

# Offsetting Carbon Footprints in Southern Rajasthan

Quarter 3

Progress Report

July - September 2021





# Executive Summary

MakeMyTrip Foundation is supporting Seva Mandir to undertake afforestation activities to offset carbon footprints. During this year, 40,000 saplings will be planted across the rural and tribal areas of Udaipur and Rajsamand districts in southern Rajasthan.

## Context

Southern Rajasthan, a semi-arid zone with erratic weather patterns across hilly terrains; is a region highly vulnerable to climatic variation; receiving an average rainfall of 640 mm annually during the monsoons. Erratic monsoons and undulating terrain cause high soil erosion and poor water harvest in the region.

Seva Mandir's work area constitutes 72% of common land such as pastures, forests and revenue land across the total land area, supporting nearly 80-100% of the rural poor for food, fuel and fodder. However, anthropogenic pressure has led to extensive encroachments in the common lands of forests and village pastures. The private wastelands, although in better conditions compared to the commons, are also rapidly degrading as families do not have the required expertise and resources to protect, restore and manage these resources.

Land degradation results in the loss of soil and water regime in the downstream areas, lowering the net groundwater available to a critical category of population- marked by low availability of fodder, fuel, wood and other forest produce affecting their livestock productivity, income and food security.

The lack of trees and supporting fauna negatively affects the local ecology and importantly, the interest of local inhabitants in natural resource conservation. Afforestation, as a mitigation strategy is therefore crucial not only from an ecological restoration lens but also to provide sustainable livelihoods for the community to encourage resilient conservation of those lands.

# Progress Update

## 1. Plantation :

The common pastureland sites were selected with the consultation of local community and village institutions i.e. Gram Vikas Samooh and respective Gram Panchayat. Regular meetings with community and Gram Vikas Samooh were conducted for planning and implementation of plantation activities at the site. Apart from these common pasturelands, the individual pasturelands/farmlands of 30 farmers were also selected and plantation was also completed on them under the project. The native species which have multi-purpose uses were selected for plantation. The required number of saplings of selected species was procured from forest department nurseries. A proper landscape plan was followed at each site for ecological plantation of native species. Thus, a total of 51,040 saplings were planted against target of 43,000 till the reporting period. The re-plantation (as a gap filling of previous year mortality) of 8,000 saplings at common pastureland was also completed during the period. Besides plantation, associated vegetative measures were also undertaken like direct tree seeding, planting branch/stump cuttings, etc. to increase vegetative cover at the sites. Ten sites of common pastureland were covered under said plantation with the following details:

**Table 1**

S. No.	Name of Block	Name of sites	Area (in Ha)	Plantation achievement (in nos.)	Activities completed / Remarks, if any
1	Girwa	Jagat	48	8,000	Convergence with MGNREGA scheme of government for protection work at the sites.
2	Vallabhnagar	Bhopasagar	22	8,500	
3	Jhadol	Gorana	21	8,100	
4		Melaniya Khurd	5	2,050	
5	Rishabhdeo	Nichli Katev I	6	3,060	
6		Nichli Katev II	7	2,060	
7	Kherwara	Khuntwada I	12	5,040	
8		Khuntwada II	7	3,040	
9	Rishabhdeo	Individual farmers	15	6,190	Plantation was done at selected 30 individual farmer's sites in two villages.
10	Kumbhalgarh	Hamerpal	32	2,500	
11		Pipla	30	2,500	Convergence with MGNREGA scheme of government for protection and soil-water conservation work at the sites.
	<b>Total</b>		<b>205</b>	<b>51,040</b>	



Plantation site



Plantation site

## 2. Protection of the Site:

The above selected sites were protected by loose-stone protection wall along with putting over thorny bushes available around for strengthening the protection of the plantation. A total area of 205 Ha covered for protection and restoration of pastureland. The protection wall was strengthened by putting over thorny bushes and vegetative live fencing. The efforts of social fencing were made to mobilize local community through Gram Vikas Samooh.



Loose-stone protection wall



Completed loose-stone protection wall

### 3. Capacity Building Events:

To enhance the capacity of the community and the field team of the project, different orientation cum on-site trainings/demonstrations were conducted at the field level; the details are given as below -

**Table 2**

S. No.	Date	Place	Details of Programme	Number of Participants
1	16/07/21	Bhopasagar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On-site training cum demonstration with village community for plantation techniques and associated soil moisture conservation initiatives.</li> <li>Orientation of Gram Vikas Samooh for protection and management of plantation site of common pastureland.</li> <li>Field demonstration and sharing site specific landscape plan for following ecological plantation.</li> </ul>	19
2	20/07/21	Nichli Katev		23
3	31/07/21	Khuntwada		32
4	05/08/21	Gorana		20
5	07/08/21	Jagat		13



Capacity building – on-site demo



Capacity building – on-site demo

#### 4. Impact study: CO2 sequestration and Biodiversity assessment

A study is being planned to assess the impact of afforestation work in southern Rajasthan in the past 10 years. The objectives of the study is to measure CO2 sequestration, assessment of bio-diversity and understand socio-economic impact of afforestation. The expected timeline of the study is around 6-8 months.

#### 5. Key Point Indicators – 3rd Quarter:

S.N.	Key Project Indicators	Unit	2021		
			Planning 3rd Quarter	Achieved 3rd Quarter	2021 Overall Target
1	Survey & site selection	Hectares	0	205	190
2	Area of sites protected	Hectares	0	205	190
3	Soil – water conservation work	Hectares	0	123	190
4	No. of saplings planted	Numbers	40,000	51,040	43,000
5	No. of capacity building programmes conducted	Numbers	1	5	4

#### Plan for 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter:

- Survey and identification of new sites for next year plantation.
- Weeding-hoeing of the completed plantation at the sites.
- Field trainings and regular meetings with local community, groups, PRIs and field team on protection and management of the common pastureland /plantation sites.
- Repairing and maintenance of loose-stone protection wall, live fencing, etc.
- Finalize technical agency to initiate said impact study proposed.