



Knowledge Nugget

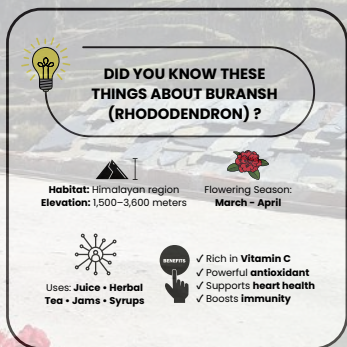
Blossoms of Livelihood: The Buransh Story from Chamba

Stories of Change from Rural India

This is the season of 'Buransh.' The green valleys of Chamba are speckled pink and red with the majestic bloom of (Rhododendron arboreum), **Himachal Pradesh's state flower**. Kanto, Bhani, Pooja, Anju, Neelo, Shrestha & Reenu, our community friends and Self Help Group (SHG) members in SBI Gram Seva Project, implemented by SUVIDHA, are having quite an event season.

A commune of women collecting flowers from the forest. Their hands stained red from the petals, the fresh scent of Buransh in the air. They move together with ease, talking, singing, and helping each other fill their baskets. Children run ahead, calling out when they spot a good patch. It's more than just picking flowers; it's a moment of togetherness, of shared work and shared joy.

Once handpicked, the bright red petals are taken to village-level units where they are carefully washed, then either boiled into a refreshing juice, fermented into a tangy sherbet, or dried for use in herbal teas and jams. This seasonal harvest not only sustains traditional health practices, helping to ward off seasonal ailments and boost immunity, but also creates a valuable opportunity for communities to make use of a wild resource and generate additional income during a period when agricultural activities may be limited. These women farmers of the hills are eco-conscious as well, with an emphasis on low-impact harvesting, selecting only fully open blooms to ensure that young buds remain on the branch.



HIGHLIGHTS

- **SUVIDHA's 21-Year Journey: Building Resilience, Inspiring Change**
- **23,261 VERS Issued for decentralised energy interventions**
- **'Weaving Livelihoods' Handloom Unit Empowers 250+ Women in Assam**
- **Madhopur Panchayat Goes Digital, A Step Towards Smart Governance**
- **65,000 Saplings Planted Under Project VIKAS - Driving Community-Led Climate Action**

PROJECT UPDATES

Empowering Farmers Through Clean Energy Irrigation

📍 Bihar

SUVIDHA, in partnership with **HDFC Bank Parivartan**, has installed four solar-powered irrigation systems in **Kaitha, Bhagwanpur, Tahsur, and Bade Saidpur villages** in Bihar, ensuring year-round water access for **175 farmers** who previously relied on the monsoon, thereby reducing crop failure risk, boosting productivity, raising household incomes, and promoting climate-resilient, sustainable agriculture.

This initiative not only **eases the burden of rising diesel costs** but also **empowers farmers with reliable, low-maintenance technology** that supports multiple cropping cycles. By integrating clean energy into irrigation, the project aligns with India's broader climate action goals while directly improving rural livelihoods and food security.



Promoting Rural Livelihoods through Silk in Bhagalpur

📍 Bihar

SUVIDHA, with support from **HDFC Bank Parivartan**, inaugurated the Center of Excellence - **Bhagalpuri Silk Saree and Other Fabric** in village Pulwaria, Block Jagdishpur, Bhagalpur, Bihar, under the FRDP project. Mr. **Nitesh Jha**, Branch Manager, HDFC Bank, Bhagalpur Branch, graced the occasion as Chief Guest and officially inaugurated the center.

Highlighting the importance of community participation, Mr. Jha shared how **the center aims to revitalise the Bhagalpuri silk industry** and create new employment avenues for artisans and youth, while also contributing to sustainable rural development. It will serve as a **skill-building** and **production hub**, preserving traditional craftsmanship while integrating modern techniques for broader market access.



A Step Towards Healthier Villages

 Himachal Pradesh



SUVIDHA, in partnership with **SBI Foundation's** Gram Seva initiative, **held free medical camps** in Sarol and Banjal village, Chamba, Himachal Pradesh that **benefited 184 locals** with health screening and other essential medications. The medical camp emphasized preventive care, educating villagers on the **importance of regular health check-ups and healthy habits**.

In response, **high turnout** and **positive feedback** demonstrated growing community trust and the value of accessible rural healthcare.

SUVIDHA and SBI Foundation remain committed to strengthening local health systems and fostering well-being in every village. By reaching people where they are, SUVIDHA aims to move closer to a healthier, more equitable rural India.



65,000 Saplings Planted Under Project VIKAS – Driving Community-Led Climate Action

 Uttar Pradesh, Haryana

SUVIDHA in partnership with **Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL)** has successfully **planted 65,000 saplings** across Hamirpur (42,970) and Sonipat (22,030) **under Project VIKAS** – Community-Based Carbon Emission Reduction Program. Implemented through an agroforestry model (75% fruit, 25% timber), the initiative promotes climate resilience while supporting farmer livelihoods.

With a **first-year target of 1.35 lakh saplings**, the project is well on course. Registered under the Verra VCS VM0047 methodology, it will enable **long-term carbon sequestration, boost soil and water conservation, and open access to carbon finance**, empowering smallholder farmers with sustainable income streams and environmental stewardship.

This effort contributes to India's climate goals while strengthening rural economies through nature-based solutions. As saplings grow, so does the promise of greener futures and resilient communities.



PROJECT UPDATES

Training Rural Communities in Sustainable Energy Solutions

📍 Uttarakhand

Under the Climate Protection Project in Uttarakhand's Himalayan landscape, supported by **Terre des hommes** and funded by DACHSER Logistics, **SUIDHA** organized a one-day, hands-on training on the construction and functioning of **Deenbandhu Model Biogas Plant** in Pratappur village, Gaulapar (Haldwani), Uttarakhand, with participants from our partners AMAN and HESCO. This model is a **cost-effective biogas technology** that converts organic waste into clean cooking fuel while producing nutrient-rich slurry for use as organic fertiliser, promoting circular rural energy systems.

By equipping communities with this knowledge, **the training aims to foster self-reliance, reduce carbon emissions, and strengthen climate resilience** across the region. The recently organised session also demonstrated live construction techniques, enabling participants to replicate the model independently in their own villages.



Strengthening Rural Leadership for Water Stewardship

📍 Uttar Pradesh

SUIDHA and the **Hindustan Unilever Foundation (HUF)** have **onboarded 200 Community Resource Persons (CRPs)** in Budaun, Uttar Pradesh, to drive **water conservation** and **sustainable agriculture** across rural regions, building on last year's number of 100, with a remarkable 75% of the CRPs being women "**Jal-Sakhis.**"

During a two-day orientation led by Mr. Prakash Singh Dasila, participants received capacity building in **communication, community mobilisation, and group facilitation**, alongside knowledge-sharing workshops on water stewardship, climate resilience, accurate data collection, and village profile preparation.

As **Jal-Sakhis** and **Jal-Mitras**, these changemakers will promote best practices in water management, support sustainable farming techniques, and mobilise local Water and Environment Groups, marking the start of a transformative journey toward inclusive, community-led development. The initiative not only strengthens grassroots leadership but also amplifies women's voices in rural water governance.



Madhopur Panchayat Goes Digital, A Step Towards Smart Governance

Assam

Under the Holistic Rural Development Program, **SUVIDHA**, in collaboration with **HDFC Bank Parivartan**, has upgraded the Madhopur Gram Panchayat Office, Jorhat, Assam, into a digital and tech-enabled governance hub. The initiative introduced **desktop computers, printers, and essential office furniture**, streamlining administrative functions and enhancing service delivery.

Comprehensive renovation and thoughtful visual enhancements have transformed the space into a modern, accessible, and citizen-friendly centre, reinforcing the vision of digitally empowered rural governance.



Field Visit – Monitoring Progress, Strengthening Impact

Madhya Pradesh

Mrs. Richa Naula, Project Manager, **HDFC Bank Parivartan**, conducted a **two-day field visit** on 23rd-24th April across all project villages in Maheshwar Block, District Khargone, Madhya Pradesh, to assess the progress of the Holistic Rural Development Program (HRDP) implemented by **SUVIDHA**.

The visit focused on reviewing project implementation, engaging directly with community stakeholders, and identifying areas for further strengthening. From livelihoods to rural infrastructure development, the ground realities reflected encouraging stories of progress, resilience, and opportunity, highlighting the tangible impacts at the grassroots level.



Sirsiya's Journey to Resilience Through Water Conservation

Madhya Pradesh

SUVIDHA, in collaboration with **HDFC Bank Parivartan** under the Holistic Rural Development Program, supported the community-led construction of a stop dam in Sirsiya village, Maheshwar Block, Khargone (M.P.), which **now stores approximately 4,30,000 m³ of water for year-round irrigation**.

Local labour and resources drove the project from site selection to execution, while training on water conservation practices empowered farmers.

Since its completion, **groundwater levels have risen by up to 6 feet, soil erosion has been curbed, and farmers now cultivate multiple crops annually**, boosting productivity, incomes, and community resilience.

The stop dam now **benefits several farming families**, improving water access for agriculture, livestock, and daily use. Women farmers, in particular, have reported reduced drudgery and improved planning for seasonal crops. The structure also supports climate resilience and is now being looked at as a replicable model in neighbouring villages.



Nutrition Gardens for Food Security and Well-being

Assam



Under the Holistic Rural Development Program (HRDP), Team **SUVIDHA**, in partnership with **HDFC Bank Parivartan**, is establishing **nutrition gardens** across project villages in **Jorhat, Assam**. To ensure sustained impact, beneficiaries received hands-on training in organic farming, efficient garden management, and sustainable practices.

SUVIDHA also **distributed bio-fertilisers, quality seeds, and essential farming tools** to support garden development. These gardens are expected to not only improve dietary diversity but also reduce reliance on market-bought produce, creating healthier, more resilient communities from the ground up.

Initial feedback from the villages highlights **strong participation and interest in maintaining the gardens**. With the support of distributed seeds, tools, and bio-fertilisers, households have begun preparing their plots and applying newly learned techniques, setting the stage for sustainable, community-driven nutrition improvements.

Regular follow-ups by SUVIDHA's field team ensure timely guidance, while peer-to-peer learning among beneficiaries is helping to maintain garden productivity and strengthen community ties around shared goals.

SUVIDHA'S 21-YEAR JOURNEY: Building Resilience, Inspiring Change



On 8th April 2025, **SUVIDHA marked 21 years** since its inception in 2004. Notably, we have worked across **24 states, 98 districts, and 5,242 villages** to reach **360,764 households** through more than **115 projects** in **water, sustainable agriculture, clean energy, education, health, and women's empowerment**.

From pioneering **Climate Smart Agriculture, community energy interventions** and **strengthening local health and education systems**, our 135-member team and **over 50 partners** have consistently delivered pro-poor, pro-environment solutions. As we step into our 22nd year, **we carry forward the same purpose with a deeper resolve to listen, adapt, and grow** with the communities we work alongside.

This milestone is a tribute to the resilience of rural India and the collective spirit that fuels every step of our journey.



ORGANIZATIONAL UPDATES

Clean Village, Strong Governance – A Panchayati Raj Diwas Initiative



On **National Panchayati Raj Diwas**, SUIDHA, under the **SBI Gram Seva** project, organised a cleanliness drive at the Kiri Bus Stand. A group of **39 villagers**, including **shopkeepers, taxi drivers, six Panchayat members**, and **SUIDHA team members**, joined forces to **remove garbage, sweep the area, and promote hygiene**.

The collective effort transformed the bus stand into a cleaner, more welcoming public space and **strengthened community engagement**. By working side by side, participants reinforced local ownership and civic responsibility, underscoring the power of grassroots action in maintaining shared resources.

The initiative also sparked **conversations around waste management** and the importance of regular community-led sanitation efforts. It served as a reminder that sustainable change begins with small, consistent actions.

'Weaving Livelihoods' Handloom Unit Empowers 250+ Women in Assam



Under the Holistic Rural Development Program (HRDP), SUIDHA in partnership with **HDFC Bank Parivartan**, has established a **fully equipped handloom unit in Lohang Bebejia**, Jorhat, Assam, fostering skill development and income generation for rural women. With eight Jacquard looms and one warping drum, the unit supports the production of high-quality textiles.

Over **250 women** from surrounding villages **have completed a structured six-month training** in advanced weaving techniques. The initiative has not only enhanced livelihoods but also bolstered women's economic empowerment. The Co-District Commissioner of Titabor lauded the project for its tangible impact on rural development and local enterprise.



Feb 7, 2025 1:08:33 PM

ORGANIZATIONAL UPDATES

Showcasing Impact at Mankind Pharma's Annual CSR Partners' Meet



SUVIDHA participated in the **Annual CSR Partners' Meet** organized by **Mankind Pharma** at Nashik, Maharashtra, a platform that brought together diverse development actors to share insights, learnings, and impact stories from across India. The session **featured a presentation on the PROSPER project implemented by SUVIDHA** in Meerut and Bijnor, highlighting community-led development efforts and early outcomes. The meet fostered valuable dialogue on collaborative approaches, innovation in CSR, and scaling impactful models for greater social change.



23,261 VERs Issued for decentralised energy interventions



We are pleased to announce that **our decentralised energy interventions for rural communities** – a Programme of Activities (PoA) **registered under Gold Standard for the Global Goals**, have been successfully certified, and we have received **23,261 Verified Emission Reductions (VERs)** under four distinct VPAs: Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Assam, and Odisha.

The project **aimed to provide energy-efficient technologies like biogas, improved cookstoves, solar street lights, and community-based solar-powered water tanks** to the rural communities. We would like to extend **our heartfelt congratulations and thanks to our project partners** – HDFC and IndiGo, for their constant support and commitment in helping us achieve this milestone.

