



**Watershed Organisation Trust
(WOTR)**





WOTR's Goal

To contribute to poverty reduction and improvement in the quality of life of rural communities in a manner that is up-scalable and replicable.

The Underlying Philosophy

Land degradation and water scarcity are the most intense and commonly felt needs of villagers, especially in rain-dependent regions. These two critical issues have the potential to bring diverse groups of people together and unlock the creative forces that can mobilize communities to address their developmental deficits. Community-led restoration of the local environment through rainwater harvesting, on a watershed basis, makes development and sustainability possible. It also reduces vulnerability, builds community-wide capacities to adapt to climate change and contributes to its mitigation.

Our Vision

Communities, especially the poor within, are empowered to live in dignity and secure their livelihood in sustainable eco-systems.

Our Mission

To provide committed development support that motivates, energizes, and empowers individuals, groups, communities and other organizations to undertake integrated eco-systems development for enhancement of well-being on a sustainable basis.



A Brief Background of WOTR

The Watershed Organisation Trust (WOTR), an NGO, was established in India in 1993 to undertake poverty reduction in resource-fragile and rain-fed regions through integrated watershed development and environmentally sustainable livelihood activities.

WOTR's initial mandate, which grew out of the context of the Indo-German Watershed Development Program in Maharashtra, was to create a "people's movement for watershed development" and develop the capacities of various stakeholders to support and implement such a large scale effort.

As WOTR's engagement with villagers and various stakeholders deepened, the range of challenges these actors faced led WOTR to broaden its suite of services, acquire new competencies and enter new sectors of development. As some of these services matured, WOTR devolved them into 2 separate institutions, namely, the Sampada Trust (ST) and the Sanjeevani Institute of Empowerment and Development (SIED).

Location and Outreach

WOTR has a physical presence, at present, in 4 states - Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.

Its corporate headquarters is at Pune and its operational headquarters, at Ahmednagar in Maharashtra.

WOTR has established 8 Regional Resource Centers (RRCs) in order to support and coordinate projects and various actors in these states.

To facilitate up-scaling, replication of successful approaches and widespread knowledge and skills dissemination, WOTR provides training and capacity building inputs through “sponsored” as well as “demand based” trainings at its **Darewadi Training Centre** and other locations.

Moreover, WOTR also provides on-site consultancy and advisory support to agencies tailored to their specific needs



and requirements, both in India and internationally.

To date, groups from 26 Indian states and from 26 countries have availed of these services.



What the WOTR Group Does: Areas of Engagement

WOTR operates in 4 domains and 14 thematic areas/sectors:

Domains:

The domains WOTR is engaged in are as follows:

- Knowledge Management - Action Research, Best Practices Development, Concept and Pedagogy Development and Information Dissemination.
- Capacity Building, Skills Development, Training, Consultancy and On-site Advisory Support
- Incubation and piloting, exploring emergent and greenfield sectors, mainstreaming and up-scaling successful approaches.
- Policy Engagement and Dialogue, Networking and Linkage Building.



Thematic Areas/ Sectors:

WOTR's competencies, interventions and activities are in the following areas/sectors:

- Participatory and integrated watershed development and sustainable natural resources management
- Integrated water resources management
- Sustainable agriculture and integrated farming systems (agriculture, horticulture, livestock, LEISHA, organic farming, etc)
- Sustainable livelihoods and employment generation.
- Inclusive community mobilization
- Local self government institutional development
- Health and Sanitation
- IT systems applications for all aspects of project management
- Institutional Analysis and Policy Development
- Systems Dynamics and Modeling
- Personal Growth and Organizational Effectiveness
- "Lean Management" (Kaizen Methodology) for productivity enhancement
- Program and Project Management (including Feasibility Studies and Proposal Formulation)
- Action Research and Documentation

The **Sampada Trust (ST)** has taken over WOTR's work in the areas of financial inclusion, SHG promotion, women's empowerment, risk mitigation (insurance) and microenterprise development.

The **Sanjeevani Institute of Empowerment and Development (SIED)** has taken over the watershed development and integrated farming systems projects of WOTR as well as some direct implementation developmental projects.

New Initiatives/Emergent Sectors:

WOTR is engaged in the following areas:

- Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation
- Renewable Energy (for household cooking and lighting)
- Community Based Eco-Tourism
- The School for Sustainable Living and Livelihoods



(SSLL) which provides "skills-for-life" training for rural youth and equips them to be local "climate change adaptation promoters" while securing for themselves sustainable livelihoods locally.

Key Statistics/Activities:

- No. of Partner NGOs / Implementing Agencies: 184
- No of villages involved in: 1459
- No of persons who have availed of training/exposures: 179,000 from 26 Indian states and 26 countries.
- No of NGOs / Implementing Agencies who have availed of capacity building support : over 350
- Number of persons directly impacted through watershed projects (own + partner agencies): Over 8,00,000
- Villages and geographical area of supported watershed projects (own + partner agencies): 1006 villages covering 579,000 ha (1.45 million acres)
- Villages and geographical area of WOTR-facilitated watershed projects: 275 villages covering 170,000 ha (425,000 acres) involving 250,000 people.
- Self help groups promoted: 4340 involving over 58,500 women.
- Over 1,500 social and drudgery reduction activities undertaken benefiting over 70,000 families.
- Over 740 income-generating / livelihood activities implemented benefiting over 9,650 families.
- Health, Child Growth Monitoring and Sanitation Promotion undertaken in 152 villages.

- School Environment and Sanitation Activities undertaken in 104 schools
- 45 Research studies undertaken, 20 books published and 37 films made
- Capacity building support provided to groups in Somaliland, Kenya, Tanzania and Malawi.

Tools, Methodologies and Systems Developed

Some well known and **key tools and systems** developed by WOTR over the years are:

- The **Participatory Operational Pedagogy (POP)** for Capacity Building in the Indo-German Watershed Development Project (IGWDP).

- The **Gender-Oriented Participatory Operational Pedagogy (POP)** for empowering women and mainstreaming them in village bodies (for the IGWDP and other programs).
- **Participatory Net Planning (PNP)** for soil and water conservation, land use planning and land husbandry.
- **Participatory Impact Monitoring (PIM)** for watershed development
- **WASUNDHARA Approach** which seeks to catalyze a strong urge for change and betterment in communities which is inclusive and led by local self governance bodies (PRIs, CBOs, etc).
- **Peer Group Reviews (PGRs)** wherein partner projects assess each other's works and share best practices.
- **Sanyukta Mahila Samitee (SMS)** - Joint Women's Committee – which is the federation of Self Help Groups (SHGs) at the village level.
- **SHG Manual and Record Keeping System**
- A **Strategy and Tools** for empowering Village Panchayats and making them more responsive and accountable to the villagers.
- Various **IT based programs** for large scale planning, monitoring and management of watershed development projects.

In addition to the above, WOTR has also further refined, simplified and localized the following existing tools:

- **Goal Oriented Project Planning (GOPP)**
- **Village Envisioning and Actioning**
- **Rapid Appraisal of Agriculture Knowledge Systems (RAAKS)**



Over the years, the WOTR Group has learnt the art of creating a *shared vision* amongst complex rural communities and groups, thus mobilizing them to undertake activities that benefit the common good. WOTR has also developed pedagogical systems that quickly build up the technical, organizational and managerial capacities of various stakeholders to undertake effective interventions.

These outcomes have been realized multiple times over, with many partners and across varied situations, thus pointing to the scalability and replicability of the methodologies and processes developed.

Awards and Recognition

- WOTR was awarded the **Kyoto World Water Grand Prize 2009** at the 5th World Water Forum, Istanbul Turkey.
- Featured in the **National Geographic Magazine**, November 2009 issue.
- 4 Villages (three of which were facilitated by WOTR and one by a partner NGO) were given the **Nirmal Gram Puruskar** ("Clean Village Award") by Govt. of India in 2008.
- WOTR has been granted accreditation by the University of Poona as an **Institute of Research** in Village Development (2009).
- Awarded the Govt. of Maharashtra's **Vasantrao Naik Award** in 2001 for "outstanding work in soil and water conservation".



Impacts

- “You could never see so much water in our village a couple of years ago. We were dependent on water tankers for our drinking water during the summer months. And it was us women who were the worst affected as it was our responsibility to procure drinking water for our families. Now we have sufficient water not only for household purposes, but also for agriculture.”

(Women SHG members, Bhoire Khurd watershed)

- “The profile of the village has changed totally. Our village has benefited tremendously. The surrounding hills are now covered with trees which we had planted at the beginning. The water level in the wells and the ground water level have increased. The average income of the farmer has increased and this has raised the standard of living. People are now able to eat good food like wheat, rice and dal.”

(Ramaji B. Phad, Sheep owner, Darewadi)

- “WOTR surprisingly, has not taught anything new, but has put all our knowledge and understanding in perspective. This has been the most important learning for us”

(Rumu Sanu Vasave, Vadade village)

- “The visit to Darewadi watershed is highly educative; the interaction with trainees was excellent. The approach of watershed involving mainly five components i.e. Jan, Jal, Janwar, Jameen and Jungle is a very good concept. The work going on here is excellent. I wish them good luck.”

(Dr. Chinna Reddy, Minister for Rural Development, Govt. of A.P, Hyderabad)

- Several approaches and instruments pioneered by WOTR and its partners (such as Participatory Net Planning, Capacity Building as a prior and integral component of watershed development, Ridge-to-Valley approach, public accountability mechanisms, civil society-public sector partnership, etc) have been widely adopted in donor, state and national watershed development projects.
- Secured permission to treat degraded forest lands under the Indo-German Watershed Development Program (IGWDP), Maharashtra. This was a singular achievement as such lands come under the purview of the Forest Conservation Act, which is a very strict Act.

- Co-initiated a major structural initiative, the National Watershed Development Fund (NWDF) which is co-funded and managed by NABARD to replicate the participatory watershed approach across the country.
- Large numbers of NGOs who have availed of WOTR's capacity building services have become effective "replicators" in several states in India.
- The SHG Manual and Record Keeping system has been widely adopted in Maharashtra and other States of India.

Next Steps

WOTR intends undertaking the following in the near future:

- Further up-scaling of existing and new initiatives
- Expanding to other states in India and Africa
- Organizing more South-South-North Knowledge Exchanges (with a focus on Asia and Africa)
- Increasing Training, Capacity Building and Extension support to developing countries
- Providing Consultancy, Program Management and Technical services to agencies in India and other countries.



WOTR Publications

S. No.	Name of the Books	Language	Authors	Publication Year
1	Participatory Net Planning: Reflections and Learnings from the Field	English	Lalita Joshi and Ratna Huirem	2009
2	Panchayat Raj on the Ground Issues in Village-Level Panchayat Raj Operation	English	Ravi Deshpande and Dr. Marcella D'Souza,	2009
3	Making Sanitation A "Clean' Habit: Lessons from A School Sanitation Project	English	Dr. Marcella D'Souza, Alpana Bose and Prashant Tambe	2008
4	Impacts of Watershed Development Project Management through Labour and Machines: A Comparative Study of Two Villages In Maharashtra	English	Sandeep Jadhav, Dnyandeav Talule	2008
5	Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation Systems in Watershed Development	English	Crispino Lobo & Abraham Samuel	2005
6	Upscaling of Successful Experiences in the Mainstream Watershed Programme in India : Mechanisms, Instruments and Policy Considerations	English	WOTR, WASSAN, WDCU, PLF, MANAGE	2005
7	Measurement and Record System for Watershed Activities	English/ Marathi	WOTR	2000
8	Operations Manual – Guidelines For Operations in The Indo-German Watershed Development Programme	English	WOTR	1999
9	Little Drops of Water Make A Mighty Ocean	English/Hindi/Marathi	WOTR	1998
10	The Rain Decided To Help Us	English	Crispino Lobo and Gudrun Kochendorfer-Lucius	1995

WOTR Films

No.	Films	DVD/VCD	Language
1	Our School On The Watershed	VCD	English and Hindi
2	Enkindled Hope	VCD	English and Hindi
3	Vaijubilbulgaon - A Story Of Transformation	VCD	English
4	Charaibandi	VCD	English and Hindi
5	Garamsur - Tale Of An Unknown Village	VCD	English
6	Dongaon - U-Turn To Fortune	VCD	English
7	Shramadaan	VCD	English and Hindi
8	Relearning From Reality	VCD	English
9	Experiences Of Village Watershed Committees In Maharashtra	VCD	English
10	Ridge To Valley	VCD	English and Hindi
11	Water Gives Life	VCD	English
12	The Silent Unfolding	VCD / DVD	English
13	Swarajyachya Watevar	VCD	Hindi and Marathi
14	The Story of Painting	DVD	English
15	Damalwadi & Wazar - Story Of A Dream Comr True...	VCD	English
16	Khadkipada - A Tale Of Development: An Account Of Transformation	VCD	English
17	Pirewadi - A Story Of Sucess	VCD	English
18	Jambhore - Try Again.. And You Will Succeed	VCD	English
19	Mohane - A New Thought!... A New Direction!	VCD	English and Hindi
20	Kholvir - A Green Transition	VCD	English
21	Pangra	VCD	English
22	Tamkadwadi	VCD	English
23	The Rain Trappers	DVD / VCD	English and Hindi
28	Earth And Water	VCD	English
29	Purushwadi	VCD	English
30	On The Path Of The Prosperity	VCD	English



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