

SEED Report

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Vision:

“The Future of India Lies in Its Villages”
Mahatma Gandhi

India made its Tryst with Destiny in 1947, at the stroke of midnight. An oppressive colonial regime gave way to a free India, governed by its own. Unfortunately, the promises of that midnight are still a distant dream for a vast majority of villages in India.

Rural India is very diverse and complex. At the same time, it is poor, unskilled, and under-served. A vast majority of the rural population is dependent on agriculture for sustenance. However, the profitability and sustainability of agriculture has greatly diminished over time due to faulty economic models, mismanagement of natural resources and a lack of technological intervention. To make matters worse, the rural communities across India are significantly vulnerable to environmental and climate changes (e.g. disruption in monsoon cycle and persistent floods and droughts). Several communities are on the verge of collapse due to this perfect storm of economic, environmental and climatic challenges.

Our team at SEED Foundation believes that without a holistic rural transformation, the vision of a developed India can never be realized. This transformation needs a self-sustaining model of development which requires innovations in technology, economic models, education and health care. We believe that the hi-tech community in USA can contribute significantly in this endeavor through its skills in technology, project execution and startup incubation.

SEED provides a platform for all such interested individuals to get together, collaborate, and make a visible impact on the grounds in India.

To help achieve the rural transformation, SEED Foundation envisions establishing SKIL (Sustainability, Knowledge, Innovation and Learning) centers amidst a cluster of villages. The SKIL centers will facilitate rural economic development through a farm to fork strategy based on sustainable agriculture (organic & natural farming). The SKIL centers will also impart a value and inquiry based education which will combine the best of traditional Indian Gurukuls with the latest in modern pedagogy. In addition, the SKIL centers will be a hub of the rural lives and will provide valuable skill development, life-caring services, and technology transfers into rural India.

SEED has a SKIL center under development in Hamirpur district of Uttar Pradesh. Our team (including collaborators) consists of experienced scientists, educationists, engineers, doctors, managers, entrepreneurs, bankers from various international organizations. There is also a strong ground team which enjoys extensive support of local rural communities. The learning from our on-going projects in the Bundelkhand region would create a good example that can be transferred to other regions in India. Please join us in this journey of Change... Together we can!

Looking back at 2016

2016 was the first year of SEED, USA; and we are excited to report the progress we have made so far:

- ❖ Registered SEED as a US non-profit organization under 501(c)(3) with complete tax exemption
- ❖ Formed the board with 4 founding members: RaviKant Pathak, Gaurav Shrivastav, Atul Mishra and Madhur Bobde and an advisor: Yajnesh rai
- ❖ Designed and implemented a fully functional SEED Website (<http://foundationseed.org/>) which is now up and running
- ❖ Set-up online donations through PayPal, and Corporate matching programs through Apple, Intel, Qualcomm. We are also active seeking collaboration from our supporters to expand to other firms in silicon valley
- ❖ Ganesh Utsav: SEED booth was set-up for the Ganesh Utsav in Milpitas; this was our first effort in reaching out to the Indian community in Bay Area. We had good success in the event, with 50+ people signing up at our booth with the desire to join our movement.
- ❖ Extensive fund collection efforts ongoing to hit our targets for CY 2016 (\$40K).



SEED Booth at Ganesh Utsav 2016 in Milpitas

Plan Ahead..

We aspire to build on the progress we have made this year! Some of the key items planned for next year are as follows

- ❖ Finalize projects & funding for CY 2017 based on the total revenue from this year
- ❖ Increase the strength of SEED team in US and plan several events throughout the year for growing the SEED team & revenue
- ❖ Set-up channel to connect the SEED members directly with the people working on the ground to understand their challenges and brainstorm ways to help them.

The first meet & greet event is tentatively scheduled for February and will overlap with Ravi's visit to the bay area

Updates from the ground: *Glimpses from Ashram's diary*

page-1: Although SEED Foundation was officially set up in 2016 in California, our core team began the ground works in India almost a decade ago. So far, this journey of rural transformation has been full of challenges and excitement. The journey began with walking (pad yatras) in the hostile harsh conditions in the region of Bundelkhand, (U.P.) India to comprehend the true situation of rural India. We have put up our base camp in the ravine areas of Betwa river in Hamirpur district (UP). This is one of the most backward areas of Bundelkhand region. Villages are almost cut off from main stream developmental works of the nation. Despite huge indirect taxes paid by rural population to central and state Govt, there are no roads, healthcare facilities, electricity, water or sanitation. As you can see in the picture beside, we used to walk many miles through natural terrains in mud and rains to reach these villages. The common man in these villages have lost hope for any developmental works in their life time. We decided to step in and take initiatives for the holistic transformation of remote rural parts of India.



Page-2: Since September 2007, we have taken initiatives to revive the barren and unproductive land through an organic farming project – Desert to Oasis. We have created water harvesting bunds and fruit and herbal gardens. We have also set up a food processing unit and a social enterprise to market the locally produced and processed organic food products nationally and internationally to empower the marginal farmers (see pictures of organic farming and transformation).


These set up have taken a form of an organization and in 2011, we have registered a public charitable trust in India (Bharat Uday Karmayogi Ashram) to better organize our efforts and establish the first SKIL center for the rural transformation in India.

SEED foundation's major projects in rural Bundelkhand include:

1. Promoting Farm to Fork concept – SEED Foundation takes initiatives to link farmers and consumers to avoid middlemen and empower farmers
2. A residential school- Bharat Uday Gurukul with a focus on values and inquiry based learning for underserved rural communities
3. Providing adequate vocational training, education and outreach for economic empowerment and problem solving within villages.
4. Life care activities including, food shelter and healthcare for sick, orphans, physically and mentally challenged and elderly people.

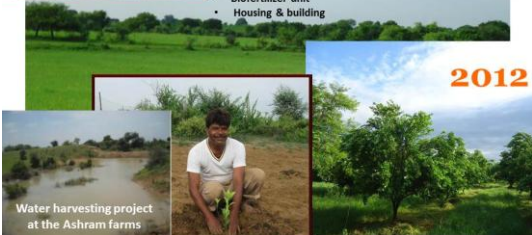
Please refer to our website: foundationseed.org/ongoing-projects for additional details

2007



**Desert to Oasis:
A Sustainable agriculture project**

- Development of organic fruit orchard in the barren land
- Creating a water resource by tube well & rainwater harvest
- Fencing of the land to protect wild creatures
- Leveling of the land, check dams
- Power connection
- Agricultural equipment and implements
- Established a Cowshed
- Biofertilizer unit
- Housing & building



2012

Water harvesting project at the Ashram farms



Glimpses of Bharat Uday Gurukul

“This journey of rural transformation has been full of challenges and excitement. The journey involves walking in dust and mud, in the most hostile harsh conditions in the region of Bundelkhand, (U.P.) India.”