UNITED NATIONS DECADE ON ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION 2021-2030

AWF
AADIVASI WELFARE FOUNDATION

Aadivasi Welfare Foundation

Annual Report 2024-25

Projects in Jharkhand, Karnataka, Odisha, Uttarakhand and West Bengal.

Registered Address:
Plot Number-8185, Near Srinath University, Sri Kirshna Road, Dindli Basti, Manjhi Tola, Adityapur, Seraikelakharsawan-831013, Jharkhand, India

“Impact Highlights: 2024–25”

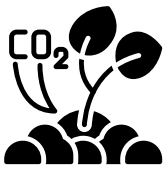
Total Trees Planted
757,350
Across 4 States

Total Water Bodies
1,100
restored

Total States benefited
5

Total Households benefited
3,873

Total No. of People benefited
20,168



Total Carbon Dioxide Sequestrated
19,000 Metric Tons

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01- About Us

1.1 About AWF

Aadivasi Welfare Foundation (AWF), a Section 8 not-for-profit organization, was founded on **November 26th, 2018**, to promote environmental sustainability and tribal development through social forestry and community-driven conservation. In its **first six years**, AWF has committed itself to **improving** the **lives** of **tribal communities**, **focusing** on both **environmental restoration** and **socio-economic empowerment.**

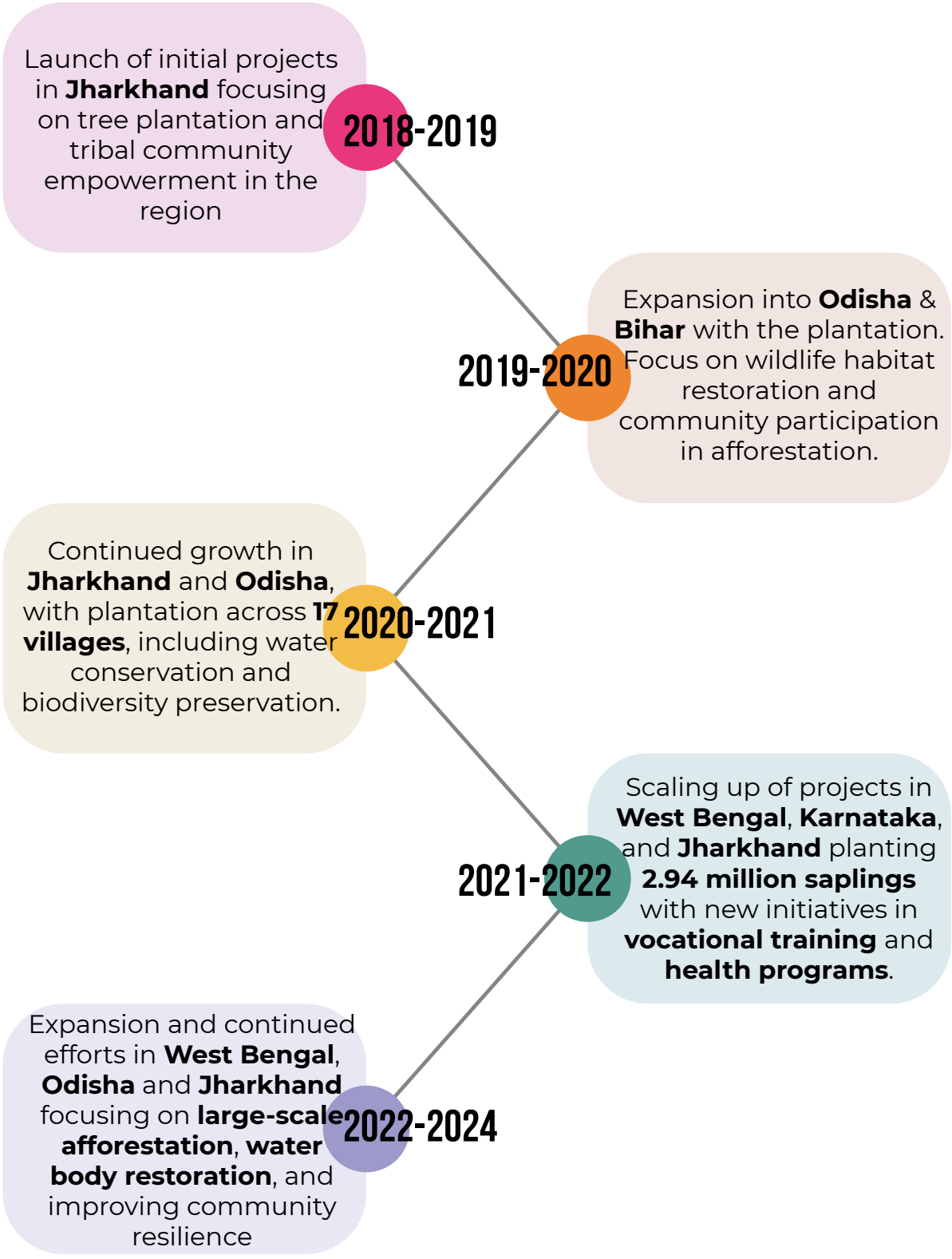
Over this period, AWF has expanded its work across the tribal regions of India, particularly in **Jharkhand**, **Odisha**, **West Bengal**, **Bihar**, and **Uttarakhand**. From planting over **7.2 million trees** to the restoration of **thousands of water bodies**, AWF has made a lasting impact on both the environment and local communities.

.From its **humble beginnings** in **2018**, **AWF**'s work in tribal regions has grown significantly.

What began as a local effort to combat deforestation and provide economic opportunities has now evolved into a multi-state initiative combining environmental restoration with community-driven development.

01- About Us

1.2 Key milestones in AWF's growth include:



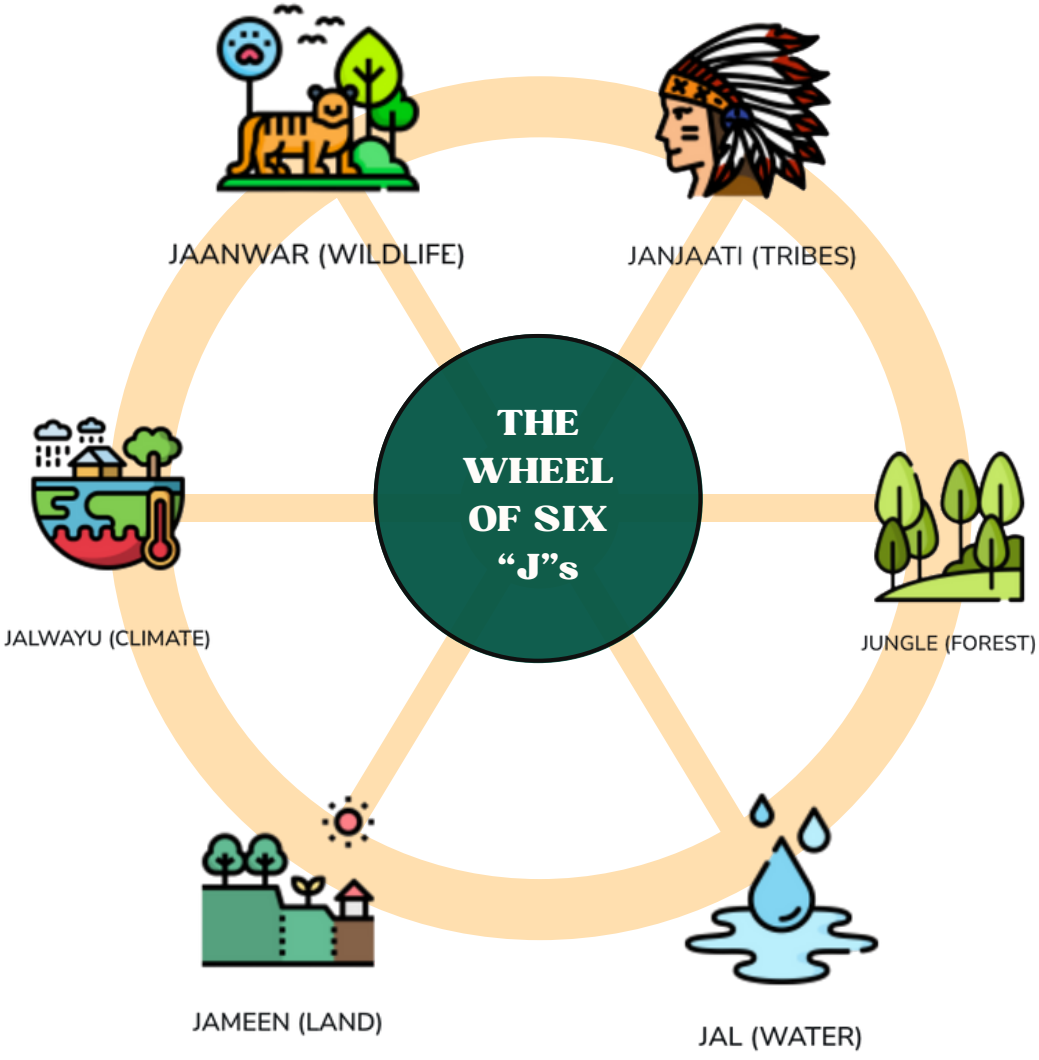
1.2 Vision, Mission & Values

Vision- To create a world where biodiversity is valued & protected and rural tribal communities can thrive sustainably within their environment.

Mission- To empower indigenous communities through sustainable development initiatives that promote inclusive growth, environmental sustainability and cultural preservation.

Values- Our Core Pillars are: **The Wheel of Six "J"s** of Conservation and Community Empowerment

At Aadivasi Welfare Foundation, our work is deeply rooted in six interconnected pillars — what we call the **Wheel of Six J's** — representing our commitment to ecological restoration, climate resilience, and cultural preservation. Each "J" is a vital thread in the fabric of sustainable living and community empowerment.



02- SDG Alignment

SDG 1: No Poverty

AWF aims to eradicate poverty among the indegenious communities by implementing various socio-economic development programs. We focus on providing income-generating opportunities, vocational training, and entrepreneurship support to empower indigenous communities economically.

SDG 5: Gender Equality

AWF strives to ensure gender equality within rural tribal communities. We work towards empowering tribal women by providing employment, and vocational training, and promoting women's rights.

SDG 13: Climate Action

The foundation actively addresses climate change issues and promotes sustainable practices. We focus on aforestation, conservation of biodiversity, and promoting renewable energy sources. We also educate communities about the impacts of climate change and implement measures to mitigate these effects.

SDG 2: Zero Hunger

Through plantation and pond rejuvenation projects, AWF provides employment opportunities to indigenous communities, fostering sustainable livelihoods. We also offer training in allied activities such as beekeeping and fisheries, enhancing their livelihood opportunities and contributing to the goal of zero hunger.

SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation

By restoring springs and constructing recharge structures, AWF ensures improved water availability and quality.

SDG 14: Life Below Water

AWF is dedicated to protecting aquatic ecosystems and promoting sustainable practices related to water bodies. We engage in initiatives such as pond rejuvenation, fishing practices, and raising awareness about the importance of freshwater conservation.

SDG 15: Life on Land

The foundation focuses on preserving and restoring land ecosystems. We work towards conserving forests, protecting wildlife habitats, and promoting sustainable land management practices. Our initiatives also include creating awareness about the importance of biodiversity and supporting reforestation efforts

03- Project Overview & Methodology

3.1 Summary

IIn the **FY 2024-25**, AWF expanded its reach and impact through continued work across **Jharkhand**, **Odisha**, **West Bengal**, **Uttarakhand**, and **Karnataka**. Building on past successes, AWF continued to focus on sustainable afforestation, waterbody restoration, and empowering local communities through direct involvement in project planning and execution.

Key statistics for 2024-25 include:

Project Name	Project Location	Domain	No. of trees planted/ water bodies created
Impact for Wildlife Habitat	Jharkhand	Tree Plantation	**500,500**
Impact for Tribals	Odisha	Tree Plantation	**200,000**
Impact for Farmers	West Bengal	Tree Plantation	**20,000**
Impact for Himalayan Conservation	Uttrakhand	Water Conservation	**1,100**
Impact for Farmers	Karnataka	Tree Plantation	**36,850**

03- Project Overview & Methodology

3.2 Methodology

AWF follows a structured approach to ensure the long-term success and sustainability of its projects. While the core methodology remains consistent, each year brings innovations or adjustments based on the previous year's learnings and community feedback.

- **Step 1: Identification of Suitable Land**

AWF continues to identify barren or degraded land within target villages for plantation. This process is done in consultation with Gram Panchayats, local authorities, and community leaders, ensuring the land is suitable for plantation and does not affect existing agricultural activities. This year, AWF further focused on areas at risk of soil erosion, ensuring that afforestation efforts also address soil conservation.

- **Step 2: Engaging the Community**

Community engagement remains a cornerstone of AWF's methodology. In 2024-25, AWF deepened its community-based approach by:

(a) Conducting regular community consultations to identify needs and ensure local involvement.

(b) Co-creating plantation plans with villagers, incorporating traditional knowledge and feedback into species selection and planting techniques.

(c) Focusing more on inclusive decision-making, with an increased emphasis on women's participation in project planning and execution.

- **Step 3: Building Local Capacity**

AWF continues to establish and support village-level collectives that are responsible for the long-term care and monitoring of the planted saplings. The emphasis this year was on:

(a) Training communities in advanced agroforestry techniques and sustainable agricultural practices.

(b) Empowering women with training in beekeeping, handicrafts, and small-scale agro-businesses, as part of AWF's focus on gender empowerment.

- **Step 4: Selecting Appropriate Tree Species**

Species selection remains a key component of AWF's afforestation efforts. In 2024-25, the process focused on:

(a) Native species suited to the local ecosystem, which helps improve biodiversity and soil fertility.

(b) AWF consulted with environmental experts and local communities to select species that not only benefit the environment but also provide economic value to communities (e.g., Teak, Acacia, Karanj, Mahua, Neem, and Pongamia).

03- Project Overview & Methodology

3.2 Methodology

- **Step 5: Planting and Site Preparation**

Once suitable land is identified and community agreements are in place, AWF proceeds with:

(a) Pit digging, soil preparation, and ensuring that the planting sites are optimal for tree growth.

(b) Transporting saplings to the planting site and ensuring they are planted at the correct depth and spacing for healthy growth. This year, additional measures were taken to ensure water retention during the planting phase in regions facing water scarcity.

- **Step 6: Maintenance and Monitoring**

AWF remains committed to ensuring the success of its tree plantations:

(a) Regular watering, soil management, and fertilization techniques were introduced in regions with low rainfall.

(b) Monitoring sapling health to ensure their survival and development.

(c) Local caretakers were employed and trained to ensure the long-term success of plantations, providing them with sustainable livelihood opportunities.

- **Step 7: Third-Party Verification and Impact Assessment**

AWF continues to prioritize transparency and accountability. In 2024-25:

(a) Third-party assessors were engaged to measure the carbon sequestration of newly planted trees and assess their survival rate.

(b) Detailed impact assessments were conducted to measure the success of each project, including social, environmental, and economic outcomes.

- **Step 8: Continuous Community Engagement and Training**

AWF's commitment to capacity building and vocational training continued in 2024-25. Training sessions included:

(a) Agroforestry techniques and sustainable farming practices for farmers.

(b) Beekeeping and handicrafts for women, providing opportunities for economic independence and reducing dependence on traditional agriculture.

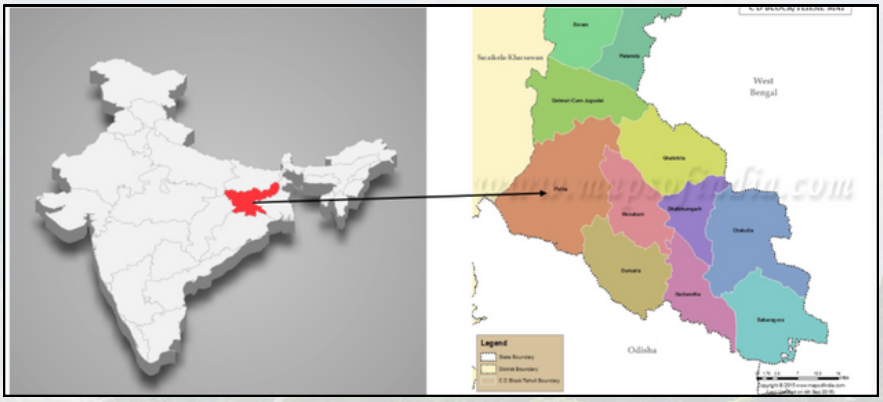
(c) AWF also focused on water management and climate adaptation to ensure communities are resilient to the changing climate.

04- Project Descriptions

4.1 Impact for Wildlife Habitat

4.1.1 Project Overview

- **Location:** Patamda and Boram Block, East Singhbhum District, Jharkhand
- **Project Type:** Tree Plantation for Wildlife Habitat Restoration
- **Total Saplings Planted:** 500,500 trees
- **Primary Objective:** The focus of the 2024-25 project is to further strengthen the Dalma Elephant Corridor, improve habitat connectivity, and enhance wildlife corridors.



Location: State Jharkhand; Villages of East Singhbhum district

4.1.2 Climatic and Ecological Profile

- **Climate:** Jharkhand's tropical climate continues to pose challenges for tree growth, especially during dry spells. This year, AWF focused on implementing climate-resilient planting techniques and choosing drought-resistant species to withstand increasingly erratic weather patterns.
- **Soil and Moisture Conservation:** AWF enhanced water retention strategies, incorporating new water harvesting systems such as small-scale check dams and rainwater recharge pits. These systems not only support sapling growth but also provide water resources to the surrounding villages.

4.1.3 Beneficiary and Community Details

- **Number of Villages Covered:** 8 villages covering 2 Gram Panchayats
- **Total Households:** 1,891 households (Census 2011)
- **Total Population:** 9,651 individuals
- **Female Population:** 4,700 (48.7% of total population)
- **Community Involvement:** Local tribal communities, such as the Santhal and Munda tribes, were actively engaged in site clearance, pit digging, planting, and irrigation activities, promoting local ownership of the project.

4.1.4 Employment Generation:

- **Total Labourers Engaged:** 658 individuals (with 326 female laborers, making up **50%** of the workforce)
- **Primary Beneficiaries:** The Santhal and Munda tribal communities, and made a concerted effort to engage youth in the process, focusing on local youth employment through vocational training programs.

4.1.5 Sapling Distribution

Species Planted:

- **Teak:** 440,000 saplings **(87.91%)**
- **Ear Leaf Acacia:** 51,400 saplings **(10.27%)**
- **Karanj:** 2,680 saplings **(0.54%)**
- **Seesham:** 4,460 saplings **(0.89%)**
- **Kathal (Jackfruit):** 1,960 saplings **(0.39%)**

The sapling distribution was done across multiple villages, ensuring that each village had a mix of species suited to local soil conditions and wildlife requirements. Notably, **Teak** and **Acacia** make up the majority of the plantation, focusing on both timber production and soil fertility.

4.1.6 Species Variety and Benefits

1. **Teak (Tectona grandis):** This **high-value timber species accounts for** 87.91% of the saplings planted, supporting both **local biodiversity** and providing a **commercial income** source for the communities.
2. **Acacia (Acacia Auriculiformis):** Known for its **soil-enhancing** properties, this **nitrogen-fixing** species improves soil fertility, making it an excellent choice for the **reforestation** efforts in degraded soils.
3. **Karanj (Pongamia Pinnata):** Helps improve **soil health** and provides **fodder** for livestock, while also being a potential source of **biofuel**.
4. **Seesham (Dalbergia Sissoo):** Used for **furniture** and carpentry, this species aids in **erosion control** and provides local communities with a source of income.
5. **Kathal (Jackfruit):** Introduced in this project to provide **fruit** for consumption and **economic** benefits to the local communities.

4.1.7 Methodology and Impact

Species Selection: The species were selected after consultations with local communities and environmental experts. This ensures that the selected species are not only ecologically beneficial but also provide economic support to the local communities.

Wildlife Impact: By restoring habitats and strengthening elephant migration corridors, the project has helped reduce human-elephant conflict. Additionally, the restoration supports a wider range of species, including deer, cattle, and other wildlife that benefit from the enhanced biodiversity.

Soil and Water Conservation: The project has significantly improved soil fertility through the planting of Acacia and Teak species, and water retention has been enhanced through the introduction of water harvesting systems and trenches.

4.1.8 Projected Outcomes (Future Impact)

- **Reduction in Human-Elephant Conflicts:** Through continued afforestation efforts and the restoration of migration corridors, AWF's work aims to reduce human-elephant conflicts. By providing **adequate food sources** and **safe pathways** for elephants, the project contributes to a 20-30% reduction in the number of elephant-related incidents, such as **crop damage** and **human injuries**. This reduction is expected to have long-term benefits for both wildlife conservation and the livelihood security of local communities.
- **Biodiversity Support:** The continued planting of native species such as **Teak**, **Acacia**, **Karanj**, and **Mango** will contribute to **increased biodiversity**. By restoring and reconnecting fragmented habitats, AWF's efforts will enhance the availability of food sources and shelter for a diverse range of wildlife, including elephants, cattle, and deer. As a result, biodiversity will be significantly enhanced, supporting a healthier and more resilient ecosystem.
- **Long-Term Environmental Sustainability:** With sustained maintenance and community involvement, the afforestation projects will contribute to the long-term **ecological health** of the region. The use of **climate-resilient species** will ensure that the region's ecosystems remain adaptable to climatic shifts, while also improving soil health and water retention. These efforts will ensure that both wildlife habitats and local agricultural practices remain sustainable for the future.

4.1.9 Challenges and AWF's Response in Jharkhand

In 2024-25, AWF faced several critical environmental challenges in Jharkhand, which were exacerbated by both natural and human-induced factors. These challenges included human-elephant conflict, habitat fragmentation, soil erosion, water scarcity, and the ongoing impact of climate variability. These issues directly affected the sustainability of wildlife habitats, the livelihoods of local communities, and the overall health of the ecosystem. However, AWF responded to these challenges with a comprehensive strategy that incorporated both afforestation efforts and community-driven conservation approaches.

Human-Elephant Conflict and Habitat Fragmentation:

The Dalma Elephant Corridor in East Singhbhum continued to experience significant human-elephant conflict during 2024. **Elephants strayed into agricultural fields** in search of food, leading to **crop damage** and **occasional human injuries**. This conflict was primarily due to the **fragmentation of wildlife corridors** caused by infrastructure development and encroachment on elephant habitats. The **expansion** of **mining activities** and **road construction** in the region further fragmented the natural migration routes of elephants.

AWF's response to this was focused on **reinforcing** the **elephant corridor** by planting saplings across key areas. These plantations aimed to provide elephants with more **secure migration routes** and access to **natural food sources**, which are critical for reducing the likelihood of elephants entering agricultural land. AWF's efforts also included community engagement through training programs for local farmers, helping them understand elephant behavior and reducing human-elephant encounters.

Soil Erosion and Water Scarcity:

The region continues to face serious issues related to soil erosion and water scarcity in 2024. **Unsustainable farming practices** and **deforestation** contributed to the **degradation of soil quality**, making the land more susceptible to erosion, particularly during the monsoon season. Additionally, **water scarcity** remained a significant issue for both local agriculture and wildlife.

In response, AWF focused on **soil conservation** and **water retention** through **strategic plantation projects**.

Climate Variability:

Climate change and its effects on weather patterns continued to pose challenges to both afforestation efforts and agriculture in Jharkhand. **Unpredictable rainfall patterns** and **longer dry periods stressed** the growth of saplings and affected local farming. **Higher temperatures** and **prolonged drought conditions**, as **reported by** the **India Meteorological Department**, **hurt plant survival** rates and **reduce** the **overall water availability** in the region.

To address the impact of climate change, **AWF adapted** its **species selection** to include **drought-resistant varieties** such as **Kathal** (Jackfruit) and **Mango**. These species were chosen for their **ability** to **withstand dry conditions** and provide **food security** to both wildlife and local communities. Furthermore, **AWF enhanced soil moisture** management techniques, which helped **retain soil moisture** and improved sapling survival during dry spells**.**

4.1.10 Project Pictures

4.1.11 Conclusion:

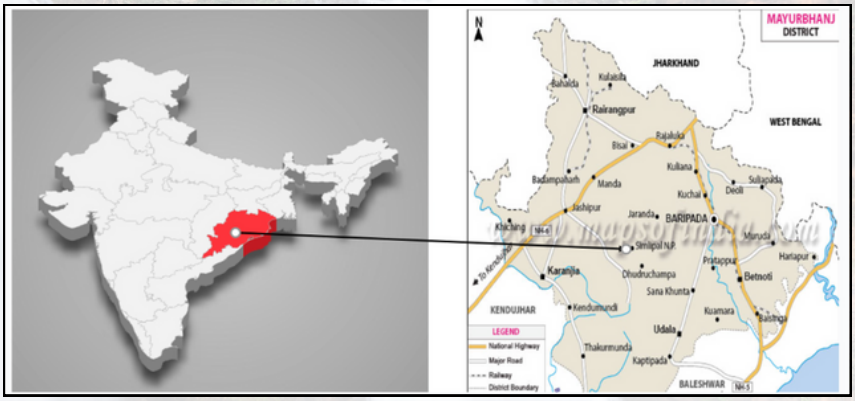
In **2024-2025**, AWF's comprehensive response to the challenges of human-elephant conflict, habitat fragmentation, soil erosion, water scarcity, and climate variability has contributed significantly to the restoration and sustainability of wildlife habitats in Jharkhand.
Through **afforestation**, **community-based conservation**, and **innovative water** and **soil management strategies**, AWF has helped to **reduce human-wildlife conflict**, **enhance biodiversity**, and **restore critical ecosystems** in the region. The success of these initiatives is a testament to the importance of community involvement, adaptive conservation strategies, and collaborative efforts in achieving long-term environmental sustainability.

04- Project Descriptions

4.2 Impact for Tribals

4.2.1 Project Overview

- **Location:** Jashipur Block, Mayurbhanj District, Odisha
- **Project Type:** Tree Plantation for the Tribal community development
- **Total Saplings Planted:** 200,000 saplings
- **Primary Objective:** The goal of this project is to empower tribal communities by involving them in large-scale tree plantation efforts, aimed at enhancing biodiversity, improving soil health, and supporting water conservation. The project also focuses on restoring critical forest corridors in the periphery of Similipal Tiger Reserve, contributing to wildlife conservation while improving the livelihoods of local communities through employment generation and sustainable income.



Location: State Odisha; fringes of Similipal Tiger Reserve

4.2.2 Climatic and Ecological Profile

- **Climate:** Mayurbhanj experiences a tropical climate with a distinct monsoon season from June to September. The region receives moderate to heavy rainfall during this period. The dry season (October to May) sees high temperatures, which impact soil moisture and agricultural productivity.
- **Soil:** The soil in the region is primarily loamy in the plains and lateritic in the hilly areas. These soils have low water retention capacity, making them prone to erosion during the monsoon. The project focuses on soil conservation methods to enhance water retention and prevent erosion.
- **Ecological Challenges:**
  1. Soil Erosion: Due to deforestation and unsustainable farming practices, soil erosion is a significant challenge, particularly during the monsoon season.
  2. Water Scarcity: The dry season exacerbates water scarcity, limiting access to water for both agriculture and daily needs.

4.2.3 Beneficiary and Community Details

- **Villages Covered:** 2 villages in Karanjaia Block, Dari Gram Panchayat, Mayurbhanj District.
- **Total Households:** 231 households (Census 2011)
- **Total Population:** 1,031 individuals.
- **Female Population:** 231 individuals (22.4% of the total population)

4.2.4 Employment Generation

- **Total Labourers Engaged: 206** individuals across various stages of the plantation process, including sapling raising, site clearance, pit digging, planting, and irrigation.
- **Female Labourers: 127** female laborers (**59.91%** of the workforce).

The project has contributed to women's empowerment by providing consistent income and supporting the economic stability of local communities.

4.2.5 Sapling Distribution

The data below highlights the geographical reach of the initiative, the number of saplings planted per village, and the specific species distributed.

Total Saplings Planted: 200,000 saplings

- **Teak:** 184,050 saplings **(92.03%)**
- **Acacia:** 14,500 saplings **(7.25%)**
- **Karanj:** 500 saplings **(0.25%)**
- **Seesham:** 600 saplings **(0.30%)**
- **Kathal (Jackfruit):** 350 saplings **(0.18%)**

4.2.6 Species Variety and Benefits

1. **Teak (Tectona Grandis):** A high-value timber species, Teak aids in soil conservation and provides long-term economic opportunities through timber production.
2. **Acacia (Acacia Auriculiformis):** This nitrogen-fixing species enhances soil fertility, supporting reforestation efforts in degraded soils and improving agricultural productivity.
3. **Karanj (Pongamia Pinnata):** Known for improving soil health, Karanj provides fodder for livestock and has potential as a biofuel source, supporting both local farming and energy needs.
4. **Seesham (Dalbergia Sissoo):** Used in furniture making, Seesham contributes to erosion control and provides economic benefits to local communities through its hardwood.

5. **Kathal (Jackfruit):** Provides fruit for consumption, contributing to food security and offering income opportunities through fruit harvesting.

4.2.7 Methodology and Impact

Species Selection: AWF consulted with local communities and environmental experts to select species that are both ecologically beneficial and economically viable for the region.

Plantation: Saplings were planted in areas that were suitable for the local ecosystem, with an emphasis on enhancing biodiversity and providing sustainable income sources for the local tribal communities.

Community Engagement: The project ensured active participation from the local communities, particularly tribal women. The communities were involved in decision-making, sapling care, and the overall management of the plantation process.

Soil and Water Conservation: The project incorporated soil conservation techniques like contour trenching and water harvesting systems. These efforts are projected to increase agricultural yields by 15-20% over the next few years, while also improving water availability in the region.

4.2.8 Project Pictures

4.2.9 Impact Summary

2 lakh saplings planted across **2 villages** on the **periphery of Similipal Tiger Reserve**.

Contextual Observations (2022-24):

No significant wildlife losses were reported in the buffer areas of Similipal during the reporting period.
The 2021 wildfire caused considerable ecological damage, but the area has shown strong signs of recovery, with increased vegetative density contributing to the restoration of critical forest corridors. These corridors support elephants and rare species, such as the melanistic tiger.

AWF's Solutions & Impact:

Support for Degraded Patch Recovery: AWF's plantations have played a crucial role in recovering degraded patches, creating alternative food sources, and establishing shade zones near human settlements. This approach helps in mitigating crop raiding, particularly by elephants.

Projected Outcomes:

Reduction in Human-Wildlife Conflict: The restoration of forest corridors and the planting of 200,000 saplings are expected to reduce human-wildlife conflicts, particularly elephant crop-raiding, by **approximately 25%** over the next 2-3 years.
Improved Habitat Connectivity: The new plantation zones will contribute to improving the continuity of forest corridors, supporting the **movement of elephants** and other threatened species, such as the melanistic tiger, and enhancing the biodiversity of the region.

4.2.10 Conclusion:

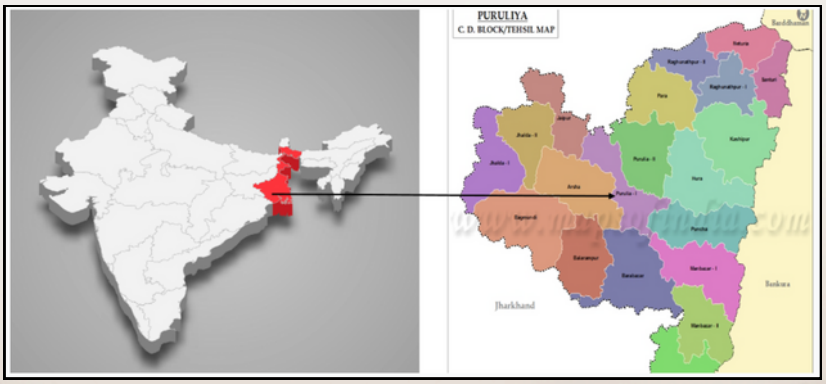
In 2024-25, AWF's work in Odisha, particularly in the areas surrounding Similipal Tiger Reserve, has made substantial progress in restoring degraded land, enhancing biodiversity, and empowering tribal communities. With the Plantation activities, AWF has supported forest regeneration and helped local communities secure sustainable livelihoods. The focus on women's empowerment, vocational training, and community involvement has provided a lasting impact, fostering greater human-wildlife coexistence.
AWF remains committed to scaling these efforts, ensuring the long-term environmental sustainability and economic development of the region.

04- Project Descriptions

4.3 Impact for Farmers

4.3.1 Project Overview

- **Location:** Purulia District, Manbazar 1 Block, Bamni Majhihira Village, West Bengal
- **Project Type:** Tree Plantation for Agricultural and Livelihood Support
- **Total Saplings Planted:** 20,000 saplings
- **Primary Objective:** The core aim of this project is to revitalize the local ecosystem, while providing economic opportunities for local farmers. By involving the community in large-scale tree planting, we not only enhance soil health and water conservation but also support biodiversity restoration. These efforts align with AWF's broader vision of creating a sustainable balance between nature and agriculture.



Location: State West Bengal; Villages of District Purulia

4.3.2 Climatic Profile

- **Climate:** Purulia experiences a tropical climate, with a distinct monsoon season (June to September) followed by a dry period (October to May). The monsoon provides essential rainfall for the plantations, while the dry season poses challenges for water retention, requiring careful soil and moisture management
- **Soil:** The soil in Purulia is primarily lateritic, known for its low water retention capacity, making it susceptible to erosion during the rains. Effective soil conservation techniques are critical in this region, particularly in terms of maintaining soil fertility and preventing degradation over time.

4.3.3 Beneficiary Details

- **Village Covered:** Bamni Majhihira Gram Panchayat, Manbazar Block
- **Total Households:** 545 households (Census 2011)
- **Total Population:** 2,481
- **Female Population:** 1,229 (**~50%** of total population)
- **Primary Beneficiaries:** Rural Population in Purulia district

4.3.4 Employment Generation

- **Total Labourers Engaged: 41** individuals, with **39.02% female participation**
- **Women Participation:** This project has **empowered local women**, allowing them to actively contribute to plantation activities, from **sapling raising** to **site preparation**, offering them a consistent **income source** and enhancing their role in community-led conservation.

AWF's efforts create sustainable economic opportunities for all involved, especially women, in traditionally underserved regions.

4.3.5 Sapling Distribution

In Bamni Majhihira Village, the sapling distribution was designed to target the region's agricultural needs while promoting biodiversity and environmental resilience. A total of **20,000 saplings** were planted, selected for their ability to **adapt** to **local conditions** and provide both **immediate** and **long-term benefits** to the community.

Total Saplings Planted: 20,000 saplings

1. **Teak:** 14,000 saplings
2. **Ear Leaf Acacia:** 3,000 saplings
3. **Karanj:** 1,000 saplings
4. **Seesham:** 1,000 saplings
5. **Kathal (Jackfruit):** 1,000 saplings

This strategically selected mix of species supports the reforestation of degraded lands while ensuring that local farmers gain **access** to **timber**, **fodder**, and **fruit-bearing trees** that will contribute to their livelihoods.

4.3.6 Project Impact

The project not only addresses **environmental concerns** such as **soil erosion** and **water scarcity**, but also **directly supports** the **local community** by providing economic opportunities and food security.
The following highlights key impacts achieved:

Soil Health Improvement: The introduction of Ear Leaf Acacia and Teak has significantly **enhanced soil fertility** and **reduced erosion**, making the land more productive for agriculture.

Biodiversity Support: The focus on Teak, Acacia, and Kathal has contributed to **increasing local biodiversity** by restoring critical habitats and providing resources for both **wildlife** and **livestock**.

Community Empowerment: By actively **involving local farmers** and **women**, the project has built sustainable livelihoods and improved the economic resilience of the community. **Agroforestry practices**, including **fruit-bearing species** like Jackfruit and Karanj, offer **long-term income** opportunities.

4.3.7 Project Pictures

4.3.7 Projected Outcomes

The outcomes of this project are expected to create long-lasting positive changes in both environmental and socio-economic contexts:

Reduction in Soil Erosion: Over time, the planting of Teak and Acacia trees will help **reduce soil erosion** and improve the **soil's water-holding capacity**, enhancing agricultural productivity.

Increased Biodiversity: The restoration of degraded lands will **increase local biodiversity**, offering **better wildlife corridors** and supporting key species like **elephants** and **deer**.

Sustainable Livelihoods: The project's focus on planting fruit-bearing species like **Jackfruit** and **Mango** will provide income sources for the community, creating a foundation for agroforestry and eco-tourism development.

4.3.8 Alignment with Local and National Goals

The West Bengal project aligns closely with **India's National Afforestation Programme** and the **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs), particularly **SDG 13 (Climate Action)** and **SDG 15 (Life on Land)**. The plantation efforts contribute to national goals of carbon sequestration and ecosystem restoration, reinforcing the project's relevance in the broader environmental policy landscape.

4.3.9 Conclusion

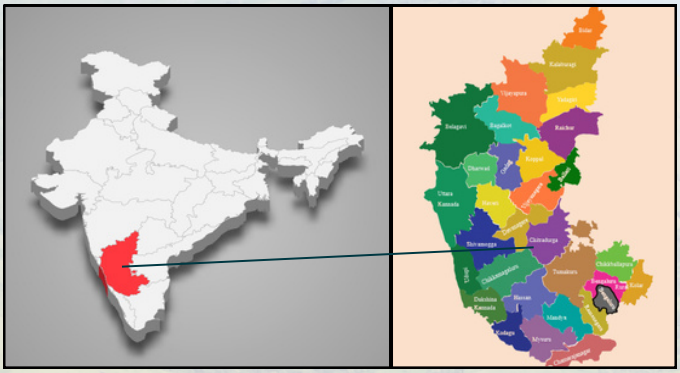
In 2024-25, AWF's tree plantation project in Purulia, West Bengal, has made significant strides in both environmental restoration and community development. By planting 20,000 saplings and involving local communities in the process, AWF has improved soil health, biodiversity, and livelihoods, laying the groundwork for a more sustainable and resilient future. The continued success of this project will not only benefit the local population but also contribute to conservation efforts and economic growth in the region.

04- Project Descriptions

4.4 Impact for Farmers

4.4.1 Project Overview

- **Location:** Chitradurga District, Parashurampura Block, Karnataka
- **Project Type:** Tree Plantation for Agricultural and Livelihood Support
- **Total Saplings Planted:** 36,850 saplings
- **Primary Objective:** This project aims to improve soil health, enhance biodiversity, and support sustainable agriculture through tree plantation. Additionally, it supports economic empowerment by involving local communities, especially women, in every aspect of the project—from sapling raising to plantation and maintenance.



Location: State Karnatka; Villages of District Chitradurga

4.4.2 Climatic Profile

- **Climate:** Chitradurga has a **semi-arid** climate, characterized by **long dry spells** and **moderate rainfall** during the monsoon. These climatic conditions make soil conservation and water retention essential for the success of both agricultural practices and afforestation projects.
- **Soil:** The region primarily has **loamy soils**, which offer **moderate water retention**. However, the region is **vulnerable to erosion** during the rainy season, and **water scarcity** is a major concern in the dry months. Effective soil conservation techniques are a vital part of the project's design.

4.4.3 Beneficiary and Community Details

- **Villages Covered:** Pillahalli, Gowripura, Mahadevapura
- **Total Households:** 808 households (Census 2011)
- **Total Population:** 3,563 individuals
- **Female Population:** 1,809 individuals (**50.8%** of the total population)

4.4.4 Employment Generation

- **Total Labourers Engaged: 383** laborers in **Pillahalli**, **35** in **Gowripura**, and **20** in **Mahadevapura**.
- **Female Labourers**: **340** female laborers (**88.77%** of total workforce)

By engaging **local communities** in every phase of the project, AWF has created **sustainable livelihood opportunities** for farmers and **women** labourers. The high percentage of female participation speaks to the project's commitment to **women's empowerment**, providing them with **stable income sources** through tree plantation and agriculture.

4.4.5 Sapling Distribution

In Chitradurga, the sapling distribution strategy was designed to maximize both environmental impact and economic returns for the local communities. A total of **36,850 saplings** were planted across **three villages**, with species selected for their ability to adapt to local conditions and meet both ecological and livelihood needs

1. **Teak:** 23,425 saplings
2. **Karanj:** 3,220 saplings
3. **Tamarind:** 3,240 saplings
4. **Jamun:** 3,580 saplings
5. **Neem:** 3,385 saplings

4.4.6 Benefits of Species Planted

The species was selected not only for its role in improving soil health and biodiversity but also for its economic value to local communities. Here's how each species benefits the region:

- **Teak (Tectona Grandis):**

Ecological Benefits: Teak is an important species for soil conservation due to its deep root system, which helps in stabilizing the soil and preventing erosion. It also plays a role in water retention, ensuring that the soil remains fertile and productive.
Economic Benefits: As a high-value timber species, Teak offers long-term economic returns through sustainable timber harvesting. This creates an ongoing source of income for local farmers and supports the local economy.

4.4.6 Benefits of Species Planted

- **Karanj (Pongamia Pinnata):**

Ecological Benefits: Karanj is a nitrogen-fixing species, which naturally enhances the soil fertility by replenishing nitrogen levels. It also helps in soil stabilization and provides valuable habitats for local wildlife.
Economic Benefits: Karanj seeds have the potential to be used for biofuel production, making it a valuable source of sustainable energy. Additionally, the tree's leaves can serve as fodder for livestock, benefiting farmers and the local economy.

- **Tamarind (Tamarindus Indica):**

Ecological Benefits: The Tamarind tree helps improve soil quality by enhancing water retention and preventing erosion. Its canopy provides shade for other plants, improving the local microclimate and supporting agricultural practices.
Economic Benefits: Tamarind fruits are commercially valuable, used in food and medicinal products. It offers local farmers a source of income through fruit harvesting, and the tree's other by-products, such as seeds and leaves, can be used for medicinal and agricultural purposes.

- **Jamun (Syzygium Cumini):**

Ecological Benefits: Jamun provides significant biodiversity support by offering food sources for wildlife, including birds and small mammals. Its root system also helps in preventing soil erosion.
Economic Benefits: Jamun fruit is highly valued for its nutritional and medicinal properties, contributing to both local consumption and income generation. The tree also supports agroforestry systems, creating an opportunity for sustainable farming.

- **Neem (Azadirachta Indica):**

Ecological Benefits: Neem is widely known for its pest-repellent properties, helping reduce the need for chemical pesticides in local agriculture. It improves soil fertility and contributes to carbon sequestration, thus mitigating climate change.
Economic Benefits: Neem is an important species for its medicinal and pest-control products. The Neem oil extracted from its seeds is used in cosmetics, healthcare, and agriculture, offering economic opportunities for local communities.

4.4.7 Project Impact

The plantation efforts in Chitradurga have contributed significantly to both ecological restoration and community empowerment:

Soil and Water Conservation: The introduction of Acacia and Teak has improved soil fertility and enhanced water retention, reducing the vulnerability of local farmland to erosion and improving productivity.

Biodiversity Support: The focus on fruit-bearing species like Jamun, Tamarind, and Neem has helped restore biodiversity and provide critical food sources for both wildlife and livestock, improving agriculture and ecosystem health.

Community Empowerment: The high female participation rate underscores the success of the project in providing women with stable employment and a sense of ownership. Through vocational training and hands-on experience, women have acquired skills that will continue to benefit their families and communities.

4.4.8 Project Pictures

4.4.9 AWF's Contribution to Sustainable Growth

In 2023–2025, Chitradurga District experienced several significant developments that align with AWF's mission of environmental sustainability and community empowerment.

Eco-Restoration Initiatives: The district's **2024 eco-restoration project** aims at forestry and land restoration, which **complements AWF's efforts** in tree plantation and biodiversity restoration. AWF's ongoing initiatives in the region focus on improving soil fertility, reducing erosion, and promoting the regeneration of habitats, supporting the larger goals of environmental recovery.

Water Management and Agriculture: In **2025**, **Chitradurga** faced a **33% rainfall deficit**, severely **impacting local agriculture**. AWF's soil and water conservation practices, including the planting of species like **Karanj** and **Tamarind**, play a key role in improving water retention and enhancing soil quality, mitigating the impacts of water scarcity and supporting sustainable farming.

4.4.10 Projected Outcomes

The long-term impact of this initiative is expected to be substantial, both environmentally and economically:

- **Reduction in Soil Erosion:** The planting of Teak and Acacia will help stabilize soil, reduce erosion, and improve water retention, benefiting both agriculture and the environment.
- **Improved Agricultural Productivity:** Karanj, Neem, and Tamarind will enhance soil fertility and increase agricultural yields, improving food security and income for local farmers.
- **Economic Benefits:** By providing fruit-bearing trees like Jamun and Tamarind, the project will create income-generating opportunities, supporting local livelihoods and reducing dependence on traditional farming alone.

4.4.11 Conclusion

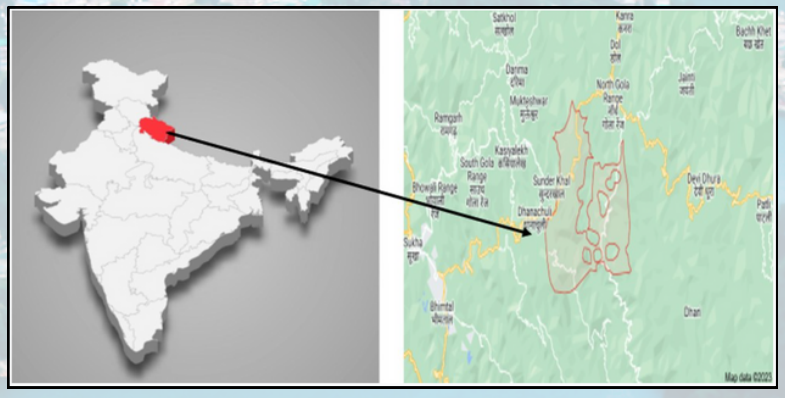
The Karnataka project in 2024-25 has made a significant impact on both local communities and the environment. With 36,850 saplings planted, the initiative has improved soil health, promoted biodiversity, and empowered local farmers, particularly women. By focusing on a strategic mix of fruit-bearing and timber species, the project ensures a sustainable future, both ecologically and economically. AWF remains committed to scaling these efforts, contributing to a greener and more resilient future for Chitradurga.

04- Project Descriptions

4.5 Impact for Himalayan Conservation

4.5.1 Project Overview

- **Location:** Okhalkanda Block, Nainital District, Uttarakhand
- **Project Type:** Water Conservation & Biodiversity Preservation
- **Total Water Structures Created:** 1,100 structures
- **Primary Objective:** The project's main objective is to enhance water conservation through the restoration of local water bodies (Chals and Khals) while also promoting sustainable livelihoods for tribal communities, especially women, by improving their access to clean water, agricultural support, and new economic opportunities.



Location: State Uttarakhand; Villages of Nanital district

4.5.2 Climatic Profile

- **Climate:** Uttarakhand, particularly in the Nainital district, experiences a sub-temperate climate, with cool winters and moderate monsoons. The region is prone to water scarcity during the dry seasons, which affects both agriculture and community welfare. The conservation of water bodies is vital to ensure year-round water availability for both drinking and irrigation purposes.
- **Ecological Challenges:** The region faces soil erosion, especially in hilly terrains, and water scarcity during the dry months. The restoration of traditional water systems like Chals and Khals can significantly mitigate these challenges, helping to restore soil health and improve local agricultural productivity.

4.5.3 Beneficiary and Community Details

- **Villages Covered:** Nai Village in Okhalkanda Block
- **Total Households:** 68 households (Census 2011)
- **Total Population:** 454 individuals
- **Female Population:** 226 individuals (**49.78%** of the total population)
- **Total Labourers Engaged:** 18 individuals were engaged in the restoration of the water bodies in Nai Village.

The project's focus on water conservation has had a direct impact on the local community, particularly in providing better access to water for agriculture, which is critical for sustaining rural livelihoods in the region.

4.5.4 Water Conservation and Sapling Distribution

- **Total Water Bodies Restored:** 1,100 water bodies
- **Total Water Conserved: 2.75 million liters**

The project also focuses on the **restoration** of **Chals** and **Khals**, traditional water conservation structures that help **improve soil moisture**, **support irrigation**, and **contribute to groundwater recharge**. This conservation work is essential to improving water security for local farmers, who face challenges during dry spells.

4.5.5 Key Regional Challenges:

In **2024–2025**, Uttarakhand faced significant environmental challenges that intensified the need for sustainable solutions. The region experienced an **escalation in forest fires**, **devastating flash floods**, and **persistent water scarcity**, all of which exacerbated the existing ecological threats. Despite these challenges, AWF continued its focus on enhancing water availability, biodiversity conservation, and empowering local communities through sustainable practices.

Forest Fires: In 2024, Uttarakhand witnessed a sharp rise in forest fires, with **over 1,276 fire incidents** across the state, **damaging 1,771 hectares** of **forest land**. The fires, primarily caused by **dry conditions**, affected **soil fertility** and increased the **risk of landslides**. The fires resulted in **loss of biodiversity** and posed serious risks to local livelihoods.

4.5.6 AWF's Response:

In response to these severe climatic challenges, AWF has been actively engaged in addressing both immediate and long-term impacts:

Soil Erosion Mitigation: AWF's soil conservation techniques, including the restoration of Chal-Khal systems, help prevent soil erosion and stabilize fragile terrain.

Water Conservation and Management: The flash floods further highlighted the region's vulnerability to water stress. To address this, AWF expanded its water conservation efforts by constructing 1,100 Chal-Khal structures, ensuring sustainable water availability for both agriculture and drinking purposes. These systems have helped recharge groundwater, mitigating the risk of water scarcity during dry periods.

Community Empowerment and Economic Resilience: AWF's focus on community-based solutions has led to the training of local communities in sustainable practices such as beekeeping and handicrafts, providing alternative livelihood options and reducing pressure on the environment. These initiatives also contribute to economic resilience by diversifying income sources for local families, particularly women.

4.5.7 Conclusion:

In 2024-25, AWF's initiatives in Uttarakhand have proven crucial in addressing the region's environmental challenges, particularly in water conservation, soil restoration, and community empowerment. Despite facing difficulties such as forest fires and flash floods, AWF's work has helped the community become more resilient to climate change and environmental degradation, ensuring sustainable livelihoods and a stable ecosystem for the future.

05- Acknowledgement & References

5.1 Acknowledgement

The impact we have achieved during the 2024-25 financial year would not have been possible without the support and collaboration of our valued partners, stakeholders, and the relentless efforts of our employees and volunteers. We express our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has contributed to the success of AWF's mission in advancing sustainable development, biodiversity restoration, and community empowerment.

Stakeholders/ Partners:

We sincerely thank our partners for their unwavering support and for helping bring our vision to life — Grow Trees, Grow Billion Trees.

Special thanks to:

- Rotary Club of Jamshedpur
- Rotary Inner Wheel
- Impact Guru
- Care Guru
- Chlorochem Pvt. Ltd.
- Forest Department of Uttarakhand

Employees & Volunteers:

A big thank you to our dedicated employees and passionate volunteers. Your tireless efforts on the ground continue to be the foundation of every milestone we achieve. The positive impact we make is a direct result of your commitment to our cause and vision.

5.2 References

Sources & References

The content and data presented in this report are based on credible sources, research, and ongoing collaboration with various organizations. We would like to acknowledge the following sources for their valuable information:

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