

Presented at The Tenth IDCA International Conference

Poverty Eradication and Climate Change Mitigation in India

October 6-7, 2012

**Illinois Institute of Technology, Rice Campus, Wheaton,
Illinois**

Presented by: Rajasvini Bhansali

**Executive Director, International Development Exchange (IDEX),
San Francisco, CA**

Promoting Innovative Approaches for Farming in the Desert



- **Founded in 1985 – 27 year old track record of supporting more than 500 grassroots, community-led organizations in Africa, Asia and Latin America. See Video: [Connecting You to Grassroots Solutions to Poverty](#).**
- **Serving more than 1.2 million people annually in impoverished and marginalized communities.**
- **20 year old history in India supporting more than 50 grassroots groups.**
- **Sustainable initiatives that: 1) Empower Women; 2) Build Local Economies; and 3) Care for the Environment.**

IDEX Partners in India

- Holistic and Practical Approach to Poverty
- *Sarvodaya* and *Gram Swarajya*

Gramin Vikas Vigyan Samiti (GRAVIS)

- Jodhpur, Rajasthan
- Founded in 1983
- Programs in areas such as:
 - Women's Empowerment
 - Water Security
 - Agriculture and Animal Husbandry
 - Health
 - Education
 - Mineworkers' Rights
 - People's Organizations

Sahyog Sansthan

- Udaipur District, Rajasthan
- Founded in 1988
- Programs in areas such as:
 - Self-Help Groups (SHGs)
 - Health
 - Natural Resource Development
 - Agriculture and Livestock Development
 - Income Generating Activities

Water Security in Rajasthan – Efforts of Gramin Vikas Vigyan Samiti (GRAVIS)

- Community based interventions, community ownership and capacity building to bring about water security.
- Development of organizational structures, implementation of construction strategies and trainings on optimal water harvesting to help communities gain self-reliance.
- The result is the creation of *taankas, nadis and beris*.

| Type of water harvesting structure | Constructed in 2000-2001 | Households benefiting in 2000-2001 | Constructed by 2010-2011 | Households benefited by 2010-2011 |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <i>Taanka</i> | 192 | 1,185 | 5,216 | 17,378 |
| <i>Naadi</i> | 31 | 4,220 | 238 | 81,325 |
| <i>Beri</i> | 15 | 360 | 515 | 5,355 |

Taankas



A Woman with her *taanka*

- *Taanka* is a small underground rainwater cistern constructed of masonry.
- GRAVIS constructs individual and community *taankas*.
- The individual *taanka* can hold up to 20,000 liters of water, which supplies enough water for 8 months for a family of 7, and the community *taanka* provides for up to 10 households.



***Naadi* full of rainwater**



Desilting of *Naadi*

Naadi

- *Naadi* – a human-made pond and the single greatest public resource in the village.
- Drinking water for humans and livestock.
- Capacity is 40,000 cubic meters of water. Smaller ones hold 700 cubic meters of water.
- GRAVIS has initiated programs to rebuild, repair and desilt *naadis* in poor condition.

Beris



Woman fetching water from renovated *beri*. *Beri's* mouth is covered with a concrete platform.

Beris are shallow, small diameter percolation wells.

These can lie close to the bed of a *naadi*. The deeply percolated water is drawn through the *beri* after the *naadi* has dried out.

Beris are usually 7-10 meters deep.

Poverty Alleviation in Rajasthan – Efforts of Sahyog Sansthan



A Self-Help Group meeting in Khodi Pipli,
Rajasthan

- Self-Help Groups (SHGs) – dozen community members working towards sustainable agriculture and income generation activities.
- Currently, there are over 200 SHGs in 100 villages reaching 3,500 women.
- More than \$110,000 in collective savings.

Self-Help Groups (SHGs) And Economic Livelihoods



Villagers using the savings of SHGs for development projects

- SHG savings used to make internal loans.
- Loans are used to meet health expenses, purchase of consumer items, seeds, cattle feed and fertilizers, organizing social functions, education, death, accidents and so on.

SHGs and Natural Resource Development

- Regenerated thousands of acres of degraded land through use of local seeds and sustainable agricultural practices, including the preparation of organic pesticides and the practice of worm composting.
- Promoting women's involvement in agricultural decision-making.



Vermicomposting provides organic nutrients for crops and helps retain soil moisture.