



The year that was

April 2022, the dark clouds of Covid gradually lifted only to be replaced by different clouds. The war in Ukraine shifted the attention of the world onto Eastern Europe and closer home Sri Lanka drew under some calamitous changes.

However for us living in Western India, the situation improved. Lifting of Covid related travel restrictions meant field work could begin in earnest. We could once again visit the communities we were working with rather than have conversations on the phone. Medicine making programmes, seminars, workshops and training programmes resumed and it felt a little bit like old times again. Although only time will tell if things have gone back to what we were used to or gone ahead to a new normal.

It has been an action packed year with lots of events. Our team worked hard to make up for lost time during COVID. We hosted many interns and volunteers. One of our projects was evaluated by an external evaluator with a clear message that change was needed.

The year ended on a high note though with the setting up of the Maharashtra Network of Pastoral youth which Anthra will support during their initial stages.

Nitya Sambamurti Ghotge



Our Projects and Programmes

Bringing Visibility and Recognition to Women Livestock Farmers and Pastoralists & Their Knowledge.

This project began in September 2020 and this is the final year of the project

The main objectives of the project are to :

- *Increase research and scholarship on women livestock farmers especially women from migratory pastoralist families*
- *Document their knowledge , and give it value and recognition*
- *Create platforms for sharing this knowledge*

The activities undertaken under this project are summarised below

Fellowships awarded

Ashwini Labde successfully finished her 18 month fellowship in June 2023 and took a short break before re-joining us as a researcher and as one of the coordinators of the pastoral youth Network . Pritha Mandothan who was selected as our second fellow, unfortunately, could not complete her fellowship due to personal reasons. Ovee Thorat joined the team in December last year to help with documentation work and help prepare for the workshop on gender and continues to be with us.

Workshop on Gender and Livestock

A workshop titled **Gender and Livestock: Evolving Research Strategies was jointly held by Anthra Indian Commoner¹, and the Indian Pastoral Network²** from 6th to 8th March 2023 in Pune. The focus of the workshop was to bring together researchers, NGO representatives, and practitioners, to deliberate on and discuss methodologies which were being used in the field , enlist shortcomings and gaps and look for approaches which would bring in a more interdisciplinary approach to the study of gender, pastoralism and livestock development . 42 participants (Annexure I) attended this workshop from different disciplines. They also represented a wide spectrum of geographic locations from across the country . Several Members of the Board also participated in this event

Evaluation

The project underwent an external evaluation . Dr. Mariette Correa conducted the evaluation and came up with several findings and recommendations . She observed that Anthra's work with livestock is well recognised in the National and International space . She also observed that COVID

¹ Online platform for discussions around commons- structured space & resource centre

² A network of individuals and organisations in India working on pastoralist issues



and other concerns including shortage of staff had created problems in addressing certain project objectives . She recommended Anthra reorganise and restructure itself to meet the challenges of the future , such as funding , shortage of staff .

“Overall, Anthra needs to revisit its current capacities, reflect on the need for expansion with a multi-disciplinary team if it is to reach the project goal, or refocus its work to capitalise on its strengths in livestock care at the community level and placing issues of pastoralists in the national and international space”

Awards for women livestock owners

Since 2021 Anthra has instituted awards for women called “Women in Livestock Care “.These annual awards are given to women from marginalised groups who rear animals to ensure that women get accounted for and their knowledge and contribution is acknowledged and shared . This initiative is part of the project "Bringing Visibility and Recognition to Women Livestock Farmers and Pastoralists & Their Knowledge."

This year 10 women were selected for receiving the awards from different communities across the state of Maharashtra . A committee was set up to help in the selection process. Women were nominated from different communities by the Anthra partner Network . Medha Kale, Jitendra Maid, Sajal Kulkarni and Manasi Paranjpe screened the nomination and selected the final awardees. The awards will be distributed in a special function in May 2023.

Pastoral Youth Network

Migratory pastoralists in India are most often invisible. These communities and their animals have seldom been “officially and accurately “recorded since they are often away on migration when human and livestock census data is collected.

Several groups in India working with these communities have tried to find a solution to this situation and looked at ways in which these migratory populations can be counted. Some organisations have also taken up the matter with the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries in New Delhi .

As a consequence, the Ministry invited several groups and the State livestock Departments to inform them of pastoral groups living in the different states so that the livestock they rear can be included in the next livestock census .

Anthra and CPC³ have been asked to help the government identify the different pastoral communities in Maharashtra. Both Anthra and CPC were keen to include pastoralists in this exercise so that the counting of livestock could be more participatory . A meeting was held on 29th Mar 2023 at IIE Pune where several pastoralists were invited to discuss ways in which the different groups and their livestock could be enumerated. This meeting led to the setting up of a Pastoral Youth Network in Maharashtra . It was decided that this network which would be led by youth representatives from pastoral communities would take this process ahead as well as work on other issues that pastoralists regularly deal with .It was decided to have one male and one female representative from every group Praful Kalokar from the Nanda Gaoli community and Ashwini Labde

³ Centre for People’s Collective (Nagpur) a group working with pastoralist communities in Maharashtra



representing Dhangars would be the first coordinators . Anthra will support this network in its initial stages .

One Health

“India Zoo Risk+: Using One Health approaches to understand and co-develop interventions for zoonotic diseases affecting forest communities in India

Anthra is partnering with UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, ATREE, VGKK (Vivekananda Girijana Kalyana Kendra) in this project on one health . This project responds to the global health system challenge of **the high and evolving burden of zoonotic diseases** in tropical forests linked to complex socio-political, ecological and environmental change drivers. Through strong engagement with affected forest communities including pastoralists , cross-sectoral policy makers and practitioners, and novel interdisciplinary methods.

The project seeks to

- *understand complex and interacting impacts of biological and socio-economic drivers (forest degradation, land tenure, human mobility and policy, power dynamics and knowledge sharing, belief systems and seasonal ecology) on health outcomes and spread of zoonotic diseases*
- *co-develop improved interventions, health system coverage and One Health capacity.*

The field location for this investigation is in two districts namely Kolhapur and Sawantwadi within the state of Maharashtra. In these districts we work with two sets of pastoralist communities namely the Dange Dhangars who herd large ruminants -cattle and buffalo who are more or less sedentary and the Hatkar Dhangars who herd small ruminants sheep and goat and migrate. We are also bringing out educational material in the form of posters and short movie clips to help communities understand how these diseases are transmitted and what preventive measures they can take to avoid getting affected

As a part of the study we also conducted an exploratory study to understand the health-seeking behaviour, perceptions of disease and the interplay with vaccine access and uptake amongst the Dhangars, a nomadic herding community of Western India. Our findings revealed gendered differences in health-seeking practices and COWIN vaccine acceptance within the Dhangar community. Whereas 39.6% of interviewees took the first dose, only 15% took the second dose and none has taken the third dose. Several supply-side barriers contributed to the limited vaccine patronage including poor healthcare access, relatively poor availability of the vaccination in urban and crowded areas, limited access to the COWIN app. which was essential to access the vaccine and lack of identification documents such as the national “aadhar” identity card. On the demand-side, there were varied perceptions about vaccine drives and programmes amongst migratory populations given their exclusion from conventional information channels (TV, radio, and social media), misconceptions about the vaccine and its effects and conflicting vaccination schedules vis-à-vis livelihood imperatives, and perceived immunity to COVID-19. The study concluded that context specific engagements are needed to solve health problems locally . Existing ‘one-size-fits all’ interventions may not achieve the intended outcomes.



Training and Training resources

We offer training programmes on livestock health and the making of herbal medicines to groups who are interested in learning these methods. Anthra Partner Network is an informal group of NGO's, practitioners and individuals interested in livestock care. AWARD an organisation based in Satara requested a training programme for women livestock keepers in 2 villages. Sangeeta Khapre takes these training programmes as well as makes herbal remedies for animals. Along with Jay Maid (intern) they developed a small range of products for use in livestock as well as in companion animals.

Lumpy skin disease, a viral infection in cattle affected large herds including those in our project areas. We used whatsapp platforms to exchange information about the spread of the disease, cures, government initiatives etc. amongst farmers, shepherds, NGO staff and other partners.

Our collaboration with Access Agriculture continues. Access agriculture is an online portal that enables local access to quality training videos in local languages, Together, we make videos on animal health care. We have in the past made videos on several conditions affecting animals. Last year a movie on "foot rot" (a condition often seen in ruminants) was made. These videos have been an excellent training resource when we visit the communities to train them on herbal medicine making. We have also received a portable projector from Access Agriculture which makes it very easy to share these videos in remote villages.

Anthra's submission to the 2nd edition of "Perspectives on Pastoralism Film Festival" organised by CELEP (Coalition of European Lobbies for Eastern African Pastoralism) was shortlisted and has been shown at several events in Europe. The movie entitled "Shepherds of the Deccan" showcases the life of pastoral communities in the Deccan and the challenges they face due to variable climate.

Interns

Anthra hosted several interns this year

Abhishek Mohite a student at Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies, Bangalore interned for a few weeks. He looked at Perceptions on health and health seeking behaviour amongst pastoral communities with special emphasis on Covid immunization amongst nomadic pastoral families along with our research team.

Julia Zammit a veterinarian also interned with Anthra for a month and looked at zoonotic disease, their transmission. She also pilot tested a game she and her colleagues had developed as a learning tool for dairy farmers.

Jay Maid a young graduate of Pharmacology worked on women's knowledge in animal health and improved ways of preparing and packing herbal medicines to improve quality and shelf life.

Suraj Kare a Masters level student from TISS Mumbai spent a month with ANTHRA looking at transitions in pastoral societies,. Suraj himself belongs to the Dhangar community.



Four students from TISS, Tuljapur spent a month with us from mid- January to mid- February . Two of them Gaurav Chand and Swapnil Bhovate spent their time in Nagpur and Wardha Districts at the Sonkhamb School initiative and with Gaolao Trust for the conservation of Indigenous breeds. They spent their time looking at quantitative methodologies for getting field based data using gender disaggregated approaches. Anjana P K and Prayojita Namdas did the same in Kolhapur and Sindhudurg districts.

Participation in different forums

Anthra's work on Livestock keepers , gender and women's knowledge is being recognized at several forums , both within India and internationally . Anthra is participating along with other groups in preparing for IYRP (the international year of Rangelands and Pastoralists 2026) and we wish to bring in the gender dimension and the lives of women pastoralist into the discussions leading to IYRP.

Dr. Nitya Ghotge was invited to present at the International Slow food event and show case pastoralism in India and South Asia.

Dr. Nitya Ghotge, Director, ANTHRA, shed light on '10,000 steps and more a day: a glimpse into **contemporary shepherding and gender in the Deccan**' at the Living Lightly - Journeys with Pastoralists' event hosted by Shiv Nadar University in collaboration with the Centre for Pastoralism from 5 to 8 November 2022. She made her presentation to students on the second day of the event in a session entitled 'Pastoralism in the Deccan', 'Nomads and Pastoralists in our Midst', and 'Pastoralists, Forests and the Commons'.

Anthra was invited to participate in a workshop organized by SOPPECOM on innovative experiments they are currently working on in collaboration with MAKAAAM⁴ partners. One of the objectives for the workshop was to discuss ways to take this programmes ahead. Nitya Ghotge made a presentation on integrating livestock rearing systems into small holder systems.

Anthra participated in the Living Lightly Pastoral Exhibition & Pastoral Youth Conclave- held between the 19th to 20th January in Bhuj . **Sangeeta Khapre and Ashwini Labde** represented Anthra . Suraj Kare an intern from TISS Mumbai also participated in the event .

Anthra was also invited to participate in a discussion called by the Government of India to enumerate pastoralists . Dr. Mamta Dhawan attended the meeting on behalf of Anthra

Visitors

⁴ Mahila Kisaan Aadhar Manch



Researchers from Karnataka associated with the Indo zoorisk project visited the field area in Sep 2023 in a joint exercise on field research methodology . Yash Desphapande and Sangeeta Khapre coordinated the visit

Paul Van Mele from Access agriculture visited Anthra in February 2023. He had discussion with the team on future movies to be jointly prepared and also gave the team a solar projector to be used in the field while screening movies.

Staff

Manasi and Sangeeta continue to be with us in our core team . We were also happy to have Rujuta Date join us as a consultant on the Indo zoo risk project as well as helping us prepare for the Gender workshop