

SESA

STUDENT EDUCATION AND SUPPORT ASSOCIATION

2857 LINDEN DRIVE, BOULDER, CO 80304

LETTER OF AGREEMENT

This letter of agreement summarizes an agreement between the Student Education and Support Association in Boulder, Colorado, United States of America ("SESA") and Gopikabai Sitaram Gawande Mahavidyalaya in Umarkhed, Yavatmal, Maharashtra, India ("GSG College") to partner together to create the Maati-Paani-Asha Center at GSG College.

Our Shared Purpose

GSG College is an oasis of opportunity for learners in one of the most underdeveloped regions of India, the Yavatmal District. As a nationally accredited college, GSG provides high quality undergraduate, graduate, and continuing education to the local, largely agrarian population as a way to help address the region's high levels of poverty, hunger, illiteracy and morbidity.

SESA believes that access to education is essential to uplifting marginalized populations, promoting opportunities, and developing skills to overcome obstacles to achieving quality of life. Since 1992, SESA has supported education in the rural home communities of its founders, Drs. Atmaram and Sushila Gawande, including through transformational support of GSG College. SESA has supported development of GSG College's campus buildings and infrastructure, solar electrification, computers & multi-media equipment, high-speed internet access, technology installations and trainings, English language education resources, and teacher training, among other supports.

SESA has undertaken the formation of the **Maati-Paani-Asha Project** ("MPA Project") with the guidance of an international, multi-disciplinary team of experts from GSG College, University of Colorado-Boulder, Sterling College, Ohio University, Portland State University, and elsewhere. The MPA Project aims to address the challenges in and around Yavatmal District by modeling and supporting a transition to agroecological practices that regenerate soil, water and hope, increase nutritious food access, improve agricultural marketing practices, improve water availability and management, uplift farmers, empower women, and enhance psychosocial supports.

Among other things, the MPA Project aims to establish a Transition Support Program that will provide robust assistance to smallholder farmers to motivate, educate, and de-risk the transition away from chemically dependent, extractive, and unsustainable methods of producing monoculture commodities for export. The MPA Project seeks to help farmers adopt diversified, agroecological farming methods that favor traditional seeds and on-farm inputs and connect them with buyers seeking sustainably sourced ingredients. The MPA Project strives to generate sufficient yields, healthy soil, healthy ecosystems, human health benefits, and conditions that support community resilience.

Our Agreement

Establishment of the Maati-Paani-Asha Center

In order to carry out the MPA Project activities, SESA and GSG College agree to establish the **Maati-Paani-Asha Center** ("MPA Center") at GSG College. The MPA Center's office will be located at the GSG College Guest House.

SESA and GSG College agree that, during the initial five years of the MPA Center, its activities will include:

- Transitioning farmers to regenerative agriculture through guided farmer study groups and trainings (in collaboration with Dharamitra),
- Researching and documenting indigenous knowledge of food and farming practices (in collaboration with Dr. Pronoy Rai, Assistant Professor of International and Global Studies at Portland State University),
- Developing kitchen gardens and empowering women,
- Establishing a model educational farm on one acre of the GSG College campus,
- Evaluating existing water supply and recommendations for water management for purposes of increasing water availability (in collaboration with Dr. Daniel Che, Assistant Professor of Civil Engineering (Water Resources Systems) at Ohio University),
- Developing educational course modules to share knowledge gained locally and globally (in collaboration with the EcoGather program at Sterling College), and
- Measuring existing circumstances and tracking changes annually in order to evaluate and strengthen the positive impact of MPA Center activities.

Depending upon the capacity and interest of SESA and GSG College, the MPA Center may pursue additional activities. Examples of such activities may include and are not limited to:

- Collaborating with regional experts to train villagers in water harvesting,
- Networking with national and international practitioners in regenerative agriculture or agroecology,
- Establishing an economic policy study group to evaluate existing markets and to model proposals for expanding market options,
- Hosting a multi-stakeholder advisory board,
- Hosting a national regenerative agriculture conference, and
- Collaborating with national and international partners (such as Ohio University) on related projects.

SESA and GSG College further agree that the MPA Center shall promote women's involvement, leadership, and empowerment in all its activities. Active efforts will be made to ensure that female faculty, female motivators, female farmers and other women are engaged in the MPA

Center's activities.

Leadership of the Maati-Paani-Asha Center

SESA and GSG College agree that Sumeeta Gawande will serve as Strategic Advisor for the MPA Project activities carried out by the MPA Center. The initial Co-Directors of the MPA Center will be Dr. Dhanraj V. Tayade and Dr. Betsy J. Briju. Dr. Betsy will serve as a full-time Co-Director for an initial five-year term. Dr. Tayade will serve as a part-time Co-Director for an initial five-year term, unless he decides to retire or resign earlier. The activities, decisions, and financial expenditures by the MPA Center are subject to review and approval by SESA and GSG College through their respective leadership.

The undersigned hereby execute this Letter Agreement, signifying their acceptance of the terms stated herein.

STUDENT AND EDUCATION SUPPORT ASSOCIATION, INC (SESA)

By: S. Gawande
 Date: 10/10/2021
 Sushila Gawande
 Director

GOPIKABAI SITARAM GAWANDE MAHAVIDYALAYA (GSG COLLEGE)

By: Dr. Someshwar Vadrabade
 Date: _____
 Dr. Someshwar Vadrabade
 Interim Principal
Principal
G.S.Gawande College.
Umarkhed Dist.Yavatmal.



YAVATMAL ZILLA AKHIL KUNBI SAMAJ (YZAKS)

By: Dr. Yadaorao Raut
 Date: _____
 Dr. Yadaorao Raut
 Secretary
Secretary
Yavatmal Zilla Akhil
Kunbi Samaj, Yavatmal.

