

HANDBOOK

Learning materials from onboarding
workshop 2024

- Introduction to Harit Bharat Fund
- Capacity Building
- Communications
- Project Management
- Monitoring, Reporting and Verification

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About Harit Bharat Fund

1.1. Introducing the Harit Bharat Fund

Aimed at bolstering India's nascent land-based restoration economy and supporting local restoration Champions, the Harit Bharat Fund is a collaborative initiative designed to support locally led organizations, including start-ups, farmer-producer companies, and NGOs, working on restoring landscapes. To start with, the Harit Bharat Fund is focused on Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, and Maharashtra to start with, based on factors such as restoration potential, multidimensional poverty, health and nutrition data, potential for social inclusion, inter alia.

The Harit Bharat Fund aims to unlock the potential of a land-based restoration economy. This includes protecting forests and open natural ecosystems, rejuvenating water resources, restoring riparian areas, and promoting sustainable land use and regenerative agriculture systems using a landscape approach. This approach aims to enhance ecosystem services such as water availability, biodiversity, carbon sequestration, and food production, thereby improving jobs and livelihoods for vulnerable communities, especially in rural areas. This will enhance the resilience and adaptive capacities of local communities to mitigate climate impacts and enable more resilient and equitable outcomes. The initiative will help India meet its key global commitments and domestic targets – its nationally determined contribution (NDC), Bonn Challenge and Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) target, Aichi Targets under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), pledge to achieve net zero emissions by 2070, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

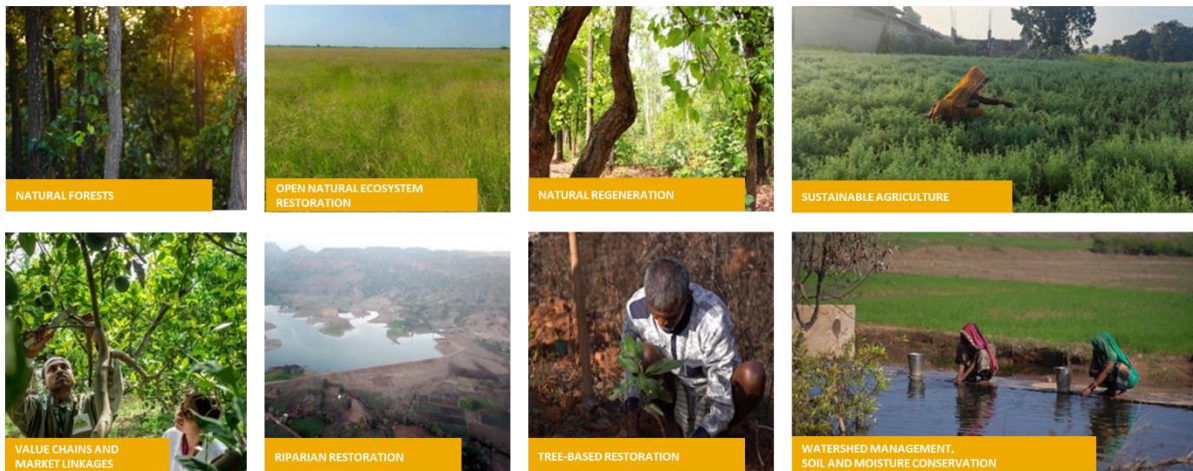
The strategy centers on delivering capital and capacity to local Restoration Champions, emphasizing on participatory and geospatial monitoring, and building an enabling restoration ecosystem by working with governments, reducing policy barriers, providing technical assistance, promoting multi-level ownership of projects, and establishing restoration hubs and dialogues.

The Harit Bharat Fund has a sustained focus on equity. We seek to have positive impacts on the lives of marginalized communities, including Dalits, Adivasis, forest-dependent communities, small landholders, other backward classes, women, and the landless, and seek to enable dignified lives and livelihoods for them. We recognize, celebrate and value diversity, and Champion inclusion. We emphasize collaborative relationships, built on mutual trust and transparency, and emphasize the interconnectedness of people, nature, and climate. We are adaptable and centered on people, and our focus is on empowering locally led initiatives and taking a holistic approach to community restoration work. We also prioritize grasping local needs for global communication.

The Harit Bharat Fund's inaugural cohort contains 18 organizations, each contributing unique perspectives and practices to the landscape restoration efforts across the Central Indian states of Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, and Maharashtra.

These organizations encompass a wide spectrum of restoration approaches. These include restoring open natural ecosystems, natural regeneration, tree-based restoration, sustainable agriculture, watershed management, soil and moisture conservation, and riparian restoration. Additionally, several organizations are working to strengthen value chains and market linkages, which are critical to the economic sustainability of restoration efforts.

A Diversity Of Restoration Practices Across Land-use Systems



To kick off the inaugural cohort of the initiative, the Harit Bharat Fund hosted a two-day inception program held in Nagpur, Maharashtra on 23rd and 24th May, 2024. This workshop is a crucial part of the initiative, aiming to build the capacity of participating organizations and equip them with the tools needed for successful project implementation. Key thematic areas covered include strengthening the enabling environment for restoration, project management strategies, communications skills, participatory monitoring techniques, and more. The workshop also provided one-on-one support and was designed to foster collaboration.

Based on key thematic areas mentioned above, the topics covered in the workshop included – i) Introduction to the Fund, ii) Communications, iii) Enabling Ecosystem, iv) Project Management, v) Capacity Building, vi) Monitoring, Reporting and Verification using tools like TerraMatch and Citizen Science app, and vii) One-on-One support.

1.2. Enabling Ecosystem

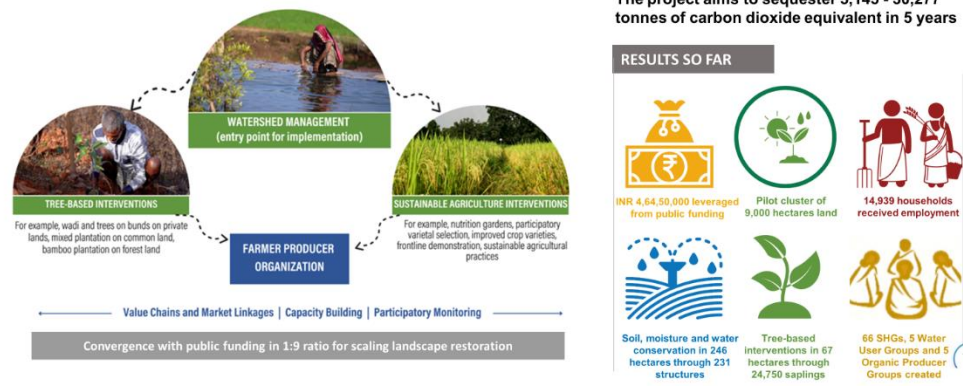
The enabling ecosystem workstream strategically seeks to enhance landscape restoration through collaboration, engagement, and implementation with government engagement and ownership, stakeholder participation, and coordinated action being foundational. Additionally, significant emphasis is placed on cross-stakeholder cooperation. Hence, this work plays a pivotal role in supporting the Harit Bharat Fund goals by fostering a conducive environment for landscape restoration and sustainable land management. Efforts encompass strategies and subsequent activities aiming to advance an enabling ecosystem by reducing systemic barriers to implementation across the policy, public finance, and market ecosystem—informed by robust interdisciplinary research and analysis through targeted Restoration Dialogues involving government agencies, CSOs etc. In addition, the focus is also on establishing a multi-stakeholder platform that brings together key actors across government, civil society, farming communities, and entrepreneurs, as well as the private sector to harmonize and sustain efforts towards building the restoration economy.

This approach has already been piloted in Sidhi district of Madhya Pradesh. The systematic process first included Restoration Opportunity Assessment Methodology (ROAM) mapping that indicated that more than 3,00,000 hectares can be restored through different interventions like agri-horti-forestry (WADI), trees on boundaries, assisted natural regeneration, etc. in Sidhi district. Further, Sidhi's opportunity assessment indicated that landscape restoration has the potential to unlock jobs for 30,000

people in one district and generate INR 71 crores in wage income and development of 6 value chains around local species. The findings are now being implemented to execute a collaborative landscape restoration project in about 9,000 ha of pilot cluster in Sidhi district of Madhya Pradesh.

Restoration in Sidhi, Madhya Pradesh

Project initiated by WRI India in collaboration with Sidhi District Administration, Government of Madhya Pradesh and Action for Social Advancement (ASA) in 2021



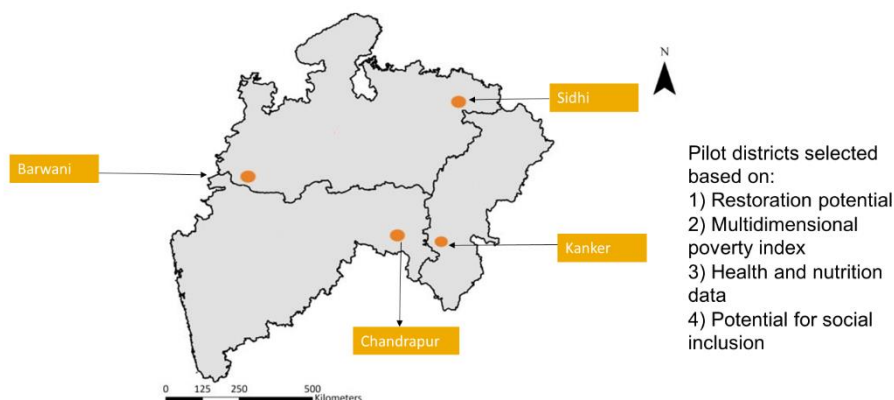
Source: WRI India and ASA; Picture credit: WRI India



This initiative focuses on showcasing a pathway to implement and scale landscape restoration by fostering collaborative planning, reducing barriers to implementation, building capacities of the stakeholders, and piloting landscape restoration through research backed interventions in Sidhi district. A key tenet of the project is convergence of private-public funding, and the project has managed to achieve it effectively to the tune of 1:9 respectively. It further uses an interdisciplinary, participatory geospatial monitoring architecture for monitoring landscape restoration and a robust policy analysis for identifying key policy and regulatory barriers for restoration.

This initiative is currently being upscaled in pilot districts of Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh and by unlocking funds in pilot districts, participatory natural resource management effectiveness is being demonstrated, encouraging wider adoption. The networks established through this pilot are expected to contribute knowledge, foster collaboration, and provide technical support and momentum in upscaling the efforts through Harit Bharat Fund.

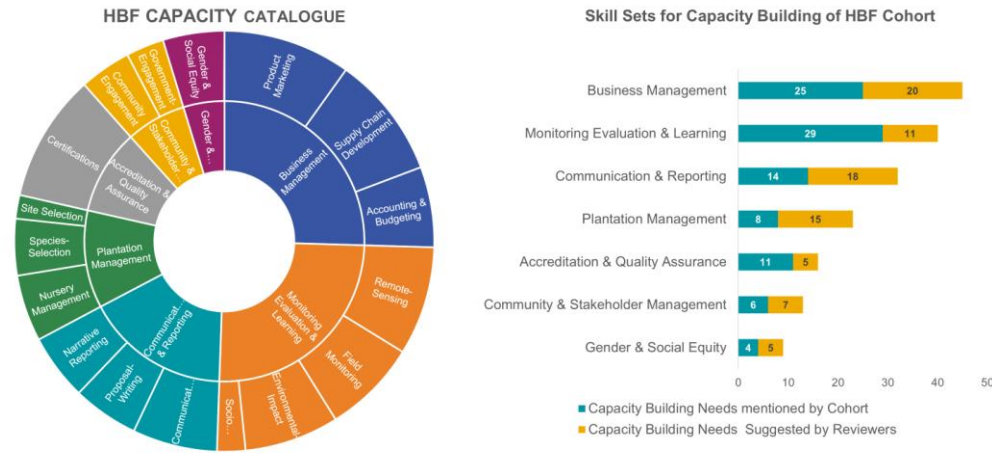
Selected Pilot Districts...



1.3. Capacity Building Catalogue

The "Capacity Building Catalogue" for the first Harit Bharat Fund cohort focuses on the skill sets and capacity building needs for both for-profit and non-profit organizations. Based on the analysis of applications from 2023, the team has identified key areas for development, including Business Planning, Financial Management, Sales and Marketing, Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning, Communication & Reporting, Plantation Management, and Community & Stakeholder Management, with a notable emphasis on strengthening Gender & Social Equity.

Capacity Building Catalogue For The First Cohort



Source: This analysis is based on HBF 2023 applications



1.3.1. Capacity Need

The key capacity building needs for non-profits were assessed through analyzing the applications from EoI and RfP stages, and suggestions from expert reviewers. Identified key areas for capacity building of non-Profits were i) Business Management for more efficient fund utilization encompassing Accounting and Budgeting, Product Marketing and Supply Chain Development, ii) Monitoring and evaluation comprising Field monitoring, Remote Sensing, Environment Impact, iii) Communications and reporting including Communications, Proposal writing and Narrative reporting, iv) Community engagement, v) Gender and Social Equity and vi)Accreditations through Certifications.

For the for-profits, the key capacity building needs were assessed through a comprehensive evaluation process, including analysis of EoI and RfP applications, interview calls, field visits, and discussions with the Investment Committee. The consolidated list of needs includes Business Planning and Management, Financial Management, Sales and Distribution, Marketing and Branding, Traceability Framework Development, Monitoring and Evaluation, Impact Measurement and Documentation, and Managing Government Engagements and Partnerships.

1.3.2. Peer-Learning Aptitude

The onboarding workshop observed that the Champions also prioritize collaborative learning. Champions are willing to provide technical assistance as well as learn from each other. While the major learning aptitude of the Champions gravitated towards Remote sensing including using GIS for Land Use Land Cover Mapping, Certifications, Product Marketing, Supply Chain Development, and assessing Environment Impact majorly, they shared that they are willing to share their expertise in domains such as community engagement, site selection, field monitoring, Watershed management, livelihood generation, active restoration, market assessment and market development and others. This

reciprocal approach is going to be supported through diverse training formats including virtual sessions, workshops and mentorships.

1.3.3. Delivery model

Aiming to transform these capacity building goals into tangible outcomes, the catalogue proposes a multifaceted delivery model that includes virtual foundation building sessions, advanced thematic workshops, and one-on-one focused mentorships with Harit Bharat Fund partners and external experts. Peer-to-peer learning, both virtually and through in-person workshops and field visits, is also emphasized to leverage the collective wisdom within the cohort.

1.3.4. Feedback

Feedback gathered from the Champions members would be instrumental in shaping the capacity building strategy. Key suggestions include scheduling frequent, interactive review meetings with landscape managers, creating an annual training calendar for consistent skill enhancement, and organizing field visits to restoration projects for firsthand learning experiences. Emphasizing the need for resilience building, members also advocate for engaging with Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) for better convergence of efforts and leveraging diverse funding sources to amplify the impact of their projects. Further feedback from the Champions on any possible development are also welcome and the Champions can share their suggestions at haritbharatfund@wri.org.

Communications for Harit Bharat Fund

2.1. Key Messages About Harit Bharat Fund

The Harit Bharat Fund is a collaborative initiative that supports 'Restoration Champions' with knowledge, capital, capacity, and connections to scale their efforts. The communication guidelines are provided to ensure effective and accurate representation of the fund. It is important for organizations to communicate the fund's role correctly in supporting their projects.

- Harit Bharat Fund is a collaborative initiative led by a consortium of different partners bringing in their diverse expertise.
- The Fund supports 'Restoration Champions' working on restoration-based solutions with knowledge, capital, capacity and connections that can help them scale their efforts.
- It monitors + communicates the impacts of the investments to inspire action.

2.2. Communication Guidelines

The guidelines aim to ensure that communications about the Harit Bharat Fund are consistent, respectful of the brand, and effectively convey the impact of the supported restoration projects.

2.2.1. How to mention Harit Bharat Fund in your communications

- ✓ [Our project] is supported under Harit Bharat Fund
- ✗ [Our Project] is funded by World Resources Institute via Harit Bharat Fund or any other partner
- Always capitalize the H, B and F while writing Harit Bharat Fund.
- Use the correct spelling ~~Harith Bharath Fund~~
- The color codes for the Harit Bharat Fund brand is: #32864b

2.2.2. How to use the Harit Bharat Fund logo

- **DO NOT** reshape the logo - it must always keep the same height to width ratio.



- **DO NOT** rotate the logo



- DO maintain clear space between this logo and other logos.



2.2.3. Protocols for using the Harit Bharat Fund logo

Use of Harit Bharat Fund logo strictly requires prior permission before any kind of usage

- Write an email to us for logo use permissions at haritbharatfund@wri.org
- Harit Bharat Fund team will review and get back to you with our advice!
- Prior permission is needed for using logos for social media posts, visual stories, physical outreach materials such as banners, posters, t-shirts, caps.
- DO NOT use logos from any of the partner organizations. Each organization has their own guidance around use of logos requiring several approvals, and any partner logo cannot be used.

2.2.4. Designing your Harit Bharat Fund impact story: Tips and guidance



- Think about what you want to share, why, and what you want to achieve.
- Consider timing.

- We are very pleased to help you communicate your outstanding restoration impacts & innovations.
- Reach out to us

- Try to match up your restoration interests with interests of the government, people and media
- Research media outlets

- Use very short words and short sentences.
- Keep it very simple, plain and direct

2.2.4.1. What all to include in your story?

- Be specific
- Add statistics about impact
- Share what makes your organization unique
- Do you focus on biodiversity? Do you work mostly with women or youth?
- Show how the land has changed over time
- Use visual materials like photos and videos

2.2.4.2. What can your communications look like?

- Social media campaigns
- Human-interest stories
- Media engagement

2.2.4.3. Things to keep in mind for social media campaigns

- All Harit Bharat Fund social media posts require a review by the Harit Bharat Fund team before they are posted. Write to us at haritbharatfund@wri.org
- Use the right tags!
- DO NOT tag any partner organizations, this will require prior approvals from each one of them
- All posts should carry the following two hashtags - #RestorationChampion #HaritBharatFund

2.2.4.4. Protocols for using photographs

- Photography plays a key role in bringing your work to life
- Carefully select your photos and try to tell your stories with powerful ones
- Photographs should always appear human, locally authentic and true to life
- Avoid images that dramatize the situation, or use Photoshop techniques to make an environment look unrealistic
- In photos with more than one person, try to reflect a gender balance (see below)



Picture credits: Shweta Prajapati/WRI India

- Photo credit format: Image: [Name of the photographer] / [Name of the organization who commissioned the photo] (See above)
- Please ensure that you take consent from the people before taking photographs where you disclose to them how will those photographs be used

2.2.4.5. Media Stories

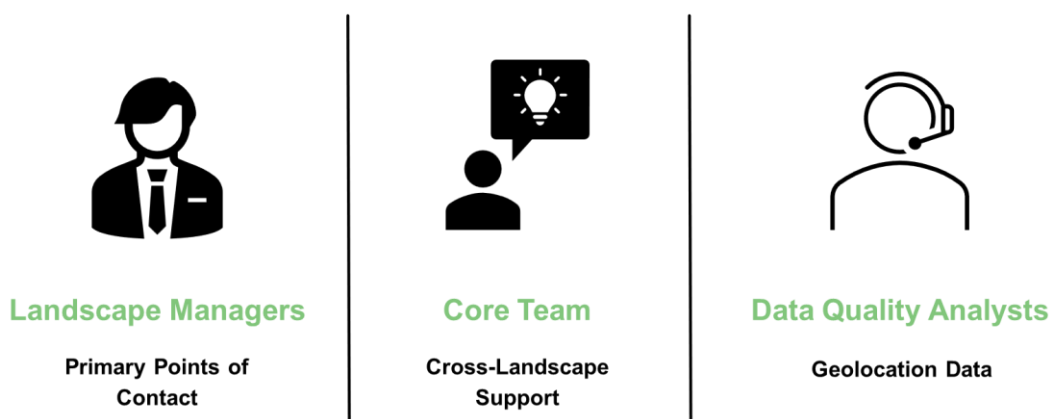
- Be part of our impact stories. Focus on how your work benefits local communities or the landscape
- Talking about Harit Bharat Fund in any media story will require a review at our end. This is especially in the case of press releases, please write to us! haritbharatfund@wri.org.

Project Management, Monitoring, Reporting, & Verification

3.1. Project Management

The onboarding workshop covered key aspects of the Harit Bharat Fund program management including the objectives of the project management team, the support structure provided to Champions, data quality assurance processes, and tips for success.

Your Three-level Support Team



Fostering a community built on trust, commitment and benefit sharing, the project management for the Harit Bharat Fund is focused on establishing a strong, supportive, and efficient framework for Champions working on restoration projects. The framework seeks to ensure the successful delivery of restoration projects through seamless coordination and hands-on management. Serving as the primary contact, the management team prioritizes building solid connections with the Champions and guiding them in planning and executing their projects to ensure success.

The team is dedicated to refining processes for enhanced efficiency and effectiveness, connecting Champions with external technical assistance as needed, and overseeing reporting with periodic reviews, quality assurance and approvals, to ensure that the Champions' efforts align with the intended outcomes of the fund.

This project management approach emphasizes a culture of continuous feedback and improvement. Champions are encouraged to share openly, ensuring strategies evolve to meet the dynamic needs of the project.

3.1.1. Support Structure

Key to the management structure is a three-level support team comprising a Core Team, Landscape Managers and Data Quality Analysts. Each level plays a crucial role in providing the necessary support and expertise.

- i) Core Team: This provides overarching guidance and support across landscapes.
- ii) Landscape Managers: These are the primary points of contact for the Champions.

The Landscape Managers for non-profit organizations are:

- Nabajyoti Roy – Chhattisgarh (Nabajyoti.Roy@wri.org),
- Paresh Parab – Maharashtra (Paresh.Parab@wri.org),
- Saeed Reza – Madhya Pradesh (Khwajasaeed.Reza@wri.org).

The for-profit enterprises will be supported by

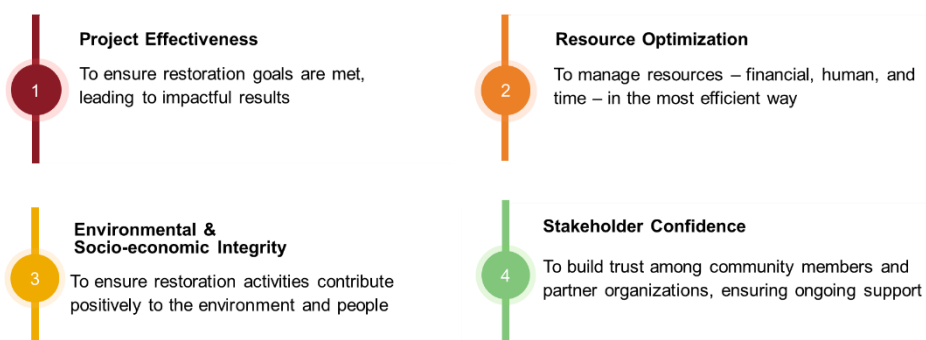
- Divya Sharma (Divya.sharma@wri.org) and
- Rahul Kumar (rahul@sangam.vc) across all landscapes.

- iii) Data Quality Analysts: They ensure the reliability of geolocation data and overall data quality. The team of data quality analysts includes Rajasweta Datta, Sidhtharthan Segarin, Ashwini Keskar, Edward Saenz, Amruta and Medhavi of EcoSatva, and more to be added soon.

3.1.2. Ensuring Data Quality

High-quality data is the cornerstone of trust with stakeholders. It builds accountability for people on the ground, landscape-level stakeholders and broader stakeholders. Data quality assurance is important to ensure project effectiveness, optimize resource use, build stakeholder confidence, and contribute towards building environmental and socio-economic integrity.

Why Quality Assurance Matters



High-quality data should be accurate, relevant, timely, consistent, complete, and transparent. These characteristics ensure that the data collected and reported are reliable and can be used to make informed decisions.

- Accuracy: Data must be truthful and reflect reality.
- Relevance: How well the data pertains to the specific need or question at hand.
- Timeliness: How current and up to date the data is for the intended use.
- Consistency: Ensures data uses the same formats and definitions throughout a dataset.
- Completeness: Verifies all necessary data elements are present and accounted for, with no missing values.
- Transparency: Provides clarity about the origin, lineage, and any processing steps the data has undergone. This allows users to understand how the data was collected and whether it can be trusted.

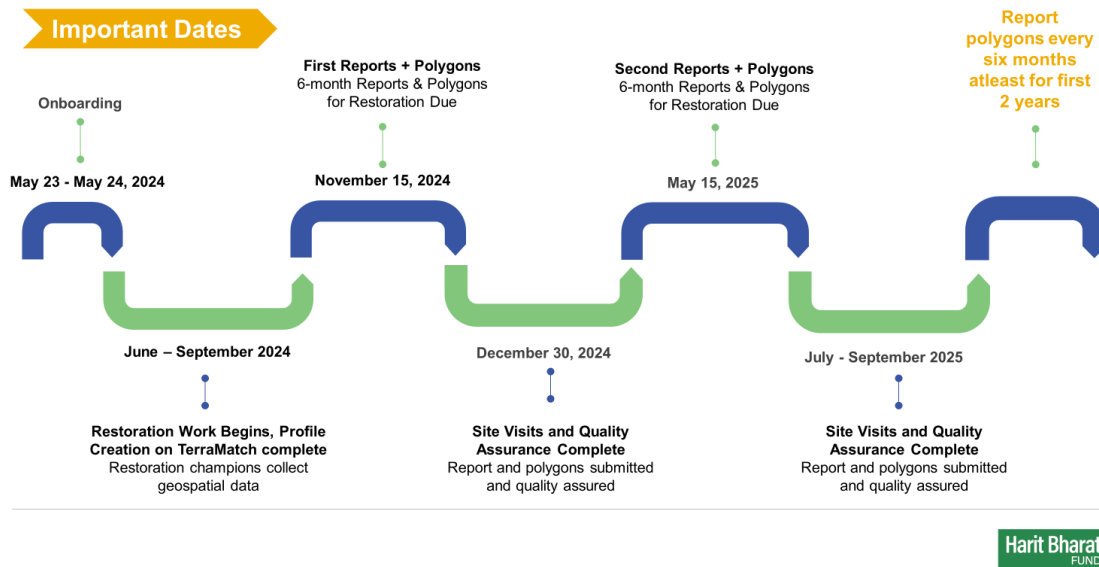
3.1.3. Reporting

Reporting is a critical component, and to ensure high-quality reports, the project management team follows a rigorous review and approval process that involves the following stages:

- Review of all reports by Landscape Manager (primary PoC).

- Feedback shared with the Champion.
- Incorporation of feedback into the report by the Champion.
- Final approval by Landscape Manager.
- Issuance of the second tranche of funds (if applicable).

Reporting Schedule & Key Deadlines



3.1.4. Communicating with the Project Support Team

Effective communication with the support team is crucial and will mainly revolve around reporting and polygons, technical assistance, public communications and upcoming milestones. Champions are encouraged to collaborate with their support teams and maintain open communication throughout the project to achieve the best outcomes together.

Communicating With Your Support Team

- Primary mode of communication is email
- Regular virtual meetings with your landscape manager

Communication will primarily revolve around the following key elements:

- 1 Reporting & Polygons
- 2 Technical assistance
- 3 Communication & Success stories
- 4 Upcoming milestones

The Landscape Managers are the primary points of contact and can be contacted via email (specified above). Regular check-ins with the Landscape Managers help align project goals, address emerging issues and challenges, and strengthen the partnerships between project collaborators. A regular

monthly cadence for meetings can be decided between the support team and the Champions. *The first virtual meeting after the onboarding is to be scheduled in July (or earlier if needed).*

The project encourages a culture of continuous feedback and improvement, wherein all collaborators are urged to share their experiences and challenges openly and regularly.

3.1.5. Site Visits and Land Tenure Arrangements

Site visits are an essential aspect of the project management process, allowing for the verification of reported data, learning from the innovative practices of Champions, and collaborative problem-solving. During such visits, there may be verification of geospatial location data, survival rate and tree species data, and data on jobs and other socio-economic benefits.

Additionally, confirming land tenure arrangements is an important step in the process and Champions organizations are requested to work with their Landscape Managers to confirm land tenure documentation based on the agreed verification and approval process.

3.1.6. Technical Assistance

Technical assistance is offered in areas such as monitoring and reporting, digital communications, proposal writing, financial modeling, and gender and social inclusion. This list is only representative and further assistance may be offered in other areas as well – this can be discussed and confirmed on a case-to-case basis.

3.1.7. Requesting Change of Project Scope

If Champions organizations need to adjust the scope of their projects, whether it's the tree species, project location, or restoration practice/s, they are advised to discuss the same with their Landscape Managers first and then send the necessary requests for approval to haritbharatfund@wri.org.

3.1.8. The 3 Cs for Success

The Harit Bharat Fund's project management emphasizes "3 Cs" for success: Collaboration, Coordination, and Communication, promoting a "One Team" mentality to support each other and overcome challenges together.

3.2. Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV)

The Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) system is an essential mechanism within the Harit Bharat Fund restoration initiative, designed to ensure that the restoration efforts are transparent, efficient, and effective. It is a structured process designed to collect data, analyse progress, and ensure that the restoration objectives are being met, while providing timely advice and help to overcome any setbacks



Monitoring

The process of collecting and analyzing data and information to measure progress toward specific goals that the restoration effort aims to achieve.



Reporting

Data collected from Champions through project and site reports, which are submitted on TerraMatch and Citizen Survey in a standardized format every six months.



Verification

Periodically subjecting reported information to some form of review, analysis or independent assessment to establish completeness and reliability.

3.2.1. Biophysical Indicators

Biophysical indicators are crucial to understand the ecological impact of restoration efforts. The MRV system tracks the hectares under restoration and saplings restored. Key indicators include the survival rate of planted saplings and tree cover changes over time, verified through self-reporting and remote sensing.

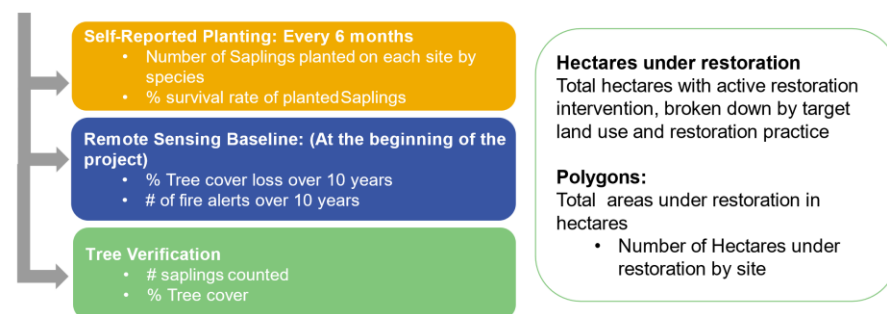
- Saplings Restored: Cumulative count of all saplings and seedlings restored across all project sites after six years.
- Hectares under Restoration: The total hectares with active restoration interventions, classified by the number of hectares per site and broken-down by land-use and restoration type.

Biophysical Indicators



Saplings restored

Total number of restored saplings across all sites, across the entire project after 6 years



This MRV framework will adapt as projects progress. An extensive MRV framework specifically designed for monitoring water-based and biodiversity-focused restoration is under development. Additionally, the Citizen Science App used for collecting geospatial data to map restoration initiatives already incorporates forms tailored to different Champions' needs working on varied landscape and different restoration types, ensuring comprehensive mapping of all restoration efforts.

3.2.2. Socioeconomic Indicators

The restoration projects influence communities. The system monitors the socioeconomic impact of the initiative segmented by demographic categories such as age, gender, caste, and type of benefit. Detailed definitions of livelihoods, jobs, community engagement and leadership will be shared in July for Champions to be able to report accurately.

- Livelihoods Benefitted: This encompasses the number of community partners benefitted by the project, segmented by age, gender, caste, and benefit type.
- Jobs Created: The number of job days and volunteer opportunities created, also broken down demographically.
- Community Engagement and Leadership: The percentage of projects that are locally led or empower marginalized communities in decision-making.

3.2.3. Financial Indicators

For a sustainable initiative, financial health is key. The MRV system would also look into financial performance.

- Non-Profits: Efficient and timely use of funds.
- For-Profits & Enterprises: Growth in revenue and profit

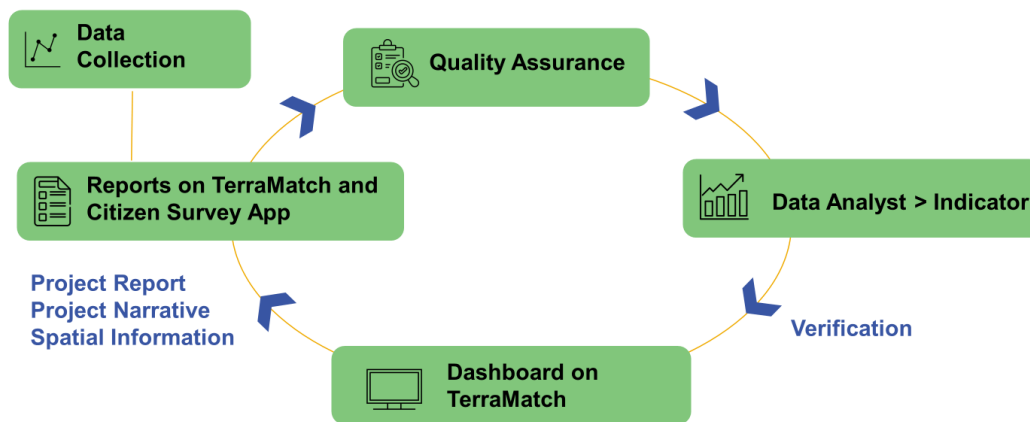
Financial audits and custom financial reports provide insights into the financial health and accountability of restoration projects. Non-profit and for-profit organizations will be provided with a reporting template to report the changes in their revenue and profit.

3.2.4. Monitoring Reporting and Verification System

Data accuracy is the backbone of MRV. Data collection and reporting is conducted through standardized biannual (6-monthly) project and site reports submitted via the TerraMatch platform and the Citizen Science App.

- Data is collected through predefined standardized format for project reports and site reports submitted via TerraMatch and the Citizen Science App (ongoing process of data collection as the restoration work progresses) every six months.
- Quality assurance is ensured by data analysts who review project narratives, spatial information, and other relevant data.
- Verification is performed via remote sensing and field verification to confirm the data's accuracy and reliability.

Monitoring, Reporting and Verification System



3.2.5. Key Takeaways

- The MRV system isn't one-size-fits-all; it's adaptable and will be refined based on the experiences and needs of different Champions within the restoration initiative.
- Champions should be prepared to engage with this evolving framework and adapt accordingly to contribute accurate and timely data.
- Emphasis is placed on both biophysical restoration outcomes and the socioeconomic benefits to ensure a holistic approach to ecosystem restoration.
- The system not only measures progress but also helps in identifying challenges early on, allowing for proactive management and adjustment of restoration strategies.

For the Harit Bharat Fund Restoration Champions, it is crucial to understand that the MRV system is a dynamic and collaborative tool. It allows for continuous learning and improvement, ensuring that the restoration efforts not only meet their intended goals but also contribute to the broader objectives of sustainability and community well-being. They should get familiarized with TerraMatch and the Citizen Science App for consistent reporting and stay engaged with the evolving MRV framework for effective monitoring of the impact of their restoration efforts contributing to the initiative's overall success. Separate handbooks for TerraMatch and the Citizen Science app have been shared along with this handbook.