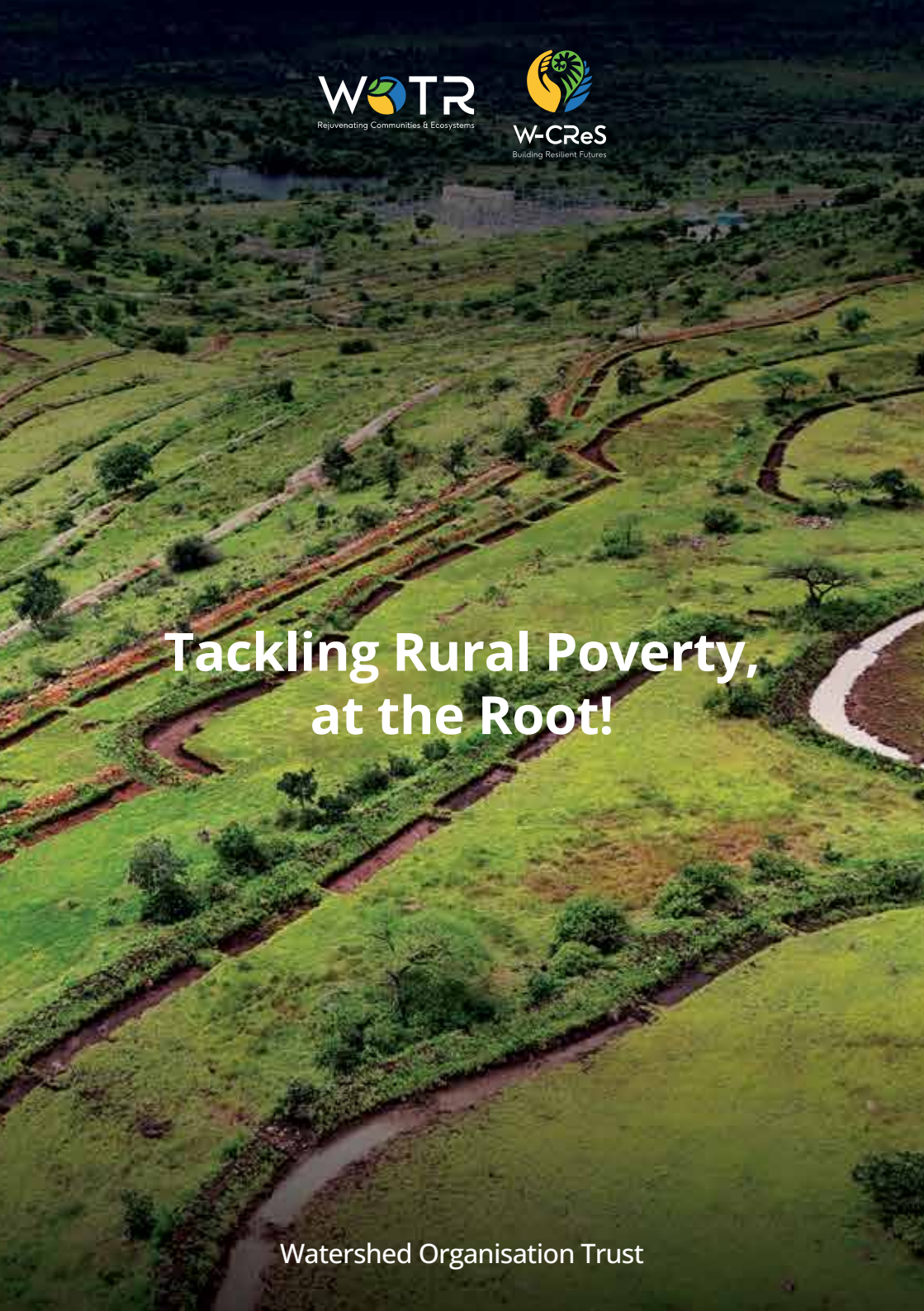
WOTR
Rejuvenating Communities & Ecosystems

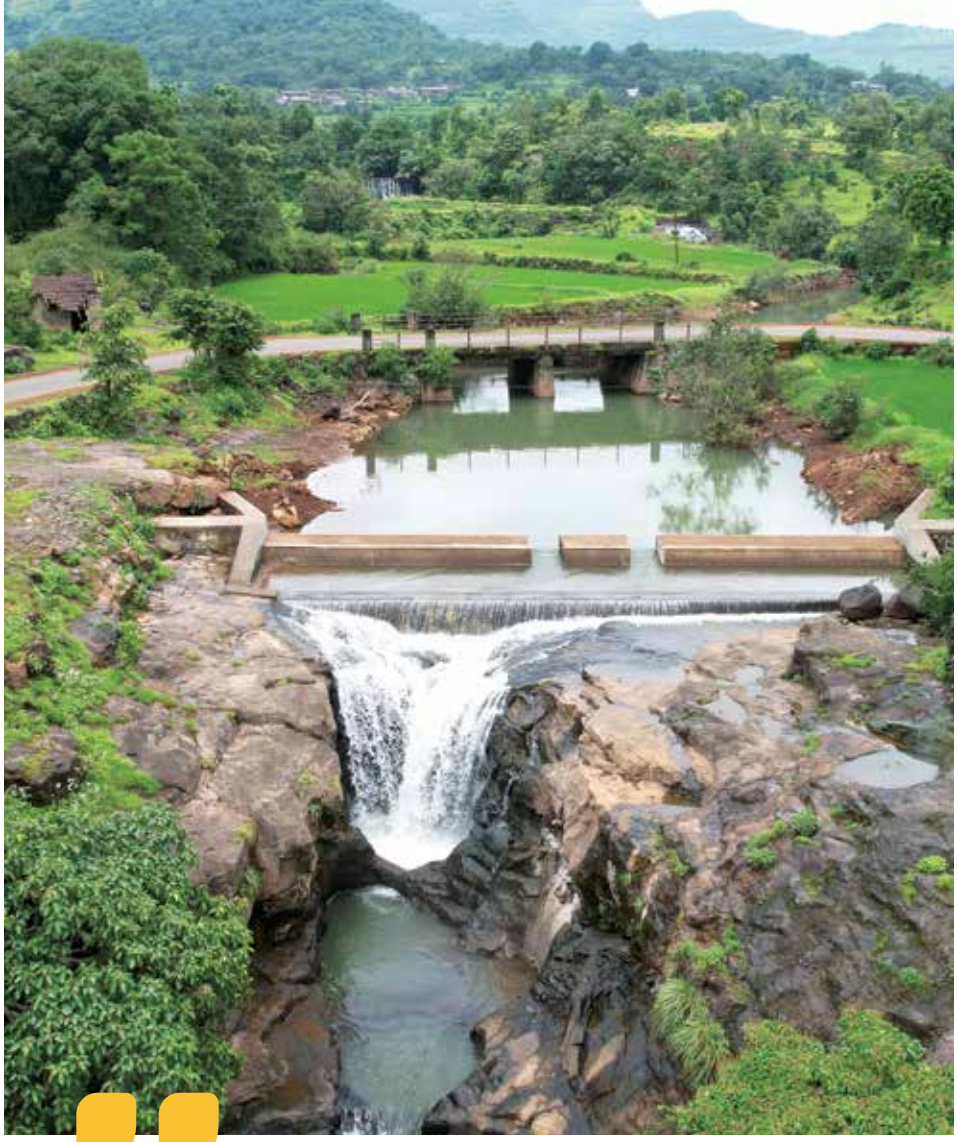
W-CReS
Building Resilient Futures



Tackling Rural Poverty, at the Root!

Watershed Organisation Trust





The earth, the land and the water are not an inheritance from our forefathers, but on loan from our children. So, we have to handover to them at least as it was handed over to us.

- Mahatma Gandhi

WOTR is a nationally and globally recognised leader and think tank in rural development. Committed to eradicating the root causes of rural poverty, WOTR champions ecosystem rejuvenation and the strengthening of community resilience to climate change. By enhancing water availability, improving land and agricultural productivity, diversifying livelihoods, empowering women, and bolstering the health and well-being of vulnerable rural communities, WOTR has made significant strides in transforming rural landscapes. The organisation's unique approach brings together a diverse range of stakeholders, including practitioners, academics, researchers, trainers, and policy makers, fostering collaborative efforts to build the resilience of rural communities. In the course of over 3 decades, WOTR has worked in 8,598 villages across 10 states in India, positively impacting the lives of 9.7 million people. For more information, please visit **www.wotr.org**

Initiated in 2007 and set up as an autonomous unit in 2016, W-CReS (the WOTR Centre for Resilience Studies) adopts a collaborative, systems dynamics approach and hosts a trans-disciplinary team in climate science, landscape engineering, agriculture, ecology and biodiversity, geo-informatics, hydrology, geology, economics and sociology. The objective of W-CReS is to understand causal relationships and drivers of behavioural change, identify and test effective strategies for change and contribute to capacity building and policy enhancement. W-CReS has formal MOUs with leading national and international research and scientific institutions including ICAR, IMD, and CRIDA among others. Both WOTR and W-CReS work in close collaboration with civil society entities, companies, and the federal and state governments to achieve their objectives. For more information, please visit **https://wotr.org/w-cres/**

Ecosystem based Adaptation for Resilient Incomes (ECOBARI), a collaborative platform uniting diverse stakeholders, formed in 2021 – including government, businesses, NGOs, and academia – champions Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) across India and the Global South. The platform fosters knowledge exchange and collaboration to empower communities to build resilience in the face of climate change. ECOBARI's membership saw an impressive growth, expanding from 10 organisations at the end of 2022-23 to 23 at the end of 2023-24. This influx of new members signifies the growing recognition of EbA as a critical strategy for climate adaptation. Ultimately, ECOBARI envisions a future where ecosystems flourish and communities prosper, together.



a vision for rural india

Resilient rural communities that enjoy a fulfilling quality of life within vibrant and sustainable ecosystems



a mission to make rural poverty a distant memory

WOTR tackles the key causes of rural poverty by rejuvenating ecosystems and building the community's resilience to climate change. We enhance the availability of water, increase the productivity of land and agriculture, diversify livelihoods, empower women, and strengthen the health and well-being of vulnerable rural communities



our impact areas

WOTR engages at the intersection of practice, knowledge and policy across scales and in collaboration with various stakeholders across sectors. This is enabled through

- **Implementation**
  through a systemic lens. Thematic areas include 'Land & Water Management', 'Climate Resilient Agriculture', 'Livelihoods', 'Women Empowerment' and 'Health, Sanitation & Nutrition'

- **Applied Research and Policy Advocacy through W-CReS**
  which leads to effective implementation and sustainable outcomes on the ground

- **Training and Capacity Building**
  through training programmes for diverse groups, including government officials, community organisations, corporations, and students. These programmes cover fields like ecosystem based adaptation, geospatial tools, water budgeting, and climate-resilient agriculture.

a systemic approach

We firmly believe that combating rural poverty requires a systemic approach that requires rejuvenating both rural communities and their surrounding natural ecosystems. Employing an Ecosystem-based adaptation(EbA) approach, we mobilise rural communities to restore and efficiently manage their land, water, and forests, while promoting participatory governance and sustainable livelihoods thus enhancing their adaptive capacities. This leads to revitalised ecosystems that strengthen their resilience to climate change, generates more livelihood opportunities, and boosts their overall quality of life, health, and nutrition.

Read in detail about our Systemic Approach

aligning with national and international agenda

Our work strongly aligns with key international priorities, including Land Degradation Neutrality, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Convention for Biodiversity, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

By placing a high priority on environmental protection, natural resource conservation, adaptive capacity enhancement, and community resilience building, we actively contribute to 12 out of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) established by the United Nations.



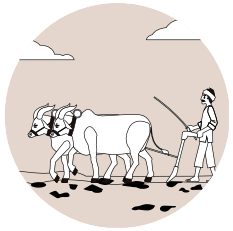
The themes that enable a systemic intervention





LAND AND WATER MANAGEMENT: At WOTR, our primary commitment lies in revitalising ecosystems that have faced degradation. We understand that restored natural ecosystems offer the only sustainable path out of poverty. A comprehensive integrated watershed development is employed where we join hands with rural communities to conserve and restore natural resources, including soil and water. The approach is holistic and spans the entire landscape - from the ridge to the valley. We mobilise our communities to harvest each drop of rainfall and preserve every bit of soil, laying a firm foundation for them to thrive and prosper. In parallel, we work closely with these communities, fostering effective governance of these vital resources. This dual approach, we believe, not only yields lasting benefits but also ensures the sustainability of our efforts.

Water, Land & Tradition: Building Resilience in Rural Maharashtra with WOTR and Rotary Club of Poona



AGRICULTURE: Our focus on Climate Resilient Agriculture is aimed at empowering rural communities to effectively manage and enhance their agricultural practices amidst changing climate conditions. We strive to blend traditional knowledge with scientific advancements to develop sustainable farming practices that can withstand climatic uncertainties. Our goal is to improve crop productivity and livelihood resilience while reducing environmental footprints. Through comprehensive training and knowledge-sharing, we help communities transform their agriculture into a sustainable, adaptive, and economically viable system, ensuring food security and livelihoods in the face of climate change.

Farming for the Future:
Climate Proofing villages in rural Ahmednagar, Maharashtra



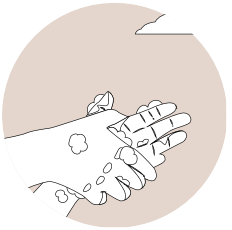
LIVELIHOODS: Our Livelihoods programme focuses on the comprehensive development of both farm and non-farm based enterprises in rural communities. We provide support to improve productivity and sustainability in agriculture, while also aiding the growth of non-farm activities to diversify income sources. By equipping communities with the skills, knowledge, and resources necessary to establish and expand local businesses, we enhance income stability and financial independence. Our approach includes promoting sustainable farming methods, enhancing market linkages, and encouraging entrepreneurship in areas such as crafts, livestock, and services. Our goal is to help rural communities build resilient and diversified livelihoods that can weather economic and climatic uncertainties.

Women Rise



WOMEN EMPOWERMENT: Our Women Empowerment programme places special emphasis on establishing and supporting Self-Help Groups (SHGs), recognising the transformational power they hold in rural societies. Through these groups, we aim to equip women with the necessary skills, resources, and confidence to become active economic and social contributors in their communities. We provide training and support to foster leadership, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy. This not only enhances their income-generating capacities but also boosts their social status and decision-making power within their households and communities. By nurturing these SHGs, we are not just empowering individual women, but catalysing change that uplifts entire communities, advancing gender equality and contributing to overall rural development.

Breaking the Mould



HEALTH, SANITATION, AND NUTRITION: Our Health, Sanitation, and Nutrition initiative is committed to improving the overall wellbeing of rural communities. We promote kitchen gardens and multilayer farms as sources of nutritious food and self-sufficiency. Through initiatives focused on accessing clean drinking water, we address a crucial aspect of disease prevention and good health. We organise health camps for anaemia detection and treatment and monitor child growth to ensure proper development. Our comprehensive approach to health extends to menstrual hygiene as well; we distribute Saafkins, an eco-friendly menstrual product, promoting a safe and hygienic menstrual cycle for women. By integrating these diverse components – nutrition from locally-grown food, improved sanitation from clean water, and direct health interventions – we foster healthier, more resilient communities.

Nourishing the Future:
Sarika's quest for Better Health

WOTR AT A glance

as of March 2026

	STATES	DISTRICTS	VILLAGES
REACH	**10**	**87**	**8598**

PEOPLE IMPACTED
9.7 MILLION

FPOs ESTABLISHED*
74

LAND TREATED
2.41 MILLION HECTARES

PEOPLE TRAINED**
10,62,805

NGOs/GOVT. AGENCIES COLLABORATED WITH
248

IMPACT OF HEALTH & NUTRITION INITIATIVES
3,35,362

FAMILIES IMPACTED THROUGH WSI* INTERVENTIONS
83,591

NO. OF WOMEN SUPPORTED THROUGH SHGs
2,59,558

WOMEN SHGs* SUPPORTED
22,079

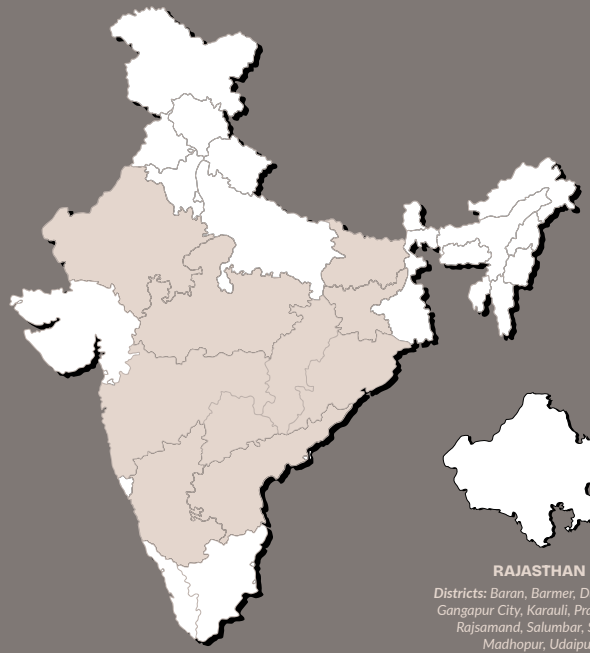
RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS
1032

FILMS CREATED
565

FPO: FARMER PRODUCER ORGANISATION **SHG:** SELF HELP GROUP **WSI:** WATER STEWARDSHIP INITIATIVE

****WOTR & PARTNERS**

OUR presence



RAJASTHAN
Districts: *Baran, Barmer, Dungarpur, Gangapur City, Karauli, Pratapgarh, Rajsamand, Salumbar, Sawai Madhopur, Udaipur*



KARNATAKA
District: *Bidar, Chikkaballapur, Kalaburagi, Vijayapura*



ANDHRA PRADESH
Districts: *Nandyala, Kurnool, Eluru*



TELANGANA
Districts: *Bhadradri Kothagudem, Khammam, Mahbubnagar, Nagarkurnool, Narayanpet, Ranga Reddy, Sangareddy*



MADHYA PRADESH
Districts: *Anuppur, Betul, Chhindwara, Damoh, Dhar, Dindori, Jabalpur, Katni, Mandla, Seoni, Sheopur, Singrauli*



CHHATTISGARH
Districts: *Balrampur Ramanujganj, Dakshin Bastar Dantewada, Kabirdham, Korba, Koriya, Raigarh, Surajpur*



ODISHA
Districts: *Gajapati, Ganjam, Rayagada*



MAHARASHTRA
Districts: *Ahilyanagar, Amravati, Beed, Buldhana, Chandrapur, Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar, Dharashiv, Dhule, Gadchiroli, Hingoli, Jalgaon, Jalna, Latur, Nagpur, Nanded, Nandurbar, Nashik, Palghar, Parbhani, Pune, Raigad, Ratnagiri, Sangli, Satara, Solapur, Thane, Wardha, Yavatmal*



JHARKHAND
Districts: *Giridih, Gumla, Khunti, Latehar, Palamu, Ramgarh, West Singbhum*

Why WOTR

The nexus between rural poverty and the degraded ecosystems in which India's rural poor live is intricate. Exacerbated by extreme weather events that push communities below the poverty line into further hardship, tackling this problem requires a unique and powerful set of competencies.

As pioneers of participatory watershed development in India, and with three decades of experience in transforming rural communities and ecosystems, WOTR is uniquely poised to scale this vital work.

WOTR's ability to penetrate the interiors swiftly, and make an impact is strong. Any by taking a scientific, evidence-based approach to project implementation and product development, we have become leaders in our field- influencing both policy, implementation and the sector, as a whole.

With your support, WOTR can leverage its strengths and decades of learning to take rural communities from poverty to prosperity.



CORE COMPETENCIES

1. Technical know-how and expertise in:
   - Ecosystem-based watershed development
   - Climate-resilient agriculture
   - Integrated water resource management and water stewardship
   - Community biodiversity
   - Rural livelihoods
2. Program implementation and management expertise of large scale, community-led land, water and agriculture development programs.
3. Development of innovative technologies and methodologies for project implementation and upscaling - developed 25 tools, some supported by customized software packages.
4. Implementing research and practical experience of climate change adaptation and its mainstreaming.
5. Farmer-friendly agro-meteorology – providing weather-based crop and farm specific advisories to farmers.
6. Capacity building and training - WOTR and its affiliates have trained more than 757,502 people.
7. Undertaking Trans Disciplinary Applied Research to provide evidence to policy-making and improving program implementation.

DIFFERENTIATORS:

1. Ability to navigate the complex social dynamics of rural India
2. Deep roots and relationships within the community and ability to obtain community ownership
3. Scientific, evidence-based approach to project implementation and product development
4. Leading professionals, thought leaders and practitioners from the Ecosystems, Watershed, Land and Water sectors partner with, and collaborate with WOTR
5. Committed, competent and professional workforce- many of whom have been with us for over 20 years
6. Long term supporters and funding relationships
7. Significant influence on the development sector and policy.

Awards

- Two projects supported by Wells Fargo and IndusInd Bank recognised at the CSR Times Awards 2024 in the Water Conservation and Management category.
- 'Land for Life Award' presented by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification(UNCCD) for innovations and efforts for achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 15.3 - Life on Land in 2017.
- Innovation in Technology award, presented by Maharashtra State Rural Livelihood Mission (MSRLM), 2014.
- FICCI Water Award 2013 under FICCI's Annual Water Awards instituted in association with HSBC.
- Dr. Punjabrao Deshmukh Krishi Ratna Award 2010 – Maharashtra's highest award in Agriculture.
- JSW-TOI Earth Care Award 2010 under the category "Community Based Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change".
- Kyoto World Water Grand Prize 2009 at the 5th World Water Forum, Istanbul Turkey.
- Hermann Bacher awarded the Federal Cross of the Order of Merit, Germany's highest civilian award in 1994.

Recognition

Accredited member of UN bodies: Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD); Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

Formal MOUs with the Indian Council for Agricultural Research(ICAR), the Indian Meteorological Department(IMD) and other premier agricultural research universities

Regular Invitee for Pre-Budget consultations on agriculture by the Ministry of Finance, Government of India, since 1999

MOUs with 4 departments of the Government of Maharashtra to increase climate resilience and nature-friendliness of agriculture; increasing water security through improved water management and governance; and craft a policy for ecosystem-based adaptation(EbA) for the state

Partners in Progress



"In the past few years, WOTR has not only aligned with our ideology but gone beyond it—innovating, involving the government, and ensuring that the beneficiaries get the best possible support,"

NARENDRA PAL SINGH BAKSHI
the 88th President of the Rotary Club of Poona.



"We are very proud of our partnership with WOTR. All of them, from field teams to directors, are so committed, and that is what makes it incredible. In the entire network of CSR professionals, whoever has worked with WOTR has had a very strong experience,"

GARIMA DUTT
President, CSR, YES Bank and CEO, YES Foundation



WOTR has been a very close partner with HDFC Bank-CSR since (its) inception, even before we coined Parivartan as a brand for ourselves. It is WOTR's strength that it is able to mobilise communities, strengthen institutions and work hand-in-hand with them (in their projects),"

NUSRAT PATHAN
Head, Sustainability & Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) at HDFC Bank.



"I think as an organisation, WOTR has completed 30 years. They have been a part of the ecosystem, they understand the development space in India.WOTR is in itself a knowledge centre when it comes to water-based interventions in the country. I think WOTR as an organisation is a very strong implementing arm, be it for the government or also for the corporates, who want to work in the common geographies that WOTR operates out of"

MATILDA LOBO
Head,CSR at IndusInd Bank.



WOTR
Rejuvenating Communities & Ecosystem

W-CReS
Building Resilient Futures

Watershed Organisation Trust (WOTR)

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