walled pools that freeze in winter — they resemble icy rivers then — before beginning to melt around April, in time for the barley- and vegetable-sowing season. The water released through the process is distributed to farmers through a traditional turn-based system called chures.

"With the extra supply, households get their share of irrigation water once every 10 days, where earlier it was 15-20 days," says Mr Sangdup. The increase in water availability has prompted many of Sakti's villagers to grow alfalfa (as cattle fodder) and vegetables. "I farm water-intensive crops like green peas, which I couldn't earlier," adds Mr Sangdup.

End-line Assessment of Leh Livelihood Initiative

PwC was awarded a contract to conduct an endline impact assessment of the Leh Livelihood Initiative. The assessment was carried out in June and July 2023 in three clusters comprising 21 villages. Samples were drawn at 95% confidence level and 3.5% margin of error. Out of the total 3,165 beneficiaries across three clusters, 640 families were covered for the household survey.

Key Findings from the Endline Assessment of Leh Livelihood Initiative :

1. Apricot value chain development

Sham valley is located 160 km from Leh town. More than 760 households in 10 villages have benefitted from the initiative; each village consists of 60-70 households. The majority of the population depends on apricot farming and other agricultural activities for livelihood.

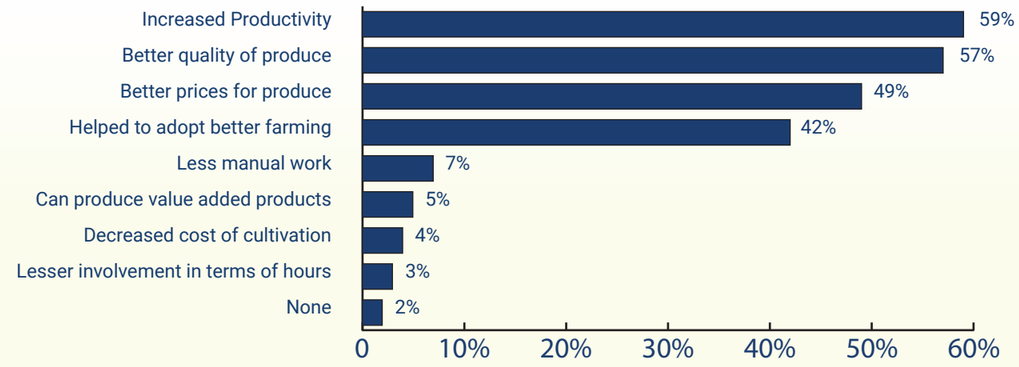
Key challenges faced by farmers in Sham Valley

- 54% of respondents reported that changes in climatic patterns with relation to precipitation creates severe problems to them.
- 42% of respondents reported low productivity from apricot farming as a major issue.
- 31% of respondents reported high percentage of loss during harvesting.
- 27% of respondents reported drying as a major challenge before project intervention.
- 26% of respondents highlighted low market prices as a major issue faced by them before project intervention.

Perceived impact

- Harvesting nets resulted in reduced wastage, and led to higher production and better quality of product.
- 15% wastage while harvesting has reduced to 5% due to harvesting nets.
- The intervention enabled beneficiaries in reducing the labour cost from Rs 3,647 to Rs 3,058.
- Solar dryers take six days on an average to dry the apricots, which is considerably lower than 20 days required for drying in other traditional methods.
- Usage of solar dryers preserves hygiene and reduces wastage.

Perceived impact of the program by the respondents [n=159]



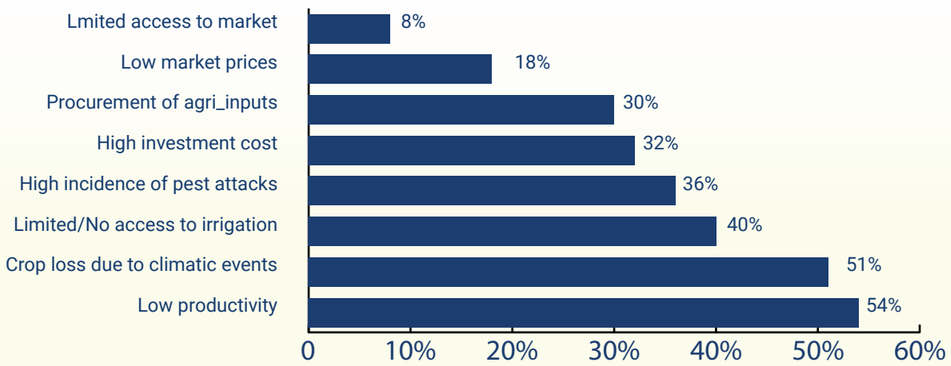
Recommendations by PwC

- Adoption of precision farming techniques such as spectroscopy, laser sensor-based pesticide and herbicide applicator, high-density planting, meadow orcharding, and micro propagation.
- Training of board members of the two FPOs on FPO management.
- Establishment of processing units at the community level through development of individual enterprises or strengthening of FPOs.
- Availability of working capital would allow the FPO to adopt processing, branding and packaging practices at its level, which is essential to connect with institutional retailers.
- To create market linkages with institutional buyers and large aggregators to cater its marketing services to all members such as start-ups like DeHaat, Fasal, Dvara E-registry, Agribazaar, etc.

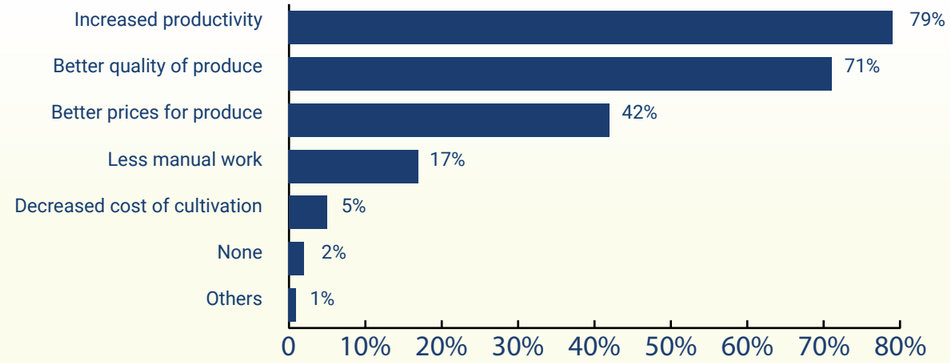
2. Off-season vegetable farming

The Kharu cluster consists of the two blocks of Kharu and Rong Chugut. The initiative has reached 1,730 households in 24 villages across the Kharu cluster. The average agricultural landholding is 12 kanal (1.5 acres). The key findings emerged from 398 respondents from the cluster.

Key challenges faced by the farmers in Kharu cluster



Perceived impact



Parameter	Pre-intervention	Post-intervention	% change
Average production of vegetables among the respondents (in kg) (N=398)	718	975	36%
Average income from vegetable farming among the respondents (In Rs) (N=398)	74,974	95,752	28%

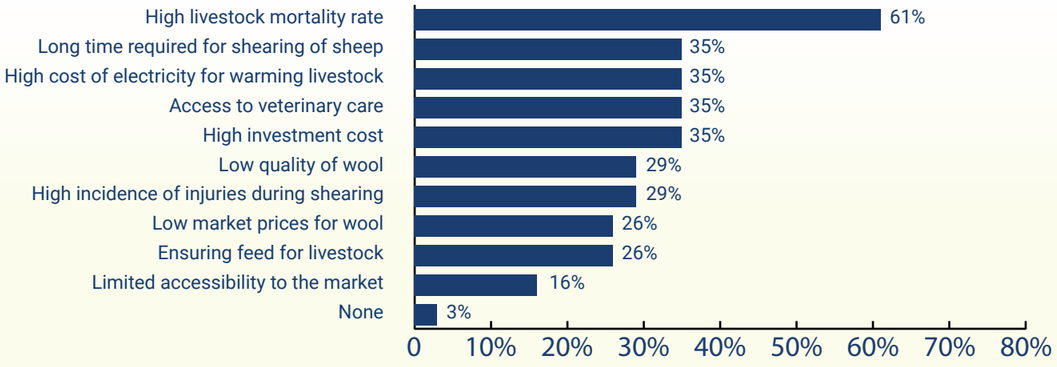
Recommendations by PwC

- Creating and promoting sustainable social enterprises where local youth can be identified, trained and provided with necessary handholding support on farm entrepreneurship.
- Farmer field schools, pilot plots and seed trials can be organised to give practical training to farmers on organic and natural farming techniques.
- Creating linkages with military establishments and local schools.

3. Wool-based value chain

Changthang is located 180 km from Leh town. More than 528 households in 15 villages have benefitted from the programme. Villagers largely depend on animal husbandry and agriculture for livelihoods. The average landholding is 8 kanal per family.

Key challenges faced by respondents in wool production and artisanship [n=31]



Perceived Impact by livestock

Type of respondents	Pre-intervention	Post-intervention	% Change
Average cost incurred per year in livestock replacement	Rs 66,000	Rs 24,000	63%

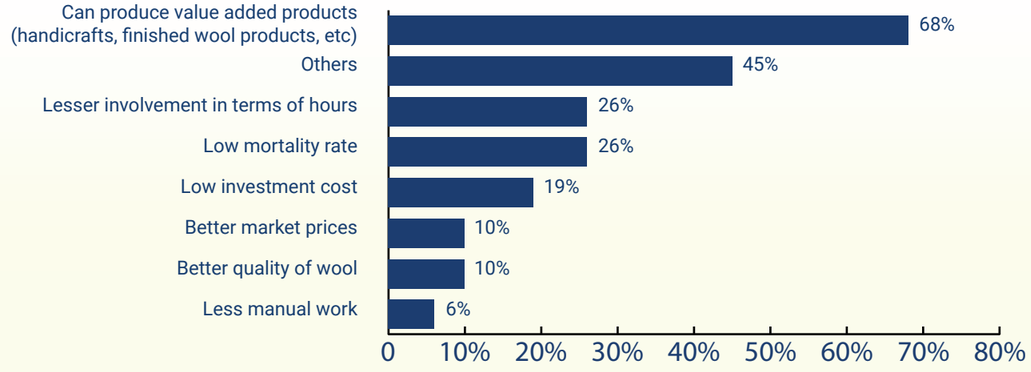
Income earned from wool

Type of respondents	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Production	4 Qtl.	8 Qtl.	12 Qtl.
Cost saved per year (market price = Rs 2,000/ quintal)	Rs 8,000	Rs 16,000	Rs 24,000

Impact on household Income of a Herder

Impact	Pre-intervention	Post-intervention	% Change
Average annual income	Rs 39,774	Rs 72,097	81%

Perceived Impact by Artisans



Type of respondents (artisans)	Pre project intervention	Post project intervention
Average income of each respondent engaged in artisanship before the program	Rs 21,111	Rs 26,556
Newly engaged respondents	-	Rs 22,778

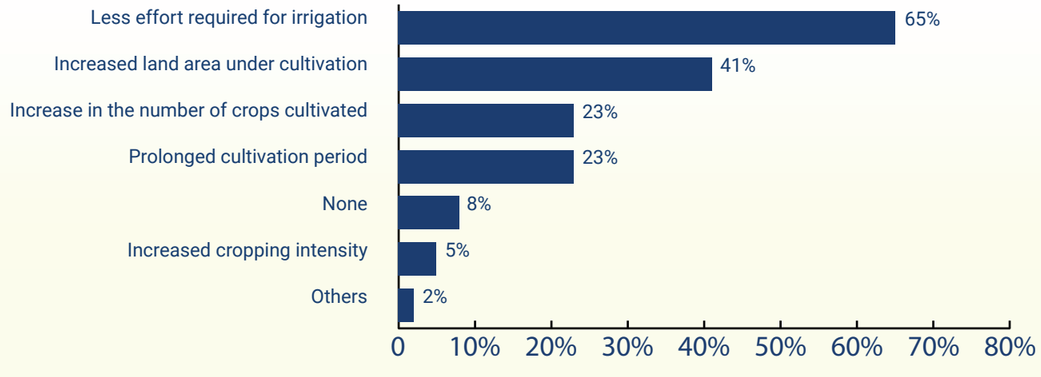
Recommendations by PwC

- Repair and maintenance of existing tools and equipment of artisans.
- Larger lambing sheds to accommodate 200-220 livestock to reduce mortality rate.
- Engagement in various productive activities such as sewing, knitting and weaving.
- Heating facilities in product development centres to maintain the artisans' level of interest and efficiency.
- Skill enhancement support in the areas of designing, weaving and finishing for artisans.

4. Natural Water Resource Management

The streams fed by natural glaciers and snowmelt are the major sources of irrigation for the local population in Ladakh. Entire villages are dependent on 1-2 streams flowing through them. Therefore, Himmotthan has identified this as a critical issue and supported local communities to establish artificial glaciers and renovate the traditional water reservoirs locally known as zing and irrigation canals, locally known as yura.

Perceived Impact of program by respondents around irrigation support [n=89]



Major impacts of water resource management

- Major impacts of water resource management.
- Reduction in level of effort required for field irrigation.
- Improvement in ‘access to water’ for irrigation.
- Increase in number of crops grown.
- Increase in cultivation period.

Recommendations by PwC

- Repair and maintenance of existing tools and equipment of artisans .
- Larger lambing sheds to accommodate 200-220 livestock to reduce mortality rate.
- Engagement in various productive activities such as sewing, knitting and weaving.
- Heating facilities in product development centres to maintain the artisans’ level of interest and efficiency.
- Skill enhancement support in the areas of designing, weaving and finishing for artisans.

Look Ahead for Next Year

A new project titled “Maximising Himalayan Agriculture Initiative (MHAI)” was sanctioned by Tata Trusts for five years from October 2023 to September 2028 by engaging 34,000 farming households across 16 mountain clusters of Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh. The project is designed to strengthen identified agriculture and allied value chains in the villages of existing cluster and blocks and upscaling of successful models in new geographies to increase outreach, economy of scale, productivity and market linkages, which will be anchored by strong producer groups (PGs), FPOs and farmer producer companies (FPCs).

The project is being implemented in 800 villages of 20 developmental blocks spread across 12 mountain districts of Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh. In Ladakh, Himmotthan has selected 50 villages across 10 administrative blocks of Leh and Kargil districts for implementation of the proposed activities. The project will directly benefit 4,000 tribal families in three clusters (Sham valley in the west, Changthang in the east, and Kharu and Rong valleys in the central region).

Additionally, Himmotthan was able to secure a five-year funding from Axis Bank Foundation with a budget totalling Rs 33 crore for the three Himalayan states. One of the key objectives of the project is value chain development of seven major products, including pulses and nutri-cereals, high-value crops, seed production, orchards and nurseries, beekeeping, apricot and agri-allied activities like woollen handicraft and dairy products with backward and forward integration. A few more years’ interventions will help us form multiple value chains and lead them to their sustainable conclusion through a strong partnership mode.

Chapter

Himachal Pradesh

02

Project Details - Himachal Pradesh

S.N.	Project Name	Thematic Area	Project Duration	Project Funder	Financial Outlay (Rs. In Lakh)
01	Holistic Rural Development Program, Hamirpur	Multi-Thematic	Mar 2021 - Mar 2024	HDFC CSR	451.00
02	Central Himalayan Livestock Initiative (CHLI), Phase 2	Livestock	Jan 2022 - Sept 2025	TATA Trusts	140.00
03	Promotion of Millets and Traditional Crops in Kangra valley	Agriculture	Oct 2021- Sept 2024	NABARD	20.00
04	Maximizing Himalayan Agriculture Initiative (MHAI)	Agriculture	Oct 2023 - Sept 2028	SRTT	353.00
05	Integrated Drinking Water Project in partnership with Jal Jeevan Mission	WaSH	Aug 2021 - Oct 2024	SRTT	81.00
06	Water Security Programme: Tata Water Mission 2022-27 in Uttarakhand / Himachal Pradesh	WaSH	Oct 2022 - Sept 2025	TEDT	43.00
07	Integrated Spring-shed Management Program in the Central and Western Himalayan Region	WaSH	Jan 2022 - Dec 2025	EGF	170.00
08	Water Security through Integrated village Development Model Phase 2	WaSH	Feb 2022 - Jan 2025	TCPL	130.00

Overview

Himachal Pradesh in the western Himalayas is richly endowed with water resources that contribute to five major river systems. The hilly terrain of the state is prone to natural calamities, especially during the monsoon (average annual rainfall 1,334.9 mm in 2023, IMD).

Agriculture in the state is characterized by low productivity, yet it employs a large workforce. The net sown area constitutes only about 12% of the state's geographical area. As much as 70% of cultivators are marginal farmers with average landholding of 0.4 ha. Around 80% of the cropland is not irrigated.

Since 2018, Himmotthan has been working in three districts of lower Himachal Pradesh, which include Kangra, Hamirpur and Sirmaur. The organization covers 17,500 households in 115 villages of six blocks. The key focus areas of interventions are:

- Spring-shed management and better use of water resources
- Revival of traditional millets and pulses cultivation
- Livestock and value-added products like goat cheese
- Fodder on community land
- Holistic village development

Project Location and Target Group

Hamirpur:

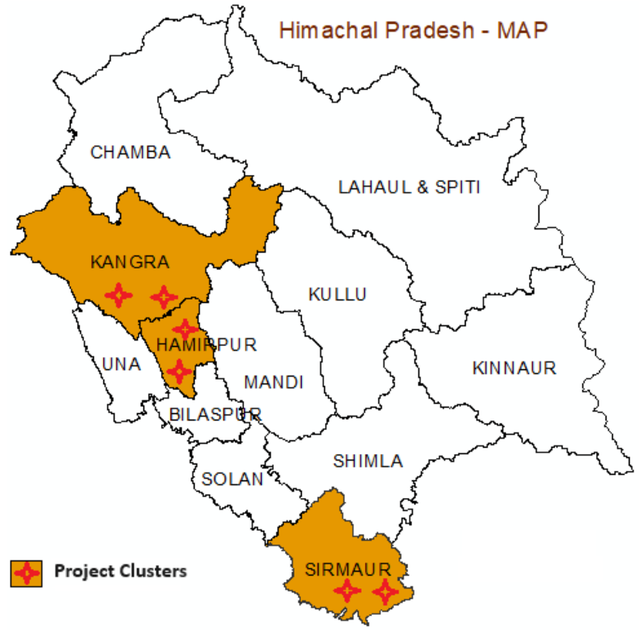
The Holistic Rural Development Programme is being implemented in 20 villages spread across Sujanpur Tihra and Nadaun blocks of Hamirpur district, which include eight villages of two village councils of Nadaun block and 12 villages of two gram panchayats of Tihra Sujanpur block.

Kangra:

Himmotthan is implementing five projects (water security, catchment area treatment, Jal Jeevan Mission, Central Himalayan Livestock Initiative (CHLI) and promotion of millets and traditional crops) covering 150 villages of Baijnath and Rait blocks.

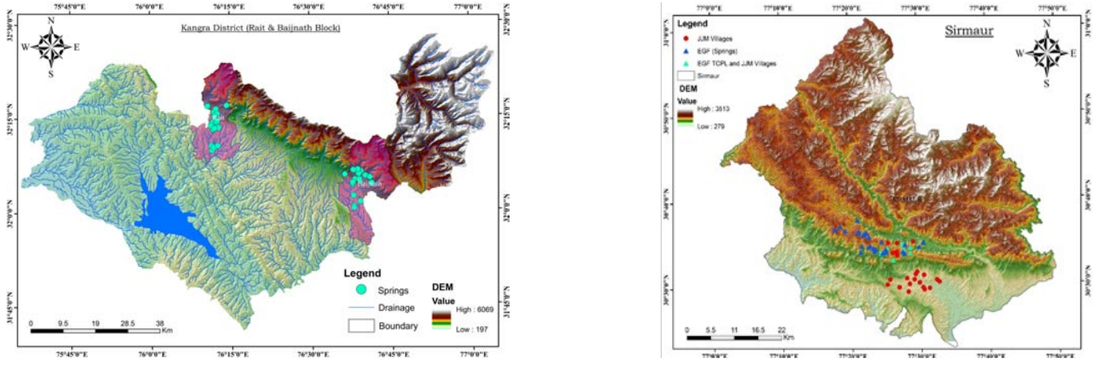
Sirmaur:

The organization is implementing four projects (water security through integrated village development, Jal Jeevan Mission, water security and CHLI-II) in 30 villages of Paonta Sahib and Nahan administrative blocks.



Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WaSH)

Most rural areas in Himachal Pradesh are dependent on groundwater. The extraction is done via tube wells, wells and traditional water sources locally known as baouris and khulas. The groundwater scenario of the study area does not show positive signs as around 76% of the groundwater is in bad condition or nearly dried up (State Centre on Climate Change).



Intervention area in Kangra and Sirmaur districts

To improve the condition of groundwater, Himmotthan with its supporting agencies started implementing project activities in the rural areas. It is currently working in Kangra and Sirmaur districts. The two blocks of Rait and Baijnath in Kangra district and Paonta Sahib and Nahan blocks of Sirmaur district have been considered for intervention.

Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)

The Union government's Jal Jeevan Mission aims to provide potable drinking water through Functional Household Tap Connectivity (FHTC) in rural areas of the state. Himmotthan is assisting JJM in 320 villages spread across Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh. In Himachal Pradesh, 103 villages has been taken up for intervention in Sirmaur and Kangra. It seeks to assist in ensuring sustainability of the water supply system including source, supply infrastructure and funds for regular O&M, and to increase awareness on various aspects and significance of safe drinking water and involvement of stakeholders in a manner that makes water everyone's business.

Spring-shed Project

Historically, bawadis, or traditional waterbodies, are the primary source of water for daily needs. During the winter, Himachal Pradesh experienced deficient snowfall and rainfall. It directly impacted water availability. Bawadis provided natural spring water. People gathered around them to collect water, fostering social interaction. Many bawadis were beautifully crafted with stone masonry, reflecting traditional architecture. However, with urbanization and modernization, they faced challenges, and modern water supply systems gradually replaced them. Overall, 160 villages have been taken up under the spring-shed project that would cover 170 springs, benefiting around 8,000 households.

Key Interventions:

- Around 525 members of WQMSC were trained in using FTK.
- 14 biogas plants have been built to promote green energy.
- 100 DTR have been prepared and approved by Water Users' Groups (WUG)/ Village Councils.
- A total 100 spring-sheds have been treated, covering 256 ha of catchment area.
- 3,788 households were benefitted through spring-shed activity.
- 224.5 ha of catchment area were treated with the support of forest deopartment.
- 16 vermicompost pits were constructed to promote sustainable organic farming.
- On average, 11% spring discharge has increased against the baseline.

The implementation of project activities were coordinated with village communities and local governing bodies of the gram panchayat and its sub-committees. The bottom-up approach was followed to mitigate the challenges in rural areas to secure impactful results.

A third-party impact assessment was conducted by consultancy firm SoulAce in 16 villages of Sirmaur district on Water Security through Integrated Village Development Model-II.

Key Achievements:

- 8,400 beneficiaries directly benefitted by project interventions.
- Water conservation measures raised the groundwater level 1-2 feet.
- Most families realises the importance of greenery and were involved in plantation activities.
- Biogas, vermicompost and WaSH in schools became sustainable as the community was well-oriented and trained.
- Sustainability was ensured by creating a Forest Development Committee (FDC), ensuring maintenance of civil measures in forest areas in coordination with the state government.

Case Study: My Water

An inconsistent supply of water was the main problem people of Mehat village in Sirmaur district faced. The small village of 106 HHs relied on an old water supply line that only provided water for up to four days a week, often even less. This meagre supply proved inadequate to meet the daily needs of households and hampered their farming and animal husbandry activities, which were the villagers' primary sources of income.

Water scarcity would reach its peak during summer. Subsequently, the monsoon brought further hardship to residents, as the water became contaminated and presented health risks.They frequently fell prey to water-borne diseases such as cholera, diarrhoea and jaundice, but had limited financial means to seek medical assistance.

Taking the lead in resolving this crisis, the resilient women of Mehat, who bore the burden of the water shortage, reached out to Himmotthan for a solution. Himmotthan conducted several capacity-building sessions for the Village Water and Sanitation Committee (VWSC) and the Water Quality Monitoring and Surveillance Committee (WQMSC). These sessions covered essential topics such as water quality testing, sanitation, hygiene and prevention of water-borne diseases. These sessions sparked the interest of schoolgirls in the village, who enthusiastically participated in the various activities.

One of the participants was Tara Devi, who expressed her gratitude for the field testing kits provided to the village. "We were not aware how the poor quality of water was affecting our lives and making us sick, but after extensive training, we are now able to test our water against various parameters at our doorstep and check if it is safe to use," she said.

"Earlier, we thought that water could only be tested in big laboratories. But, thanks to Jal Jeevan Mission, we received a new field testing kit and practical training from the society. Now, we are testing our water every month and teaching this to the community through the Water Quality Management and Surveillance Committee," said Bala Devi, another participant of the training.

The implementation of JJM in Mehat village has proven to be a remarkable success, with every household now equipped with a tap connection. The water supply scheme, too, is nearing completion, offering hope to the community that has long struggled with scarcity. Meanwhile, the villagers have united to devise alternative methods that will allow them to continue their agriculture and animal husbandry activities in the face of water scarcity. The JJM's Har Ghar Nal Se Jal programme has undeniably brought a new ray of hope to these rural women as they eagerly look forward to embracing a better quality of life.

Holistic Rural Development Program

Background:

The Holistic Rural Development Program in Himachal Pradesh is being implemented with the support of Tata Trusts funded Central Himalayan Livestock (CHLI-II) and Maximizing Himalayan Agriculture Initiative (MHAI), and HDFC bank CSR supported Holistic Rural Development Project.

CHLI-II is being implemented to address the gaps in the livestock value chain. Acute fodder shortage, inferior quality of breeds, traditional feeding practices, poor animal health and management services and unorganised marketing often leave the sector at mere subsistence level in the region.

The Holistic Rural Development Program was funded by HDFC for three years from April 2021 to March 2024. The project aimed at enhancing the quality of life through sustainable and resilient livelihood interventions and services for holistic development for over 1,000 HHs.

The project focused on the following key interventions:

- Mountain Dairy - Improved feed, breed, better health and management practices and strengthening of FPOs-led dairy.
- Small Ruminants - Enhance production, replication of demonstrated semi-intensive goat model in potential locations with more inputs on the market end and ensuring ecological and economic sustainability.
- Backyard Poultry - Strengthening the local poultry value chain and extension to the potential locations and their market linkages.
- Promote holistic and integrated development of the villages by focusing on multi-thematic areas of livelihood, education, skill development, health and hygiene.
- Generate self-reliant livelihood opportunities through promotion of micro-enterprises and entrepreneurship.
- Natural resource management through interventions in agri-horticulture, animal husbandry and irrigation infrastructure.

Key Activities and Achievements:

The project focused in developing and nurturing self-reliant FPOs through training and capacity building, and providing extension services to farmers.

Promotion of Backyard Poultry Value Chain

Backyard poultry has been a part of the mountain farming system characterized by a combination of agriculture and allied activities-based livelihoods. Backyard poultry is a low investment and high economic returns enterprise generally managed by women.

Landless and marginal farmers commonly reared mountain-based local birds in the vicinity of their premises. These birds are hardy, and survive with low nutrition and at extreme weather conditions. There is no requirement to follow strict vaccination and bio-security measures that makes them first choice to rear. Also, poultry products such as eggs and meat have niche markets and high price realisation compared to the commercial poultry farming system.

- 16 backyard poultry units were established and upgraded in project villages.
- 4,762 eggs were loaded for hatching, resulting in 3,618 chicks hatched and 3,059 sold to poultry farmers.
- *536 farmers were supported with technical training, poultry feed and medicines.*

Better Housing, Breed Improvement and Animal Health Services

a. Better Housing:

Livestock farming requires proper housing, nutrition, health services and regular monitoring for better production and reproduction. A good housing condition permits animal to grow, mature, reproduce in hygienic environment for their well-being.

- 8 animal sheds were constructed to promote better livestock housing practices.

b. Better Improvement:

Himmotthan has been focusing on breed improvement in collaboration with the state animal husbandry department since project inception. Breed improvement was ensured by infusion of improved milch animals. This motivated the dairy startups and milk producers to buy improved animals to boost their farm stock and income.

- 20 milch animals were distributed to livestock farmers to promote breed improvement.
- *30 animal health camps were organised and 320 animals were vaccinated in collaboration with the animal husbandry departments.*

Setting up and Upgradation of Mountain Dairies

A micro-dairy was set up in Boh Darini village in Kangra district, providing dairy farmers a platform for milk collection and sale of surplus milk. It has become an important source of income. The dairy outlet was started collecting 35 litres of milk per day in February 2021. It was upgraded and upscaled during the year to involve more farmers and increase sale of milk. New milk routes were developed in the cluster. Currently, collection and sale of milk have reached to 350 litres per day. Six milk collection centres are in operation and 120 milk producers sell their milk through the Dhauladhar Dairy. The dairy is providing employment to nine youth and its annual turnover reached to Rs 43 lakh in 2023-24 financial year.

Fodder Resources Development and Management

Fodder promotion is a key intervention to meet quality fodder demand in villages. Introduction of improved fodder varieties, especially those that are perennial and can be propagated through seeds, has been promoted. High-quality fodder farms and nurseries centres have been established to attain self-sufficiency in planting material. Improved varieties of forage crop, dual purpose crops like maize, barley, millets, legumes and Napier have been introduced on private land.

- 12 ha of common land comprising of six fodder plots established at Bhethjhikli, Ghorpith, Kandral, Bhaled and Luharuka villages.
- Chari-Bajra distributed among 187 farmers, covering 64 acres of private land.
- Improved seeds of onion, barley, red rice, jau and berseem were distributed to 135 farmers covering 12 acres of land.

Maintenance of Old Fodder Plots

The fodder plantations are often damaged by wild animals and stray cattle. They sometimes dried out due to water scarcity. These dead and damaged plants were replaced by planting fresh saplings. Weeds such as lantana, parthenium, eupatorium and thorny bushes also hamper fodder and grass production, which need to be uprooted and removed at regular intervals. Perennial grasses, especially Napier, needs to be replaced or replanted after a few years, and replaced with fresh saplings of new grass species such as Thysanolaena, Paspalum and Brachiaria. Intercultural operations like hoeing, composting, mulching and pruning of plants are required for proper growth of fodder grasses and trees. These operations are mostly done in winter with community participation.

- 4 ha of old fodder plots were established and maintained with active participation of community in protection, management, fodder distribution and intercultural operations.
- Stonewalling and barbed wire fencing was done around all fodder plots to protect the plants and grass from cattle and wild animals.

Central Fodder Nursery

A centralised nursery was established in 2022-23 financial year in Bhaled village. In the initial year, 2,500 mulberry cuttings and 2,000 saplings of Bahunia, Oak and Grewia were grown in the nursery. The nursery owner earned Rs 18,000 from sale of planting material. Last year, the owner extended the nursery on 0.3 acres and planted 1,500 Mulberry buds, 500 Oak, 300 Bahunia, 250 Grewia and 400 Robinia seeds in polybags. In addition, he also planted grassroot stock like Paspalum, Seteria, Brachiaria and Napier grass.

Community led Livelihoods

Community awareness and mobilization was crucial to organise community institutions (SHGs, PGs and FPOs) according their skills and resources. This was followed by skilling and handholding in livelihood activities. For holistic village development, an integrated approach was followed to promote agriculture (cereals, pulses, spices, vegetables and horticulture), livestock (dairy, goat rearing and poultry), and off-farm-based livelihoods. The selected value chains were strengthened by boosting production, skilling, training, value-addition and establishing market linkages.

- 20 new producer groups were formed in 2023-24 across various farm produce from agriculture and poultry.
- Registration for the Himika Farmer Producer Company has been initiated. The FPO will manage enterprises like agri-processing units, hybrid feed units and poultry hatchery.
- 119 SHGs were formed and promoted, consisting of 1,200 members. An amount of Rs 13,16,100 inter-loaning was carried out for consumption and livelihood activities.

Natural Resource Management

The villages selected for NRM are predominantly rainfed (In Hamirpur, 95% villages are rainfed) and highly dependent on surrounding natural resources. Crop yields are low due to erratic rainfall. Natural resource management and infrastructure development are integral to livelihood improvement and income generation.

- 10 Low Density Polyethylene (LDPE) Tanks were constructed in Bamnehar, Chabutra, Garoru Ranautan, Swahal, Nihari, Balh, and Pastal villages. These tanks collect rainwater and other sources of water, providing irrigation to 8.5 acres of farmland.
- 8 water bodies were renovated to conserve water for drinking and domestic purposes.
- 5 water lifting pump sets (3 HP capacity, 90 m distribution pipe) were installed in Bamnehar (2), Chabutra (1), Nihari (1) and Badhyar (1) villages. This initiative provides irrigation to 6.5 acres of agricultural land, enabling farmers to grow cash crops.

Health Care and Hygiene

To address health and hygiene issues, several activities were carried out, such as rural health camps and awareness programmes on women and child health.

- 12 camps on menstrual health and hygiene were conducted where 412 persons attended.

Skill Training and Livelihood Enhancement

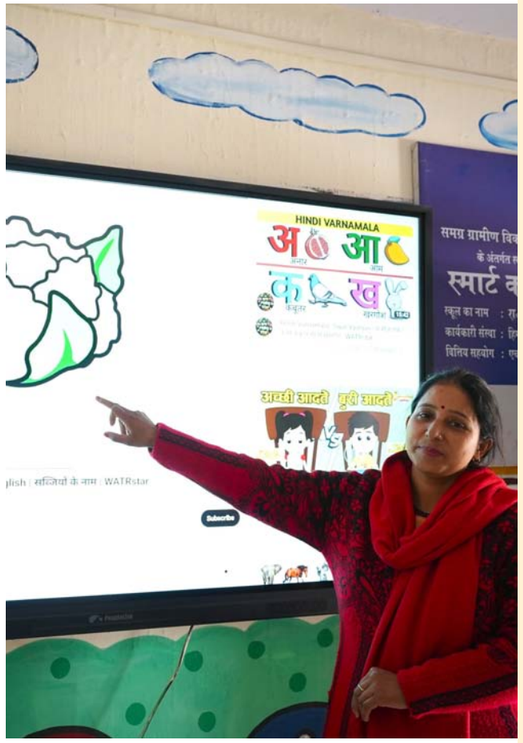
Farmers in the project villages are mostly dependent on farming and livestock rearing for subsistence. Skill-based trainings are essential to improve their livelihoods. Promotion of high-value agricultural commodities such as fruits, vegetables, dairy, poultry, fish and processed food has emerged as a potential activity. Similarly, livestock farmers need to be trained in healthcare and breed improvement. Two entrepreneurship training programmes were organised in Kangra district. A two-day training on scientific poultry rearing and health management was organised in March 2024 at the Veterinary College in Palampur to enhance skill and develop entrepreneurship. Similarly, a one-day dairy farming entrepreneurship training was organized for Darini cluster farmers.

- 180 kg of poultry feeds and 240 chicks were distributed to 30 farmers after the training.
- Two capacity building programmes were organised for SHGs members of Utrala and Ghorpith panchayat where 156 members participated. Training was given on accounting, bookkeeping and maintaining records.
- 350 farmers were supported with various farm inputs, including improved varieties of turmeric (143 farmers), mustard (106 farmers), onion (15 farmers), pea seeds (86 farmers), fertilizer, vermicompost and spray pumps.
- 266 farmers received farm tool kits and on-farm training was given on farm machinery.
- 4 farm tool banks were established with power tillers and maize threshers provided to VDC members in Badehtar, Bamnehar, Karot Khas and Garoru Ranautan villages.
- 20 technical trainings were conducted, including protected cultivation, value addition of milk, turmeric cultivation, poultry farming, mushroom farming and value addition, mustard cultivation, organic farming, natural farming, crop pest and disease management, soil health, and integrated nutrient management.

Promotion of Health and Hygiene in Schools

The basic infrastructure and facilities such as wastewater management to improve hygiene, streetlights for safety during the night, and drinking water facility at schools to reduce risk of water-borne diseases and easy availability of drinking water were addressed to make the school premises comfortable.

- Renovation work was carried out to ensure safe drinking water by installing hygienic sanitation units and improved school infrastructure. Four smart classrooms were established in four government schools, benefiting over 400 students.
- Toilet construction work was carried out in two anganwadi centres.



Promotion of Millets and Traditional Crops

The project was initiated to reintroduce millets and traditional crops, which has almost disappeared from the area. In the initial phase, trial of various crops like finger millet, naked barley, linseed and red rice were successfully demonstrated. After completion of the trials, efforts were made to expand these crops in project villages along with establishing market linkages for surplus produce. Currently, 25 ha of land has been brought under millets and traditional crops, and 365 farmers are successfully growing these crops. Farmers are selling their surplus products like alsi seeds, flour of finger millet and naked barley through various trade fairs organized by NABARD and other state agencies.

Key Achievements:

- 25 ha of land brought under various crops such as finger millet, red rice, linseed, and naked barley.
- 10 tonnes of production was obtained, of which 5 tonnes were sold by SHGs in trade fairs.
- 179 farmers were trained on package of practices, post-harvesting and value addition from CSKHKV, Palampur.
- 119 new farmers started cultivation of millets and traditional crops.

Case Study : Satya Devi, Poultry Farmer from Baijnath, Himachal Pradesh

In Himachal Pradesh, backyard poultry production consisting 100-200 birds are suitable and recommended due to varied reasons, small landholding being one. By adopting backyard poultry, farmers in Baijnath have shown it is possible to improve household incomes.

The story of Satya Devi from Baijnath, a small town in Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh, is a case in point. Her journey in poultry farming is inspiring and illustrates the transformative power of entrepreneurship, particularly in rural settings.

She lived in a region where agriculture is the primary source of income, but yields are often insufficient to sustain a family. With limited resources and opportunities, Satya Devi was determined to find a way to improve her family's financial situation.

She is a member of Jai Lake Wali Maa self-help group. The project team encouraged her to take up poultry farming. She showed keen interest in the scheme and attended a two-day training program on poultry farming at the Veterinary College in Palampur. The project supported her in establishing a backyard poultry unit, build a shed, and buy poultry equipment and 120 chicks to start the activity.

She constructed a pukka (permanent), well-ventilated shed with initial financial help from Himmotthan. In April 2022, a batch of of 120 chicks of Him Samridhi breed, including poultry started feeder, was provided to the her. She also received technical training and guidance from the veterinary college from time to time.

Out of the 120 chicks, only 10 birds died. At the age of 4 months, the average body weight of the birds was up to 2 kg. These birds were sold locally at price of Rs 500 per bird. She managed to earn Rs 43,200 by selling 96 birds and also earned Rs 2,160 by selling eggs. Her income was Rs 84,120 after deducting expenses on feed and electricity.

The additional income enabled her to cover her son's medical expenses, daily household needs and her children's school fees. This newfound financial stability not only improved her quality of life but also inspired other local farmers to consider poultry farming as a viable and profitable source of livelihood.

Case study : Mushroom farming in Hamirpur, Himachal Pradesh

Mushroom farming has been long recognized as a viable agricultural activity due to its minimal input requirements and suitability for small-scale operations. Bhavnish Kumari from Chabutra Khas village in Hamirpur in Himachal Pradesh benefited from mushroom farming that was promoted as an intervention under the Holistic Rural Development Program by HDFC Parivartan.

Bhavnish Kumari faced significant financial hardship following her husband's critical injury. This left him unable to work for 2-3 months, drastically reducing household income to around Rs 12,000 per month. With two children aged 12 and 9 years and very little land, meeting daily expenses became increasingly difficult.

Mushroom farming was identified as a suitable intervention for the region. Bhavnish Kumari was selected as one of the beneficiaries based on a feasibility study conducted by Himmotthan, which confirmed that a room in her home was suitable for mushroom cultivation. A small-scale mushroom unit was established at her home that was equipped with iron mushroom racks, 150 button mushroom bags with casing, medicines, hygrometer, heaters and spray pumps. Bhavnish Kumari also received a technical training and regular supervision to ensure successful cultivation.

The intervention significantly transformed Bhavnish Kumari's financial situation. She earned Rs 49,692 within six months by selling approximately 4.5 quintals of mushrooms. Encouraged by this success, she expanded her operation in the 2023-24 season, using 230 bags and earning Rs 75,950 in four months from another 5.5 quintals of mushrooms.

The additional income enabled her to cover her husband's medical expenses, daily household needs and her children's school fees. This newfound financial stability not only improved her quality of life but also inspired other local farmers to consider mushroom farming as a viable and profitable enterprise.

Look Ahead for Next Year

Tata Trusts and Axis Bank Foundation have supported the agriculture initiative to promote millets and traditional crops and transform the current agriculture system. This program is being implemented in selected part of Kangra and Hamirpur districts. Himmotthan is strategically focusing on several key areas to enhance agricultural productivity and sustainability of agriculture in these areas. These areas include revival of millets cultivation; beekeeping, which supports both crop pollination and honey production; cultivation of high-value crops like chilli, capsicum, garlic and ginger to increase farm incomes and market opportunities; and development of seed production systems to ensure availability of quality seeds for various crops. By diversifying and intensifying efforts in these domains, Himmotthan aims to promote sustainable agricultural practices, improve economic stability for local farmers and foster the overall agricultural resilience in the region.

A new project by HDFC has been approved for Hamirpur district, targeting 15 villages in Bijhari block. This project is designed to focus on developing entrepreneurship and enhancing livelihoods by strengthening the mushroom value chain. By fostering local entrepreneurship, the project aims to create sustainable economic opportunities for the community, contributing to the overall economic development of the region.

Further, formation of the new FPO is in process for long-term economic viability of the livelihood interventions. The capacity of the FPO would be developed for backward and forward linkages. The efforts made to pilot and established a farm-processing unit and an animal feed unit will be taken forward by developing the capacities of women shareholders, strengthening the supply chain and market linkages.

Chapter

Uttarakhand

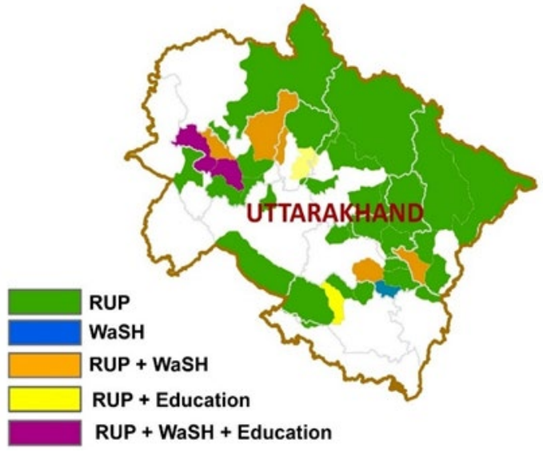
03

Project Details - Uttarakhand

S.N.	Project Name	Thematic Area	Project Duration	Project Funder	Financial Outlay (Rs. In Lakh)
01	Education Initiative in 3 Districts in Uttarakhand	Education	Oct 2022 - Sep 2025	SDTT	824.59
02	Livelihood Skills Uttarakhand	Livelihood	Mar 2018 - Nov 2023	TATA Trusts	1,000.00
03	Mission Pulses Uttarakhand	Agriculture	Feb 2018 - Sept 2023	TATA Trusts	950.00
04	HDFC Parivartan (Lakhpati Kisan Programme)	Livelihood	April 2021 - Mar 2024	TEDT	632.00
05	Samarth for Promoting Rural Women's Entrepreneurship	Livelihood	April 2023 - Mar 2025	FREND	175.00
06	Establishment of Smriti Van for Biodiversity Conservation	Livelihood	Feb 2023 - Dec 2024	TCS Foundation	50.00
07	Central Himalayan Livestock Initiative (CHLI), Phase 2	Livestock	Jan 2022 - Sept 2025	TEDT	1,255.00
08	Holistic Rural Development Programme, Almora	Livelihood	Jan 2021 - Mar 2024	HDFC CSR	752.00
09	Focused Livelihood Development Project, Joshimath	Livelihood	Oct 2021 - Sept 2024	HDFC CSR	767.00
10	Community Based Tourism Project	Tourism	Nov 2021 - June 2024	MMTF + TEDT	225.00
11	Maximizing Himalayan Agriculture Initiative (MHAI)	Agriculture	Oct 2023 - Sept 2028	SRTT	1,411.00
12	Gender Inclusive Livelihoods through Financial Inclusion in Uttarakhand (GiLU)	Livelihood Skills	Oct 2023 - Sept 2028	SRTT	1,936.00
13	Integrated Village Development Project (IVDP II)	Livelihood	Apr 2022 - Mar 2025	Titan	927.00
14	Integrated Drinking Water Project in partnership with Jal Jeevan Mission	WaSH	Aug 2021 - Oct 2024	SRTT	325.00
15	Water Security Programme: Tata Water Mission 2022-27	WaSH	Oct 2022 - Sept 2025	TEDT	383.00
16	Integrated Spring Shed Management Program	WaSH	Jan 2022 - Dec 2025	EGF	503.00
17	Uttarakhand Forest vesource Management Project	Livelihood	Apr 2022 - Mar 2024	UFRMP-JICA	585.00
18	Uttarakhand Forest Resource Management-Honey-II	Livelihood	Jan 2023 - Dec 2025	UFRMP-JICA	190.00
19	Uttarakhand Forest Resource Management Apple Orchard	Livelihood	Mar 2023 - Feb 2025	UFRMP-JICA	95.00
20	Establishment of High-Density Temperate Fruit Orchards for Livelihoods and Carbon Sequestration in Uttarakhand	Livelihood	Dec 2023 - Nov 2024	TCS e-Serve International Ltd	81.00
21	Maximizing Mountain Agriculture Project (MMAP)	Agriculture	Apr 2020 - Jan 2024	RIST	352.00
22	Water Supply in Govt Schools (WSGS)	WaSH	Apr 2020 - Sept 2023	RIST	379.00
23	Strengthening Primary Schools in Uttarakhand	Education	Jan 2024 - Dec 2024	HT Parekh	35.70

Overview

Rural communities in the Himalayan state of Uttarakhand depend on agriculture as an important source of livelihood. Agriculture is practiced mainly on rainfed, terraced and fragmented land (average holding 0.2 acre per household) with minimal irrigation (15.8% of arable land). Even with limited farm holdings, a variety of traditional crops (17-30) are cultivated on favourable micro-climatic conditions but in subsistence mode. Niche crops such as apples, nut and fruits, off-season vegetables, pulses and millets are the backbone of the region's economy. Livestock rearing has been an integral part of farming and a source of livelihood for over 70% rural households in Uttarakhand, accounting for over a third of family income. In addition, livestock farming contributes to family nutrition, besides producing much-needed biomass and draught power for farming.



» In Uttarakhand, Himmotthan is implementing programs in 2,000 villages covering 40 blocks of 11 mountain districts. The major focus is on integration of different programs in a cluster of villages. Broadly, Himmotthan programs fall into three categories:

Natural Resource Management

Spring-shed management, water resource management, fodder cultivation on community land and strengthening ecosystem services.

Social mobilisation

Primary education through FLN, libraries, physical literacy. Secondary Education through skilling and career counselling.

Livelihoods

Strengthen value chains of millets, pulses, cereals, orchards, aromatic and culinary herbs, honey, animal feed, livestock product-based social enterprises; Promote climate-smart technologies and practices such as green energy; Boost community-based organizations, financial inclusion, livelihoods and entrepreneurship.

Water Sanitation & Hygiene

Mountainous Uttarakhand has varying geographical conditions and biodiversity. The state saw drastic changes in land use and forest cover in the past few decades due to rapid industrialization, urbanization and climate change accompanied by extreme weather events. This has seriously impacted the hydrology of the state. It lacks water management and water reservoir systems due to which there is a crisis every summer. Considering this, Himmotthan is implementing four projects under WaSH.

Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)

The central government's Jal Jeevan Mission aims to provide potable drinking water through Functional Household Tap Connectivity (FHTC) in rural areas of the state. The program focuses on service delivery at the household level, which means water supply on a regular basis in adequate quantity and of prescribed quality. Himmotthan is assisting JJM in Uttarakhand by implementing the scheme in 184 villages in Tehri Garhwal, Almora and Pithoragarh districts. The key support areas include ensuring sustainability of water supply system such as source, supply infrastructure and funds for O&M, and increase awareness on various aspects of safe drinking water and involvement of stakeholders in a manner that makes water everyone's business.

Springshed Management Programme

Spring-shed management plays a vital role in building resilience against climate change by promoting science-based approach and community solutions. Himmotthan is implementing the programme in 430 villages, of which 220 are in Uttarakhand. The project aims to enhance socioecological and climate resilience through spring-shed management, which includes measures such as needs assessment, spring inventory, data monitoring, community mobilization and livelihoods creation. Spring-shed management represents a crucial shift in addressing water insecurity in the Himalayas.

Integrated Village Development Program-One water Project:

The project is focusing on strengthening farming system linkages through an integrated village development program. The key components include water conservation and wise use of water resources, promoting agriculture and livestock-based livelihoods, boosting forest resources, and skilling community institutions to manage natural resources. Through the One Water Project, Himmotthan is developing a model where surplus water through conservation measures in a village is used to cultivate cash crops and other farm activities to improve livelihoods besides meeting drinking and domestic water requirements.

The project is being implemented in the Chamba, Thauldar and Jaunpur blocks of Tehri Garhwal district with the support of Titan CSR. Overall, 60 villages were selected (20 in each block) for integrated village development. Collecting baseline data, identifying local needs and selecting appropriate activities were initial activities, followed by implementation of different activities with active participation of the village communities.

Key Achievements

- 2,928 VWSC (Pani Samiti) members were trained on various WaSH aspects.
- 215 of Water Security Plan (DTR) prepared and approved by Water User Groups (WUG)/ Village Councils.
- 215 spring-sheds were treated, covering 602 ha of catchment area.
- 11,799 households were benefitted through spring-shed activity.
- 9 water schemes were augmented for drinking and irrigation.
- 5,552 households got portable drinking water supply through tap connections in 84 villages.
- Different technologies were used for data collection such as water level recorder, weather tower and snow gauge.
- Spring discharge increased 12% on average compared with baseline data.

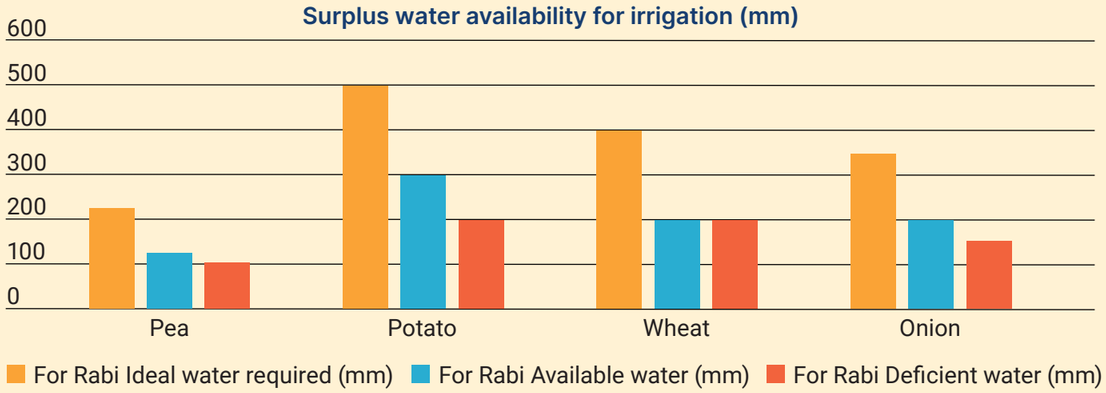
Integrated Village Development: A Case Study of Sabli village

In June 2022, Himmotthan surveyed Sabli village in Jaunpur block of Tehri Garhwal district to analyze the water scenario. At community meetings villagers showed interest in working to rejuvenate a local spring named Paniyarkhala. The village was facing severe water crisis during summer. All 52 households were dependent on Paniyarkhala for drinking in the summer months as pipeline supply was either intermittent or not there at all. The discharge variation of the spring declined from 30 lpm in the monsoon to 5 lpm in May-June.

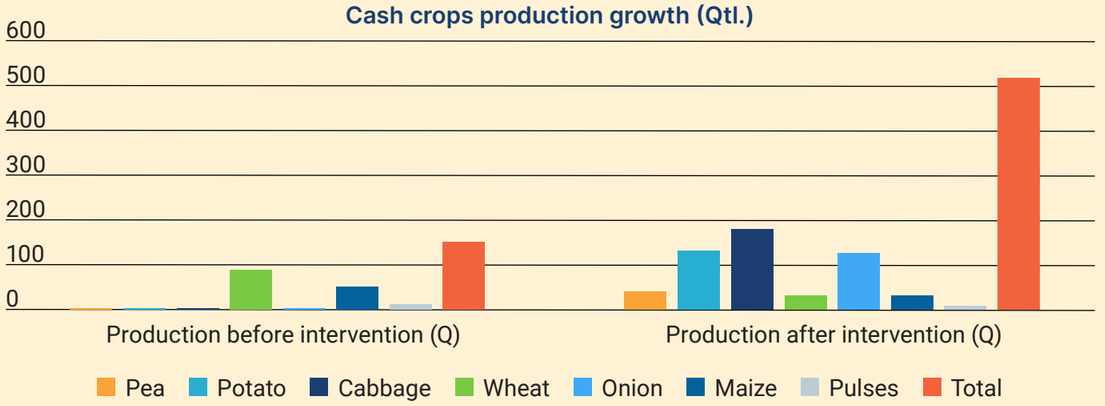
During the four months of summer, the village faced a water deficit of around 1.4 million litres. The villagers decided on a series of measure to protect and treat the catchment area of the spring. Altogether, 120 trenches with an average size of 3m x 0.75m x 0.6m and four recharge ponds with average size of 4m x 3.5m x 0.75m were dug in 3 ha area. These led to collection of 160 cum of water. Besides these, five boulder check dams were also built to retain soil moisture.

Sabli has 2 ha of agricultural land belonging to 35 farmers that are below the water source. Farmers generally grow traditional crops in the Rabi and Kharif seasons using rainwater. Due to erratic rainfall and water stress, crop yields slumped by 40% to 80%.

After catchment treatment and increase in spring discharge, the village people decided to use the surplus/ wastewater for irrigation. The surplus water was channelized towards the agriculture land through 600 meters HDPE pipes and collected in 20 KL chamber. The stored water is being used in irrigation of crops in 2 ha land.



The farmers were growing crops like wheat, maize and pulses due to lack of irrigation. Now they have started growing cash crops like peas, potato, cabbage and capsicum. Since women suffer the most from water stress, they actively participated in forming the water users' committee, implementation and O&M. The beneficiary farmers bore 10% cost of the scheme.



Production growth pre and post implementation

After the intervention, villagers said the reduction in spring discharge was not as frequent as it was in earlier years. This year, they had a surplus even during summer, which led to cultivating cash crops. The income of these farmers will likely grow at least threefold due to irrigation. The success at Sabli has prompted nearby villages to approach Himmotthan to establish a similar water management system in their villages as well.

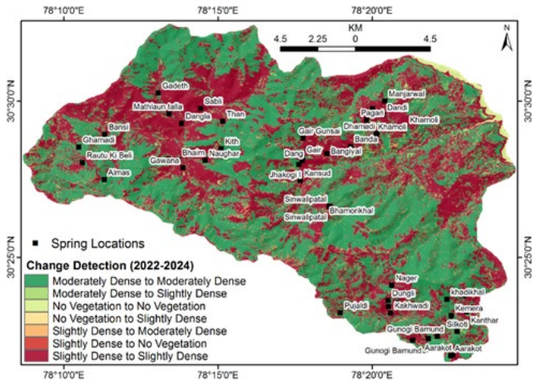
IIT, Roorkee Assessment Study on Springshed

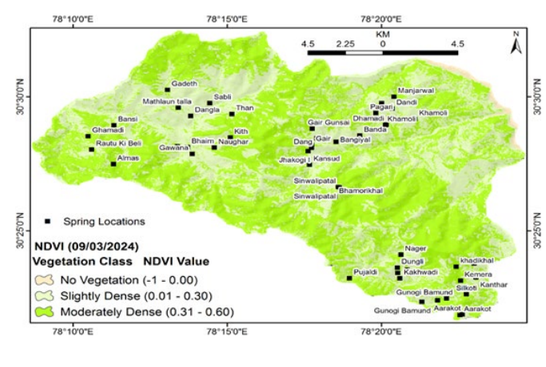
Himmotthan has utilized the technical expertise of IIT, Roorkee, to study villages in March 2024 on spring-shed measures implemented under IVDP to achieve water neutrality. The team studied nine villages (three in each cluster of Jharipani, Bhawan and Thauldhar). The scope of work included evaluating the impact of recharge structures on springs, analysing methodologies for site selection, validating on-ground functionality and its impact on catchment area, and providing recommendations for sustainable water resource management and socioeconomic development of project villages. The findings of the study is as follows:

Groundwater Recharge: Recharge structures have a significant positive impact on groundwater recharge, seen by increased spring discharge and baseflow.

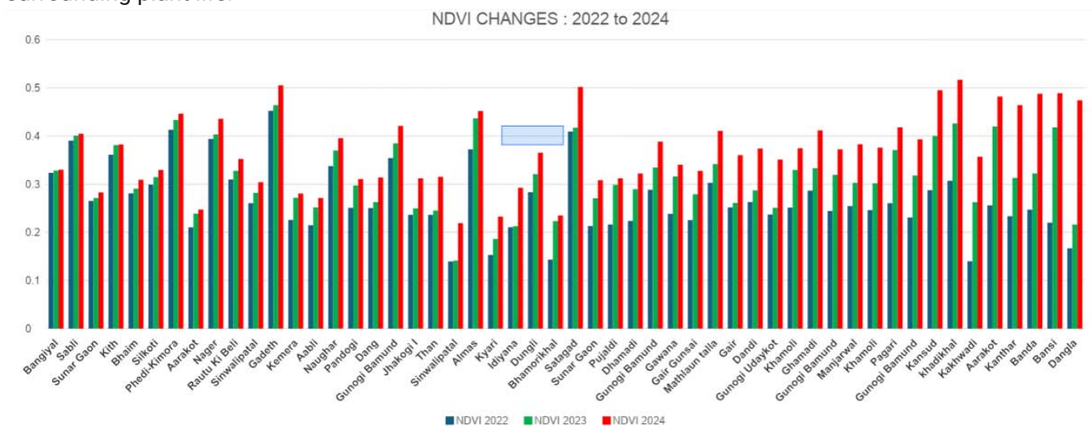
Water Loss and Recharge Volume: After accounting for 60% water loss, the volume of water available for recharge in one complete filling is 7,884 cubic meters (or 7.9 million litres).

Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) is a satellite-based tool used to measure vegetation health and density. By comparing NDVI data from before and after the construction of recharge structures like trenches, ponds and pits, we can assess their impact on the surrounding plant life. An increase in NDVI from 2022 to 2024 indicates a positive impact of the recharge structures, reflecting healthier and denser vegetation. Overall, the recharge structures led to improved groundwater levels and healthier ecosystems, with significant socioeconomic benefits for local communities.





Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) is a satellite-based tool used to measure how healthy and dense vegetation is. By comparing NDVI data from before and after the construction of water harvesting structures like trenches, ponds, and pits, we can see how these structures impact the surrounding plant life.



External Assessment by IIFM, Bhopal

Titan company engaged an IIFM Bhopal faculty to carry out a mid-term assessment of the integrated village development project. Scientists visited 10 villages and interacted with farmers on sample basis. The summary of observations are as follows:

- Work began with community meetings and the formation of a water users' group in coordination with the village council.
- Implementation done with soft engineering structures to augment ground and surface water to increase spring flow.
- Spring water via gravity flow is collected in a 7.5 kilolitre tank.
- The community contributed 10% of the project cost through voluntary labour, which creates a sense of ownership.
- O&M is conducted by the stakeholders with funds from the village council.

Impact assessed by IIFM, Bhopal:

S.No	Impact Parameter	Response (%)
1	Improved water management	100
2	Improved livelihood opportunities	100
3	Increase awareness	100
4	Will to pay water service charge	100
5	Increase in irrigated land	80
6	Access to water	100
7	Time saved	100
8	Impact on health	100
9	Willing to maintain infrastructure	100
10	Better return to the time saved	100

Agriculture Initiative

Himmotthan made significant strides in agricultural interventions in Uttarakhand by working directly with mountain communities. The organisation intervened in aspects such as diversification of crops and production of high-quality seeds, promoted sustainable farm practices, and focused on striking a balance between climatic conditions, market requirements and farmers' aspirations.

The Mission Pulses program was started in 2018 with support of the Tata Trusts to strengthen the value chain through better production, value-addition and market linkages. It has employed scientific knowledge, innovative interventions and technical proficiency to boost agricultural production and productivity across nine districts of Uttarakhand.

The Maximizing Mountain Agriculture Project (MMAP) launched in 2020 aimed to enhance the livelihood of mountain communities by increasing crop productivity, promoting critical support irrigation systems, farm mechanization, establishing sustainable enterprises for seed crops, and establishment of cluster-based farm enterprises. The project was implemented in villages of Almora, Nainital, Dehradun and Tehri Garhwal districts.

In addition, Axis Bank Foundation funded Lakhpati Kisan program was initiated in 2018 to layer various agricultural and allied activities with irrigation infrastructure, and also honey processing.

Aim:

Transforming current stage of agriculture practices into higher level knowledge based, technique driven, sustainable, commercial agri economy and social enterprises model.

Key Interventions and Achievements:

Improved Varieties and Production Technologies

Ensuring access to high-quality seeds is utmost for farmers to increase crop production, nutrition, and rural wellbeing. Introduction of superior quality seeds to farmers, strengthens farmer seed systems, therefore, increases seed security and ensures variety diversification, while simultaneously contributing to the sustainability of farmers' livelihood.

- As a result, various crop varieties were introduced, including VL Mandua 380 in finger millet, PRJ-1 in barnyard millet, VL Chua 110 in grain amaranth, and for vegetables, VL Pyaz 3 in onion, Pahuja 3636 in pea, Kufri Himalni and Kufri Jyoti in potato, and Pant Haritima in coriander.
- Farmers adopted various soil and moisture conservation technologies with notable implementation rates. These include raised-bed technology (65%), seedbed preparation (55%) and land levelling (61%).
- Further techniques employed included biomass mulching (46%), sprinkler irrigation (32%), polythene mulching (12%), drip irrigation (13%) and solar lift irrigation (3%). The relatively low adoption of solar lift irrigation was due to the high investment cost.
- In the case of Munsyari Rajma, a Geographical Indication (GI) product of Uttarakhand, production was previously hampered by traditional methods such as dense planting for pest management, reliance on wooden stacks, seed broadcasting and low plant spacing. However, the adoption of improved techniques such as raised bed cultivation, vertical netting for plant support, wider row spacing and the use of ridges and furrows during planting led to a remarkable 50% increase in production in certain areas.

Critical Irrigation Support for Agricultural Crops

In Uttarakhand, the net irrigated area stands at 3.17 lakh hectares (2020-21), which is 49.68% of the total net sown area. Irrigation predominantly occurs in the plains, covering 98% of the net sown area. In contrast, only about 18.86% of the net sown area in the mountains is irrigated, with the rest being rainfed. The implementation of critical irrigation support has significantly contributed to improving agricultural productivity and water management in the region.

a) In the mountains, where much of the region relies on rainwater, the installation of high tech irrigation system in different clusters covering an area around 44.21 acres, has proven to be transformative. These interventions were executed through various schemes, including the implementation of gravity pipelines, installation of LDPE tanks, drip irrigation, sprinkle system, and adoption of solar-powered water lifting mechanisms.

b) In the mountains, where much of the region relies on rainwater, the installation of drip irrigation systems in Maldevta, Bhatwari and Joshimath Clusters covering an area around 6.5 ha, has proven to be transformative. This system minimizes water waste by reducing evaporation and runoff, making it particularly suitable for areas with limited water resources.

Beekeeping

Pollination serves as a fundamental biological process crucial for the successful production of seeds in flowering plants. This process not only increases the quantity of seeds produced but also improves their quality, resulting in better germination rates and vigorous growth. Diverse pollinators, such as bees, butterflies and birds, contribute significantly to this process. By fostering a healthy pollinator population and ensuring optimal pollination conditions, farmers achieved higher seed yields and better crop diversity through sustainable agricultural practices.

- To enhance pollination for better seed production, farmers were introduced to apiculture in selected clusters. Recognizing the dual benefits of supplementary income and biodiversity enrichment, apiculture was subsequently introduced in other clusters as an additional livelihood pursuit. Engaging a total of 1,256 beekeepers, the project area produced approximately 120 quintals of honey.
- Bee breeding centres were established to develop bee colonies. Honey production was boosted by multiplying the bee production colonies. Two bee breeding centres were established to promote sustainable beekeeping practices.

Establishment of Post-Harvest Training Centre

Post-harvest losses significantly reduce the quantity and quality of farm produce, negatively impacting farmer incomes and market supply. By providing training and demonstration, the centre aims to reduce post-harvest losses, contributing to better price realization.

- Established one post-harvest training centre to develop a market-oriented agricultural production system and establish community institution-led farm enterprises. The centre aims to address these challenges by providing specialized training in modern post-harvest handling techniques, grading, packaging, processing, storage methods and value-addition processes.

Nurturing Community Institutions, and Institutional Marketing

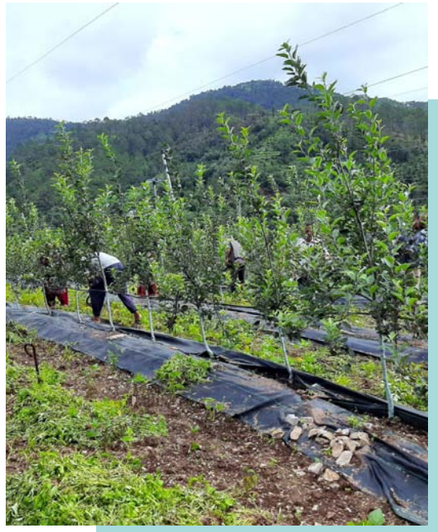
Ensuring the sustainability of agricultural practices requires widespread community adoption, which can be achieved by nurturing community institutions and focusing on training and capacity building. The interventions have been implemented by engaging self-help groups, producer groups and other community-based organizations such as cooperatives and FPOs.

- A total of 1,130 Producer Groups, each concentrating on a specific commodity, were linked to 13 cluster-level FPOs.
- Selected products from these cooperatives were marketed and distributed to locations beyond the state through the Apex Farmer Producer Company. Recognizing the limitations of local markets and the scale of production, these cooperatives have experienced significant growth by diversifying operations, encompassing agricultural produce, processed foods, honey, dairy and cattle feed, among other ventures.

Establishing Orchards for Temperate and Subtropical Fruit Plants

Orchards with temperate and subtropical fruit trees present an opportunity to address climate change and generate carbon credits. By converting barren or marginal land into productive orchards, this initiative contributes to carbon sequestration as trees absorb and store atmospheric carbon dioxide. Well-managed orchards can enhance local biodiversity, improve soil health and increase water retention, further mitigating the effects of climate change.

- The integration of 32,201 temperate fruit plants (apple, peach, plum, and walnut) and subtropical fruit trees (mango and citrus) diversified agricultural production, making it more resilient to climate variability.
- The introduction of high-density planting (HDP) was one of the most important changes in fruit production practices. These orchards can produce early and sustained yields of quality fruits. This innovative approach involves the use of dwarfing rootstocks for temperate fruits, such as M9 and MM111 for apple farming, and Myrobalan and Marianna 2624 for stone fruits.
- Additionally, dwarf canopy varieties like Amrapali mango were utilized for subtropical fruit production.



Chain Link Fencing

In the hilly regions of Uttarakhand, scattered landholdings present a challenge for agricultural productivity. Due to land fragmentation, local farmers face threats from wildlife, particularly monkeys and wild boars, which raid fields and damage crops. To mitigate these conflicts and protect farms, Himmotthan has introduced chain-link fencing in selected sites. The combined approach of land consolidation and protective fencing supported resilience and productivity.

- Himmotthan is actively working to address land consolidation by combining smaller, scattered plots into more manageable and productive farming units. This initiative enhances farming efficiency, and fosters community cooperation and land management.
- In 2023-24, chain link fencing implemented across 120 households in Nainital and Pithoragarh under the Parivartan Lakhpati Kisan Programme, successfully protecting 10 acres of land and creates a physical barrier that deters wildlife, reducing crop losses and contributing to stability and sustainability of farming practices.
- Similarly, under the Holistic Rural Development Programme (HRDP), installation of chain link fencing promoted among 100 farmers in Almora district in 6,000 running meters effectively prevented wild animals from accessing and damaging farms.

Look Ahead for Next Year

Insights garnered during implementation were utilized to formulate more resilient and forward-thinking programs such as the Maximising Himalayan Agriculture Initiative (MHAI) funded by Tata Trusts and the Rural Livelihood Programme (RLP) funded by Axis Bank Foundation, which targets 35,000 households across Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh. The primary objective of this five-year program is to raise household incomes through engagement in diversified commodity-specific, agri-allied and non-farm production clusters. Strengthened production systems are anticipated to bolster productivity by 20% and elevate average household incomes by 70%, reaching Rs 1.65 lakh a year from all livelihood sources. Emphasis is placed on the development of seven key value chains that include pulses and nutri-cereals, beekeeping, mountain seed production, high-value crops, apricot, high-density orchards, agri allied sector like livestock, and non-farm activities, aimed at maximizing benefits for farmers.

These value chains are projected to generate a cumulative revenue of Rs 74.3 crore over five years, with FPOs achieving breakeven by the third year and attaining 12% profit margin by the fifth year. The program aims to empower 22,500 rural women producers, fostering financial independence and enhancing their overall prosperity and well-being.

Case Study: Agricultural Transformation through Rosemary Cultivation

In the hills of Uttarakhand, water scarcity and wild animal raids pose challenges to traditional agriculture, leading farmers to either abandon their fields or adopt crops that require less water. To overcome the issue, Himmotthan has provided assistance and technical guidance for the establishment of nurseries and the cultivation of rosemary, a hardy crop suited to rainfed conditions. Lata Devi, a farmer from Utircha village of Dugadda block in Pauri Garhwal district of Uttarakhand started a transformative journey by successfully adopting rosemary cultivation.

In April 2023, Lata Devi established a rosemary nursery using the raised bed method. She procured 25,000 cuttings at Rs.0.50 per cutting from Kandai village. Himmotthan provided technical know-how, covering aspects like soil preparation, planting techniques, plant spacing and nursery management.

By September 2023, Lata Devi sold 20,000 rosemary plants at the rate of Rs 4 per plant to various farmers' self-help groups in different villages. Herbs cultivation piloted by Himmotthan in few years ago in the region is now widely adopted by farmers. Farmers are cultivating rosemary in fallow land and rainfed areas to generate additional income. It is least affected by wild animals and is a water-efficient crop.

Encouraged by the success of the initial intervention, Lata Devi expanded her nursery in October 2023 with 60,000 cuttings. By February 2024, she sold 50,000 plants. Additionally, 37,500 plants were sold to a private vendor in Rudraprayag at Rs 3 per plant.

Lata Devi's venture into rosemary cultivation proved to be highly profitable. She earned Rs 50,000 for the initial 20,000 plants and Rs 1,62,500 by selling 50,000 plants in February 2024. After deducting production expenses of Rs 15,000, she earned a profit of Rs 1,67,500, showcasing the financial viability of rosemary cultivation in water-scarce regions.

Lata Devi's journey from traditional farming to successful rosemary cultivation showcases the potential for agricultural transformation in water-scarce regions. She has inspired other farmers to consider similar ventures, promoting sustainable agriculture and improving livelihoods.

Endline Assessment of Mission Pulses Uttarakhand

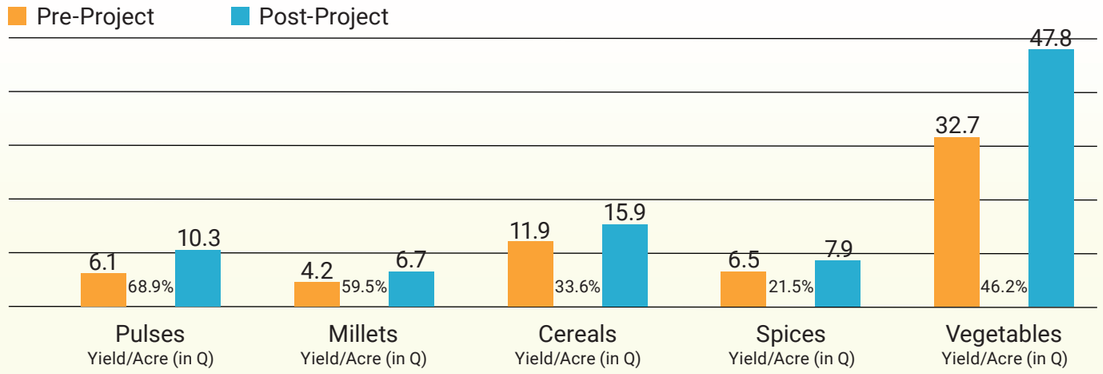
The Mission Pulses - Uttarakhand program was completed by September 2023. An endline evaluation was conducted to evaluate the project's implementation and measure its impact on beneficiaries by assessing the project's achievement on its outputs and outcomes. The assessment also sought to capture the learning and build upon them for future interventions under the mountain agriculture system for the benefit of the farming community.

Himmotthan invited applications from consultancy firms for undertaking a detailed and comprehensive end-line assessment. CMSR was awarded the contract. The agency has applied a mixed method of quantitative research (CAPI survey of a sample of 527 households) with 95% confidence interval and 3.5% margin of error, combined with qualitative data collected through focused group discussion (eight at the SRC level, two at the CFC level and one at Trishuli level), IDIs (six with Lakhpati Kisans) and KIIs with two knowledge partners.

Key findings from the Endline Assessment

Adoption of new crops and improved varieties by the farmers: 34% of households replaced traditional crops with new ones and 54% of them introduced new seed varieties
Adoption of correct package of practices by farmers: 67% of households adopted modern package of practices.

Change in productivity: Adopting an optimized package of practices led to improvements in plant growth, crop yield and overall productivity. Pulses production increased to 2,575 kg per ha against a target of 1,600 kg per ha.



Post-harvest handling of produce: The promotion of various post-harvest practices resulted in reducing post-harvest losses by 20%.

Product Marketing: Before the project was implemented, a majority of cultivators (68%) were selling their produce to weekly and local markets. Currently, a large proportion (74%) are selling their produce to SRCs. The dependence of farmers on brokers and intermediaries reduced from 27% before the intervention to 12% post intervention.

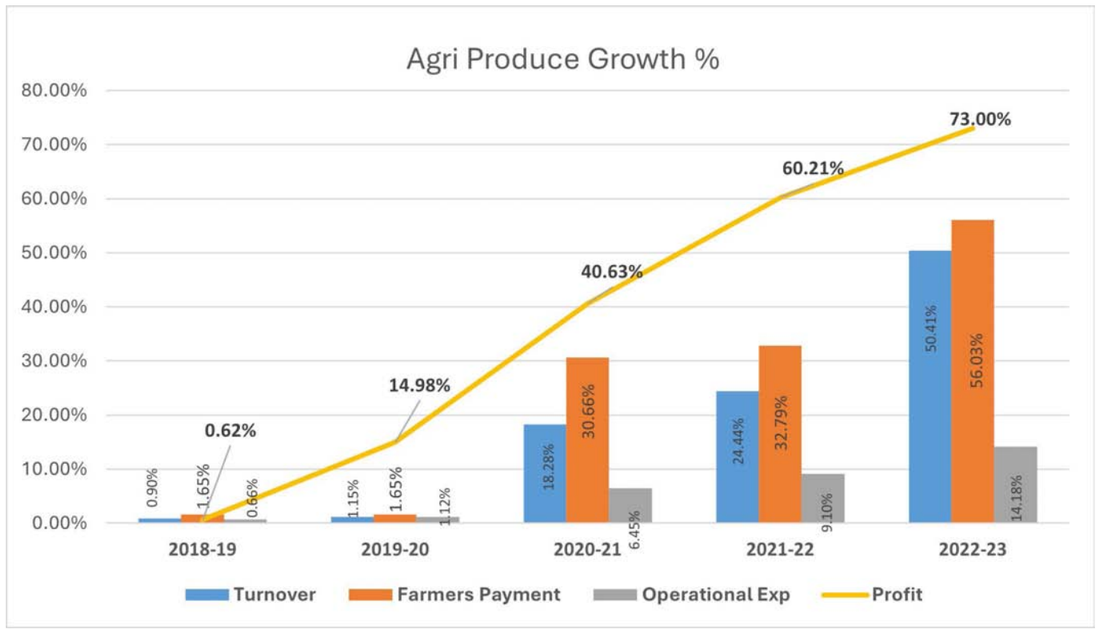
Seed Production: Seed production benefited 3,750 farmers. Onion seed production accounted for the largest proportion (22%) of seed producers, followed by millets (19%), coriander (7%), and garlic (3%) and potato (3%).

Farm Mechanization: Awareness and use of farm machinery like power tillers, power threshers and power sprayers saw a substantial increase. Farmers availed machinery on government subsidies .

Critical Irrigation: Irrigation support helped farmers to switch to cash crops, cultivate off-season vegetables, solve drinking water scarcity and store water using LDPE tanks, thus increasing productivity and reducing drudgery of collecting water from distant locations.

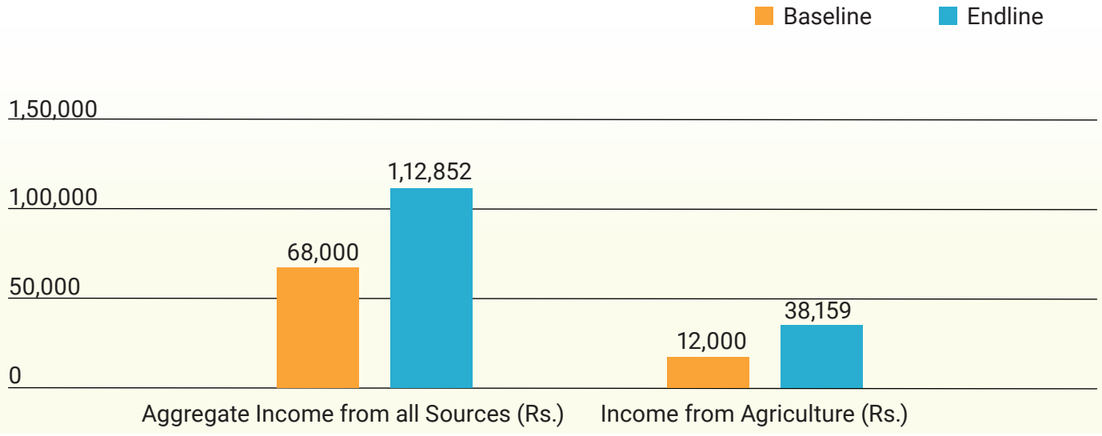
Beekeeping: Support to beekeepers helped increase production of honey from 1-2 kg earlier to 5-6 kg. Before the project, 68% respondents used to sell their honey produce in local markets.

Outcomes of Strengthening Community Institutions and Social enterprise: The project has established and nurtured 1,110 producer groups and SHGs, 15 women cooperatives and one state level producer company. The cumulative turnover of the enterprises saw a turnover growth of over 150% over the five-year intervention period. These women cooperatives play a vital role in promoting social enterprises and microfinance-based livelihood activities.



The business growth of farm produce was remarkable. Although farm produce accounted for a mere 1% of the total business turnover in 2018, it surged to over 50% by 2022-23. A similar upward trend was observed in the context of farmer payments and profitability.

Change in Income: At baseline, the combined average household income from all sources was Rs 68,000, which increased up to Rs 1,12,852 at end term, an increase of 65.9%. The rise in income from agricultural production was 218%.



Recommendations:

- Strengthen social capital through community engagement initiatives.
- Conduct regular evaluations to identify and prioritize impactful interventions.
- Foster partnerships for sustained support and scalability.
- Implement measures for climate resilience and adaptive capacity building.
- Continued efforts in social capital formation and intervention refinement will be crucial for maximizing long-term impact and ensuring resilience of mountain communities.

The project has made significant strides in improving the livelihoods of rural communities in Uttarakhand. By addressing key challenges and leveraging partnerships, the project has laid a foundation for sustainable agricultural development in the region.

Livestock Initiative

Livestock rearing is an integral part of mountain farming. Highland communities face acute fodder shortage, inferior quality of livestock breeds, traditional feeding practices, poor animal health and management services, and unorganized marketing often leave the livestock sector at mere subsistence levels. The projects designed for livestock promotion have encouraged a shift in rearing improved, high-yield animals, better health and management practices from extensive grazing to stall feeding, by growing fodder and forage crops, and promotion of feed concentrate to provide proper animal nutrition.

The Central Himalayan Livestock Initiative (CHLI-II) is designed to strengthen the livestock value chains in existing village clusters and upscale successful models to increase outreach, volume, productivity and market share. CHLI-II is aiming to reach out to 60,000 households of 1,200 villages in 13 districts of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, with scaling up the successful livestock models suitable for mountain conditions such as micro-dairy, semi-intensive goat rearing and hatchery-based poultry value chain.

Livestock interventions in Uttarakhand is being implemented through Tata Trusts funded CHLI-II, HDFC Bank CSR supported Focused Livelihood Development Project, Holistic Rural Development Project and Lakhpati Kisan Yojana, and Titan CSR supported Integrated Village Development Project.

Key Achievements:

The livestock initiative of Himmotthan reached to 48,000 households of 11 hilly districts of Uttarakhand. Micro-dairy promotion was a key area of the initiative that provided livestock rearers and dairy farmers a platform for milk collection and sale of surplus milk, enhancing family incomes. Higher production through feed and fodder promotion, breed improvement, adopting better health and management practices and collective marketing of dairy and dairy products were key intervention areas. The following milestones are achieved in 2023-24:

Strengthening, Nurturing and Upgradation of Mountain Dairy Farming

Promotion of Fodder and feed

In Uttarakhand, 80% of the livestock are reared by smallholders, who are facing almost 47% fodder shortage. Farmers are now transitioning from open and migratory grazing to semi-stall feeding with a small number of high-yielding animals. The adoption of concentrated feed is increasing, although increasing prices are a concern. Fodder harvesting and conservation techniques are required to reduce drudgery of women, but adaptation rate is low due to cost effectiveness and restricted handling and mobility of machines in the mountains.

Himmotthan is promoting a silvi-pastoral system and supporting farmers in developing community managed fodder plots with planting grass, shrubs and fodder trees on common and private lands. A major objective of fodder promotion is to provide quality fodder at the nearest location to reduce drudgery. Community management system for protection, management and fodder distribution and intercultural operations are also promoted.

- 10 centralized fodder nurseries were developed to provide quality planting material.
- 218 ha of common and private land were brought under fodder plantation. Most fodder plots are well established and providing regular fodder to the farmers in different clusters. A total 53,000 trees and 444 quintal of fodder grasses were planted.
- Forage crops were promoted on 33 ha of private land and high-value crops were promoted on 40 ha .
- 12 animal feed units for manufacturing concentrated animal feed are being operated and managed by women led community institutions. Steps have been taken to strengthen and upgrade these units to provide quality feed on a regular basis.
- 2 new animal feed units were established in Ramnagar and Hawalbagh clusters to cover at least 2,000 additional households.

Breed Improvement, Health and Management Practices

Promoting a pool of improved milch animals through breed upgradation is a major area of work in dairy farming. In collaboration of Uttarakhand Livestock Development Board (ULDB) and the state animal husbandry department, Himmotthan has created a pool of trained paravets to provide artificial insemination (AI) and basic health facilities to farmers at their doorsteps.

- 35 paravets conducted 18,674 successful AIs, and 4,718 upgraded progenies were born through AI.
- 65 animal health camps were organised in coordination with the animal husbandry department to ensure timely check-up and treatment of 10,900 animals, benefitting over 5,000 households.
- Special health camps were organized, and medical kits distributed to tackle the lumpy disease.
- A total of 118 cattle sheds were built for proper livestock management.
- 344 improved milch animals were distributed, including 80 indigenous cows under cow ghee value chain initiative.

Micro Dairies

Himmothan is supporting women's self-reliant cooperatives (SRCs) in operating and managing 26 micro-dairies. These dairies were upgraded and upscaled in existing villages by adding new milk routes in nearby areas to increase volume and profit share of SRCs.

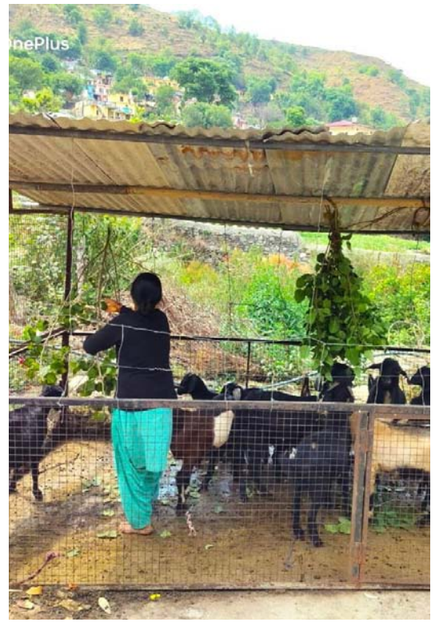
- 1 new micro-dairy was started in Ramnagar in Nainital, and 1 butter-centric unit was started by setting up a A2 ghee processing unit in Joshimath in Chamoli district.
- 5 existing micro-dairies have been upgraded by developing new milk routes, providing required equipment and material to maintain quantity and quality of milk in Saryu Ghati, Boh-Dhirni, Kathpuriyachhina, Gorang Ghati and Jaripani clusters.
- Over 18.8 lakh litres of milk was collected and sold by the dairies, earning an income of Rs 803.06 lakh. Around 80% of amount was paid back to the farmers.

Promotion and Strengthening of Small Ruminant Value Chain

Semi-intensive goat rearing was promoted (a) to provide an opportunity to marginal farmers to ensure regular income with small investments; (b) to reduce forest degradation by introducing semi-intensive goat feeding that reduces grazing pressure; and (c) to focus on early bodyweight gain of goats through proper feeding, healthcare and management.

Focus was given on promoting 4 goats + 1 buck, or 9 goats + 1 buck rearing models for different set of farmers according to economic conditions and resource availability. Goat rearing under semi-intensive system for commercial production is gaining momentum as farmers are gradually adopting stall feeding. Semi-stall feeding helps the goats to gain weight in less time that ensures early income while reducing drudgery.

Goat enclosures are made for daytime feeding, while sheds are developed for night shelter. During 2023-24, a total of 890 goats were distributed and 53 goatsheds and enclosures were constucted to promote semi-intensive rearing. Goat rearers are encouraged to adopt concentrated feed for fattening.



Promotion and Strengthening of Backyard Poultry Value Chain

Backyard poultry has been a part of the mountain farming system and is characterized by a mix of agriculture and allied activities-based livelihoods that is generally managed by women. Himmotthan has promoted cluster-based hatchery, brooder, and backyard or mother units to set up a complete poultry value chain within the cluster to reduce dependency on hatcheries and poultry farms in the plains.

- » **Poultry Chicken Infusion:** Local birds of mountain districts in Uttarakhand are hardy with low egg production and slow growth rates. Therefore, improved poultry breed such as Rhode Island Red, Kadaknath and Vanraja have been introduced in the project villages. The infusion varied from village to village and district to district as per techno-commercial specifications and choice of farmer to manage the flock. It is proving to be an important step in strengthening and promoting backyard poultry in the mountains.
- » **Operation of Cluster-based New Hatchery Units and Brooder Units:** Currently, 11 small hatcheries with a capacity range of 500 to 3,000 eggs are in operation. Himmotthan is providing technical handholding support to hatchery operators. The backyards and mother units in the villages are providing fertile eggs to hatchery units. The hatched chicks are sold to brooder units for vaccination and fattening.
- » **Brooding Units:** Brooder units have been set up to rear hatched dayold chicks for a month in protected and regular monitored conditions. Around 13,400 poultry birds distributed in village clusters to promote backyard poultry in 2023-24.
- » **Backyard Poultry cum Mother Units:** One-month old chicks from brooder units are sold to backyard and mother units for further rearing and marketing. Birds are sold in local markets. Healthy egg laying birds, and a few male birds are being maintained at mother units to provide fertile eggs to the hatchery.

Community Institutions and Capacity Building

Over the years, Himmotthan has organised and nurtured community institutions to promote livelihoods and collective enterprises. The program adopted producer-based institution to promote on and off-farm enterprises. In 2023-24, over 2,000 SHGs and producer groups with more than 20,000 women members have been formed and strengthened. During the year, over 1,000 SHGs were able to obtain a financial inclusion amount of Rs 890 lakh from banks and other MFIs to provide financial services to members. Around 55% of the overall loan amount was provided to members for agriculture and allied business activities.

Himmotthan promoted local youth as young professionals to manage and implement projects activities. To ensure proper and effective implementation, a series of training cum exposure visits were organised to enhance their capacity and competencies. Over 1,000 community resource persons working under the FPOs have been trained in operation and management of different enterprises. Overall, 252 trainings and exposure programs were organized during the year to train 7,700 farmers, CRPs and team members on improved livestock management practices, enterprise promotion, financial management and leadership development.

Case study: Financial Inclusion for Semi-intensive Goat Rearing through FPO

Today Sarashwati Devi, a resident of Chushala village in Almora district is an owner of a flock of 13 goats and 2 bucks. She earned an income of Rs 25,000 by selling 5 goats in the past few months. Sarashwati Devi has a family of eight members the grows millets and other crops in a few rainfed fields, which was not sufficient to fulfill family food requirement for the entire year. Fortunately, she was among the members of Dhaula Devi Self Reliant Cooperative formed in 2013 by 250 women from 20 villages of Danya block in Almora. One objective of the SRC was to raise the income of farmers by providing financial assistance for livelihood activities.

Earlier, she used to rear one or two goats via free grazing, as was the practice of other farmers of the village. Sarashwati Devi got a loan amount of Rs 50,000 from the SRC to buy 9 goats and 1 buck after fulfilling the criteria and required recommendation of the Chaushala SHG. Himmotthan provided timely technical inputs through experts to ensure better rearing practices that included proper feeding, housing, breeding, medical insurance, regular deworming and timely vaccination of the flock.

Dhaula Devi SRC in support of Himmotthan has piloted goat loans for semi-intensive rearing. The SRC provided soft loans, ranging from Rs 10,000 to Rs 50,000 to a household willing to adopt the method for a period of 12 months with 8% annual interest rate.

So far, Dhaula Devi SRC has disbursed loans worth Rs 35 lakh in 5 years to 130 women members to buy over 300 goats. In return, the SRC was able to earn an amount of Rs 2.40 lakh from the loan interest, which is again invested for providing loans for buying goats. The entire operation is managed by the women members of SHGs and SRC. The selection of interested farmer for loans is done in SHG meetings and the loan application is forwarded to SRC for approval. The SHG takes responsibility of monitoring the procurement and timely repayment.

The loan amount provided by the cooperative to the farmers might not be in big, but the confidence and borrowing power generated among women farmers like Sarashwati Devi is seen as bringing a change in the lives of the community.

A Success Story of Van Panchayat Baja Nadila, Bageshwar

The Baja Nadila Van Panchayat lies under Khark Tamta Gram Sabha, covering 54 households of nearly 300 people. The Van Panchayat is spread over an area of 47.50 ha and is situated at an altitude of 1,350 to 1,500 meters. It receives an average annual rainfall of 1,250 mm with temperature ranging from 4°C to 35°C. Sarpanch Bhagwati Prasad has played a key role in establishing and maintaining the Van Panchayat and motivating villagers for forest protection.

Community fodder development in was started in Baja Nadila Van Panchayat in 2016 under CHLI by Himmotthan and MNREGA funds. A total of 27.5 ha area was brought under silvi-pasture, growing grasses, shrubs and trees. As a result of regular protection and maintenance, fodder in form of grasses is now available to each household of the village. Villagers open the plot for grass cutting every year in October-November. During the year, around 102.2 tonnes of grass was produced, benefitting 35 households.

Baja Nadila has played an important role not only in maintaining ecological balance but also providing livelihoods services to the community. It was recently conferred the prestigious Rangeland Award 2023 in the Rangeland Workshop organised at Pulluthu, Madurai, Tamil Nadu, on 28th March 2024.

Education Initiative

Education is an important tool to foster human development. It provides individuals the capability to develop and contribute to the welfare of society. In Uttarakhand, communities are primarily agrarian. The terrain is difficult to tread and provides only subsidence. For these communities, government primary schools are the only accessible and affordable source of formal education for their children. Migration in the past decades has drastically increased the number of households that are solely dependent on women for all farm and household chores, including the education of children. Under such conditions, strengthening of these schools is imperative.

Key Achievements:

Establishing Functional Reading & Writing Corners/ Libraries

The reading and writing corners across 300 schools in 4 blocks have been conceptualized and set up in alignment with best practices discussed and shared by the CoEEL team and Parag team at Tata Trusts. Some of the parameters that have been kept common across these 300 schools are print-rich environment, accessibility of the material, book issue registers & individual library cards and activating Bal Library Management Committees

Strengthening of School Management Committees (SMCs)

Himmotthan collaborated with CiNi Jharkhand to mentor the team on best practices to strengthen SMCs. Given their decades of work with SMCs in Jharkhand, trainers from CiNi trained some members from Himmotthan to eventually become master trainers in the concerned subject. Two members from each block volunteered and are leading individual blocks in SMC work.

» 22 trainings were conducted across all 4 blocks covering 1,031 members from 250+ schools. On average, 4-5 members attended SMC trainings. At the end of the training, teams worked on school development plans with the SMC members.

Team Capacity Building

The focus of team capacity building has been on:

» Understanding and creating inclusive classrooms
» SMC
» Physical literacy
» Foundational literacy and numeracy

The team has gone through systemic trainings planned across the year with experts. They were also conducted at education institutes outside Uttarakhand, such as OELP, Kalike, Quest and Digantar. Nearly 15+ trainings took place.

Teacher Capacity Building

The team has been collaborating with the block education department to conduct various trainings. In total, 501 teachers through 14 sessions were trained across blocks on topics of FLN, library and physical literacy.

Assessments and Reviews

Baseline assessment of students on FLN and physical literacy capacities were conducted on sample and control schools. The assessment for FLN anchored by Tata Trusts and designed by CGI were conducted over 2 months. The physical literacy review was carried out by Sportz Village.

School Visits

Under the education initiative in three districts in Uttarakhand, the team made regular visits to schools and conducted around 10,853 onsite support visits.

Digital Learning Interventions

» Earlier in the project, smart classes were set up. These classes were equipped a smart board, computer and inverter. The content is procured by the schools. Four of these smart classes were given power backup. One new smart class was set up, now totalling to seven.
» A Digital Learning Centre was established in Bhawan cluster after the successful running of the centre in Jadipani. It is used by 70 students to learn on computers and prepare for higher studies.

Career Counselling

400 students from 10th, 11th and 12th classes went through 4 sessions of career counselling conducted by external institutes in Almora. In Jadipani, Jaunpur and Thauldhar, 256 students participated in counselling sessions.

Sports Interventions

Sports is one of the important streams that students and youth in Uttarakhand are interested in. The team tried various small interventions across projects to nurture the sports potential.

» In Almora, 4 sports events were conducted in the schools, targeting secondary and senior secondary schoolchildren.
» In Tehri Garhwal's Jadipani and Jaunpur blocks, events were conducted across village level. Around 224 students participated in different sports.
» 6 schools had volleyball and badminton courts constructed with chain fencing.

Case Study : People of Education Team

The working model of the project allows reaching the last mile of schools through its team of facilitators and Siksha Preraks who have been identified from these villages. These resource persons through proper guidance and training will not only take the project ahead but also become champions of new ways of learning in their areas. Two young girls who joined the program as their first job have developed life-long perspectives. These are their stories.

Mansi Rawat | School Facilitator, Chamba

In our area, we had heard about Himmotthan that works in water and livelihoods with women of our villages. I applied due to my inclination to work with children and education. I come from a family where nobody has gone out to work, and we rely on farming for our meagre income. For me, working in the education space was going and teaching in a school or taking tuition classes. Little did I know that I would have to work with 15 schools and manage my team of 3 Siksha Preraks. We were so homebound that I had never gone to the interior villages of the blocks. I recruited and managed my team, although this was a stressful but empowering experience.

Today, I interact with all kinds of stakeholders, from children, community members, teachers to other NGO members and government officials. Through the LEC program, I am not only questioning my beliefs but also dreaming of better education for our rural children. I have studied at the same schools and now would like to bring something better for the children. This is what inspires me each day to walk 4-5 km to reach my schools.

Anjali Rawat |Siksha Prerak, Jaunpur

I am a college graduate who would have been married or just passing my time in my village with friends and family or would have been working in the fields with my mother if I had not joined this program. My mother is a member of the FPO in our village. I am known as a quiet girl among my family. When I joined this program, my first day at the school was full of hesitation and awkwardness. Although I knew the children from my village, standing in the school made me nervous.

I have now been trained on skills that I didn't know existed in education. As one of the initiatives, I cleaned a closed room in one of my schools and set up a whole library for children in that room. I feel proud looking at the way BLMC manages that library space. It has been chosen as one of the best library spaces in Jaunpur by Himmotthan. When I go back to the village, I try to take evening sessions with my village children.

Today, I can comfortably organize all events, talk to stakeholders, and share good practices with teachers. I aspire to become one of the best facilitators and take up higher studies in the field of education.

Case Study : Student, teacher, community and Himmotthan collaboration

The reading and writing corners in 300 Intensive Schools in 4 blocks have been conceptualized and set up in alignment with the best practices discussed and shared by the CoEEL team and Parag team at Tata Trusts. Setting up functional Reading and Writing Corners in schools has been a journey for the team.

One such school is GPS Dhamola in Kotabagh. Himmotthan was able to convert a storeroom into a functional library with the help of students, teachers and SMC. The SMC was activated to participate in their school's functioning. Sessions are conducted in these spaces. It is now one of the model centres where others can visit and learn about the print-rich environment and various other good practices that the team wants to standardize.

The school facilitator at Dhamola, Uma Negi, was able to mobilize the SMC and students to establish a kitchen garden as well. This space is now maintained by children and bhojan mata at the school.

Community based Tourism

Background:

Himmotthan has been working on a Community Based Tourism (CBT) project with the support of Make My Trip Foundation (MMTF) and Tata Trusts in Uttarakhand as a pilot. This model is based on two aspects:
(a) A natural or cultural asset is best nurtured through custodianship of local communities; and
(b) Today's traveller is far more sensitive to deep and authentic experiences that are planet and people friendly.

The project is aimed at creating a replicable, scalable and sustainable tourism business model in rural settings of Uttarakhand, offering authentic cultural, natural and architectural heritage experiences as experiential tourism products, with complete management and ownership of local communities and their institutions.

- Create a sustainable, replicable and scalable model for tourism in rural settings in Uttarakhand.
- Curate experiential tourism activities, with the community promoting local cultural, natural and historic heritage.
- Create and develop tourism anchors and trainers who will act as hosts and guardians of the local heritage.
- Create business models to be run and managed by the community or its institutions. By encouraging and promoting the communities to take up experiential tourism as a means of bettering their economic status via sustainable, alternative means of employment.

Project Location and Target Groups:

The project is currently being implemented in Uttarakhand in the three clusters of Jadipani in Tehri Garhwal, and Ukhimath and Ransi in Rudraprayag district. The locations are among the emerging tourist destinations.

i. Jadipani Cluster, Chamba Block, Tehri Garhwal: The area between Mussoorie and Chamba is an emerging tourist destination as an alternate to Dhanaulti and Mussoorie. The cluster under the project is a group of 5 villages -- Saud, Jadipani, Chopdiyal Gaon, Silkoti and Kakhwari.

ii. Makkumath Cluster, Ukhimath Block, Rudraprayag: The area at the base of the mountain of the popular tourist destination of Chopta. It is frequented by pilgrims and adventure seekers alike. The villages included under the project are Makku, Pab, Jagpuda, Ushada and Sari. The cluster houses the biggest van panchayat of Uttarakhand called Makku Van Panchayat. The region receives snowfall and there is an influx of tourists due to natural and cultural attractions. The economy of the cluster is already tourism-driven.

iii. Ransi Cluster, Ukhimath Block, Rudraprayag: The area around the fourth Kedar, Madhmaheshwar shrine, is an emerging tourist destination, attracting nature lovers and pilgrims for its tranquil and immense natural bounty. The project villages in the cluster are Ransi, Uniyana, Gaid and Mansuna.

The targeted communities in these locations are primarily engaged in farming activities. A small part of the demography is already engaged in the unorganized sector of the regional tourism industry. A total of 300 households have been targeted for upliftment under the project with significant incremental income.

Key Achievements:

The major components of the project aligned were development of traditional homestays in the villages, training villagers as community guides and experience anchors and establishment of media units of local youth trained as photographers and filmmakers, and developing a community run café cum museum and studio in a cluster to generate sustainable jobs.

So far, the project was focussed on completing the infrastructural development and making an organized system for the development, specially involving community contributions, and incorporation of the institutions for business operations of the curated and developed products.

Key Activities and Achievements are as follows:

Tourism Trainers and Experience Anchors trained

» **Jadipani:** 10 women guide and 3 media persons trained. They have started earning.
» **Makkumath:** 18 guides and 2 media persons trained. They have started earning.

Local community members enrolled in Khoji groups

» **Jadipani:** 24 community members enrolled in documentation of the cluster.
» **Makkumath:** 19 community members enrolled in documentation of the cluster.

Architectural design guide based on traditional heritage

» Architectural design guide created based on traditional heritage, mentioning the thought, technique and approach adopted while developing the homestays.

Tourist accommodation rooms added (Homestays)

» **Jadipani:** 10 homestays developed. All have started commercial activities.
» **Makkumath:** 6 homestays developed & 4 are in progress. Six homestays are being developed in convergence with the Integrated Child Development Scheme and State Rural Livelihood Mission of Rudraprayag district.
» Third cluster is being proposed. Ground survey, selection and onboarding is in progress.

Tourism experiences offered

» **Jadipani:** 5 experiences designed and curated. They were rolled out for business with trained guides.
» **Makkumath:** 11 experiences designed and curated. They are yet to roll out for business.

Community institutions nurtured

» **Jadipani:** The institution of Him-Vikas Cooperative incorporated for business.
» **Makkumath:** The institution of Nayi Kiran Cooperative incorporated for business .

Households involved in tourism activities

» **Jadipani:** 98 direct beneficiaries onboarded in tourism activities. The households shall be enhancing their income in the next 6months once full-fledged business starts.
» **Makkumath:** 56 direct beneficiaries onboarded in tourism activities. More households will be enhancing their income in the next 6 months once business starts.

Tourism Plans enumerating the Business model

» Business plan rolled out for both clusters to cater to all tourism activities in association with community institutions.

Look Ahead for Next Year

As the project has completed almost all of its infrastructural development, the is now on building the market base and linkages towards generating revenue. Various approaches being planned as follows:

» **Training & Market Linkages:** Connections will be established with major tourism operators and schools and colleges in the region for regular activities like community lunch, guided tours and summer camps.
» **Developing a Larger Tourism Ecosystem in the Region:** Popular tourist destinations like Kanatal (Jadipani), Chopta (Makkumath) and Ransi (Madhmaheshwar) are frequented by nature lovers, pilgrims and adventure seekers. As the experience packages are now developed, and the communities are being empowered to deliver them, the organized tour and travel industry would also offer business opportunities. Both the clusters have several homestays struggling for market connections and quality guidance. They need to be upgraded.

Livelihood Skills Uttarakhand

Background:

The Livelihood Skills Uttarakhand program launched in March 2018 as a joint development initiative by Tata Trusts and Uttarakhand Department of Rural Development. The program was implemented in 5 blocks of 5 districts for 5 years (2018-2023). The program leveraged the power of collectives, working on building strong, skilled individuals to manage these collectives, livelihoods skill building, creating platforms to start women-led enterprises, and thus accelerated growth of rural women.

The aim was to raise the income of over 12,500 households to over Rs 1 lakh per annum over 5 years. The objectives were:

» Formation and strengthening of community institutions, including over 5,000 SHGs, 604 VOs and 49 CLFs.
» Over 20,000 women skilled in various rural enterprise linked skills.
» Poor households linked to livelihood activities through financial inclusion worth Rs 32.3 crore.
» 49 Cluster Level Federations created that are involved in operation and management of different rural enterprises.
» Over 2,000 independent entrepreneurs and skilled local youth were directly employed.

Project Outreach

The project was implemented in five blocks (Ukhimath, Chinyalisaur, Pauri, Betalghat and Berinag) of five districts (Rudraprayag, Uttarkashi, Pauri, Nainital and Pithoragarh) of Uttarakhand. Himmotthan worked with 866 villages in project blocks. Overall, the project has directly benefitted more than 25,000 households. In 2023-24, Himmotthan reached more than 1,500 households across 5 blocks.

Key Achievements

The project focused on institution building, capacity building and livelihood skilling, financial inclusion and enterprise promotion.

a) Institution Building and Strengthening:

» In 2023-24, Himmotthan mobilized women from 1,510 households and formed 208 SHGs.
» The initiative established 19 Vos and 1 CLF in across five blocks in the Garhwal and Kumaon ranges.

b) Capacity Building and Livelihood Skilling:

» 1,355 CBOs benefited from training sessions conducted by Himmotthan on both farm and non-farm operations. A total of 4,998 individuals and 589 community resource persons were trained in skill development and livelihood enhancement.

c) Financial Inclusion:

» During the project tenure, Rs 5.80 crore was allocated as funds to support rural businesses through financial inclusion measures such as subsidies and revolving funds.
» On average, 668 SHGs were linked with banks via CCL to access financial services.
» A total of 797 microcredit and livelihood plans were developed to ensure sustainable business activities, facilitated by a uniform fund flow system.

d) Enterprise Promotion:

» Livelihood enterprises enabled 1,621 households to initiate income generation through the incubated livelihood activities.
» Project activities resulted in an incremental additional income of Rs 8,936 per farmer per year during 2023-24.

In 2023-24, while the Livelihood Skills Uttarakhand program concluded in September 2023, a new project titled Gender Inclusive Livelihood through Financial Inclusion in Uttarakhand started in October 2023, which is set to run for another five years (2023-28).

Case study : From Farming to Entrepreneurship and Empowerment

Rameshwari Devi, a 38-year-old resident of Gahad village in Pauri Garhwal district, has shown remarkable resilience and determination, rising from humble beginnings to achieve success as an entrepreneur. Despite educational limitations, she transformed her life and supported her family through various entrepreneurial ventures. As leader of the Danda Nagraja SHG, she has successfully managed a flourishing nursery business. Through training provided by Himmotthan, she acquired essential skills and with SHG members established a successful nursery in 2021. Their collective efforts culminated in 2022 when they generated an impressive income of Rs 4,45,000 by supplying saplings to the forest department.

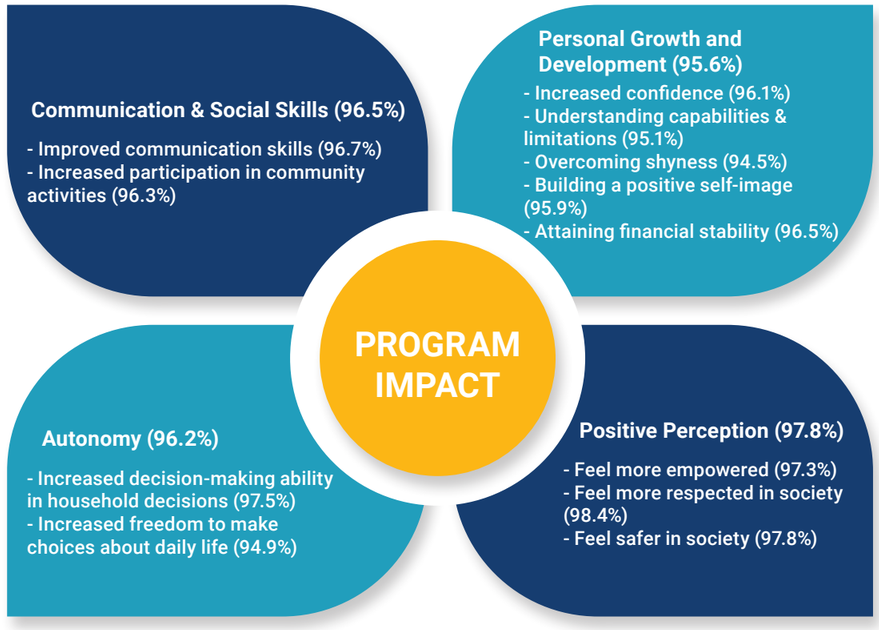
In addition to her nursery business, she diversified her income stream by venturing into the production of Baddi as well as Dhoop and Agarbatti. With support from her family, the SHG and Himmotthan, she has become a beacon of inspiration in her community. Rameshwari Devi's journey underscores the transformative power of self-help groups and community support in achieving economic stability, illustrating how determination, skill-building and collective effort can pave the way to empowerment and financial independence.

Endline Assessment

An endline assessment was carried out by IPSOS, Delhi. The assessment was carried out with 511 beneficiaries of 52 villages across the project area in August 2023.

Key Outcomes

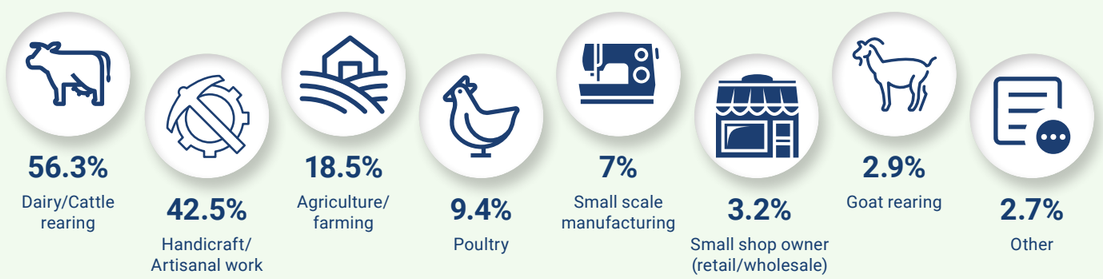
- 96.5% personal growth and development of rural women beneficiaries.
- 67% of beneficiaries received training on livelihood activities during the project tenure.
- 302 beneficiaries took 453 loans for income generation during the project tenure.
- More than 70% of beneficiaries are actively engaged in income-generating activities.
- 89% beneficiaries are satisfactorily engaged in livelihood activities.
- 78% of the beneficiaries utilized Rs 50,000 or less as their initial business investment.
- The average yearly household income increased from Rs 66,000 to Rs 1,45,119.



Perceived impact of the program on individual beneficiaries [n=511]

Conclusion:

The project had a positive impact on the community, particularly benefiting women through financial inclusion, livelihood development and active engagement in livelihood activities. Its interventions significantly improved economic opportunities, facilitating greater participation and empowerment within the community.



Recommendations:

- Prioritize inclusion of the most vulnerable women
- Showcasing best practices through model CLFs
- Implement accounting software for transparent and efficient recordkeeping
- Establish a digital platform for centralized monitoring and evaluation
- Implement intensive business planning with CLFs to forecast and track loan disbursements and repayments
- Promote rural infrastructure development by collaborating with government entities and fostering public-private partnerships

Look Ahead for Next Year

In continuation to the initiatives undertaken in Phase 1, the Phase 2 titled Gender Inclusive Livelihoods through Financial Inclusion in Uttarakhand (GiLU) proposes to focus on sustaining the state's livelihood ecosystem undertaken earlier. The project is sanctioned by Tata Trusts and Uttarakhand Department of Rural Development under the State Rural Livelihood Mission for five years from October 2023 to September 2028. The project is designed to empower 27,000 households by providing them with social capital, low-cost financing, new skills, diversified livelihoods, and market connections through economically viable, producer-oriented social enterprises.

The aim of the project is to mobilize 27,000 households over five years, providing them with doorstep services, access to finance and increased incomes.

The project will be implemented in 950 villages of 7 developmental blocks (Betalghat, Berinag, Chinyalisaur, Dunda, Pauri, Ukhimath and Yamkeshwar) spread across 5 Himalayan districts of Uttarakhand.

Samarth | Rural Women Entrepreneurship Promotion

Background:

- By establishing women's federation, Himmotthan promotes entrepreneurship among rural women in the mountains that would catalyse the micro-entrepreneurship ecosystem services in Uttarakhand. The project is implemented with following objectives:
- Promote and provide entrepreneurship an micro-entrepreneurship services to rural women
- Women champions promoted in the program will further push the narrative of local and hyperlocal entrepreneurship individually or through CBOs.
- Linkage to formal financing channels coupled with the successful utilization of the capital by these entrepreneurs will boost confidence in the relationship between formal financing institutes and rural mountain areas

Project Coverage:

Nine hill districts in Uttarakhand (Tehri Grahwal, Pauri Garhwal, Uttarkashi, Chamoli, Rudraprayag, Pithoragarh, Bageshwar, Nainital and Almora).

Key Achievements

- A total of 100 farm-based entrepreneurs related to activities such as cattle rearing, beekeeping, floriculture, mushroom production and other essential practices that are integral to many farming communities were promoted.
- Over 50 off-farm based entrepreneurs promoted. The off-farm operations include operation of paddy sheller machine, flour mill, handloom, tailor shop, spice seller, power weeder, an oil and flour mill, candle and dhoop batti making and dona pattal manufacturing.

Awards and Recognitions

CII FPO Excellence Award 2023

Three Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) promoted by the Himmotthan Society have received prestigious CII's FPO Excellence Award 2023. This esteemed recognition was bestowed during the award ceremony jointly organised by the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer Welfare (MoA&FW), Government of India, held on October 18, 2023 in New Delhi. The three FPOs recognised by the CII are:

» Him Vikas Swayatt Sahkarita, Chamba, Tehri Garhwal, Uttarakhand honoured in the Community Engagement category. The award was received by Ms. Krishna Pundir (FPO representative) along with Mr. Anil Ramola and Ms. Garima Tewari from Himmotthan Society.

» Sham Valley Apricot Producer Cooperative Limited was declared the winner under the Market Linkage category. The award was received by Mr. Tsewang Dorjai (General Secretary of Apricot FPO) along with Mr. Samten Choephel, Team Leader, Himmotthan Ladakh.

» Trishulii Producer Company Ltd. (TCPL), Dehradun was honoured with runner-up in the Market Linkage category. The award was received by Ms. Sulochan Devi, BoD member of Trishulii along with Mr. Rajat Kaushik and Dr. Rajendra Koshyari from Himmotthan Society.

Rangeland Awards – 2023

The United Nations has declared the year 2026 as International Year of Rangeland and Pastoralists to create awareness on the importance of protection and regeneration of rangelands (pasturelands, common lands). In this backdrop, a voluntary organisation called SEVA (Sustainable Agriculture and Environment Voluntary Action) had organised Rangelands Awards 2023 on March 28, 2024 at People Dhan Academy in Pulluthu-Madurai, in association with the Ministry of Fisheries and Animal Husbandry and Dairying under the National Livestock Mission.

Himmotthan Society supported the Van Panchayat of Baja Nadila, district Bageshwar, Uttarakhand to develop the pastureland in their community forest for coping up with fodder scarcity and forest fire. Efforts done by the Van Panchayat towards the management of community forest was recognised with Rangeland Award – 2023. A certificate and cash prize of Rs.10,000 was received by Van Panchayat Sarpanch Bahagwati Prasad along with Himmotthan staff Dr. Kapil Bisht.

Membership Certificate from National Cooperative Organics Ltd. (NCOL)

Nanda Devi Self Reliant Cooperative, Munsyari, Uttarakhand, a FPO promoted by the Himmotthan Society under the Tata Trusts initiative has received a Membership Certificate for the newly created National Cooperative Organics Ltd. (NCOL) from the Hon'ble Union Cabinet Minister of Home and Cooperation Shri Amit Shah on Launching of National Cooperative Organics Limited (NCOL) in New Delhi on November 8, 2023. Nanda Devi FPO is one of the five FPOs identified across the country. Smt. Mohini Devi, a member of Cooperative has received the Membership Certificate from the Hon'ble Union Home Minister.

CII National Awards for Excellence in Water Management

The award recognises the organisations for their contribution in making a Water Secure World - be it through their operations, innovations, or CSR activities. For over a decade, CII–National Awards for Excellence in Water Management has been celebrating and awarding good and innovative water conservation and management practices undertaken by industries from varied sectors.

The awards adhere to a transparent and rigorous assessment process that includes three levels of security and verification. The result of each assessment is then reviewed by a pre-eminent jury, comprises of former bureaucrats, representatives of government, industries, and academia at two stages before arriving at the final discussion.

Titan along with Tata Trusts has been supporting water programme in Uttarakhand through Himmotthan Society since 2016. Titan – Tata Trusts efforts under Beyond the Fence category for Water Management has been acknowledged by the prestigious CII National Award for Excellence in Water Management – 2023. This esteemed recognition was bestowed during the award ceremony organised by the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) and the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India, held on December 2023 in Delhi. The award list is given as under:

No.	Name of the Award/Recognition	Year of Receiving	Name of the organization who conferred the Award/Recognition
1	CII FPO Excellence Award - Market Linkage Category - Sham Valley, Ladakh- Winner	2023	CII and Ministry of Agriculture & Farmer Welfare
2	CII FPO Excellence Award - Market Linkage Category - TPCL- Runner Up	2023	CII and Ministry of Agriculture & Farmer Welfare
3	CII FPO Excellence Award - Community Engagement (Him Vikas SRC)	2023	CII and Ministry of Agriculture & Farmer Welfare
4	National Cooperative Organics Ltd. (NCOL)	2023	Ministry of Cooperation
5	Water Conservation (Catch the Rain Award)	2023	Govt of India (By Hon'ble President of India)
6	CII National Water for Excellence in Water Management	2023	CII and Water Department, GoI
7	Rangeland Award 2023	2023	SEVA, IGFRI-ICAR Jhansi and FES-Anand

Endurance:

Himmotthan encourages its staff to participate in sports, track and field events. In the long-distance event, Dr. Rajendra Koshyari and Dr. Vinod Kothari has been participating in many long-distance runs. In the last year, they have participated in Sarmang Half Marathon in Dehradun held in October 2023 and prestigious Tata Mumbai Full Marathon held in Mumbai in January 2024.

Voluntary Disclosure

VISION ETHICAL PRACTICES

Himmotthan being an organization which aims towards improving the lives of women have also ensured that more women talent is attracted at all levels especially at the Cluster and at the Self Reliant Cooperative Level. Healthy policies like Prevention of Sexual Harassment are ensured at all levels through dynamic POSH Committees.The Code of Conduct & Whistle Blowers Policy has also been put in place and is monitored regularly to ensure transparency and high levels of work culture across different levels of functioning.

VOLUNTARY DISCLOSURE

None of our Governing Board members are related to each other, nor are related to any of the senior salaried staff by blood or by marriage. None of the Governing Board members have received any salary, consultancy, or other remunerations from Himmotthan. Three Board meetings 32nd, 33rd and 34th were held on 05.09.2023, 16.01.2024 and 22.03.2024. Himmotthan Annual General Body Meeting on 05.09.2023.
Travels was incurred only as budgeted in project heads. No travel costs were incurred for any other reason.

OUR STATUTORY AUDITOR

M/s Deloitte Haskins and Sells LLP
(DHS), Indiabulls, Finance Centre,
Tower-3, 32nd Floor Elphinstone, Mills
Compound, Mumbai – 400013

OUR BANKS

» Indian Overseas Bank, Kanwli Branch, Vasant Vihar, Dehradun, Uttarakhand
» Axis Bank, GMS Road, Dehradun, Uttarakhand
» Uttarakhand Grameen Bank, Indira Nagar, Dehradun, Uttarakhand
» HDFC Bank Ltd. Ballupur Chowk, Dehradun, Uttarakhand
» Canara Bank Ltd., GMS Road, Dehradun

OUR INTERNAL AUDITOR

PKF Sridhar & Amp; Santhanam LLP
201, 2nd Floor, Center Point Building, Dr.
Ambedkar Road, Parel,
Mumbai 400 012

SOCIETY REGISTRATION DETAILS

The Himmotthan Society is registered under the
Indian Societies Registration Act of 1860.
The registration Number is 78/2007-2008, dated
20/12/2007. It was last renewed on 31/12/2022 and is valid till 19/12/2027.

Details of Registration under the Income Tax Act,
1961 and Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) are:

» Section 12A granted on 25/09/2008; 40(117/ Dehradun/ 2008-9/10768), Renewal granted on 28/05/2021 via Registration Number AAATH6935KE20214.

» Section 80G granted on 08/10/2008; S.No.19(52) Dehradun/ 2007-08/11261; Renewal granted on 28/05/2021 via Approval Number AAATH6935KF20214 and AAATH6935K23LK01.

» The Society has been registered for undertaking CSR activities and the Registration number is CSR00000081 dated 01/04/2021

AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT

HIMMOTTHAN SOCIETY

Registration No. Uttarakhand/78/2007-2008

BALANCE SHEET AS AT MARCH 31, 2024

Particulars	Note No.	As at March 31,2024 (₹)	As at March 31,2023 (₹)
FUNDS AND LIABILITIES			
FUNDS			
• General Fund	3	83,88,099	16,81,019
• Earmarked Funds	4	12,06,80,457	12,75,97,530
• Other Funds	5	2,12,52,905	2,01,95,117
• Income and Expenditure Account	6	38,84,096	55,17,286
		15,42,05,557	**15,49,90,952**
LIABILITIES			
• Payables	7	13,28,245	9,13,373
		13,28,245	**9,13,373**
TOTAL		**15,55,33,802**	**15,59,04,325**
ASSETS			
• Fixed assets	8	2,13,10,193	2,02,31,578
• Loans and advances	9	5,56,655	4,04,185
• Cash and bank balances	10	13,36,66,954	13,52,68,562
TOTAL		**15,55,33,802**	**15,59,04,325**
See accompanying notes forming part of the financial statements	**1-18**		

In terms of our report attached.

For **Deloitte Haskins & Sells LLP**
Chartered Accountants

For and on behalf of the Himmotthan Society

Jayesh Parmar
Partner

Place: Dehradun
Date: August 09, 2024

Dr. Rajesh Thadani
Chairman

Place: Dehradun
Date: August 09, 2024

Dr. Yashpal Singh Bisht
Secretary

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

INSTITUTIONAL DONORS

» Sir Ratan Tata Trust, Mumbai
» Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, Mumbai
» Tata Education Development Trust, Mumbai
» JRD Tata Trust, Mumbai
» HT Parekh Foundation
» MakeMyTrip Foundation
» Foundation for Rural Entrepreneurship Development (FREND)
» Tata Consultancy Services Foundation
» TCS – E-service International Ltd
» Rural India Supporting Trust (RIST) -FCRA

CSR FUND

» HDFC Bank Limited, Mumbai
» Titan Company Limited, Bangalore
» Tata Consumer Products Limited
» Eicher Group Foundation
» Axis Bank Foundation

INDIVIDUAL DONORS

» Mr. Darshak Shashivadan Vasavada
» Mr. C.K. Venkataraman

DEPARTMENTS (GOVERNMENT OF INDIA)

» Niti Ayog, Govt of India
» Central Poultry Development Organization (Northern Region)
» Defence Institute of High-Altitude Research (DIHAR), Leh
» Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee (MGNREGA)
» National Scheduled Tribes Finance Development Corporation (NSTFDC)
» Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA), New Delhi
» Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, GOI
» National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)
» Ministry of Jal Shakti, GOI

DEPARTMENTS (STATE GOVERNMENTS)

» Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC)
» Uttarakhand Forest Resource Management Project (UFRMP-JICA)
» Department of Rural Development- State Rural Livelihood Mission (SRLM)
» Uttarakhand Forest Department
» Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)
» Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)
» Maharana Pratap Sports College and Hostel
» Department of Drinking Water: SWAJAL Project, Govt. of Uttarakhand

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS

» Association for People Advancement and Action Research (APAAR)
» Central Himalayan Rural Action Group (CHIRAG)
» Himalayan Society for Alternative Development (HIMAD)
» Kapkot Sewa Samiti (KSS)
» Sankalp Samiti (SANKALP)
» Self Reliant Cooperatives (SRCs)

TECHNICAL AGENCIES

» Vivekanand Parvatiya Krishi Anusandhan Sansthan (VPKAS)
» Uttarakhand Livestock Development Board (ULDB)
» Uttarakhand Sheep and Wool Development Board (USWDB)
» Dr. Y.S. Parmar University of Horticulture and Forestry (YSPUHF)
» National Institute of Food Technology Entrepreneurship and Management (NIFTEM)
» Punjab Agriculture University (PAU)
» CSK Himachal Pradesh Agricultural University

“Look after our planet, and it will look after us”

- Phil Harding

Thank You

HIMMOTTHAN SOCIETY
(Registered u/s Society Act 1860)

193, Vasant Vihar, Phase-II, Dehradun, Uttarakhand

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