

THIRTIETH ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017



Chirag

Central Himalayan Rural Action Group

Go to the people,
Live among them,
Learn from them,
Love them.
Start with what they know.
Build on what they have.
But of the best leaders,
When their task is accomplished,
Their work is done,
The people all remark,
'We have done it ourselves'.

Chinese proverb



Our vision

To be a catalyst for the creation of a society rooted firmly in the principles of dignity, justice and solidarity.

Our mission

Chirag's mission is to improve the quality of life of rural people – especially the poor and women – in the Central Himalaya. We try to do this through interventions in health, education and natural resource management, and by providing access to diversified livelihood options. We promote the sustainable ownership and management of common resources by the community.

THE YEAR IN RETROSPECT

The NGO sector is going through a rapid change. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funding is increasingly becoming the major source of funding and as such terms such as Outputs, Measurable Indicators, Standardization, Impacts etc. are becoming part of NGO lingua franca. NGOs are still struggling to apply these corporate concepts in the development context. A significant amount of time and energy is spent on data analysis and reporting. Delivery of quality products and services which was used as a yardstick of success till a few years ago is not considered satisfactory anymore. The programs are becoming technically more complex and hence the skill sets required to achieve the required results and present them cogently are significantly different from what most NGO staff possess. Along with this, the community's needs which were largely centred on more efficient management of community owned natural resources, getting affordable health services and creating some livelihood opportunities for themselves are changing rapidly as well and they are demanding specialized services. So the skill sets and capabilities that took us here will not take us further. It is thus of critical importance that NGOs recognize and adapt to this changing scenario to remain relevant. To address the emerging challenges, it is crucial to constantly work on improving the capacities of human resources so that they can successfully cope with the changing requirements.

Chirag is blessed with a committed team of experienced professionals with deep connect with the community, a proven track record of spearheading successful implementation of different programs and building strong village level institutions. Our field staff is our strength and we will continue to build their capacities so that they are able to address the new challenges facing us.

We continued our efforts at strengthening our relationships with existing partners. Our relationship with ACWADAM, IIT Roorkee, ARGHYAM, Berkeley Reafforestation Trust, Ernst and Young Foundation, The Hans Foundation, HIMMOTTHAN Society, Rajeshwar and Susheela Dayal Charitable Trust and Indian Education Collective (the erstwhile Rajiv Gandhi Foundation) got strengthened. During the year we built a new partnership on Education Water Sanitation and Hygiene (E-WaSH) in partnership with HIMMOTTHAN Society. Through this project, we aim to make safe drinking water available in Government Primary Schools and set up better standards of sanitation and hygiene. We have been working in these schools for the past two years in improving the quality of education.

With technical support from ACWADAM, IIT Roorkee and Peoples Science Institute (PSI) our understanding of Himalayan geology, hydrology and water quality issues improved significantly and the impacts of our spring recharge is becoming evident and highly appreciated at all levels. Our footprints in Spring Recharge increased this year with our initiation of Spring Recharge work in Lamgarha Block of Almora District. Spring Recharge is an area

which is becoming one of Chirag's flagship programs and with our enhanced expertise and understanding which has few parallels in the country, we are well on our way to becoming a resource agency in the region and ultimately impact government policy.

Our partnership with SBI Youth for India has been an interesting experience. This year 4 Fellows are working with us on different projects. These young people bring different perspectives into our projects and introduce a culture of innovation and novelty which pushes our field teams to think differently. Some of these young professionals we hope will continue to work on these issues post their fellowship and make it their life's mission.

Our education program continues to innovate with new Teaching Learning Materials (TLMs) and pedagogical tools. With support from institutions like Magic Bus Delhi and Centre for Learning Resources (CLR) Pune, we continued to improve the quality of the content as well as the tools and techniques of delivery. Apart from ensuring a better quality of education, our focus has also been on strengthening the School Management Committee (SMC). Chirag School continued to innovate and experiment with new teaching methods but more importantly continue to build characters and instill values in young minds.

The Kumaun Grameen Udyog's (KGU) model has proved that it is possible to create competitive products of high quality by investing in building capacities of local artisans. It has established that business and social development can go hand in hand. KGU continued to support Chirag School and Hospital. This is a unique model and can be a source of learning for similar organizations across the country.

Chirag became 30 this year and we celebrated our Annual Day on 29th July in all our area offices as well as in our head office. We plan to restart our annual retreat to strengthen our bonds and to reinforce our core values and our pride in being a part of this extraordinary organization.

It has been almost three and a half years since I took over as the Executive Director and had the pleasure of learning and evolving with the organization and its people. There are other commitments in my life which beckons and it is time to move on. The love and respect that I have received from everybody in Chirag has been unprecedented. This is something that I will cherish for years to come. But as I move on, I have a firm belief that the organization has inherent strength in its' people and will rise to the new challenges and grow from strength to strength.

September 2017

Ujjal Ganguly
Executive Director

OVERVIEW

With increase in tourism in the area, the local community is finding it more lucrative to sell their land than to grow crops on them. The younger generation in particular is migrating to the plains in search of more remunerative livelihood options. However the quality of education does not equip them to compete successfully in the job market. They thus find themselves in a difficult situation with neither the cushion of land and property nor the prospect of finding a reasonably well paying job. However, despite a surge in construction activities and increased opportunities in industry and service sectors, natural resource based livelihoods is still the mainstay of the rural communities of Kumaun.

Forests in the region are getting denuded at a rapid pace. Along with the forests the springs which are the lifeline of the region are drying up causing serious issues of drinking water shortage especially during the summer months. The quality of primary education is a matter of grave concern. The learning level continues to be abysmally low. With a poor level of basic education, competing for professional courses from a good institution and getting a well-paid job remains a distant dream.

Our interventions attempt to address some of these challenges. Through our livelihoods program, we have attempted to capture as much value as possible at the local level so that more money can be paid to the community. Through our spring recharge work, we have simplified the nuances of hydro-geology and involved the community in understanding the nature of springs. Our focus has been on making the community realize the importance of springs and building strong community institutions who can take ownership of restoring and maintaining the springs. Our primary education program lay stress on imparting quality education through innovative pedagogy and curriculum and by building a strong connect with nature. Our school has made education fun and fear free yet enriching. We constantly develop locally relevant teaching learning materials and facilitate the learning process through 'learning by doing' methodologies. Our health clinic has created access to quality health services at an affordable price for the local community.

Despite our persistent efforts for over 30 years now, we are aware that the challenges are enormous and are getting complex by the day. Over the coming years we probably need to focus on some activities in which we have proven expertise and phase out of those in which we have not been able to create a niche. Sensitizing and involving the community and ensuring that they take ownership will probably be our greatest challenge. This and only this will ensure the sustainability of our efforts.

Another very important challenge for the organization is to nurture and build the next line of leadership. As the older generation of organizational leadership move on, it is critical that the next line of leaders take over and carry on the spirit, philosophy and values into the next generation.

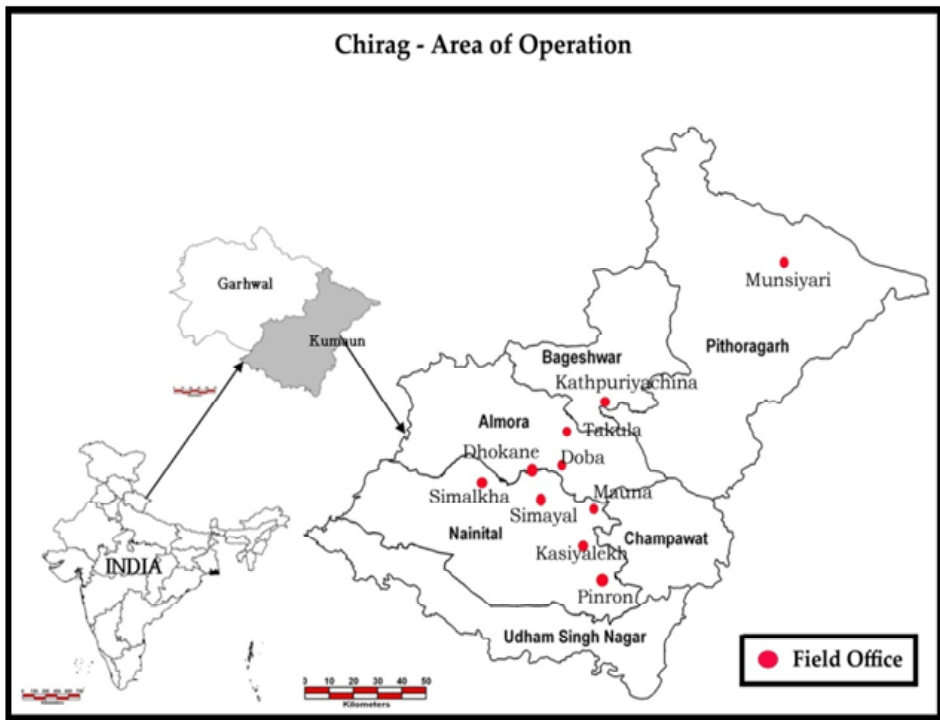
AREA OF OPERATION

Chirag currently works in 221 villages in 9 blocks spread over 4 districts of Kumaun region of Uttarakhand. We work in four blocks of Nainital district, three blocks of Almora district and in one block each of Bageshwar and Pithoragarh districts. We work with 16,104 households impacting over 85,880 people in different areas of our operation.

Project Area	District	Block	Gram Panchyat	Hamlet/ Village
Reetha	Nainital	Ramgarh	15	17
Kasiyalekh	Nainital	Ramgarh, Dhari	20	23
Mauna	Nainital	Ramgarh	09	12
Pinro	Nainital	Bhimtal	11	12
Takula	Almora	Takula	12	14
Doba	Almora	Hawalbag	09	16
Dhokane	Nainital	Ramgarh	15	30
	Nainital	Betalghat	04	04
	Almora	Hawalbag	04	04
Simlakha	Nainital	Betalghat	19	29
	Almora	Tarikhet	01	02
Kathpuriya- chhina	Bageshwar	Bageshwar	32	40
Munsiyari	Pithoragarh	Munsiyari	15	18
			166	221

The Table below shows the program wise village coverage:

Project Area	Education	Natural Resource	Rural Livelihood
Reetha	14	03	10
Kasiyalekh	11	05	10
Pinro	08	05	0
Mauna	11	04	05
Takula	0	14	0
Doba	05	05	16
Dhokane	14	13	26
Simalkha	09	11	31
Kathpuriyachhina	21	15	20
Munsiyari	0	0	18
Total:	93	75	136



WHAT WE DO

EDUCATION

There is increasing concern across the nation about dismally low learning levels in our primary schools. Studies have repeatedly shown that over 60% of children aged between 8 and 14 are unable to read Class 2 level texts. This is a matter of serious concern because this scenario persists inspite of considerably increased investment in the education sector and substantial progress in access, infrastructure, pupil-teacher ratio and increased salaries for teachers. While these investments have resulted in dramatic increase in enrolment in the last decade, this has not translated into improvement in learning levels. It probably requires a fresh approach that builds on the experiences of previous efforts and makes learning outcomes rather than enrollment the key focus. Various studies have highlighted the fact that Indian students underperform on tests meant to gauge Minimum Learning Levels (MLLs). It is worth mentioning that more often than not, the children (often girls) who study in government run primary schools belong to the poorest section of the society. Thus there is a need to ensure that the education being provided at the government schools are of a minimum acceptable quality and addresses the issue of equity. Chirag focuses on primary school education because we firmly believe that a strong foundation in primary education is necessary for creating a well-educated nation.

With a weak foundation at the primary level, children rapidly lose interest in studies and eventually drop out or else continue to get degrees without learning much. It is sad to note that education which is the nucleus around which the social and economic development of a country hinges, is being largely neglected.

The structure of our balshikshak program focuses not only on developing basic literacy skills through activity based learning but also on increasing curiosity, problem solving skills, critical thinking and life skills development through our library, sports for development and 'We learn English' Programs. Our balshikshak program has come a long way from appointing para-teachers in the initial years to ensure that the schools are opened regularly, to reaching a stage now where child-centric teaching and learning approach and innovative learning methods are used in the schools through them. In the first half of the day, our balshikshaks

teach basic numeracy and language to classes 1 and 2 through activity based methods while in the second half of the day, they run the library program and 'We Learn English' program with grades 3, 4 and 5 on alternate days. Once a week, the sports for development program is also implemented as a pilot in 20 out of 65 schools.

District and Block wise details of our project schools are given in the table below:

District	Block	Area	No. of Schools
Nainital	Ramgarh	Kasiyalekh	13
Nainital	Ramgarh	Mauna	10
Nainital	Ramgarh	Reetha	06
Nainital	Ramgarh	Dhokane	05
Nainital	Bhimtal	Pinro	02
Nainital	Betalghat	Simlakha	10
Bageshwar	Bageshwar	Kathpuriya	15
Almora	Hawalbag	Dhokane	04

During the year, the following activities were undertaken with the balshikshaks:

1.1 Basic Literacy

The key focus of our balshikshaks are on building content knowledge, improving pedagogy, using classroom data to improve learning outcomes and monitoring our basic literacy goals. We conduct a baseline in the beginning of the year, an endline at the end of the year and quarterly assessments to assess learning levels of the children.

We assess the children's learning level in both oral and written skills. Our staff continuously monitors our balshikshak run classes using the data from the classrooms. In this way the staff and the balshikshaks are aware of the areas of improvement in themselves as well as in the children.

A comparison of baseline and endline for both numeracy and language is given in the table below:

Reading Comprehension Assessment Score (Hindi)

	St.- 1		St.-2	
	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline
Not even letter	32%	04%	10%	04%
Letter	47%	10%	27%	10%
Word	12%	15%	13%	15%
Paragraph	03%	18%	10%	18%
Story	04%	21%	13%	21%
Comprehension	02%	32%	27%	32%

Numeracy Assessment Scores

	St.- 1		St.-2	
	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline
Not even number	25%	04%	09%	03%
No. Recognition (1-9)	57%	40%	13	14%
No. Recognition (10-99)	17%	46%	48%	36%
Subtraction	01%	10%	30%	42%
1 digit Division	00%	00%	00%	05%

As can be seen from the table above, there is significant improvement in both numeracy and language in the schools where we have been working on improving the quality through the balshikshaks.

1.2 We Learn English Program:

The aim of introducing the "We Learn English" program conceptualized and designed by Centre for Learning Resources (CLR) Pune was to equip the students of our mainstream regional medium primary schools with a basic proficiency in written and spoken English.

Baseline

The study reveals that majority (more than 90%) of the students are able to comprehend the familiar sounding questions such as, "What is your name, Where do you live, etc" given in the Level 1 test. More than 50% of the students attempted to answer these questions in complete or broken sentences in English or through mono-syllabic responses. While for unfamiliar questions, they needed prompts or helping questions. In spite of these prompts less than 50% of the students could respond in complete or broken sentences in English. Student responses were less encouraging on unfamiliar picture cues. The students in Grade 5 showed slightly better performance than the Grade 4 students on the same level of test. However, their performance came down considerably in the Level 2 test. Based on this it is obvious that students possess rudimentary English comprehension and speaking skills which is limited to familiar expressions and situations. None of the students could speak correctly in complete sentences.

Endline

The study reveals that a higher proportion of children have been successful at attempting the Level 1 test. Children were able to comprehend basic questions in English. A relatively higher proportion of students tried to answer questions in broken or complete sentences. While for unfamiliar questions, they found it easier to express themselves with the help of prompts or helping questions. Student responses were less encouraging on unfamiliar picture cues. But there is an improvement in comparison to the baseline responses.

In order to reach the desired levels of proficiency, the students will require a structured English learning and speaking support and a sustained exposure over a period of time.

1.3 Magic Bus-Sports for Development:

Magic Bus, an NGO based in Delhi believes in using sports as a medium to make learning more interesting and attractive to children. In collaboration with Magic Bus, we have introduced this novel learning approach in 20 out of 65 schools where we have introduced this technique as a pilot initiative. We initiated the program in June 2016 with a five days training on the program structure, content, pedagogy and implementation. Post this initial training; we distributed the Magic Bus kits in all the 20 schools. These kits included the essential sports and other equipment required to conduct the program effectively. We also distributed the Magic Bus manual to each of our 20 balshikshaks. In October 2016, Magic Bus conducted refresher training on using the kits effectively to make learning more interesting. The experience has been very encouraging. Children naturally love sports and it is much easier to teach numeracy, language and social skills through games. From next year, we will involve all our 65 schools in this program.

1.4 Library Program:

A library in each school serves the purpose of creating an opportunity for children to read more which helps improve their language skills as well as instill values in them. Setting up of the libraries and convincing the teachers of its importance have been the initial goals of our library program. Over the years, both the teachers and the students gradually began to realize the value of school library. As on March 2016, there were a total of 19,847 books across all our school libraries, an average of over 300 books per library. This year we added an additional 135 books per library taking the total available books to 435 per school. Student and teacher interviews have revealed that children are reading more. Some children also involve their parents in reading when they take books home thereby improving community literacy and instilling a reading habit. We have received encouraging feedbacks from many SMC members on improved reading habits. The next challenge for us is to use the school libraries as a base to teach skills like problem solving, critical thinking, communication and social skills for holistic development of the children.

1.5 Content Training on Basic Mathematics for Balshikshaks and Coordinators:

The Mathematics training was led by a two member team from Sampark Foundation. The Sampark mathematics kit which has a number of teaching learning materials (TLMs) for teaching mathematics through interesting games has been adopted by us in all our 65 schools. It only made logical sense to have our balshikshaks trained in the effective use of this kit. The focus was also on improving the conceptual understanding of elementary mathematics of the teachers. The concepts covered in this context were basic operations (Addition, Subtraction, Multiplication and Division), concept of money, time, shapes and weight. The training also helped Chirag coordinators refresh their basic concepts in elementary mathematics.

1.6 Training on curriculum and session plan:

In May 2016, we conducted a series of sessions with all our balshikshaks on curriculum planning. We used Uttarakhand State Education Board's curriculum to discuss with the balshikshaks on what and how to teach mathematics and language. In all our 5 clusters we had fruitful sessions on importance of following curriculum, planning and breaking the curriculum down into key objectives. The focus of the workshops were also to do better planning of each session.

1.7 Balshikshak Cross Visits:

Balshikshak cross visits is an important component of our capacity building strategy which facilitates learning from each other's experience. These cross visits are done quarterly. During the year, 20 balshikshaks were sent to different schools where they learned from other balshikshaks. Typically a balshikshak on a cross visit spends about 3 days in another school observing their peer, reflecting on the culture of the school and sharing their learning with the area coordinators.

1.8 Balshikshak Exposure Visit:

An exposure visit was organized to Anjanisain ParyavaranVidyalaya in Anjanisain, Tehri Garwhal for our balshikshaks. The participant group for the trip was a mix of balshikshaks, area coordinators and central team staff.

1.9 Digital Literacy for Chirag Education Team:

This year we had a SBI Youth for India fellow working with our education team. His project was to increase the use of technology in teaching mathematics and language. His involvement helped introduce basic computer technology and digital literacy among children, government teachers, balshikshaks and Chirag education team. Through this project he used technology to teach mathematics and language.

1.10 E-WaSH Project:

To improve health and hygiene, access to potable water and sanitation facilities in government primary schools, a project focusing on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WaSH) was initiated with support from HIMMOTTHAN Society. This project complements our existing Central Himalayan Education Initiative (CHEI) program and hence is called Education, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (E-WaSH). Implementation of E-WaSH program is undertaken in 45 Primary Schools in which 26 schools are in Ramgarh block, 10 schools are in Betalghat block and 09 schools are in Bageshwar block. This project complements our existing education program.

Case Study:1

The SMC That Would Not Give Up!

Name of School: Primary School, Diyari

Block: Ramgarh District: Nainital

Like any effective School Management Committee (SMC), the Diyari School's SMC also has been meeting every month to discuss and plan for making their school a joyful place of learning for the students. They have been working on various issues like ensuring regular attendance, improving teaching and learning process, infrastructure and increased community involvement in school management. One such problem that they had been grappling with for a long time was of electricity in the school. They needed to ensure electric connection in the school not only for illumination but also for using different audio-visual aids. After a series of discussion on this issue, the SMC decided to invite some Education Department officials for a school visit and shared the problem with them. They also submitted

an application for electricity connection for the school to the authorities. However, despite all their efforts, the school did not get electricity connection. But the SMC did not give up. They sought Chirag's help in the matter. Based on our advice, they approached the District Magistrate and requested his intervention. The District Magistrate was impressed by the SMC's persistence. He gave necessary instructions and within a week electricity connection was provided to the Diyari Primary school. A learning for all of us that if one is committed and persistent, one can get almost anything done. The SMC of Diyari Primary School has become an inspiration for all other SMCs in the region.

Case Study: 2

From "I can't!" to an emphatic "I CAN!" - A Teacher's Journey.

Name of School: Primary School Chaukbisod

Block: Betalghat District: Nainital

Shalini Arya joined Chirag as a balshikshak in 2015. She had never taught before and this was to be her first interaction with children aged between 6 and 8. But how difficult would it be to teach a motley group of 1st and 2nd graders? Shalini was soon to find out! Within two months into her job, Shalini found herself to be utterly frustrated. The children were unruly and did not listen to her while at the same time their learning levels were at an all-time low. Shalini was at her wits end and was on the verge of quitting her job. Then the first training of the year happened, which was an orientation cum training on pedagogy for teaching language and mathematics.

Shalini found the training sessions very useful and also found the courage to tell her area coordinator that she was facing many challenges in the classroom. The Chirag coordinator started visiting Shalini's school more often and provided support to her. The coordinator also took her to a different school where she got an opportunity to observe another balshikshak at work. Shalinibrought the learning and feedbacks into her own classroom. She started to make frequent home visits and as a result got to know her students and their families better. This ensured

that the student-teacher relationship improved and helped immensely in better learning levels for the children. Shalini introduced more activity based learning and a series of interactive games to generate more interest among her students. The students have started responding to her much more and are learning much faster.

During our recent interactions with Shalini, she looked much happier and seemed to be enjoying her work. "I love teaching now, even though it still frustrates me on some occasions!" she said while describing the change over the past few months.

Scholarship for Girls

We currently provide scholarships to 82 socially and economically disadvantaged girls spread across 57 villages in Nainital, Almora and Bageshwar districts to enable them to complete their schooling. The girls are selected from class 8th onwards and support is provided to them till they complete class 12th. Chirag covers the cost of their stationery, textbooks, uniforms and school fees and also monitors their health through periodic medical check-ups. In addition, the girls are provided tuition support in different subjects.

The class wise breakup of the girls supported under the program is given in the table below:

Area	Class wise Girls				Total
	9th	10th	11th	12th	
Reetha	3	2	5	6	16
Kasiyalekh	2	0	2	6	10
Mauna	2	1	1	3	07
Dhokane	2	2	3	5	12
Simalkha	1	2	0	1	04
Pinro	4	2	8	5	19
Kathpuriyachhina	5	3	3	3	14
Total	19	12	22	29	82

During the year, the following activities were undertaken with the Girl Scholars:

- During the year regular meetings were held with parents to debrief them on the progress of their children. Two health check-up camps were organized in which detailed health check-up of the girls were done by Chirag doctors. Those with serious ailments requiring specialized treatment were referred to other facilities.
- Chirag team visited the school teachers every quarter to discuss the performance of the girl scholars with the teachers and sought their advice on improvement.
- During the year, a two day workshop on menstrual hygiene was conducted for all the scholarship girls. A baseline was done to assess their attitudes and beliefs on menstrual hygiene. The workshop was very interactive and helped the girls get a better understanding of menstrual cycle and related issues. Since discussion on menstrual health is considered a taboo, there were many myths which were clarified during the workshop.
- Two residential camps of 1 week each were organized for girls studying in classes 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th. The camps helped the girls with topics that they were unable to comprehend and also helped them prepare for their upcoming examinations.
- This year out of the 82 girls supported by us, 41 appeared for their class 10th and 12th examinations. Out of the 41, 19 girls passed their examinations with 1st division while 20 got 2nd division. Only 1 girl secured a 3rd division while 1 girl could not pass her examination due to ill health.

The class 10th and class 12th examination results of the supported girls are given in the table below:

Class	Total No. of Scholars	1st Division	2nd Division	3rd Division	Failed
10th	12	09	02	01	0
12th	29	10	18	00	1

Chirag School

The Chirag School located in the picturesque Kumaon hills, was formally started in 2006. The school aspires to provide a fear free learning environment to children where they can develop their body, mind and soul and understand the significance of living in harmony with nature and self.

Our goal is to demonstrate that quality education for rural children can be provided at an affordable cost. The school envisions itself as a model on which educational endeavors in the region can be based. Girl students, children from economically weaker sections and children of single parents are given preference during the admission process.

The school believes in providing experiential learning to its students and in order to ensure personal attention to all students, the number of students per class is capped at a maximum of 18. In the year 2016-17, the school had 115 students from pre-school through class 5, 9 teachers, 3 support staff, 2 volunteers and 1 principal. The school has a building each for the pre-primary and the primary section and a separate one for the office. The school also has a computer lab, a master library, small classroom libraries in every class and a teachers' resource room to help teachers develop learning materials for children.

In the spirit of holistic development of the children, the school's curriculum was designed to provide increased opportunities through co-curricular activities. Students attended in-school workshops conducted by external resource persons and volunteers. These included a drums workshop, a lesson on snakes and the environment by a wildlife biologist, a workshop on wildlife conservation organized by the National Geographic channel, a puppet making and

theatre workshop and a story telling session. The school also celebrated the local festivals with the students to keep indigenous traditions alive.

Special events were also organized for the students. The pre-primary and class 1 students went on a picnic to Sonapani resort, classes 2 and 3 went to Nainital Zoo while an overnight camp on Chirag campus was organized for students of classes 4 and 5. In addition, a team-building winter fun event was organized with mixed grade-level teams comprising students from class 1 through class 5, exploring a variety of activities. Two health camps were also organized for the students in which more than 70 students were examined. The children were given de-worming and iron-calcium tablets.

Before the term got over we had 6 counseling sessions for our 5th graders broadly aimed at helping them in building self-esteem, managing anxiety (around tests/exams, meeting new children/new teachers, new school), dealing with bullying and/or abuse of any kind, being assertive and building supportive relationships, staying away from smoking, alcohol and drugs and managing new emotions as they reach adolescence.

In March 2017, 11 students graduated from Class 5, of which:

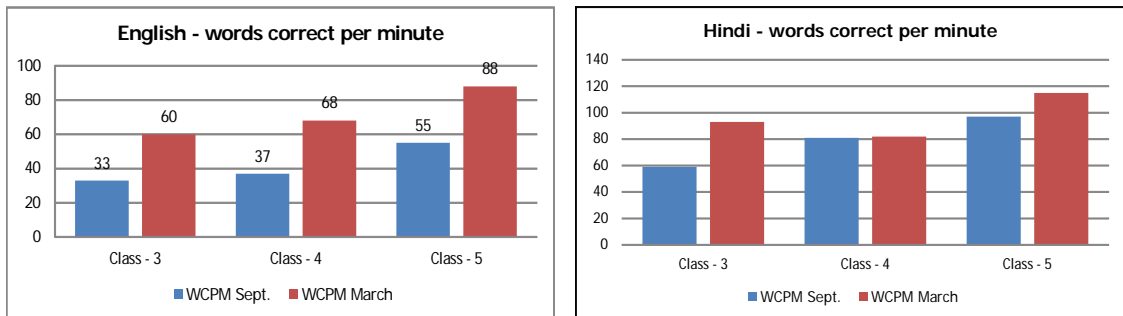
- Five students joined Rajkiya Uchhatar Madhyamik Vidyalaya in Reetha
- Two students joined Kendriya Vidyalaya in Mukteshwar
- Two students joined Peora Inter College in Peora
- One student joined Rajiv Gandhi Navodaya Vidyalaya in Kotabagh
- One student joined a school in Haldwani.

Some new initiatives started in the school during the year are as under:

Language Development Program:

In order to understand the level of the students in reading fluency, accuracy and comprehension in Hindi and English we conducted a baseline reading assessment of all the students. Based on the results, a focused intervention was designed to meet the unique needs of the students. A 40 minute session each day was dedicated to improving reading. Apart

from focused reading intervention, we also introduced a program called DEAR (Drop Everything And Read) when everyone at the school including the principal, support staff, teachers, volunteers and the youngest child chooses books based on their interest and ability and literally drops everything and starts reading. Children were encouraged to take books home every day and even the parents were motivated to read stories to their children. The hope is that through these programs children will become habitual readers and also critical thinkers. We conducted an end line assessment of the reading levels of children as well. The results are given in the charts below:



In English correct words per minute, all grades showed an average increase of approximately 30 percentage points on a scale of 4. Comprehension for classes 4 and 5 improved from 1.7 and 2.1 to 2.6 and 3 respectively.

In Hindi correct words per minute, classes 3 and 5 showed improvement in reading speed and accuracy. However, class 4 did not show any improvement. The average accuracy levels have improved from 80% to over 95%. On a scale of 4, the average comprehension levels improved from 2.5 to 3.4.

Computer Program:

With the help of a Chirag intern we designed a computer curriculum for the students of classes 4 and 5. The curriculum focused on understanding computer hardware and software, basic applications such as MS Word, Excel and Power Point, computer programming using Scratch, using the internet and becoming aware of the importance of cyber security.

After School Activities:

The After School Activities program was initiated for the students of classes 4 and 5 on Monday and Wednesday afternoons. Development of an after school physical education program arose from a recognition of the importance of physical activities on physical and mental development. In addition, properly structured exercise sessions also provide opportunities for development of self-discipline, teamwork, respect for rules and sportsmanship.

Professional Development

We believe that a school should be a learning community for everyone associated with it. The teachers in particular are central to the learning atmosphere. We spend a lot of energy on professional development of the teachers. Throughout the year, many professionals and educators came to the school to conduct workshops for the teachers.

- A mathematics workshop was organized by Arvind and Arundhati at their village library in Chhatola from 16th to 22nd January 2017. The workshop was facilitated by Surendra from the IGNUS group, Varanasi and was attended by 40 students and 4 teachers from the Chirag School. The main objectives of the workshop were learning mathematics through games and activities and help students identify mathematical concepts from their daily lives.
- In November 2016, Atul Pant of Timeless Life Skills (TLS) came to Chirag School to work with teachers and students. Atul role-modeled inquiry-based learning for the participants. The lessons focused on electricity, ultrasonic and infrared sensors, and robots.
- In January 2017, the school teachers and the education team members traveled to Rajghat Besant School in Varanasi for learning new methods of teaching and to broaden their understanding of education. During the visit the group learned about organizing a library, integrating subjects while teaching, conducting games and activities with pre-school children, working with students with special needs and gaining an understanding of the significance of art in education.

NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Forests continue to remain the mainstay of Himalayan ecosystem. Since rural Kumaun primarily remain an agrarian economy, forests and fodder play a crucial role in the livelihoods of the local community. Apart from providing fuel wood and fodder, forests protect and recharge Himalayan springs which are the main sources of drinking water for the local community. It is thus crucial to actively involve the community in conservation and regeneration of forests. Chirag's strategy has been on building strong community institutions which protects and nurtures community forests. Over the years we have reduced our physical interventions and have increasingly focused on protection and strengthening of community institutions.

Forestry & Fodder

Forests are the main source of fuelwood, fodder and leaf litter used for making compost in this region. Since inception, Chirag has been involved in afforestation program. Over the past 30 years, Chirag has facilitated the plantation of over 10 million saplings in over 150 villages of Nainital, Almora, Bageshwar and Pithoragarh districts.

Community forestry program focused on involving village institutions, capacity building and awareness building. Chirag works directly with the van-panchayats and van suraksha samittees to create awareness of forest management and protection. Chirag's forestry and fodder programme is currently operational in four areas namely Kathpuriyachhina, Simalkha, Dhokane and Doba. In all these areas we carried out extensive awareness programs through monthly meetings, trainings, van-mahotsavs and bal-melas.

The key activities undertaken during the year are as under:

- A total of 56,652 seedlings were grown by 52 nursery persons.
- A total of 52,908 saplings were planted in van-panchayat land in 122 hectares spread over 28 villages.
- A total of 51,246 seeds were sown directly covering 35 hectares.
- 15 different species of seedlings were planted. These were primarily fodder and fuel wood species e.g. Oak, Celtis, Bauhinia, Leucaenia and Jacaranda.

- A total of 220 community meetings were conducted during the year involving all the 52 project villages. The meetings were attended by members of the van-panchayats and van suraksha samities. A total of 2,339 people participated in these meetings.
- A total of 14 van-mahotsavs were organized in which 449 community members participated across all our project areas.

Soil and Moisture Conservation (SMC)

Soil moisture conservation measures are the backbone of all natural resource management programs. Plantation by itself cannot yield the desired results unless there is enough soil depth and moisture. Hence as a strategy we use Soil Moisture Conservation (SMC) as a compulsory measure in all our forestry activities to ensure better germination and survival. Physical measures for soil and water conservation were undertaken in the catchment areas of springs. During the year we treated 89 hectares to improve soil moisture and water recharge in the springs.

The following SMC activities were undertaken during the year:

Key Activity	Units	Quantity
Dry Stone Check-dam	Rmt.	122.79
Spring Rejuvenation	Nos.	7.00
Deep Recharge Pit	Cum.	1608.55
Roof Rain water harvesting Tank	Nos.	20.00
Khal	Cum.	338.95
Drainage for khal	Rmt.	180.55
Contour Trench	Rmt.	4948.30
Contour Terrace Repair	Rmt.	1777.00
Contour Terrace	Rmt.	4459
Percolation Pit	Nos.	277
Protection Wall	Mt.	400
Sub-surface Check-dam	Rmt.	22.60
Gully Plug	Rmt.	397.61
Loose Bolder Check-dam	Rmt.	51.56
Gabion Check-dam	Rmt	2.00
Wall Fencing	Mt.	1864

Spring Recharge Program

Natural springs form the most important source of water for communities in the Himalayas. Most water supply schemes that have been laid in the area have their origins in a local spring. It has been found that most Himalayan villages in the state of Uttarakhand and particularly those in the Kumaun region are in the grip of a water crisis of significant proportions. The crisis is one of decreasing availability, deteriorating quality and poor governance, which is resulting in conflicts related to water availability. The scant details available on the water situation in the state reveal that drinking water scarcity has increased from approximately 19% of the villages in '81 to almost 80% of villages by '86. Nainital and Almora district are among the worst affected districts.

Chirag began working on recharge and rejuvenation of Himalayan springs since 2008 to try and address the issue of reduced water availability and deterioration of water quality in the springs. With technical support from ACWADAM Pune, Chirag focused on geology and its' different aspects to address the issue of water recharge in the springs. In the initial years we invested a lot of time and effort in developing our own understanding of Himalayan geology and devising scientific techniques of recharging different types of springs. We currently work on recharge and rejuvenation of 95 springs in 3 districts of Uttarakhand. All the work is done through active participation of the village level institutions. Community members are provided trainings on the concept of geology, hydro-geology and water management. The springs, after the implementation of recharge activities are handed over to the community institutions which takes care of its' maintenance. The springs are monitored regularly for discharge and water quality.

Currently, Chirag is working on two spring recharge and water distribution projects. In partnership with ARGHYAM, we are working on 70 springs on improving their discharge through relevant recharge activities. The focus is on involving the community and building their capacity in basic geology, hydrology and water management. Since women are the most important stakeholder, conscious effort is made to form women led water users group and involve them in recharge activities and decision making process. A Key Resource Person (KRP) is also selected from among the community and intensive training imparted to him/her. The KRP acts as the local knowledge source on springs and ensures sustainability of the process.

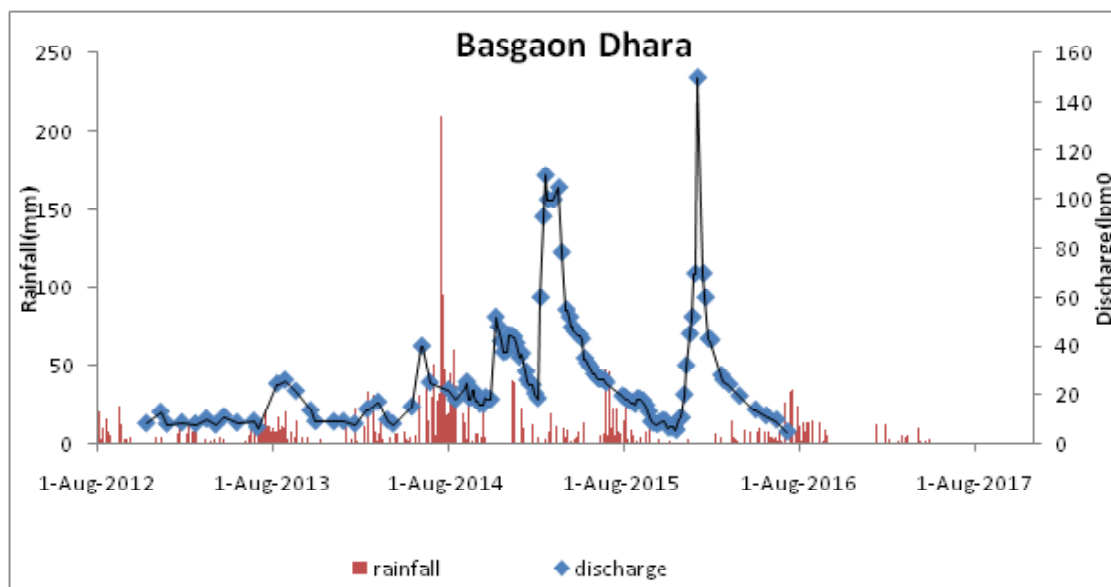
In partnership with The Hans Foundation, we initiated spring recharge and water distribution work on 11 springs in Takula block of Almora district. In this project we will work on spring recharge and water distribution in 25 springs benefitting over 1,300 households over a period of 3 years. Under this project, we have introduced the process of creating an Operation and Maintenance (O&M) fund to ensure availability of funds for post project maintenance of the community assets created under the project. This amount is entirely contributed by the community. Water User Committees are being formed and are involved in the design and implementation of the project. Post implementation, the Water User Committee will take responsibility of operation and maintenance. Till March, over Re 1 lac was collected as O&M fund.

The key activities undertaken during the year in spring recharge and water distribution is given below:

- During the year, a total of 95 village level training were conducted in addition to regular monthly meetings to enhance community participation and sharing of knowledge.
- A total of 7 awareness workshops and 2 block level advocacy meetings were conducted at Bageshwar and Ramgarh to share our experiences with elected representatives and government authorities.
- Recharge activities in the catchment of 29 springs were done during the year benefitting 24 villages. A total of 27 water committees were formed in these villages.
- Water distribution work was initiated in 5 villages impacting over 150 households.
- The total community contribution during the year has been Rs. 7.96 lacs.
- A Bal Jal Samiti was formed to create awareness among children on the importance of springs in the Himalayas. They were also exposed to the issue of water borne diseases and the ways to protect themselves from them.

To develop scientific understanding of the impact of our recharge efforts, automatic rain gauges and water level recorders have been installed in both Takula and Ramgarh watersheds. The analysis of the data will help us in assessing the impact of our work by correlating the discharge with rainfall at different points of time and also before and after implementation. By analyzing the rainfall and discharge data of different types of springs and across different types of recharge activities, we will be able to identify the best possible recharge activities in different spring types and in different topography and land use patterns.

Many springs that Chirag has worked on have shown distinct improvement in discharge which are also corroborated by the community. Shown below is the hydrograph of Basgaon Dhara in which recharge activities were done between August and December 2014.



As can be seen from the graph, there is a distinct improvement in discharge from 2015 onwards.

To constantly improve our own skills and capabilities, we continued to collaborate with ACWADAM in providing scientific training to our staff and community resource persons. We deepened our partnership with IIT Roorkee in improving our capacities in understanding of hydrology and data analysis. Two of our staff went for training on hydrology at IIT Roorkee.

Our collaboration with ATREE also deepened and scholars from ATREE helped us with data analysis. A fellow from SBI Youth for India brought in scientific rigor in our work by training our staff in scientific techniques of data capture and data analysis using new softwares. These partnerships helped us in improving our scientific understanding of geology and hydrology of the Himalayan spring system and will eventually lead to better and more effective implementation and impacting public policy in the years to come.

LIVELIHOOD

Rural Livelihood (Cooperatives)

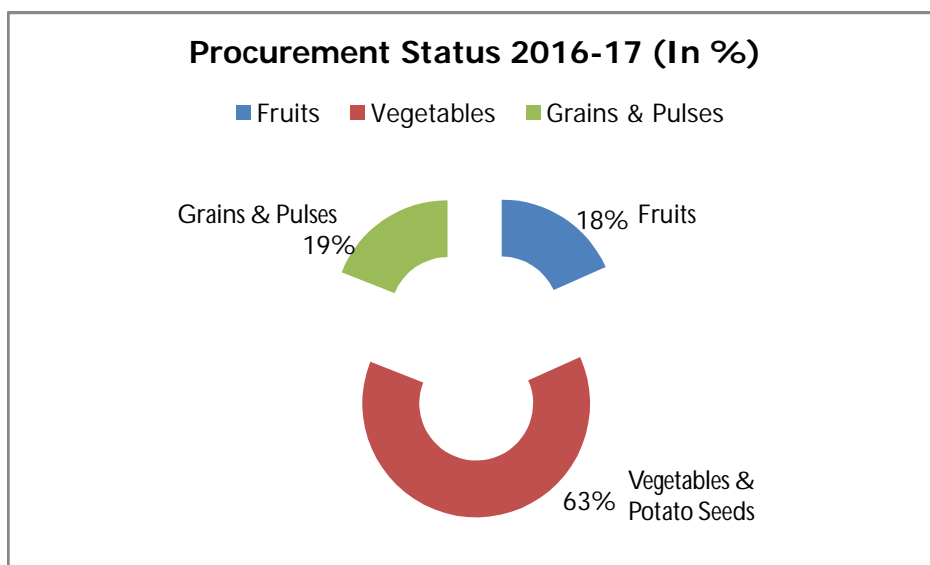
To reduce the influence of middlemen and to ensure a better return for agri-produce especially for the small farmers, Chirag facilitated the establishment of 7 cooperatives. The cooperatives have a membership of 587 covering 16 villages. To ensure that the benefits accrue to the women, the office bearers are all women. However to elicit better participation and involvement in the decision making process, from this year we have started involving men as well. The cooperatives though not entirely successful in its efforts, have managed to reduce the involvement of middlemen and intermediaries to a certain extent.

To bring in more professionalism, Chirag facilitated the formation of Mukteshwar Kisan Producer Company Limited (MKPCL) which comprises farmers from the region as well as office bearers of the cooperatives. This initiative is being supported by NABARD and Ernst and Young Foundation. The Producer Company was registered on 8th October 2015 under section IX of the Company's Act 2013 and currently has 100 shareholders and 5 board members. The key objectives of the producer company are to improve the livelihood of the local farmers especially small farmers, by providing them access to different markets and help them realize a better rate by shortening the marketing chain and by improving grading and packaging. MKPCL have set up two procurement centers and have been marketing the produce under their own brand name. This has resulted in better returns to the farmers.

The key activities undertaken through the MKPCL in 2016-17 are as under:

- A total of 126 quintals of fresh fruits were procured from 56 farmers spread across 16 villages. These were marketed through MKPCL.
- This year MKPCL procured 432 quintals of fresh vegetables valued at Rs 1.10 lacs.
- 400 quintals of Kufri-Jyoti variety of potato seeds were procured through MKPCL and sold to 115 farmer members. The total turnover was Rs 12.06 lacs out of which MKPCL made a net profit of Rs. 1.12 lacs.
- During the year 131 quintals of grains and pulses e.g. Millet, Rajma, Gahat etc. were procured from 105 farmers valued at Rs 3.77 lacs.

The graph below depicts the procurement done by MKPCL in 2016-17:



As a crop failure mitigation strategy, cultivation of culinary herbs is being promoted on degraded land. During the year, a total of 9.57 quintals of dried and green herbs were procured from 105 farmers of a total value of Rs 1.39 lacs giving them an additional income of over Rs. 1,300 each.

Community Based Micro Enterprises:

Dairy Federation:

Chirag facilitated the setting up of 4 decentralized livestock based micro-dairies in Nainital, Bageshwar and Pithoragarh districts over the past 4-5 years. These micro-dairies have provided alternative livelihood options to the local farmers. A total of 110 members are selling milk through these federations. During the year the federations procured 87,310 litres of milk and paid Rs 23.84 lacs to the farmer members. The turnover during the year was Rs 30.12 lacs with a net profit of Rs 2.02 lacs.

During the year, Chirag facilitated the establishment of a new dairy federation called 'Shyama Devi Cooperative' in Doba cluster of Nainital district. Shyama Devi dairy federation at Doba is a federation of 9 SHGs from 7 villages. A total of 89 members are associated with the federation. Doba federation started their dairy based activity in the month of November 2016. The federation converts the milk collected every day into 8 to 10 kilograms of khoya. Between November and March, the dairy federation procured 4,505 liters of milk and produced 1.15 MT of khoya. The total turnover of the federation was Rs. 2.40 lacs with a net profit of Re 0.50 lac.

The Table below gives a snapshot of the business done by all the dairy federations during the year:

Particulars	Total
Beneficiary Numbers	110
Total milk collection (Its.)	87,310
Net payment of milk to villagers (Rs.)	2,383,756
Total Income (Rs.)	3,012,135
Operational Expenses	426,271
Net profit	202,108

Cattle Feed Unit

The Parvatiya Pashupalak Sangh at Reetha is a federation of 15 Self Help Groups from five nearby villages. Chirag facilitated the formation of the federation which is run and managed entirely by the women for taking up alternative livelihood activities. The federation produces cattle-feed and poultry-feed using locally available crops. The objective is to make quality cattle-feed available to the local dairy farmers at a reasonable price. During the year 80.5 quintals of cattle-feed was produced and marketed through the federation valued at Rs 1.61 lacs. In addition, the federation produced 41 quintals of poultry-feed. The total turnover of the federation was Rs 2.68 lacs with a net profit of Re 0.28 lac.

Ayurvedic Veterinary Medicine Unit

The Gau Palak Sangh, a federation facilitated by Chirag at Dhokane was formed in 2009 with members drawn from 4 Self Help Groups. Currently members from 17 Self Help Groups are involved with this federation. The federation produces ayurvedic veterinary medicine from locally available herbs and medicinal plants. During the year, 24 kgs of ayurvedic medicine were produced and sold which was worth Rs 15,922. The federation made a net profit of Rs. 4,000.

Common Facility Center (CFCs)

Chirag helped set up 6 Common Facility Centers (CFCs) in Reetha, Kasiyalekh, Simalkha, Dhokane, Kathpuriyachhina, and Walthi. The first four are located in Nainital district while the other two are located in Bageshwar and Pithoragarh districts respectively. These CFCs provide easy availability of agricultural tools, improved seeds, pesticides and agro products to the community at an affordable price. During the year the CFCs did a turnover of Rs 22.74 lacs with a net profit of Rs 1.16 lacs.

Micro-Finance

We currently work with 181 Self Help Groups (SHGs) with a total membership of 1,817. The average member per SHG group is 10-12. The cumulative savings of these groups is Rs 53.19 lacs. The total inter-loans availed during the year was Rs 50.21 lacs. During the year a number of training and capacity building workshops were organized for the members of the SHGs.

In addition, training on different income generation activities was also given to help them earn additional income through these activities.

Agriculture Extension:

In agriculture extension, we try to improve the yield of different crops by providing better quality inputs and through the introduction of improved agricultural practices. We have identified the key crops and have introduced locally available inputs and improved agricultural practices which are low cost and hence can be easily adopted by the farmers. This has made the effort more sustainable and has shown encouraging results. Our own experts as well as external experts regularly visit the project area to provide technical support. Over a 3 year period, there has been an increase in productivity of 20% - 40% in the identified crops. Onion in particular has shown a remarkable increase in productivity.

VL-907 variety of wheat was introduced as an alternative to the local wheat variety under the Maximizing Mountain Agriculture Project (MMAP). There has been a significant increase both in terms of number of farmers cultivating wheat and area under cultivation. There has been a 3 fold increase in the number of farmers and a 6 fold increase in area under cultivation. The productivity also increased by over 42% compared to local varieties. Similar results were seen in other crops. This year over 131 farmers planted VL-3 variety of onion in 4.27 acres as compared to only 6 farmers growing onion 3 years ago in only 0.25 acres. Productivity also increased significantly from 11 quintals per acre to 59 quintals per acre. Seeing the potential of onion in the area, 10 farmers have taken up onion seed production from this year. In Pusa basmati, which was a new crop tried in the area, the results have been equally impressive. It was tried on an experimental basis with 6 farmers who had their land in the low lying areas. This was sown in only 0.3 acres. Based on the encouraging results, a large number of farmers expressed interest in taking it up. Currently 52 farmers are growing Pusa basmati VL-1509 in around 5 acres.

The table below gives the productivity, household covered and area under cultivation of these crops between 2013-14 and 2016-17.

Crop	Variety	Before Intervention (2013-2014)			After Intervention (2016-17)			Increase Productivity %
		HH Covered	Area (Acres)	Produc (Quintal)	HH Covered	Area (Acres)	Produc (Quintal)	
Wheat	VL-907	76	12	10.4	226	73	14.8	42
Onion	VL-3	06	0.25	11	131	4.275	59	436
Pusa Basmati	VI-1509	06	0.3	13	52	4.825	15.68	21

The experiment with VL-1 variety of pigeon pea however has not been successful. The average productivity was around 3.8 quintals per acre which was slightly lower than the average productivity of local varieties which stood at around 4 quintals per acre.

Animal Husbandry

We seek to promote better husbandry practices, access to veterinary care and access to better feed and fodder through a cadre of community based para-vets. Currently there are five community based para-vets. These para-vets provide veterinary care services in over 150 villages.

Activities done under animal husbandry program are given below:

- During the year 1,540 Artificial Inseminations (AI) were done both on cows and buffaloes. Out of this, 817 animals became pregnant.
- A total of 49 veterinary camps were held during the year in which 1,458 animals were vaccinated and treated.
- During the year 27 small ruminants (goats) and 5 large ruminants (cow/buffalo) were purchased and given to the farmers.
- During the year, 41 cattle were insured. In addition, 9 cattlesheds were constructed.
- During the year, the cumulative income of all the 4 para-vets was Rs. 340,000.

The average monthly income of each para-vet was Rs 5,600.

Uttarakhand Post-disaster Livelihood Project

This was the third year of 'Uttarakhand Post Disaster Livelihood Program (UPDLP) which is being implemented in Munsiyari block of Pithoragarh district with the support of Himmatthan Society. The main objective of this program is to rebuild the lives of the people of the disaster affected villages of the Walthi cluster by focusing on restoration of natural resource based livelihood systems. Our primary focus has been on promoting livestock based micro-enterprises, strengthening of community based institutions and promoting horticulture and culinary herb based enterprises. Chirag is working with 642 disaster affected households in 15 villages of Walthi cluster.

Some of the key activities undertaken in the project are given below:

- During the year 25 cross-breed cows and 3 buffaloes were purchased benefitting 28 households.
- 5 biogas units were constructed.
- During the year, 68 improved varieties of goats and sheep were purchased which were distributed among poor families. The beneficiaries earned Rs 158,500 from the sale of 45 goats.
- Forage crops were grown on 9 hectares of private land in 12 villages. This produced over 85 quintals of forage which benefitted over 300 families.
- During the year, 12 hectare of van-panchayat land was brought under plantation. A total of 11,774 seedlings were planted. In addition, 31,338 rootstocks of different grasses were also planted.
- 19 cattle-sheds, 29 goat-sheds and 11 backyard poultry units were built during the year.
- To promote dairy based livelihood, 2 livestock based micro dairies were established. A total of 40,425 litres of milk was procured from 56 farmer members. The dairies did a combined turnover of Rs 17.78 lacs and made a net profit of Rs. 1.42 lacs.

HEALTH

Though the conditions have improved significantly over the past decade or so, getting access to quality health services at a reasonable cost is still a challenge for the common man. Through our hospital and our preventive health program we strive to create awareness of the key ailments in the region and provide quality and affordable curative health services to the rural poor especially women and children. Our preventive health care measure is centred in the Kasyialekh area where we continue to provide training and capacity building support to Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA) workers and Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANMs) in 25 nearby villages. ASHA workers and ANMs help by improving information dissemination, generating awareness and providing better mother and child care services to the community. In addition, they also identify the patients requiring medical services and refer them to our hospital and discourage them from going to the quack which is a common practice in this region.

Curative Health

Through our hospital established in 2009 at Sargakhet, we aim to provide affordable health services to all in the region with a special focus on women and children. The hospital also provides emergency services.

The hospital has an equipped laboratory, an X-ray facility, an ECG machine, treatment rooms, delivery rooms, dental services and a general ward of eight beds. There are trained doctors in ayurveda, modern medicine and dental services. We are fortunate to get continued support of Dr. Ruma Mukherjee who provides voluntary service. In addition, an experienced retired doctor, Dr. Pooran Lal Arya is providing his services since November 2016.

During the year the hospital provided services to 5,023 out patients. Out of these, 27 patients were admitted in the hospital for further treatment. We conducted 4,725 pathological tests and did 900 X-rays, 222 ante-natal patients were treated and 2,117 patients were treated with ayurvedic medicines. A total of 12 health camps were held in the villages in which 503 patients were treated.

Chirag and Aarohi, an NGO with expertise in medical services, jointly conducted 11 camps at our hospital which were mostly attended by poor people. Apart from general health check-

ups, ante-natal and post-natal services and ultrasound facilities were provided to the patients. A total of 1,205 patients benefitted from the camps.

Break-up of different services provided by Chirag Hospital during 2016-17 is given in the table below:

Outpatients	5023
Patients admitted	27
Ante-natal care	222
Fracture /Dislocation treated	175
Ayurvedic treatment	2117
X Ray	900
Pathology tests	4725
Dental Patient	238
No. of camps	12
No. of patients treated in camps	503

KUMAUN GRAMEEN UDYOG

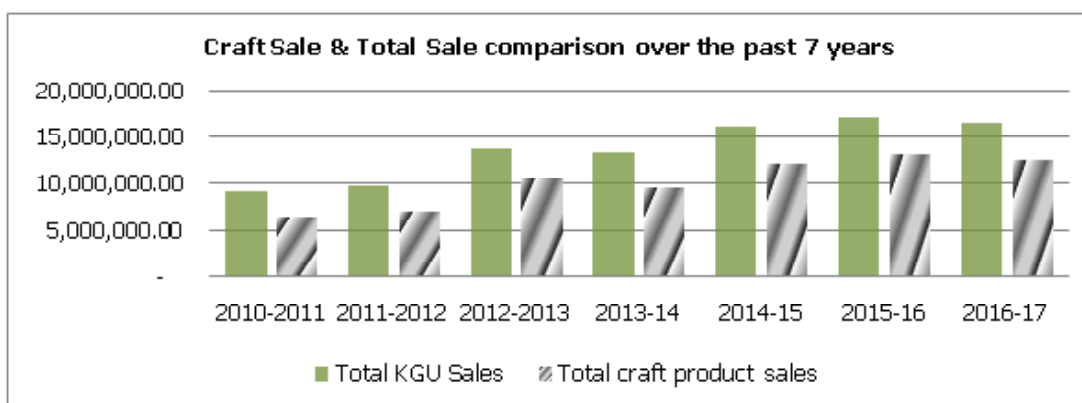
CHIRAG began to realize the need for income generation projects in the early 1990s. As a result, CHIRAG established a separate organization called Kumaun Grameen Udyog (KGU) in 1996 which focused on enhancing the livelihoods of the local community. The main objective of setting up KGU was to create a professional organization which focuses on product development, skill building and marketing of rural produce. KGU was incorporated as a section 8 company (erstwhile section 25 company 1956) under the Companies Act 2013. It is mandated to use the profit generated from its' business for community development in the region. Over the past 21 years since it was established, KGU has grown substantially by investing in product value chains and developing a niche market for its products. All the products made by local artisans and agri-products procured from local farmers are sold under the brand name of 'Kilmora'. Providing fair and sustainable livelihood options to people of the

area is at the core of KGU's business strategy. KGU has been successful in achieving this by:

- Involving marginalized sections of the community, especially women, youth and small farmers
- Building skills among local community
- Developing contemporary products of high quality
- Building strong market linkages

KGU has a full time staff of 19. Almost all of them are from the local community. It works with over 300 artisans (weavers and knitters) who derive steady income from these activities all through the year. In addition, it sources agri-produce like fruits, apricot seeds, culinary herbs, spices, pulses and grains locally and provides supplementary income to over 700 households.

Over the years, it has become evident that the craft products generate much larger value for the community as about 80% turnover comprises the sale of craft products made by KGU artisans. Efforts are being made to train more local artisans for producing high quality contemporary craft products and to provide them with a steady source of income. The proportion of craft sale to total sale over the past 7 years is shown in the chart below:



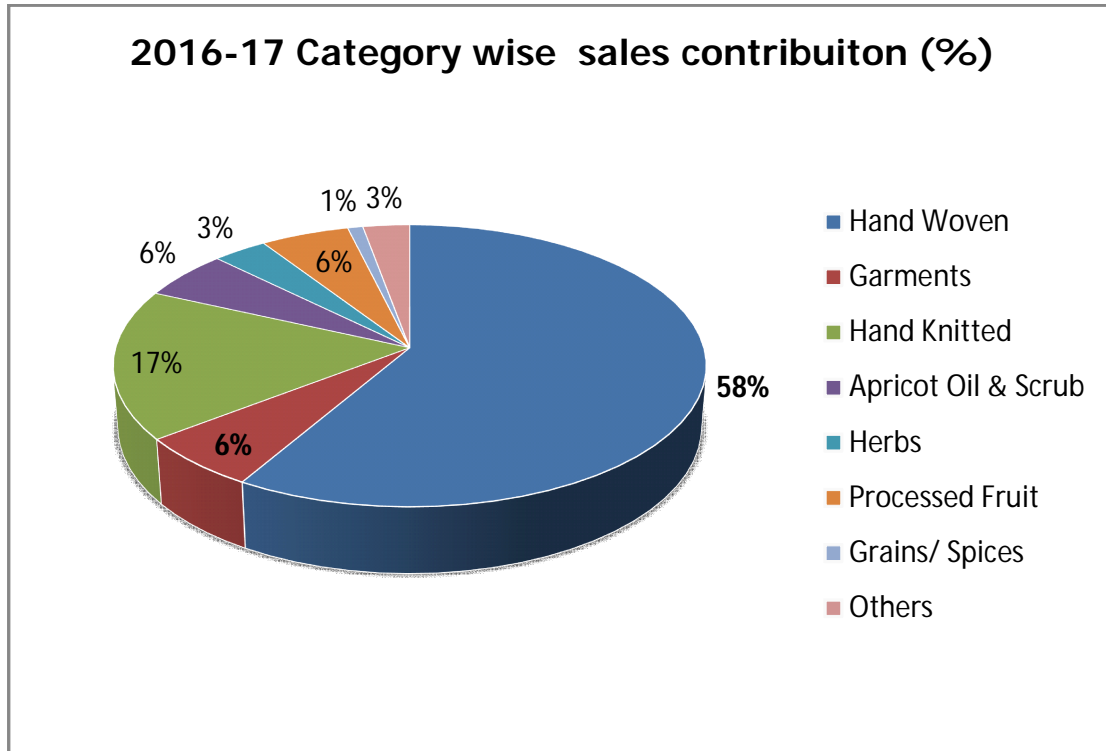
The efforts of KGU were recognised and it was selected for the Tata Trusts-Harvard University South Asia Institute (SAI) Social Innovation Grant in February 2016. The grant was for setting up of computerized inventory management systems for KGUs products. The implementation of the project took place from April 2016 to September 2016. Under this project, KGU was able to standardize the systems of inventory and sales management. The

finished goods inventory at the warehouse was computerized and bar-coded. KGU also introduced computerized billing systems at all the three Kilmora retail outlets. This has made it easier to keep track of the stocks and product-wise sales and has significantly increased the efficiency of the sales staff.

The growth potential of KGU is evident from the increase in sales over the years. The sales for 2010-11 was Rs 9.2 million as against Rs. 16.6 million in 2016-17, an overall growth of about 80% over the past 7 years.

The table below gives the category-wise sales break-up of KGU during the year 2016-17

Category	Sales (INR)
Hand Woven	9,712,619
Garments	1,013,696
Hand Knitted	2,862,834
Apricot Oil & Scrub	925,429
Herbs	559,921
Processed Fruit	907,193
Grains/Spices	155,657
Others	477,304
Total	16,614,653



Another important achievement of KGU during the year has been 100% payments through bank transfer to all the artisans. As an organization, there have been concerted efforts on reducing cash transactions. The organization believes in setting-up robust systems, which will help in its growth and provide fair and sustainable livelihood opportunities to more people in the area.

This year KGU contributed Rs 29.62 lacs to Chirag hospital and school. This is a unique model of creating value for the people and by the people. It has few parallels anywhere in the country. This social enterprise not only provides sustainable livelihood opportunities to local artisans and farmers but also contributes to overall development of the area by supporting education and health care facilities for the rural poor of the region.

THE TEAM

In March 2017, there were 100 people working full time in Chirag. Out of this, 87 works in different programs, 04 are support staff and 09 work in administration and finance. The proportion of women staff is 30%. A large proportion of these development professionals have been with Chirag for over a decade and have made invaluable contribution in achieving our goals and making a difference in the lives of thousands of families and lighting the lamp of hope in countless households. We at Chirag are proud to have such a dedicated and committed team. The field teams are distributed over our 9 operational areas.

Staff Breakup

	Program	Support	Administration & Finance	Total
Women	29	00	01	30
Men	58	04	08	70
Total	87	04	09	100

GOVERNANCE

There are 26 members on Chirag General Body of which 6 form the Governing Board duly elected by the General Body. The Governing Board members are:

Mr. Radhesh Lall	Chairperson Engineer and Entrepreneur
Ms. Kamla Bhasin	Member Gender specialist, Activist, Founder-member of Jagori
Dr. Prashant Upadhyaya	Member Pediatric surgeon, Graphic Designer and former Executive Director of Chirag
Prof. Malavika Karlekar	Member Ethnographer, worked with Centre for Women's Development Studies
Ms. Radha Ahluwalia	Member Managing Director, International Market Assessment
Mr. Keshav Desiraju	Member Former Secretary, Government of India

OUR PARTNERS

Chirag remains indebted to the following organizations and individuals:

Institutions

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. ACWADAM | 11. CEDAR |
| 2. A & A Book Trust | 12. ARGHYAM |
| 3. B2R Technologies Pvt. Ltd. | 13. Give 2 Asia |
| 4. Berkeley Reafforestation Trust | 14. Kumaun Grameen Udyog |
| 5. Canada India Village Aid | 15. The Hans Foundation |
| 6. Ernst & Young Foundation | 16. COMDEKS- UNDP |
| 7. NABARD | 17. India Education Collective (IEC) |
| 8. Rajeshwar and Susheela Dayal
Charitable Trust | 18. State Bank of India |
| 9. Himmotthan Society | 19. IIT,Roorkee |
| 10. Tata Trusts | 20. Magic Bus |
| | 21. Centre For Learning
Resources (CLR) |

Individuals

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Ashish & Deepa Arora | 9. Ashish Mukherjee |
| 2. Arundhati Deosthale | 10. Dr. Ruma Mukherjee |
| 3. Deepika Mahajan | 11. Murli Krishanan |
| 4. Chetan Mahajan | 12. Manoj Pant |
| 5. Arvind Kumar | 13. O. N. Rao |
| 6. Gita Krenek | 14. Vittal Das Janardhan Komath |
| 7. Siddhartha Menon | 15. Partha Chatterjee |
| 8. Nikhilesh Senapati | 16. Indra. S |
| 17. Vandita Dubey | |

Interns & Volunteers

1	Raksha Balakrishna	Azim Premji University, Bangalore
2	Chirag Patil	Azim Premji University, Bangalore
3	Ramakrishna Vaisnov	Tata Institute of Social Science, Tiljapur
4	Feteah Veer Singh	Tata Institute of Social Science, Tiljapur
5	Rivika Bisht	St. Xavier's College, Mumbai
6	Ryosuke Mori	Hiroshima University, Japan
7	Richa Joshi	University of Washington, America
8	Uma Ojha	Kolkata
9	Elizabeth Manchester	Retired American Embassy School vice-Principal
10	5 Students	Shiv Nadar University, Noida

SBI Youth For India Fellows

1.	Ashvath Singh	SBI Youth for India Fellow
2.	Surendra Singh	SBI Youth for India Fellow
3.	Rabina Jaiswal	SBI Youth for India Fellow
4.	Deepshi Arya	SBI Youth for India Fellow

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

No Annual Report can be complete without acknowledging the support and trust of various people and institutions. The results that we have achieved would not have been possible neither would our lives be the same without the contribution and support of these remarkable institutions and individuals who continued to inspire and enlighten us.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to Sonia Philip for providing training and capacity building inputs to our teachers and balshikshaks.

We would like to thank Elizabeth Manchester and Gita Krenek for providing valuable support and capacity building inputs to our school. It is wonderful to have Elizabeth work with our school as a volunteer from July 2016.

We would like to thank Mohan Chandra Kabdwal for providing capacity building inputs to our school teachers in the correct use of language

A special thanks to Vandita Dubey for her counseling sessions for the graduating students of our school. This will help them immensely in coping with the world outside.

We acknowledge the contribution of Arvind and Arundhati for their continued support to our school through periodic workshops and training sessions.

A special thanks to Chetan Mahajan for his support to our school. Renu Khanna deserves special mention for providing training and pedagogical support to our teachers and our education team.

Our heartfelt thanks to Lakshmi Lall, Dr. Ruma Mukherjee and Ashish Arora for their continued support.

We would like to acknowledge the support of the people of the area where we work who continue to tolerate us, challenge us and inspire us. Our heartfelt thanks to all those individuals and institutions who continue to repose faith in us.

We specially acknowledge the support of all our donors who have made it possible for us to realize our vision and mission and reach out to the disadvantaged and the marginalized sections of the society.

Finally we thank our Governing Board and General Body from the bottom of our heart for their vision, guidance and direction.

ANNEXURE I: VOLUNTARY DISCLOSURE

In the spirit of transparency, Chirag voluntarily discloses the following information:

Governance

- None of the members of the Governing Board are related to each other by blood or marriage.
- The Executive Director is not related to any member of the Governing Board by blood or marriage.
- Elections to the Governing Board are held as per the rules of the Society. However, no policy of rotation of members of the Governing board is followed.
- No members of the Governing Board received any remuneration from Chirag during the year.
- The Governing board met more than twice during the year with the requisite quorum.
- Minutes of the meeting were documented read out and approved in the subsequent meeting.
- The General Body of the Society approved the Annual Report and the Audited Statement of Accounts.

BENEFITS TO STAFF

Gross Salary and Benefits (Rupees per month)	Men	Women	Total
Less than 5,000	00	00	00
5,000-10,000	25	15	40
10,000-15,000	25	12	37
15,000-25,000	15	03	18
More than 25,000	05	00	05

Note: Gross salary includes all benefits payable by the organization.

STAFF REMUNERATION (GROSS SALARY AND BENEFITS IN RUPEES PER ANNUM)

Highest paid full time regular staff Rs. 841,032/- per year

Lowest paid full time regular staff Rs. 94,680/- per year

Note: This includes basic salary, cost of living allowance, provident fund (including Chirag's contribution), medical benefits, medical and accidental insurance and scholarship. All figures are as on 31st March 2017.

COST OF TRAVEL

Total cost of international travel incurred by Chirag during the year: NIL

Total cost of national travel incurred by Chirag during the year: Rs. 69,332/-

OUR STATUTORY AUDITOR

R Balasubramanian
Partner
S Ramanand Aiyar and Co.
708 Surya Kiran Building,
19 Kasturba Gandhi Marg,
New Delhi-110001

OUR BANKERS

- State Bank of India
- Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation of India Ltd.
- Uttarakhand Gramin Bank
- Almora District Cooperative Bank Ltd.

Registration Details

- Central Himalayan Rural Action Group (Chirag) is a Society registered under the Indian Societies Registration Act of 1860. Registration No. 16928, dated 29th July 1986.
- Central Himalayan Rural Action Group (Chirag) is authorized to receive foreign contributions as per the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act 2010. Registration No. 231650446, dated 4th August 2016.
- Chirag is registered under Sections 12A and 80G of the Income Tax Act, 1961.
 - Section 12A - No. CIT-VI/TE (276)/86/1292 dated 9/1/1987
 - Section 80G-No. DIT (E) 2007-2008/C245/1918 dated 21/09/2007

ANNEXURE II: ACCOUNTS

Central Himalayan Rural Action Group Balance Sheet as on 31st March 2017

	Current Year (Rs)	Previous Year (Rs)
Liabilities		
Corpus Fund	41,526,979	41,029,137
Reserve Fund	9,636,888	10,170,749
Fixed Assets Utilisation Fund	17,249,597	19,027,501
Transport Fund	663,944	526,144
Reafforestation Fund	644,512	644,512
Chirag Education Fund	229,642	555,833
Current Liabilities	5,406,457	7,152,119
	75,358,019	79,105,995
Assets		
Fixed Assets	17,249,597	19,027,501
Investments	42,042,178	41,036,428
<u>Current Assets, Loans and Advances</u>		
Cash, Bank Balance and Term Deposit	15,641,798	18,571,355
Loans and Advances	420,446	466,711
Security Deposit (endorsed in favour of Government Authorities)	4,000	4,000
	75,358,019	79,105,995

Signed on behalf of Chirag
Chairperson: Radhesh Lall
Member: Dr. Prashant Upadhyaya
Executive Director: Ujjal Ganguly
General Manager Accounts and Admin.: B K Kabdwal

In terms of our report of even date annexed
For S Ramanand Aiyar and Co.
Chartered Accountant
Registration No. 000990N

R Balasubramanian
Partner
M No. 080432
New Delhi

Central Himalayan Rural Action Group
Receipts and Payments Accounts for the year ended as on 31st March 2017

Receipts	Current Year (Rs)	Previous Year (Rs)
Balance as on 1st April 2016	23,506,609	17,141,891
Project Funding		
Foreign Contribution	7,518,879	7,041,758
Local Contribution	17,927,718	25,143,970
Rural Health Services	1,373,100	1,250,403
Donations	151,500	1,365,207
Interest	1,438,351	1,668,679
Others	18,602,256	2,694,400
	70,518,413	56,306,308
Payments		
Canada India Village Aid (CIVA)	–	118,228
Berkeley Reafforestation Trust	786,665	521,621
The Hans Foundation	4,519,597	738,921
For S.E-Wash project	395,000	–
ther Payments (FCRA)	841,715	62,896
Sir Ratan Tata Trust (for- Natural based Livelihood Project)	48,004	2,550,138
For Maximizing Mountain Agriculture Programame	810,469	1,287,599
Himmotthan Society (IFLDP)	–	57,728
For Uttarakhand Livelihood Restoration Programme (ULRP)	1,649,723	2,165,914
For Central Himalayan Livestock Initiative(CHLI)	4,439,677	3,599,205
For Central Himalayan Education Initiative (CHEI)	5,273,800	2,814,928
For Integration of Microfinance (IME)	941,190	247,027
NABARD	–	605,396
For FPO's - Nainital	231,834	339,318
For FPO's - Bageshwar	236,559	52,205
Rajeshwar & Susheela Dayal Charitable Trust	2,253,286	2,199,690
Ernst & Young Foundation (E&Y)	817,727	911,784
For Social Renewal Programme	–	926,545
For Strengthening of Producer Institutions for Agri Produce Marketing	394,052	–
ARGHYAM	3,435,710	2,687,020
For 3rd Spring Partner Initiative Meet	–	1,498,350
India Education Collective (ICE) for Transforming School Programme	290,200	137,400
Rajiv Gandhi Foundation (RGF)	–	220,413
Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative	250,472	582,836
Rural Health Services	1,534,448	998,122
Chirag School	631,593	474,108
Other Payments	12,250,896	6,932,037
Balance on 31st March 2017	28,485,796	23,506,609
	70,518,413	56,306,308

Central Himalayan Rural Action Group

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended as on 31st March 2017

Income	Current Year (Rs.)	Previous Year (Rs.)
Project Funding		
Foreign Contribution	7,021,037	7,041,758
Local Contribution	17,927,718	25,143,970
Donations	151,500	920,957
Rural Health Services	1,373,100	1,250,403
Interest	4,669,247	1,603,362
Others	2,812,255	2,299,832
Projects in Progress	7,152,119	4,367,065
	41,106,976	42,627,347
Expenditure		
Canada India Village Aid (CIVA)	–	188,228
Berkeley Reafforestation Trust	786,665	521,621
The Hans Foundation	4,471,597	670,891
Himmotthan Society	395,000	–
Other Payments (FCRA)	841,715	62,896
Sir Ratan Tata Trust (Small Grant Programme)		
For- Natural Resource based Livelihood Project	48,004	2,550,138
For- Maximazing Mountain Agriculture Program	810,469	1,287,599
Himmotthan Society (IFLDP)	–	57,728
For Uttarakhand Livelihood Restoration Programme (ULRP)	1,649,723	2,225,914
For Central Himalayan Livestock Initiative (CHLI)	4,439,677	3,599,205
For Central Himalayan Education Initiative (CHEI)	5,242,825	2,742,799
For Integration of Microfinance (IMF)	941,190	247,027
NABARD	–	605,396
RajeshwarSusheelaDayal Charitable Trust	2,125,691	2,169,935
For FPO's -Nainital	231,834	339,318
For FPO's -Bageshwar	236,559	52,205
Ernst & Young Foundation (E&Y)	817,727	911,784
For-Social Renewal Programme	–	926,545
Strengthening of Producer Institutions for Agri-produce Marketing	394,052	–
ARGHYAM	3,435,710	2,687,020
For 3rd Spring Partner Initiative Meet	–	1,498,350
Rajiv Gandhi Foundation (RGF)	–	220,413
India Education Collective (ICE)	290,200	137,400
Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative	270,472	518,003
Rural Health Services	1,553,120	941,212
Chirag School	631,593	409,129
Other Payments	8,710,441	6,132,090
Total Expenditure	38,324,264	31,702,846
Available Funds	2,782,712	10,924,501
Appropriations		
Transferred to project in progress	5,219,013	7,152,119
Surplus for the year transferred to Reserve Fund	(2,436,301)	3,772,382
	2,782,712	10,924,501

Ajay Singh Bisht
 Amit Singh Bisht
 Anand Singh Bisht
 Anil Chandra Binwal
 Anil Kumr Keshari
 Anita Arya
 Anoop Singh Bisht
 Asha Sah
 Bachi Singh Bisht
 Bahadur Singh Mehra
 Balam Singh Negi
 Basanti Bisht
 Bhagat Singh Thapliyal
 Bhaskaranand Joshi
 Bhim Singh Negi
 Bhupal Singh Bisht
 Bhupal Singh Jeena
 Bhuwan Chandra Pant
 Bhuwan Singh Negi
 Bimla Bisht
 Binod Kumar Pandey
 Bipin Kumar Kabdwal
 Bishan Singh Raikwal
 Champa Pandey
 Chandan Singh Bisht
 Chandan Singh Chamiyal
 Chandan Singh Mehta
 Deep Chandra Kandpal
 Deepa Joshi
 Devendra Singh Nayal
 Dharmanand Kabdwal
 Dinish Pandey
 Diwan Chandra
 Diwan Ram
 Diwan Singh Mehta
 Dr. Champa Kumari Rao
 Dr. Mahendra Singh Bisht
 Dr. Pooran Lal
 Dr. Rinku Dutta
 Durga Bisht
 Ganesh Singh
 Ganga Joshi
 Geeta Bisht
 Girish Chandra Budhani
 Girish Rama Verma

Govind Singh Bisht
 Harendra Singh Nayal
 Harish Chandra Arya
 Harish Chandra Palaria
 Hema Bisht
 Hemlata Tiwari
 Jagdish Mishra
 Jaswant Singh Bisht
 Jitendra Singh Bisht
 Kailash Chandra Joshi
 Kalpana Bhoj
 Kamla Bisht
 Kanchan Arya
 Keshar Singh
 Keshav Dutt Joshi
 Khushal Singh Bisht
 Kiran Bisht
 Kishore Singh Rautela
 Krishana Chandra Bhandari
 Krishana Kumar
 Krishana Kumar Nayal
 Kunti Bisht
 Kusum Raikwal
 Kusum Tiwari
 Lakhan Singh Rautela
 Lakshami Biroria
 Lalit Mohan Tiwari
 Lalit Mohan Tiwari
 Lata Harbola
 Leela Pant
 Madhavi Devi
 Mahendra Singh Bisht
 Mahendra Singh Bisht
 Mahendra Singh Raikwal
 Mamta Arya
 Mamta Kandari
 Mamta Mer
 Manju Kholia
 Maya Pandey
 Meera Bisht
 Mohan Singh Bisht
 Mohan Singh Bisht
 Mukesh Singh Bisht
 Munni Bisht

Munni Tamta
 Naveen Chandra Bhatt
 Noopur Hukmani
 Om Prakash Pandey
 Pan Singh Bisht
 Pan Singh Mehta
 Pooran Singh Raikwal
 Prakash Chandra
 Pratap Singh Bisht
 Prayag Dutt Bhatt
 Prema Tiwari
 Pritam Singh Rautela
 Puja Bisht
 Pushpa Devi
 Pushpa Gaira
 Pushpa Negi
 Raghvendra Singh Bisht
 Rajani Mehta
 Rajendra Singh Bisht
 Rajendra Singh Dangwal
 Rajendra Singh Jeena
 Ram Singh Bisht
 Ramesh Chandra Palaria
 Ravindra Singh Bisht
 Rekha Chhimwal
 Sanjay Joshi
 Sarika Samdani
 Suman Das
 Sumit Arora
 Sundeep Dutt Bhatt
 Sundar Lal
 Sundar Singh Nayal
 Sunil Kumar Bhoj
 Sunil Kumar Tamta
 Surendra Singh Negi
 Suresh Kumar
 Tara Singh Bisht
 Thakur Singh
 Tulsi Negi
 Ujjal Ganguly
 Uttam Singh Jeena
 Vanshika Vohra
 Vikas Kumar
 Vikram Singh Raikwal



Chirag

Central Himalayan Rural Action Group

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