

**Goat Cluster in the Sarmathura region of  
Dholpur  
Case Study of a Good Practice**

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### **Introduction**

Professional Assistance for Development Action (PRADAN) has been working in the Dholpur district since 1999. It has formed 213 SHGs covering 2820 households in 100 villages of Dholpur. Pradan has extensive experience of building savings and credit based self-help groups (SHG) and linking them to banking institutions. Pradan functionaries believe that promoting SHGs is necessary, as credit is a key input for livelihood promotion. Pradan develops SHGs as independent community based associations that would be able to leverage credit from banks without its continuous support and supervision. About 10-15 mature SHGs in a geographical contiguous area form a cluster. A large number of women SHGs have been promoted by Pradan as they believe that women members are more actively involved in regular meetings, savings and interloaning and are conscious about maintaining records.

### **The region and choice of SPA**

Dholpur district is made up of three distinct geographical areas- the plain region, the rocky terrain of the Aravali Plateau commonly known as the Daang region and the ravines of the Chambal Basin. The Sarmathura region of Dholpur district is an area with an undulating rocky terrain with some patches of agricultural land. There are large tracts of fodder land in this region and there is a problem of potable drinking water.

Pradan started operating in the Sarmathura region in the year 2002 for implementing DPIP. It initiated work by developing SHGs and later identified households/members who could be associated with DPIP. They also aimed to reach out to a large number of BPL families. The selection of SPA was based on matrix ranking technique. Pradan functionaries provided suitable SPA options in the region like Bore well, beading, durrie weaving, poultry, dairy and goat rearing to the CIG members. Finally the group members chose goat rearing as the SPA. The members were also of the view that goat rearing was comparatively manageable and seemed more viable and economical than other activities. The availability of large tracts of fodder land was an added reason for choice of SPA.

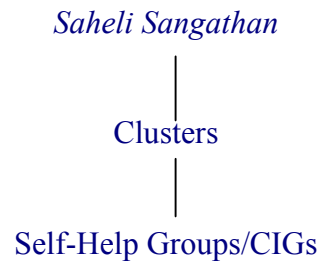
There are 69 goat rearing CIGs in Dholpur. DPIP funds have been released in 56 CIGs. All of them are women groups. In these CIGs twenty-seven UCs have been adjusted and 10 are still pending whereas 13 CCs have been adjusted and 8 are pending. Twenty-seven goat rearing CIGs have been linked to banks.

## Building an Institutional set-up

In the proposal prepared by Pradan (submitted to SPMU) on promotion of goat cluster in Sarmathura region, it is stated that the cluster aims to build a strong subsector around goat rearing activity, taking all the stakeholders into the fold and building a network of all backward and forward linkages. Pradan also proposed building a strong all women federation to monitor the activity, make all linkages sustainable and making the entire subsector in the region vibrant. Pradan functionaries felt that service providing became easier through this sectoral approach, in the structure where SHGs formed the base level and cluster and federation levels constituted the higher tiers.

When Pradan started forming clusters comprising its SHGs /CIGs of goat rearing in the region the group realised that high mortality rate in goats and inadequate support of insurance services were the major hindrances in the smooth functioning of the SPA. High mortality rate in goats is the result of lack of proper veterinary care. Though there is one Veterinary hospital in Sarmathura but the doctor is rarely available in the hospital. Pradan functionaries also noted that since most of the villagers were rearing goats in a traditional way, survival of goats became a major challenge in this region. Thus Pradan functionaries decided to initiate provision of veterinary support to the goat rearing CIGs for sustenance of this SPA. Providing veterinary and insurance support through an institutional set-up seemed more feasible. Pradan has also identified and trained paravets to provide veterinary support to goat rearing CIGs in Sarmathura region.

An institutional structure i.e the *Saheli Sangathan* has been formed with representation from clusters at the middle level and women SHGs or CIGs at the village level respectively.



Presently there are seven clusters in the region. Two elected representatives from each SHG/CIG are the members of the clusters and they are elected for a period of six months. The members in a cluster elect their representatives who become the members of Federation. The members of the Federations elect their representative who becomes the President. Only those women are elected as representatives who are vocal and show leadership qualities.

The cluster meeting is organised on 7<sup>th</sup> of every month where the issues related to sub-project activity are discussed at length among the members. If the members are late they have to pay the late fees of Rs. 5. A penalty of Rs. 10 is charged for not attending the cluster meeting without prior information. In the cluster meeting one representative from

Pradan maintains the minutes of the meeting. The Federation meeting is held on 9<sup>th</sup> of every month where matters of insurance, veterinary care and other group issues are taken up. The Pradan functionaries also attend these meetings of clusters and federation to guide the members in resolving the issues.

### **Present status of Goat cluster**

At present there are 67 SHGs or goat-rearing CIGs across 33 revenue villages in the goatry cluster of Sarmathura region. These CIGs were formed from the year 2002 to 2005

In the proposal sent to SPMU, Pradan had defined the areas wherein support would be provided in order to overcome various bottlenecks:

- Backward linkages
- Forward linkages
- Governing structure to make the system sustainable

### **Assuring backward and forward linkages**

For the promotion of any activity backward and forward linkages are essential elements. The erstwhile DPIIP experience indicates that many CIGs and SPAs are not sustainable, as backward and forward linkages are not established. In the case of goat rearing SPA one of the main causes identified for high mortality in goats was lack of veterinary support. Insurance claim is another crucial issue. Establishing predictable market linkages also becomes extremely important.

### **Backward linkages**

To support long term economic gains from goatry SPA Pradan went about strengthening backward linkages especially veterinary care and insurance services.

#### *Veterinary support*

Due to lack of adequate and timely veterinary care in Sarmathura region many CIG members lost their goats they received from DPIIP. To fill this gap Pradan identified educated village youth with some basic understanding of animal rearing and trained them as paravets. They were trained to diagnose, administer drugs and all vaccines to the animals. Presently there are four paravets who are providing their services in the Sarmathura region. The paravets visit the CIGs of their area once in 15 days, check the herd, and collect data on health status of goats and even train the CIG members in identifying diseases. The Pradan functionaries told the PM team that the paravets are provided three types of training–(i) Animal Management Training (AMT), (ii) medical training of short duration (three hours) (iii) Revision AMT. A veterinary doctor who provides handholding support to paravets has also been recruited by Pradan to strengthen veterinary support. The Pradan functionaries informed the PM team that initially the other community members also took the services of Veterinary doctor, but recently the Pradan functionaries have asked him to focus on the SHGs/CIGs formed by Pradan.

The Federation also provides veterinary support to the CIG members. the CIG members contribute an annual payment of Rs. 25 per goat in the pooled deposit of *Saheli*

*Sangathan*. This amount is used for purchase of vaccines when required. The goats require doses of 3-4 vaccines in a year.

#### *Providing Insurance services*

Though insurance cover was included in the SPA, there were problems of non-payment or delays in payments of claims made to Insurance companies. As the mortality rate of goats in the region was high and the poor CIG members were not able to bear the loss of livestock, a *Saheli Rahat Kosh* was established by Pradan to provide insurance support. This Kosh is managed by the *Saheli Sanghatan*. The CIG members deposit the insurance premium obtained in DPIP in this *Kosh*. Though DPIP has kept the rate of insurance premium at 2.25 percent of the price of goats, the rate of insurance premium in Saheli Rahat Kosh is 5 percent. On the death of the goats the member is paid the insurance claim out of the pooled deposit of the *Saheli Rahat Kosh*. The payment is made only after verifying the claim made. The decision regarding payment is based on consensus of *Sangathan* members.

### **Forward linkages**

#### *Marketing support*

At present local traders approach the CIGs for the purchase of lambs. The goat milk is often utilised for household consumption especially by children.

The CIG members pointed out that with proper veterinary care the herd size of some members has increased by 10-30 goats. Some CIGs reported an annual income of Rs. 3000-10000 from the sale of goat kids. However, Pradan functionaries also reported that with the increase in goat supply (more than the demand) the members are not able to fetch a good price from the local traders.

Discussions with Pradan functionaries revealed that they were exploring other market avenues for the sale of goat milk and the sale of lambs. They were planning to organise *haats* for the sale of lambs and had talked to some traders regarding purchase of goat milk for cheese preparation.

Pradan has also tried to link the SHG/CIGs with other activities. Some CIGs members have set up vermicompost plants and have even earned out of the sale of goat manure, which is very productive and fertile. Pradan has taken the support of Sir Ratan Tata Trust (SRTT) that promotes experimentation and innovative projects in the area of livelihoods. Pradan is also providing marketing support for goat manure. On the one hand it is linking traders to the CIGs for the manure purchase and on the other Pradan is itself purchasing goat manure from the CIGs. Pradan has recently purchased the goat manure from its SHGs/CIGs at the rate of Rs. 2 per kg. for their NRM (Natural Resource Management) projects.

#### *Other support*

Pradan also trains and prepares *Munshis* for maintaining the group records of savings, meetings and interloaning. They are either educated members of the community or the

CIG members who are interested in learning record maintenance. The *Munshis*, if they are not CIG members, are paid by the group for the services rendered.

A computer *Munshi* who is located in the Sarmathura office of Pradan compiles all the data related to the SHGs/CIGs in a programme RMGS (Regular Meeting Generation Set). The SHG/CIG members visit the office once in fifteen days and submit all SHGs details of meetings, savings, and interloaning in a prescribed format.

### **What has changed for CIG members**

All the groups in the goatry cluster are women's groups. Field interactions with CIG members reveal that coming together as members of a federated body has given the members a sense of group identity. The women members meet regularly and have been able to tide over household contingencies through savings and interloaning. The earnings from goat rearing have improved their economic status. The mobility of women has also increased and women members articulated that they go to the bank themselves for various transactions. Some cluster leaders have also gone out of their district/state to attend workshops. After becoming members of the SHG/CIG women have learnt to write their signatures. One of the CIG Presidents has also received training as *Mahila Munshi*.

However there are several issues that need to be looked into. It is evident that some girls in the member households were not enrolled in schools and were involved in grazing the animals obtained from DPIP. Issues related to unequal gender relations, access and control over income, reproductive health and violence against women need to be stressed in the SHG/cluster or federation meetings.

### **Conclusion**

Cluster development in Sarmathura region was perceived as an approach to set up a governing structure to provide institutional linkage and support to the SHGs or CIGs formed by Pradan. This structure provides a strong support to the activity i.e. the SPA of goat rearing through backward and forward linkages.

These backward and forward linkages have enhanced the quality of the groups and are simultaneously promoting sustainability of livelihoods. The above case shows that sustainability of groups may be enhanced by the formation of cluster-level groups and federating them. Cluster-level federations can contribute to improving savings and loan recoveries, resolving conflicts and cases of financial mismanagement in groups, mobilising government programmes, and addressing the common social and economic needs of villages in the cluster. In some cases they could even act as financial intermediaries for mobilising capital from some groups and channeling it to others. Federation membership also gives groups a sense of belonging to a larger organisation. In short, federations contribute not only to the sustainability of groups, but also assist in reducing overall transaction costs.

It is important to note that the DPIP did not provide for costs of building backward linkages, especially salaries of vets, or for building the federation of CIGs. This has been done by Pradan with its own initiative, which is commendable. Some of the activities,

which Pradan undertook, could perhaps not have been foreseen when the project was being planned.

Many NGOs have such success stories. And one of the major reasons is the flexibility with which they function. And this is their comparative advantage vis-a-vis a government plan. Sadly, we have more watertight plans in the DPIIP and the NGOs work with their hands tied at their back. The good practice of Pradan shows how a cluster could be built. The DPIIP needs to learn from this experience and allow flexibility to the NGOs in their project planning, financing and implementation.

**Post Script:** At the time of the field visit the funds for the development of this goat cluster in Sarmathura region had been sanctioned by SPMU, but had not been released, as the cluster has not been registered.

## **CIGs in the Goatry Cluster of Dholpur**

**District:** Dholpur

**Village:** Kota (Dhani Narayanpura, Daumayi)

**CIG:** Kaila Devi Mahila Bachat Samiti

**SPA:** Goat rearing

**Number of members:** 15 women

The group was formed in April 2003. All the members belong to 'Meena' community. They had deposited Rs. 4415 as contribution, which included purchase of goats and other assets like stalls-feeders (khanaute), axe (farsa), box, petromax, insurance and shed for goats. The shed is still under construction and each member has received Rs. 6000 for its construction. The goats were purchased in November 2005 from Masalpur in Karauli district. The male relatives had gone for the purchase. Each member received 5 goats and one male goat between two members. In this way for the entire group flock of 75 goats and 7 he-goats were purchased under the first milestone. The purchases of the second milestone have not taken place as yet.

The goatry SPA was identified by the members themselves. They had a choice of buffalo rearing but they did not prefer to take it up due to costs of maintaining buffaloes.

The group received a three-day skill based training in Sarmathura in September 2005 where they were informed about goat-rearing practices.

The CIG is a part of Naari Shakti Zindabaad cluster. Two members of this group had attended cluster meeting in which the group issues were discussed. After their association with the Saheli Sangathan the members were informed about the loan facility at the interest rate of 12 per cent. They were also informed about the diseases in goats and proper care and maintenance of goats. The members were also told about the insurance services offered by Sangathan and the free medical facility provided by the paravets and the veterinary doctor.

Each member of the group had deposited Rs. 900 as insurance premium in the Saheli Rahat Kosh. The member whose goat died was paid the insurance claim worth Rs. 1125 by the Saheli Sangathan.

Presently almost all the members have goats with them, which they received from DPIP. Though one or two goats of some members died but there has also been an increase in the herd size. Each member presently has 4-5 lambs. The members said that they were able to rear their goats well because of adequate and timely information on goat rearing and proper veterinary support from Pradan.

The group has been involved in regular savings, meetings and interloaning since inception. In each meeting every member contributes Rs. 10 as savings. There are four meetings in a month, the monthly savings amount to Rs. 40 per member. The group presently maintains Rs. 17400 as its total savings with the individual's share as Rs. 1160. As per the records maintained in the register, the group has Rs. 4546 as its current savings deposits in the bank. Presently the group members are interloaning the amount of Rs. 12854 among the members. The interest rate for interloaning is 18 per cent. The CIG members are meeting out their financial needs through interloaning and they strongly desire to continue their group savings in future.

A *Munshi* who is a community member maintains the group records of savings, meetings and interloaning and the group pays him Rs. 15 per meeting for his services. None of the members has earned an income from the sale of goat kids.

The group has its account in Rajasthan Grameen Bank. The President and the Treasurer of the group themselves go to the bank for transactions.

Pradan functionaries visit the CIG once or twice a month. They interact with the group members and discuss issues related to savings, interloaning and loan facilities and monitor the group records. They also try to resolve group issues, if any.

**District:** Dholpur

**Village:** Kahaarpura

**CIG:** Kaila Maiya Bachat Samiti

**SPA:** Goat rearing

**Number of members:** 10 women

The group was formed in January 2004. All the members belong to Kahaar community and seven of the members are from BPL household. The CIG members deposited Rs. 47500 as the amount of contribution. Each member also deposited Rs. 808 as insurance premium.

The group members preferred goat rearing as the SPA as they found it less expensive and much easier than buffalo rearing. The goats were purchased from Masalpur in Karauli district in October 2005. The male members of the family carried out the purchases. Each member received 5 goats and one he-goat between two members. The members received Rs. 1500 for one goat and Rs. 2500 for one male goat from DPIIP. The members had to bear the additional expenditure from their own pockets for the purchase of goats of improved breed.

The group holds four meetings in a month and in every meeting each member deposits Rs. 20 as savings. The monthly contribution per member therefore is Rs. 80. The CIG members manage the savings of the casual labour. As per the records the group is presently maintaining the total savings of Rs. 25800 in which the individual's share is Rs. 1920.

The group is involved in interloaning. Presently eight out of 10 members have borrowed the group savings worth Rs. 24800 at the interest rate of 24 per cent. The group members fulfill their domestic requirements through interloaning.

Nine members in the group borrowed the contribution amount from the moneylender, *bohra*, at the interest rate of 24 per cent. They took the group loan of Rs. 40000 from the Rajasthan Grameen Bank to repay the debt. They are paying the monthly installment of Rs. 500 to the bank and the amount of Rs. 10000 with interest is still overdue.

Radha bai who is the President of the group is also the member of Federation. She regularly attends the meeting of the cluster. She has even received the *Mahila Munshi* training by Pradan. Though she is not well educated but out of interest and motivation from Pradan functionaries she learnt to write the proceedings of the group meetings and also learnt how to maintain accounts.

Five members in the group including the President are presently operating vermicompost plants in their homes. They have even earned from the sale of goat manure purchased by Pradan at the rate of Rs. 2 per kg for its NRM (Natural Resource Management) projects. SRTT has funded this vermi-compost project. Their respective earnings from the sale of manure is as follows:

S.No.	Name of the member	Sale of manure as on 27/06/2006 (in rupees)
1	Manjhali Guddi	192
2	Badi Guddi	138
3	Lahori bai	194
4	Roop bai	200
5	Radha bai	312

Four members excluding the President had utilised the group savings worth Rs. 2570 for the purchase of worms.

The CIG members told the PM team that after getting associated with the *Saheli Sangathan* they have gained some understanding on livelihood earning. They are getting proper veterinary support for maintaining their livestock. Since the doctor does not charge any fees regular veterinary care is an added advantage.

**District:** Dholpur

**Village:** Kota

**CIG:** Mahakaleshwar Mahila Bachat Samiti

**SPA:** Goat rearing

**Number of members:** 10 women

The group was formed by Pradan three years ago as a Self-Help Group (SHG). It was later converted into CIG and was allotted the SPA of goat rearing. The members belong to BPL households of Jaatav and Prajapat communities.

The group is regular in its monthly savings of Rs. 400 with each member contributing Rs. 10 in weekly meetings. Presently the group has a total saving of Rs. 14730 and the members have interloaned this amount among themselves at the interest rate of 24 per cent. Any member who defaults has to pay the penalty of 60 percent rate of interest on not repaying back the amount in time. Though the group has opened its account in the bank but it does not deposit its monthly savings in it.

The *Munshi* who is a community member maintains the records of meetings, savings and interloaning and the group pays him Rs. 20 per month for his services. The CIG did not take any loan from financial institution.

After their association with DPIP the members deposited the one-time contribution worth Rs. 50,000 (Rs. 5000 per member) for the two milestones under the Goatry SPA. They managed the amount through borrowings from *Bohras*. The group purchased the goats in October 2005 from Gurda Garol village of Karauli district. Each member received 7 goats and one he goat between two members under the first milestone. The group has submitted Utilisation Certificate of first purchase in DPMU office.

The CIG members have received a three-day skill based training under aegis of DPIP in which they were informed about goat rearing practices and the pattern/design of shed. The members also learnt the ways of treating diseases. They told the PM team that no Government veterinary doctor approaches them. They said that the paravets charge Rs.1-3 for vaccination. There is no extra charge for the vaccines other than the amount they deposit in the Saheli Sangathan. The CIG members themselves bear the expenditure on medicines.

The CIG members have not earned any income from the sale of lambs. Presently each member has 4-5 lambs ready for sale. The CIG members reported that the estimated price for a he-goat of 2 ½ years is between Rs. 2000-2500. Two goats in the group have died and the members are aware that they would get the cheque of insurance claim from *Saheli Sangathan*.

The President of the group is also the President of the Federation- the Saheli Sangathan. She is very active and vocal.

**District:** Dholpur

**Village:** Narayanpura

**CIG:** Mainkaal Baba Mahila Bachat Samiti

**SPA:** Goat rearing

**Number of members:** 12 women

Narayanpura village has 50-60 households of only Meena community. Mainkaal Baba Mahila Bachat Samiti was formed in February 2003. The goats in this CIG were purchased in October 2004 from Kailadevi and the women members had gone for the purchase. Each member received 15 goats and there was 1 he-goat between two members. The CC of SPA in this CIG has been adjusted in May 2006.

Presently each member has around 20-40 goats. The women members in this group told the PM team that they have earned some amount from the sale of lambs. The member wise present status of the number of goats and the earnings gained from the sale of goat kids is as follows.

S. No	Name of member	Number of goats	Income generated from goat kids (in rupees)
1	Ramdulari	40	4400
2	Mangal bai	24	3000
3	Bharat bai	25	12000
4	Guddi	30	7000
5	Premdai	28	7500
6	Ram bai	35	11000
7	Puniya	35	10000
8	Mangal bai	35	Could not be ascertained
9	Harbeghi	20	8500
10	Shanti	28	9000
11	Mullo	50	13000
12	Prem bai	40	11000

The members have sold goat kids to local traders of Bari and Sarmathura. The traders visit the CIG member's place for the purchase and the members sell the goats at assumed price. Though weighing machines are available but women members are not aware of its usage. The President of the group told the PM team that she sold four he-goats at the rate of Rs. 1100.

The group holds weekly meetings on every Wednesday where the members collect the weekly savings of Rs. 10 per member. It is also interloaning the group savings among the group members for two to six months at the interest rate of 24 per cent. This financial support through interloaning helps the CIG members in meeting out their domestic requirements and consumption needs. Beside that it also protects them from being exploited by *bohras* who charge higher rate of interest ranging from 36-50 per cent on the borrowings whose time period of repayment is restricted to one month only. The CIG members also have to keep some assets with the *bohras* as security or mortgage. Some members have borrowed money from the *bohras* to deposit the contribution. Subsequently they took one loan from a commercial bank in Dholpur to repay the moneylender.

The members of this group regularly attend the cluster and the federation meeting. One of the women member's relatives who is a post-graduate is the *Munshi*. He writes down the proceedings of meetings in the register and also maintains the group records. The PM team found that the women members are aware of the accounts and could calculate.

The CIG was also initially associated with the vermicompost project with the support from the Agriculture department. But the project was discontinued due to water scarcity. The CIG members had even purchased the worm culture from *Goras*.

In the entire group five goats (2 goats and 3 kids) died and the members were paid the insurance claim from Saheli Sabgathan. A veterinary doctor visits the CIG once in a week and is reported to charge Rs. 2 for a dose of injection