



Grameen
Development
Services

ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25



Head Office:

B-1/59, Sector-K, Aliganj

Lucknow (UP) – 226 024

Telephone: +91 522 4075891

Website: www.gdsindia.ngo

Contents

S. No.	Content	Page #
1.	Executive Summary	01 - 02
2.	Introduction	03 - 04
2.1	<i>About GDS</i>	03
2.2	<i>Mission, vision & core values</i>	03
2.3	<i>Approaches and objectives</i>	03
2.4	<i>Outreach and locations</i>	04
3.	Programs & Initiatives	05 - 15
3.1	<i>Community institutions</i>	05
3.2	<i>Fostering agriculture-based livelihoods</i>	07
3.3	<i>Livestock based livelihood promotion</i>	10
3.4	<i>Skills based livelihoods</i>	10
3.5	<i>Water conservation & management</i>	11
3.6	<i>Community response system for DRR</i>	12
3.7	<i>New initiative for nutrition promotion</i>	12
3.8	<i>Cross cutting theme – Gender mainstreaming</i>	12
3.9	<i>Cross cutting theme – Climate change resilience</i>	13
3.10	<i>Nudging the humanitarian approach</i>	14
3.11	<i>Collaboration and convergence</i>	14
3.12	<i>Organisation Development Initiatives</i>	15
4.	Change stories	16 - 18
5.	Donor recognition	18
6.	Accolades and awards	19
7.	Appendices	20 - 21
7.1	<i>Governance & team</i>	20
7.2	<i>Major projects implemented</i>	21
8.	Contact information	22

GRAMEEN DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Annual Report 2024-25

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Enormously blended with multi-thematic approaches and strenuous efforts made for generating transformative impact on socio-economic empowerment of poor and underprivileged community, Grameen Development Services (GDS), a development NGO, completed 32 years of its services in voluntary sector of India. Working at last mile, the livelihood promotion in the given context had been the core focus of the organisation to improve the quality of life of target community as envisioned long back by its founders and presently forging ahead by the GDS volunteers and its staff members. The year 2024-25 passed by through wax and wane of resources creating challenges for organisational survival to continue with its experienced workforce and arriving at logical end of the on-going ventures. The closure of Tata Trusts supported CSAL Project and EdelGive Foundation supported GROW Project happened. Efforts continued to raise fresh proposals to funding agencies. Consequently, GDS succeeded to get approval for two new projects; Sujalam Sufalam Initiative-Phase II and Nutrition focused Project in Mar'25 to be implemented in Shravasti district of eastern Uttar Pradesh.

During the FY 2024-25, GDS reached out 87230 households living in 977 villages spread over 781 village panchayats of 31 CD blocks in 9 districts of 3 states; UP, Bihar and Rajasthan. As one of its core strategic approaches, networks of 891 primary level, 119 secondary level and 3 apex level community institutions (CIs) were created and strengthened capacitating them for collective responses towards development processes taking place at their locations. Most of these CIs were issue based addressing the common issues for redressal at various level. Their involvement and ownership of programme lead towards sustainable development action. The apex institutions are bestowed with the responsibilities to take up broader issues at large platforms. The FPCs promoted at Pharenda, Mahrajganj (LAPCL with its outfit at Shravasti) facilitated backward and forward marketing linkages for individual producers & their collectives, shareholders and other households in the villages. Under the above supplies chain management, a network of 72 agriculture entrepreneurs (AEs) was strengthened under CSAL Project and additionally, 9 AEs under APPI Ltd. supported SLAD Project at Jamunah block, Shravasti.

Focus had been towards promotion of high value vegetable crops preferably potato, onion, groundnut and other vegetables in all the agriculture-based projects and major pulses being grown in the area. In CSAL project alone, 60.3% of the total farmers adopted minimum one HVC. Under SLAD Project, Jamunaha, the demonstration and upscaling of above HVCs happened with selected farmers. For promoting regenerative agriculture practices, use of Fasal Amrit, a bio-waste of fruit peels and super absorbent polymer was demonstrated in 150 pulses and staple crop fields. For enabling to learn and practice crop PoPs, 263 Farmers' Field School (FFS) sessions at Lalitpur and 460 sessions were organised at Bahraich district. Context specific crop PoPs with focus on organic farming were developed. Further, DSR method was promoted in Bahraich and it was adopted by 6342 farmers. Line-sowing of wheat was adopted by huge number of farmers in Bahraich. Studies were conducted to assess the impact of DSR and zero-tillage methods on soil health at Bahraich. The ITC supported interventions were concluded at Shravasti and Balrampur districts. Soil testing and re-regenerative agriculture practices including use of vermi-compost, green manuring etc. were promoted for soil health improvement at Jamunaha block in Shravasti.

The allied sector activities included livestock development for livelihood promotion through bovine animal keeping and goat rearing in Jamunaha block covering 3000 farming households. A network of 33 technically trained local volunteers known as '(1) Pashu Sakhi and (2) para-vets' was created to provide

basic health care services to animals at the doorstep of farmers. The animal health camps were organised by them in support with govt. block veterinary hospital. Networks of community/VRP resource persons (CRPs/VRPs/Krishi Mitra)) were strengthened at Bahraich, Shravasti and Lalitpur districts to arrange for on-site technical support to farmers at village level and sustain the field interventions. Earning through skills was promoted in many ways by GDS. Training-cum-Production Centres were started at 2 sites in Shravasti in support with Usha International for exploiting opportunity by the women earlier made skilled in cloth sewing at Shravasti and Bahraich districts to earn livelihood for their families. Similarly, the para-vets and pashu sakhi technically trained for providing basic health care services to bovine animals and goats started earning through realising service charges from the farmers.

For water conservation in semi-arid Bundelkhand region of UP, construction of gabions, loose boulders and check dams was completed as climate smart initiatives taken up this year at Birdha, Lalitpur in support with ITC Ltd. to enhance water availability for increasing crop coverage and intensity as well. For water governance, water user groups were organised in 6 villages in the block. Additionally, 25 village water management committees (VWMCs) were organised under TROSA Project at Palia Kalan in Lakhimpur Kheri and Pilibhit districts of Rohilkhand region of western UP and water testing kits used by 100 volunteers of citizen science group at the location. Responding to the local contexts of flood prone in the terai region, 25 task force units of local volunteers were made functional for facilitating early warning about flood occurrence to the community.

Convergence mobilisation has been one of the crucial strategies adopted to multiply the benefit through realisation of DBT, relief, subsidies, exemptions etc. under various schemes and programmes of mainstreams, other development players and community itself for the project's beneficiaries. It was the essential practice to mobilise such convergence in almost all the agriculture focused projects being implemented by the organisation at various locations. During FY 2024-25, the total convergence was made worth Rs. 6,38,08,799/-. GDS continued favouring climate adaptive measures in its field interventions. Crop diversification, enabling percolation of technologies and practices, expanding the practice of cover crop cultivation, construction and renovation of village water bodies, solar solution for agriculture were some of such measures promoted for adoption in the field.

On cessation of erstwhile CSAL Project, the efforts continued to keep on the finetuning of next phase proposal imbibing as extension of Sujalam Sufalam phase -1 project, with Tata Trusts team and other partners of the project. After a rigorous process the organisation could finally submit the proposal and succeeded to get approval for its next phase from Tata Trusts but with a gap of 3 months to start it from 1st January, 2025. Similarly, the nutrition project proposal already submitted to Tata Trusts was approved for implementation from 1st March, 2025. However, the approval was communicated to GDS in last week of Mar'25. The operational area of *duo* projects is in the same blocks (Gilaula & Sirsiya) of Shravasti district. In addition, the programme partnership with ITC Limited being extended on annual basis was further agreed for FY 2024-25 through approval of project for Bahraich and Lalitpur districts in UP.

Despite all above, the reporting year witnessed some ups and down but consistently proceeded towards attaining improvement in organisational productivity and growth with the team efforts made by its experienced volunteers and staff as well. The various policies and strategic plan of GDS revised earlier under GROW Project were reinforced in GDS system. It was through effectively managing the internal system & resources and also mobilising external resources by the senior management and robustness in field implementation by the field teams. Gender equality focused sensitisation sessions and training programmes were conducted as cross cutting theme of organisational plan. Gender champions were identified at Shravasti volunteering their efforts to promote gender equality in the community. With the induction of new initiatives at Shravasti and also appropriate interventions at other locations, the overall organisational health has improved paving the way for its long term financial and operational success.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 About GDS

Strenuously striving for socio-economic empowerment of poor and disadvantaged section of the community particularly women, Grameen Development Services (GDS) emerged as a premier, mature, professionally competent and learning NGO completing 32 years of its services since its inception in February, 1993. Thus, seeded at ground long back by its founders consisting of eminent professionals, academicians and NGO leaders, the organisation joined hands with renowned funding agencies of national and international fame mobilising them for collaborative go ahead through program partnership focusing towards transformative development in its operational areas. During 2024-25, GDS reached out 87205 poor households living in 976 villages spread over 781 GPs of 31 CD blocks in 10 districts of poverty-stricken states; Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Bihar to shouldering the mission as visualised long back by them. GDS has its head office at Lucknow, the state capital of UP to provide governance and managerial support to all its 6 field offices currently located in these states.

GDS enjoys active legal status and is registered under Societies Registration Act 1860. It is also registered under 12A & 80G of Income Tax Act, FCRA, CSR, EPFO, ESIC and NGO Darpan. The timely renewal of these registrations is strictly taken care of and legal compliances ensured as per law of the land.

2.2 Mission, vision & core values

The mission, vision and core values of GDS are well defined in its strategic plan (2023-27) portraying the true spirit of its founders and broader community perspective as given below;

Mission	<i>“To create and strengthen sustainable livelihood systems through community-based participatory approaches with techno-managerial inputs to achieve social and economic empowerment for poor and disadvantaged sections living in areas of structural poverty within India”</i>	Vision	<i>“GDS will contribute to building a just, humane and economically prosperous society”</i>	Core values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Integrity ■ Gender equality ■ Professionalism ■ Reflection & learning ■ Collaboration
----------------	---	---------------	---	--------------------	---

2.3 Approaches and objectives

Based on the current need of the community, the geographical contexts, organisational experiences & expertise and core organisational competence, GDS strategized to adopt the following thematic/action areas for executing its various field interventions in support with funding agencies and development players;

Core themes

- Agriculture based livelihood
- Livestock based livelihood
- Climate change resilience
- Vocational skills & entrepreneurship promotion
- Nutrition security

Subsidiary themes

- Disaster risk reduction (DRR)
- Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH)
- Women literacy
- Migrant workers' livelihood

Cross-cutting themes - (1) Climate Change, and (2) Gender equality

Objectives

GDS envisages the following organizational objectives;

- **Objective 1:** Strengthening grass-root action – *community first*
- **Objective 2:** GDS as resource organization
- **Objective 3:** Community based business development
- **Objective 4:** Enhance organizational effectiveness and performance
- **Objective 5:** Enhance information management and knowledge sharing
- **Objective 6:** Resource mobilization

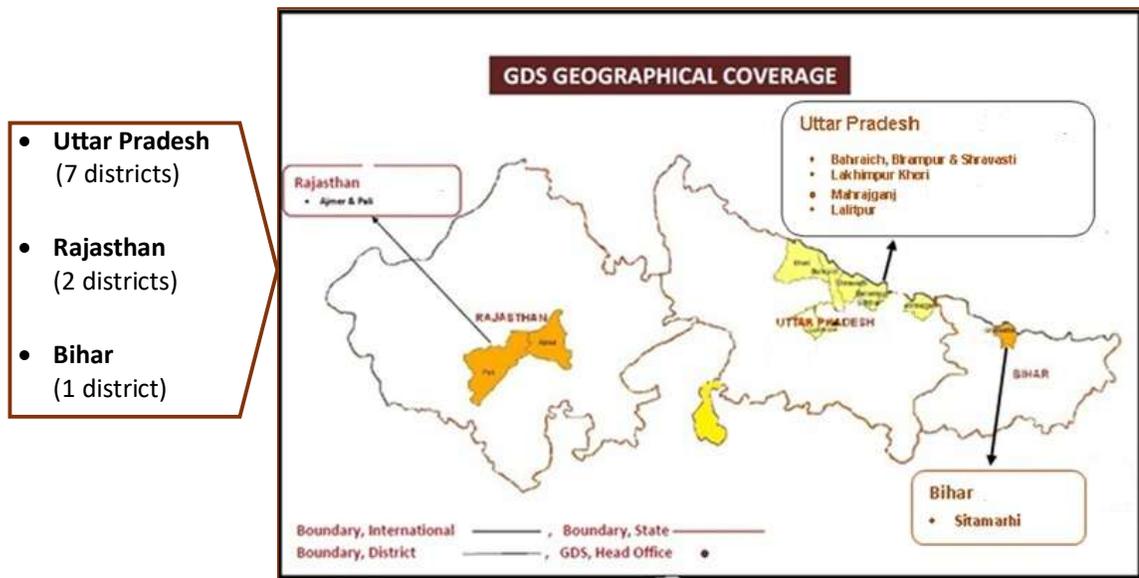
2.4 Outreach and locations

Adhering the larger impact as often preferred by the funding agencies also, GDS continued to intensify field implementation among comparatively large target community living in diverse contexts; semi-arid region of Central Rajasthan & Bundelkhand in UP, flood prone area in eastern Uttar Pradesh particularly Nepal bordering areas & north Bihar. So far, GDS reached out more than 1.25 lacs rural households to bring transformative development for impacting their lives in the selected areas of 3 states; Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Bihar.

State	District	CD Block	No. of CD blocks	No. of GPs	No. of villages	No. of households
Uttar Pradesh*	Bahraich	Jarwal, Kaiserganj, Fakharpur, Tejwapur, Shivpur, Mahasi, Nawabganj, Payagpur, Risia & Huzoorpur	10	463	469	11760
	Shravasti	Gilaula, Jamunaha Ikauna, Hariharour Rani and Sirsiya	5	146	164	34837
	Balrampur	Balrampur Sadar, Tulsipur, Gainsari, Uttaraula and Sridattganj	5	50	50	9984
	Lalitpur	Birdha	1	36	40	4084
	Lakhimpur Kheri	Palia, Nighasan	2	18	20	11083
	Pilibhit	Puranpur	1	4	5	2410
	Lucknow	GDS HO Lucknow				
Sub-total (Uttar Pradesh)			24	717	748	74158
Rajasthan	Beawar	Jawaja & Raipur	2	22	56	3072
Bihar	Sitamarhi	Runni Saidpur, Belsand, Parasauni, Dumra, Nanpur	5	42	173	10000
3 states	Total (9 distt.)		31	781	977	87230

*In addition, GDS promoted FPC (LAPCL) is functional at Pharenda block of Mahrajganj district.

The above coverage is characterised with major focus towards socially and economically weaker section of the community including SC, ST and other OBCs households whereas women for gender justice. Currently, GDS has its intensive coverage in Nepal bordering districts of eastern Uttar Pradesh establishing alignment with development indicators of NITI Aayog (GoI) for agriculture development in aspirational districts of Devipatan division. In Bihar and Rajasthan, direct implementation of any intervention doesn't exist but the community institutions owned the responsibility to continue with various livelihoods promoting initiatives being taken up by the government and other development players at the locale.



- **Uttar Pradesh**
(7 districts)
- **Rajasthan**
(2 districts)
- **Bihar**
(1 district)

3. PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES

GDS as field implementing organisation proceeds with its multi-thematic & multi-stakeholder approaches in the field implementation leading towards strengthening the livelihoods of target households impacting the transformative development in people’s lives. Agriculture based livelihood promotion has been at crux during major span of GDS’s development trajectory supported with other thematic initiatives. Besides existing interventions in continuation, the organisation could add new interventions/activities as needed in its operational areas during the reporting year through its on-going and new projects. The progress made under various program areas during FY 2024-25 is delineated henceforward in brief;

3.1 Community institutions (CIs)

As its strategic comprehension to prepare the community for collective thinking and action, it is the usual practice in GDS to initially organise the community in groups for addressing their broad issues at various level at any particular location. These groups are categorised depending upon their coverage, prevalence of issues and scope of functioning. Currently, there are 1013 various community institutions functional in existing project locations; mostly being managed by the women only. These are often task/issue based for redressal utilising their skills and resources sometimes with external support or even without that also. The status of these CIs by the end of FY 2024-25 was as given below;

GDS Location	PGs	SHGs	VLOs	VDMC	EWS Task Force	VDCs	GRGs	WUGs	Citizen Science Group	Federations	FPCs
Shravasti	292	334	20				10				1
Palia Kalan				25	25				1		
Lalitpur						17		6			
Jawaja		265	15							2	1
Total	292	599	35	25	25	17	10	6	1	2	2

Efforts were underway to organise water user groups (WUGs) at Bahraich location. These 3-tier CIs are broadly categorised in as follows;

✚ **Primary level CIs** – For addressing the local issues, the primary level CIs are organised at small settlement or village level preferably by the community of equal social and economic status. All 891 PGs and SHGs as denoted above in the table fall in this category of CIs. Shravasti and Jawaja are the only locations having huge number of PGs & SHGs represented mainly by the women members. In Jawaja, 265 SHGs were linked with their 2 federations benefitting 3072 households; 97% of these from SC community at the location. With newly linked 29 SHGs this year, total 240 SHGs have their Bank accounts. 350 members associated with 32 SHGs were benefitted with total dividend of Rs. 53.72 earned through the interest on loan. The federations facilitated bank credit of Rs. 347.3 Lakhs to 78 SHGs in 2024-25. Training on SHG functioning was arranged for 63 office bearers from 21 SHGs. In Shravasti, the PGs converted into SHGs linking them with UPSRLM were layered in previous years involving them in agriculture development activities. The producer groups were informal collective of women farmers not indulging them in thrift and credit practices but taking up agricultural activities under Sujalam Sufalam/CSAL Project. It helped in promoting agri-business model for demand generation of quality agri-input, supplies and marketing of agri-produce.



✚ **Secondary level CIs** – These types of CIs, ideally organised at cluster or village level, shoulder to address the broader issues comparatively with more coverage and diverse approaches. The primary level CIs are, often, clustered for organising secondary level CIs. The village and cluster level CIs; VOs, WUGs, GRGs, VDCs, VDMCs, EWS Task Force and Citizen Science Group are deemed under this category of CIs. Under APPI supported SLAD project in Jamunaha, Shravasti, 16 SHGs and PGs were merged with 20 village level organisations (VLOs) and the process was still in progress to add more at the location. In Jawaja, 120 members of 10 VLIs were trained about their roles and responsibilities to align with the purpose of SHGs and federations as well. There were 117 secondary level CIs at GDS locations. The primary level CIs are represented by these CIs through deputing their proportionate selected members in secondary level CIs to address their broader issues at larger platforms.

✚ **Apex level CIs**- These CIs operate at the highest level supporting the primary & secondary level CIs in a defined geography and initiatives. In GDS's field implementation system, federations of SHGs, community owned Trusts and FPCs are there to address the broader issues of the lower-level CIs and other community as well. The apex level CIs provide guidance, support and resources to the CIs functioning under their purview.

The self-sustaining Suraj and Ujala Mahila Mahasangh functioning at GDS Jawaja location (Beawar, Raj.) with minimal external non-financial support only for strategic and managerial input were active to promote livelihoods among their 245 member SHGs and their 2785 members. These federations facilitated linkages of their respective member SHGs with local Bank branches for credit support in addition to their own financial support given to SHGs. Suraj Mahila mahasangh sanctioned total credit support of Rs. 8.89 lakhs to 36 SHG members for livelihood

activities. Also, it arranged training to 10 GRGs for adopting improved goat rearing practices. These federation realise token institutional charges from SHGs to provide services for maintenance of their accounts and proceedings properly and in a transparent manner. GDS took initiative to promote one more FPO '**Jawaja Mahila Agro Farmer Producer Company Limited¹**' registered with RoC on 20th May, 2024. Initially, 60 women farmers became shareholders of the above FPO which was in process to develop its business plan under the guidance of the organisation. All the BoD members were women aspiring for entrepreneurial approach and their economic betterment.

Registered under 'Indian Companies Act, 1956 (amendment 2002)' on 17th June 2010, **Lehra Agro Producer Company Limited (LAPCL)²**, a wholly farmers owned profit making enterprise started its

outfit as extended arm at Shravasti district in the year 2022. Added with 302 new households in FY 2024-25, total 2775 households (including 100 HHs from Jamunaha block)



in Shravasti were the member/shareholders of LAPCL. In all, 4664 households were linked with FPC as its shareholders. The annual turnover of the Company was Rs. 1.82 crores and 1357 members (824 men & 533 women) were benefitted with its agri-business activities. The input trading of major crop seeds, agri-chemicals worth Rs. 94.28 lacs and output trading of wheat, potato & ground nut produce worth Rs. 86.31 lacs were done. In addition, seed production/multiplication business of potato, wheat & groundnut valued Rs. 2.05 lacs were done. The Company got credit support of Rs. 25 lacs from NABKISAN to meet its working capital need and still seeking collaboration with other financial institutions for the same. A network of 72 agriculture entrepreneurs (AEs) was active channelising the agri-business to the doorstep of small and marginal farmers. The capacity building of BoD members and AEs was well taken to upgrade their knowledge and skills for providing services to member farmers and agri-business promotion with them.

3.2 Fostering agriculture-based livelihoods

Since last 3 decades, GDS has strenuously been involved in strengthening agriculture-based livelihood as its mainstream core theme for small and marginal farmers living in diverse contexts; Nepal bordering floodplains of eastern UP & north Bihar, central UP and semi-arid regions of Bundelkhand (UP) and Central Rajasthan. The major initiatives taken for agriculture development during FY 2024-25 at various GDS locations are delineated below;

- 🏡 **Doubling the farmers' income in Shravasti (UP)** - It was a 5-year initiative supported by Tata Trusts aiming at doubling the agriculture income of 20042 small and marginal farmers living in 101 villages in Gilaula and Sirsiya blocks of Nepal bordering Shravasti district. The later phase of the project titled as 'Climate Smart Agriculture & Livestock' (CSAL) phased out in September, 2024.

¹ Regd. Office: Indra Colony, 12 Quarter, Udaipur Road, Jawaja – 305 922 (Beawar, Raj.)

² Regd. Office: Harivanshpur, Sidhwari, Pharenda, Mahrajganj -273 155(UP)

The major focus has been on promotion of high value crops (HVCs) and pulses. Adoption of ground nut cultivation in Zaid season has emerged as source of additional agriculture income in summer when no crop cultivation was usually taken up by the farmers in past. With the enhanced coverage of HVCs, the quality seed requirement has also increased. Thus, the FPC will have the potentials for promoting seed production and multiplication for these high value crops. In addition to input supplies, the output marketing linkage has started evolving on increasing surplus at farmers' level. There has been significant rise in area coverage for HVCs as denoted in the table appended below;

Name of HVC	Y-1		Y-2		Y-3		Y-4		Y-5	
	Farmers	Area in acre								
Potato	862	53.4	1278	102.3	4435	390.1	5346	555	5337	911.7
Onion	1325	199	1353	114.9	3655	319.7	5110	730	5107	937.0
Ground-nut			105	14.7	766	120.4	1946	230	2892	593.3
Machan	178	12.05	607	63.5	543	57	609	61	889	102.3

During the project period, a supportive eco-system could be developed engaging various development players; Syngenta Foundation, CInI, Kamakhya Agri-tech, NABKISAN, Women on Wings, Bayer, Farms.IO, Gyandhara, Khyeti Pvt. Ltd., Social Alpha, ITC Limited, Govt. line-departments etc. working in agriculture sector. In this process, total 2775 households (an outfit of GDS promoted FPC 'LAPCL' and network of 72 *agriculture entrepreneurs (AEs)* for agri-business promotion in the interest of farmers to enhance their gains. The project was in success with the achievement of doubling the income of 87.9% of the total covered farmers by the end of the project. The first six months of FY 2024-25 were utilised mainly for project consolidation and its closure. Simultaneous

efforts continued to accord approval for next phase of the project from Tata Trusts.

In January, 2025, GDS took up implementation of second phase of Tata Trusts supported **Sujalam Sufalam Initiative (SSI-II project)** with the same demographic and geographic coverage. The

sustainable community support & established eco-system, agri-interventions (solar pumps, net-houses, farm implements etc.) & business channels etc. were the existing strengths to move ahead for project implementation. The broad goal of SSI-II Project is to sustain the doubled income of farmers and ensure linkage of 3000 new households with LAPCL by the end of year 2027. As first step, the Project establishment process could be initiated in March, 2025 for deployment of workforce and strategize for field implementation.

-  **Diversified agriculture development in aspirational block of Jamunaha (Shravasti)** - Enhancing farmers' income by 50% over their baseline in beginning is the broad goal of APPI supported 'Strengthening livelihood through agriculture development' in Jamunaha block of Shravasti district. During Y-2, project covers 8500 farmers in 40 villages of this aspirational block. An integrated approach to promote agriculture, livestock and entitlement realisation through govt. social welfare schemes was adopted. Based on the experiences of Tata Trusts supported

agriculture focused projects, various interventions confined with the above approach were taken up during 2nd year of project implementation.

In all, 802 demonstrations were held for high value crops; potato, onion & groundnut including 59 demo plots for pulses. Based on the findings of 100 soil testing samples, capacity building of farmers was done to reduce soil health deterioration. Construction of vermi-compost, dhaincha cultivation and other re-generative agriculture practices were promoted for soil health improvement. Two batches each having 5 village volunteers underwent para-vet technical training at BAIF, Pratapgarh district (UP) and those trained in 1st batch started providing basic health care services including AI to bovine animals in their cluster villages. The expertise of 'Goat Trust, Lucknow' was utilised for skill-based training to Pashu Sakhis to create a network of 20 women service providers for goat health care services in their cluster villages. Meanwhile, health care services were provided to bovine animals and goats through organising health camps in collaboration with govt. veterinary hospital, Jamunaha. Entitlement realisation through registration on govt. portals for various welfare schemes including social pension schemes, DBT, subsidies, relief etc. was taken up seeking support from local Jan Suvidha Kendra and CD block development/district authorities favouring target eligible farming households.

 **ITC supported agriculture promotion in Devipatan and Jhansi divisions of UP** – Beneath the joint collaborative programme partnership, ITC supported projects are implemented at separate locations with diverse geographic contexts of UP being the Nepal bordering floodplains of eastern UP and semi-arid region of Lalitpur district in Bundelkhand, U.P.

In Lalitpur, the project covered 4084 farming households living in 40 villages of 36 GPs of Birdha block. Promoting climate impact resilient agriculture systems through developing project area context-specific packages of climate-smart technologies and practices, and upscaling them for wider application was one of the key objectives of the project. Due to poor water holding capacity and minimal carbon, the soil fertility is deteriorated considerably challenging agriculture development in this semi-arid area. The task was taken up seriously to adopt organic preparations to be used for crop protection and growth. Made from biowaste of fruit peels, Fasal Amrit was demonstrated as an organic super absorbent polymer in 60 plots of Kharif crops and 90 plots of Rabi crops (each plot of 0.5 acre) to promote cereals and pulses grown in the area. In all, 263 FFS were organised to motivate farmers for adoption of context specific crop PoPs at major crop stages.

In addition, GDS promoted climate resilient agriculture practices in 3 Nepal bordering aspirational districts; Balrampur, Bahraich and Shravasti of eastern UP in support with ITC Ltd. DSR method of paddy sowing was adopted by 6342 farmers and line-sowing method for Rabi crops by 26167 farmers in Bahraich district. 11739 farmers participated in 460 FFS to learn and practice the crop PoPs at various crop stages. Soil quality assessment study for conservation agriculture program through soil sample analysis and field survey was conducted by Ingrain Technologies in 3 districts of UP; Bahraich being one of them. The study focused to assess the impact of DSR and Zero-tillage methods on soil health. In addition, study and documentation of water saving, GHG saving and crop economics in DSR was conducted in the same districts. Further, 9927 farmers were linked to get benefit of various government schemes under DBT, subsidies etc. The closure workshops were organised at Balrampur and Shravasti districts share transfer the experiences with mainstreams for sustainable action on withdrawal of the programme from these two districts.

 **Soil health improvement through organic farming practices in Palia Kalan (UP)** – Supported by IUCN, New Delhi, TROSA project covers 13493 households in 25 villages spread over 22 GPs of Palia Kalan & Nighasan blocks of Kheri district and Puranpur block of Pilibhit districts.

Incorporating the organic farming practices and recommendations from the agriculture scientists, the climate resilient crop PoPs were developed for paddy, wheat and mustard crops by GDS team as complimentary under Project. Based on the above crop PoPs, paddy crop demonstrations were held in 24 acres of land by 75 farmers, wheat and mustard crop demonstration in 40 acres by 103 farmers. For soil health improvement, cover crop demonstrations took place in 30 plots to turn the mixed crops into the soil after 45-50 days of sowing. The farmers seemed interested to upscale the practice of cover crop sowing in future. In a field day program, on-site visit was arranged for farmers from other villages, river basin partners, agriculture scientists and others to share the learning by the demonstrating farmers.

3.3 Livestock based livelihood promotion

Extracted from the experiences that GDS gained through implementing multiple projects at its various locations in all 3 states; UP, Bihar and Rajasthan, the livestock-based livelihood promotion proceeded among approx. 3000 bovine and small ruminant keepers (35% of the total coverage) in Jamunaha block of Shravasti district through SLAD Project being implemented with the direct support from AAPI Pvt. Ltd. for last two years. The block is facilitated with limited veterinary health service facility that is only one veterinary hospital at block level and access to animal health care services is meagre in the villages. To respond with the local needs, initiatives were taken to provide quality basic health care services for bovine animals and goats.

A network of 11 para-vets and 22 Pashu Sakhis (all being local volunteers) could be established. The technical training to all para-vets was conducted through utilising the expertise of BAIF, Pratapgarh (UP) and the Pashu Sakhis were trained by 'The Goat Trust' Lucknow in two batches. 69 awareness meetings and trainings were organised for animal keepers and 10 GRGs on management of animal shed cleaning,



cleanness of menzer and also benefits of AI and importance of vaccination and deworming. Quality health care services were provided to 1485 bovine animals and 720 goats through organising 20 health camps in 18 villages. Additionally, 7 more camps could be organised in coordination with local veterinary hospital and private

service providers. The central livestock service unit established during Y-1 has, now, become functional engaging the para-vets and Pashu Sakhis.

In Jawaja (Beawar, Rajasthan), goat rearing is one of major livelihood option for the households which male members have migrated for earning bread to their families and women opted for goat rearing to generate revenue to meet their expenses. For the first time, the Pashu Sakhi model & goat FFS module emerged at this GDS location. 369 goat rearers got vaccination and de-worming for their 1537 goats through these Pashu Sakhis.

3.4 Skill based livelihoods

Encompassing vocational skills for earning livelihood by the women for their families, GDS in collaboration with Usha International started village level centres for developing sewing skills in village women during previous years in Shravasti & Bahraich districts. On completion of these trainings, training-

cum-production centres (TCPCs) were started by GDS with the support of Usha International in Shravasti district. For strengthening grass-root ownership, self-help groups (SHGs), village-level entrepreneurs, and local women artisans were engaged. It aimed at empowering women with skills, infrastructure support and entrepreneurial behaviour for sustainable livelihood. 50 trained and skilled women were capacitated to run 2 TCPCs in Shravasti with market linkage facilitation.

22 Pashu Sakhis (all of them being women) trained for providing goat basic health care services to goat rearing households under SLAD project in Jamunaha block of Shravasti started their work and they charge for their services in their villages and surroundings. Further, 55 agriculture entrepreneurs (20 of them were women) capacitated to hold agri-business in their respective villages and earn an additional income to their families. They earned about Rs. 2000-3000/- per month.

3.5 Water conservation & management

Aiming at enhancing availability of water for agriculture use to maintain soil moisture, the construction and renovation of village water bodies continued in support with ITC Limited, Kolkata covering 40 villages

in Birdha block of Lalitpur district in Bundelkhand region and Bahraich in Devipatan division of eastern Uttar Pradesh. In Lalitpur, construction of loose boulders took place at 4 sites, gabion construction at 31 sites, ponds' renovation at 4 sites, check dam at 3 sites and earthen dam at one site realising the community in-kind contribution. The water conservation through these water bodies in this semi-arid region



helped in enabling the use of fallow land for crop cultivation, one time irrigation saving through moisture retaining, area enhancement of summer pulses and enriching soil fertility for productivity enhancement. Earlier, the water conservation-based interventions were taken up in support with Tata Trusts which impacted the catchment area with positive results and encouraged to farmers for their active involvement in this phase also. For effective management of above water bodies to objectively and judiciously use them, 6 water user groups (WUGs) represented by local community members were also organised. In Shivpur and Risia blocks of Bahraich district, renovation of 7 village ponds was got done for rising of water level and water storage to be used for agriculture and animals during summer season.

Under Trans Boundary Rivers of South Asia (Sharda Basin) Project being implemented in Palia Kalan &



Nighasan blocks of Nepal bordering Lakhimpur Kheri and Puranpur block of Pilibhit district of Uttar Pradesh with the support of IUCN, New Delhi, 13493 households in 25 villages of both the districts are covered. Strengthening leadership of civil society,

especially women, indigenous people and youth to influence government and private sectors on water

governance across and between the Trans boundary GBM basin is the key purpose of the project. For water quality monitoring 100 volunteers from citizen science groups from all project villages were trained to use water testing kit and obtain results for advocacy and monitoring. Based on the water quality test results, advocacy was held with block and district level government officials and people's representatives to influence the local level policies. All 25 village water management committees (VWMCs) with 500 members more than 80% of them being women continued their action in their respective village. Training programmes were organised for these CIs. On March 22, 2025 World Water Day was observed with the huge involvement of community to create awareness through IEC activities including meetings, rallies, pledge taking etc. at various places.

3.6 Community response system for DRR

Flood occurrence is a perennial disaster in *terai region* mainly affecting the catchment area of Sharda River flowing through Lakhimpur Kheri and Pilibhit districts during monsoon. It devastates the agriculture and affects the normalcy of lives of people and animals living in the area. Under TROSA project community-based response system for DRR was brought in existence and capacitated to cope with the situation through pre-preparedness and timely action. 25 task force units; one in each village, were organised involving village volunteers. Pre-Flood Information System Working Group remained active in close coordination with VWMCs and early warning task forces in the villages.

3.7 New initiative for nutrition promotion

Based on its past experience gained from its erstwhile '*TARINA*' Project implemented in Pharenda block of Mahrajganj district, GDS imbibed the idea to integrate it with organisational five-year strategic plan as core theme. These experiences were extracted from nutrition promotion through agriculture pathway. Encouraged by the above project, a new project proposal "*Addressing undernutrition among children, pregnant and lactating women in select blocks of four districts of eastern Uttar Pradesh through community engagement*" was submitted to and approved from from Tata Trusts, Mumbai in March, 2025 for a period of 39 months starting from march, 2025. Under this project, the coverage of anganwadi centres (AWCs) functioning in two blocks; Gilaula and Sirsiya of Shravasti district is adopted for implementation. On getting the approval, the initial phase started with strategizing for completing project establishment, recruitment & deployment of workforce and other preliminary tasks for quick opening of the project. The project is partnered with two other organisations; PANI and SAATHI network at Balrampur, Siddharthnagar and Ambedkar Nagar districts in UP state. With the induction of this new project, GDS could exploit the new opportunity to enter into health sector for creating awareness and providing health referral services focusing towards undernutrition to target community.

3.8 Gender mainstreaming

GDS has, always, been in strong favour of practicing *gender just approach* to avoid any discrimination in equal access to opportunities, resources and decision-making particularly for women in its programmes. It was long back in year 2002, the organisation came with its comprehensive gender policy in documented form safeguarding women from any act of depriving them from their development and growth in the system. Gender equality lies at the crux of above policy and the provisions to be reinforced in its true spirit across the organisational proceedings. Despite all program areas covered by the organisation, gender equality approach stands as a core value and cross cutting theme of the organisation. Last year, a new PoSH policy of GDS was enunciated in the light of 'The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition & Redressal) Act 2013 of Gol with a provision of 4-member Internal Committee replacing the previous ASH Committee to ensure its commitment for providing safe workplace as a right for women. The gender policy is integrated with five-year strategic plan of GDS.

In July, 2024, a context specific gender mainstreaming framework evolved utilising the expertise from internal and external sources as well to focus the gender mainstreaming in agriculture at APPI supported SLAD Project in Jamunaha block of Shrivasti district. To go with, initial training was imparted for the core team of the project followed by repeated sessions for 40 CRPs being the local volunteers engaged in agriculture promotion in their respective villages during 6 months. One of the female staff members was nominated as gender focal point person to promote the gender mainstreaming initiatives at locale. She along with one other staff member was deputed to participate a five-day training on 'gender responsive program management' at VISTHAR, Bangalore. For enabling community discourse on gender equality, networks of 19 women gender catalysts at Jamunaha and 9 gender catalysts at CSAL Project area were created and their capacity building was done through organising fresher/refresher training courses and exposures.

In Jawaja (Beawar, raj.), three-day training on gender mainstreaming was held on May 7-9, 2025 at Beawar by Suraj mahila mahasangh utilising the expertise of GDS consultant to sensitize its women members about gender equality, prevailing gender discriminatory practices, gender justice etc. in local context. 30 women members participated in this training. As a follow-up action, the assessment of existing gender mainstreaming status in community institutions and villages was been planned.

Under a new initiative taken up by the organisation, the registration of 229 needy girl students from disadvantaged backgrounds, living in Shrivasti and Bahraich districts, was done to benefit them with Azim Premji Foundation scholarship 'An initiative to support girl students to pursue their college education'. Out of above, only 46 girl students got success to win the scholarship and received Rs. 30,000/- by each of them through bank transfer as scholarship to pursue their college education. Thus, the total scholarship amounting Rs. 13,80,000/- was mobilised for girl education. This was a good monetary support for their families to stand with their girl child for higher education.



3.9 Climate change resilience

Climate change stands as one of the major global concerns impacting the lives on earth. Decades after decades, it is becoming more challenging for survival of human being and needs to be addressed by all responsible for future generation. Like others, GDS, as a development organisation, perceives its responsibility to address this burning issue in all its programmes in a strategized manner. Climate change has been incorporated as cross-cutting theme in the current five-year strategic plan of the organisation. GDS feels to have the holistic strategies for mitigation and adaptation. Currently, these strategies are adopted across the GDS field implementation particularly for promoting agriculture development with small and marginal farmers.

- *Crop diversification* – Almost 30-35% farmers adopted pulse cultivation. Despite water saving it helped in maintaining soil fertility also. The intercropping of pigeon pea, groundnut, maize, black & green gram, lentil and mustard was done in the area.

- *Technologies & practices* - In Baharaich alone, 6342 farmers adopted DSR method of paddy sowing. Using clean energy through 68 solar irrigation pumps continued at Shravasti. In addition, 3 solar pump units each with 5 hp capacity were installed by ITC Ltd. supported agriculture project of GDS at Birdha block of Lalitpur district. The day-to-day management of these units is taken care of by 3 agri-business centres; each for one solar pump to realise rent from farmers and use in agri-business promotion by the centres. In all, 35-40 farmers are benefitted by these units. The automated weather station (AWS) started earlier with UNDP support at Jawaja (Beawar, Raj.), continued its services to provide weather data to nearest weather station run by the government. Further, 54 new solar pumps were installed with government support under KUSUM schemes at Bahraich & Lalitpur locations to prevent carbon emission and drudgery. In most of the cases, now, the women can easily handle these solar pumps for irrigating the crops.
- *Cover crops in summer season* – Learnt during the staff exposure visit to Aandhra Pradesh in year 2023, GDS has, now, started motivating farmers for practicing cover crops cultivation during lean period in summer season to maintain soil health. During 2024-25, the demonstration of cover crop cultivation was, initially, done with 80 farmers in Lalitpur and 30 farmers under TROSA-II project in Lakhimpur Kheri district, most likely to be upscaled in future. Mix seeds of 8-10 crops were used for sowing in the demo plots.
- The construction & renovation of water structures taken up under ITC supported projects at Bahraich and Lalitpur is most meaningful measure for water conservation and usage for agriculture purposes. The benefit to farmers will sustain through these structures of permanent nature.
- *Local advocacy* – Promotion of clean energy, pulse cultivation and other climate adaptive agriculture technologies is always emphasized in all awareness meetings held with the community institutions, farmers and other stakeholders. The water structures were constructed at all sites under intimation to mainstream functionaries and their support.

3.10 Nudging the humanitarian approach

GDS has concern for the community covered under its various projects at field locations particularly during vulnerabilities caused due to natural calamities; floods, draught etc. At the behest of the development agency 'ASK Training & Learning Pvt. Ltd.' GDS joined hands for making quality & cost-effective health services accessible and protect eligible community members from high out of pocket expenditure. For the purpose, the initiative 'Swasth Sankalp' was started in May, 2024 to provide micro health insurance coverage for poor and marginalised households. The initial coverage took place at Jawaja (Beawar, Raj.) and Bahraich district in U.P. In all, 546 individuals were registered through paying premium of Rs. 600/- by each of them almost from the equal number of families. A total settlement of Rs. 1,54,500/- was made by the agency. The major beneficiaries were pregnant women getting claim settlement for deliveries at hospitals.

3.11 Collaboration and convergence

Multi-stakeholder approach, in GDS, is aimed at extracting resources for maximising benefits to target community. In Shravasti, an eco-system of multi-stakeholders was created engaging for their support in defined roles whether technical or financial adding value to the on-going interventions. They are mainstream line departments, private development players, corporates and voluntary agencies like us.

In Shravasti, these stakeholders were explored and involved for quality agri-input supplies, holding new trials & demonstrations, farm mechanisation, technical input, output marketing, livestock development and agri-business promotion. Subsidised installation of solar irrigation pumps & net houses, spraying

machines, crop seeds, procurement of wheat from farmers on fair prices are some such examples. Bank branches of nationalised and scheduled Banks had SHG linkages at Jawaja (Beawar, Raj.). Some of the key stake-holders are as follows;

- ITC Ltd.
- CInI
- Social Alpha
- NABKISAN
- Bayer
- Farms.IO
- Govt. Agriculture Deptt.
- The Goat Trust, Lucknow
- Women on Wings
- Syngenta Foundation
- BAIF, Pratapgarh
- Foragen Seed Pvt. Ltd.
- Bank of Baroda
- Other mainstream line deptt.
- Access Development Services
- Kamakhya Agri-tech Ltd.
- Kheyti Pvt. Ptd.
- Parle Agri-Product
- Axis Bank
- ICICI Bank
- Govt. Veterinary Deptt.
- Govt. Horticulture Deptt.

The senior management of GDS continued to have interactions with development agencies all the time for seeking collaborations to mobilise financial and technical support from them. Collaborative meetings were attended by the Executive Director, Programme Director and OD Manager in person and online also with the various renowned developed agencies having their offices at national and state level. The ED, GDS represents as one the directors of INAFI India, a development network of NGOs and as President of NALANDA, a Lucknow based NGO dedicated for education promotion in the poor & underprivileged community.

Efforts continued seeking convergence with various schemes and programmes of above stakeholders particularly from mainstreams' line department through DBT subsidies, relief, exemption etc. Realising community contribution in almost all the field interventions is practiced as a step towards enabling community ownership on sustained basis. It benefits to involve more beneficiaries claiming their active participation. The total convergence worth Rs. 6,38,08,799/- from all sources was mobilised during the reporting period.

3.12 Organisation Development initiatives

On cessation of EdelGive Foundation supported GROW Project, GDS continued its OD processes utilising its own resources. The recruitment process for new entrants was adequately completed in case of Tata Trusts supported new projects at Shravasti. AGM and EC meetings were timely held. The annual report of GDS for FY 2023-24 was prepared and adopted in AGM. The progress review and planning process was adopted for all on-going projects on quarterly basis. The staff members working as part-time employee in GROW project, were brought back to their main project adjusting with necessary adjustment of their remuneration. The draft policy documents of GDS, revised under GROW Project, were finalised for use in the system. As a good organisational practice, GDS Working Group (GWG) involving senior management staff was formed to discuss and resolve the organisational issues within the organisation. On-line GWG meetings were conducted on monthly basis to strategize for future implementation. The compliance of decisions taken by the GWG was emphasized upon and follow-ups made regularly.

To enable GDS teams to understand the principles, practices and importance of SBCC to design & develop relevant communication strategies and material to deliver effectively towards improvement in the quality of program execution, 4-day training on social & behaviour change communication (SBCC) was organised at SSK, Lucknow on September 23-26, 2024 and it was participated by 42 GDS staff members

across the field locations & H.O., Lucknow. Based on individual performance of GDS staff, 5 staff members were selected as *best performing employee of GDS* for the year 2024-25 and they were felicitated to inspire others in the organisation for healthy competition.

GDS encourages the farmers to adopt natural farming practices for crop cultivation through its agriculture focused projects being implemented at various field locations. Conceptual understanding and exposures to successful models was felt necessary for senior management staff members for enriching knowledge and skills to promote natural farming. 5-member team of senior staff members of GDS happened to learn about natural farming at Patanjali Research Foundation, Haridwar (UK) on September 18-20, 2025.



4. CHANGE STORIES

Change story #01: She contributed and earned

Earning a fair net income of Rs. 13,300/- through sale of quality seed of ground nut grown in summer season to FPC had been highly satisfying and encouraging for Mrs. Phoolmati during lean agriculture period in summer season. In Shravasti, one of the aspirational districts of Devipatan division in eastern Uttar Pradesh, no crop cultivation is usually taken up by most of the farmers in summer season. This was for the first time that Mrs. Phoolmati was motivated by CSAL Project team of GDS for the seed production in her field area of 0.3 acres. She was supplied with breeder seed of TGA37A variety of ground nut seed procured from BARC, Mumbai through facilitation by Tata Trusts. Under the technical guidance of project field team and LAPCL (GDS promoted FPC being the local supplier of crop seeds) at all crop stages, she got crop yield of 3 quintals which was sold to FPC for seed multiplication. It benefitted in two ways, firstly for fetching fair price of produce by Mrs. Phoolmati and secondly availability of quality seed for multiplication in the area.

Mrs. Phoolmati and her 5-members family lives in Chilhariya village of Sirsiya block and she is a marginal farmer with land holding of 2 acres only. Earlier, she used to grow ground nut only in Kharif season using the locally available poor-quality seed impacting the low yield and income. Meanwhile, she participated in the crop focused trainings organized by the project and got opportunity of exposure visit to learn about the improved seed production practices. The quality seed production demonstrated by her paved the way for other farmers in her village and surroundings to go with the intervention for upscaling as observed by the project team. Now, LAPCL (FPC) has decided to develop the cluster for seed multiplication in future making it more beneficial to small and marginal farmers and ensuring availability of quality ground nut seed at locale.



Change story # 02: Enhancing water availability in semi-arid Bundelkhand (UP)

Betel farming has been a significant agriculture activity to earn livelihood by the farmers in some the villages blessed with having water bodies in Birdha block of Lalitpur district. Over the period of time, the arising water scarcity compelled many of them to leave or reduce the betel farming and they had no option to migrate for earning bread for their family. The situation worsened even to grow foodgrains to maintain food security for their families. During its long presence in the area, GDS, always, perceived this problem very well. Not only in Lalitpur but the rural communities and agriculture are highly impacted due water scarcity in semi-arid Bundelkhand region of Uttar Pradesh. Over the years, GDS has been in process to strengthen agriculture-based livelihoods and capacitating community institutions for collective approach in selected villages of the block and its surroundings. Keeping in view the situation, GDS initiated some soil and water conservation interventions in support with Tata Trusts, Mumbai long back in year 2015-16 covering 693 plots in 9 villages in Birdha block.

Encouraged with the impact, GDS stepped into the renovation of existing water bodies and construction of new water structures at selected sites with the support of ITC Limited, Kolkata in year 2024 and 2025.



Bela Talab, one of the large village ponds spread over 7 acres of land area in Pali village panchayat of Birdha block was identified for renovation. For collective response and action Neelkanth Water User Group of farmers was organized. Initially, a check dam was constructed at drainage point for water storage. Next to this, deepening of this pond was done. Now, the water availability has remarkably improved for crop irrigation under the command area of 125 acres. The farmers, earlier engaged in betel farming, seemed excited to resume their work for better

gains. Not only this, they decided to increase the wheat sown area to 20 acres and more. The head of village panchayat while in discussion proposed for chestnut growing and develop fisheries shortly. Now the farmers feel that this was a good transformative action for water conservation directly impacting the livelihood of many families having their cultivable land within the catchment of the above pond. The initiatives to construct gabions, loose boulders, check & earthen dams etc., jointly taken by GDS and ITC for water conservation to benefit hundreds of farmers at other sites also, are well taken by the local farmers with their full support and contribution during last two years.

Change story # 03: Change towards sustainable livestock services

Availing livestock basic health care services at their doorstep utilizing local expertise was the first-time event that took place in village Lal Bojha of Jamunaha block in Shravasti district (UP). Jamunaha is one of the aspirational blocks in the state. The government veterinary services are quite inadequate in this Nepal bordering floodplain area emerging as one of the key challenges being faced by the animal keeping farming households. Considering the fact, GDS started its SLAD project in support with APPI Pvt. Ltd. in year 2023 focusing towards interventions on agriculture development and livestock basic health care management. Based on its past experiences, it was decided to arrange skill-based training to a batch of 5 local volunteers from the Project area utilizing the expertise of BAIF training centre at Raniganj in

Pratapgarh district (UP) and Mr. Vikas Tiwari was one of these trainee volunteers identified from Lal Bojha village. It was observed that 65% of the farming households were having bovine animals and goats in this village and availability of health services to their bovine animals emerged the high felt need of the village.

Vikas underwent one month long technical training of para-vet followed by another 2 months practical training in the field. However, he further continued to sharpen skills providing cost-to-cost basis health services to establish his credibility for providing quality health care services to bovine animals in the community. Once satisfied with his performance, Vikas started to charge for his bovine animal health



care services to earn income for his family. Within a period of 2 months at this early stage, he could earn a net income of Rs. 9, 000/- (average Rs. 4,500/- month) by providing services to 65 animals in 57 animal keeping families at their doorstep. The basic health/ services included AI, vaccination, de-worming and other basic health care services. Initially, Vikas Tiwari identified a cluster of 10 project villages to provide livestock health care services. It enabled non-farm income to his family on one hand and sustainable doorstep easy service delivery to animal keepers on the other. Like him, the other trained para-vets have also started providing services at their own in their respective cluster of villages. The

network of para-vets, thus created under the project, would continue providing services even without any external support in future ensuring the sustainable and successful model in livestock management within and around the project area.

5. DONOR RECOGNITION

With deep sense of gratitude, GDS acknowledges the generous support and valuable guidance provided by all its renowned funding agencies enabling to strive for impacting the lives of its target community; poor, underprivileged particularly women, towards betterment and quality transformation. The organises wishes to name some of these supporting agencies as follows;

- ❖ *Tata Trusts, Mumbai*
- ❖ *IUCN, New Delhi*
- ❖ *Oxfam Novib, Netherland*
- ❖ *CRS, New Delhi*
- ❖ *Usha International Ltd.*
- ❖ *ITC Limited, Kolkata*
- ❖ *APPI Pvt. Ltd., Bengaluru*
- ❖ *UNDP, New Delhi*
- ❖ *CInI (Sustain Plus platform)*

6. ACCOLADES & AWARDS

GDS was awarded with *certificate of appreciation* by EdelGive Foundation, Mumbai for having successful programme partnership to implement GROW Project for organisational development. GDS was one of the 100 NGOs across the country to implement the Project in Uttar Pradesh. Further, the long-term partnership with renowned funding agencies and its representation in NGO networks including national level organisations resembles sectoral recognition to GDS.



7. APPENDICES

7.1 Governance and team

GDS is privileged with having well experienced volunteers of high reputation in social & development sectors in its 'General Body and Executive Council' for effective governance and guidance contributing for organisational growth and programmatic relevance. In its annual GB meeting (AGM) held every year, significant strategic decisions are taken to enhance organisational productivity, futuristic advancement and better collaborative proceedings in the interest of community. The GDS volunteers representing in the GB & EC are enlisted as follows;

S. No.	Name	Brief Background
1.	Ms. Padmaja Nair, Lucknow President*	Masters in Economics with a Diploma in planning and management from the School of Public Policy, University of Birmingham, she has over 25 years' experience in the social development sector in program and project planning, Water resources development & urban issues, institutional development, capacity building and gender.
2.	Mr. Probir Bose Lucknow Vice President*	Graduate in Commerce from St. Xavier College, Kolkata, has served for 22 years in the corporate business sector and over 20 years in GDS as Program Director. His expertise has been organization development and business cluster development through Business Development Services.
3.	Mr. S. K. Dwivedi Lucknow Secretary*	A master in Economics and Rural Development, he has, previously, served with technical institutions and NGOs for 11 years before joining GDS in 1996. Mr. Dwivedi has vast experience of a variety of income generation and livelihood programs as a strategist, implementer and a trainer.
4.	Mr. Amitabh Mishra Lucknow Treasurer*	MA in Political Science from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi and has seven years teaching and research experience before joining GDS in 1996. He has substantial understanding of issues relating to women's empowerment, livelihoods and community development. Presently he is Program Director associated with various field projects in GDS.
5.	Ms. Nishi Mehrotra Lucknow Member	Senior Development professional with more than 30 years' experience in the field of women's rights and child education issues. She is associated with several national and international development agencies and in various committees. She has held key positions as State Project Director in 'Mahila Samakhya', with BETI Foundation and SHPHP GTZ, New Delhi.
6.	Dr. Biswajit Sen, Jaipur, Member	Dr. Sen is well known development professional on livelihoods of poor. He was among the promoters of Pradan, GDS, Nalanda and several other voluntary initiatives. He also worked in World Bank on Livelihoods.
7.	Dr. B. K. Joshi Dehradun Member	Former Director of Giri Institute for Economic Studies Lucknow and Vice Chancellor of Kumaon University and well-known academician. He has been an evaluator and consultant to UNICEF and other education programs in India and overseas.
8.	Mr. M. S. Singh Lucknow, Member	Experienced Rural Development professional with expertise in rural marketing and agriculture development. Has been associated with Kribhco Fertilisers Ltd. and has fair understanding of economics related to agriculture.

*Represents in the Executive Committee of GDS also.

AGM & EC meetings

The last AGM was held on September 14, 2025 to discuss the important agenda items. Dr. Biswajit Sen, one of GDS founder members of GDS also participated in the meeting in person and provided his valuable input for future proceedings of the organisation. Further, 4-member Executive Committee of GDS conducted its bi-annual meeting on April 27 and September 7, 2024 to discuss the agenda items focused towards important action to be taken for effective execution.

With profound grief and sorrow, GDS pays tribute and honour for the valuable contribution made by Dr. C. S. Verma, one of the GB members who passed away on 11/10/2024.

GDS workforce

GDS had 42 full time employees contributing to the particular project assigned to them and 2 part time employees for their proportionate working time to more than one project. However, the recruitment process was in progress to deploy additional workforce for new projects sanctioned in March, 2025 and with the induction of new entrants, the size of workforce would almost be doubled. In addition, total 175 community/village resource persons (CRPs/VRPs) were voluntarily contributing to the filed implementation at village and cluster level.

7.2 Major projects implemented in FY 2024-25

After closure of Tata Trusts supported CSAL Project at Shravasti, it was really challenging to maintain the workforce for future due to *sine die* approval from funding agency for next phase. The organisation utilised its cushion fund to somehow keep engaging the key personnel involved in the process of getting approval for the project. However, approval for 2 new projects was received from Tata Trusts for implementation at Shravasti in March, 2025. The projects implemented in FY 2024-25 are enlisted below;

Title	Supported by
Climate smart agriculture & livestock (CSAL) project, Shravasti (closed on September 30, 2024)	Tata Trusts (TEDT) , Mumbai
Sujalam Sufalam Initiative Phase II - Sustaining agriculture-based livelihood services to small and marginal farmers in floodplains of Shravasti, UP(New project started w.e.f. 1 st Jan'25)	Tata Trusts (SDTT), Mumbai
Strengthening livelihood through agriculture development (SLAD), Jamunaha	Azim Premji Philanthropic Initiatives (APPI) Pvt. Ltd., Bengaluru
Trans-boundary rivers of south Asia (Sharda basin)- TROSA-2	IUCN, Delhi
Promoting climate smart agriculture systems among small and marginal farmer of Bahraich District & consolidation of the aspirational district programme of Balrampur & Shravasti District (Uttar Pradesh), 2024-25	ITC Limited, Kolkata
Capacity Promoting Climate Smart Villages in Lalitpur, UP 2024-25	ITC Limited, Kolkata
GROW Project for Grameen Development Services (Closed on June 30, 2024)	EdelGive Foundation, Mumbai
Addressing under-nutrition among children, pregnant and lactating women in select blocks of four districts of eastern Uttar Pradesh through community engagement. (New project started in Mar'25)	Tata Trusts (SDTT), Mumbai
Renewal energy-based Usha SIDBI-TPCDT & TPRMG Training cum Production Centre at Shravasti" (Closed in June, 2025)	Usha International

8. GDS CONTACT INFORMATION

Head Office, Lucknow (UP)	
<p>Grameen Development Services B 1/59, Behind Kendranchal Colony, Sector-K, Aliganj, Lucknow- 226 024, UP Phone: 0522 – 4075891, Email: ho@gds.org.in; info@gds.org.in Website: www.gdsindia.ngo Contact Person: Mr. S. K. Dwivedi, Executive Director, Mobile No.: 094151 10759</p>	
Project Locations and Offices	
<p>Shravasti, Uttar Pradesh Grameen Development Services Keshav Nagar, Pure Khari, Bhinga, Shravasti- 271831 (U.P.) <i>Contact person: Mr. Ravikant Upadhyay</i> <i>Mob. No.: +91 97943 82098) /</i> <i>Mr. B. N. Tiwari (Mob. No. +91 79051 03757)</i></p>	<p>Lalitpur, Uttar Pradesh Grameen Development Services Govind Sagar Dam Road, 42, Azadpura, Lalitpur (U.P.) <i>Contact person: Mr. Ashok Kumar</i> <i>Mob. No.: +91 77668 14273</i></p>
<p>Shravasti, Uttar Pradesh Grameen Development Services Near Tehsil, Village Ganeshpur, Jamunakala, Shravasti- 271 803 (UP) <i>Contact person: Mr. S.H.H. Abidi</i> <i>Mob. No.: +91 73554 66975</i></p>	<p>Lakhimpur Kheri, Uttar Pradesh Grameen Development Services 05, Mohalla Indra Nagar, Palia Kalan, Kheri, -262902 (U.P.) <i>Contact person: Mr. O. P. Rai</i> <i>Mob. No.: +91 63931 68944</i></p>
<p>Bahraich, Uttar Pradesh Grameen Development Services Mohalla Dhawalipurwa, Near-KDC, Bahraich- 271 801 (U.P.) <i>Contact person: Mr. N. D. Pandey</i> <i>Mob. No.: +91 96956 35017</i></p>	<p>Ajmer, Rajasthan Grameen Development Services Indra Colony, 12 Quater, NH-8, Udaipur Road, Jawaja Distt. - Beawar- 305 922 (Rajasthan) <i>Contact person: Mr. Shivraj Vaishnav</i> <i>Mob. No.: +91 70143 01663</i></p>