A quest for justice, dignity and hope.
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Utthan envisions a society that imbibes and ensures the values of gender justice, equality and peace, in practice, resulting in happiness for all.

To initiate sustainable gender-sensitive, grass root processes of empowerment amongst the most vulnerable communities; through a process of inclusion, building conscientiousness, and organising around their major issues.

UTTHAN

The Beginnings

1981

Utthan's journey began in 1981, when four women opted to work in Gujarat’s desolate Bhal region, supporting marginalised communities in organising themselves around critical livelihood issues and developing local leadership. Utthan, which means “upliftment” in Hindi, launched a people’s movement comprised of a large number of women and youth to address their rights to regular, safe drinking water, to protect and access common land for their livelihood security, and to challenge patriarchy, feudal exploitation, and caste discrimination at the local level. As part of the process, Utthan has facilitated the formation of the community-based organisation Mahiti (knowledge), which has been actively working on the local issues of the region since 1994.
Utthan’s quest for exploration and sharing of learning continues beyond 43 years.

Utthan’s journey started in the coastal districts of Saurashtra and the tribal areas of South Gujarat which are severely affected by poverty and lack of resources. Throughout its history, Utthan has broadened its reach to other states such as Chattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Odisha. In addition to its work at the local level, Utthan is actively involved in international movements in South Asia and other regions, constantly searching for new opportunities to grow and acquire knowledge.

**Founding Location**
- **Amreli** - Rajula
- **Bharuch** - Valia
- **Bhavnagar** - Bhavnagar, Tadaja, Ghogha, Mahuva
- **Panchmahal** - Morva Hadaf
- **Dahod** - Fatehpura, Dhanpur, Sanjeli, Jhalod, Singvad, Limkheda
- **Mahisagar** - Santrampur, Kadana

GUJARAT, INDIA
// OUR WORK //

APPROACH AND STRATEGY

The winds of the world sailed through Utthan, providing the early realisation that the challenge of accessed to resources, entitlements, and quality of life by the marginalised communities, needed to be squarely located within a struggle for justice. Inspired by Gandhiji's approach, our interventions are geared to address the challenges of translating constitutional values into society. Utthan is an evolving exploration of community-based, community-led change founded on a core of non-negotiable values: equity, democracy, liberty, secularism, and social justice. These values are linked to everything that Utthan does and every capacity that it tries to build and sustain. Promoting peaceful coexistence, ensuring human rights, gender justice, and inclusive sustainable development for positive change in the status of the marginalised (women, youth, and children from Dalit, tribal, OBC, religious minorities, and economically poor communities) thus forms the core of its approach.
Following are the Strategies that have evolved and continue to be relevant:

- Participatory situation analysis of challenges in multiple, intersectional contexts
- Awareness raising & organising around issues: building community agency through participatory communication
- Strengthening leaders & institutions: collective prioritisation & planning
- Demonstrating best practices: social & technical alternatives based on people's knowledge and new innovations
- Building a body of Utthan learnings for sharing and exchange: strengthening its team as a resource pool with core competencies for influence & growth
- Policy advocacy through networking and partnerships with various Government & non-Government stakeholders
In today’s social, political, and economic landscape, marginalized and vulnerable communities often struggle to access basic entitlements and rights. However, civil society organizations like Utthan have a crucial role to play in supporting these communities and reintegrating them into the mainstream developmental process.

Today, Utthan’s work spans 6 districts of Gujarat, spanning 265 villages that include the tribal areas of Dahod, Mahisagar, and Panchmahal, as well as the coastal areas of Bhavnagar, Amreli, and Bharuch. Our primary focus is to mobilize communities and build their capacity to voice their issues, while promoting just and equitable socio-technical demonstrations. By providing a platform for learning and exchange, we build replicable models that can be shared with multiple stakeholders, including both government and non-governmental organizations.

The pandemic (COVID-19) has severely affected marginalized households, resulting in the loss of livelihoods, the depletion of savings, and the non-payment of existing loans. Additionally, the pandemic posed multilevel challenges to Utthan’s team in field operations. To understand and advocate for the impact of the pandemic on grassroots communities and strategies to prepare for the second wave, we carried out different studies in partnership with the Rapid Rural Community Response to COVID-19 (RCRC), a national coalition. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we implemented various measures, including organizing training sessions, workshops, and awareness programs, both online and offline, aimed at changing societal mindsets and behaviours.

In response to the severe impact of Cyclone Tauktae, a survey was conducted in 35 villages in Bhavnagar, Amreli, and Bharuch districts as part of a collaborative effort with Inter-Agency Gujarat, and the findings were shared with the government.

Utthan promoted five Women’s Federations emboldened their membership, supported survivors of violence against women and girls and helped secure women’s land rights. The Vanita Shakti Mahila Sangathan in Dhanpur enabled the establishment of 90 Mahila Suraksha Samitis in the Dhanpur block to increase women’s safety by working with the government. The Women’s Federations also supported marginalized households accessing mandated resources, including various social welfare and agricultural-related schemes. Further, we planned the holistic Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) for three years for 45 Gram Panchayats. The EdelGive Foundation greatly supported these institutional building and livelihood security efforts.
With the support of the Azim Premji Foundation, intensive efforts were made to increase food security among small and marginal women farmers, and 5000 women farmers were trained to cultivate food grains by adopting sustainable agricultural practices. To ensure nutritional security, we also promoted kitchen gardens.

With the generous support of Apcotex and Edelgive, we were able to construct sanitation structures for marginalized households in Valia block of Bharuch. Our efforts also included intensive institutional building and behavioural change trainings to improve water and sanitation access for these communities.

Our grassroots women’s leaders were invited to share their experiences by various institutions. Dayaben, a woman farmer from Bhavnagar, shared her experience in natural farming and conservation agriculture in an online meeting organized by the National Coalition for Natural Farming. Lataben, a women farmer, was selected as one of the 8 Change Agents at the Ek Naam Event 2022 by the Apollo Tyres Foundation, and her life was featured in the "Our Land, Our Story” campaign under the India Land and Development Conference platform.

Utthan’s efforts in capacitating women’s community-based institutions to provide support to those struggling for land and engage in livelihood enhancement activities were featured in Sattva’s Agility in Adversity (AiA) series. Additionally, Utthan’s work has been recognized by various stakeholders, including the media. For instance, Kuda Gram Panchayat appreciated Utthan for its COVID-19 relief efforts, while Shishu Vihar in Bhavnagar and Manav Jyot Trust in Mumbai recognized Utthan’s efforts in grassroots empowerment.

I would like to express my deep appreciation for the Utthan team’s unwavering commitment and passion towards our shared goals. I am also grateful to the Board for their proactive engagement and support throughout our journey of growth. As we move forward, I look forward to continuing to receive your valuable guidance and support.

Pravin Bhikadiya

Chief Executive Officer
THRUST AREAS

Utthan has established a skill and has strengthened itself for collaborating with stakeholders from different levels, including the local, national, and international, while continuously incorporating lessons learned. The critical areas of focus for Utthan are all interconnected and crucial for the pursuit of justice, dignity, and hope. With its strong connections to grassroots communities, involvement in state and national movements, and global policy discussions on human rights issues, Utthan has dramatically influenced its interventions. The interventions made by Utthan play a significant role in supporting the achievement of several of the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals, such as SDG 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 10, 13,15, and 16. Following are the key thrust areas that Utthan is working on to improve the quality of life of the marginalised:

1  Gender equity & Women’s Rights
   Initiatives within this thrust area address existing inequalities in society by challenging patriarchal attitudes embedded in formal and informal structures and institutions. With a focus on protecting and securing rights of women and girls, Utthan has intensively worked on the issues of Right to Safety and Security, Resource Rights (Land, Property, Forest, Credit), Right to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, Political Participation and Access to Basic Entitlements. Integrating a feminist approach in all thrust areas has been a priority.

2  Livelihood Security
   The focus is toward the livelihood security of the marginalized, improving their abilities to enhance the quality of life. Sustainability, equity and a people-centred approach is the common thread in designing and implementing gender sensitive, inclusive natural resource management initiatives to protect and augment livelihood resources through the demonstration of innovative alternatives.

3  Conflict Transformation towards Peace & Justice
   Over the years and in response to conflict in the state, a strategy has evolved to work through women and youth, and build inclusion into every initiative, so that issues of peace, equity and justice can be understood as essential to sustainability.
Utthan’s key experiences in this thrust area lie in developing gender sensitive institutional mechanisms and technologies interwoven with the idea of women’s leadership and community participation in planning, implementation and monitoring and feeding these learnings at the policy level. Additional experience in sanitation (tailor made according to geography, ability and sustainability) was gained through Utthan’s People’s Learning Centre on Water & Sanitation. It is currently sharing its experience with 11 organisations through training and monitoring support in 4 other states, along with continued advocacy on the issue.

Within this thrust area, there is a two-fold focus; one, of Strengthening Utthan as a learning institution and the other, Building self-reliant local institutions with the capacity to independently sustain empowerment and inclusive development processes. As an institution, Utthan has demonstrated the concept of collective leadership and proactively addressed succession and growth.
The COVID-19 pandemic brought immense challenges to marginalized communities, including increased health risks and losses in livelihood. This was especially true for already vulnerable groups such as Dalits, tribals, minorities, other backward castes, and nomadic and denotified tribes, who were neglected and ignored during the crisis. Single women, widows, pregnant women, people with disabilities, reverse migrants, unskilled and skilled daily wage earners, and people with disabilities were all disproportionately impacted. Since April 2020, Utthan has been raising awareness about the pandemic, offering counselling and support, and providing relief, such as ration packages and other hygienic supplies, to those in need. The organization also worked with local governments to ensure that marginalized communities had access to state support. Utthan also offered safety and diagnostic equipment to four community health centres (CHCs) and created awareness in 100 villages by collaborating with Community Response Groups to ensure the safety of front-line workers. The five women’s federations of Utthan, including volunteers, have been crucial in the response to the COVID-19 crisis in the tribal districts of Gujarat (Mahisagar, Panchmahals, and Dahod) and the coastal district of Bhavnagar. Utthan joined Rapid Rural Community Response to Covid 19 (RCRC), a national coalition of 60+ organisations, formed to collectively respond to the crisis, ally for research and advocacy. In addition, organizations such as Azim Premji Foundation, Edelgive-Apcotex, Ghatkopar Education Society (GES), Manav Sadhna, India Development Service (IDS), and Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) have contributed to the COVID-19 relief initiatives of Utthan at different levels. Close coordination with Inter-Agency Group (IAG), Gujarat helped direct a collective response to Cyclone Tauktae hit areas. An existing deep alliance with the Working Group for Women & Land Ownership helped to esp. address issues of women farmers. A total of 4100 ration kits were distributed to families affected by the cyclone in the coastal area, with the support of APPI. These kits contained 22 essential items, including groceries, cereals, and other necessary food items to support the health of children. The distribution of these kits was instrumental in providing critical assistance to impacted families during this challenging time.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUPPORT TYPE</th>
<th>NUMBER OF FAMILIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>EMERGENCY SUPPORT</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ration &amp; Essentials Kit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kharif Sowing Kits</td>
<td>2054</td>
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<td>Kitchen Garden Kits</td>
<td>2074</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soaps</td>
<td>7592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanitary Pads/Cloth Pieces</td>
<td>7592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tarpaulin</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EMERGENT SAFETY &amp; DIAGNOSTIC EQUIPMENT &amp;</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AWA ARENESS SUPPORT TO VILLAGE COVID RESPONSE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GROUPS 100 VILLAGES AND 4 CHCs</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Safety Kits for Team &amp; Volunteers</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaccine Awareness Banner</td>
<td>424</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vaccine Awareness Leaflet</td>
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<td>Thermal Guns</td>
<td>312</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medicine Kit</td>
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<td>Hand Gloves</td>
<td>20600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Face Shield</td>
<td>1060</td>
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<tr>
<td>N 95 Masks</td>
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<td>Oximeters</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPE Kits</td>
<td>750</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oxygen Concentrators</td>
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</table>

- In addition to direct support, emergency aid was extended to families in both tribal and coastal regions through collaborations with other organizations. Through Project Chaav, sponsored by IIM Ahmedabad and Bengaluru in collaboration with RCRC, safety kits were distributed to cover 100% health workers in four blocks of Gujarat.

- Utthan also delivered medical supplies, including 175 oximeters, 100 thermal guns, 10,000 nitrile gloves, 10,000 surgical masks, 750 pieces of PPE, and 10,000 N-95 masks, to the Community Health Center in Koliyak of the Bhavnagar district, as well as the Block Health Offices in Kadana, Santrampur, and Dudhamali of the Mahisagar and Dahod districts, respectively.

- With other support, 12,500 surgical masks were made available to members of women’s federations and diamond workers in various units across Bhavnagar, Amreli, and Rajkot. Furthermore, Madhiya, Kumbhan, and Mota Asrana Primary Health Centers of Mahuva Taluka received COVID medical equipment support, including 30 antigen-based Corona testing kits, 150 N95 masks, 2 pedal sanitizer stands, 500 ml of sanitizer, and 3 thermal guns.
Addressing Vaccination Hesitancy among the Rural Communities

Efforts to raise awareness about COVID vaccination were carried out in 66 villages under 6 Primary Health Centres in Mahisagar, Dahod, and Bhavnagar districts of Gujarat, in collaboration with Dasra’s #BacktheFrontline campaign. Aimed at motivating communities to get fully vaccinated through close engagement by community influencers, vaccine champions and strong collaboration with local healthcare providers, such as PHCs and CHCs, this included addressing stereotypes and concerns with easy to understand facts. As a result of this initiative, 2,138 left out citizens in these 66 villages between the ages of 18 and 45 received the vaccine.

Sharing of Utthan’s Model with the Objective of Policy Impact

The process and learnings of Utthan in promoting socially just, environmentally sustainable, and economically efficient development in coastal and marine environments were shared in an article, "Boosting social solidarity and empowerment of women in building the local response to the COVID-19 pandemic in coastal villages of Gujarat, India," as part of the publication Mainstreaming Gender in Coastal and Marine Ecosystem Management: Principles, Case Studies, and Lessons Learned published by UNEP-Gender Water Alliance, which offers structure and guides the practise of gender mainstreaming into the integrated management of coastal and marine ecosystems.
Transparency in processes and recognition for Utthan’s COVID work

Utthan is transparent and open about its processes, so we have conducted an independent evaluation study to better understand relief kit distribution and kit recipient satisfaction (N = 617). According to the study, 98.4% of respondents received kits and were satisfied, while 1.6% had forgotten about them. More than 79% said it was delivered when they were in desperate need. Several stakeholders lauded Utthan’s COVID relief efforts, and Kuda Gram Panchayat, Ghogha Block, Bhavnagar, Gujarat presented a token of appreciation for COVID relief efforts.
STORIES OF EMPOWERMENT AND AGENCY

In late 2020, relief support provided by Utthan led to benefits for several individuals and families through income-generating activities. Eight people who were given poultry units now have a supplementary income of Rs 225 per day, while seven families who received cow units are earning Rs 80 per day from the sale of excess milk. Following the devastating loss of her home to Cyclone Tauktae, Mangaben (name changed), a determined foot fisher, received crucial relief assistance from Utthan, including rations and tarpaulin. This support helped her to escape from hunger and repair the house. Mangaben's self-motivating strength is matched by her leadership within her community, where she inspires and motivates others to create positive change and lead by example.

Despite economic growth, Gujarat has also witnessed incidences of violence against women and a lack of swift justice for the survivors. In 2021, the state reported 7,348 crimes against women, fewer than the 8,028 cases reported in 2020. In contrast to this, the number of cases of crimes against children has grown by 10 percent—from 4,075 in 2020 to 4,515 in 2021.

The court has completed the trials of 1,221 cases of crimes against women in 2020, and it almost doubled during 2021 with 2,535 cases, according to the NCRB report for 2021. However, the percentage of cases pending in the court in the state is still high (96001 cases), with a pendency rate of over 97% by the end of 2021. The National Commission for Women and the Abhayam Helpline document a sharp rise in cases of violence against women and girls in the post-Covid scenario across the nation. Domestic violence cases increased during the four phases of the lockdown compared to a similar period in the previous ten years. Child marriage, dowry, Sata paddhati, witch labelling, low literacy rates, poor resource ownership, and decision-making status are among the critical women’s rights issues in the state, particularly in tribal belts such as Mahisagar and Dahod.
Utthan continues its efforts to address existing societal inequalities by challenging kyriarchal attitudes embedded in formal and informal structures and institutions. We work extensively on the issues of the right to safety and security, resource rights (land, property, forest, and credit), right to water, sanitation, and hygiene, political participation, and access to basic entitlements, with a focus on protecting and securing the rights of women and girls. Our strategies and processes are founded on feminist principles that promote the voice, agency, and empowerment of women and girls.

The women’s federations (sangathan) promoted by Utthan are raising awareness, assisting survivors of violence and injustice, engaging, and rallying with responsible actors, and demonstrating sustainable alternatives. Sangathans are the collectives of women from the social and economically marginalized.

Currently, five sangathans are under-functioning and names and the area of operations are:

a) Samarthan Mahila sangathan - Bhavnagar  
b) Vanita Shakti Mahila Sangathan – Dhanpur  
c) Mahila Vikas Sangathan – Rajula  
d) Ekta Mahila Sangathan – Gothib and  
e) Shakti Mahila Sangathan – Mahuva

During the financial year, the federations were actively engaged in women’s rights issues. The justice committees of the women’s federations provided counselling and referred the violence against women and land rights-related cases to the appropriate legal mechanisms, and the economic committees supported the members of the federation.

- Capacity building trainings: The federation leaders were undergone 10 trainings that focused to improve the skills on Planning & Governance and perspective on Gender & Intersectionality. The Legal Clinics with all 5 Federation’s to improve the socio-legal documentation of survivor support being taken up by Justice Committees. The organizational structure, strategies for tackling cases of Violence against women and girls, and managing accounts were discussed. The 23 members of the Ekta Mahila Sangathan, Vanita Mahila Sangathan, and Utthan team members visited Navjivan Adivasi Mahila Vikas Manch Sangathan in Sagbara taluka in Narmada district, Gujarat, India, to learn about the organization’s structure, strategies for dealing with cases of violence against women and girls, and accounting.

- 35 members of Samarthan Mahila Sangathan, Shakti Mahila Sangathan, and Mahila Vikas Sangathan, as well as Utthan team members, visited Panam Mahila Sangathan in Shehera Taluka, Panch Mahals district, Gujarat state, for knowledge exchange on topics such as organic farming, entrepreneurship, and vermicomposting, as well as discussion on strategies to strengthen memberships and the federation itself.
Part of Mahila Suraksha Samitis:
Members from the Vanita Shakti Mahila Sangathan, Dhanpur, covering 90 villages, joined village-level Mahila Suraksha Samitis created by the Government of Gujarat to improve women's safety.

During the financial year, the federations formed 100 Self Help Groups (SHGs) under Mission Mangalam and participated in a rapid assessment of the SHGs/women collectives in Gujarat.

The 50 women were trained on reaching out to various government departments including Sakhi one stop Centre to access their rights by the District Department of Women and Child Development (DWCD) of Bhavnagar. Further, Human Rights Day celebration also was celebrated in collaboration in the Kharakadi village of Ghogha Block of Bhavnagar district.

The Block Legal Service Authority of Mahuva Block has collaborated with Shakti Mahila Sangathan to conduct 57 village-level campaigns on women's safety and security. The campaign resulted in 10 women seeking assistance from the Justice Committee. The partnership also allowed federation leaders and justice committee members to have an interaction with government lawyers and share their work in support of women survivors.

A curriculum for women in governance was designed in partnership with GRP Ltd. In addition to this, an academic collaboration was signed with Women's College, Bhavnagar.

The land rights struggle and the empowerment story of Lataben of Dhanpur were featured in the "Our Land, Our Story" campaign by the Center for Land Governance- NRMC as a part of the India Land and Development Conference. She has also been selected as one of the 8 Change Agents of Ek Naam Event 2022 by the Apollo Tyres Foundation.

Utthan's efforts to mobilise women through community-based institutions for empowerment and rights, to lend support to people fighting for land rights, and to serve as a forum for engaging in livelihood-improving activities were highlighted in Sattva's Agility in Adversity (AiA) series.
Federations successfully produced and marketed vermicompost

Samarthan Mahila Sangathan, with post-Covid support, has started bio-input production, i.e., vermicompost. From July to September 2021, the sangathan leaders managed to produce 590 kg of vermicompost, which they successfully packed and sold. This further inspired them to continue the production; during the second wave of COVID, they increased their production by 2300 KG.

- Six members of the Utthan team and 143 women from five federations participated in 2.5-day training to better their understanding of intersectionality and feminism. Hard-hitting discussions on the linkages of gender with caste, class, ethnicity, and religion were facilitated.

- Leaders of sangathans celebrated International Women’s Day under the theme “Break the Bias” in collaboration with Utthan, and members took an oath of allegiance to work toward overcoming the barriers of deep-seated patriarchal mindsets and providing support to women to achieve their rightful status in society.

- Utthan formed a collaboration with the Working Group for Women and Land Ownership (WGWLO) and the Foundation for Ecological Security to expand our work promoting forest rights through paralegal cadre in 30 tribal villages (FES).
Varshaben Bharatbhai Damor is from Mota Sarnaya village, which is a small village in the Santrampur Taluka of Mahisagar District, Gujarat, India. She has two children, a girl and a boy. She earlier worked as a "cook" in an Anganwadi in her village and cooked meals for children who came to the Anganwadi. Her husband works in agriculture. When Varshaben learned that Utthan works in her village, she contacted the team and became involved in grassroots activities. Later, she joined Ekta Mahila Sangathan, which had been working in the area for quite some time. Since then, Varshaben has been an active leader in the Ekta Mahila Sangathan and has been working for the upliftment of her village and the sangathan for over 6 years now. She has been a part of every training, meeting, and celebration organised by Utthan. She also served as a member of the Jagruti Gram Vikas Committee and worked with all the communities in the village without any discrimination. One day, during the GPDP planning, all the members of the various village committees, men and women, and members of the Sangathan joined, but the Sarpanch did not take part. It was at that moment that Varshaben decided that she had to contest for the position of sarpanch in her village. She put forth the idea to the assembly and received astounding support from everyone. With her grit and determination, along with the support of the village residents, Varshaben Damor has become the Sarpanch of her village. She won the panchayat elections by 472 votes. When the results were announced, all the members of the Sangathan rejoiced and celebrated. This time the Sarpanch presided over the GPDP meeting and assured the Gram Sabha that it is time that the village heads towards overall development, and with Varshaben, it seems just possible.
Nitaben Ramjibhai Dabhi and Her Initiative: 
Growing Trust and More Hands Joining for Collective Change

Nitaben Ramjibhai Dabhi has been a member of the Samarthan Mahila Sangathan of Bhavnagar for the past three years. Nitaben started her own credit savings group in her village Khadsalia at first. She joined Samarthan Mahila Sangathan after learning about it and adding new members. She worked hard to reduce her debt and improve her financial situation. She made a concerted effort by obtaining a loan from the sangathan. To begin, she had borrowed Rs. 10,000 to purchase and care for cattle as part of her livelihood. Her entrepreneurial spirit and willpower propelled her even further, and in 2022, she began a diamond unit in Bhavnagar’s Hathab village with an Rs.30,000 loan. There are 17 females and 3 males working, and they earn between INR 9,000 and INR 10,000 per month. Her life is an inspiration to many women because she not only improved her financial situation but also helped others by providing employment. It strongly stands with the idea that Utthan’s women collectives / federations create the space and sources for women like Nitaben to dream and act for the right opportunity with financial support, resulting in an improvement in their quality of life.
Livelihood

Under Livelihood Security, Utthan establishes models demonstrating gender-sensitive, ecologically sustainable livelihood security alternatives to enhance incomes, improve food security, and improve the quality of life of the most marginalized. Sustainability, equity, and a people-centred approach are the common threads in the experiences of gender-sensitive, inclusive natural resource management (protection and augmentation) and the demonstration of technological and innovative alternatives through people's institutions.

Evidence of the Livelihood Security Model being Equitable, People Centred & Sustainable

During the fiscal year, Utthan has undertaken activities to educate communities, including small and marginal women farmers, about the importance of conserving soil and water and the need for adopting a sustainable agricultural package of practices to promote climate resilience and food & nutritional security. It has also attempted to address the impact of policy and governance issues on people's livelihoods by increasing panchayat engagement, supporting the establishment of local institutions, including Village Development Committees (VDCs) to protect livelihoods, and facilitating access to and control over resources and entitlements. The following milestones were achieved under the livelihood security programme during the fiscal year:

- Kitchen Garden Kits distributed for ensuring Nutritional Security
  - 1255

- Women Farmers Trained on Sustainable Agriculture Package of Practices
  - 5000

- Village Workshops for Convergence with GPDP and NREGA
  - 47

- Job Requirements created under MGNREGA with Utthan’s Support
  - 13773

- Individuals placed in Jobs under MGNREGA with Utthan’s Support
  - 11956

- Village Development Committee Meetings Conducted in 47 villages
  - 104

Women’s Institutions Responding to Injustice and Mob Violence

Following a distressing incident of mob violence against a woman in Dahod district, the Vanita Shakti Mahila Sangathan and Utthan team collaborated with the Devgarh Baria Mahila Sangathan, ANANDI, Mahila Samakhya, and One Stop Center. They swiftly urged the district administration and police to guarantee the survivor’s safety and conduct an investigation into the violence. Additionally, women leaders provided emotional support to the survivor. The group’s efforts garnered public attention, leading the district administration to take action by establishing Mahila Suraksha Samitis and promoting awareness of women’s rights in the community.
Promotion of Sustainable Agriculture: Sharing of Best Practices

As part of the sustainable agriculture promotion initiative supported by the Azim Premji Foundation, the Master women farmers (lead farmers) have shared their experiential knowledge and skills through field days, training, farm visits, and meetings with other 5000 women farmers to reduce the impact of pest attacks and increase yield. During the Rabi season (2022), 1171 women farmers from tribal areas and 849 women farmers in coastal areas were trained by the master farmers in the sustainable agricultural package of practices. The training offered information relevant to the techniques for the crops, including chickpeas, maize, wheat, and vegetables in the tribal areas and wheat, chickpeas, bajara, onions, and vegetables for the farmers in coastal areas. Among the trained, most of the women farmers adopted and applied the lessons.

Utthan has assisted vulnerable communities in establishing their own kitchen gardens, and as part of the programme, 1255 kitchen garden kits were distributed in 51 coastal and tribal villages. Furthermore, the families that grew the vegetables assisted the families that did not have land for a kitchen garden. The community and the media both applaud this "model of social solidarity."

Situational analysis of the status of small and marginal women farmers: The situational analysis was conducted to understand the status of small and marginal women farmers, existing livelihoods, potential for improvement, and status of resource access in the Azim Premji Foundation-supported villages of six blocks in Gujarat. The study observed that the villagers are migrating in search of employment, and better employment is one of the major reasons. The villagers from Bhavnagar and Ghogha are migrating within the city. On the other hand, Mahuva is reported as Vadodara, Mahauva, and other places, including Mumbai. The households from tribal blocks including Dhanpur are migrating to Rajkot, Ahmedabad, Surat, and Vadodara. The study also found that the lead farmer (LF) approach of Utthan is effective in promoting sustainable agriculture. The study found that women farmers who were trained by the lead or master farmers adopted the sustainable agriculture package of practises (POP) relatively better than women farmers not associated with Utthan's intervention. It was inferred that continuous knowledge sharing is important to increase the adoption of POPs.
Six village-level workshops were conducted and helped to interact with the SHGs made under Mission Mangalam promoted by Gujarat Livelihood Promotion Company (GLPC) i.e., the State Rural Livelihood Mission. Several Federation members are part of these SHGs. The list of active SHGs was shared with Taluka Devpt. /mgr., GLPC. Federation members & SHGs members were made aware of the IFC initiative.

Utthan conducted a “Chalo Evu Gaam Banaviye” Campaign across 47 villages of tribal and coastal Gujarat to raise awareness and accountability for inclusive and participatory Gram Panchayat Development in collaboration with the Department of Journalism & Mass Communication, Gujarat University & Tulsipatra Art Foundation. The Campaign consisted of performances to visualize the scope and merits of effective mobilization of mandated resources for holistic village development as well as individual well-being. In addition to the Utthan initiatives in these villages, the Campaign was an added effort to encourage marginalized communities to participate in village development planning & accelerate demand generation for livelihood empowerment. The Campaign Call for various stakeholders was:

- To foster an enabling environment that centres the unheard voices of the marginalised to co-create Gram Panchayat Development plans – ensuring their viewpoints, and active participation in its formulation.
- Increase demand for both, individual and collective livelihood activities under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS).
- Build accountability of the Gram Panchayats.

Two soil and water conservation projects, including Modhava and Pipero, were taken up in the Dhanpur block to address the income augmentation issues of marginalised communities with the support of NABARD. Through these watershed projects, a total of 550 ha of land was treated, benefiting 1100 families and generating approximately 5500 human days. Utthan attempted to address the issue of depleting water levels and deforestation through its revitalization and afforestation initiatives. These initiatives yielded the following results: The groundwater level in villages rose by 1–1.10 metres, and 15000 forest plants, including teak, were planted on a 17-ha plot. Soil erosion is common in tribal areas, and tonnes of productive soil are lost each year. To combat erosion, 1 gabion, 980 stone outlets, and a 12960 RMT farm bund were built.

To increase the economic independence of the marginalised women, training on various sustainable livelihoods was provided. Within this, 30 women were trained in honeybee keeping. 50 families were also supported to set up the kitchen gardens. A Kadaknath poultry demonstration was conducted in Modhava village, and two women were given 80 chickens. To increase the ownership of natural resources, 30 watershed committee members were provided leadership role and responsibility training.
Access to Safe Drinking Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Our major strategic experiences in this Thrust Area revolve around creating institutional mechanisms and technologies that are sensitive to gender issues, intertwined with the notion of women's leadership and community involvement in planning, implementing, monitoring, and feeding these learnings at the policy level. The glaring issues of safety and security of drinking water that emerged in the founding years of Utthan became a central means for translating its vision of justice into action for those last in line. This quickly developed into a movement, and in 1990, a conference sponsored by the UN-GoI proclaimed using the strategy of "equity through developing local capacities." In all of its interventions in this area, Utthan had been promoting the idea of decentralised, people-centred water and sanitation with women's leadership and community involvement in planning, implementation, and monitoring. Utthan's tenacious advocacy resulted in the adoption and recognition of these ideas in the guidelines of the Swajaldhara Scheme in 2002 and the Gujarat Jal Disha in 2010. We also developed and implemented specialised sanitation solutions based on geography and need and sustainability through our Utthan's People's Learning Centre on Water and Sanitation programme.

In 2016, Utthan took up a three-year collaboration with Bharat Rural Livelihood Foundation (BRLF), an autonomous undertaking of the Government of India (under the aegis of the Ministry of Rural Development) and offered its services as the National Resource Agency for 20 CSOs across 5 states (Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Odisha) in India. Utthan is continuing its efforts to improve the sanitation facilities in rural Gujarat and the experience is elevated from implementing agency to a capacity building one by sharing its expertise with other organisations and providing them guidance and support.
During the financial year, Utthan was involved in the establishment of sanitation structures at the household level and sensitization activities that resulted in better utilisation and maintenance of sanitation facilities through water and sanitation committees in the Valiya block of Gujarat. The initiative was supported by Edelgive and Apcotex, and the project aimed to empower women by securing their rights to access safe and sufficient drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene through gender-just community mechanisms in two villages in Valia block, Bharuch District, Gujarat. The key achievements of the year are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faliya Meetings</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASH Committee Meetings</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness Programmes including Video Show, Rally on Sanitation Rights</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Hygiene Promotion Programme</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Training for CBOs</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance, Monitoring and Sustainable Training</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toilets Built (newly constructed/renovated)</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soak Pits for Safe Liquid Waste Disposal</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toilet Seats installed for People with Disabilities</td>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Testing for Drinking Water Source</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Training and Workshop on WASH and Programme Implementation</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Toilet Chairs make Dignified Sanitation Possible for the Disabled

Access to safe and clean water and sanitation facilities is the basic right of all people, including people with disabilities, the denial of which has serious implications for their well-being. According to research, inaccessible toilet and water facilities contribute significantly to school dropout among disabled children. Access to clean water and basic sanitation is a right also guaranteed under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Utthan has installed toilet chairs in the villages of Valiya Block to provide access to safe sanitation facilities for the disabled. Accessing the facility was overwhelming for the stakeholders who received it and their family members. Many of them shared with the team how it was a significant event in their or their loved ones' lives. Ranguben, a Dungri village resident who had the toilet chair installed, said, "The toilet facility of my house, which was previously only accessible to my family members, is now open to mine as well."

Standing for the Welfare of Neighbourhood:
Member of the Water and Sanitation Committee

"I want to do as much as I can for the people. So even in my absence in the future, people will remind me that Vibhaben did a good job for us."

These are the words of Vibhaben, a member of the water committee of Nadhari village, who lives in Navi-nagri in Naldhari. Her daughter is an LLB student, and her husband is a mason, whereas Vibhaben has been running a small shop since last year. Vibhaben has been on the water committee for the last two years and is interested in learning new things. She is also very enthusiastic about working for the welfare of the people. Despite the difficulties at home, Vibhaben contributes actively to the village's water sanitation program.

When work on the issue of water and sanitation was started in Naldhari village, she agreed to join this work and used to remain present in each and every meeting and training. As her understanding of the issue grew, Vibhaben decided that she would also build a toilet in her house and teach people how to get and use a constructed toilet at her home. She participates in each and every Pani Samiti meeting and training and awareness programme organised in the village and encourages other people by saying that it is "better to attend such meetings and training than sit idle at home; we will learn some useful things from it." So I kept my shop closed to attend it. "If I learn something, I will be able to explain to people," by saying that she is inspiring people to raise awareness on this issue. She says Utthan is supporting us with the overall village development activities, so it is our duty to support the Utthan team as, after all, the village is ours.
The focus of Utthan, as a development organization in India, is twofold: to strengthen itself as a learning institution and to build self-reliant local institutions that can independently sustain empowerment and inclusive development processes. Through its work, Utthan has successfully facilitated the establishment and growth of many community-based institutions, including women’s federations, Village Development Committees (VDCs), and mechanisms for justice for violence survivors.

One of the key successes of Utthan is its approach to collective leadership and addressing succession and growth. The organization has demonstrated its commitment to building capacity and empowering communities to lead their own development processes. This approach is critical to creating sustainable change and ensuring that communities have the skills and resources necessary to continue their development even after Utthan’s support has ended.

Overall, Utthan’s work aligns with a broader movement towards community-led development and empowerment, which emphasizes the importance of building the capacity of local institutions and empowering communities to lead their own development. By building strong local institutions and promoting collective leadership, Utthan is contributing to a more sustainable and inclusive development process in India. Throughout the period, initiatives were made to strengthen all types of grassroots leadership, including village-level institutions, women’s federations, and farmer-producer organisations.
• **MIS:** The management information system (MIS) for effective programme delivery is in the final stages of development and software testing. The domain name as well as the server have been purchased. Prior to the rollout of the MIS, staff will be trained on the entire ecosystem of the MIS, including data feeding, report generation, and also using the data from the MIS for better project planning and implementation.

• **Human resource and Finance Policy:** As part of the process of strengthening Utthan’s organisational systems, a review of its financial and human resource policies have been initiated.

• **Knowledge Management Team:** To ensure that the knowledge gained through the processes and deep engagement with communities is accessible to all, it must be documented. To create this “institutional memory,” a knowledge management team has been formed. The three-person team consists of a knowledge management lead, a knowledge management coordinator, and a management information systems coordinator. The team focuses on the three key components of knowledge management: people, procedures, and technology.

• **Projects approved during the Year:** Utthan was selected for the GROW Fund, which aimed to strengthen the capabilities, resilience, and future readiness of grassroots organisations. The GROW Fund was co-founded by the EdelGive Foundation and a group of reputable funders. Further, A three-year proposal to the Azim Premji Foundation to Deepen sustainable agriculture under the leadership of Women farmers has been approved.

• **Credit Cooperative:** Samarthan Mahila Sangathan (SMS) has taken a significant step towards formalizing microfinance activity by registering itself as a Credit Cooperative. This will enable SMS to provide even greater support to women in need, helping to build more resilient and financially stable communities.

• **Capacity building of Team:** The team members of Utthan have participated in capacity-building training, such as training on the use of Word, Excel, and Google tools, social justice and human rights, as well as sexual harassment sensitization.

• **Member in significant Committees:** Pravin Bhikadiya, the CEO, was selected as a core committee member of the National Coalition for Natural Farming (NCNF) Gujarat chapter. Pallavi, the Deputy CEO, has been tasked with convening the RCRC’s capacity-building theme.

• **Strategic Planning:** Through the consultative process the a) Strategic action plan 2021-2025, and b) Utthan’s organizational development plan 2021-2025 were developed. To ensure the accessibility of the members of Utthan, the document is made available both in English & Gujarati.

• **Meetings:** To streamline the processes and to take key decisions, the key committees including the Management committee, the Welfare Committee, Governance & Statutory Finance Committee (GSFC), and the Procurement Committee had the meetings in the defined intervals.

• **The Annual Meeting** of Utthan was held with the focus of “building a shared understanding of Utthan’s ethos and culture” at Silvassa from August 30 to September 3, 2022.
AWARDS

CHANGE AGENT AWARD
For her work on sustainable agriculture and facilitating women’s land rights, Lataben from Shakti Mahila Sangathan in Mahuva was honoured as a “Change Agent” by the Apollo Tyres Foundation’s “Ek Naam” campaign.

CIVIL HONOUR AWARD
As part of the 31st civil honours ceremony, Utthan was recognised by Shishu Vihar, Bhavnagar, and Manav Jyot Trust, Mumbai, for its work on empowerment. Utthan was one of the 75 Gujarati organisations honoured in the ceremony.
Learning, Exchange, and Efforts in dialogue with Individual Institutions, Government, and through Networks and Alliances.

Nafisa Barot, 2021 Global Awardee for "Women in Water" was invited for the inaugural session of a Summer School on "Engaging with Water and Water Bodies" organised by Auroville Integral Sustainability Institute, in association with, Engaging Cities Initiative (ECI) & Alliance for Good Governance, AGG and Water Pedagogy Advisor Prof. Dr. Mansee Bal Bhargava.

Pallavi Sobti Rajpal, Deputy CEO, Utthan and Jaya Rathod, Program Coordinator (Coastal Area Programme), shared their views on economic empowerment as a means towards gender empowerment in the context of COVID-19 poverty alleviation at Women Power Connect's seminar titled "Women's Economic Empowerment as a Means of Combating Violence Against Women: Strategies, Limitations, Interventions, and the Way Forward."

Ms. Nafisa Barot, Utthan’s founder and former executive director, was invited as a speaker to the Institute of Architecture and Planning, Nirma University, on March 8, 2022, to deliver her thoughts on "Towards Integrating Gender Equality: A Journey of Women’s Empowerment—Learnings" as part of Women’s Day celebrations.

Pallavi Sobti Rajpal & Babu Prajapati were invited to lead a session on Livelihood Security at a National Workshop on Striving for Human Security: Efforts from the Field, organised for the students at Sophia College, DAIICT & Amity University, Mumbai.

Ms. Nafisa Barot delivered a lecture on "Are we listening to women and the environment?" in the first episode of an online talk jointly organised by St. Joseph’s College and the United Nations Global Compact on March 8, 2022. The series aimed to bring awareness to women’s role in sustaining nature and natural resources.

Jitendra Maru & Laxman Rathod from Utthan participated in the second phase of the Oasis Leadership Workshop focused on personal growth, value-based culture, and lifelong learning through an experiential learning methodology.

Utthan participated in a Sankalp Forum session focused on empowering women’s agripreneurs in India by exploring practical innovations to help women farmers to access land and services. They also shared their views on the status, opportunities, and future of the women land rights funding ecosystem.

A woman farmer, Dayaben from Bhavnagar, was invited to share her experience in natural farming and conservation agriculture in an online meeting organised by the National Coalition for Natural Farming.
A non-financial memorandum of understanding was signed with the District Rural Development Agency in Bhavnagar to provide training inputs on MNREGA.

The Integrated Farming Cluster in Dhanpur, Dahod, has been approved under the non-financial MoU of the RCRC (Utthan as a member of the NRLM-ICAR).

Pallavi Sobti Rajpal attended the Learning Labs webinar by the International Land Coalition on “How to Bring Gender Perspective into the Work of Your Organization”.

External organisation’s visit: A team from PRADAN, a well-known non-profit, visited Utthan’s field and support offices to learn about the organisation’s work and federations, particularly Utthan’s women’s empowerment model and processes.

Utthan’s Networks and Alliances as of March 2022

Utthan has undertaken coordinated efforts, learning and exchange, and advocacy on issues related to sustainable agriculture, women’s rights, and the impact of COVID on the Indian population at the national and Gujarat levels in collaboration with various organisations and networks and government departments.

State and National Level

- Working Group on Women and Land Ownership
- Sajjata Sangh
- Rapid Rural Community Response to COVID 19
- Pravah
- National Coalition for Natural Farming
- Mahila Kisan Adhikar Manch
- Janpath
- Inter-Agency Group, Gujarat
- India Wash Forum
- Gujarat Mahila Manch
International Level

- Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council
- Water and Environmental Sanitation Network Water Conflict Forum
- South Asia Consortium for Inter Disciplinary Waters
- Global Water Partnership
- Gender Water Alliance
- Freshwater Action Network South Asia
- Feminist Alliance for Rights
- Capnet
UTTHAN'S BOARD

VIJAY PARMAR
Chairperson
Managing Trustee, Janvikas

ALKA PARikh
Member
Dean, School of Liberal Arts, Bennett University

ASHOKE CHATTERJEE
Member
Former Director, National Institute of Design

BINOY ACHARYA
Member
Director, UNNATI & President, Voluntary Agency Network India (VANI)

NAFISA BAROT
Member
Founder & Former Director, Utthan

NEELIMA KHETAN
Member
Managing Partner of Nous Consultants, Senior CSR and Social Sector Expert

SARA AHMED
Member
Adjunct Professor, Centre for Water Research, Dept of Humanities and Social Sciences, IISER, Pune

SUDARSHAN IYENGAR
Member
Former Vice Chancellor, Gujarat Vidyapith, presently associated with ARCH

UTTHAN'S PARTNERS

EdelGive Foundation
Azim Premji Foundation
WGWO
WGWLO
Institute of Social Studies Trust
INDIANS FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION
Kavita Mehta Foundation
Girl Education & Development
NABARD
apcotex
dasra
ACCOUNTS AND TRANSPARENCY

BALANCE SHEET AS ON 31.03.2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funds and Liabilities</th>
<th>Annx.</th>
<th>2021-22</th>
<th>2020-21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corpus Fund and Asset Funds</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7,39,271</td>
<td>8,33,324</td>
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<tr>
<td>General and Earmarked Funds</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4,82,558</td>
<td>3,83,256</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unutilised Grants</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13,13,743</td>
<td>2,95,032</td>
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<tr>
<td>Current Liabilities</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Maintenance, Monitoring and Sustainable Training</td>
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<td>7,76,074</td>
<td>4,26,755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>33,11,646</td>
<td>19,38,367</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assets and Properties</th>
<th>Annx.</th>
<th>2021-22</th>
<th>2020-21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fixed Assets</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6,17,757</td>
<td>7,16,939</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2,97,622</td>
<td>2,84,076</td>
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<tr>
<td>Current Assets, Loans and Advances</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>23,96,267</td>
<td>9,37,352</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>33,11,646</td>
<td>19,38,367</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

UDIN: 22030268AUTMJH9564
For Utthan

As per our report attached
For B C M Associates
Chartered Accountants
FRN 100808W

Bharat Mehta
Partner
Membership No. 030268
Ahmedabad
9th September, 2022

For Utthan

Trustee

Ahmedabad
9th September 2022
# INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

**FOR THE PERIOD 01.04.2020 to 31.03.2022**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Particulars</th>
<th>Annx.</th>
<th>2021-22</th>
<th>2020-21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>29,30,033</td>
<td>36,00,105</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donation</td>
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<td>2,80,339</td>
<td>44,667</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Income</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1,24,946</td>
<td>60,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Liabilities Extinguished</td>
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<td>30,455</td>
<td>14,054</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>33,65,773</td>
<td>37,18,826</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Expenditure**                          |       |               |               |
| Expenditure on the objects of trust      | 13 & 14 | 26,85,272 | 35,40,105     |
| Establishment Expenses                   | 14    | 3,16,182      | 33,956        |
| Remuneration to the Trustees             | 13    | 15,000        | 60,000        |
| Grants receivables written off            | 13 & 14 | -           | (12,500)      |
| Current Assets written off                | 14    |               | 18,500        |
| Depreciation                             | 6     | 1,12,389      | 1,08,615      |
| Depreciation recouped                    |       | 1,12,389      | 1,08,615      |
| **TOTAL**                                |       | 30,16,454     | 36,40,061     |

Excess of Income over Expenditure/ (Excess of Expenditure over Income)  
3,49,318                   78,765

UDIN: 22030268AUTMJH9564
As per our report attached
For B C M Associates
Chartered Accountants
FRN 100808W

For Utthan

Trustee

Bharat Mehta
Partner
Membership No. 030268
Ahmedabad
9th September, 2022