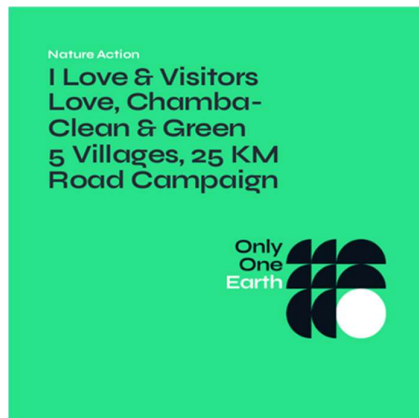
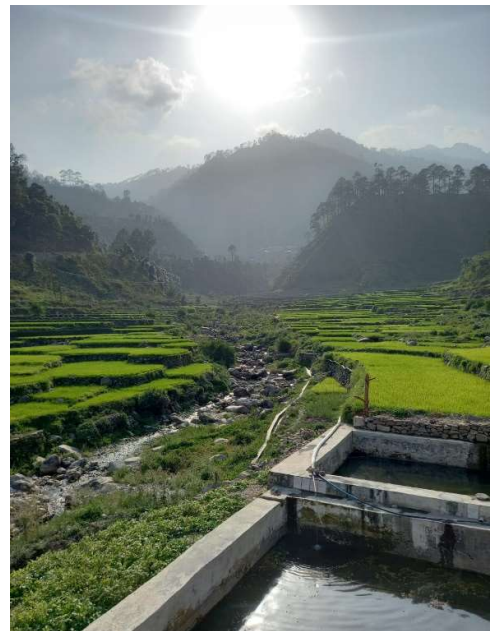


# Community Based Tourism Project Tehri Garhwal & Rudryprayag



Quarterly Progress Report  
April-June 2022



Supported by

Implementing Partner



**MMTF Quarterly Progress Report**  
**April-June 2022**

**Background:**

Make my Trip Foundation and Tata Trusts are jointly supporting the promotion of rural tourism in Uttarakhand. The project is being implemented in Tehri Garhwal and Rudryprayag districts of Uttarakhand.

The project is supporting in developing quality rural tourism products, that can be locally managed by the community institutions. The rural tourism products are being developed taking into consideration the cultural, environmental, heritage, bio-diversity of the region.

The project is being implemented two clusters, i.e. Jhadipani cluster in Tehri and Maku Math & its environs in district Rudryaprayag.

**Quarterly Key Highlights**

The reporting quarter of the project focused on 1. Development of Area specific tourism products and 2. Development of Local Human Resource Base to develop quality audio-video information content. Apart from this during the reporting quarter the field locations and operational modalities related to functionality of the two clusters was also streamlined.

**1. Area Specific Tourism Product Development Initiatives**

Jhadipani Cluster and the area stretching from Buranskhanda to Chamba has seen a steady increase in the number of tourist foot fall, which has resulted in development of Infrastructure to cater to the growing demand.

**Key Challenge Observed:** One the key challenge that has emerged in this area is the development of the destination as a weekend tourist destination. The relative easy accessibility of the destination to major tourist originating points of North India and providing respite to the visitors by offering pleasant climate can be considered the prime mover for the emergence of the region as a weekend destination. The after effects of this is reflected by the following characteristics.

- a). Heavy footfall in the region for a very short duration
- b). Revenues for the Hotels/Resorts/Camps often not comensurating with the capital and recurring costs.
- c). Low retention rate of employees providing services in the accommodation units.
- d). Heavy tariffs for visitors
- c). Waste disposal issues and growing presence of rhesus macaque in the region and its adverse impact on the traditional horticulture and vegetable belt. The major income source for the community, offering relatively higher price realization owing to off-seasonal nature of produce reaching the markets.

## Existing Tourism Product Offerings



The existing tourism product offerings in the region is also emerging in line with the weekend destination dynamics. The only tourism product offering that has been esthetically designed is the Forest Departments Kaudia Eco Park. The park has been developed in line with the Dhanolti Eco Park and is well managed by the Uttarakhand Forest Department. Apart from this majority of other tourism products that have emerged in the area are focused on zip lines and other adventure based activities. All these activities can cater to a large number of visitors as the involvement time is around 15-20 minutes.

<b>Weekend Shot Haul Destination</b>	<b>Long Haul Leisure Destination</b>
<b>Short term visitors</b>	<b>Long Stay visitors</b>
<b>Heavy fluctuations in income/Revenue stream</b>	<b>Low fluctuation in Income/revenue streams</b>
<b>Heavy pressure on a destination</b>	<b>Low impact on the destination</b>
<b>Degradation of quality services</b>	<b>More focused on quality service</b>
<b>Revenue share low for the communities and associated services and products</b>	<b>Revenue share/opportunities high for local communities to engage and offer products and services.</b>

## Need for New Tourism Product Lines

In an effort towards promoting the destination as a leisure cum experiential and a long haul destination, there is a need to develop new product lines that are more engaging, having a greater deal of involvement of the visitors and also has the ability to spread the associated revenues to the local communities.

The following factors are being taken into consideration towards development of new tourism product lines.

- The tourism product should be engaging, has the ability to initiate a communication with the visitor.
- The Product should have more people-to-people engagement and low or no additional costs associated with infrastructure development and any negative impacts on the social-cultural-agricultural and ecological aspects.
- The product offering can be easily managed by the local community with minimal and only need based support.
- Has the revenue possibilities both for individuals and for the community Institution at large.

## Regional Tourism Product Development Initiatives

During the quarter, efforts were made towards identification of regional tourism products that fall in line with the above detailed parameters. Community level interactions and focused group discussions were held with the community members to identify the same. The results of the same are elaborated below.

### 1. Experience Centre/Café/Travelers' Lounge:

The centre/café/lounge ideally in the visibility range for people driving on the Mussoorie-Chamba Road, either on the main road or having not more than 200 mts accessibility from the main road. This center can have space for curating various activities as well as a small functioning kitchen to curate some basic fusion and local dishes/snacks and beverages.

One of the suggested name for the space is 'Nanihaal'- a place that evokes the warmth and nostalgia of a grandmother's home. While one corner of the café can have the functioning kitchen, the other will have a few activities that can be chargeable. These can include Block printing of scarves (where the visitors are made to design the scarves- a kind of datoo that women from Jaunsar-Jaunpur wear on their heads, though not very local, but useful as low cost takeaway - and take the ready product along with them), Dhol-damau playing, Make your own Tehri nath (the large nose ring from Tehri), grinding grains on a chakki (there are 12 types of grains like Mandua in this region that can be mixed and ground by the visitors – also educating the visitor about the Barahnaaja food system of the hills).



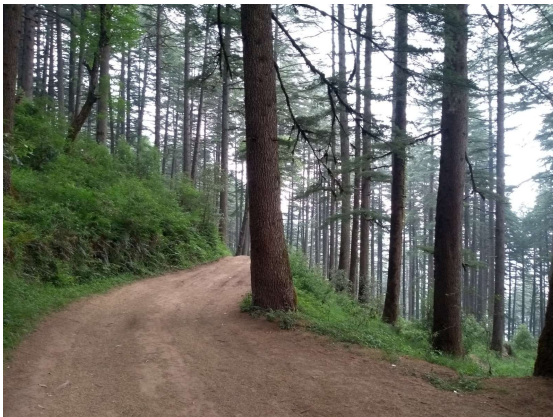
Nanihaal can also have a selfie point where people can wear traditional clothes (blouse, ghaaghra, tehri nath and scarves for women and black Garhwali topi, vasket, kurta and pyjama for men) and get clicked. Alternatively, possibility of using cutouts with costume where people can just place their faces quickly and click a picture is also being explored. One

wall of the Nanihaal can have black and white toned photographs of a few vernacular homes or local landscapes to evoke nostalgia. Also, the décor would promote other tourism products such as experience and trails.

It has also been suggested to develop a “wall of experience” where people can share their experiences of visiting this region and what they liked most about being here.

### 2.Kaudia Hikes

The Kodia Forest Range has two entrances- one that is being actively used for open gypsy safaris and the other that may be accessed by private vehicles/on foot. The forest also has multiple cycling trails developed by the Tehri Forest Division very recently.



Two trails have been shortlisted that are walkable and can be promoted for forest hikes. One can drive for about a km before reaching the first bamboo hut in the forest, near which one can park and begin the walk. This trail can be promoted as a forest hike since it also includes the temple and is quite a serene walk.

### **3.Stargazing Observatory & Himalayan Peaks Identification Point**

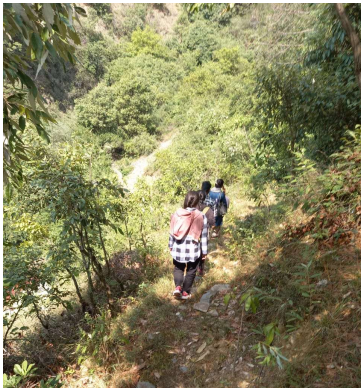
The altitude of the region and the clear skies especially during the winter months has been found to be ideal for an astronomical observatory. Village situated on the eastern side of the Chamba-Mussoorie Road such as Silkoti-Danda and villages situated on high ridges like Jhadipani (Gram Panchayat Dungli) have been found ideal for both astronomical observatory and a Himalayan Peak Identification Point. Both the activities are dependent on clear skies as such have their own limitations. Winter line phenomenon that has been adequately highlighted by Mussoorie is also clearly visible through some vantage point villages. The possibility of clubbing the same with astronomical observatory or peak identification point will be further explored.

### **4. Mobile Cookout**

The possibility of a mobile food van had also been discussed that can be equipped with basic equipment to make local chutneys and a few basic local dishes. The van can be hired by the nearby resorts/properties for a few hours to offer a cookout experience to the visitors. The local women will be demonstrating the recipes and invite the visitors to try the same and help them to prepare the dishes.

### **5: Trekking**

The region offers moderate level treks. Traditional connecting pathways to different villages and also to adjoining blocks of the district have been used by the community for ages. Some of the routes are still being used, others have lost their relevance due to road connectivity.



These treks/Pathways are being explored for their level of difficulties, number of hours required, circular treks options and also the possibility of utilizing on route villages as halting points. Treks and pathways emerging out of low lying villages, such as Khakwadi, which have been mostly abandoned are being prioritized for the development of trails/hikes.

### **6.Bird and Nature Trail**

East facing villages with heavy mixed forest type such as Silkoti, Manjiyad Gaon, Gunogi have found to be ideal for developing a birding trail. A good number of young people from the region have been trained by the Uttarakhand Forest Department as birding guides. The possibility of developing a product line for birding combined with other activities is being further explored.

## 2. 5 Villages-25 Km Road Campaign on World Environment Day



### key objectives of the Campaign

- I. **Sensitize the community**, that a clean and green destination is a pre-requisite for sustained growth of the destination and the community directly and indirectly associated with the trade.
- II. **Sensitize the Municipal authorities**, that although the region is beyond their municipal boundaries. The activities and the trade associated has a direct bearing on the economy of the Chamba municipality area.
- III. **Sensitize the operators**, that their business is directly associated with the Common Property Resources of the region as such a joint responsibility to maintain the commons is also necessary to sustain the destination in the long run.

### Stakeholders that were covered under the Campaign

In order to meet out the above said objectives the following stake holders were covered.

#### 1. Chamba Municipality:

The road campaign which consisted of an awareness generating vehicles manned by volunteers explaining about the importance of the day in general and cleanliness needs of the region was flagged off by the representatives of the Chamba Municipality. The waste collected was disposed of at the side pre-approved by the Chamba Municipality.

#### 2. Gram Pradhan's and Village Campaign:

The Gram Pradhan's from the following villages, Jadipani, Silkoti, Dhungli, Kakhwadi and Chopdiyalgaon were involved in the campaigns. The awareness cum cleanliness drive was flagged off by the respective Gram Pradhan's. The major water collection points were cleaned during the campaign along with the connecting village roads to the main roads. Apart from this common places of the villages were also cleaned in each village. The participants in the villages involved the volunteers, school children's, Villagers and the Him Vikas Self Reliant Cooperative Staff coordinated the event in each village. In each village the Gram Pradhan was provided with a waste collection bin (Metal). The bin can be used both for collection and burning the waste collected. The Gram Pradhan's selected the location of the bins and also instructed the community for its proper usage.

#### 3. Schools:

Although the schools were closed, the school premises in three villages were covered. The students of these schools residing in the villages were mobilized along with other volunteers and community members.

The following schools were covered under the Campaign 1. Govt. Primary School Nagun Dhar  
2. Govt. Primary School, Kanthar Gaon, Govt. Primary School, Dungli. More than 40 students participated in the event.

#### **4. Tourism Operators**

The operators on the Chamba-Kanatal stretch of road were covered during the campaign. The operators were informed about the initiative by the community members along with the volunteers. Suggestions on the possible waste disposal and management were taken from the operators.

#### **5. Hewal Vani (Community Radio).**

The community radio operating in Chamba was also associated in the campaign, slogans, and jingles were aired by the Radio Station during and after the event also. Facebook Live coverage of the event was also done by the Radio Station.

#### **Event Organization and Volunteers:**

The members of the Him Vikas Women's Self Reliant Cooperative were instrumental in organizing the entire event. The Board Members of the Cooperative agreed upon the villages that were identified to be covered under the Campaign. More than 30 women Self Help Groups from the selected and other villages helped in organizing the event at village level.

The Self Help Groups of the respective villages motivated and identified volunteers for the event. The volunteers were oriented towards the campaign and the common village points that were to be covered under the campaign. More than 50 Volunteers helped in various activities that were carried out during the event, which included. Cleanliness drive, awareness rallies, managing the campaign on the road, collection and disposal of the waste that was collected during the campaign.

During this campaign

- 1. More than 345 Community members, Volunteers, School Children's and youths participated.**
- 2. 30 Self Help Groups were directly involved in coordination, and the campaign**
- 3. More than 500 Kg of waste was collected during the campaign and disposed of at the Chamba Municipality dump site.**

### Key observations

The federation and its members, along with the operators in the region are of the opinion, that the challenges associated with garbage and waste disposal are huge and increasing by the day. Such a challenge cannot be overcome by a single day event. There are challenges associated at different level.



A). The operators are severely challenged in terms of human resource, logistics, capital to make substantial support towards garbage disposal.

B). The Municipality and its jurisdiction along with the resources to manage and operate a service on a regular basis remains a key challenge.

C). Most of the garbage is collected and thrown in deep Georges in close vicinity. The steep nature of these Georges and the rain quickly drains down the garbage. The garbage goes down in the valleys and over the years may cause severe ecological hazards.

D). The edible waste in the region has brought in Rhesus macaque to the region. The entire region is a vegetable belt and over the years the attack of macaques on standing agriculture produce is increasing.

### 3. Development of Regional Media Unit

Under the project a digital media unit is being developed. The media unit is being developed with the following objectives.

a). To develop the ability of a group of people from within the community to effectively utilize the digital media space.

b). The group will be able to produce, edit and host quality media content aimed towards promotion of the cluster and its offerings to a wider audience.



Updates on the Regional Media Unit.

a). Screening process for identification of deserving and interested candidates from the region has been conducted.



b). The training sessions for the identified candidates will be initiated by July second week

### 3. Initiatives in Makkumath Cluster

The survey work in the project area along with data verification work has been completed. The potential homestays identification work apart from the under construction 7 homestays along with other parameters for incorporation of homestays/associated services/built and natural assets of the region, social and cultural assets pertaining to the region have been surveyed.



#### Village Level Meetings:



In an effort towards building a consensus among the different stakeholders on various project activities. Village level meetings are being organized in Makku and other project villages towards formation of Producers Organization and other tourism development initiatives to be carried out.

#### Homestay Development:

The work of developing 7 homestays was started in Makkumath. Foundation and plinth work of 3 units is completed and excavation work for rest is also done. Further progress is at hold due rains.



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