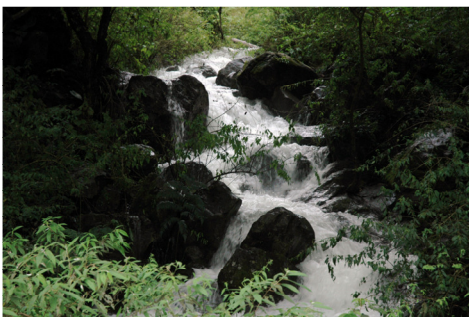




# review

## 2009-2010



**Pan Himalayan Grassroots Development Foundation**

[www.grassrootsindia.com](http://www.grassrootsindia.com)



Outreach Program Office Village

## About Us

The Pan Himalayan **Grassroots** Development Foundation is established as a non-profit voluntary organization under the Societies Registration Act (1860) at the office of the Registrar of Societies, Delhi since November 1992.

The primary aim of Grassroots is to initiate peoples action at the grassroots for restoration of ecological security in languishing river basins through holistic mountain development programs, in order to improve the quality of life.

Over the past seventeen years, Grassroots has been able to evolve a holistic intervention strategy which channels resources - managerial, technical and financial - directly to people and associations of the communities, working at the village/watershed level. The emphasis is on self-help participation and the belief that average villagers have the desire, the right and the capability to promote their own welfare and prosperity and to participate in decisions that affect their lives.

Grassroots continues to be a lean and independent organization, which reaches out to far-flung micro watersheds in the central and western Himalaya through **Outreach Program Offices** located in the states of Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh. The composite spearhead team comprises of twenty professionals-in-development, almost all of whom are from the rural areas of the Himalaya.

Over the years, Grassroots has been able to initiate programs on improving the quality of life of mountain communities through sustainable community development strategies, training and technology transfer, micro enterprises and marketing by strengthening the capacity of community based organisations, selected voluntary organizations and creation of new forms of organisations such as Kumaon Artisans Guild and Mahila Umang Producers Company.

Through forging such partnerships, Grassroots has been able to spread the benefits of holistic mountain development strategies to communities in 650 villages, spread over 27 Blocks in 12 Districts in the states of Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh.

In order to address issues related to sustainable mountain development in a comprehensive manner, Grassroots has been involved with the Restoration of Gagas River Basin in Almora district of Uttarakhand for the past five years. The Gagas river basin plan has been endorsed by HELP, UNESCO as part of its global efforts for restoration of languishing river systems. The idea is to demonstrate the feasibility of a holistic river basin management plan, based upon the three pillars of ecology, economy and equity.

During the period under review, it may also be worth mentioning the following:

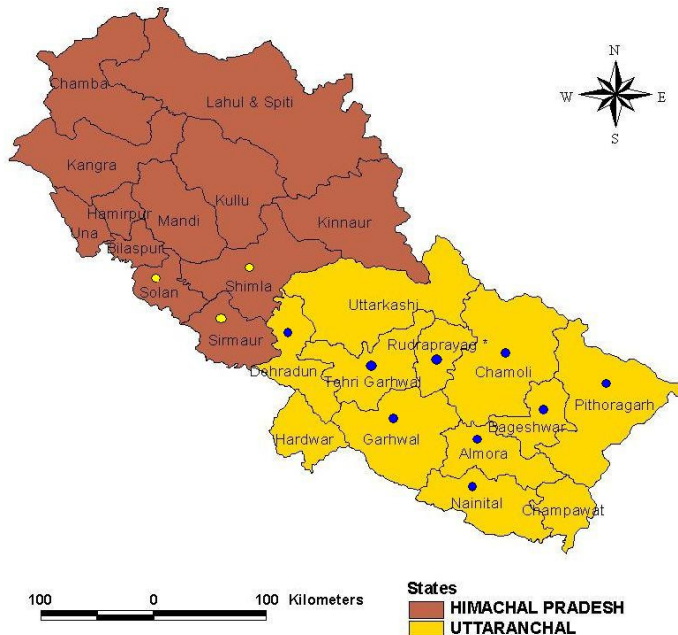


Mainstreaming Infiltration Wells as an appropriate technology application in the drinking water sector of Uttarakhand, through a collaboration between Grassroots and Jal Sansthan, Government of Uttarakhand, wherein Kumaon Artisans Guild has also been recognised as the key implementing organisation. This has led to the growth of the *barefoot engineers* guild in a manner envisaged by Grassroots for the last decade.



Transformation of Mahila Umang Samiti, from that of a voluntary organisation to a Producers Company, to account for the growth of business initiatives of over 2,000 producer-members. This has been strengthened by establishing the *House of Umang*, a new facility which accommodates most activities of the producers company under one roof with over 5,000 square feet of space.

Finally, it may also be mentioned that Grassroots is slowly emerging as a Resource Organisation, not just for the two above mentioned initiatives which directly provides sustainable livelihoods to over 100 barefoot engineers and 2,000 small farming-families, but also hundreds of communities who are being empowered to adapt to climate change issues through adoption of appropriate technologies. Alongside, Grassroots is being requested to engage in macro-level issues, like the campaign for Safe Foods, Climate Change and Mitigation of Black Carbon.



Map of Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh showing Outreach Program Districts



## Eco-restoration of Gagas River Basin

*The Gagas river originates in the sacred forests of Pandokholi in Almora district, of the Kumaon Himalaya in the state of Uttarakhand. The river is largely defined through the flow of over fourteen major streams or gadheras on both banks, and flows for about 50 kms prior to merging with Ramganga (West) river. Gagas river basin is spread over 500 square kms with a population of over 120,000 in 370 villages.*

The interface between man and nature is a necessary condition for survival of mountain farming systems, which depends upon adequate flow of a stream, biomass supplies from the forest support area in terms of tree leaf-fodder and tree leaf-litter for organic compost - which may or may not have a market value. The synergy between forests and water has traditionally been a matter of reverence for mountain communities.

The colonial perspective, for over a century, of viewing forests as a natural resource of the state which could be harvested in terms of ancient trees and thereby provide an impetus to economic growth has been the single most important reason for creating the 'tragedy of the commons'.

The loss or lack of title to environmental assets is viewed, by Grassroots, as an additional component of poverty, leading to the conclusion that environmental conservation is actually a necessary fundamental to poverty alleviation. The poor are often forced to over-exploit limited local natural resources in order to satisfy immediate household necessities, and in a way, the poor are actually both victims and agents of environmental destruction and that policies addressing these issues ought to consciously consider both.

Briefly, concepts like sustainable mountain development are more like a mirage in the desert unless forest ecosystems are restored for adequate hydrological and nutrient recycling functions.

\* The habitat of Paradise Flycatcher is around the rivers/lakes at 4,000 feet in Nainital district. For the first time, the bird was seen at higher grounds of 6,000 feet at Ranikhet this summer. Certainly we do not need the weatherman to tell us which the mercury is rising.



So it seems that the order of the day would be for organizations like Grassroots to establish a coalition between various stakeholders, especially in the ongoing eco-restoration program in the Gagas river basin. Wherein, impacts such as reduction in food production, water scarcity, loss of forest biomass and enhanced risk to human health add to the burden of women, making them one of the groups most vulnerable to climate change. To this effect, during the year under review, activities in Gagas River Basin progressed as follows:

The focus on renewal of the hydrological cycle and its linkages with sustainable mountain farming systems has led to the galvanization of marginalized communities to form appropriate institutional structures at the grassroots – self help groups of women at the hamlets have led to the creation of a dynamic basin-level federation, which in turn has been able to initiate an effective dialogue with other stakeholders and thereby evolve a multi stakeholder platform.

This approach has forged a coalition of interest between stakeholders to share lessons regarding ecological restoration which leads to fulfilling the millennium development goals in the following manner:

- Providing a fresh vegetal cover on degraded commons and renewal of traditional methods for soil and moisture conservation
- Swift spread of appropriate technologies in cross cutting sectors like drinking water, environmental sanitation, renewable energy and rainwater harvesting
- Improving food security and livelihoods through land-use optimisation and establishment of market linkages directly between producer-farmers and consumers

During the period under review, dialogues regarding eco-restoration were consolidated with residents of two major *gadheras* – Dusad and Kanari. And, similar efforts were initiated in a major *gadhera* – Malegar, along with selected villages in adjoining *gadheras*.

A community-driven institutional pattern is being strengthened in the *gadheras*, with the sole idea of enabling communities to take matters in their own hands, which would ultimately lead to furthering *gram panchayati raj*. And in order to sustain ecosystem management at the level of *gadheras*, appropriate measures are being adopted by the communities.

- Over 1,300 homes have constructed twin-pit water-seal toilets
- Over 2,000 homes have access to enhanced quantities of safe drinking water
- Over 68 homes have access to stored rainwater harvest from roof tops
- Over 220 homes have installed biogas units as a renewable energy option

Alongside, these communities have been encouraged to create *gram kosh* worth more than Rs. 23.00 lakhs and more significantly shared the cost of infrastructure development to the tune of Rs. 23.35 lakhs. Finally, steps are being taken to establish micro enterprises which would provide sustainable incomes to communities over the years – such incomes have reached Rs. 9.00 lakhs during the year under review.

The challenge ahead is for communities to comprehensively understand that economics and ecology are two sides of the same coin, balanced with equity.

Status of Action Items in the Gagas River Basin

Sr #	Particulars	<i>Gadheras</i>				Total
		Dusad	Kanari	Malegar	Others	
1	Village	20	10	5	92	127
2	House holds	896	251	690	1050	2887
3	SHGs	49	19	4	56	128
4	GBSs	16	7	3	-	26
5	SHGs Saving	10.20	2.55	-	2.70	Rs.15.45 lakhs
	<i>Gram Kosh</i>	6.83	1.07	-	-	Rs.7.90 lakhs
6	Protected Commons	230	54	96	10	390 hectares
7	Tree Planting					
	a. Nurseries	6	1	2	1	10
	b. Planting	2,62,000	64,500	11,500	4,500	342,500
8	Check Walls / Dams	51				51
	Contours	14,000	300	-	-	14,300 meters
9	<i>Khals</i>	676	4	-	-	680
10	Infiltration Wells	34	15	2	47	98
11	Sanitation	384	128	37	781	1330
12	Renewable Energy	56	18	4	142	220
13	Rainwater Harvesting	30	6	-	32	68
14	Livelihoods *					
	a. Knitting	2.27	0.54	-	3.49	Rs.6.30 lakhs
	b. Fruit Preserves	0.08	0.02	-	1.16	Rs.1.26 lakhs
	c. HimKhadya	0.20	0.54	-	0.72	Rs.1.46 lakhs
15	Community Contribution	17.03	3.62		2.70	Rs.23.35 lakhs

Significant vegetal cover as well as soil and moisture conservation activities have been spearheaded by communities in these *gadheras* during the year. Some of the pictures tell the story quite well.



Each year nursery-persons at the village level are enabled to grow around 100,000 mature saplings of important species of grasses, shrubs and trees – some take over two years at the nursery like the *cedrus deodara* (top left) and women plant and protect these saplings on a voluntary basis



Protection of commons has led to five-fold increase in production of fodder-grasses



Communities are reviving the tradition of maintaining *Khals*, which lead to significant moisture conservation





Native species of shrubs and trees are raised and planted-out on degraded common lands, which increases availability of biomass as well as lead to soil and moisture conservation – further assisted through simple check walls and dams



While communities have been engaged towards eco-restoration activities, farmers have continuously expressed the need to strengthen livelihoods opportunities within the river basin. To address this need, Grassroots has been able to assist SHGs to undertake on and off farm supplementary income generation programs, in coordination with Umang, as follows:

- Revive cultivation of traditional rain-fed crops and conduct field trials for high value crops like chamomile and strawberry and promote horticulture
- Improve Soil Fertility
- Training of Para Vets in order to improve local livestock
- Supplementing incomes through off-farm micro enterprises like production of hand-knitted garments and adding value to local fruits
- Orient communities regarding the need to certify traditional farming systems as organic and also establish Fair Trade marketing brands, such as *Kumaoni* and *HimKhadya*

During the year under review, Grassroots forged partnerships with Organic Farming Association of India and facilitated the process of small farmers in the Dusad *gadhera* to pledge towards the growing movement of Participatory Guarantee System for ensuring the production of Safe Foods. The status of this process is in the table below and it is envisaged that during the next two years, similar initiatives would benefit farmers in other *gadheras*.

Dusad <i>Gadhera</i> SHGs with Organic Farming Certification				
Sr #	Village	SHGs	Households	Certified Organic Farm Land (acres)
1	Bargalla	2	19	13.3
2	Chilalgaon	2	18	22.04
3	Bhora	1	15	7.69
4	Satinagaon T	4	45	22.71
5	Satinagaon M	1	26	23.4
6	Syalsuna	2	30	55.72
7	Kafra	2	31	21.85
8	Talli Mirai	6	85	39.31
9	Darmar	4	36	22.59
10	Ubhiyari	2	27	40.35
11	Chabisa	2	27	42.3
12	Taili Sunoli	3	39	34.75
13	Nehra	3	24	8.35
14	Saili Sunoli	5	50	59.67
15	Masar	1	10	5.55
Total		40	482	419.58

The challenge ahead is to spearhead similar eco-restoration activities in a holistic manner in other villages and *gadheras* across the entire river basin.



## Millennium Development Goals & Partners-in-Change

*At the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in 2002, India along with 147 heads of state, pledged to adopt 8 goals to be achieved by 2015 that respond to the world's main development challenges.*

*It is realised that human development is about much more than rise and fall of national incomes. It is about quality of life, the level of human well-being and the access to basic social services. The pressures on environmental and natural resources and the repercussions of their degradation on low income livelihoods have become a source of increasing concern.*

A decade prior to this declaration, Grassroots had set out to select local youth and provide them with sufficient skills and knowledge to spread the benefits of appropriate technologies in cross cutting sectors like drinking water, environmental sanitation, renewable energy and rainwater harvesting - with the idea of improving the quality of life for mountain communities, here and now.

These efforts led to the creation of a dedicated team of *barefoot engineers* - Kumaon Artisans Guild in Uttarakhand and a similar Association in Himachal Pradesh. During the period under review, the Guild has been able to consolidate its operations as an independent organization and Grassroots is increasingly viewed as a shadow organization, with the primary task of strengthening the managerial capacity of the Guild. Over the year, processes have been set in motion to enable the Guild to emerge as the key player in promoting appropriate technologies in the central Himalaya, especially in the drinking water and renewable energy sectors.

**At the end of the year, cumulatively, the benefits of appropriate technologies have reached over 80,000 people spread over 12 districts in the states of Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh.**

### Spread of Appropriate Technology in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh

- |                            |                  |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| • Drinking Water           | 442 villages     |
| • Environmental Sanitation | 3,368 households |
| • Renewable Energy         | 1,753 households |
| • Rainwater Harvesting     | 371 locations    |

During the period under review, Grassroots has also been involved with consolidating the ongoing partnership with selected voluntary organizations in the state of Uttarakhand and forging fresh alliances with the state governments in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh as partners-in-change to spread similar initiatives through 'technology transfer' programs.

The success of this strategy would be measured in future through the depth and spread of appropriate technologies through the active participation of various partners-in-change. And, while doing so, Grassroots would continue to strengthen the platform of *barefoot engineers*, as change makers, in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

### **Blue Schools Program in Himachal Pradesh**

Schools in the hill states of Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh lack adequate access to water and sanitation. Quite often, both these fundamental conditions for good hygiene are missing, even though it is one of the Millennium Development Goals.

Many institutions across the planet, including Grassroots, are involved in the challenge to provide access to water and sanitation, especially to school children. Children ought to be provided the right conditions to assure not only their health, but also their understanding of the problems linked to water and forests.

Over the years, Grassroots has been able to provide adequate access to water and sanitation to 30 schools in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, largely through rainwater harvested from roof run-off and stored in underground tanks. The stored water is connected to toilets built within the school campus.

During the period under review, Grassroots continued to participate in a larger global movement in this direction - **Blue Schools Program** - an initiative of the International Rainwater Harvesting Alliance, located in Switzerland. The idea is to involve the children, teachers and parents in a program to address the environmental crisis and initiate adequate steps to mitigate the problems.

Ten large schools with a student/teacher population of over 4,000 have been selected in Sirmaur district in Himachal Pradesh. While activities had been initiated in the previous year, construction work in the remaining schools has been completed during the year under review.

The salient features of the program are as follows:

- Formation of Students, Teachers and Parents Forums in each of these 10 schools (STEPs)
- Community resource mapping exercises of villages - done by senior students in their respective villages
- Water quality has been tested both within the school campus and the adjoining villages and students are being trained to continue with such exercises on a regular basis under the aegis of STEPs
- Solid waste management exercises have been initiated within the school campus, with the idea that similar action would spread in the adjoining villages
- Workshops on climate change impacts and water borne diseases are being held on a regular basis
- Fruit trees are being planted on homesteads of all students
- Greening of the school campus is being done by the students
- Rainwater harvesting tanks are being constructed within the school campus along with adequate numbers of toilets – average of fifty persons per toilet
- Renewable energy options like biogas units are being promoted in the homes of students

It is significant to mention that all the above action items are being planned and implemented by the various STEPs as it is envisaged that these students would be the future change makers.

During the period under review, the Blue Schools Program provided underground rainwater harvesting tanks as well as toilets to the following schools in Sangra and Nahan blocks of Sirmaur district:

1. Sangra 2. Basahan 3. Galanaghat 4. Vermapapri 5. Jamta 6. Dadahu

## **Partners-in-Change**

### A. Agriculture Department, Government of Himachal Pradesh

Over the past five years, Grassroots has been demonstrating the feasibility of biogas units as a renewable energy option for cooking, especially in view of scarce forest resources as well as dependence on subsidy-driven fossil fuels like LPG. So far, the benefit of this appropriate technology has been experienced in about 600 households, mainly in Sirmaur district.

During the period under review, the state government continued the partnership with Grassroots in consolidating and spreading the benefits of this renewable energy program to another 150 households. It is envisaged that this partnership would grow and mature over the next few years in order to benefit at least 250 households each year.



Biogas Stoves provide clean cooking energy, reduces biotic pressure on forests and impacts positively on health, besides reducing black carbon through burning of fossil fuels

### B. Voluntary Organisations

Grassroots had embarked on an ambitious program regarding transfer of appropriate technology through a dozen voluntary organisations, regarding biogas units, rainwater harvesting and drinking water systems. Field experiences have led to a review of this strategy during the year under review.

Basically, the partnership has been limited to only four voluntary organisations – based on the performance in the first phase and the capacity of organisations to pledge time and energy for complex matters related to reduction of black carbon and meeting MDGs.

During the period under review, the partnership was consolidated through regular workshops and processes involved with transfer of appropriate technology, largely through deputation of master trainers to the concerned VOs – three of whom are located in Nainital district and the fourth is in Almora district – all in the Kumaon region of Uttarakhand.

While these coalitions are probably the ideal way forward for reaching out to more and more communities in the Himalaya, lessons of these experiences clearly reveal the need for much more efforts to consolidate and sustain spread of appropriate technology interventions at the grassroots.

#### C. Swajal Project, Government of Uttarakhand

The Ministry of Water Resources, Government of India has initiated a program whereby each and every *gram panchayat* needs to be empowered to test the quality of drinking water on a continuous basis.

The Swajal Project Management Unit, through its district office at Almora requested the participation of Grassroots in this process at the grassroots, considering the fact that Grassroots has been involved with spreading a similar concept for the last few years.



As a result of this partnership, during the period under review, 500 *panchayat* representatives from 68 *gram panchayats* participated in 2-days long workshops to learn the skills of water quality testing; at the end of which, portable water testing kits were provided to each *panchayat* representative.

This beginning in Dwarahat block of Almora district is envisaged to spearhead similar initiatives in other blocks of the district in the near future.

#### D. Ramkrishna Mission, Deharadun, Uttarakhand

Considering that thousands of people, from all walks of life, seek blessings at the Mission each year, the Head of the Mission invited Grassroots to install appropriate demonstrations for biogas and rainwater harvesting technology within the campus.

A 3 cubic meter biogas unit has been constructed between the cowshed and dormitory, which provides cooking gas for preparation of the *prasad*. Alongside, rainwater harvesting tanks

with a capacity of 60,000 litres have also been constructed within the campus. The pictures show the site during and after construction!



Hopefully, other institutions in the capital city of the state would learn from this example.

#### E. Jal Sansthan, Government of Uttarakhand

The Jal Sansthan is the apex organization in the state, along with the Jal Nigam, in planning, implementing, operating and maintaining drinking water supply systems for 16,000 villages spread over 13 districts in the state of Uttarakhand. Grassroots has been involved with spreading the benefits of an appropriate technology - Infiltration Wells – in the drinking water sector for over a decade.

The state government undertook a study regarding the benefits of this technology which had been providing enhanced quantities of safe drinking water in over 300 villages and thereafter requested Grassroots to assist in spearheading this process across the state. (This partnership was forged during the previous year)

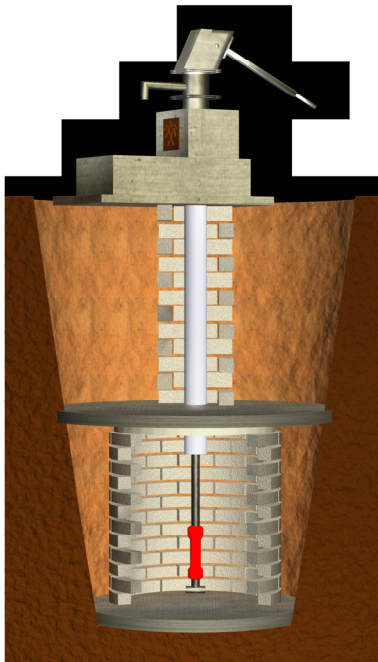
During the period under review, the partnership with Jal Sansthan continued to make significant progress. Through the year, along with senior *barefoot engineers* of the Kumaon Artisans Guild, Grassroots assisted the Jal Sansthan to enhance availability of safe drinking water through this technology in 43 villages, spread over the Kumaon and Garhwal regions of the state.

Over a period of little less than two financial years, almost 100 villages have been benefiting through this partnership.

It is envisaged that this partnership with the Jal Sansthan would continue in the future, with the idea of enabling the government to spread this appropriate technology to over 3,000 villages which have been identified with chronic water shortages.

The partnership has been institutionalised in the following manner:





- Government would provide funds for technology transfer and adoption of Infiltration Wells across all hill districts in the state
- Jal Sansthan would select problem-villages and provide the list to Grassroots
- Grassroots would play the role of a technical resource institute for feasibility survey, monitoring and evaluation
- Jal Sansthan would identify and award tenders to selected voluntary organisations with adequate experience to install Infiltration Wells on the heels of technical surveys done by Grassroots
- As a result of which, Kumaon Artisans Guild and another Partner-VO in the Garhwal region have been selected by the Jal Sansthan for installation of Infiltration Wells.

During the year under review, community managed drinking water systems have been installed in the following areas across the state:

A. <u>Kumaon Region</u>	
Almora	4 villages
Bageswar	2 villages
<u>Nainital</u>	<u>7 villages</u>
3 districts	13 villages
B. <u>Garhwal Region</u>	
Chamoli	6 villages
Pauri	8 villages
Rudraprayag	6 villages
<u>Tehri</u>	<u>10 villages</u>
4 districts	30 villages
<u>Total of 7 districts</u>	<u>43 villages</u>

## Livelihoods, Food Security & Micro Enterprises

In fragile ecosystems in the Himalaya, forests play a pivotal role in supporting mountain farming systems. The degradation of such essential support systems has affected traditional food security and enhanced risk to human health.

To find a fresh balance in the quality of lives for such marginalized farming communities, Grassroots has been involved with creating a platform for establishment of pro poor business ventures, with women as the primary stakeholder.

Along with spearheading eco-restoration efforts in Gagas river basin, Grassroots has been involved in consolidating a network of over 2,000 women who are involved with various viable business activities, which provide small yet significant incomes on a sustainable basis. This has been largely possible through the efforts of women spearhead team members of Grassroots who ‘hived-out’ to establish a collective of several self-help groups – Mahila Umang Samiti.

All products of the network are marketed under the brand name ***Kumaoni*** and ***HimKhadya*** and it is Umang’s belief that those who purchase these products are directly assisting resource poor households through ‘trade and not aid’. The turnover during the year under review has been over Rs. 120.00 lakhs and sales have reached Rs. 80.00 lakhs.

However, the most significant aspect of these local efforts in promoting the spirit of enterprise is a concern of the *institutional framework at the grassroots: each and every business activity be directly controlled by the producer-group, all assets be owned by them and all are equal shareholders of the business.* This arrangement ought to be also operated in a manner whereby the greatest portion of the consumer’s rupee reaches the producer-groups.

In view of this, as well as future plans for further growth, Grassroots facilitated the process of transforming the business ventures of Mahila Umang Samiti to a more appropriate *form of organisation* – Mahila Umang Producers Company Limited, which was formally registered on 9 January 2009.

During the year under review, Grassroots has been able to establish the headquarters of the nascent Producers Company. The “House of Umang” has floor space of over 5,000 square feet and almost all activities of the producers company operate out of this complex.. The crowning glory is the fruit processing unit, which has been scaled-up from 10 tonnes per year to 50 tonnes per year capacity.



A joyous function was held in January 2010 to mark the occasion of shifting into the House of Umang, located in Naini village, 10 kms outside Ranikhet town, in the Kumaon region of Uttarakhand.



The House of Umang has three floors and a basement: the ground floor is the fruit processing unit, the first floor is shared by the showroom, hand-knits quality control centre and office, while the top floor is a large meeting hall flanked by two open terraces.

The challenge for Grassroots is to build upon the capacity of shareholders at all levels, from that of the producer-members in the various verticals of the business - hand-knits, fruit processing, bee-keepers and farmers – as well as the producer-members selected as the Board of Governors and the Team Members of the organisation.

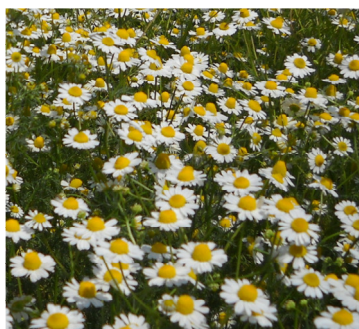
An immediate task is to scale-up the business of Umang to a level which provides sustainable incomes to 2,000 producer-member families to the extent of Rs. 15,000 per annum, which would be an increase of fifty percent of current levels of income in the region. For this to be a reality, it is essential to forge forward linkages with markets in the metros as well as consolidate sales within the region.

The Umang showroom, during the year under review, was responsible for 25 percent of the total sales - Rs.20.00 lakhs. This could be further improved along with more aggressive sales in local shops and hotels. However, for more mature scaling-up, linkages with markets in the

metro would still be important. And, in this direction it is significant to mention that Grassroots facilitated the process of creating a marketing organisation, named Himjoli, which would operate as an umbrella for not only Umang but few other organisations in the region.

Within the span of the year under review, this nascent marketing organisation, Himjoli, has been responsible for 35 percent of the total annual sales of Umang and in the years ahead it is envisaged that Umang would continue to negotiate a significant portion of the total Himjoli basket. Himjoli has already invested in five showrooms within the region and has been instrumental in generating significant corporate gift orders during Diwali.

Based on the growing market demand for both brands of Umang products - *Kumaoni* and *HimKhadya* – it would be imperative for Grassroots to encourage Umang to consolidate procurement, processing and marketing activities. Especially as economic growth is as essential for small hill farmers as ecological management of languishing river basins like Gagas.



Farm land growing value added crops like chamomile and strawberry need to be increased significantly in the year ahead as field experiences during the year has revealed quite clearly that these crops could be providing much needed incomes to farmers.

The Umang business plan needs adequate backward linkages as well as forward linkages, in order to bridge the gap between farm-gate and consumers.

During the year under review, the status of the nascent producers company has been as follows:

<b>Livelihoods &amp; Micro Enterprises</b>		
<b>Revenues Generated (Rs.in lakhs)</b>		
	<u>Cumulative</u>	<u>This Year</u>
Hand-Knitted Products	142.70	34.50
Fruit Preserves & Pickles	54.87	17.00
Natural Honey & Spices	36.66	10.30
Beeswax Candles	1.44	0.12
Country Hens	55.32	3.85
Roofing Tiles	26.49	0.32
HimKhadya	25.14	14.35
	<u>Rs. 342.62 lakhs</u>	<u>Rs. 80.44 lakhs</u>



## Grassroots Leadership Initiative

As always, Grassroots has encouraged visits of student-groups and other professionals to experience and understand issues related to sustainable development of mountain ecosystems. Most of the guests have been subscribers to the concept of HomeStays – which basically means that selected local farmers host the guests at a small price and donate part of the revenue to the village-fund.

During the year under review, the following interns visited the Outreach Program Office as part of the growing Grassroots Leadership Initiative:

1. A group of 12 students from Lakeside School, Seattle, USA spent a month at various HomeStays in the villages of Kalika and Naini, near Ranikhet. The HomeStays are proving to be a meaningful experience for the students who are selected each year by Lakeside School for the Global Student Leadership Program supported by the Gates Foundation.
2. A group of 4 students from Cambridge University, England spent six weeks as monsoon-interns. The group studied the eco-restoration activities in Gagas river basin and documented the impact of growing fruit trees by marginal farmers.
3. Two students from KIIT in Orissa came as summer-interns to study marketing channels of Umang products.
4. Two students from Delhi University came as summer interns; to volunteer as a coordinator for Grassroots programs and study the nuances of womens empowerment in *panchayati raj*.
5. Another group of students from MIT, Cambridge, Boston, USA spent two weeks as winter-interns with the idea of designing appropriate technology applications in improving the efficiency of wood-burning stoves and water quality testing. This venture is supported by the International Development Design Summit (IDDS) of MIT and has been continuing for some years, including visits of senior staff of Grassroots at the annual IDDS at MIT.

Besides these volunteers and interns, Grassroots was involved in the orientation of environment-journalists from SAARC nations during a workshop held at Kathmandu, Nepal. Similarly, Grassroots was requested to organise a South Asia Regional Workshop for Leadership Development in the campaign for Safe Foods. A workshop was organised for emerging leaders at the Outreach Program Office at Ranikhet, followed by a Round Table at The Rockefeller Foundation, New York.

Finally, Grassroots was involved with two other significant events during the period under review: the Ashoka-Lemelson Fellows global workshop at Indian School of Business, Hyderabad for grassroots change makers involved with spearheading appropriate technologies which directly improve the quality of life for rural communities and a workshop at the Grassroots Outreach program Office at Ranikhet for 8 NGO leaders and 20 farmer-leaders involved in the campaign for promoting Organic Farming and Safe Foods.





### **Council of Governors**

Mrs H Bedi  
Chairperson

Mr Deep Joshi      Mrs Sumita Ghosh  
Mrs Annie Sinha   Mr Naren Karunakaran

The Council of Governors and the Executive Officers of Grassroots  
would like to acknowledge the assistance received from the following organizations  
during the year under review : 2009-2010

Artha – Sustainable Development Fund, United Kingdom  
Ashoka: Innovators for the Public, USA  
Department of Agriculture, Government of Himachal Pradesh  
Department of Rural Development, Government of Uttarakhand  
Friends of Grassroots  
International Rainwater Harvesting Alliance, Switzerland  
Jal Sansthan, Government of Uttarakhand  
Jamsetji Tata Trust, India  
Lakeside School, USA  
National Research & Development Corporation, New Delhi  
Rockefeller Foundation, USA  
Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, India  
The Ford Foundation – Winrock International India, Delhi  
Terre doc Creations, France  
UNESCO, New Delhi  
World Wide Fund for Nature, India

**The financial records of Grassroots are a matter of public record and as such are available**

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