



Impact Assessment Report

Holistic Rural Development Projects (HRDP)- West 1 Region

P0380- FES, Kheda, Gujarat



October 2025



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PROJECT SUMMARY - P0380 - FES

Location

15 villages in Kheda, Gujarat

Duration

April 2022- March 2024

Total Beneficiaries Reached

2730 households

Impact At Glance

Landscape Restoration & Water Security

Integrated watershed and ravine-reclamation measures stabilised the degraded landscape, reduced erosion, improved groundwater recharge, and enhanced water availability

Income Enhancement

Improved productivity, irrigation facilities and livestock hygiene contributed to increase in household income

Agricultural Productivity & Resilience

Improved land productivity enabled farmers to shift from rain-dependent cropping to planned multi-season agriculture, increasing household resilience

Overall Project Score

4.14

Theme-wise Impact scores

SDLE

4.5

NRM

4.4

POE

4

H&H

4

Key Achievements

Overall Impact Score

4.2

Overall Sustainability Score

4.3

PRODUCTION

2x yield increased

CROP LOSS

40% reduction

INCOME FROM AGRICULTURE

50% increase

WHAT WORKED?	WHAT DIDN'T WORK?
Participatory Planning- A rigorous participatory planning approach was adopted using Rapid Rural Appraisal, household consultations, and site inspections by Village Institutions. This ensured that interventions were demand-driven, contextually appropriate, and technically vetted Timely implementation and community engagement- All infrastructure and land-treatment works were executed within the planned timelines, with strong field supervision and technical inputs. The context-fit of structures allowed communities to adopt and replicate, enhancing sustainability and ownership. Integrated, Climate-Responsive Intervention Design-The project effectively combined NRM and SDLE interventions to address both short-term productivity gains and long-term ecological restoration. It supported systemic, landscape-scale improvement and long-term resilience.	Constrained Input Support: While subsidised seeds and basic training on line-sowing were provided, the input support did not fully address farmers' need for comprehensive scientific guidance. Limited demonstrations and weak linkages with KVK limited farmers' expertise on practices such as mulching, pest management, moisture conservation, nursery management, and yield optimisation. Limited Youth engagement in SDLE interventions: SDLE interventions aimed to increase farmers' incomes and included activities such as kitchen gardens to diversify livelihood sources. However, the reach of these interventions among youth was limited. As a result, the potential for broader livelihood diversification and youth participation remained largely untapped. Sustainability aspects insufficiently embedded in interventions: H&H and PoE interventions including health camps, BALA paintings, and RO water coolers delivered immediate benefits but had limited long-term impact on behaviour change. Across interventions, sustainability was limited, only a few beneficiaries were familiar with maintaining assets such as ROs and solar irrigation systems.

RECOMMENDATIONS

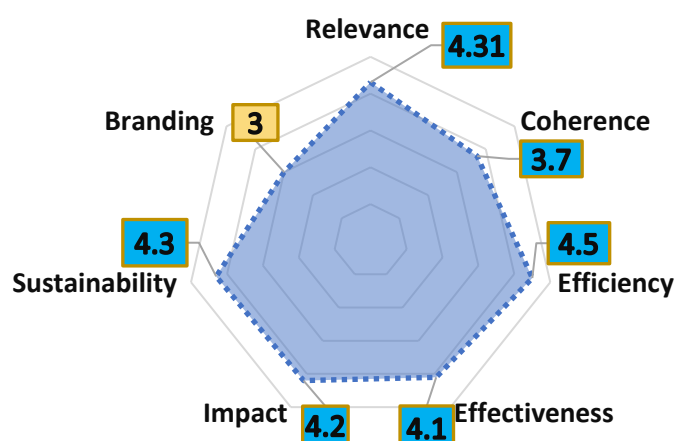
- Facilitate coordinated action between MNREGA, Agriculture, Soil Conservation, and Panchayats to execute a district-wide ravine and micro-watershed restoration and provide avenues for livelihood diversification for unemployed youth.
- Develop strong FPO-led aggregation, grading, and direct buyer contracts for crops such as tobacco, vegetables, fodder, and dairy. Introduce low-cost storage and shed models.
- Formalise PHC partnerships for quarterly health camps, strengthen disease surveillance via ASHA/ANM workers, and scale hygienic cattle-shed management and kitchen garden models to improve household nutrition and milk yield.
- Integrate PoE interventions with SMC governance through SOPs for RO and BALA maintenance, and build teacher capacity using pedagogy workshops and digital FLN tools to improve learning outcomes.

PROJECT LEVEL FINDINGS

OVERALL PROJECT SCORE
Good

4.14

OECD Parameter wise Scoring



LEGEND:

>= 4.6	Excellent
3.6 to 4.5	Good
2.6 to 3.5	Moderate
<= 2.5	Poor

Findings by OECD Criteria

Relevance (Good) 4.3	NRM 4.4 < SDLE 4.5 < PoE 4.1 < H&H 4.1 - The project area lies within the Mahi river basin, with undulating terrain, high surface runoff, and recurring soil erosion that degraded cultivable land and caused sedimentation downstream. The interventions directly addressed livelihood instability due to these issues through fencing, input support, solar irrigation and land levelling. - Gabions supported soil health and reduced moisture stress and income loss due to erosion, allowing creating a foundation for ravine reclamation in the area. - RO water cooler and BALA painting in schools were relevant to schools but did not align with the actual needs of the students, as they require smart classes and computers to achieve substantial improvement in FLN. - Health camps enhanced community awareness and enabled early detection and prevention, contributing to averted health costs. This outcome is particularly relevant as some pockets still lack adequate access to PHCs and have low awareness of health and sanitation.
	NRM 4 < SDLE 4 < PoE 3.2 < H&H 3.5

	- The interventions showed strong internal coherence with FES's ecosystem-based livelihood model, allowing for income diversification and shift to productive agriculture. - H&H interventions also showed moderate coherence, functioning as stand-alone efforts without coordination between health camps, kitchen gardens, or ICDS workers for sustained behaviour change. - The NRM interventions complemented government schemes such as PM-KUSUM, and IWMP, addressing soil and water management where these programmes were weakly functional. - However, external coherence was partial as linkages with departments and markets were underdeveloped, limiting convergence potential despite there being strong functioning of Panchayat Institution and provisions for inclusion of aligned interventions in the Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP). - For PoE interventions, the absence of convergence with SSA budgets or school development/improvement plans limited resource optimization beyond the project cycle.
Efficiency (Good) 4.5	 - Implementation was cost-effective due to community labour mobilisation and local resource use. The participatory model reduced contractor dependency and administrative overhead, with communities contributing labour and partial material support. - Solar systems and inputs were delivered on schedule in most villages, ensuring alignment with cropping calendars - NRM and SDLE demonstrated exceptional efficiency by designing low-cost, low-maintenance assets using locally available materials. These interventions were supported by high-quality guidance from FES engineers and technical experts, ensuring that each asset was technically sound, site-specific, and compliant with environmental design standards. Continuous technical backstopping was provided through joint monitoring visits by site engineers who assessed asset functionality and reinforced design integrity.
Effectiveness (Good) 4.1	 - Tangible results were seen in land productivity, cropping intensity and household income through the SDLE and NRM interventions. - SDLE demonstrated the strongest effectiveness, with average farm-level production increasing 2.5 to 3 times post intervention. Farmers who produced 2-4 quintal now report 10-12 quintals per season, as land levelling enabled farmers to bring previously non-arable plots under cultivation. Other supporting interventions like fencing, seed support, training and solar for irrigation also contributed to this outcome. PoE and H&H lagged due to absence of long-lasting interventions which include pedagogical integration. No significant difference in student engagement or attendance was reported. Effectiveness of BALA painting in improving FLN was reported. The health camps acted as a source of awareness generation in the community but outcomes were limited due to lack of follow ups.
Impact (Good) 4.2	

	- The program produced measurable transformational outcomes in SDLE and NRM with large scale land restoration and substantial yield and income gains due to reduction in crop loss from wire fencing and reliable irrigation. Benefits in NRM was seen in improvement of groundwater recharge due to Gabion structures in the villages. - PoE and H&H impacts are positive as they improved learning environment and sanitation awareness but were not transformational across all sites due to short-term, design-centric efforts which limit potential for systemic educational impact.
Sustainability (Good) 4.3	 - Design choices prioritized low-maintenance, replicable structures (gabions, solar panels, communal levelling, wire fencing) and collective construction/ownership, which supports technical and financial sustainability. - Replication by villagers demonstrates behavioral sustainability and ease in adoption of the intervention highlighting simple, durable and impactful project design. - Lack of market linkages slowed down the sustainability of the interventions, however seed support and training provided an avenue to explore better options for quality produce. - Women's economic participation remains constrained, as well as benefits for those in remote hamlets, due to procedural gaps in beneficiary selection which continue to hinder equitable outreach.
Branding (Moderate) 3	 - Project visibility at the village level was limited and inconsistent. While some physical assets such as gabions, fencing, and solar installations carried signage or co-branding, many did not adhere to a unified visibility format. - Community recall and awareness of the project was good, but largely event and activity based.

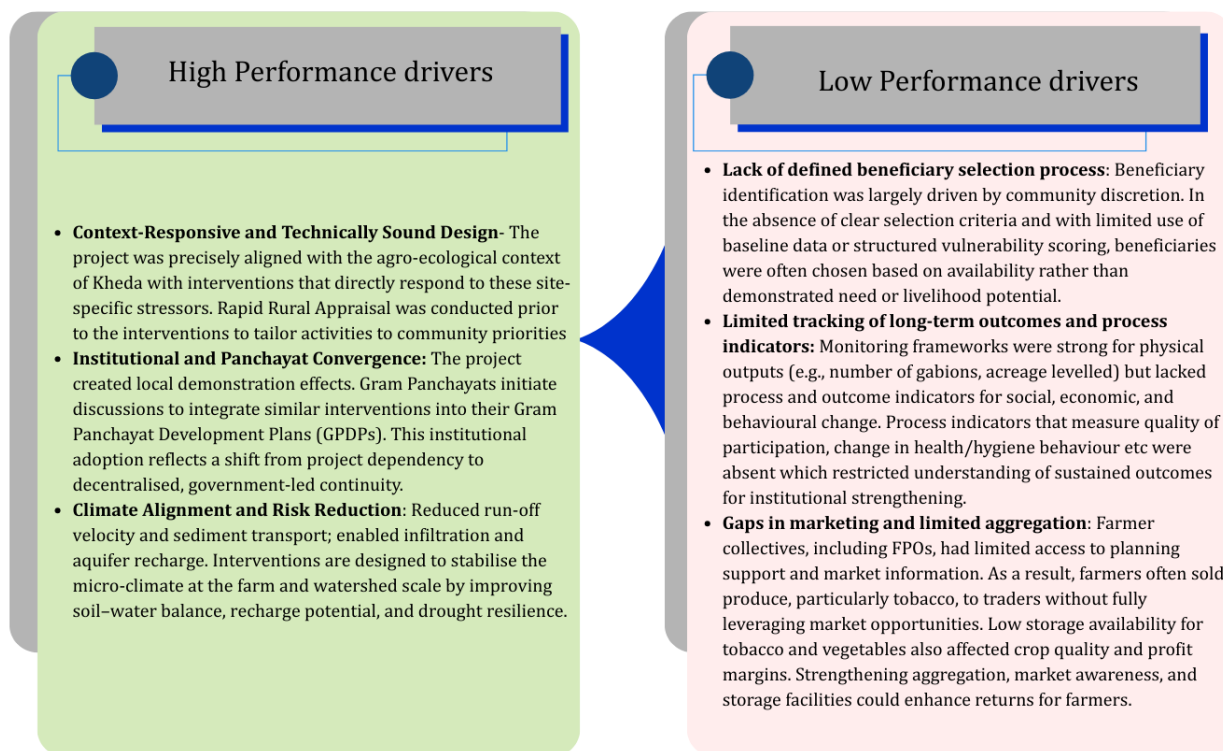
Key Impacts & Evidence of Change:

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Agricultural Transformation & Productivity gains: Farmers shifted from rainfed subsistence farming to systematic, irrigated, and multi-cropping systems, leading to enhanced productivity and income stability. Cropping intensity rose from *one cycle to two or three per year* due to irrigation from solar, improved soil moisture and increase in productive land with additional 2-3 bighas of productive fields from land levelling intervention.
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Natural Resource Regeneration and Ecosystem Improvement: The project reversed land degradation processes and strengthened the ecological resilience of the Mahi basin through hydrological and soil-conservation measures. Farmers reported improved soil texture and fertility, resulting from reduced erosion and nutrient loss. Stabilisation of hill slopes and soil retention reduced vulnerability to heavy rainfall events.
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Enhanced Income and Economic Stability: The project catalyzed a measurable rise in household income through increased yields, reduced input costs, increase in cropping cycles and diversification of income sources. Health and Hygiene (H&H) interventions for livestock through pucca flooring, improved cleanliness, reduced hoof and udder infections, and enhanced milk quality and yield. This allowed farmers to supply high quality milk to

AMUL, diversifying income streams. Project designed multi-sectoral impact pathways with health, infrastructure and input support collectively strengthened rural resilience. **Crop loss reduced by 40–50%** after fencing interventions, directly improving net profitability. Overall, communities reported decline in seasonal migration, especially among younger men, indicating improved livelihood stability.

- ✦ **Community Ownership and Replication:** Strong participatory design and local contribution encouraged ownership and replication of interventions. Farmers voluntarily replicated fencing, contour bunding, and land levelling using personal resources, extending the project's impact beyond its initial footprint. Community institutions and farmer groups demonstrated improved decision-making and coordination for operation and maintenance of assets such as gabions, solar units, and animal sheds. Gram Panchayats were influenced by the demonstrated success of FES interventions, initiating discussions to integrate similar soil–water conservation, dairy hygiene, and livelihood enhancement measures into their GPDs (Gram Panchayat Development Plans). This indicates institutional uptake and the beginning of localised scaling through the Panchayati Raj system — embedding project practices into formal development planning cycles.

Key Factors influencing Performance:



Asset Mapping:

ASSET MAPPING- FES, KHEDA DISTRICT, GUJARAT

Intervention	Observed	Assets Provided	Physical availability	Functionality	Utilisation	HDFC Bank CSR Branding
Solar 	8	75	100% Available	Fully Functional 100%	Fully Utilised 100%	90%
Gabion 	10	48	100% Available	Fully Functional 100%	Fully Utilised 100%	40%
Land Levelling 	10 acres	75 acres	100% Available	Fully Functional 100%	Fully Utilised 100%	50%
Pucca Flooring for Livestock 	20	225 H.Hs	100% Available	Fully Functional 100%	Fully Utilised 100%	50%
Wire Fencing 	Observed in 30 farms	20,500 metre	90% Available	Fully Functional 100%	Fully Utilised 80%	20%
RO Water cooler 	15	15	100% available	Fully Functional 100%	Fully Utilised 100%	100%

Recommendations:

Focus Area	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority
NRM 	Facilitate multi-department convergence to develop a large-scale ravine-reclamation plan, integrating MNREGA, Agriculture, Soil Conservation, and Panchayats for systematic treatment of gullies and degraded land. Prioritize gabion structures, LBS, contour bunds, and land levelling as part of a district-level micro-watershed plan to arrest erosion and restore cultivable land. <i>(Responsible: IA + Panchayat + MNREGA + Soil & Water Conservation Dept.)</i>	No medium priority recommendation	No low priority recommendation
SDLE 	Develop robust market linkages by enabling FPO-led aggregation, grading, and collective marketing units, especially for tobacco. Using SFAC/NABARD-supported templates for price discovery, contracts, and buyer-seller meets <i>(Responsible: IA+ SHG's +FPO's)</i>	Strengthen farmer capacity through intensive technical training on climate-resilient agricultural practices that improve moisture retention and soil health such as Mulching, bunding, intercropping etc. <i>(Responsible: IA+ KVK +Agriculture departments)</i>	Promote livelihood diversification through SHG-based entrepreneurship. Providing SHGs with the capacity to engage in businesses- through financial literacy training, business training and climate-responsive agricultural practices allowing them to have independent productive spaces- eg horticulture. <i>(Responsible: IA + FPOs + SHG federations)</i>
PoE 	No High Priority Recommendations	Integrate PoE interventions with SMC governance by creating SOPs for RO maintenance, BALA upkeep, and monitoring frameworks that align with school improvement plans for sustainability. <i>(Responsible: IA + SMCs + Teachers+ PRI members)</i>	Introduce digital learning aids for FLN and building teacher capacity using pedagogy workshops to convert infrastructure improvements into learning gains and link BALA into lesson planning <i>(Responsible: IA + SMC + Teachers)</i>

H&H 	Strengthening disease surveillance reporting through ASHA/ANM workers. A formal partnership with PHC to conduct quarterly health camps and track high-risk patients will improve community health. <i>(Responsible: IA + PHC + ASHA Workers)</i>	No Medium Priority Recommendations	Scaling hygienic cattle-shed management and kitchen garden support to more households. <i>(Responsible: IA+ SHGs + PRI members)</i>
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Annexure:

Case study

Where Strength Lives Quietly: Women's Stories from Simlajpura in Kheda, Gujarat

The village of Simlajpura moves at an unhurried pace, but inside its homes and across its fields, women carry a steady rhythm of work that keeps families going. Among them are Jinal Ben and Sarmishtha—two women whose lives show how small, well-designed interventions can shift daily burdens, stabilise incomes, and expand women's agency.

Before the project, a large share of women's labour went into livestock care, a task they managed almost entirely on their own. Cattle frequently fell ill due to bacterial infections caused by damp, kutcha floors; fodder was costly; and milk quality declined during monsoons. For women like Jinal, this meant unpredictable milk income, long hours spent managing sick animals, and frequent veterinary expenses that strained already limited savings. The intervention- pucca flooring for cattle, brought a visible shift. The cleaner, drier sheds reduced disease and infection, improved milk quality, and cut down veterinary costs. For Jinal, this translated into a more reliable milk supply and regular earnings. With fewer emergencies and less time-intensive care work, she could devote consistent hours to stitching blouses at home, an income stream she values because it is hers alone. The intervention effectively freed time, reduced financial shocks, and strengthened her economic independence.

Kitchen gardens created another layer of livelihood diversification for women. For households like those of Jinal and Sarmishtha, where cash flow is often seasonal and uncertain, the availability of home-grown vegetables reduced monthly food expenses and improved nutrition for their children. Surplus produce could be shared or sold within the neighbourhood, giving women a small but steady earning option that did not depend on access to markets or mobility outside the village. For Sarmishtha, who never attended school and manages three young children, the kitchen garden became her first tangible source of contribution to household income. This increased her confidence and strengthened her position in community meetings, where she now speaks about the importance of girls' education and women's economic roles an empowerment rooted in the small but meaningful shift the project enabled.

These interventions mattered because they touched the everyday realities of women's work. With healthier cattle and productive kitchen gardens, women gained three things they rarely have: time, predictable earnings, and control over a part of household resources. For Jinal, this meant uninterrupted stitching work and savings protected from unexpected veterinary expenses. For Sarmishtha, it meant a livelihood activity she could manage from home, one that gave her a voice and recognition in community spaces.

Together, their stories show how rural women are empowered through practical changes that reduce drudgery and stabilise livelihoods. The pucca flooring and kitchen gardens strengthened income, improved food security, expanded financial decision-making, and gave women the confidence to participate more actively in community life. These everyday shifts saved time, diversified income and strengthened voices, are the practices that begin to reshape gender relations in households and, slowly, in the village itself.

Score card**P0380:**

OECD parameter	Indicator	SDLE	NRM	H&H	PoE	Project Level score
Relevance	Beneficiaries need alignment	4.8	4.6	4.5	4.8	4.7
	Local context alignment	4.5	4.5	3.5	3.0	3.9
	Quality of design	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
	Overall	4.55	4.5	4.1	4.1	4.3
Coherence	Internal Coherence	4.0	4.0	3.5	3.0	3.6
	External coherence	4.0	4.0	3.5	3.5	3.8
	Overall	4.0	4.0	3.5	3.3	3.7
Efficiency	Timeliness-	5.0	4.9	4.9	5.0	4.9
	Quality	4.9	4.8	4.9	4.8	4.8
	Operational efficiency	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.0	3.8
	Project Design	4.5	4.5	3.5	3.0	3.9
	Overall	4.6	4.5	4.4	4.1	4.5
Effectiveness	Reach (target vs Achievement)	4.5	4.5	4.0	4.0	4.3
	Interim Result (Outputs & Short-term results)-	4.7	4.9	4.8	4.8	4.8
	Influencing factors (Enablers & Disablers)	4.0	4.0	3.5	3.0	3.6

	Differential results	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
	Adaptation over time-	3.5	4.0	3.0	3.0	3.4
	Overall	4.3	4.3	3.9	3.9	4.1
Impact	Significance-(outcome)	4.7	4.8	4.9	4.6	4.8
	Transformational change-	4.5	4.0	3.0	3.0	3.6
	Unintended change-	4.0	4.0	3.0	4.0	3.8
	Overall	4.5	4.4	3.9	4.0	4.2
Sustainability	Potential for continuity	4.9	5.0	4.6	4.8	4.8
	Sustainability in project design & strategy-	4.0	4.0	3.0	3.0	3.5
	Overall	4.5	4.6	4.0	4.1	4.3
Branding	Visibility	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
Overall score		4.3	4.3	3.9	3.8	4.1



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