



Impact assessment of VIKALP project

Pernod Ricard India Private Limited


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Price Waterhouse Chartered Accountants LLP



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10. Our work was limited to the samples/specific procedures described in this report and were based only on the information and analysis of the data obtained through interviews of beneficiaries supported under the program, selected as sample respondents. Accordingly, changes in circumstances/samples/ procedures or information available could affect the findings outlined in this report.

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List of Acronyms

Acronyms	Full Form
APMC	Agricultural Produce Market Committee
BoD	Board of Directors
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
FGD	Focused Group Discussions
FPO	Farmer Producer Organization
IDI	In-depth Interviews
INR	Indian Rupee
IRECS	Inclusiveness, Relevance, Effectiveness, Convergence and Sustainability
KII	Key Informant Interviews
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
KVK	Krishi Vigyan Kendra
LoE	Letter of Engagement
LPM	Litres Per Minute
MGNREGA	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
OBC	Other Backward Classes
PoP	Package of Practices
PRI	Panchayati Raj Institutions
PRIPF	Pernod Ricard India Foundation
PR IPL	Pernod Ricard India Private Limited
PW	Price Waterhouse Chartered Accountants LLP
SC	Scheduled Caste
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SHG	Self Help Group
SRIJAN	Self-Reliant Initiative through Joint Action
ST	Scheduled Tribe
VLCC	Village Level Collection Centers
WPG	Women Producer Group



Table of Contents

Executive Summary	8
1. Introduction and background	11
1.1. About PRIPL	12
1.2. About the project.....	13
1.3. About the implementing agency.....	14
2. Approach and methodology	15
2.1. Scope of work	16
2.2. IRECS Framework	16
2.3. Overall methodology	16
3. Detailed findings and recommendations	20
3.1. Profile of the respondents	21
3.2. Community Institution and Value Chain	23
3.3. Agriculture Productivity Enhancement	26
3.4. Natural Resource Management	28
3.5. Horticulture Promotion – Nano Orchards	30
3.6. Perception of beneficiaries about VIKALP Project	32
3.7. Stories of change	33
3.8. IRECS analysis	34
3.9. Limitation.....	36
3.10. Recommendation	37



List of Figures

Figure 1:	Key CSR focus areas	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Figure 2:	Overview of project VIKALP	13
Figure 3:	IRECS Framework	16
Figure 4:	Gender composition of the respondents (n=253).....	21
Figure 5:	Marital status of the respondents	21
Figure 6:	Level of education of the respondents (n=253).....	21
Figure 7:	Chief bread winner of the family (n=253)	22
Figure 8:	Social category of the respondents (n=253)	22
Figure 9:	Sources of income of the respondents (n=253)	22
Figure 10:	Percentage of respondents having an alternate source of income (n=253)	23
Figure 11:	Alternative sources of income of the respondents (n=253)	23
Figure 12:	Percentage of migration before and after the VIKALP project (n=253)	23
Figure 13:	Percentage of respondents associated with community institutions (n=253)	24
Figure 14:	Years of association with community institutions (n=253)	25
Figure 15:	Awareness about VIKALP Project (n=253)	25
Figure 16:	Crops cultivated during Kharif season (n=253).....	26
Figure 17:	Crops cultivated during Rabi season (n=253).....	27
Figure 18:	Trainings received on agriculture productivity enhancement (n=253)	27
Figure 19:	Change observed after trainings and exposures (n=253).....	28
Figure 20:	Benefits received through water interventions (n=47).....	29
Figure 21:	Awareness about nano orchard intervention (n=253)	30
Figure 22:	Percentage of beneficiaries who practice nano orchard (n=253)	30
Figure 23:	Variety of fruits cultivated in nano orchard (n=53)	31




Figure 24: Increase in household consumption of fruits through nano orchard (n=53)	31
Figure 25: Perception of beneficiaries about VIKALP Project (n=253)	32

List of Tables

Table 1: Quantitative sampling plan	19
Table 2: Qualitative sampling plan	19

Executive Summary

Pernod Ricard India Private Limited (PRIPL) has been implementing a range of interventions for communities in & around their geographical presence. PRIPL engaged PW to carry out the impact assessment of their **CSR project 'VIKALP' with a purpose to evaluate the impact created on the local communities** during the project period of 2018 to 2022.

The scope of work includes understanding the project implementation plan and reviewing the Key performance indicators (KPIs) as defined by the Management under the framework for implementing the CSR project for the outputs, outcomes, and impact of the Project. Framework used was Inclusiveness, Relevance, Efficiency, Convergence, and Sustainability framework (the 'IRECS') as agreed with the Management. The objective of the study was to assess the outcomes and impact created on the stakeholders covered under the project and provide recommendation on the project performance for Management's evaluation. Based on the nature of project, a mixed methodology method was adopted. Interactions were planned for all projects based on the study methodology after mapping the key stakeholders.

PRIPL initiated the VIKALP project with the help of its implementation partner Self-Reliant Initiative through Joint Action (SRIJAN) with a focus on **creating sustainable community institutions** by mobilising rural women to form **women producer groups** through awareness campaigns and collective action. **Village Level Collection Centers (VLCC)** and **Farmer Producer Organizations (FPO)** have been established with the aim to **develop the value chain** of local farm produce to **boost farmers' income** and **provide market linkages**. Additionally, the project tried to address **water availability** challenges by **constructing small ponds for irrigation** and **introducing sprinklers** for efficient farming. The project also promoted development of **nano orchard** to introduce **climate resilient fruit varieties** providing farmers with an alternate income source and a safety net in case of crop failure. The project was able to reach 3,738 beneficiaries in 3 blocks of Shivpuri district in Madhya Pradesh.

A total of **253 project beneficiaries were surveyed** while conducting the impact assessment study along with **7 qualitative interactions** with key project stakeholders.

Key Findings:

Community Institution and Value Chain

- **75% (n=253) of the respondents have been actively engaged with the community institutions (SHG, WPGs and FPO) for more than two to three years** showcasing that the members have **developed mutual trust and are willing to contribute through collective action**.
- Through community institutions (VLCC & FPO) the farmers experienced a **swift and efficient process of receiving payment** for their agricultural produce, as the amount gets **deposited into their bank accounts** within a short period of 2-3 days.
- The VLCC representative informed the farmers about the **rate of their produce based** on the weight and moisture content providing them with **transparency and information on the market rates** provided at the Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC).
- The project beneficiaries **were able to get an addition of INR 10-15/ kg for their produce when selling to the VLCC/ FPO which is 10-20% higher than the local market prices** as the community institutions helped in cutting down the middlemen and transportation costs.

Agriculture Productivity Enhancement

- **88% of the farmers (n=253), have reported that they have benefitted after receiving training on pest management and bio composting** under the VIKALP project.
- **20% (n=253) of the respondents stated that they have developed an enhanced ability to manage their crops post harvesting.**

- 26% (n=253) of the respondents mentioned that there is a **notable reduction in crop damage, due to the adoption of improved risk mitigation and pest management practices learnt during the training.**
- 69% (n=253) of them stated that there is an **improved productivity in their land due to the application of pre-sowing and post sowing techniques. 87% (n=253) of the respondents reported that the training which they received on best practices and pest management has resulted in improving their overall productivity of crops.**
- As per the interactions with the women farmers, it was shared that prior to the intervention, on an average the productivity of groundnut was around 4-5 quintals per acre of land where during the intervention 20 kgs of improved variety of seeds were provided to the farmers, which resulted in an increased productivity to 7-10 quintals per acre.

Natural Resource Management

- **49% of the respondents have got small farm ponds constructed and bunding of their farmland has been done to stop soil erosion and maintain the quality of soil.** The farmers who were cultivating only 50% of their land are **now able cultivate around 75% of their land during the rabi season due to establishment of water infrastructures such as farm ponds, doha and gabions.**
- **66% of the respondents have claimed that they require less effort for irrigating** their farms post intervention because of improved water conservation structures.
- **89% of the farmers** stated that the project interventions have helped **increasing their cropping intensity and 34% of the respondents** have experienced an **increase in the number of crops being cultivated** by the farmers. Earlier, majority of farmers were growing only groundnut during kharif season and mustard, gram, and wheat during the rabi season. However, due to improved availability of water for irrigation, some of the farmers are also **growing vegetables during the rabi season.**

Horticulture Promotion – Nano Orchards

- During the interaction with the beneficiaries of nano orchards, it was observed that for the majority of beneficiaries saplings planted are at nurturing stage and are yet to bear fruit. However, the beneficiaries who received their plants in the year 2019-20, the nano orchards have transformed into flourishing fruit bearing trees. **These orchards have yielded approximately 35-40 kgs of guava, 15-20 kgs of papaya and 10-15 kgs of lemon annually.**
- **89% (n=53) of the respondents** have reported that there has been an **increase in the household consumption of fruits through nano orchard intervention** that has been carried out under the project.
- It was reported by the local farmers that while **lemon and papaya** produced are being **used for household consumption, guava** is not only **contributing towards enhancing dietary diversity** but is **also providing an additional income to the respondent households.** The **average annual income generated from selling the guava** cultivated was reported to be around **INR 10,000/-.** This signifies that **nano orchards are not only offering food security but are also acting as a means of substantial income generation.**
- Though the quantitative survey it was found that only **21% (n=253) of respondents established nano orchards through the project's support.**

Key Recommendations:

Capacity building of FPO staff and Board of Directors (BoD)

Currently, significant portion of the work of the FPO is carried out with the support of the SRIJAN team. In order to ensure future sustainability of the FPO, it will be crucial to provide regular training in leadership and FPO management to the Board of Directors and FPO staff. Enabling the FPO leadership and staff including the CEO to take informed decisions based on real time market information through the use of apps such as eNAM (National Agriculture Market), Agmarknet, NCDEX, etc. can be essential to make the FPOs profitable.

Ensure access to quality and affordable agri-inputs

Availability of quality seeds for various crops is a major issue as highlighted by the local communities. Requirement levels are such that it can help sustain an input trading business. Promoting individual/ collective entrepreneurship to leverage the void between demand and supply for quality seeds can help in creating sustainable social enterprises. Identifying local youth and training and handholding them on agri-entrepreneurship to establish micro or small secondary enterprises around seed breeding and trading and nurseries can help the local farmers in getting quality agri-inputs at local level.

Creating processing infrastructure and strong market linkages

Establishment of processing units at community level through development of individual enterprises or strengthening of FPOs can help the local communities to produce value added items from groundnut, mustard, and other commodities. Groundnut has multiple uses across various sectors and the future programs can support the local communities to take up primary and secondary processing activities to produce oil, snacks, etc. Also, it is important for the Groundnut FPO to create further market linkages preferably with institutional buyers (large aggregators) to cater its marketing services to all its members. Start-ups such as DeHaat, Fasal, Dvara E-registry, Agribazaar, etc. which procure agricultural and horticultural products from FPOs directly can also be reached out to create linkage for the existing FPO.

Diversifying product portfolio of the FPO

In addition to groundnut, the FPOs can also work on other locally available products like milk, mustard, and guava as many farmers reported of being involved in producing these products. This will strengthen their value chains and make them more remunerative for the local communities. It will be important to understand the market potential of such products and identify the possibility of introducing new ones in the context of the local areas through new studies.

Capacity building of farmers on adopting natural farming/ regenerative agriculture techniques

Farmers lacked the technical know-how to effectively use the locally available resources in agriculture. Farmer field schools, pilot plots, and community-cadre based farm-level support can be organized to give practical training to farmers on preparation of bio-inputs and opting for resource saving practices like mulching and line sowing.

A detailed analysis of the assessed impact of all the interventions can be found in the [Detailed findings and recommendations section](#), and recommendations can be found in the section titled [Recommendations](#) in the report.



1. Introduction and background

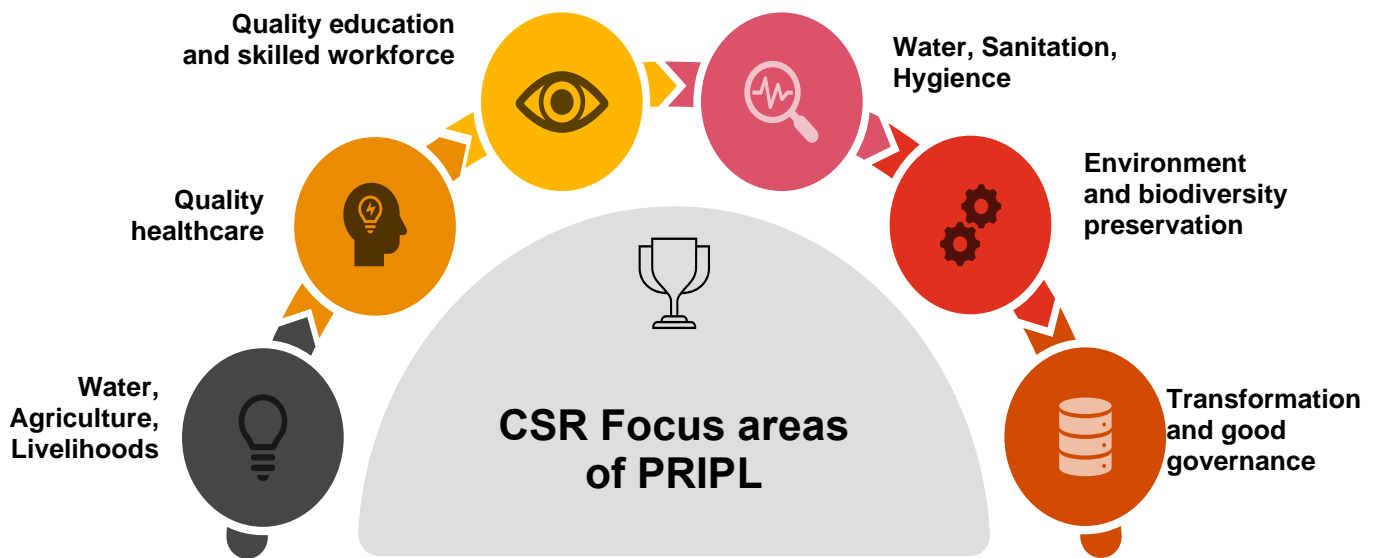
1.1. About PRIPL

Pernod Ricard India Private Limited (PRIPL) is a leading multinational alcohol beverage company that delivers quality products to its consumers across the country. As an industry leader, it is known for promoting safe and responsible alcohol consumption. To drive its commitment to the cause of Corporate Social Responsibility near its operations and beyond, in areas of special needs, Pernod Ricard India Foundation (PRIF) was formed as a Section 8 Company incorporated under the Companies Act, 2013. PRIPL aims to drive sustainable solutions to address social, economic & environment sustainability while partnering in India's development initiatives.

Through the CSR initiatives, PRIPL aims to address social, economic, and environment sustainability by:

- Delivering on corporate social commitments
- Partnering in India's development initiatives
- Aligning CSR initiatives more closely with our core business

Over the years, the CSR Foundation of PRIPL has worked across several themes as illustrated in the figure. With a strong Plant-based focused approach, PRIPL is actively working with more than 3.6 million people from communities near 22 Plant locations across 22 states in India through 285 programmes. All these programmes are designed in a manner that they can contribute towards the SDGs and national priorities.



CSR Reach	22 States	1600 Villages	3.6 million coverage
			

1.2. About the project

The south-eastern part of Shivpuri district in Madhya Pradesh lies in the Bundelkhand region which receives less than 800mm of rainfall annually. Low precipitation levels along with limited water conservation infrastructure have led to increased water stress among the local communities. While most of the working population in Shivpuri is engaged in agriculture, accessibility of water for agriculture remains an issue. According to the 2011 census, only 49.57%¹ of the total cultivable area in Shivpuri is irrigated. Due to this, many local farmers resort to seasonal migration as productive agriculture is not possible during the rabi and zaid (summer) season. Hence, the need for water-based interventions in the region was observed.

Pernod Ricard India Private Limited, in collaboration with SRIJAN as its implementing agency, initiated the VIKALP project in Karera, Picchore and Khaniyadhana blocks of Shivpuri district in Madhya Pradesh with the aim to catalyse impactful change through livelihood enhancement of small and marginalized farmers in the Shivpuri region.²

Figure 1: Overview of project VIKALP

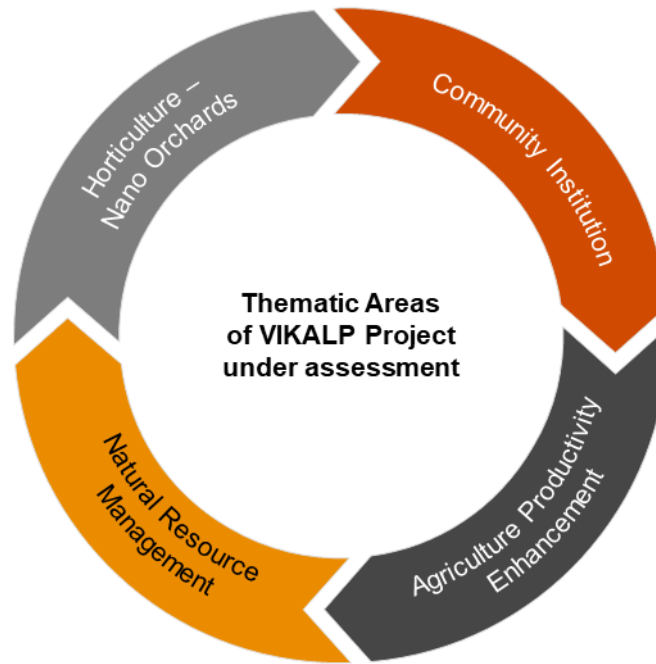
Project location	Project Duration	Project Beneficiaries
Karera, Khaniyadhana & Picchore Blocks in Shivpuri District	2019-2022 (3 years)	3700+

The VIKALP project focuses on creation of sustainable community institution by mobilizing the rural women to create Women Producer Groups in each village of intervention area. The project facilitates awareness creation on benefits of collective actions through formation of community led **Village Level Collection Centers (VLCC)** and **Farmer Producer Organizations (FPO)**. The **formation of these community institutions** was planned to **develop value chain of the local farm produce** and enhance the income level of the farmers by providing them with market linkages. VIKALP project focused on engagement of small and marginalized farmers by providing them knowledge on best farm practices, pest management and quality input supply to **enhance agricultural productivity**. In some of the villages of Shivpuri district there was lack of **water infrastructures** creating a hinderance in irrigation of farms, to address this issue of the farmers, VIKALP project focused on the **Natural Resource Management** components and led to formation of small farm ponds and farm bunding. The farmers were also introduced with sprinklers to irrigate their farms efficiently. To reduce the risks of the farmers and their dependency on agriculture, **Nano orchard** activity was implemented, wherein climate resilient variety of fruits were planted to provide an additional source of income and act as a safety net to the farmers in case of crop failure.

¹ https://censusindia.gov.in/nada/index.php/catalog/758/download/2682/DH_2011_2306_PART_A_DCHB_SHIVPURI.pdf

² <https://srijanindia.org/>

Thematic Areas of VIKALP Project under assessment



1.3. About the implementing agency³

Self-Reliant Initiative through Joint Action (SRIJAN) is a not-for-profit organization which focuses on empowering communities toward self-reliance and has experience in tailoring livelihood solutions to meet the unique contextual needs of the community. SRIJAN works towards implementing developmental projects at the grassroots level in thematic areas such as **water and soil conservation, livelihoods, agriculture, natural resource management and sustainable value chain of non-timber forest produce etc.** The organization is committed towards implementation of projects at grassroots through its community centric approach and firmly believes in the leadership of women and contributes actively to promoting women lead community institutions.

SRIJAN showcases its achievement in its association with the growth journey of **25,000 women leaders** and nurturing of development professionals' leadership path. The dedicated efforts and commitment towards community empowerment and sustainable development has cemented SRIJAN as a catalyst for **positive change in the lives of rural communities.**

³ <https://srijanindia.org/>



2. Approach and methodology

2.1. Scope of work

Pernod Ricard India Private Limited (PRIPL) engaged PW to carry out the impact assessment of their CSR projects with a purpose to evaluate the impact created on the community during the project period of 2018 to 2022. The scope of work includes reviewing the Key performance indicators (KPIs) as defined by the Management under the framework for implementing the CSR project for the outputs, outcomes, and impact of the Project. Inclusiveness, Relevance, Efficiency, Convergence, and Sustainability framework (the 'IRECS') (defined later) as agreed with the Management was used.

The assessment was undertaken using the quantitative and qualitative methods to understand the interventions undertaken under its CSR initiative in mutual discussion with PRIPL. As per the engagement letter signed with PRIPL, the scope of work involved conducting the desk review of the project documents, mapping of key project stakeholders, developing research methodology & impact map, data collection & analysis and report writing.

2.2. IRECS Framework

The impact of the programme was assessed using the IRECS framework. IRECS is geared to provide overall feedback on the efficacy of implementation as well, as its efficiency in terms of achievement of the desired project outputs with reference to inputs. IRECS framework measured the performance of programme on five parameters – Inclusiveness, Relevance, Effectiveness, Convergence and Sustainability.

Overview of areas assessed under each of these five parameters is provided below:

Inclusiveness - Ability of different stakeholders, particularly poorest and most marginalised - to access the benefits of activities, be part of institutions (healthcare / education committees) and derive equitable benefits from assets created.

Relevance - Are the services /inputs /institutions facilitated in the project able to meet community priorities? How was the planning done? Was it participatory? How were the success indicators developed? Was the community involved in development of project indicators?

Effectiveness (& Efficiency) - Have the activities been able to effectively address community expectations? How efficiently have the resources been deployed, monitored and utilized?

Convergence - Degree of convergence with government/other partnerships; relationship between individuals, community, institutions, and other stakeholders.

Sustainability - Do communities feel ownership over the assets created by the activities and/or will the Project initiated community interventions sustain even after the exit of the funding agency. Are the institutions strengthened adequately to effectively manage and sustain the activities after the completion of project? Has an exit strategy been drafted?

2.3. Overall methodology

Team has adopted a **coherent and integrated approach** to deliver the scope of work of the engagement. The following **4-stage approach** ensured that impact assessment study was carried in systematic and consultative manner:

Figure 2: IRECS Framework



Inception and Desk review

- Inception meeting and engagement kick off with the PRIPL team
- Building consensus on scope of work, understanding PRIPL's expectations
- Getting a deeper understanding of the projects basis discussion with the PRIPL team
- Desk review of documents and reports related to the project received from PRIPL
- Stakeholder mapping

Planning and tool preparation

- Finalising the data collection plan in consultation with the PRIPL team.
- Finalising key indicators as per the finalized stakeholders for impact assessment in consultation with PRIPL
- Developing data collection tools
- Digitization of the developed tools
- Communicating the data collection plan to the PRIPL team

Data collection and field visit

- Training of field team on tools
- Initiation of field data collection process as follows:
 - Quantitative survey with beneficiaries.
 - In-depth Interviews (IDIs) with Implementation partners and other relevant stakeholders
 - Focused group discussion with beneficiaries, community/ opinion leaders, PRI members, etc.

Data analysis and report writing

- Assimilate the key findings to analyse the data
- Present the draft of the impact assessment report to PRIPL team
- Obtain and incorporate feedback received from PRIPL
- Prepare and submit final impact assessment report to PRIPL

Stage 1: Inception and desk review

An **inception meeting with** PRIPL team was organized to introduce the engagement team and provide an overview of the roles and responsibilities of the project team members. Discussions were also held during the

meeting to align on the scope of work including the finalization of projects to be assessed during the first phase of the engagement and further, to finalize sample, timelines, and deliverables.

PW team **requested documents/ information relevant for conducting impact assessment** to develop a deeper understanding of the **projects under assessment**. In this regard, following documents were received from the PRIPL project team for the desk review:

- MoU between PRIPL and respective Implementing Partners of the projects
- Project annual reports projects
- Beneficiary data of projects

Post receiving the documents, the team initiated the desk review of the projects. Simultaneously, the team also initiated the desk review of the available secondary literature on the prevailing situation of natural resource availability, livelihoods, and social inclusion across the project geographies. This helped the team with the following:

- Develop understanding of the project details
- Mapping of stakeholders to be interacted with during the study
- Selection of study geography and finalization of sampling plan for primary research
- Strengthening our understanding on the socio-economic and demographic scenarios in the select geography
- Understand the relevance of the intervention with local problems, and national and state priorities
- Understand the coherence of the programme with other similar interventions especially government schematic assistances

Stage 2: Planning and tool preparation

Post mapping of key stakeholders in the previous phase, the study design comprising of a **mixed methodology (combining both quantitative & qualitative aspects) for projects was finalised**. Quantitative research was used to capture the value of the selected indicators whereas qualitative research helped in validating the quantitative findings and understand the rationale and reasoning behind them.

Based on the data shared by PRIPL team; it was understood that **3,738 beneficiary** households have been covered under VIKALP project distributed across 3 blocks namely: **Karera, Khaniyadhana, and Picchore**. By opting for the below mentioned sampling methodology, the total sample size of **253 was estimated**.

The sample size for quantitative research was calculated using the following:

$$n' = n/1 + \{[z^2 * p(1-p)]/m^2 * N\}$$

where the parameters are.

- n' – sample
- Z is z score depending on Confidence Interval (in this case CI = 90% and $z = 1.645$)
- $n = z^2 * p(1-p)/m^2$
- N = population size (depending on individual projects as obtained from each project MoU)
- M = margin of error (5%)
- p = population proportion (considered as 50%, 0.5)

It was understood from the review of the project documents that project has focused upon 5 different themes: community institutions, agriculture, horticulture, natural resource management, and value chain development. However, the beneficiaries covered under the themes: Community Institution and Agriculture are the same and thus, while selecting the sample size for the study, these two themes were combined. Opting for a

proportionate sampling across the 4 themes and the 3 selected blocks, total sample size of 253 was distributed in following manner.

Table 1: Quantitative sampling plan

Project blocks	Community institution and Agriculture productivity enhancement	Horticulture-nano orchards	Natural resource management	Value chain development
Karera	33	11	1	42
Khaniyadhana	24	13	0	0
Picchore	69	19	41	0

Additionally, the following stakeholders as shown in the below table were interacted as part of the qualitative research.

Table 2: Qualitative sampling plan

Stakeholder	Type of interaction	Total
Beneficiary farmers	FGD	3
Board of Directors of FPO and VLCC members	FGD	1
PRI members	IDI	2
Project team of SRIJAN	IDI	1

Stage 3: Data collection and field visit

Before starting the quantitative and qualitative survey, a training of field team was conducted to make them familiar with the project activities and the tool. The field investigators/ enumerators were sensitized and trained beforehand for ensuring smooth interaction with the community. The field visits started with mobilizing the stakeholders at the field which was done in consultation and support of PRIPL and its implementing partners: to capture the present conditions of the stakeholder's and their perceptions towards the project activities. Data collection process was done through in-house research team. The team conducted survey, IDIs and FGDs in the sampled locations as per the finalised sampling frame and used tools to capture the data. The team collated the quantitative data and summarised the key findings from the qualitative part of the study.

Stage 4: Data analysis and report writing

The next step was to clean the quantitative data in order to initiate the analysis process. Post cleaning, data was reviewed and triangulated with the qualitative findings. The team then generated the data tables and started analysis of the key data points. Accordingly, draft impact assessment report was prepared and shared with PRIPL detailing the process adopted, the results, key findings, and suggestions. Basis the inputs received from PRIPL, the report was finalized and submitted for the Management's consideration.



3. Detailed findings and recommendations

This section of the report highlights the key findings along with recommendations of the impact assessment study of Project VIKALP as per each of the activities and interventions.

3.1. Profile of the respondents

A total of 253 respondents were interviewed from Picchore, Karera and Khaniyadhana blocks of Shivpuri district to understand the impact of VIKALP project. Out of total 253 respondents, it can be observed that, a significant majority of **97%** (n=253) were **female** and **3%** (n=253) **male**, this observation underscores the project's relevance and importance on empowering women. Figure 46 shows the marital status of the respondents interviewed, the majority **95%** (n=253) were **married**.

Figure 3: Gender composition of the respondents (n=253)

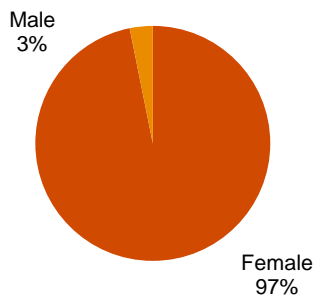
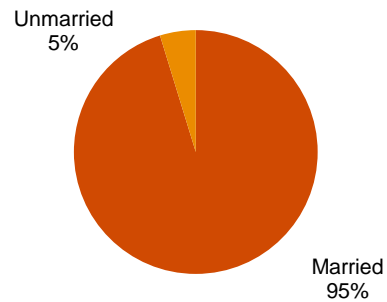
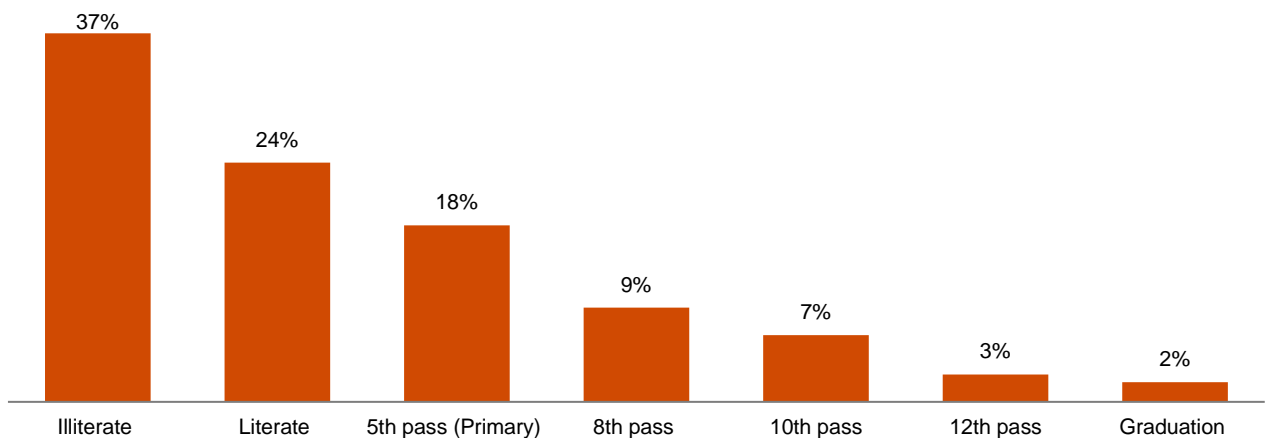


Figure 4: Marital status of the respondents



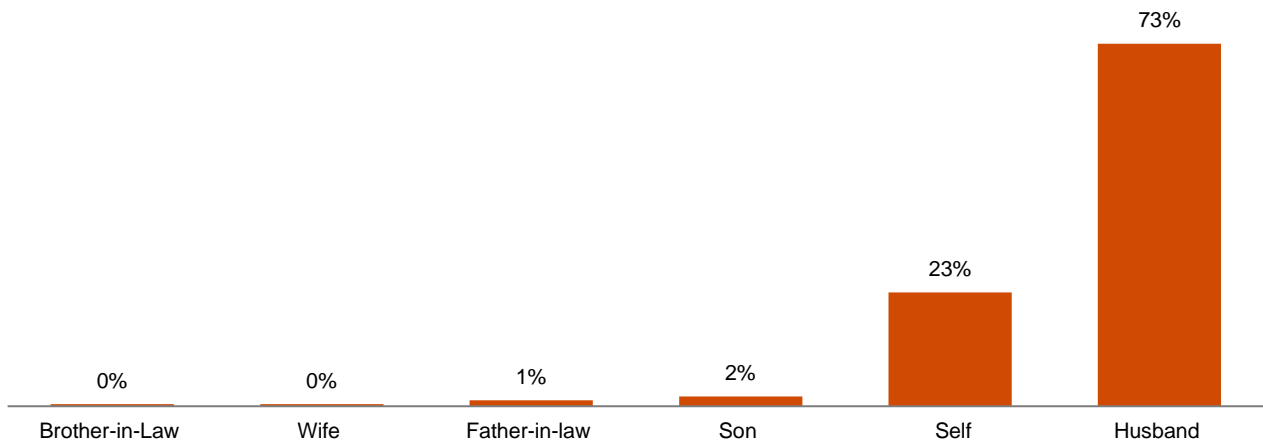
The level of education of respondents, as depicted in the figure 47 showcases a **diverse range of educational background** within the sample, with 37% (n=253) of the respondents being **illiterate highlights the presence of individuals with limited or no formal education**. 24% (n=253) of the respondents claimed that they are literate as they can read and write their name and **holds fundamental understanding** in their language. Only 7% (n=253) of the respondents have achieved **secondary level of education** while 3% (n=253) of the respondents have achieved a **higher-level education** by completing up to 12th grade and 2% (n=253) of the respondents hold a **graduate degree**. It is evident that the varying educational needs of the respondents can be comprehensively addressed but special attention can be given to the illiterate masses and must be encouraged to pursue elementary level of education.

Figure 5: Level of education of the respondents (n=253)



In figure 48, 73% (n=253) of the respondent's states that their husbands are the primary earning members of their families. While 23% (n=253) of the respondents reported that they themselves are the bread winners of their family. 2% (n=253) of the respondents mentioned that their sons are the chief breadwinners of their families and 1% (n=253) referred to their father-in-law, while the remaining stated that their wives or brothers-in-law are sole income earners of the family.

Figure 6: Chief bread winner of the family (n=253)



100% the respondents (n=253) holds both a bank account and an Aadhaar Card. This shows that there is awareness among the beneficiaries of financial and government linked initiatives. Possessing a bank account and digital identity gives them the potential to facilitate access to financial services and gives them a unique identification.

VIKALP project aimed to target the small and marginalized farmers, referring to the figure 49, majority of respondents interviewed belonged to the Other Backward Caste (OBC).

With relation to the income sources available to the respondents, 90% of the respondent's earned their living as cultivators and practiced farming in their own land whereas, 8% of the respondents do not have their own land and worked as agricultural labourers for the farmland owners. 1% of the respondents belonged to the salaried income group or are small shop owners and remaining 1% are skilled workers such as artisans or non-agricultural labourers.

Figure 7: Social category of the respondents (n=253)

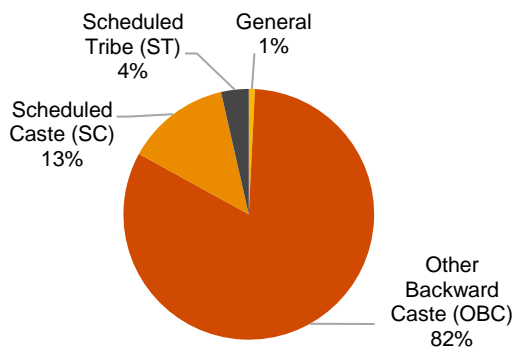
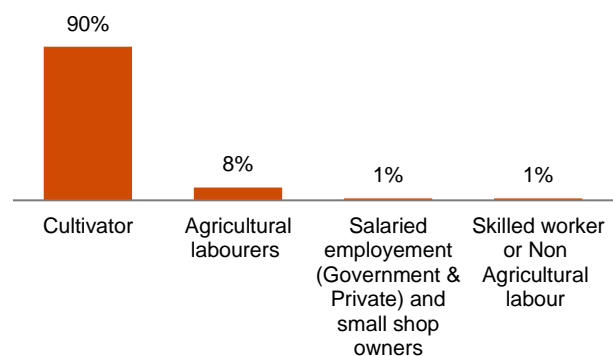


Figure 8: Sources of income of the respondents (n=253)



Among the 253 respondents, **58% (n=253) of them have an alternative source of income** for stability and resilience through sources other than their primary income generation source while 42% of the total respondents (n=253), rely only on their primary source of income.

68% (n=152) of them are engaged in working as agricultural labourers while 17% (n=152) are engaged in non-agricultural labour. 12% (n=152) of the respondents are engaged in farming activities as their alternate source of income and 3% (n=152) are salaried employees and small shopkeepers. Therefore, it can be seen that majority of population having an alternate source of income.

Figure 9: Percentage of respondents having an alternate source of income (n=253)

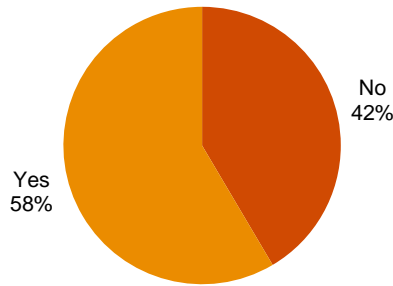


Figure 10: Alternative sources of income of the respondents (n=253)

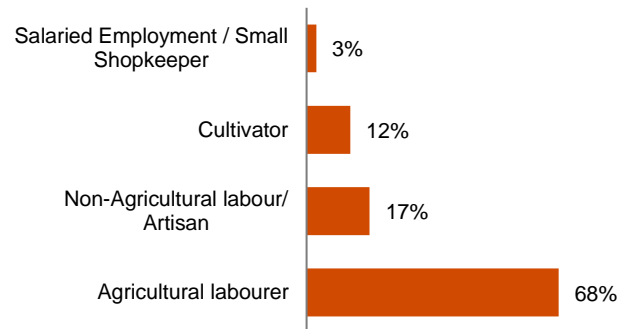
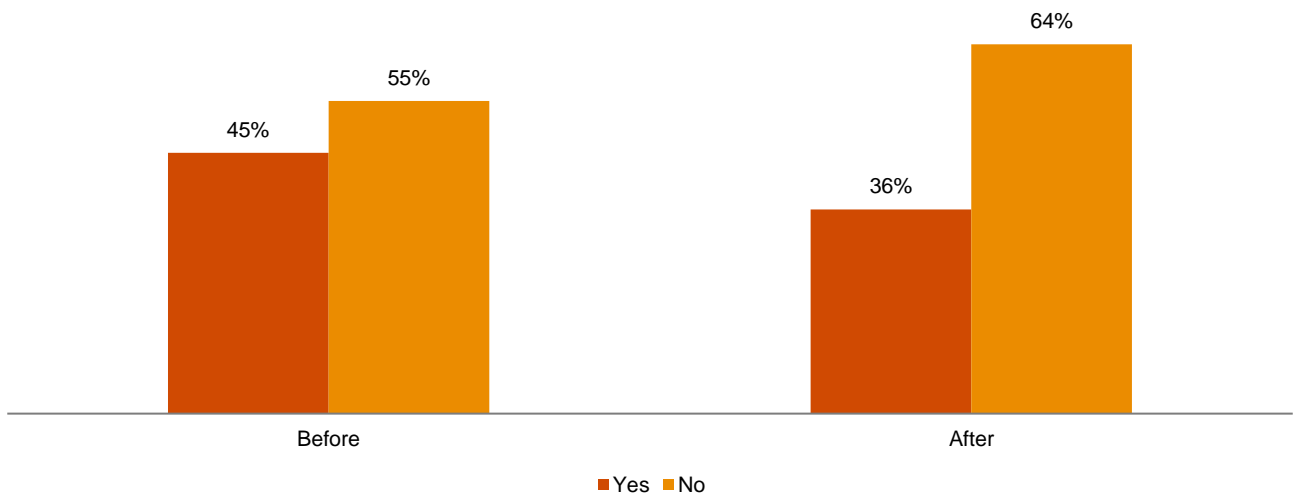


Figure 53 represents the status of migration prior to the intervention of VIKALP project, it can be observed that 45% (n=253) of the respondents interviewed migrated for work outside their villages because of lack of livelihood opportunities during the off season. After the implementation of VIKALP project, the percentage of migration decreased to 36% (n=253). Hence, **there is a 9% decrease in the percentage of overall migration that occurred in the intervention area due to increased livelihood opportunities in the region.**

Figure 11: Percentage of migration before and after the VIKALP project (n=253)



3.2. Community Institution and Value Chain

3.2.1. Need for the intervention

During the interactions with SRIJAN, the implementing agency it was shared that when they started operating in Karera, Khaniyadhana and Picchore blocks of Shivpuri district, they recognized the pressing need for community institution and value chain development in the region to address a range of social and economic challenges. The intervention began with an assessment of the local community's need, which was facing a myriad of issues due to lack of community-led institutions such as absence of fair pricing for agricultural produce.

During the interactions with the Village Level Collective Center (VLCC) representative and Farmer Producer Organisation (FPO) members it was highlighted by them that without an organized platform, the local farmers were often at the mercy of middlemen who dictated the prices, resulting in unfair compensation for their hard work and produce. Heavy transportation costs of the produce caused another hurdle, this incurred additional expenses reducing the limited profits of the farmer which they were receiving.

3.2.2. About the intervention

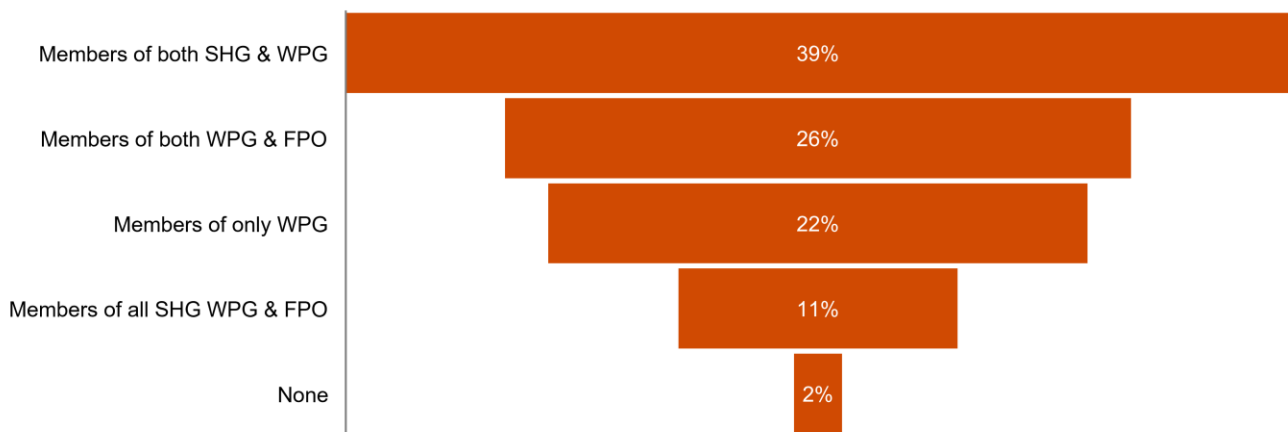
To empower community members in the region, SRIJAN facilitated the mobilization of women and formation of three types of women led community-based organisation, these were the Self-Help Groups (SHGs), Women Producer Groups (WPGs) and Farmer Producer Organization (FPO). These community institutions played a significant role in the decision making, management of farm produce, and fair pricing.

A community-based institution called the Village Level Collection Center (VLCC) was also set up to streamline the collection of commodities at the village level. The collection process was carried out by the selected members of the village who were also the members of SHGs, WPGs and FPOs known as VLCC representatives. The responses of the local communities with relation to the coverage of the intervention are discussed below.

3.2.3. Key findings and impact of the intervention

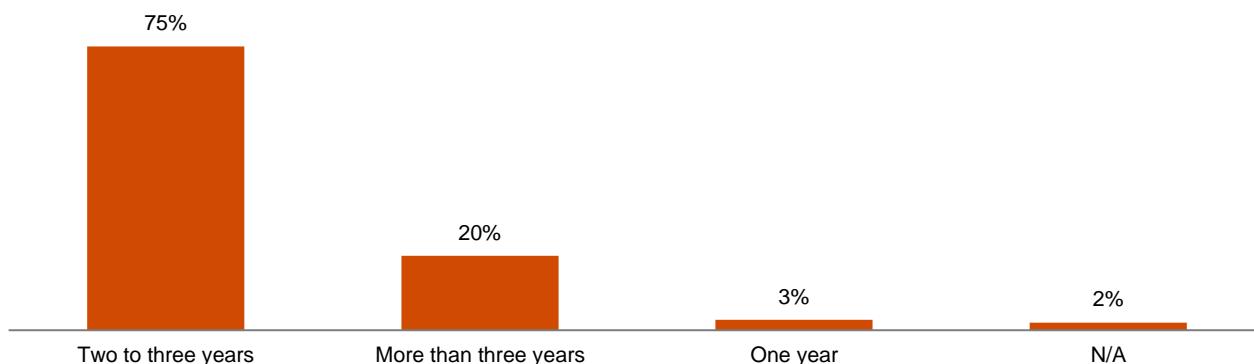
The respondents interviewed were part of one or more community institutions with only 2% (n=253) being part of none. Hence there is a potential to mobilize them into the community institutions to have a multiplier impact of the project. 9% (n=253) of the respondents interviewed were the members of both SHG and WPGs, followed by 26% (n=253) of the respondents who were members of both WPGs and FPO, while 22%(n=253) of the respondents confirmed that they are the members of only WPGs and **11% (n=253) of the respondents were members of all the three level of community institutions i.e., SHG, WPG and FPO.** Therefore, there is a potential to mobilize the members who are not a part of all community institutions, so that they can avail a larger horizon of benefits from these institutions.

Figure 12: Percentage of respondents associated with community institutions (n=253)



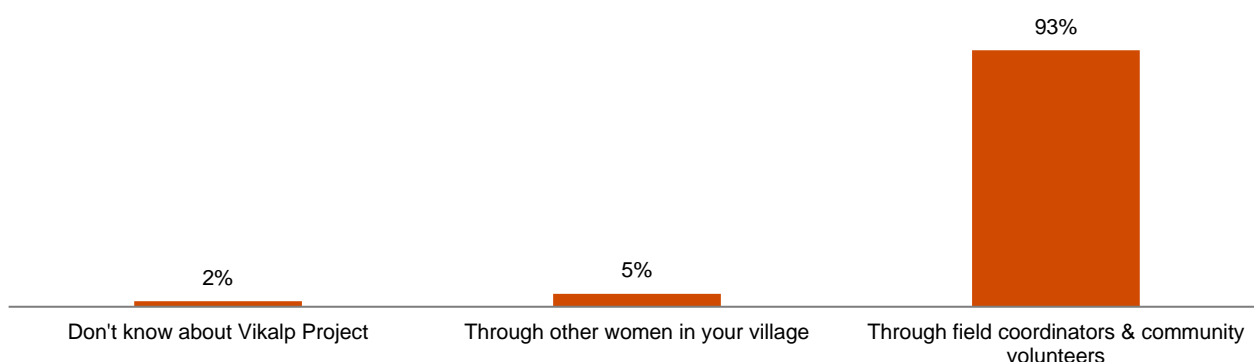
To assess the years of association of respondents with the community institutions, based on the response collected, it was found that **75% (n=253) of the respondents have been actively engaged with the community institutions for more than two to three years**, this showcases that the **members have developed mutual trust and are willing to contribute through collective action.** While 20% (n=253) were associated for more than three years, this duration of association indicates that they have developed a strong connection within the community institution and have a richer understanding of the dynamics and needs of the community. 3% (n=253) of respondents were a part of the community institution for approximately one year, therefore this population needs to be focused for nurturing and inducing them to the systems and processes of community institutions and its functioning and 2% (n=253) of the respondents were not a part of any community institution. Understanding the reason behind non-engagement could provide insights to identify potential challenges that are preventing them from participating in community institutions.

Figure 13: Years of association with community institutions (n=253)



Most of the respondents (almost 93%) came to know about the VIKALP Project through field coordinator and community volunteers from SRIJAN, whereas 5% of the respondents came to know about the project through other women in their villages. 2% of the respondents stated that they were unaware about the VIKALP project.

Figure 14: Awareness about VIKALP Project (n=253)



The role of VLCC representatives is significant in providing marketing support to the local farmers. The VLCC representative takes the responsibility to visit the farmers and informs them about the rate of their produce based on the weight and moisture content. The rate of farm produce at which VLCC procures is decided based on rates provided by the Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) and is subject to change as per the market. The VLCC representative collects the produce from each household and sends it collectively to the FPO, through this process the farmers save on the cost incurred by the farmers individually to transport their produce which gradually adds on to their income.

After receiving the produce at the VLCC, **the FPO disburses the amount of produce directly to the bank accounts of the farmers.** Farmers in the region experience a **swift and efficient process of receiving payment** for their produce through FPO, as the amount gets deposited into their bank accounts within a short period of 2-3 days. The VLCC representative plays a crucial role in streamlining the entire process, ensuring that the farmers timely receive their compensation for their agricultural contribution. Further, **the farmers stated that the transportation cost of their produce has also reduce as they no longer have to pay heavy amount as part of transportation and commissions to the middlemen.**

During our interactions with the women farmers, members of VLCC and FPO it was shared that prior to the intervention of VIKALP project, the farmers use to majorly sell their produce to the local traders. Groundnut, being the primary commodity, was sold at an average price of INR 25-30/ kg based on market fluctuations. Whereas, after the intervention of VIKALP project the farmers get an average price of INR 55-60/ kg. However, it is to be noted that this increase was not solely because of the intervention as the natural increase in the market prices also played a crucial role. As per the respondents, they also sell certain percentage of their produce to the local farmers as VLCC has its own limits in procurement. In the year 2021, the respondents sold their groundnuts at INR 45-50/ kg to the local traders. This shows that **the project beneficiaries were able to get an addition of INR 10-15/ kg for their produce when selling to the VLCC/ FPO which is 10-20% higher than the local market prices.**

Additionally, selling of groundnuts to the FPO also allowed the **farmers to receive payments in a timely manner** as the FPO transfers the payment to farmers within 2-3 days of purchasing their produce. This is a

significant improvement as the farmers had to wait even up to 2 months to receive their payment from the local traders.

3.3. Agriculture Productivity Enhancement

3.3.1. Need for the intervention

Karera, Khaniyadhana and Picchore blocks of Shivpuri district are predominantly agrarian, with farming as the primary occupation for most of the population. The major crops cultivated in the region are ground nut and wheat. However, despite the region's agricultural potential, there are certain challenges that affected productivity.

Low agricultural productivity was identified as one of the significant concerns, majorly due to limited access to quality inputs. Small and fragmented landholdings make it difficult to adopt mechanized farming techniques, furthermore challenges related to pest management and lack of access to knowledge about best farm practices add on to the hurdles.

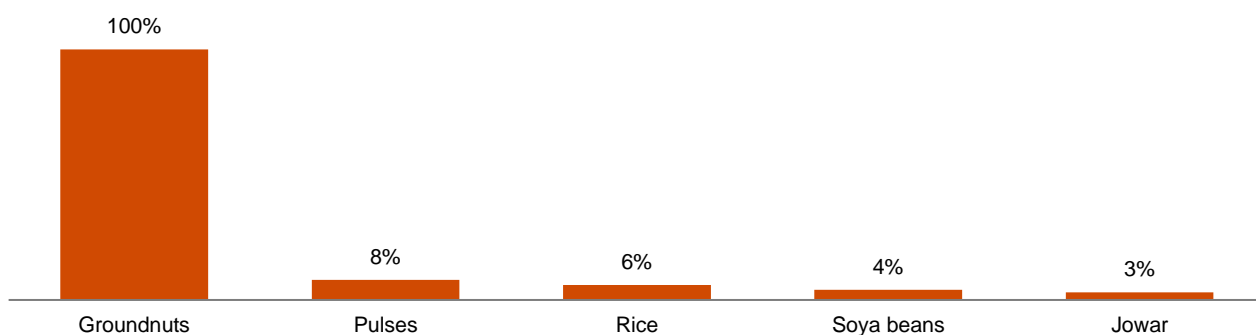
3.3.2. About the intervention

In response to the multiple challenges faced by the farmers in the region, project VIKALP came up with a comprehensive approach to enhance agricultural productivity. It provided the farmers with access to quality input supply such as improved quality of seeds which are more resilient and productive. This not only ensured the farmers to have access to better resources but also encouraged them to adopt efficient farming techniques. Further, the project activities included training of farmers on pre-harvest and post-harvest farm practices by equipping them with knowledge on crop management, pest management and efficient post-harvest handling of the farm produce. The farmers were also trained in bio-pesticides and bio composting techniques and provided the farmers with composting kits. Responses of the local communities with relation to the coverage of the agriculture-related intervention are discussed below.

3.3.3. Key findings and impact of the intervention

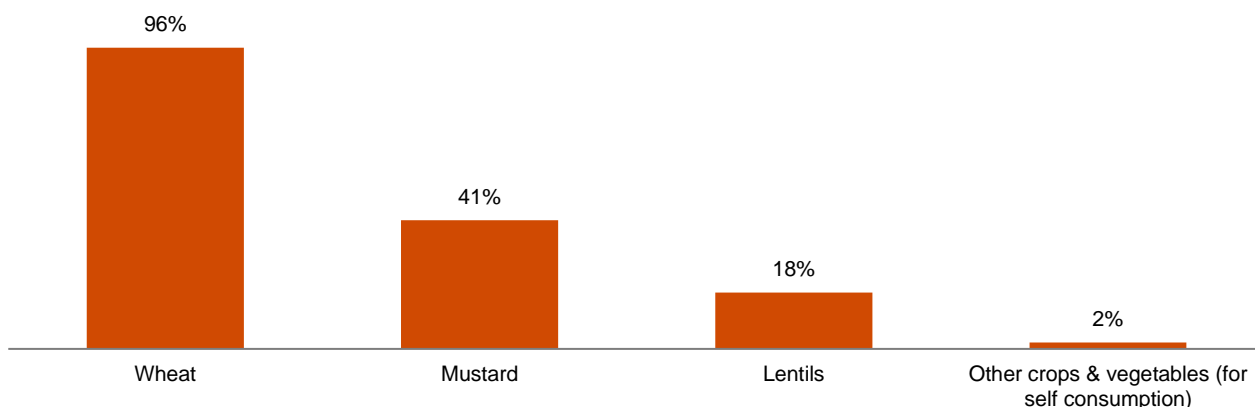
The project comprising of the three blocks is predominantly a groundnut growing belt with the majority being small and marginal farmers with less than 1.5 acres of cultivable land. According to the responses collected, all the respondents (n=253) are engaged in the cultivation of groundnuts. Additionally, 8% (n=253) of the respondents cultivate pulses, 6% (n=253) cultivate rice and 4% (n=253) have included soya bean along with groundnut in their crop selection. A small proportion of 3% mentioned cultivating jowar as a part of their agricultural activity during the season.

Figure 15: Crops cultivated during Kharif season (n=253)



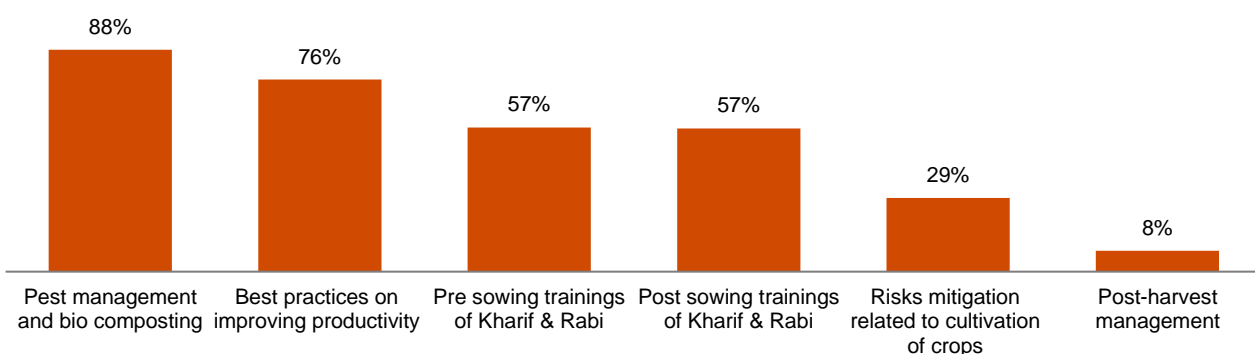
In Rabi season, the respondents have indicated that 96% of them are engaged in cultivation of wheat, making it a predominant crop for the season. Along with wheat, 41% of the respondents grow mustard, while 18% cultivate lentils. Additionally, 2% of the respondents mentioned that they cultivate various other crops and vegetables for self-consumption.

Figure 16: Crops cultivated during Rabi season (n=253)



In course of the study, all the respondents interviewed (n=253) stated that they were the beneficiaries of agriculture productivity enhancement activities. **The most widely received training was on pest management and bio composting, with 88% having reported benefiting from it.** However, the farmers shared that they have been able to practice it in only on around 0.5 acres which showcased good results but due to limited availability of resources required to prepare bio pesticides and bio compost they are facing difficulties in preparing these for larger area of their farmland (1 acre and above). Training on best practices to improve productivity of the crops was received by 76% (n=253) of the respondents. Farmers shared that with the help of bio compost and good quality of seed provided by the project they have witnessed an increase productivity of approximately 50% in their produce. 57% (n=253) of the respondents received trainings on both pre sowing and post sowing techniques of Kharif and Rabi crops. As shared by the farmers, earlier the crops used to get damaged because they were not aware of the land preparation techniques for pre sowing of the crops and post-harvest care which they got to know during the training provided under project VIKALP. 29% (n=253) of the respondents have received training on risk mitigation related to crop cultivation and 8% (n=253) of the respondents have received training on post-harvest crop management. **While the above-mentioned training provided have been able to reach the target group to enhance agricultural productivity there remains the scope for further development in imparting risk mitigation and post-harvest management training.** Focusing on these can significantly improve the overall resilience and productivity of the farmers.

Figure 17: Trainings received on agriculture productivity enhancement (n=253)



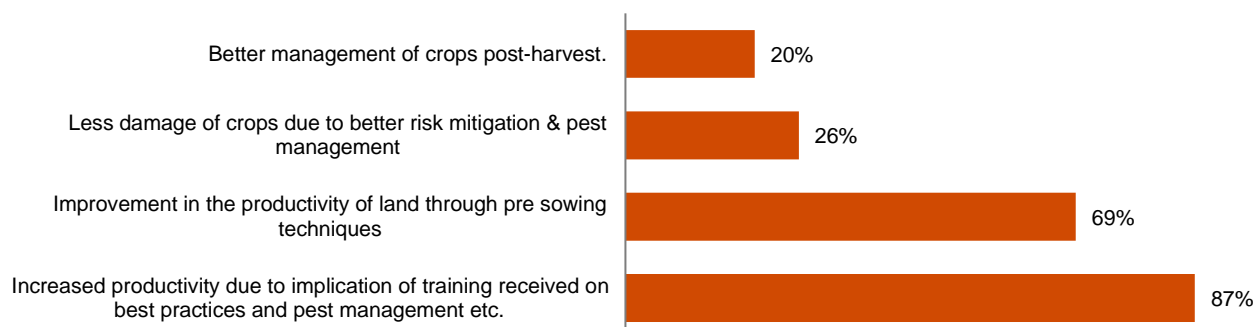
After receiving training and exposure to various agricultural practices, respondents have reported the following changes in their farming operations.

- 20% (n=253) of the respondents stated that they have developed an enhanced ability to manage their crops post harvesting.
- 26% (n=253) of the respondents mentioned that there is a notable reduction in crop damage, due to the adoption of improved risk mitigation and pest management practices learnt during the training.
- 69% (n=253) of them stated that there is an improved productivity in their land due to the application of pre-sowing and post sowing techniques.

- Additionally, 87%(n=253) of the respondents credited that the training which they received on best practices and pest management has resulted in improving their overall productivity of crops.

These changes validate the effectiveness of the training received by the target group and its positive impact in improving the productivity of crops.

Figure 18: Change observed after trainings and exposures (n=253)



As per the interaction with the women farmers and community member it was shared that the prior to the intervention on an **average the productivity of groundnut was around 4-5 quintals per acre of land** where during the intervention 20 kgs of improved variety of seeds were provided to the farmers, which resulted in an **increased productivity 7-10 quintals per acre.**

3.4. Natural Resource Management

3.4.1. Need for the intervention

Project VIKALP focused on meeting the needs of the farmers, to address the challenges faced by the farmers regarding scarcity of water to irrigate their land. Due to the lack of irrigation facilities, there was a high rate of migration the intervention area. The need for natural resource management was observed by a combination of agricultural and environmental challenges. The local communities face scarcity of water for irrigation purposes in many of the villages. Therefore, there was a need for developing water harvesting structures and construction of small farm ponds as an integral part of the intervention. The project implementation team observed that there is a need to implement farm bunding techniques to retain the moisture level of soil which will improve the productivity of farmers. Additionally, there was a need to introduce drip and sprinkler systems to ensure the efficient utilization of water resources to irrigate the farms.

3.4.2. About the intervention

The intervention focused on construction of water conservation structures such as farm ponds, Gabion and Doha structures, etc. to ensure that rainwater is being harvested and can be used for irrigating the farmland. Along with that, the project also supported the farmers in doing field bunding to reduce surface water runoff and check soil erosion. As per the Annual report of the VIKALP project (2021-22) shared by PRIPL, the project has created 22 farm ponds, 1 Gabion structure, 15 Doha structures along with supporting the local communities in bunding 4585 cubic meters.

3.4.3. Key findings and impact of the project

A sample of 47 respondents were interviewed to assess the impact of the water related intervention carried out in Karera, Picchore and Khaniyadhana blocks. Based on the interactions with the beneficiaries, it was found that **49% of the respondents have got small farm ponds constructed and bunding of their farmland has been done to stop soil erosion and maintain the quality of soil.**

On asking about, the benefits received by the respondents through water related interventions, 89% of the respondents that the project interventions have helped increasing their cropping intensity. The average

landholding among the respondents as reported by them during the FGD was between 1-1.5 acres. Earlier, due to limited access to irrigation facilities, the **farmers could only cultivate 50% of their total land during rabi season**. However, due to the construction of farm ponds, gabion and Doha structures, water is now available for longer duration of time and the respondents reported that they could **now cultivate around 75% of their land during the rabi season**.

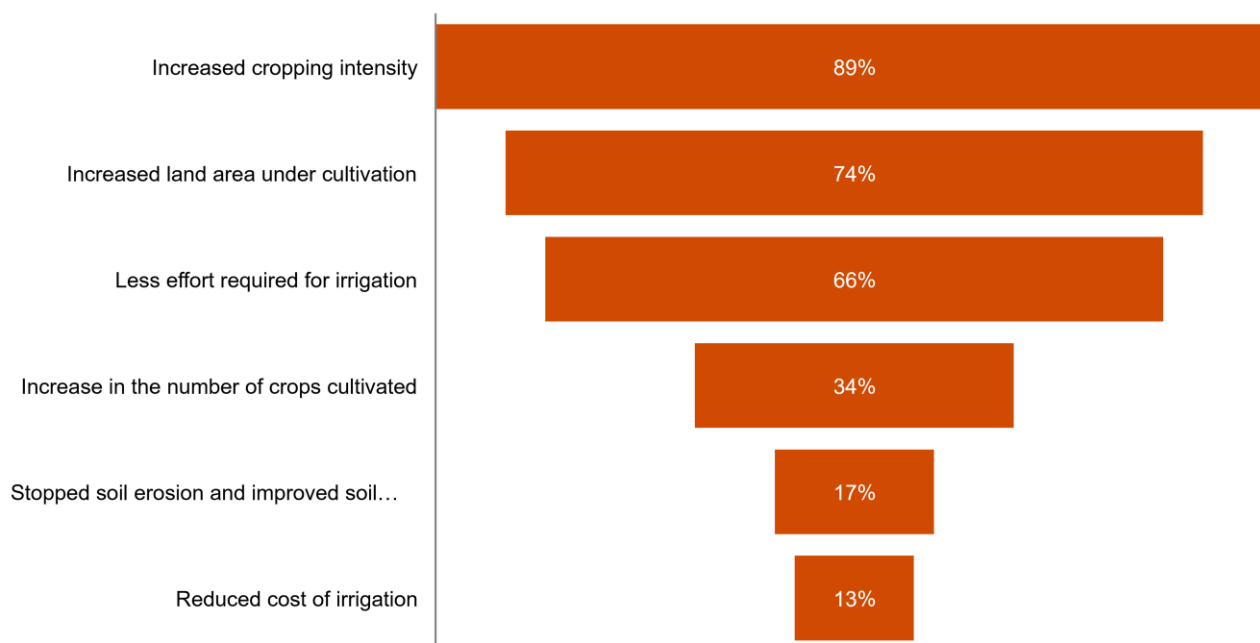
Additionally, **74% of respondents reported to have been able to increase their land area under cultivation** with the help of farm ponds as they are able to irrigate their land which they could not irrigate prior to the intervention due to lack of availability of water infrastructures. It was found through the qualitative discussions that on an average there has been an **increase to the tune of 1/4th of an acre** in the land area under cultivation among the respondent farmers.

66% of the respondents have claimed that they require less effort for irrigating their farms post intervention because of improved water conservation structures.

There is also an **increase in the number of crops being cultivated** by the farmers, as claimed by 34% of the respondents. Earlier, majority of farmers were growing only groundnut during kharif season and mustard, gram, and wheat during the rabi season. However, due to improved availability of water for irrigation, some of the farmers are also **growing vegetables during the rabi season**. It was observed that a few of the farmers have also started **growing paddy in limited capacity** (restricted to low-lands). In addition to this, there also has been slight changes to the cropping pattern in rabi season among the respondent farmers as they reported of **dedicating more land to wheat instead of mustard** (requires less water than wheat) after the intervention as they now have better access to irrigation.

The water intervention has been able to effectively mitigate the problem of soil erosion and have improved the soil quality through farm bunding techniques as reported by 17% of the beneficiaries. Lastly, 17% of the respondents have shared that the water interventions such as farm bunding have helped in stopping soil erosion and has improved the soil health and 13% of the respondents have stated that there is a reduction in the cost incurred for irrigation, attributed to the improved water systems installed in their farms supported by the project.

Figure 19: Benefits received through water interventions (n=47)



3.5. Horticulture Promotion – Nano Orchards

3.5.1. Need for the intervention

The conventional agricultural model, which relied solely on staple crop cultivation failed to adequately address the challenge faced by the farmer, it felt short in reducing the inherent risks and dependency on a single agricultural produce. This dependency made farmers highly susceptible to various factors such as climate change, market fluctuations and pest outbreaks. Crop failure, in particular, posted a threat to the livelihoods and financial stability of the farmers.

The need to promote nano orchard was felt as it diversifies the agricultural landscape and creates an additional source of income. This diversification not only mitigates the risk associated with monoculture but also adds a layer of climate resilience. Fruit trees, when appropriately selected, tend to be more resilient to certain environmental changes, providing a safety net for the farmers during crop failure.

3.5.2. About the intervention

The intervention focused on promotion of nano orchards through awareness creation on climate resilient fruits and facilitating the plantation of sapling, in half acres of land, optimizing the space for diversification and climate resilient horticulture practices. The plantation guava (I-49 and pink Taiwan quality), papaya (red lady) and lemon were selected, for they are adaptable to the local climate, making them more resilient to weather extremes, pests, and diseases. The project through convergence with the Department of Horticulture, procured the saplings of guava, papaya, and lemon and distributed it to the beneficiaries.

3.5.3. Key findings and impact of the project

Among the total respondents (n=253) interviewed during the assessment, 59% of the respondents expressed that they were aware about the nano orchard intervention being implemented through VIKALP project. In terms of actual adoption, 21% (n=253) of respondents established nano orchards through the project's support.

Figure 20: Awareness about nano orchard intervention (n=253)

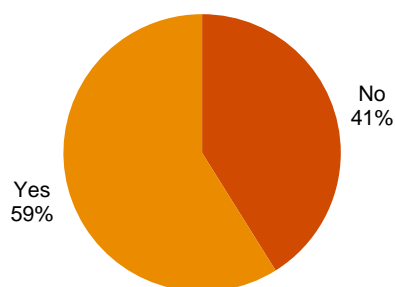
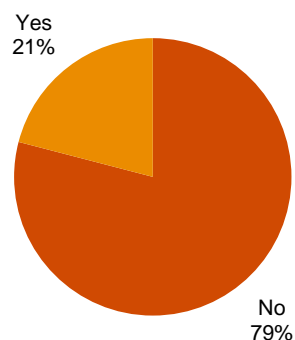
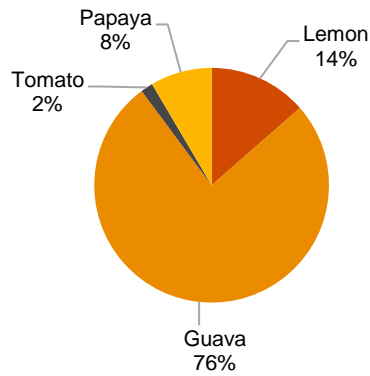


Figure 21: Percentage of beneficiaries who practice nano orchard (n=253)



Among the 53 respondents who reported of having nano-orchards, 76% of the respondents reported of growing guava in their nano orchards. 14% and 8% of the respondents reported of growing lemon and papaya respectively while only 2% of the respondents stated that they grow tomatoes in their nano orchard.

Figure 22: Variety of fruits cultivated in nano orchard (n=53)

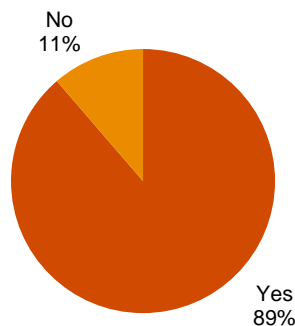


During the interaction with the beneficiaries of nano orchards, it was observed that for the majority of beneficiaries saplings planted are at nurturing stage and are yet to bear fruit. However, the beneficiaries who received their plants in the year 2019-20, the nano orchards have transformed into flourishing fruit bearing trees. **These orchards have yielded approximately 35-40 kgs of guava, 15-20 kgs of papaya and 10-15 kgs of lemon annually.**

In the figure 66, it can be observed that, 89% (n=53) of the respondents have reported that there has been an increase in the household consumption of fruits through nano orchard. While interacting with the community members it was shared that prior to practicing of nano orchard there was limited to almost no consumption of fruits at household level because they had to buy it from the outside which would add to their expenses. But after the intervention, they are now able to grow the fruits in their own land which has improved their consumption level and added to the dietary diversity.

While the **lemon and papaya** produced are being **used for household consumption**, **guava** is not only **contributing towards enhancing dietary diversity** but is also **providing an additional income to the respondent households**. The **average annual income generated from selling the guava** cultivated was reported to be around **INR 10,000/-**. This signifies that nano orchards are not only offering food security but are also acting as a means of substantial income generation.

Figure 23: Increase in household consumption of fruits through nano orchard (n=53)



3.6. Perception of beneficiaries about VIKALP Project

Perception of the beneficiaries regarding the VIKALP project is positive across various criteria. 83% (n=253) agreement among respondents, expressing strong belief in the effectiveness of the project and addressing the challenges faced by the community by facilitating strong community institution, knowledge on best agricultural practices, improved irrigation facilities and alternative source of income. This signals a collective recognition of the project's positive impact.

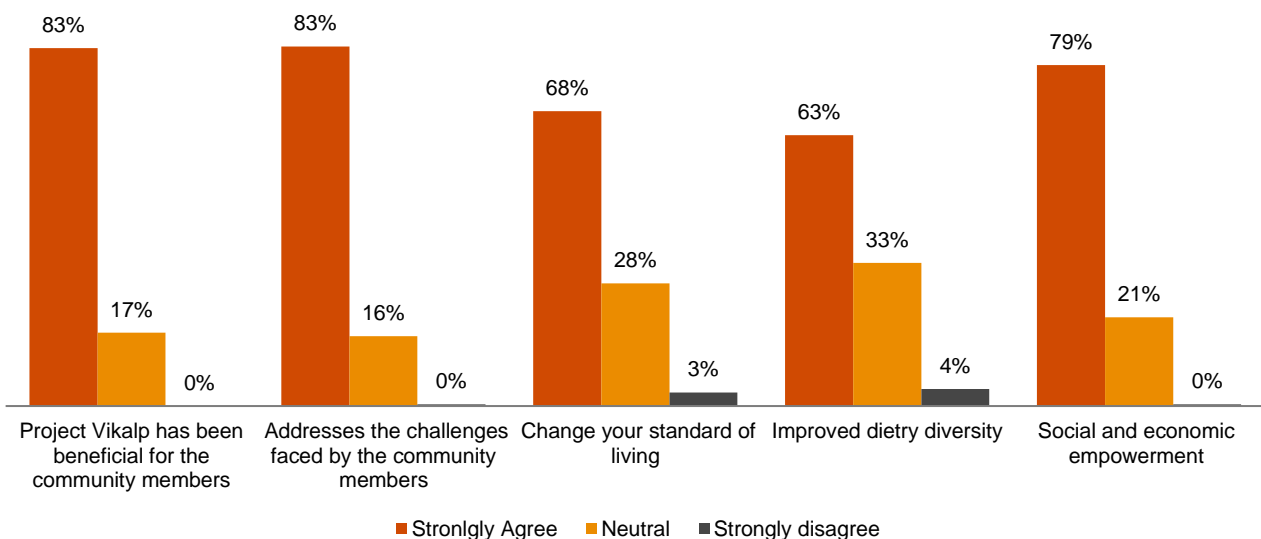
68% (n=253) of the respondents strongly agree that the project has brought about change in enhancing their standard of living, by adopting improved agricultural practices and having an alternative source of income they have an increase in overall income which they save for the future needs, which was not possible earlier.

63% (n=253) of the respondents agreed that they have been able to improve their dietary diversity by growing varieties of fruits and vegetable for their self-consumption with the support of improved irrigation facilities and awareness on agricultural productivity. 33% (n=253) of the respondents have been neutral on this as they may not have experienced noticeable change in their dietary diversity practices or may be waiting for further developments.

79% (n=253) of respondents suggests an acknowledgement of the project's positive impact in bringing about social and economic empowerment. The respondents have experienced social and economic empowerment through systematic functioning of the community institutions. There has been a shift in the lives of women from performing basic household chores to providing financial support to the family. 21% (n=253) of the respondents have been neutral about this because they are still in the process of achieving their desired level of socio-economic changes and are working towards it. From the analysis, it can be stated that the perception of beneficiaries toward VIKALP Project is notably favourable showcasing its positive impact on the community and overall well-being.

The consistently high agreement percentage of the respondents across different criteria underscores not only the project's positive impact but also its comprehensive reach, portraying a transformation in enhancing the community's standard of living, dietary practices, improved farm practices and socio-economic empowerment.

Figure 24: Perception of beneficiaries about VIKALP Project (n=253)



3.7. Stories of change

Change story: 1 - Breaking free from societal bounds, to craft a path of financial independence and create my own identity

Ms. Janki (changed name) shared that being the “Bahu” (Newlywed married woman) of the village there were restrictions and boundaries to be followed. She was expected to stay at home and do household chores only. Any work that required going out of the house was done by the male members of the family. Having completed her studies till 12th grade she aspired to grow further in life and have her own identity and earn financial independence. However, being married at an early age she could not do much. She came to know about the VIKALP Project supported by Pernod Ricard through community volunteers in their village. She expressed her interest in joining the WPG. Initially her husband did not agree to it but having gained awareness about the benefits of community institutions he gradually agreed, and she joined Santoshi Mata WPG in their village.

After joining **Santoshi Mata WPG** in **Sirsona Village, Picchore Block** supported by Pernod Ricard, she got the opportunity to attend trainings about benefits of community institution, collective action, and value chain. She proactively participated in WPG meetings and training and showed keen interest too. Based on her consistent participation and level of education she was selected as the **VLCC representative**. She started working as VLCC representative which not only gave her the confidence to interact with other community members in the nearby villages but also started to earn. With her earnings she supported her husband and family. She feels extremely happy to be associated with VIKALP project as her association with VIKALP project did not just provide an identity in the village and nearby areas, but it became a steppingstone to financial independence. She felt that being part of VIKALP had given her an identity and her self-confidence had reached new heights.

Change story: 2 - Demonstrating power of collective action through community institutions

The **members of Maha Kaal Women Producer Group (WPG), Debko, Karera** shared that before becoming a part of the WPG, all of them were part of different Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in their villages. They were dedicatedly having their SHG meetings and collected the savings in their SHG's accounts on a weekly basis for almost two years. Despite their commitment, they struggled to envision a path for growth. In 2019, with the implementation of VIKALP project, they came to know about the concepts of Women Producer Groups and Farmer Producer Organisation, soon collectively they became member of the Maha Kaal Women Producer Group this gave a direction to them, offering them the chance to participate collectively in a larger group as one unit.

The opportunity presented itself through collectively selling their farm produce to women led SRI PRI Farmer Producer Organization formed and supported by Pernod Ricard and Srijan. The members of Maha Kaal WPG sold their produce collectively securing fair prices that not only boosted their earnings but also eliminated the burden of individual transportation cost, this wasn't just a financial success but a demonstration of the power of collective action. The income they generated coupled with the savings on transportation costs significantly improved their financial well-being and they are grateful for this positive change to the VIKALP project.

Change story – 3 Cultivating Dreams through farm ponds

Mr. Ram (name changed), farmer from Picchore block have been associated with VIKALP project since 2019, before the project began in his village, he had 1.5 acres of cultivable land but his farming endeavours were limited to less than one acres of land due to lack of irrigation facilities. Despite having his own land, he had to migrate outside his village in search of livelihood and worked as agricultural labour in other's farm. The turning point came to his life with the initiation of VIKALP project in his village. The construction of farm pond supported by Pernod Ricard through the project provided him the ability to irrigate all 1.5 acres of his land. This has led to an increase in his overall income by 50% percent as now he is able to cultivate in the entire land parcel. Earlier, his annual income was INR. 50,000 but after the intervention it increased to more than INR. 1,00,000 as he can earn more through more cultivation.

The project has not only helped increasing his annual income but also addressed the issue of migration and he no longer has to stay away from his family. Now that he has an improved income from own farmland, the need for migration to other areas for livelihood has diminished.

3.8. IRECS analysis

Based on the interactions with the key stakeholders and desk review of the documents, the impact of the program was evaluated on 'IRECS framework'. The IRECS analysis summary has been presented in below Table:

Parameter	Assessment from the study
Inclusiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project focused on working with the most marginalised communities of the region. All of the respondents reported having less than 1.5 acres of cultivable land. Many of these respondent households have to migrate to different places in search of during the Rabi season as they lack access to irrigation to cultivate Rabi crops. The project largely worked with women farmers from the 3 blocks of Picchore, Karera and Khaniyadhana. These women farmers mostly belonged from the OBC and ST categories. By mobilizing the women and encouraging their participation, the project not only fosters gender inclusivity but also recognizes the essential role of women in agricultural and rural development.
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project's relevance is evident in its tailored approach to specific challenges and needs of the community. The various problems faced by the farmers such as unavailability of market linkage and value chain for their produce, low productivity, lack of water infrastructures and dependency on single source of income through agriculture. The challenges have been addressed by the project in the form of tailor-made solutions such as formation of women led community institutions which has empowered the community to take collective action and get fair price for their produce cutting down the transportation costs and gradually adding on to the overall income. Additionally, the knowledge dissemination and training provided on best farm package of practices has been able to mitigate the challenge of low productivity in the region and has enhanced agricultural productivity. The water infrastructure development has not only helped the farmers in dealing with the problem of unavailability of water for irrigation but has also provided an efficient and cost-effective solution to irrigate their land enabling them to increase their crop intensity and land area under cultivation. Nano orchard has provided the farmers to diversify their sources of income and mitigates the risk associated with dependency on only one source of income i.e., agriculture. The plantation of climate resilient fruits in these orchards are adaptable to the change in the climate and provides the farmers with safety net during crop failure due to climatic conditions or pest attacks.
Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The effectiveness of the project is demonstrated by its ability to reach the targeted group of small and marginalised farmers. Status of migration prior to the intervention of VIKALP project was 45% (n=253) because of lack of livelihood opportunities in their villages during the off season which has reduced to 36% after the implementation of the project. 9% decrease in the overall percentage shows that the project has provided to be effective to reduce the overall migration of farmers. The formation of community institutions has showed a positive impact in empowering the women of the village. 98% of the women have been mobilized into the SHGs, WPGs and FPO. With the support of these community institutions, they have been able to get around 10-20% of increase in the price of groundnut they used to receive from the market prices for their produce.

Parameter	Assessment from the study
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The trainings and exposures received by the beneficiaries under the agriculture productivity enhancement activity has proven to be effective as 87% of the respondents have observed increase in productivity due to implication of training received on best practices and pest management. It was shared that the prior to the intervention on an average the productivity of groundnut was around 4 to 5 quintals per acre of land where during the intervention 20 kgs of improved variety of seeds were provided to the farmers, which resulted in an increased productivity 7 to 10 quintals per acre. Earlier, due to limited access to irrigation facilities, the farmers could only cultivate 50% of their total land during rabi season. However, due to the construction of farm ponds, gabion and Doha structures, water is now available for longer duration of time and the respondents reported that they could now cultivate around 75% of their land during the rabi season. Additionally, 74% of respondents reported to have been able to increase their land area under cultivation with the help of farm ponds as they are able to irrigate their land which they could not irrigate prior to the intervention due to lack of availability of water infrastructures. It was found through the qualitative discussions that on average there has been an increase to the tune of 1/4th of an acre in the land area under cultivation among the respondent farmers. There is also an increase in the number of crops being cultivated by the farmers, as claimed by 34% of the respondents. Many farmers are now growing vegetables during the rabi season, which was not the case earlier. In addition to this, there also has been slight changes to the cropping pattern in rabi season among the respondent farmers as they reported of dedicating more land to wheat instead of mustard (requires less water than wheat) after the intervention as they now have better access to irrigation. Prior to practicing nano orchard there was limited to almost no consumption of fruits at household level because they had to buy it from the outside which would add to their expenses. But after the intervention, they are now able to grow the fruits in their own land which has improved their consumption level and added to the dietary diversity. Additionally, the average annual income generated from selling the guava cultivated was reported to be around INR 10,000/-. This signifies that nano orchards are not only offering food security but are also acting as a means of substantial income generation
Convergence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project has fostered convergence with the horticulture department to procure saplings of Guava, Lemon, and Papaya which were then distributed to the local communities to establish the nano orchards. As per the team of SRIJAN, although the target was to form 120 nano orchards under the VIKALP project, but due to the assistance received from the Horticulture Department, they were able to establish 350 nano orchards
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The sustainability of VIKALP project is ensured by creation of strong community institutions. The project has promoted one FPO in Karera block having 800 members to provide marketing support to local farmers of groundnut. The FPO institutions in the future can help in disbursing the support currently provided by the project. Community-led institutions have been formed and strengthened to take up production and marketing of groundnut and mustard without the support from the project. The local farmers have been trained in adopting sustainable agricultural practices by focusing on preparing their own agri-inputs instead of depending on the external input shops. The adoption of such practices by the local farmers would not only help in reducing water and carbon footprint in agriculture but also, reduce their vulnerabilities which arise due to dependence on external stakeholders such as input shops.



3.9. Limitation

- During the impact assessment study, for the VIKALP project, one of the significant challenges faced by the PW research team was, due to the project's focus on agricultural activities and harvesting season, a considerable portion of the respondents were engaged in their fields. This posed challenge as in mobilizing the beneficiaries for data collection as it became time consuming.
- Time constraint faced during the collection of data made it challenging to conduct the interviews during the data collection process. Many of the beneficiaries had limited availability for interviews. This constraint made it challenging to gather comprehensive information from the respondents. The respondents' time limitation affected the depth and breadth of the data collected.

3.10. Recommendation

Capacity building of FPO staff and Board of Directors (BoD)

- Currently, significant portion of the work of the FPO is carried out with the support of the SRIJAN team. In order to ensure future sustainability of the FPO, it will be crucial to provide regular training in leadership and FPO management to the Board of Directors and FPO staff. Enabling the FPO leadership and staff including the CEO to take informed decisions based on real time market information through the use of apps such as eNAM (National Agriculture Market), Agmarknet, NCDEX, etc. can be essential to make the FPOs profitable.

Ensure access to quality and affordable agri-inputs

- Availability of quality seeds for various crops is a major issue as highlighted by the local communities. Requirement levels are such that it can help sustain an input trading business. Promoting individual/ collective entrepreneurship to leverage the void between demand and supply for quality seeds can help in creating sustainable social enterprises. Identifying local youth and training and handholding them on agri-entrepreneurship to establish micro or small secondary enterprises around seed breeding and trading and nurseries can help the local farmers in getting quality agri-inputs at local level.

Creating processing infrastructure and strong market linkages

- Establishment of processing units at community level through development of individual enterprises or strengthening of FPOs can help the local communities to produce value added items from groundnut, mustard, and other commodities. Groundnut has multiple uses across various sectors and the future programs can support the local communities to take up primary and secondary processing activities to produce oil, snacks, etc. Also, it is important for the Groundnut FPO to create further market linkages preferably with institutional buyers (large aggregators) to cater its marketing services to all its members. Start-ups such as DeHaat, Fasal, Dvara E-registry, Agribazaar, etc. which procure agricultural and horticultural products from FPOs directly can also be reached out to create linkage for the existing FPO.

Diversifying product portfolio of the FPO


- In addition to groundnut, the FPOs can also work on other locally available products like milk, mustard, and guava as many farmers reported of being involved in producing these products. This will strengthen their value chains and make them more remunerative for the local communities. It will be important to understand the market potential of such products and identify the possibility of introducing new ones in the context of the local areas through new studies.

Capacity building of farmers on adopting natural farming/ regenerative agriculture techniques

- Farmers lacked the technical know-how to effectively use the locally available resources in agriculture. Farmer field schools, pilot plots, and community-cadre based farm-level support can be organized to give practical training to farmers on preparation of bio-inputs and opting for resource saving practices like mulching⁴ and line sowing⁵.

⁴ Mulching as a Sustainable Water and Soil Saving Practice in Agriculture: A Review (<https://www.mdpi.com/2073-4395/12/8/1881>)

⁵ CIMMYT (International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center) - <https://repository.cimmyt.org/bitstream/handle/10883/20862/61876.pdf?sequence=6>



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