

Orans: Alleviating Poverty and Mitigating Climate Change through Water, Biodiversity Conservation

Experiences from KRAPAVIS

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What are Orans or Devbani?

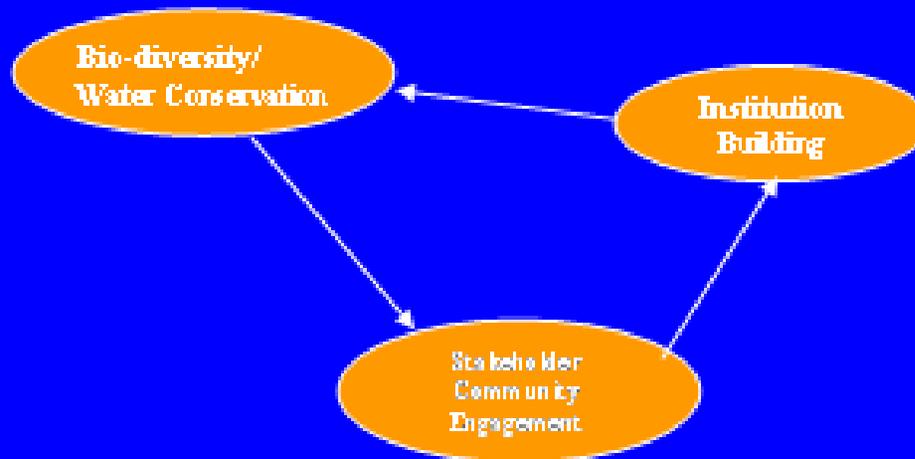
- Orans are local micro bio-diversity reserves harboring the shrine of a local goddess or deity, most of which **contain sources of water, either small springs or rivulets or variety of pond & nadis**
- At the heart of every Oran is a Deity, whose domain has at some point in time been marked out by a ritual, usually consisting of **the pouring of Ganges water or saffron-milk around the grove.**

Project Area

- Topographically, Alwar is characterized by the **rocky ridges of the Aravalli** range
- **Gujjars**, Meos, Yadavs, Bairwas, Meenas etc. castes inhabiting
- Apart from agriculture, **pastoralism has an important role to play in the local and regional economy.** Livestock herding is largely geared to producing for the market.

Approach/ Activities

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----- **Contd. Approach/ Activities**

- **Rehabilitate** water structures
- **Recreate** water storage structures - oran talab (storage tank), provide optimal solutions - in terms of providing water for irrigation and drinking purpose.
- **Installing** conservation devices like trenches, 'Tak' & stone barrier
- **Protecting** trees, raising saplings in nurseries & planting saplings and grass growing on the orans land

----- **Contd. Approach/ Activities**

- **Promote** DB Irrigation- gravity fed devices- from the talab, laying out of field channels and/or pipelines to fields.
- **Put in place** the equity in water sharing from the Oran Talab'

----- **Contd. Approach / Activities**

- Empowering local communities/ SHGs on Administrative and Managerial abilities.
- **Developing** management rules and regulations and enforcement systems
- **Income generation** from orans minor forest produce such as honey, pottery (from Oran clay) and baskets (from grasses), wild grains (ber, kair, *Sawan*, kuri etc) can be sold at the market, providing an invaluable supplement to SHGs .

----- **Contd. Approach/ Activities**

- Campaigning for the recognition of orans
- KRAPAVIS facilitates policy meeting for representatives from village, region and state level, for which it has set up a forum, called **'Oran Forum'**.

Results

- KRAPAVIS has restored around **100 orans** in two districts of Rajasthan (Alwar and Jaipur), in which about **100 water harvestings** and about **598,000 trees** planted and protected.
- Led to a dramatic improvement in the livelihoods of associated rural communities, and pastoralists; better **grazing** for livestock and increased availability of **medicinal plants** and other **minor forest produce**, such as **fruits, seeds, honey and grasses for weaving**

----- **Contd. Results**

- KRAPAVIS's research into oran water resources suggests that these potentially provide a permanent solution to water scarcity and degradation in the area.
- In our working area, where poverty and vulnerability to climatic changes (drought, famine) are common, villagers depend on these oran water sources.
- Creates additional environmental benefits beyond reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

----- Contd. Results

- The initiative also strengthens economic opportunities for local communities by establishing self-help groups (SHGs) for women. To this end, KRAPAVIS currently has **a cadre of around 300 women and youths** to disseminate information and training related to oran revival.

Conclusion

- **Creates additional environmental benefits beyond reducing greenhouse gas emissions.**
- **Empowers or increases independence of the local community.**
- **Uses your donation to create an incremental benefit that would not have otherwise been achieved.**

"Global Giving USA, evaluated KRAPAVIS Oran Project, based on how it is positively affecting climate change, and as a result KRAPAVIS project has been awarded GlobalGiving Green's "leaf" for the above reasons"