

LEADING CHANGE 2001-2004



JAL BHAGIRATHI
FOUNDATION



The Cover Design...



A woman filtering sand to fill a water pitcher in the village pond to provide clean drinking water for her family.



OUR MANDATE


To work towards creating a congenial atmosphere that promotes sustainable levels of human interaction with natural resources by reviving traditional water management practices

To facilitate women's access to and control over natural resources as primary stakeholders and enhance their inclusion in the development processes by ensuring access to economic resources and alternative livelihood options

To create an integrated model for micro-level development by addressing issues concerning literacy, health and hygiene

To build local capacities for mobilizing communities to address their own needs, thereby strengthening the decentralized social governance process. Alongside, creating an environment to foster and nurture local leadership for promoting sustainable development and social justice in the region

To effectively contribute towards policy interventions and recommendations at national, state and local levels for attaining an equitable, just and sustainable paradigm of natural resource management and rural development



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Geological landscape and demographic specifics

The land and its people

The 805-kilometer (km) long and about 485-km wide Thar region is bounded on the north-west by the Sutlej river, on the east by the Aravalli range, on the south by the salty marshes of the Rann of Kutch, and on the west by the Indus valley. The largest part of the desert is located in Rajasthan. The terrain consists mainly of rolling sandhills, in which lie scattered growths of shrub and rock outcroppings.

The Rajasthan desert is a part of a monsoon desert region. The average annual rainfall in the region varies from 100-500 millimeters (mm), distributed erratically, occurring mostly between July and September. The mean average temperature varies from a minimum of 20°centigrade to 50°centigrade in summer, to 4°centigrade to 10°centigrade in winter.

The region is infamous for its fragile and inhospitable eco-system characterized by sandy soils low in organic matter, scarce surface water, depleted groundwater resources, sparse vegetation cover, low humidity and high transpiration. Here, the Jal Bhagirathi Foundation (JBF) has based its operations in the Marwar region, which covers the entire Jodhpur

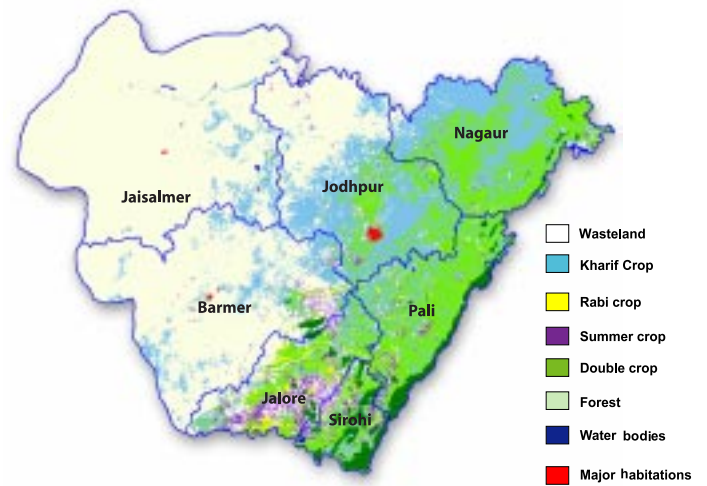
division. The JBF is active in four of the seven districts of the division — Jodhpur, Barmer, Pali and Jalore.

Drought is a recurrent phenomenon in the region; 43 out of the last 50 years have been drought years. The consequence: extreme economic backwardness, which is exacerbated due to lack of contextual planning and need-based development.

With 48 persons and 80 heads of livestock per square km, this region was — by the 1970s — supporting a higher density of human and livestock population than any physically similar area in the world; it continues to do so. The region boasts of some of the best breeds of livestock in the country and a great diversity in vegetation. There are 700 species of plants, out of which 107 are of grass alone.

Because of the high population density, the requirement in terms of water, food, fuel and fodder is proportionately high to an extent that even an average rainfall year provides little surplus, whereas a drought year completely disrupts the fragile balance leading to starvation and mass migration of livestock and





Land Use/Land Cover

human population. As a result, a once predominantly pastoral economy has now been transformed into an area of intensive agriculture with total disregard for the soil profile and groundwater regime. The existing land use pattern is entirely dependent on exploiting groundwater, leading to further desertification.

Marwar can be divided into two distinct regions based on the rainfall pattern. The mean annual rainfall ranges from slightly below 500 mm in the east and dips to less than 100 mm in the west. In areas receiving annual rainfall above 250 mm, agriculture is the dominant activity. Most farming households also maintain livestock. In the less than 250-mm rainfall zone, there is larger uncertainty of crop harvest; animal husbandry is the main pursuit and is sustained on grazing on open access lands. Agriculture is only practised in places where water is available or where the moisture content is high.

The overall groundwater status in the four districts where JBF is functioning is either critical or over-exploited. Critical area is one where groundwater extraction is between

85-100 per cent; areas where groundwater extraction exceeds 100 per cent are categorized as over-exploited.

The worst affected district is Jalore, where about 81 per cent of area falls under both critical and over-exploited categories. Barmer (61.21 per cent), Pali (56.29 per cent) and Jodhpur (about 55 per cent) follow. The districts with more than 50 per cent of their area falling under just the over-exploited category are Jalore (75.58 per cent) and Jodhpur (53.15 per cent). Despite the precarious water scenario, the percentage of area irrigated by tubewells to the total irrigated area is above 90 per cent.

The monsoon does not lead to a substantial change in the region's groundwater profile. This could be attributed to insufficient systems for retaining rainwater and using it to recharge groundwater reserves. The presence of high levels of fluoride in groundwater is another problem. The percentage area affected by fluoride varies between 40 per cent in Jodhpur to 80 per cent in Pali and Jalore.

Common property resources like community pasturelands, sacred groves, gravelly lands and



The percentage area affected by fluoride varies between 40 per cent in Jodhpur to 80 per cent in Pali and Jalore



cultivable wastelands are inseparable parts of the cultural heritage of the desert, and have played an important role in supporting livestock and preserving local bio-diversity. But due to degrading bio-diversity reserves leading to livelihood insecurity, the rural economy has been severely threatened. A serious effort is required to reinstate the community's rights over natural resources for ecological regeneration, social reconstruction and economic revival.

Despite the inhospitable environment, the desert society has evolved a sustainable way of life. This has been possible because of a strong tradition of belief in the sanctity and value of water. Local inhabitants have evolved indigenous technologies of water management to judiciously use the resource and ensure balanced supplies to the human and livestock population. An assortment of such techniques exist — *talab, nadi, johad, tanka and bawari*.

Time and again, it has been established that traditional rainwater harvesting systems are more resilient and responsive to crises than 'modern' methods of deep tubewells based on

intensive exploitation of groundwater. But traditional systems have been pushed to the brink by misguided development. Agriculture policies have promoted intensive monoculture of high-yielding and high input-dependent crops, encouraging farmers to use unsustainable quantities of water.

Repeated droughts and decreasing sources of drinking water in the region are leading to mass exodus from villages to towns and cities, increasing the pressure on urban infrastructure and leading to the creation of new slums. Absence of sustainable means of livelihood based on agriculture and livestock has resulted in unemployment and increase in the crime rate. Since 1951, the Government of Rajasthan has spent US \$745 million on drought relief, which is over and above the expenditure incurred on drought relief by individuals, international, national and other donor organizations in the state. The apparent lack of impact of such large investments can be attributed to the absence of a long-term strategy on preparedness, risk reduction and mitigation of the drought situation, and more





specifically, on the usage, conservation and harvesting of water. There has been an emphasis primarily on drought response with relief activities directed mainly to generate immediate employment, but not to address drought risk reduction.

Drought conditions include not merely weather or monsoon failure, which precipitate it, but also human factors like management, exploitation and use of water resources. The development process, oriented towards capital accumulation rather than livelihood and sustainability, has been based on external models, instead of models evolved locally. Drought, therefore, is not just because of environmental factors but is also a human-made reality.

Successive years of drought have reduced the role of the poor and particularly, the women, to that of mere selfless providers. The responsibility of house and livestock management generally rests with women. During droughts or 'lean periods' the rise in migration adds to the existing burden on them. In such circumstances, the girl child normally

provides a helping hand to the mother. Apart from increasing the physical strain, drought conditions have led to a fall in the health status of women. Lack of adequate nutrition, excessive work pressure under inhuman conditions, and the neglect of basic infrastructure facilities due to 'other' impending priorities affect pregnant and lactating women. This often leads to foeticide and high infant and maternal mortality.

This state of affairs calls for a paradigm shift in policy from the current emphasis on drought relief (to reduce the state's vulnerability to the impact of drought) to drought preparedness (drought planning, plan implementation, proactive mitigation, risk management, resource stewardship, consideration of environmental concerns and public education). This needs to be the cornerstone of the state's drought policy. Preparedness would reduce conflicts over water during droughts. Also, models that can be adapted to local conditions could be developed to create a radiation impact in different areas.



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New organization with strategic alliances

Genesis

A fragile ecosystem, extreme economic backwardness, a land which no longer yields fodder, fuelwood or food, disappearing groundwater resources and advancing desertification: this is Marwar. Every three years, the region suffers one lean year; every eight years, a year of famine. A land and environment that had tested the patience and versatility of humans through the ages, the region posed a stiff challenge to the House of Marwar and the Tarun Bharat Sangh (TBS) when they came together to form a strategic alliance for initiating a process of ecological, economic and social regeneration. It was a unique alliance, a partnership that had to draw from the strengths of both the parties to triumph over the hostile conditions.

The House of Marwar brought with it the support, following and faith of Marwar's indomitable people. TBS offered its extensive knowledge and understanding — of social nuances, working with communities, technology, and of program and organizational management systems and processes. It also had the ability to link local issues to the wider national and international dialogue. Strong in

its conviction to achieve its objectives, the alliance decided to initiate a movement in the desert.

Its first public interaction took place at a meeting at Umaid Bhawan, Jodhpur on October 5, 2001, where the alliance partners met farmers and community leaders from the seven districts of Marwar. The meeting was aimed at generating information about the region's problems. It was also expected to help the alliance draw up a preliminary mandate, strategy and support for launching its movement. The output of the meeting strengthened the alliance partners' belief: that initiating a dialogue with the people and eliciting their support would be an essential part of the movement's strategy.

To begin its work on institutionalizing decentralized governance of natural resources and overall development at the micro level, the alliance chose to depend on community leaders and local volunteers for support. A *Jal Chetna Yatra* (Public Awareness Campaign) was organized with their help from October 6-8, 2001, in Jodhpur, Jalore, Barmer and Pali districts. The purpose was to encourage the





rural community to create village-level institutions for identifying and nurturing water sources, and to advocate village-centric reforms.

The *Yatra* was a success: village communities came forward to build water harvesting structures in Bhadrajun (Jalore), Kolar, Guda and Chokaria (Pali). The encouraging response meant the initiative could be replicated in other parts of the region. Another thing that emerged from this *Yatra* was the idea of institutionalizing the partnership for enhanced output. The alliance received a name: Jal Bhagirathi.

Generating mass support was just one part of a multifaceted approach adopted by this initiative. As a strategic endeavor, a formal interaction with donor agencies was organized on November 24-25, 2001 at Pushkar in Ajmer district of Rajasthan. The purpose of the meeting was to share the plans and inspirations of the alliance with the agencies and get their cooperation and support. The delegates endorsed the efforts and suggested that the venture should acquire a formal status.

The alliance now moved ahead towards such a formal status. To get a general consensus on

the formation of an organization, a *Jal Samwad* (Water Dialogue) was held on January 11, 2002. The delegates, comprising of community leaders, pledged their support, thus giving the necessary impetus to the formalization process.

On January 15, 2002, the alliance was formally instituted as a Trust, and named Jal Bhagirathi Foundation. The new organization took upon itself the dual responsibility of working towards creating an environment of *Gram Swaraj* – that of a dynamic, self-reliant and responsive village community and positioning its work and learnings at the national level for further replication and contributing towards the ongoing debate of pro-poor policies and creation of village republics through a well thought out advocacy strategy.

The Foundation is led by a Board of Trustees whose members are Shri Rajendra Singh and Shri Prithvi Raj Singh from Tarun Bharat Sangh; HH Maharaja Gajsingh and HH Maharani Hemlata Rajye from the House of Marwar.



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Village institutions of collective wisdom

A philosophy of self-reliance

The Indian village is a highly integrated, agro-sylvo-pastoral system with its own diversities and uniqueness. This basic and crucial characteristic must be borne in mind while making an effort to initiate an ecological, economic and social revival of the region, and JBF has done just that. The Foundation believes that involvement of the local community and its healthy interaction with neighbouring villages is critical for improvement in the ecosystem and the overall development of the region.

People's participation is effective due to various reasons. One, villagers are able to relate better to their local ecosystems. Two, micro-level planning by the people takes cognizance of the specific local problems, resource base, requirements, possible limitations and the social structure. Three, local governance perpetuates a sense of ownership, prudence, discipline and equity.

The Foundation believes that villagers can attain this and much more only if there is an effective village-level institution. This institution works towards generating cohesion, motivating people, and providing a local platform to

control and manage the ecosystem and to resolve disputes. JBF emphasizes on strengthening such institutions for facilitating democratic development processes by partnering with primary stakeholders and local communities, and limiting its own role to that of a catalyst and facilitator.

JBF's strategy also focuses on building the capacities of village-level institutions to identify and address issues of ecological management and restoration. Moreover, it emphasizes on creating an enabling environment that allows women's participation in the planning and resource management process.

The Foundation promotes local representation with its village, block and division level functional units. The effort is to inculcate in these units a spirit of sharing resources, resolving conflicts and addressing their problems. JBF also works towards eliciting their participation not only at the grassroots level, but also at macro-level decision-making stages. This ensures the formation of a cohesive and self-reliant community-based structure that can sustain the activities of JBF on a permanent basis.





At village level, the local community forms a *Jal Sabha* (a Water Users' Association) – a forum where villagers can congregate, discuss problems, seek solutions and assert priorities. The *Sabha*, led by elected office bearers, is responsible for execution of work and mobilization of community resources. The *Jal Sabha* also has a *Mahila Mandal* (Women's Self-Help Group) to ensure the participation of women in the process of decentralized governance. *Jal Karmis* (Water Volunteers), selected by the *Sabha*, work with the community towards finding common and local solutions. The *Jal Sabha* can be seen as an attempt to institutionalize self-governance at the micro level.

At block level is the *Jal Samiti* (Water Development Group), which consists of members of *Jal Sabhas* and community leaders from the region. While interacting at this level, the members develop a comprehensive perspective of not only the Foundation's work, but also of the critical issues and emerging problems in the region. Periodic meetings induce interaction between village representatives and help them collectively assess the prevailing situation, voice

their concern, develop strategies to counter problems, and advocate and build equitable systems for managing and disbursing resources within the block. This, in turn, strengthens local governance patterns and provides an opportunity to the representatives to institutionalize it beyond the boundary of a single village. The *Jal Samiti* also makes an attempt to amicably resolve disputes emerging due to either sharing of or using the limited available resources.

Finally, the water forum or the *Jal Parishad* at the level of the division involves knowledgeable and enthusiastic community leaders in deciding on macro-level issues. These leaders assist the organization in developing future strategies and providing a road map for consolidating democratic processes. They also contribute in initiating and holding a dialogue with state representatives at all levels, advocating for developing pro-poor and pro-people policies.

The diverse responsibilities shouldered by village representatives at different levels contribute towards institutionalizing local-governance in the region.



The *Jal Sabha* can be seen as an attempt to institutionalize self-governance at the micro level



Natural resources of the commons

Managing the commons

Despite its vulnerable ecosystem and inhospitable terrain, western Rajasthan remains the world's most densely populated desert. For years, local natural depositories have supported the population by supplying its basic requirements for survival — water, biomass, fodder and fuelwood. This was possible only because desert societies in the region attached sanctity and value to the core principles of conservation, equity and controlled utilization of natural resources. Ecological prudence was perpetuated through a matrix of *Agor* (water catchment), *Gauchar* (pastureland) and *Oran* (sacred groves) — the AGO.

This AGO matrix has been developed, protected and controlled by people's institutions for centuries. This has contributed towards sustaining the local economy, catalyzing benefits from natural resources and — most importantly — institutionalizing an equitable pattern of resource accessibility and utilization. Therefore, efforts were made to integrate the three components of the AGO matrix to achieve ecological revival and social reorganization.

How did these components create ecological well-being?

An *Agor* is an integral part of the water sub-system in the village; its size is proportionate to that of the water body. While restoring a water body, equal emphasis was put on increasing its capacity as well as developing its catchment area for longevity and effectiveness. *Agors* had permanent plantations; in the post-monsoon period, they also provided fodder for livestock and fuelwood for villagers. Traditionally, the management and upkeep of *Agors* has been the responsibility of the community.

Community pasturelands or *Gauchars*, part of the village common property, are also the main support system for livestock economy at the micro level. Despite the frail ecosystem, this natural resource reserve has ensured equal accessibility and availability of fodder, fuelwood and pastures.

Orans are the oldest natural resource depositories in the region. Some of the region's *orans* are 150-500 years old, while a few might even be 800 years old. Dedicated to deities,





local gods and goddesses, sects and martyrs, the *Oran* was and remains the most effective approach to protect and promote biodiversity in the village. In a majority of cases, *Orans* have successfully supported more than one village since centuries — thus exemplifying the culture and practice of collective utilization of limited resources. The responsibility of protecting and managing the *Orans* exists with the village community.

But despite the presence of traditional wisdom for creating ecological security, the situation has deteriorated. The AGO has become a hotbed of ‘non-ecological’ activities, carried out for personal gains. There are numerous reasons for the destruction of this socio-ecological system. Firstly, common property resources have been converted into government property resources, thus alienating the village community from its commons. *Agors* have been designated as revenue lands, and their ownership lies with the state while the *gram panchayat* (village council) has been made responsible for their management. A *Gauchar* is considered as grazing land under the jurisdiction of the *panchayat*. The most

important of the three — the *Oran* — does not have any legal status. Thus, the AGO, once considered central to rural livelihood, has been made redundant today.

Secondly, increasing human and livestock population has resulted in more diversified demands which the ill-managed AGO is unable to cope with. Thirdly, lack of resources and a burgeoning demand have resulted in the gradual erosion of the social ethos of collective and equitable utilization of commons.

An approach that had addressed all natural resource-based needs of the village, helped rural society maintain ecological prudence through local participation in conserving and regenerating village ecosystems, resulting in long-lasting economic and social benefits, lies in total disarray today. Realizing the importance and relevance of these three pillars of rural ecological, economic and social advancement, JBF is trying to empower people through village-level institutions to once again adopt a pragmatic approach towards *agor*, *gauchar* and *oran*. This is the way the region will manage to sustain local economy, strengthen governance, revive social ethos — and thus attain *Gram Swaraj*.



JBF is trying to empower people through village-level institutions to once again adopt a pragmatic approach towards *Agor*, *Gauchar* and *Oran*.



Organizational design for democratizing development

The organization

JBF has adopted a multifold strategy to attain its goal of facilitating *Gram Swaraj*. This strategy involves ecological security, economic revival, strengthening democratic governance through village-level institutions, developing a cadre of local volunteers, and networking with government agencies, research organizations and other non-government organizations to facilitate policy reforms.

Such an approach demands extensive and exhaustive interactions with villagers, community leaders, people's representatives, development workers, government officials, researchers, professionals, subject experts and donor organizations. To do this, JBF has settled on an organizational structure that is a unique amalgam of village-level volunteers and a professional resource base.

The village-level volunteers are being assisted by the professional and technical workforce in effectively adopting a rights-based approach by sensitizing and mobilizing communities, and by planning, implementing and monitoring of development interventions for strengthening the process of self-governance in the region. This partnership aims at building capacities of the volunteers to

enable them to deal with micro-level development works independently. The professional workforce is also involved in generating socially sound technical innovations, facilitating policy advocacy and networking with concerned agencies. The organizational structure, therefore, has three main components — the people, the programs and the executive.

The 'people' component is the determining factor in JBF attaining its vision of a dynamic and self-reliant village community. This component is expected to initiate, sustain and strengthen micro-level governance by developing committed volunteers, through whom the rural communities will be activated to address their problems. The component involves *Jal Karmis* and *Jal Sabhas*, *Jal Samitis* and the *Jal Parishad* — local representations at the village, block and division levels, respectively.

The 'program' component organizes and oversees execution of work. It consists of Resource Groups which include a Program Officer, two or more Community Organizers and Resource Persons (Technical). The Resource Groups facilitate the work of village-level institutions by providing professional and technical skills in project





designing, planning, training, mobilization etc. To highlight the gender concerns of the Foundation and give special emphasis to programs for the benefit of women, a *Mahila Mandal* or a Women's Self-Help Group has been set up in each block for their inclusion in the development process. A strong accounts section has been established to maintain financial control, ensure optimum utilization of funds, report to the Trust Board and partners, and enable monitoring.

Project Coordinators are involved in conducting primary monitoring and evaluation of project

activities. Independent reviews of the activities, process documentation, and building capacities of the members of the organization are undertaken by independent consultants. JBF has also set up an internal evaluation system: an external agency has been given charge of conducting financial as well as management audits regularly.

The 'executive body' of the Foundation is the Board of Trustees and its Chief Executive is the Managing Trustee. All JBF functionaries report to him and he is responsible for the management of the Foundation. He is assisted by the program component of the Foundation and interacts with its members through a monthly review meeting to assess past performances and develop future strategies. A

Program Management Group has been constituted to assist him in keeping tabs on the program. The Managing

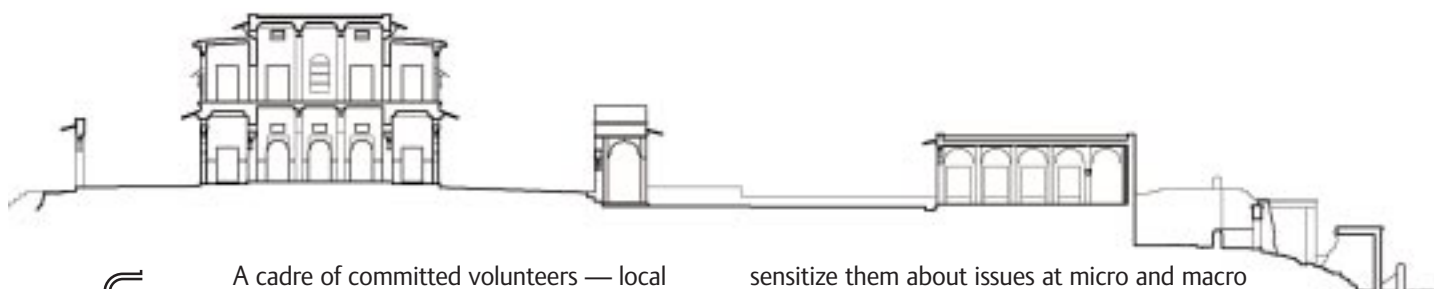
Trustee also receives support from a multi-disciplinary advisory council, called an Appraisal Committee, which includes stakeholders, senior volunteers and professionals. This Committee provides independent feedback on the activities of the Trust.



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A conclave of best practices



Jal Ashram

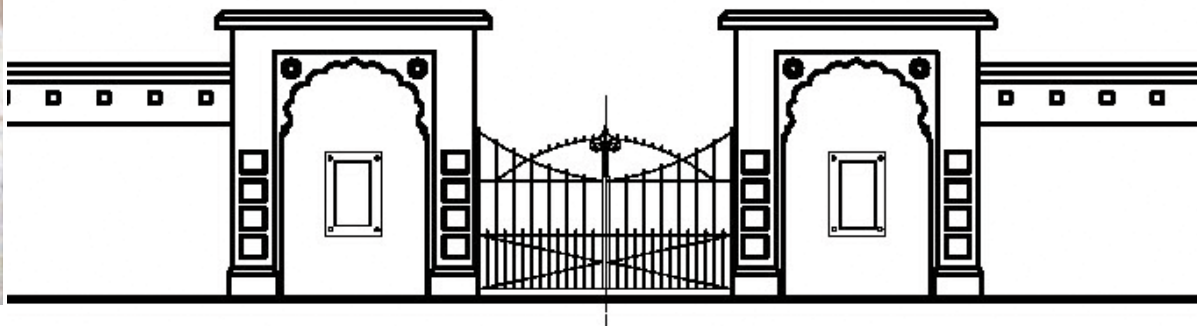
A cadre of committed volunteers — local representatives — is a must for restoring egalitarianism, generating self-reliance, leading development interventions, rejuvenating village communities and ensuring their accountability to their work. This is the belief the Foundation is determined to strengthen, disseminate and popularise at all levels. To do this, it has developed a well-structured plan of action to transform the region by mainstreaming and enhancing the potential and involvement of volunteers.

JBF has strategized to accomplish this through a *Jal Ashram* — a fountainhead of all its organizational activities. The *ashram* will provide valuable exposure and orientation to volunteers, as well as learnings through sharing of experiences. Familiarizing the volunteers with issues concerning livelihood security, social justice, ecological regeneration and effective governance patterns will help them develop a comprehensive perspective and

sensitize them about issues at micro and macro levels. The learnings will inculcate a feeling of community service and enhance their involvement in strengthening the peoples' voice, either as development workers, community members, grassroots functionaries or potential responsive leaders. Involved volunteer groups will mobilize the community and work along with them to address their concerns. While doing so, they will create an environment for institutionalizing a rights-based approach to promote sustainable development and social justice in India's rural society.

To ensure wider replicability of the development partnership model between local volunteers and the village community, the *ashram* will be involved in developing cadres of new volunteers through an intensive and meaningful learning process. The approach will entail functional and conceptual knowledge dissemination through interaction with





development workers, grassroots functionaries, government officials and civil society groups from all over India. The orientation procedure will also adopt dissemination of ‘best practices’ in community management, decentralized governance, community mobilization and control of natural resources from all across the country.

Alongside, the volunteer groups will also be exposed to unproductive and failed development initiatives to make them conscious of the nuances of such development interventions. The orientation will be through innovative and constructive learnings by

foster partnerships for experience sharing, networking and policy advocacy.

The *ashram* will be the venue of national and regional conferences, workshops and symposiums to provide a forum for exchange of ideas and exposure to different points of view. It will create public awareness, provide a platform to voice pro-poor concerns, and optimize social cohesion and emotive bonding among communities through continued interaction.

The *Jal Ashram* — a conclave of ideas, perspectives and plausible strategies — will contribute and steer the existing dialogue of



converging theoretical information and practical experiences in management of natural resources and social engineering. The *ashram* will also strengthen the existing civil society networks to provide impetus to the volunteer model for promoting and consolidating community participation in ecological regeneration and pro-poor initiatives. As community members from across the state and even the country gather at the *ashram*, it will

strengthening disadvantaged people-oriented policies and strategies that the state should adopt at local, regional and national levels.

To uphold the quality and impact of the *ashram*, JBF will house its entire program component at the same location. This will help JBF disseminate and popularize its belief in enhancing the potential of local human resources for spearheading development work.



The *Jal Ashram* — a conclave of ideas, perspectives and plausible strategies — will contribute and steer the existing dialogue of strengthening disadvantaged people-oriented policies



Structures of community self-reliance

Community initiatives

JBF's programs, activities and strategies all aim towards one goal: involving, empowering and making the village community self-reliant. The strategy adopted to realize this is by organizing and strengthening community groups to identify and address issues that will help them attain social security, ecological self-sufficiency, economic adequacy and stronger people-led processes.

Prior to initiating work at the village level, members of the organization interact intensively with the village community. Through this interface, the process of social cohesion gets initiated, apolitical individuals get identified to lead the development practices, the community develops a perspective of equitable and sustainable resource management and most importantly, people converge to prioritize their issues of concern and subsequently develop a common strategy to address their problems.

The community is then trained to undertake collective action. While orienting the community, conscious effort is made to reinforce values such as equitable accessibility

and utilization of resources, prioritizing the problems of the disadvantaged section, resolving conflicts before initiating the work and adhering to the norms that have been collectively decided for the upkeep of the assets created within the village. JBF emphasizes on preparing a strong foundation to ensure the sustenance and effectiveness of all development work and to instill confidence within the community.

These initial developments become crucial while undertaking activities that are community oriented — for instance, building of water harvesting structures — since these are critical to ecological regeneration and livelihood systems of the village.

The most challenging task confronted by development workers is to ensure that the village community becomes self-reliant and takes the lead to execute, monitor and sustain development work at the village level. JBF members devote all their skills, learning and intellect to contest this demanding situation.

Before initiating water harvesting and natural resource management programs,





sufficient time is dedicated to instill the feeling of community ownership amongst the stakeholders. First and foremost, a favorable ambiance is created for the community to voice its concern and to identify the problems it would be interested in addressing. At this stage, JBF takes care to avoid handholding. The community is then given the responsibility to search for plausible solution, detail out its technical specifications, prepare a supporting budget for the intervention and share them with the members of the Foundation. The comprehensive interaction between the village community and the organization provides dynamism to the whole process of developing community ownership and strengthening the process of local governance. The interaction also bolsters the confidence of the community in its own potential and abilities and in the proficiency of local solutions. People's enthusiasm and commitment is further consolidated through the *Jal Sabha*. To ensure sustainability to the developmental intervention, the community's involvement is not only limited to mere planning of the

program but also towards its execution and maintenance. This comprehensive approach equips the community to negotiate and collaborate with other external agencies for institutionalizing self-reliance. Such trends suggest that natural resource-based initiatives, apart from improving the ecology, also reinforce the community's wisdom and become the crucial binding force.

Women's empowerment initiatives also have the potential to perpetuate self-reliance as women's groups are organized around the issue of livelihood security. Women are supported in building and enhancing their own capacities to not only supplement their individual household income, but also to voice their concern and suggest appropriate strategies for reviving the ecology to reduce their drudgery.

Another major component for achieving self-reliance is the selection and training of volunteers and village-level workers, who facilitate the learning process of community groups.



Before initiating water harvesting and natural resource management programs, sufficient time is dedicated to instill the feeling of community ownership amongst the stakeholders



Operational systems

Institutional approach

To reinforce and establish decentralization of responsive local governance through effective village-level institutions, JBF has adopted participatory process as an institutional approach. The operational process involves eliciting people's involvement and making them accountable towards programmatic interventions. To facilitate such an approach, JBF has entrusted the supervisory and management responsibilities to the community and limited its role to that of a catalyst and facilitator through well-structured organizational processes.

The Foundation's area of operation has been divided into four functional units, referred to as blocks. Each block has been further divided into clusters of villages. The identification process of potential clusters in the region is initiated either through public meetings, *padyatras* (walks), *jal yatras* (water walks) or local workshops. When distressed communities or villages approach the organization for support to initiate development work in their village, village clusters are identified based on a set of criteria. The first and foremost criterion is the level of distress in the cluster due to the

fragile ecosystem, economic backwardness, depleting natural resources and the high incidence of livelihood insecurity. The members of the organization conduct a preliminary survey to find out the exact status. The potential of the village community to collectively prioritize, identify, execute and supervise the work is another criterion that is accorded significant importance. Last but not least, technical feasibility is also a crucial factor. Analysis of all the three criteria helps the organization identify the potential clusters.

After the completion of the identification process, a *Jal Sabha* of those who are willing to collectively participate in the proposed work is formed. This is followed by the election of office bearers who act on behalf of all the members of the *Jal Sabha* and undertake the execution of the work and mobilization of community resources. The *Sabha* initiates discussion at the community level, prioritizes the issue to be addressed, decides on the form and ways of generating the village contribution and finally, shares the action plan along with its technical and financial details with JBF. Subsequently, the community and JBF





negotiate the rates of the proposed program and strategies to optimally utilize the resources for achieving the desired results.

After arriving at a consensus on program execution and management, the proposal is submitted to the block office. Similar proposals from other villages are collected and shared with the *Jal Samiti* — a forum consisting of members of *Jal Sabhas* and community leaders. Involvement of the *Jal Samiti* ensures equity and transparency in disbursement of the limited resources among the different villages.

Following this block-level scrutiny, the proposal is presented to the 'Program Management Group' at Jodhpur for approval of grants. In the meantime, a village-level worker is nominated by the *Jal Sabha* to oversee the work, and mobilize and generate community contribution for the proposed program. Large private contributions (exceeding 50 per cent of the village contribution) by a single donor are discouraged so that the community as a whole participates. Community resources are also mobilized in the form of labor, material and cash. Prior to program execution, the *Jal Sabha* also forms a women's group. As part of the

mobilization effort, it tries to ensure that at least 25 per cent of the local volunteers are women who will be assisted to develop their capacity to organize other local women.

Women are also being assisted and encouraged to develop alternative means of livelihood and formed into self-help groups to generate other sources of income for their families.

Throughout the program duration, the JBF representative is available at the cluster level to constantly interact with and build capacities of village volunteers and *Jal Sabhas*. The representative is also involved in informing the people about crucial government plans, programs, policies and schemes. This approach enhances the supervision, negotiation, articulation and management skills of the villagers, thereby helping them in establishing knowledgeable, vibrant and assertive village communities.



JBF representative is available at the cluster level to constantly interact with and build capacities of village volunteers and *Jal Sabhas*



People's voice influencing action

Advocacy

JBF has an enormous commitment towards society, and is determined to utilize its experiential learnings to live up to this commitment. Therefore, a strong advocacy component has been built into its organizational processes to enable villagers, community leaders and development workers to gain access and voice in decision making and to influence public attitudes and policies. The Foundation has developed a comprehensive advocacy strategy that focuses on creating awareness, generating constructive responses, eliciting partnerships and developing conscientious citizens at local, regional, state and national levels.

At the local level, the strategy focuses on developing an effective network of villagers to become a pressure group for institutionalizing rights-based governance. Presently, the network is being established through *Jal Sabhas* and *Jal Samitis* in each block. The *Jal Sabha* binds the people of the village and provides a forum where need-based dialogue is promoted. The *Jal Samiti* represents community members at the block level. Periodic interaction

provides them with an opportunity to identify the existing and emerging problems in the region. The forum creates opportunities for them to deliberate and decide on appropriate strategies to be adopted to address the immediate concerns. It also forms an effective pressure group having the potential to negotiate and dialogue with local government functionaries to impact on their proceedings.

Innovation is the key to any advocacy strategy, and JBF's advocacy strategy lives up to this aspect too. The organization has started producing newsletters in the local language, which are circulated at the local, regional and state levels. The newsletter has dedicated space for the villagers to share their viewpoints.

Another local level strategy taken up by JBF is of documenting best practices of people-led programs. This documentation is disseminated at the local level for creating consciousness and motivating people to adopt similar strategies.

At the regional and state levels, JBF has concentrated on developing partnerships to provide visibility, relevance, acceptance and utility to the issues that have emerged from the





grassroots during program execution. The organization has consciously interacted with local politicians to sensitize them to dominant issues along with plausible solutions to overcome the problems. This is an extremely crucial partnership because the policy makers are the focal point of any advocacy strategy.

Similarly, to generate viewpoints, create pressure groups and demand effective functional strategies, JBF has developed linkages with government machinery, academia and research institutions, voluntary agencies, donor agencies, media and individuals. The *Jal Ashram* has an important role in strengthening the advocacy component of the organization. It is an appropriate hub to showcase experiences and disseminate knowledge to people and generate positive and effective responses.

Integrating the *Jal Parishad* within the organizational structure is also an effective advocacy strategy. Responsible citizens are members of this forum and each one plays a crucial role in creating an environment conducive for initiating dialogue, impacting policies and generating mass support as per requirement.

The national-level advocacy plan of JBF entails diverse strategies. The organization has made efforts through conventions, conferences and workshops to bring the government, local bodies, voluntary and community organizations working on the issue on common platforms to discuss and debate the national-level policies, which have an impact on the village community. JBF has adopted another innovative mode of advocacy by disseminating information and relevant issues through researchers, development workers, interns and experts who visit the organization. Effective communication tools like the website and newsletter help in reaching out to people at the national and international levels with issues that require broad-based support.

JBF has been able to effectively promote issues relevant to Marwar amongst diverse groups towards creating an environment effective for upscaling the negotiation and dialogue processes.



JBF has concentrated on developing partnerships to provide visibility, relevance, acceptance and utility to the issues that have emerged from the grassroots



Adaptive design

Learning processes

Since its birth, JBF has been persistently making efforts to augment its effectiveness and outreach, maximize its proficiency and utilize its experiential learnings for the organization's evolution and development. The Foundation is clear about its goal and vision: establishing village republics as the basic unit for enabling democratic development processes in the region. JBF's commitment to its vision is evident from the number of amendments that it has made in its operational processes to match its objectives. So far, there have been four distinct approaches that the organization has put into practice and tested for impact.

Initially, the *Jal Chetna Yatra* was the only way of inspiring villagers to conserve water. The process centered on public meetings in which the JBF Board of Trustees interacted with the local people and motivated them to become self-sufficient. A nodal person was identified in these meetings to carry forward the work in the stipulated region.

But JBF was also keen to extend its outreach to the remote villages in the region. To do this effectively, it sought assistance from its

partnering agency — the Tarun Bharat Sangh (TBS). TBS has gathered extensive experience in social mobilization and engineering while working in the villages of Alwar: it helped JBF develop a comprehensive pro-poor development approach, thus aligning it with the marginalized sections of the society, a crucial component in any effort towards creating village republics. The nuances of building partnerships with villages, making them accountable for their own work, creating structures of self-reliance, and finding out ways of reviving village-based management were shared. The strategies were later established as JBF's practice — the foundation of JBF's procedures and processes, therefore, were the realistic learnings of TBS. However, the differences in social, cultural and economic profiles between the villages of Alwar and the desert region became an impediment in entirely replicating the TBS model in the region. Another difficulty was the level of people's expectations from what they viewed as an initiative of the House of Marwar.

Despite these limitations of the TBS model





in the context of Marwar, JBF persisted with the core values that TBS had imparted through its experience sharing. The Foundation learnt the importance of integrating village-level institutions with its own structure to further strengthen the process of rights-based development. Therefore, it decided to identify village-level workers, sensitize them, build their aptitude towards local governance, provide necessary exposure and equip them with the skills needed to undertake the responsibility of creating a region with self-reliant villages.

This strategy was undertaken to ensure proactive involvement of the local people and to create a cadre of committed and enthusiastic workers who will have the capability and tenacity to take the movement forward. This approach helped JBF in identifying efficient cadres of volunteers, who had all the necessary skills to help the Foundation realize its vision.

While working closely with the volunteer groups, JBF realized that to sustain their interest levels the responsibilities needed to be addressed by them in increments. It also felt the need to streamline the enthusiasm and

commitment of the volunteer groups for enhancing their output.

To develop effective village-level institutions and efficient cadres of volunteers, JBF not only decided to restrict its operations to four of the seven districts in the region — Jodhpur, Barmer Pali and Jalore — but also identified the administrative blocks in each of these districts for executing its programs. This approach adopted by the organization is fully supported by a well laid out process which is based on creating effective and accountable village-level institutions with the help of strong cadres of local volunteers. These volunteers, in turn, are supported by professionals. The purpose of this partnership is to create capacities of the volunteers and enable them to lead development initiatives at the local level without external support.



To develop effective village-level institutions and efficient cadres of volunteers, JBF decided to restrict its operations to four of the seven districts in the region: Jodhpur, Barmer, Pali and Jalore



■ BHAKRI

Traditional knowledge

Bhakri, in Luni block of Jodhpur district, is located on a small hillock and hence the name, derived from the Rajasthani word *bhakar*, meaning hillock. Remote and with limited access to basic resources, the village has survived by depending on its bank of traditional knowledge.

The village's location — between two seasonal rivers, the Luni and the Bandi — should have been a blessing. But it has been the major cause of its problems instead. In 1979, a flood destroyed cultivable lands, changing the livelihood pattern in the process. The groundwater aquifer turned saline. For its drinking water requirement, the village is now dependent on two village *nadis* (ponds), which in turn depend on the erratic and meager rainfall. The water in these *nadis* lasts for six to eight months. During the rest of the year, water has to be bought from Satlana, Kudi or Luni; a tanker charges Rs 600-800 for water.

A pipeline installed by the government supplies saline water. In dry months, the supply dips to once a week. Those who cannot afford to buy water or do not have storage tanks in their homes, have to depend on wells dug in the river-bed.

TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE AT WORK

JBF's first project in Bhakri was the construction of a school *tanka* (storage tank) and toilets. Bhakri's new *Jal Sabha* provided JBF engineers with a design (created by Baga Ram, its local 'barefoot engineer') to save the optimum amount of water. After successful completion of this project, the *Sabha* and JBF began their work on the village *nadi*.

The Jogmaya *talab* and the Gavai *talab* are Bhakri's *nadis*. The *Jal Sabha* had to decide which

The house of Sundari, a Meena woman, has no storage tank; helped by her two older children, Sundari gets 10 pots of water every day for her seven-member family. When the village *nadi* runs dry, she walks two-three kms to neighbouring villages. Her family owns five goats and a cow. While the goats are taken to the wells in the river-bed, she has to carry water home for her cow. If the *nadi* did not dry up, she would "spend less time collecting water and invest that time in labour to make more money".

A pipeline installed by the government supplies saline water. In dry months, the supply dips to once a week





one it wanted to undertake work on. The *Gram Sabha* (village council) was convened to discuss the issue, and finally it was decided that work on Gavai *talab* would be more beneficial for the village. The community's traditional knowledge base was instrumental in affecting this decision and the work that followed.

The Gavai *talab* is the older of the two *nadis*. Being 'ancestral property', the *nadi* was expected to be able to generate more contributions. The *Gram Sabha* also found that the 200-foot catchment area of the Gavai was larger. Some of the *Sabha* members contended that the spot for the old *nadi* had been identified because of the "gradient of the land" and the "large *agor*" (catchment area).

Once the *nadi* was selected and the JBF team had measured the area for excavation, the *Jal Sabha* proposed a circular design, which the members felt would "retain more water, allow livestock to drink more easily, and make it safer for children playing on its banks as the gradient is more gradual". To maximize the potential of the project to harvest rain water, Jetha Ram, a local *Gajdhari* (water engineer), proposed building two feeder canals in the next phase of

the project. These would "channel the water not only from the catchment but from the other areas in the village where water collects". The design of one of these feeder canals is particularly innovative — it channels the water flow around the *nadi* so that the force of the water does not destroy the bank. Bhakri's elders believe that these canals would bring twice the amount of water to the village *nadi*. They should know. As Champa Lal, the secretary of the *Jal Sabha*, says: "The villagers have knowledge that has been passed down from their forefathers."

The capacity of the Gavai *talab* has now increased from 15,000 cubic meters (cu m) to 23,888 cu m. The total cost of the project has been Rs 1,58,907, in which the village contributed Rs 40,000. Interestingly, the total cash collected through contributions, which went towards paying for diesel, was only Rs 26,000; the rest was contributed as labour by Bhakri's four tractor owners.



"The villagers have knowledge that has been passed down from their forefathers."



■ BHANDIYAWAS

Initiatives at village level

Systems of traditional water management may fall into disuse over the years, but villages in this region of Rajasthan do have a deep-rooted and strong tradition of public work. This was apparent in the community water initiative seen in Bhandiawas village in Balotra block of Barmer. Here, the villagers revived the traditional approach of *shramdaan* (voluntary labour for common good), and thus made clear their enthusiasm to manage things on their own. The most striking achievement of the Bhandiawas *Jal Sabha* has been the system that it has instituted to generate consensus and contribution within the village towards the water harvesting work.

In Bhandiawas, the village *nadi* is the only source of drinking water. Even in a good monsoon year, the water harvesting structure only provides water for eight months. The other source of water is the government pipeline, which supplies saline water — and that too, irregularly. Women in the village spend their entire day collecting water, begging for it from the richer households.

In Bhandiawas, each household spends

Rs 4,000 on an average on water in the four dry months. One 4,500-litre tanker of water costs Rs 500-600. A minimum of two tankers is required in a month to meet the water need. During dry months, the poorer families are forced to take 'water loans' at exorbitant interest rates ranging from 24-60 per cent annually. In addition to the cost of water, each household spends Rs 2,500 on an average every month on other expenses. The average size of land holdings is 4-5 hectares which, with only one rain-fed crop a year, gives an average yield worth Rs 5,000. This puts the villagers in a vicious cycle of debt and repayment.

Tejan, a Bhil woman, has a small *tanka* (storage tank) in her house with a storage capacity of 3,500 litres. A full *tanka* lasts for 15 days. Hers is a nine-member household and they own seven goats. This *tanka* had not been filled for a month because the family did not have the money to buy water. During dry months, the family depends on the saline water supplied by the government pipeline.

The most striking achievement of the Bhandiawas *Jal Sabha* has been the system that it has instituted to generate consensus and contribution within the village towards the water harvesting work





THE INITIATION

The JBF team initiated its interaction with the Bhandiyawas villagers on one *Akha Teej*, a local festival. Following the first few meetings, a *Jal Sabha* was formed and a working committee was nominated to shoulder the responsibility of generation of contribution and the revival and monitoring of the water harvesting structure.

The *Sabha* nominated Nain Dan, a senior member from the village's well-respected *Charan* community of landlords, as its chairperson. Under his leadership and guidance, the *Jal Sabha* was able to generate high levels of participation and enthusiasm amongst the villagers.

REVIVING SHRAMDAAN

The *Sabha* members went around the village meeting individual households for creating awareness and motivating people to contribute towards a collective good. The contribution was decided depending on the size of the households, their income, the amount of land and livestock owned, and ownership of tankers or tractors. One hundred of the poorest households were identified and their contribution was set at Rs 200. Those unable to pay cash were expected to

contribute through *shramdaan*. Joint families whose members worked as labourers, were expected to make a minimum contribution of Rs 500. The richer households made contributions ranging from Rs 1,000 to Rs 5,000.

One of the most interesting outcomes, according to Nain Dan, was that the "collections exceeded by far the minimum contribution of the Rs 0.1 million required". The village collected Rs 0.15 million, and this Nain Dan attributes to the stringent policing methods followed by the committee members. In fact, Nain Dan often took the lead in this: he would go to wedding celebrations (*davats*) of the rich Jat families and "refuse to eat before the house head pledged a contribution towards the water harvesting structure".



The *Sabha* members went around the village meeting individual households for creating awareness and motivating people to contribute towards a collective good



■ CHIRADIA

Enlightened community

The people of Rajasthan are known for their sensitivity towards water and their willingness to conserve its every drop. However, communities today have chosen to move away from their local wisdom and have become dependent on government dole and other external sources for ensuring water security. But Chiradia, in Barmer district, is a village that believes in its potential and capability to address its problems locally. To overcome their water woes, the villagers did not wait for the JBF to approach them; instead, they tracked JBF down with a proposal for reviving their dead *nadi*.

But before approaching JBF, they raised 25 per cent contribution within the village. They visited water harvesting structures which had been revived with JBF's help and interacted with *Jal Sabhas* which had implemented similar works in their villages. According to Sawai Singh, the initiator of the project, "We were willing to make an investment that would benefit the village, but not before conducting a thorough investigation of the organization and its works."

For its drinking water, Chiradia relies on the village *nadi*, excavated 100 years ago; the *nadi* has a well by its side. Due to the *nadi*'s small size and silting over the years, its water lasts only six months in a year. For the remaining months, tankers supply water at Rs 250-600 each. The village does have a government pipeline for water.

Ghiji is a widowed Devasi woman. She cannot afford to pay for water. She has one hectare of land, which yields one rain-fed crop a year — the average annual earning from this is Rs 2,500. Ghiji earns another Rs 1,000 from her 40 sheep, and Rs 40 per day when she does manual labour. She has to support her family of five on this income. In a water crisis, she takes loans to share the cost of a tanker to fill her brother-in-law's storage tank. She has yet to pay off a loan of Rs 20,000 which she took for her daughter's wedding. But Ghiji has hope. She feels "giving Rs 200 towards the water harvesting structure has been a wise choice, as it would benefit her and the entire village".





But this supply comes from Gondo ka Bada, which lies at a lower level from Chiradia — as a result, the water supply is erratic due to lack of pressure.

According to Ganga Singh, a *Jal Sabha* member, each household in Chiradia fortunate enough to have a storage tank and the capacity to pay, spends Rs 6,000-7,000 every year on water.

AN ENLIGHTENED COMMUNITY

Sawai Singh first heard about JBF when he learnt about the Foundation's work in Piparli, an adjoining village. He and other community leaders visited the water harvesting structure at Piparli and were "impressed with the work". The team returned to Chiradia and convened a meeting of the village community; the villagers were asked if they would be willing to contribute. The community felt it was "worth its while to make a contribution towards the solution to its water problem".

The *nadi* was measured and it was agreed that the excavation project would cost Rs 4,00,000 — which meant the village would have to raise a contribution of Rs 1,00,000 (25 per cent). Dugar Ram Chaudhry agreed to make the entire

contribution on behalf of the community, but it was eventually decided that each household would contribute depending on its ability to pay.

The contributions flowed in, ranging from Rs 50 to Rs 2,500. Once the contributions were collected, the villagers were faced with a problem: they found out that JBF did not work in the district of Barmer. They decided to wait; the money was set aside.

It was a year-long vigil. When villagers of Piparli informed their neighbours in Chiradia that JBF had finally reached Barmer, the village leaders went to Uttesar to see the JBF project and meet the Uttesar *Jal Sabha* members, through whom they were finally able to initiate a dialogue with JBF.

The JBF team helped constitute the Chiradia *Jal Sabha* and agreed to the excavation work. After detailed discussions, it was decided that a JCB (a machine to excavate earth) would be required to complete the work successfully. The *Jal Sabha* managed to negotiate and bring down the JCB rate from Rs 26 to Rs 23.5 per cubic meter, and the work was begun.



It was a year-long vigil: villagers of Piparli informed their neighbours in Chiradia that JBF had finally reached Barmer



■ GODAWAS

Water and its association with culture

Water is in the very fabric of Rajasthani society: the case of Godawas illustrates this. The scarcity of water has given this resource a sacred position, and around it have evolved diverse socio-cultural practices that are attributed a degree of holiness. Folk beliefs have emphasized the value of water through its association with the local pantheon of Hindu gods and demigods. Bhomiaji is one such revered deity, and a temple stands in his honour in Godawas.

Godawas is situated in Barmer's Balotra block. The average land holdings here are 4-5 hectares from which the average returns are Rs 4,000 on a single rain-fed crop. There are 200 households; at least one member of the family from 150 migrates in search of labour.

The village *nadi* is the only source of drinking water. For the four months when the *nadi* runs dry, water has to be bought for Rs 400-500 per tanker.

WATER AS A CULTURE CONSTRUCT

The village had a long tradition of collecting money and getting work done on its water

harvesting structure. According to Hanuman Ram, the president of the *Jal Sabha*, "In the past, the village would collect funds and get the *Ode* (gypsies who traveled to villages) to work on their water harvesting structures or to desilt their

When in dire straits, Godawas puts its faith in the village deity: Bhomiaji. Bhika Ram, the treasurer of the local *Jal Sabha* and the priest of the Bhomiaji temple, says: "Rohting Bhomia was a Jat landlord who lived in the village 100 years ago. He had a deep concern for the land, the people and the cattle. He would take his bullock cart every day to work on the *nadi*. Motivated by this, the villagers joined him in his endeavor and this tradition is still followed. A temple was erected in Rohting Bhomia's honour after his death, as he died protecting the cattle of the village." The pond is called *gau kund* (cattle pond). People from Godawas as well as neighbouring villages make regular offerings at the temple. Forty years ago, one of the temple priests pledged that all offerings to the temple would only be used on the water harvesting structure; the tradition has endured.





nadis.” Also, on certain auspicious days, the village community would work on the *nadi*. Laxmi, actively involved in the *Jal Sabha*’s work, tells us that “even to this day men dig out the silt from the *nadi* and the women carry it to the bank”.

The *Oran* (pastureland) surrounding the water harvesting structure is protected in the name of Bhomiaji’s temple. No one is allowed to cut wood in the *Oran*; any money from sale of wood is put into the temple fund. “There is sense of awe for Bhomiaji,” say villagers. Tulsa Ram, a member of the committee of 25 set up to work along with JBF, has another view; according to him, “just as people invest in doctors for the sake of their health, we invest in Bhomiaji and our natural resources”. It is evident that though there is an undying faith in the local deity, it stems from a deeper understanding of the importance of conserving water and natural resources.

The temple is not only connected with water — it also plays a crucial role in providing livelihoods. Offerings to Bhomiaji include clay figurines of horses and sheets of white cloth. The clay horses are made by *kumhars* (potters) in the neighbouring village of Chirarli; the temple sustains them through the year. Similarly, the

sheets are made by tailors in Godawas and Chirarli.

THE WATER HARVESTING STRUCTURE

Earlier, the village had spent Rs 80,000 to work the extremely hard and rocky soil using a Hitachi machine. However, as Hanuman Ram points out, this was “not enough to retain water all year round”. When JBF approached him, Ram jumped at the opportunity. He and Bhik Ram, the temple priest, convinced the village community of JBF’s sincerity. The result: a 25-member committee was set up. The project cost was fixed at Rs 4,00,000 and Rs 1,00,000 was immediately contributed from the temple fund.

It is a wonderful relationship (and not just blind faith) that the villagers of Godawas share with their presiding deity — and with water. It is a two-way stream. The villagers invest in their Bhomiaji. They make offerings and pray that their wishes be granted. These very offerings come back to them in the form of a more resource-secure life, as they are used for the work on the village water harvesting structure.



Though there is an undying faith in the local deity, it stems from a deeper understanding of the importance of conserving water and natural resources



■ KHICHIYAON KA DAIPARA

Monitoring by stakeholders

The village of Daipara, in Luni block, has a population of 2,200. There are 500 children in the village, 372 of whom attend the local government school. The only source of drinking water for all these people is the village *nadi*. In the dry season, the village gets tankers of water at Rs 400-500 per tanker.

THE SCHOOL TANKA

When JBF approached the village with its proposal for reviving its water harvesting structure, the community suggested that work be done on a *tanka* (storage tank) at the village school instead. In 2001, the village had raised Rs 4,000 and made a small 7,000-litre *tanka*, informed Gop Singh, the local schoolteacher; but the *tanka* had broken down within two years. Their previous experience with the *tanka* had made some members of the village community rather sceptical, but the JBF team managed to convince them by explaining how the *Jal Sabha* and its office bearers would oversee and implement the project.

The *Jal Sabha* decided to build a *tanka* with a capacity of 60,000 litres at a cost of Rs 86,245;

of this amount, the village was expected to contribute Rs 21,562. Except for the 15 families which were below the poverty line, every household in the village donated Rs 100.

THE JAL DAL (WATER GROUP)

What stands out as an exemplary feature in this village is the way in which the school children have organized themselves to bear complete responsibility of the maintenance of their *tanka*. Constituted into a *Jal Dal* (Water Group), the students, led by Bhawani Ram (the elected captain of the Dal), have taken charge of keeping the *tanka* clean and functioning.

After the monsoons, the JBF inspection team had found that the drains through which the rain water was routed to the tank were not very clean. The Foundation suggested that the *Jal Sabha* appoint volunteers for keeping the *tanka* clean. Gop Singh, the school teacher, had another solution: he suggested that “the students themselves should be responsible for their drinking water”. Thus was formed the *Jal Dal* (Water Group).





SHARING RESPONSIBILITY

The Dal has been divided into three groups of three students each. Two groups are responsible for cleaning the two outlets where the water collects before it goes into the storage tank. The third group is responsible for keeping the roof clean; this is where the rain water is collected. Another responsibility of the *Jal Dal* is to ensure that the school's earthen pot is filled with water every morning and that the smaller children get water. To ensure that water is not wasted, students are not allowed to operate the hand pump.

Having begun its work on the *tanka*, the *Jal Dal* realized that the hand pump was being neglected: water would collect around the hand pump and it needed to be cleaned regularly. As the members of the *Jal Dal* (constituted from the seniormost class in the school) had their hands full, it was decided that younger students would be entrusted the responsibility of cleaning the hand pump.

Naresh Kumar, a student, feels that "this was a good idea as the younger students could then be trained to take on the entire responsibility once the senior class graduated". The *Jal Dal* now has four groups.

The members of the *Jal Dal* are grateful that the "community gave money for the school *tanka*", because earlier they had to bring their own water from home. They believe that the water in the *tanka* will see them through the whole year. According to Suresh Kumar, another student at the school, the "capacity of the *tanka* is 1,000 earthen pots, of which two are used every day". Kumar's mathematical abilities stop at this point, beyond which he is unable to calculate. When asked the reason, his prompt reply is "because the math teacher has not taken classes for months".

Daipara's school *tanka* project has brought to light the extent to which even children are willing to go when it comes to ensuring a supply of and conserving a scarce resource. The *Jal Dal* of this village is a model that other schools will do well to follow.



What stands out as an exemplary feature in this village is the way in which the school children have organized themselves to bear complete responsibility of the maintenance of their *tanka*



■ MALIYAON KI DHANI

Community Service And Social Commitment

Undaunted by the acute water shortage it faces, a village community decides to pool its resources to provide water for travellers at the local bus stop. As an act of complete selflessness, this one stands apart.

Maliyaon ki Dhani is a small village of the Mali community in the district of Barmer. Acutely aware of the plight of people from their village as well as neighbouring villages who had to wait for hours under the scorching sun for the bus, the community decided that it was its “duty” to provide water for the travellers.

Every day, 30 people take the bus from the village to neighbouring Pachpadra to work in a factory. The adults earn Rs 60 per day, while the children get Rs 40; Rs 10 is spent every day on bus fare.

Maliyaon ki Dhani has a *nadi*. When the *nadi* runs dry, usually for seven months in a year, tankers of water are bought from Newai and Thob for Rs 200-400.

In spite of such difficult conditions, this community of Malis chose to help its neighbouring communities before it had even dealt with its own water-related problems. The village has built a community *tanka*, but even before this *tanka* was built, water was kept at the bus stop and one of the village boys would be paid a nominal fee to ensure that the earthen pots were kept full and that the travellers got water. Regular commuters to Pachpadra were asked to contribute Rs 10 on occasion.

Maliyaon ki Dhani is surrounded by villages and hamlets holding about 500 households. All these

Nathu has a family of nine members and her average monthly expenditure is Rs 2,000 a month, which is also her average income. She has a small 500-litre storage tank in her house, but it hardly meets her needs. According to Nathu, “interest rates on loans go up during the dry season”. As a result of this, water loans become a huge liability for people like her.





communities use this bus stop which receives 10 buses daily. Hastimal, the *Jal Sabha* chairperson, found that “filling up the *matkas* (earthen pots) regularly was very time consuming”. Building a *tanka* at the bus stop was a solution. So when the *Jal Sabha* was approached by JBF, the members immediately proposed this community *tanka* project, the first and only one of its kind. According to Damadar Sant, the village priest, “the region has a long-standing tradition of building community *tankas* for travellers”. There are two *tankas* near Pachpadra, built 50 and 80 years ago respectively.

The project was duly initiated. No limits were set for contributions. Thirty households made donations ranging from Rs 50 to Rs 400.

THE STRUCTURE

The village decided to make a 26,000-litre capacity *tanka*, the cost for which was accurately estimated at Rs 30,000. Twenty-five per cent of the money was to be contributed by the village. The money was used to buy cement, bricks and concrete; records of these, as well as for the

additional transport costs, were meticulously maintained by Hastimal.

The newly-built *tanka* is 3.5 meters wide and 3.6 meters deep. Though it did manage to collect some rain water, “it was not enough, so it has been filled with tankers funded by another contribution from the village,” says Hastimal. A tanker sourcing water from the village *nadi* costs just Rs 100.

In building this unique *tanka*, the community of Maliyaon ki Dhani has demonstrated a rare level of social responsibility and commitment.



According to Damadar Sant, the village priest: “The region has a long-standing tradition of building community *tankas* for travellers”

List of Micro-Projects supported by JBF from 2002 to 2004

A. Water Harvesting Structures

A1. Talab/Nadi

S.No.	Project Village	Block	District	Water Storage	Persons Benefited	Micro-Project Cost (Rs.)			Date of Finish
				Cap. (cu.m)		Jal Sabha	Grant	Total	
						Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	
1	Piparli	Luni	Jodhpur	15,600	4,000	172,064	190,936	363,000	30-06-02
2	Begadia	Osian	Jodhpur	2,600	700	34,694	15,306	50,000	30-06-02
3	Ramdevra	Pokharan	Jaisalmer	48,600	5,900	540,665	485,880	1,026,545	30-06-02
4	Panchota	Ahore	Jalore	3,300	2,370	41,709	33,291	75,000	30-06-02
5	Bara Kallan	Osian	Jodhpur	1,300	1,500	16,147	13,853	30,000	30-06-02
6	Hamirana	Mundwa	Nagore	15,000	2,500	197,459	137,833	335,292	30-06-02
7	Rewara	Balotra	Barmer	9,400	1,700	54,042	108,083	162,125	30-06-02
8	Gangawas	Balotra	Barmer	5,800	4,850	50,149	148,485	198,634	30-06-02
9	Khejarla	Bilara	Jodhpur	11,000	1,500	126,228	111,772	238,000	30-06-02
10	Chandelav	Bilara	Jodhpur	800	2,400	9,730	7,520	17,250	30-06-02
11	Gwalnada	Balotra	Barmer	10,200	2,000	102,683	125,217	227,900	30-06-02
12	Pindaran	Balotra	Barmer	1,700	1,084	7,230	21,500	28,730	30-04-03
13	Bagawas	Marwar Jn.	Pali	8,800	3,017	86,000	150,000	236,000	07-06-03
14	Motisara	Balotra	Barmer	8,800	2,850	49,820	149,243	199,063	08-07-03
15	Uttesar	Luni	Jodhpur	18,300	2,000	112,000	300,000	412,000	25-09-03
16	Bhadrajun	Ahore	Jalore	8,500	2,200	48,159	144,476	192,635	10-04-04
17	Rewara Jaitmal	Balotra	Barmer	3,500	1,138	20,000	48,545	68,545	09-05-04
18	Lunawas Khurd	Luni	Jodhpur	4,900	840	22,991	81,713	104,704	24-05-04
19	Lunawas Kallan	Luni	Jodhpur	8,200	950	26,383	135,852	162,235	29-05-04
20	Khichiyon ka Daipada	Luni	Jodhpur	30,000	9,000	50,000	150,764	200,764	29-05-04
21	Janguwas	Luni	Jodhpur	32,000	1,050	70,452	210,800	281,252	31-05-04
22	Lambada Nada	Luni	Jodhpur	23,000	690	65,064	195,356	260,420	10-06-04
23	Dudiya	Luni	Jodhpur	20,300	1,499	48,310	145,550	193,860	14-06-04
24	Jatiasani	Luni	Jodhpur	6,700	728	31,154	98,065	129,219	19-06-04
25	Asotra	Balotra	Barmer	3,400	6,600	16,970	51,020	67,990	19-06-04
26	Chainpura Bhatan	Luni	Jodhpur	4,000	410	16,500	50,300	66,800	21-06-04
27	Rewara Mahiya	Balotra	Barmer	7,500	1,179	36,167	107,921	144,088	23-06-04
28	Suwana	Luni	Jodhpur	6,500	1,450	30,587	91,760	122,347	25-06-04
29	Chiradia	Siwana	Barmer	40,000	1,347	99,471	299,209	398,680	26-06-04
30	Bhakri	Luni	Jodhpur	9,500	702	40,000	119,707	159,707	26-06-04
31	Maliyaon ki Dhani	Balotra	Barmer	4,900	700	25,000	75,547	100,547	01-07-04
32	Godawas	Balotra	Barmer	18,300	1,000	100,000	300,999	400,999	06-07-04
33	Bhandiyawas	Balotra	Barmer	27,100	1,932	100,000	300,790	400,790	10-07-04

S.No.	Project Village	Block	District	Water Storage	Persons Benefited	Micro-Project Cost (Rs.)			Date of Finish
						Jal Sabha	Grant	Total	
						Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	
34	Hanuman Nagar	Luni	Jodhpur	11,300	735	47,357	142,713	190,070	11-07-04
35	Bhadrajun	Ahore	Jalore	10,200	5,122	32,650	128,277	160,927	14-07-04
36	Asada	Balotra	Barmer	8,400	6,825	50,000	150,675	200,675	15-07-04
37	Purkhawas	Balotra	Barmer	6,500	1,000	34,410	103,482	137,892	15-07-04
38	Asotra	Balotra	Barmer	12,800	6,600	52,500	157,500	210,000	15-07-04
39	Kudi	Balotra	Barmer	3,000	2,000	21,257	62,095	83,352	31-07-04
40	Rayalnada	Balotra	Barmer	2,800	500	18,690	53,500	72,190	23-08-04
41	Torami	Ahore	Jalore	5,700	532	9,951	29,844	39,795	30-11-04
42	Aipura	Ahore	Jalore	5,800	1,858	17,900	53,696	71,596	30-11-04
43	Ramsin Mungada	Balotra	Barmer	5,500	1,800	14,770	44,227	58,997	30-11-04
44	Sikri Nadi	Balotra	Barmer	7,500	500	31,658	94,976	126,634	30-11-04
Sub-total A1				499,000	99,258	2,778,971	5,628,278	8,407,249	

A2. Johad/Anicut

S.No.	Project Village	Block	District	Water Storage	Persons Benefited	Micro-Project Cost (Rs.)			Date of Finish
						Jal Sabha	Grant	Total	
						Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	
				Cap. (cu.m)					
1	Dhanla	Marwar Junction	Pali	21,600	4,000	186,333	298,667	485,000	30-06-02
2	Tehkala Dham	Balesar	Jodhpur	28,000	2,300	117,590	131,392	248,982	30-06-02
3	Babhan	Marwar Junction	Pali	7,500	325	41,975	125,927	167,902	25-08-03
4	Selri	Ahore	Jalore	25,000	944	45,636	133,611	179,247	31-03-04
5	Gangawas	Balotra	Barmer	10,000	4,850	49,495	148,485	197,980	31-03-04
6	Mathania	Osian	Jodhpur	10,000	17,000	76,414	229,241	305,655	10-04-04
7	Rabariyawas	Jaitaran	Pali	10,300	5,000	96,406	142,278	238,684	10-04-04
8	Jian Bera	Balesar	Jodhpur	600	778	57,825	118,606	176,431	18-06-04
9	Rama	Ahore	Jalore	22,500	2,200	125,837	377,741	503,578	24-06-04
10	Santra	Balotra	Barmer	24,000	750	125,295	392,347	517,642	18-08-04
11	Ratanada	Ahore	Jalore	13,800	412	57,518	172,751	230,269	21-08-04
12	Nimbo ka Gaon	Balesar	Jodhpur	17,000	893	83,210	167,897	251,107	26-08-04
Sub-total A2				190,300	39,452	1,063,534	2,438,943	3,502,477	

A3. School/Community Tanka

S.No.	Project Village	Block	District	Water Storage	Persons Benefited	Micro-Project Cost (Rs.)			Date of Finish	
				Cap. (cu.m)		Jal Sabha	Grant			Total
						Rs.	Rs.			Rs.
1	Khichiyon ka Daipada	Luni	Jodhpur	60	362	21,562	64,683	86,245	15-03-04	
2	Sehnai	Luni	Jodhpur	60	80	21,901	65,705	87,606	15-03-04	
3	Sewala	Luni	Jodhpur	30	159	14,316	42,340	56,656	15-03-04	
4	Bhakri	Luni	Jodhpur	30	84	17,037	38,472	55,509	15-03-04	
5	Dedi Nadi	Luni	Jodhpur	30	80	13,098	39,294	52,392	15-03-04	
6	Jangu ki Dhani	Luni	Jodhpur	30	38	12,446	37,338	49,784	15-03-04	
7	Chipdi Nadi	Luni	Jodhpur	30	55	12,819	38,458	51,277	15-03-04	
8	Dhana Nada	Luni	Jodhpur	30	92	12,974	38,923	51,897	15-03-04	
9	Sewron ki Dhani	Luni	Jodhpur	30	60	13,058	39,175	52,233	15-03-04	
10	Lambada Nada	Luni	Jodhpur	30	83	12,551	38,855	51,406	15-03-04	
11	Saigon ki Dhani	Luni	Jodhpur	30	29	11,258	34,497	45,755	21-06-04	
12	Maliyaon ki Dhani	Balotra	Barmer	30	700	8,834	27,292	36,126	01-07-04	
13	Pachpadra (Girls)	Balotra	Barmer	50	200	13,213	40,152	53,365	07-07-04	
14	Arnia Nada	Luni	Jodhpur	30	45	11,282	33,806	45,088	11-07-04	
15	Roichi Nadi	Luni	Jodhpur	30	60	11,881	35,600	47,481	28-07-04	
16	Asotra	Balotra	Barmer	30	200	9,742	29,226	38,968	30-11-04	
17	Pachpadra (Boys)	Balotra	Barmer	50	300	14,543	43,629	58,172	30-11-04	
	Sub-total A3			610	2,627	232,515	687,445	919,960		
	Total A (A1+A2+A3)			689,910	141,337	4,075,020	8,754,666	12,829,686		

B. School Toilets

S.No.	Project Village	Block	District	Water Storage	Persons Benefited	Micro-Project Cost (Rs.)		Total	Date of Finish
				Cap. (cu.m)		Jal Sabha	Grant		
						Rs.	Rs.		
1	Chipdi Nadi	Luni	Jodhpur	Not Appl.	55	300	16,500	16,800	15-03-04
2	Dhana Nada	Luni	Jodhpur	Not Appl.	92	430	16,500	16,930	15-03-04
3	Lambada Nada	Luni	Jodhpur	Not Appl.	83	230	16,500	16,730	15-03-04
4	Sewron ki Dhani	Luni	Jodhpur	Not Appl.	60	140	16,500	16,640	15-03-04
5	Dedi Nadi	Luni	Jodhpur	Not Appl.	80	1,000	16,500	17,500	15-03-04
6	Jangu ki Dhani	Luni	Jodhpur	Not Appl.	38	1,560	16,500	18,060	15-03-04
7	Khichiyaon ka Daipada	Luni	Jodhpur	Not Appl.	362	580	16,500	17,080	15-03-04
8	Bhakri	Luni	Jodhpur	Not Appl.	84	1,010	16,500	17,510	15-03-04
9	Sewala	Luni	Jodhpur	Not Appl.	159	974	16,500	17,474	15-03-04
Total B					1,013	6,224	148,500	154,724	
Grand Total (A+B)				689,910	142,350	4,081,244	8,903,166	12,984,410	

Year and Month	Events/Programs	Venue/Location	Highlights
2001			
October			
	<i>Jal Samvad</i> (Workshop on Water Resource Management in Marwar)	Akbar Ali Auditorium, Umaid Bhawan Palace, Jodhpur	<i>The genesis of JBF can be traced to this meeting.</i> The meeting was attended by farmers and community leaders from all the seven districts of Marwar region of Thar Desert.
	<i>Jal Chetna Yatra</i> (Water Awareness Campaign)	Rohit, Raakhi, Bhadrarjun, Jaitpura, Jojawar, Kolar, Guda and Chokaria villages	Footwalks and meetings with village communities in Jalore, Pali and Barmer districts were organized. As a result the village community spontaneously came forward and commenced construction of water harvesting structures.
November			
	Convention on Water Resource Management	Royal Camp, Pushkar, Ajmer	The convention was a formal interaction with donor agencies to share the plans of the Jal Bhagirathi Program.
2002			
January			
	<i>Jal Chetna Samvad</i> (Water Awareness Dialogue)	Hanwant Boarding House, Jodhpur	Attended by 300 prominent community leaders from all the seven districts of Marwar region. The delegates pressed upon the need to formalize the organization
	<i>Jal Chetna Yatra</i> (Water Awareness Campaign)	Gangawas, Nagana and Kalyanpur areas.	Public awareness campaign and community mobilization in different villages.
	Execution of Trust Deed and formation of Jal Bhagirathi Foundation (JBF)	Umaid Bhawan Palace, Jodhpur	Jal Bhagirathi Foundation settled as a Trust by HH Rajmata Krishna Kumariji with the appointment of HH Maharaja Gaj Singhji, HH Maharani Hemlata Rajyeji, Shri Rajendra Singhji and Shri Prithvi Raj Singhji as Trustees.
February			
	<i>Jal Chetna Yatra</i> (Water Awareness Campaign)	In villages of Jodhpur, Jalore, Pali, Nagaur and Jaisalmer	Mobilization campaign for formation of <i>Jal Sabhas</i> and construction of village water structures.
	Conference on “Community Participation in Resource Development”	Royal Tented Camp, Ahichatragarh Fort, Nagaur	Conference with potential donor organizations to explore funding sources to support the JBF programs

April			
	Launching of <i>Jal Karmis</i> program (Water Volunteers)	Hanwant Boarding House, Jodhpur	Selected volunteers were oriented in community mobilization and water harvesting methods and practices.
May			
	Training camp for Water Volunteers (<i>Jal Karmis</i>)	Chopasni School, Jodhpur	Volunteers from villages of Marwar were trained for mobilization of communities and management of water resources.
	<i>Sarve Dharm Jal Sammelan</i> (Conference on Water in Religion)	Chopasni School and Geeta Bhawan Hall, Jodhpur	200 Hindu, Muslim, Christian and Sikh religious leaders pledged public support to water conservation
June			
	Workshop on Natural Resource Management	Khejralla village, Jodhpur district	Training in water harvesting, NRM, hygiene, low cost latrines and health care.
July			
	Collaboration Agreement signed between JBF and The Asia Foundation (TAF)	Jaipur	Agreement signed between Shri Prithvi Raj Singhji, JBF and Smt. Dinesha de Silva from TAF under the Civil Society Partnership Program with support from US-Asia Environmental Partnership.
August			
	<i>Jal Karmi</i> (Water Volunteer) training camp	Tarun Bharat Sangh, Bhikampura, Alwar	Practical training given on role and activities of <i>Jal Karmi</i> in community mobilization.
December			
	<i>Jal Chetna Shivir</i> (Mass Mobilization and Training Camp)	Bhadrajun, Rama and Selri and adjoining villages in Jalore district	8,000 men and women and 150 community leaders participated representing 150 <i>Jal Sabhas</i> .
	Prithvi Raj Singhji appointed Managing Trustee of the Foundation	Umaid Bhawan Palace, Jodhpur	On 20 th December, 2002, the Board unanimously requested Shri Prithvi Raj Singhji to take over as the Managing Trustee and Chief Functionary of the Trust.
2003			
February			
	Contract signed between the Embassy of Japan and Jal Bhagirathi Foundation (JBF)	Embassy of Japan, Delhi	Contract signed between Mr Akira Hayashi, Ambassador, the Embassy of Japan and Jal Bhagirathi Foundation (JBF) Shri Prithvi Raj Singhji, Managing Trustee, JBF for a program on "Capacity Building for Sustainable Management of Natural Resources"
March			
	Cluster Allocation and Training Camp	Uttesar village	More than 4,000 village women and men attended
	Agreement signed between United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and Jal Bhagirathi Foundation (JBF)	UNDP Office, Delhi	Agreement signed between Mr Maurice Dewulf, Senior Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP and Shri Prithvi Raj Singhji, Managing Trustee, JBF for a project on "Vulnerability Reduction Through Community Management & Control of Water in Drought-prone areas of the Marwar Region"

April			
	Launching of UNDP project	Ahore, Luni and Balotra Blocks	The preparatory phase of the UNDP-JBF project launched
May			
	Establishment of <i>Jal Ashram</i>	Mehrangarh Fort, Jodhpur	Grant of the “Bijolai Palace” by HH Maharaja Gaj Singhji on behalf of HH Maharaja Hanuwant Singh Trust to Jal Bhagirathi Foundation for establishing a “Jal Ashram”.
	CII-Conference on Water Management–Public Private Partnership	Jodhpur	The meeting explored the issues involved and the scope for public-private partnership in water management
June			
	Launching of Youth Development Programme	Machwa, Jaipur	Computer education centre, library, sewing training, girls education centre and games & sports.
August			
	Launching of Health Care Centre	Rojda, Jaipur	A dispensary and a clinic opened.
	Mass Mobilization Campaign	Villages in Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Pali, and Barmer districts	Public meetings, footwalks (<i>Padyatras</i>) and visits to water harvesting structures (WHSs) in Tekhladham, Ramdevra (Pokharan), Bagawas, Auwa, Dhanla, Gwalnada, Uttesar and Piparli villages
	Agreement signed between the UNICEF and Jal Bhagirathi Foundation	UNICEF Office, Jaipur	Agreement signed between Ms Maria Calivis, Representative in India, UNICEF and Shri Prithvi Raj Singhji, Managing Trustee, JBF for a project on “Community Empowerment for Drought Management”
November			
	<i>Vatavaran Nirman Yatra</i> (Environment Building Campaign)	Ahore, Luni, and Balotra blocks	Villagers were mobilized to participate in construction of water harvesting structures.
December			
	Launching of UNICEF project on “Community Empowerment for Drought Management”	Luni Block, Jodhpur district	Project addressing concerns of drinking water and hygiene in schools was launched with promotion of sentinel centres to monitor drought.
	Village Contact Drive	Ahore, Luni, Balotra & Marwar Junction blocks	Village meetings were held in 14 villages in Ahore, 15 in Luni, 18 in Balotra and 6 villages in Marwar Junction.
	Training on “Strategy for Drought in Arid Zones”	CAZRI	Training of JBF volunteers and members for Land Resource Management
	Exposure Visit	SARITA, Dungarpur	Exposure of JBF members and volunteers for implementation of the UNICEF project.

2004			
January			
	Stakeholders Conference	Jodhpur	JBF members of the Board, <i>Jal Parishad</i> , staff, village volunteers and community leaders met to formulate an annual workplan.
March			
	Training in Gender and Hygiene	Roicha Kallan village	Office bearers of <i>Jal Sabha</i> , Teachers and Anganwadi workers were trained.
June			
	Awareness Training Program	Rama, Ahore block	450 participants including women were trained in alternative livelihood options.
	Exposure visit	SEWA, Ahmedabad and Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan	Training on micro-finance, SHG linkages, systems and processes.
July			
	Technical Training on Water Harvesting Structures	Dundhara, Luni Block	Training on NRM and Design and Construction of Water Harvesting Structures for all members of JBF
August			
	Training on Capacity Building	Dundhara, Luni Block	Training on vision, objectives and values of JBF, natural resource management, women's empowerment, community Mobilization, volunteerism, advocacy and documentation.
	<i>Jal Chetna Yatra</i> (Water Awareness Drive)	6 villages in Luni and 5 in Balotra Block	About 15,000 villagers attended the <i>yatra</i> . Public meetings, padyatras and visit to JBF supported water harvesting structures.
	Dialogue on Ways to Synergize Interventions of JBF with District Development Programs	Umaid Bhawan Palace, Jodhpur	State and District level functionaries participated. Areas of cooperation and partnership were discussed.
October			
	Area Exploration and Monitoring visit	Luni Block in Jodhpur, Ahore Block in Jalore and Balotra and Sivana Blocks in Barmer district	Meetings and mobilization drive in villages for discussion of the impact of JBF interventions and future focus.

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- Meherangarh Museum Trust
- Mr Marieke Brugman, Gourmet Tours of Australia
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“Water is fundamental for life and health. The human right to water is indispensable for leading a healthy life in human dignity. It is a pre-requisite to the realization of all other human rights”

The United Nations Committee on Economic, Cultural and Social Rights



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