

Anthra Annual Report 2016-17

Our work over the past year

Anthra's work in the past year was spread over several states, regions and subjects. This diversity was both exciting and also challenging, and at the end of the year we are happy to share many stories of success and learnings, new ideas and experiences. We worked and traveled with livestock rearing communities and nomadic groups in several states of the country. We worked on exciting projects of food exchange between the rural and urban areas.

Livestock rearing is critical and important to the economy both at the micro (household) level and at the macro (national) level. It provides a livelihood and several marginalized communities contribute to the environment and economy in substantial ways and are an integral part of the complex fabric of Indian society. Our aim has been to give visibility to these different livestock communities who are otherwise invisible. We have achieved this through:

- Engaging regularly with these pastoral communities
- Building awareness around these communities; their contribution to society and the environment through articles in journals, newspapers and our website
- Seeking incorporation of the communities into government plans and programs through organizing and participating in workshops where these communities have the opportunity to directly voice their concerns to academics, researchers and policy makers
- Partnering with the communities to help them articulate and discuss their problems, identify their main concerns and collectively find solutions to their problems.
- Empowering shepherd communities through the introduction of new skills and technology:
 - The use of solar lamps and solar chargers has made a difference to the daily lives of the nomadic migratory communities.
 - Access to medical care through the medical helpline has enabled the communities to be proactive in getting their children and their animals immunized.
 - The communities take informed decisions regarding their health and those of their children and animals.
 - Women from the community who were reluctant to speak openly about their problems and concerns are today willing to travel for meetings to other states and articulate their needs.

, , These are small but brave new steps.

Livestock, Landscapes and Livelihoods

Livestock Products and Livestock Markets in Dryland areas of India: Emerging Changes and Challenges

Location:

Gujarat, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu

Team: Nitya Ghotge

Collaboration: Rain-fed Livestock Network, Future Greens, Sahjeevan

Start: June 2014

This study looks specifically at livestock markets and the informal economy. The project is mapping livestock markets in the aforementioned states. In these markets livestock, species, breeds, important products and their flows are also being mapped. The project also aims to study the laws governing animal welfare, animal care, animal health and animal transport and look at possible avenues for improvement in markets and their infrastructure. The project also seeks to examine existing markets from different perspectives including farmers' livelihoods, public health and the rural economy and suggest improvements for the markets to make them better for livestock and people entering the market.

Study Findings

Livestock markets are an important part of India's rural landscape. Several markets are held as large fairs such as the well-known Pushkarmela of Rajasthan. In other states weekly annual markets exist. There are also markets associated with several festivals. Markets provide an extremely useful meeting place and are the centre and hub of livestock activity. They also embody strong cultural significance and enhance the livelihoods of farmers, traders, butchers, transporters, vendors, loaders and several other people who deal in livestock and livestock byproducts. However, this part of the rural landscape is poised to change. Changes in the rural economy and demand for different products have seen a change in the type and composition of animals entering the market. It has also changed the structure of the market. More recently, legislations imposed by the state and central government favouring certain kinds of livestock products and banning others has also changed the nature of these markets. These changes could have long-lasting impacts on rural livelihoods and landscapes. The study findings are being compiled into a report.

In April 2017, the team along with Kamal kishore or the Rainfed Livestock mnetwork and Dr. Balu Athani of Future Greens visited Karnataka and met the chairperson of the Karnataka

Sheep & Wool Development Cooperative Ltd (KSWDCL) to give the study findings from Karnataka and other recommendations for small ruminant care in the state of Karnataka. These recommendations were well accepted. The study reports from the other states were completed and these are also being analyzed.

Partnering through Knowledge Sharing: Helping Small Livestock Holding Communities Emerge from the Shadows

Location

Several states in India

Team

Sangeeta Khapre, Pooja Shinde, Heli Desai, Rasi Surana, Siddharth Prabhune, Ruchita Khurana and Nitya Ghotge

Developmental support in the livestock sector is often in favour of large farmers, industries and corporations. Small producers and marginal groups tend to be invisible, and their knowledge systems ignored, unrecognized or even derecognized. Small-scale producers contribute significantly to the economy in ways which are unaccounted for by formal processes. Not only do they supply milk, meat, eggs, wool, dung and leather, these small-scale producers also keep local breeds and thus conserve local biodiversity. The dung of these animals support small-scale farmers and their fields. We also have reason to believe that pastoral systems, being dynamic and flexible, are better equipped to deal with climate change than sedentary systems. Yet there is little recognition given to small holder systems. There is little data or research on these systems and they are not visible in national surveys and data sheets. In fact, very few policies of agriculture of livestock in India support small holder systems. The theory of change we hoped to create for pastoral communities and small livestock holders is based on making their conditions more visible, by have them enumerated in state records and by giving voice to their concerns.

Thus through this project we have engaged with livestock groups across the length and breadth of the country - camel herders in Rajasthan and Kutch, pastoralists rearing ducks in Tamil Nadu, small-scale pig herders in Goa in the West, to Vidarbha in central India, right up to Meghalaya in the North East.

The Camel in India

India is home to the single humped camel. Found in the dry states of Rajasthan and Gujarat, the camel was used mainly for transport. As other forms of mechanized transport become available, the camel is slowly losing its place. Recently, in an attempt to save the camel the Government of Rajasthan passed a legislation preventing the sale of camels both male and female. Rather than preserving the camel this is likely to have a negative impact on camel

populations. With no incentive to rear camels any more, rearers will give up rearing camels unless a new economic use for camels is found. Using camels for entertainment, such as rides on beaches, has also been banned under this legislation. In contrast, in neighbouring



Gujarat camel herders are organizing themselves and looking at new ways of keeping their herds and their livelihoods going - a cooperative dairy for collecting, processing and marketing camel milk is on the anvil. The Anthra team traveled to Rajasthan and Gujarat meeting camel herders and hearing their stories. We also met other NGOs working with camels and livestock in these

states and discussed opportunities for reaching out to herders. Processing camel milk into different products is one of the ideas proposed and we are looking at ways to take this forward jointly with other groups.

Our team traveled widely through eastern and northern Maharashtra documenting several communities of livestock rearers. Among them were the Oraon and Maria tribes of Gadchiroli district, the Golkars of Chandrapur and Gadchiroli, the Nanda Gaulis of Wardha, Amaravati and Yavatmal districts and the Pawaras of Nandurbar district. The Oraon and Maria tribes traditionally rear pigs, chicken and goats. The Golkars rear the Shahi breed of buffalo and supply milk. The Nanda Gaulis rear Nagpuri buffaloes and Gaolao cattle and make a livelihood selling milk. The Pawaras rear goats and a variety of poultry called Satpudi that is hardy and adapts well to diverse climatic conditions.

All these communities have a distinct relationship with the landscape they live in, be it forests, grazing lands or commons. Some, like the Pawara and Maria tribes, who were hunter-gatherer tribes till fairly recently, have taken to livestock rearing in greater earnest as they can no more practice hunting. These livestock provide both a livelihood and nutrition to the families that rear them. [Siddharth Prabhune helped with this documentation.]



Pig Rearing Across the Country

Pig rearing is practiced across the country. In several areas the animals are reared as scavengers or village cleaners and are consequently reared by marginalized communities. Yet in other areas they are a prominent part of the village economy especially in the Nicobar islands, the Northeastern states of India and in the state of Goa. Besides forming an important part of the local cultural and food habits, pigs are reared as a ready source of cash. Backyard pig rearing though has received a negative impetus. In popular perception, pigs are perceived as scavenging animals and thereby considered responsible for transmitting several diseases. The pig is considered unclean, dirty, a transmitter of disease, and rearing pigs under backyard systems is seen as an unclean activity. There have been several efforts to convert pigs from a free-range enterprise to more intensified systems. Simultaneously, there has been an increase in the demand for products from pigs in urban markets as the Indian consumer develops a taste for new and diverse foods such as sausages, salami, ham, bacon, etc. Pork is priced at an affordable rate and is very popular among several consumers. These factors in turn have led to the start of several pig units which are run in a modern semi-industrialized mode.

What does the future hold for pig farming in India? Is there a future for backyard pig farming? Can small farmers meet the increased urban demand matching requirements of clean, fresh, safe-to-consume products? What are the challenges faced by these farmers? We tried to take a look at some of these questions. Pig rearers in two states of India, Goa and Meghalaya, were interviewed in April and May this year.

Most of the traditional farmers in the two states have reduced the number of pigs they keep. Free scavenging has considerably reduced which perhaps is good from a public health point of view. In Goa, in one hamlet the number of households owning pigs has decreased from 11 about 10 years back to merely three. In both states, local breeds are preferred as they are easier to maintain, can eat household leftovers and are less prone to disease although the government in both states is recommending improved exotics. There is also considerable scope for household value addition into traditional sausages, pickles, etc. Backyard pig rearing is often an activity handled by women and contributes substantially to family incomes.

Clearly this system is in transition and as the tug of war between small and backyard systems versus large and industrialized is played out, where the balance lies remains to be seen.

Grazing Ducks in Tamil Nadu



Ducks form about 10% of the total poultry population of the country and contribute about 6-7% of total eggs produced in the country. Ducks are mostly concentrated in the eastern and southern states of the country, mainly in the coastal region with non-descriptive indigenous stocks. Duck rearing has changed in the last 15 years especially in Tamil Nadu from being a localized activity where ducks were raised by

landless communities in the paddy fields of land owners to a more organized contract farming based activity but still practiced by landless communities. Today duck owners are migrating to other districts and states to graze their animals. Flock sizes have increased and ducklings are purchased from contract farmers who hatch the eggs in electric hatcheries. Our study revealed that although this activity is practiced by lakhs of duck rearers, there is very little documentation on them. Duck rearers are unable to make ends meet under the contract farming systems and shrinking paddy fields and high cost of duck feed is pushing farmers into a high level of indebtedness. Besides disease, accidents are another major causes of duck mortality as animals perish when walking from one grazing field to another.

[Ruchita Khurana helped anchor this study.]



The Climate Change Cell

Mobile and Solar

We continue to explore solar options for mobile communities, especially mobile pastoral communities. Solar lamps remain a hot favourite and we made it possible for several pastoral communities to access solar lamps and lights.

Solar pumps were installed successfully in village Morawane in Ratnagiri district and in Mandavkhadak in Pune district. The solar pumps were made available with support from Amphenol and the solar pumps were installed by Atom Solar.

Foodscales and Agroecology

Project Title: 'Good Food for All: Accessing good food through a sustainable rural-urban exchange'

Location: Maharashtra

Team: Sangeeta Khapre, with support from Liliane Schmid, Lora Murray and Nitya Ghotge

Collaboration: SSP, YUVA, farmer groups in Pune, Raigad, Ratnagiri, Osmanabad and Latur districts

Start: August 2016

In August 2016 we embarked on an exciting new project of rural-urban exchange that would enable the urban poor to have access to 'good' nutritive food produced in rural areas.

Main objectives of the project

- i. Providing a common space for rural and urban groups and capacitating them for effective and continued dialogue
- ii. Understanding the changing culture of food consumption patterns among urban poor groups and identifying means in which their nutritive value can be enhanced through products available with rural groups
- iii. Preparing seasonality charts of food products and measuring quantities available in surplus in rural areas
- iv. Working collectively to come up with models and strategies for effectively piloting the programme

Achievements

We have been successful in providing a space for rural and urban communities to meet and exchange their knowledge and experience of food. Mapping has taken place in three different regions in rural Maharashtra about produce available, the seasons they are available in and the quantities available. Discussions have taken place on value addition, collection, storage, processing and packaging. Some discussions on pricing have also taken place but these have not been sufficient. While some excellent ideas for transporting have been mooted they need to be implemented. The project is largely led by community initiatives with support from NGO staff.

Farmers from villages Bavnadi in Ratnagiri and Nanegaon in Pune district are interested in collaborating with Anthra to develop sustainable models for marketing their livestock and agricultural produce. They are also collaborating with us in the good food rural-urban exchange programme. Documentation of the produce, their prices at the farm gate, and prices at the retail market were noted and mapped.

Sangeeta Khapre travelled to Osmanabad to train women from SSP on backyard poultry

One Health

One Health is a growing collaborative approach (Keeling and Rohani, 2008) that recognizes human health as connected to the health of animals and the environment.

Maternal and Child Health Concerns in Pastoral Communities

Models Being Shared with the Community

Several pastoral, nomadic and mobile groups do not have their children immunized as they do not know that immunizing their children against certain diseases is essential and that the vaccines are available through the primary health services of the government. Health workers from the government health services also do not visit these communities as they are constantly on the move. Pregnant women of these nomadic groups do not know they can get regular prenatal and postnatal check-ups done. As a result, several essential vaccines such as those for polio, tetanus and tuberculosis which are part of the Indian government's essential vaccination programme are not given to children of pastoral communities. Likewise, women from these communities do not access essential maternal health facilities as they do not know what steps are needed or are available. Universal maternal and child health are part of the sustainable development goals.

The approach we follow

1. Sharing information on existing maternal and child healthcare services available with the government which these communities as a right are entitled to. A lot of the information is shared using mobile phones or tablets.
2. Showing the community how these services can be accessed.
3. Helping the community to make its own decision on when and how to access the service/s.
4. Encouraging members to share the information and services with more people if the method is successful.
5. Encouraging women to discuss good practices amongst themselves.
6. Simultaneously, informing the government that these communities exist and need to be accounted for in their schemes. We inform the government through workshops, seminars, papers, policy briefs and advocacy initiatives.

Models we shared with the community

- 1. Sharing videos on maternal and child health through YouTube.** The topics covered include children's immunization, care of newborn babies, women's antenatal and postnatal care. We decided to use the videos available on the UNICEF and WHO websites which have been translated into the local language.

After seeing the videos, the community is taking proactive steps to ensure their children get immunized through the government healthcare systems where they approach the government center for necessary vaccines. Many have already shared the videos on immunization with others in their area.

By sharing the videos on antenatal care, postnatal care and the importance of feeding colostrum, we have opened up discussion and debate amongst the women from these groups. The women realize that these are important concerns and are able to take some simple decisions on their health as well as that of their newborn child. As the information is available on tablets they can watch it at a time convenient to them. As it is in the local language they understand the context. They watch these videos collectively. If they have questions, they discuss them amongst each other as well as ask their doctor the next time they visit a hospital or the Anthra team. The videos are also being shown to the men of the community so they also understand the importance of addressing these issues.

- 2. Sharing information on key government schemes such as the Rajiv Gandhi Jeevandayee Arogya Yojana (RGJAY) meant for marginalized groups**

Although there are good schemes from the government public health system, mobile communities such as pastoral and mobile groups are not aware of such schemes. The RGJAY is a scheme of the Government of India to improve access of Below Poverty Line (BPL) and Above Poverty Line (APL) families to quality medical care for identified specialty services which require hospitalization for surgeries and therapies or consultations through an identified network of healthcare providers. We have shared information on these schemes with the ten groups and also showed them videos on the schemes. The helpline number and contacts associated with the scheme were been shared.

Consequently, in one of the groups, a shepherd got through to the helpline and managed to save considerable expense for an important surgery his daughter had to undergo in an emergency. He was so happy with the programme, that he shared it with many others.

Another group got their members registered and obtained health cards for themselves. As there has been no incidence of ill health at the moment they have not had to use the card.

- 3. Mobile phone service and reminder for essential immunization of children**

This is a service available for all pregnant mothers from the Ministry of Health and Family

Welfare. They need to register their mobile numbers with the Ministry during their pregnancy and inform the Ministry when the child is born. Once registered, they get regular reminders by SMS of when the child has to be immunized and against which disease. Several women we worked with registered themselves on this service and are receiving reminders which enable them to get their children immunized on time.

Cross-cultural Learning

Education on the move: the case of children of mobile communities

Education

Formal schooling sometimes takes children away from their surroundings by introducing and enforcing a curriculum which has little relevance to the everyday lives that pastoralists and small livestock holders lead. In our approach we have searched for models which:

1. do not take them away from their regions and their contexts
2. are easy to access and follow.
3. gave relevance to their knowledge systems.
4. gives opportunities for the community itself to participate in curriculum design.
5. can be done at their time and convenience; this way many more women can become a part of the process.
6. makes learning a joyful experience.

As learning happens in several ways, we are trying to look at different pedagogical methods and approaches to make education and literacy a joyful as well as an empowering experience. We are also looking at ways in which the community itself can take this process forward without constantly depending on external facilitation.



Nomad's Edu Kit

This kit has been developed by Rasi Surana a design consultant who worked with Anthra for

some months. Nomad's Edu Kit aims to help the community achieve basic literacy and numeracy through three phases which have been appropriately named 'Out of the Darkness', 'Wherever You Go' and 'Into your pockets'. It draws on subjects and topics which the community is familiar with, such as livestock, plants and fodder species. It is hands-on, simple and easy to use and can be used both as a model for individual or collective learning. The kit also encourages nomadic communities to tell their own stories, draw their own pictures which are then used to make the training aids.

The initial pilot tests on this model have been successful and we have received very positive responses for this kit. We are going to be taking this kit to many more groups.



Mobile Phone Applications

Several nomadic communities have been quick to buy and use mobile phones. In a survey we did with the community we found some groups had extremely modern and “smart” phones. Considering this, we thought of looking for literacy options available through mobile phone technology. Several phone applications now exist for learning languages and some have been developed for local Indian languages too. For this project we selected five Marathi (the local language) learning applications which have been downloaded on to tablets. These are the Marathi kids application, Marathi kids story, Marathi barakhadi (alphabets), Marathi kids balwadi, *Ankasharanchiduniya* (the world of numbers and alphabets) .

Several of these mobile applications can be downloaded for free. They follow a pattern similar to Duolingo, the international language learning application. These applications were shared with the community by loading them on a tablet (iball) which we left for some days with the community. In the initial review we were happy to find that the pastoralists accepted the applications and were constantly using the applications. They found them convenient to use even when they are grazing sheep, in the evening when the family gets some free time, in the afternoon when women have free time. The children are very excited to be handling tablets and learning with this new device.



A slight drawback is that some of applications do not have images and contexts relevant to the pastoral reality and is largely designed for children from urban backgrounds.

Accessing Internet

We have taught the community to access information on the Internet. As a result we found that they are able to listen to radio programmes, watch news channels and read the newspaper when they are out in the field grazing their sheep. This has given them access to a whole new world.

Some events we participated in

Kullu Call

Estimating the number of pastoralists in the country

Very few plans and programmes of the government cater to the needs of the nomadic pastoralists, as there exist no clear estimates of itinerant populations of the country. As a result of this, no budget allocations are made.

Anthra took part in a national-level workshop to estimate the number of pastoralists in the country. The purpose of the workshop was to create visibility for pastoralism, a livestock production system that is gaining increased international recognition¹ but not recognized officially by Indian policy makers. Fourteen experts from all over India met in Kullu (Himachal Pradesh) from 13 to 15 May 2016, to define pastoralism in the Indian context and establish a methodology for estimating numbers and assessing trends. Participants worked in groups according to their states. A result of the workshop was an advocacy document, the *Kullu Call*, which seeks recognition of the importance of common pool resources (CPRs) and pastoralism for India's livestock sector.

Livestock Policy Formulation

In July 2016, Dr. Nitya Ghotge from Anthra took part in a workshop jointly organized by The Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries, Government of India and Global Alliance for Livestock Veterinary Medicine (GALVmed) on 'Pro-Poor Livestock Policy Formulation' for policy makers from ten states of India.

The objectives of this workshop were to facilitate interstate interaction, understand the issues and challenges confronting policy makers in developing livestock policies that are inclusive, exchange experiences, share good practices, and deliberate on a way forward. A part of the workshop had a training component to enable participants to (i) critically analyze the interplay between social, economic, political and cultural circumstances that go into policy-making; (ii) understand steps in pro-poor policy making; (iii) examine, debate, prepare and critique livestock policy documents (of their respective states).

It was interesting to note that in several states livestock policies had been changed to include some very positive elements but almost no state had any section dealing with climate change or pastoralism, two subjects that Anthra presently closely associates with. This feedback was shared by Dr. Ghotge with other workshop participants.

Consultations with Pastoralists

A meeting was organized between shepherds associated with Anthra and the Tata Institute of Social Science (TISS), Mumbai, to discuss the issues faced by the Dhangar community of Maharashtra. This exercise is part of the larger 'Socio-Anthropological Study of Dhangar Community of Maharashtra' being undertaken by TISS.

Brainstorming Consultation on ‘Socio-Anthropological Study of Dhangar Community of Maharashtra’

This workshop was organized by the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) and was held in Pune on 28 November 2016 and Dr. Nitya Ghotge was invited to take part in the session and give a presentation on the work done by Anthra with the Dhangar community.

Stakeholder Consultation

In December 2016, Anthra participated in a workshop titled ‘The Future of India’s Livestock Sector: What is the New Role for Pastoralists?’ This discussion brought together pastoralists, development groups, civil society groups, NGOs, academicians, researchers, students, academics, government officers and policy makers together to talk, discuss and debate about the future of India’s livestock sector and the role played by pastoralism. Pastoralists closely associated with Anthra took an active part in the process. A major outcome of the process was that several pastoralists across the country got the opportunity to come together, articulate their contribution to the livestock economy of the country as well as offer suggestions and recommendations to policy makers of what they felt was the way forward. This workshop was part of a larger two-week exhibition which was held in Delhi called ‘Living Lightly’ that used multi-media exhibitions, music, film and photographs to showcase the pastoralist communities of India and the world.

Dr. Nitya Ghotge made a presentation on “Small ruminant rearing as a strategy to overcome climate variability in dryland areas” at a workshop titled ‘Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation in Livelihood and Natural Resource Management in rural India’, on 11 November 2016, at New Delhi. This exchange was organized by Welthungerhilfe.

Dr. Nitya Ghotge attended a workshop titled ‘Smallholder poultry – challenges and opportunities’, jointly organized by CARI (Central Avian Research Institute) and GALVmed.

Dr. Chandana Choudhary Baruah and Dr. Nitya Ghotge attended the 2nd International Seminar on Vet Ayurveda, held in Calcutta on 2nd December 2017 and made presentations.

Dr. Nitya Ghotge was invited to participate in an academic discussion on pastoralism which was held as part of the ‘Living Lightly’ exhibition held in Delhi, 6-8 December 2016. The panels covered topics such as climate change, ecological dynamics of rangelands, economic contribution of pastoral systems, and indigenous knowledge and breeding systems.

Events we hosted

Training programme on Backyard Poultry

A team of 12 people from FES Karnataka participated in a workshop on steps needed to support backyard poultry rearing practices, in Pune, which included field trips to see good examples initiated by Anthra in the past.



Publications

Pastoralism in India: The warp and the weft

The authors make a case for pastoralism which deserves recognition and support as a profession across the country that has a future, especially considering that the approximately 60 million-strong pastoralists make a significant contribution to the grassland ecosystem.

Toran

The 98th issue of Toran on

Ovitla landga

A report on the collaborative project about grasslands, people and wildlife in western Maharashtra that concluded in December last year. The report has a contribution made by Dr. Nitya Ghotge of Anthra on 'Dhangars, wolves and grasslands'.

Website

Anthra has a new website now. Work on the website took place in the last year.

Volunteers and Interns

Lora Murray joined us again for a month in June 2016. Lora Murray is a PhD student in the anthropology department at New York University (NYU). She is interested in the developmental history and contemporary politics of the cooperative dairy industry in India and its relationship to capital, technoscience, and environmentalism. However, this time besides visiting several dairy farmers in and around Pune, Lora also tried her hand at transplanting rice in Ratnagiri and learning to cook Indian food.

Liliane Schmid, a post-graduate student in Business Management from the University of St Gallen, Switzerland, interned with us through July and August 2016, under the Gateway to India Programme. She worked closely with the 'Good food for All: Accessing good food through a sustainable rural-urban exchange

Board

Elections to the Board were held at the Board meeting held in February 2017. Dr. Chandana Choudhary Baruah was unanimously elected the new President. Sumi Krishna is Vice President.

Dr. Mamta Dhawan was invited to join the Board. Mamta Dhawan is a veterinarian and additionally holds a Bachelor's in Education. She has considerable experience working on aspects of livestock health, and livestock policy. She is based in New Delhi.

