

# COMMUNITY BASED TOURISM PROJECT UTTARAKHAND

## QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT

(JANUARY - MARCH, 2023-24)

LOCAL - ECONOMICAL - SUSTAINABLE



*"TOURISM IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE IT CAN CREATE SUSTAINABLE LOCAL ECONOMIES. I WOULD RATHER HAVE 1000 TOURISTS GOING UP THE MOUNTAIN THAN 10 MINERS."*

– ANONYMOUS

TATA TRUSTS



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### BACKGROUND:

The Himmotthan Society, Dehradun, has been working on a Community Based Tourism (CBT) Project with the financial support of Make My Trip Foundation (MMTF) and TATA TRUSTS (TEDT), in Uttarakhand, as a pilot project. The project is currently being implemented in two clusters named Jadipani cluster and Ukhimath cluster, in Tehri Garhwal and Rudraprayag districts respectively. The project is termed from November, 2021 to June, 2024. The project is aimed at creating a replicable, scalable and sustainable tourism business model in the rural settings of Uttarakhand, offering authentic cultural, natural and architectural heritage experiences as experiential tourism products to the tourists, with complete management and ownership of the local communities and its institutions.

The major components of the project aligned towards its aim, in order to curate some authentic experiences are, development of traditional homestays in the villages, training the villagers as community guides, and establishment of media units (local youth trained as photographers and film-makers), and developing a community run café cum museum and studio, in the cluster towards generation of sustainable employment opportunities.

The project in the last quarter i.e., October to December, 2023-24, was majorly concentrated on taking the infrastructural development of homestays and community cafe in the Jadipani cluster to the finishing stage. And initializing all the homestays towards the business operations. In the Makkumath cluster, homestays being built with the District Administration were pushed for completion, and the Guiding training was concluded.



### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE QUARTER:

The fourth quarter of FY 2023-24, January to March, has been slow due to the low season activities, no snowfall and more of dry cold in the regions. In the period, the project progressed in completing the six homestays in the Makku village of Makkumath cluster, and initiated three other homestays in the cluster for development. Also, profiling of the curated experiences in the cluster, like homestays, trails and Guides. In the Jadipani cluster, the process of homestays registration was pressed for completion with the District Tourism Department. And the promotion of business activities for homestays and Guiding trails was initiated.

### PROGRESS ACTIVITIES IN THE QUARTER:

1. **JADIPANI CLUSTER:** The cluster has almost completed all its infrastructural developments, and now concentrating on generating and enhancing the new and on-going business involvements. In terms of business, this quarter was the first and full season for the project, to mark its business presence in the region. But due to lack of snowfall in the entire Himalayan belt, the tourism

industries, witnessed a dry and low season, have been affected badly in the all regions. Hence, the business activities were negligible in the cluster as well. Therefore, the project team focused on completing the pending formalities of homestays registrations, café development, and preparing for the upcoming seasons. Major tasks in progress in the cluster were as follows.

**1.1. Homestays:** Under the project, the ten units of homestays developed in the cluster, few were operationalized in the last quarter, and few were initiated in business in this quarter. The hectic procedure of homestays registration was enhanced with completion of formalities. The lengthy process of geographical and structural mapping of the individual homestays has almost completed. The procurement and the issue of Entry registers, Bill books and installation of Fire Extinguishers has completed in all ten homestays. And the team is working on making them better in terms of appearances and services, with the respective homestay owners.

**1.2. Community Café:** The construction work of community café cum museum was completed in the last quarter and further interior work has been completed during this period. The procurement of the café kitchen articles has completed, and the acquisition of furniture on demand order, after the interior designing, is in process. Along side the roof railing, veranda and boundary-gate work is in process for the café compound. The café will be ready for business functioning in the upcoming quarter for the tourist season.

**1.3. Business Activities:** Business wise the season has been very low, due to dry winters. As the destination is popular for its weekend vibes, pulling the crowd from neighbouring States on snowfalls in the months of January and February mainly ; but due to no snowfall in the full winter season, the tourist inflow was scarce. Affecting the generation of incomes in the region intensely, for not only tourism players but for farmers as well.

Meanwhile, the team engaged in preparing for the upcoming summer season by generating some queries of long-haul tourists for the homestays, like on 'work from mountains' concept, and encouraging the homestay owners for personal marketing as well. A good inflow of tourists is expected in upcoming season, due to possibility of hotter summer this year, the project team is all set for the business activities.

**2. MAKKUMATH CLUSTER:** The cluster been remote and complex in terms of project implementation due to various factors like, geographically scattered villages, intricately woven society with multiple and frequent local festivals, community events, cultural occasions, tourism ventures, joint intervention with the State Government, etc. going on throughout the year, has lagged the work in Makkumath cluster a lot. But in the current quarter, the project has progressed a lot in the cluster.

Homestays development work been pushed aggressively, the media team youth have engaged in the commercial activities and are generating good income after the training, the trained Guides been engaging in the additional trainings for enhancing skills, and the Cooperative Society of the cluster, the Nayi Kiran Cooperative Society, has been incorporated for destination level tourism plan initiated under the project. The major activities in progress in the cluster were as follows.

**2.1. Homestays:** The six homestays being built in collaboration with the District Administration in Makku village were completed, one unit is delayed on part of the District and beneficiary itself. Six homestays were finished in all the work and officially handed over to the Beneficiary/homestay owner with signing of an agreement of association with their FPO/Cooperative Society. Another three homestays are in process of modification, with completion of due paper work like, obtaining applications, NOCs, agreement signing, design & estimates, and submission of community



contribution to their FPO/Cooperative Society. This will facilitate the hassle-free progress in modification works and ensure the cordial participation of the owners in the process.

**2.2. Community Guides:** The community members including both men and women from wide range of age group, were trained as a resources and guardians to the local cultural, traditional, and natural heritage. All tourist regions in the Himalayan ranges faced a low and dry season this winter, due to which it was difficult for the new people engaged in the tourism activities to find any business. But with the regular practice runs and meetings the Guides were kept updated and in touch with their newly acquired skills.

Moreover, the CBT Project, in a collaboration with *Rural Self-Employment Training Institution (RSETI)*, organized a 10 days training programme in the Ushada office of Makkumath cluster. The training was focused on developing tourism employment skills of community members, that boost their growth by engaging in multiple activities, in a year as per the seasons.

**KEY PROJECT INDICATORS:**

Indicators (KPIs)	Overall Project Target	Achievement till March 2023	Annual Target 2023-24	Achievement				Cumulative Achievement
				2023-24				
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
Cumulative Tourism Trainers and Experience Anchors Created/Trained (No.s)	24	16	14	0	0	17	0	33
Cumulative number of local community members enrolled in Khoji groups tasked with documentation of tangible and intangible culture (No.s)	30	43	18	0	0	-	0	43
Cumulative number of architectural design guide based on traditional heritage (No.s)	1	0	0	1	0	-	0	1
Cumulative number of tourist accommodation rooms added (No.s)	22	0	18	3	7	0	6	16
Cumulative number of tourism experiences offered (No.s)	16	5	12	3	4	4	0	16
Cumulative number of community institutions including "All Women's Travel & Tourism Agency" (No.s)	3	0	1	0	0	0	2	2
Cumulative Number of House-holds earning incremental tourism income of Rs. 24,000 during the project duration Job Opportunities/Livelihoods Generated (HH)	300	36	170	27	13	24	7	107
Cumulative Rs. Lakhs of Tourism and allied online income/ spend at destination through community / institutions (Rs.)	100	0	70	7.83	0.55	0.41	1.17	9.96

Cumulative No. of Destination level Tourism Plans enumerating the Business model (No.s)	2	1	2	1	0	-	-	2
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**3. THIRD CLUSTER:** As per the project, three cluster were to be incorporated under the project. The proposal for the same is being prepared. Major prospect considered for the third cluster was Narendranagar in Tehri Garhwal only, but it has been ruled out after observing the lesser possibilities of tourism activities and inflow in this region.

Therefore, the prospect is being explored meticulously in the extended geography of the Ukhimath region towards, Mansuna and Ransi (area of Madhyamaheshwar, the fourth Kedar shrine), as an alternate to the Third cluster of the project. This region has seemingly numerous prospects and offers a vista of nature’s bounty and cultural-natural heritage, making it an emerging destination for tourists. With a good road and network connectivity, the region is easily accessible and can emerge as an alternate of Chopta, a very popular long weekend tourist destination.

As currently even after a prolonged struggle of the stakeholders and local leaders to maintain and grow the tourism activities in Chopta, it is being demolished (all the camps and resorts) by the Forest Department in the State, due to being subject to Kedarnath Wildlife Sanctuary and preserved forest area.

The current scenarios are favouring the development of other Kedars like, Rudranath, Madhyamaheshwar, and Kalpeshwar as alternate tourist destinations, for the crowd of Tunganth, Chopta. Hence, once the proposal gets approval, the development of further activities in the region will be pursued subsequently.

**PROJECT PICTURES:**



Homestays in Makkumath Village completed



Handover of six homestays in Makku village



A Bikers Group from MMTF was catered in the Jadipani cluster



The group members participated in a nursery making exercise in the Kakhwari village





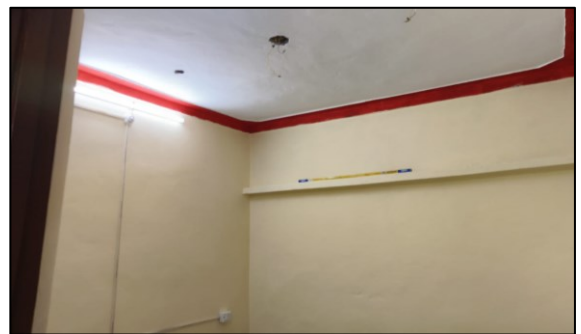
Guiding trail mock runs in Ushada



Village tour by Community Guide in Silkoti



Homestay owners' Business agreement draft discussion meeting in Jadipani



Homestay in modification in Ushada village of Makkumath cluster



Guides Training with RSETI in Ushada office



Fire Extinguishers installed in Jadipani HSs

\*\*\*\*\* OVER \*\*\*\*\*