



Thriving ecosystem for camel-based enterprises
roadmap document for western Rajasthan

Urmul Trust | Centre for Pastoralism

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The above establishes the intent, spirit and the interventions process flow of The Camel Partnership. Camel and the sand dune depicts our interventions around the communities – input services; the core circle reflects the enterprise to galvanise the efforts towards business continuity and the line establishes the market linkages. This the fuller value chain for The Camel Partnership to establish...

A full industry creation exercise, The Camel Partnership aims to mobilize the camel herding community, knowledge & potential. We aspire facilitating herders to take charge of their livelihood and drive an inclusive, accountable, collaborative, and, sustainable enterprise ecosystem.

This partnership with resource, technology and knowledge support from multiple stakeholders and strong market linkages would develop a resilient camel derivative ecosystem and value chain in western Rajasthan.

The Camel Partnership

What do we want to achieve

Through a comprehensive set of interventions spread over three key verticals – Communities, Enterprises, Policies – the Camel Partnership plans to set-up a resilient ecosystem to support camel herders and enable camel enterprises to take on the ecosystem management and development work.

- Through a comprehensive range of input services, achieve qualitative and quantifiable improvement in the camel systems in the western Rajasthan districts of Jaisalmer, Jodhpur & Bikaner.
- Achieve a fair, inclusive, accountable, auditable enterprise to scale the business opportunities
- Achieve community owned and professionally managed value chain for camel products
- Achieve a cadre of enterprising changemakers across the value chain

Why do we want to

Animal husbandry is a traditional occupation and the backbone of the communities in rurscape. In the Thar desert it's more pertinent as a scope and means of livelihoods, given the high variability and unpredictability of rains. Cow, goat and sheep are reared in abundance and provide for milk and wool. Camel is a unique feature of the Thar desert. It's interdependence with community and living has meant a special care and utility for the animal. It has enjoyed a high popularity and demand amongst the herding communities of Rajasthan for its resilience to the climate of the region and the functions it has played. Over the years, however, there has been a significant decline in the population of this animal – a crucial component of desert living and the overall ecology of the region.

Historically, camel has been used for transportation and heavy work – water lifting from well, seed sowing, mill grinding etc. All these applications have faded away in the recent years. There is a great survival challenge, the camel is facing in the absence of alternative functions that a camel could play in the living of the desert.

The relationship of this animal has changed from coexistence to liability amongst herding community. Today a household cannot survive and sustain itself only by rearing camels. Traditional camel products like camel milk, camel leather and products made out of camel hair no longer have a local market or demand in the community thanks to globalization thence availability of cheaper alternatives, fast fashion and no lack of value chains. The higher feed and health costs are due to shrinkage of CPRs, loss of traditional revenue stream, and poor reach of existent support services.

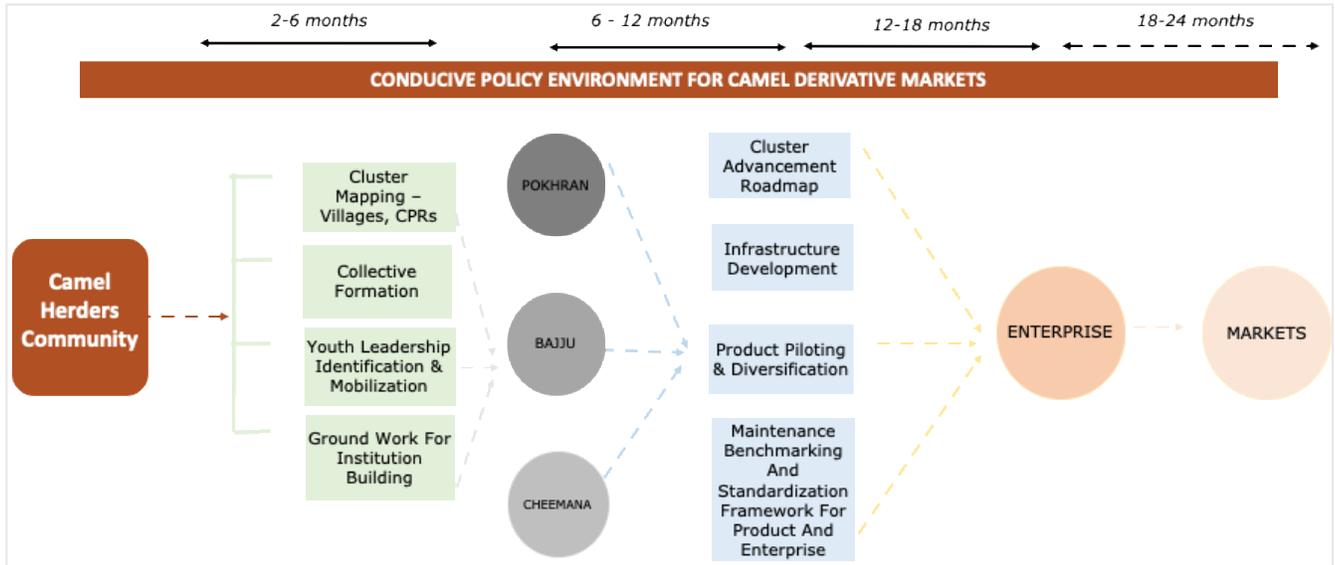
How we are going to do this

Across the three focus verticals, the Partnership plans to systemically engage with stakeholders, design scalable enterprise models, promote market creation and foster cadre of leadership and micro-entrepreneurs.

The partnership interventions shall spread across the three core verticals with a targeted reach of over 5000 households affecting over 25000 individuals in the western districts of Bikaner, Jaisalmer & Jodhpur. Spread across the three years a definitive outcome shall be a brand driven camel milk enterprise –

enabling the community and markets. The timeline for organising the community members into an enterprise and connecting them with the market is depicted in the image below. As represented,

- In the Pokaran cluster, the herders have been successfully mobilised and are now focusing on procuring equipment to kickstart their camel based enterprise.
- In the Bajju and Chimana clusters, cluster mapping and community mobilisation efforts are underway.



A broad stroke of interventions, basis the field challenge mapping, dialogues with knowledge resources,

COMMUNITY	ENTERPRISES	POLICIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Detailed camel herders mapping ▪ CPR mapping and NRM intervention scoping Quantities, qualities and seasonal variation of camel milk is mapped ▪ Developing set of input services to achieve standardisation of feed and camel management Good health care access to camels (medicines and vaccinations) through regular health camps ▪ Facilitating health insurance coverage under the government scheme ▪ Systemic interventions for improved credit access to camel herders ▪ Camel herders indigenous knowledge management (feed, medicines, cartographic) ▪ Youth entrepreneurs cadre identification and consolidation ▪ Network development & exposure visits for community leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establishing viable business model for piloting the camel milk business ▪ Encouraging entrepreneurs and agro-dairy start-ups to look at the camel milk based business opportunities ▪ Developing efficient and responsive supply chain ▪ Interface with RCDF / AMUL and other dairies in Rajasthan ▪ Focus business trainings for identified community youth ▪ Setting up of milk collection & chilling infrastructure equipped with viable technology ▪ Experimenting & developing a diversified product line and product mix e.g. camel milk cheese ▪ Establishing definitive standard operating procedures ▪ Industry dialogues to promote therapeutic value of camel milk and market creation ▪ Conducting business opportunities workshop with first generation and existing entrepreneurs around camel milk products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meeting / interface with different stakeholders – private and public sector ▪ Network expansion for consolidated policy driven reach ▪ Establishing processes for policy deliberation to enable camel based livelihood ▪ Concerted efforts dedicated by all the government departments

The Collaborative

Through pledging knowledge, resources, infrastructure & technology support, and, other strategic resources the following partners constitute the Camel Partnership committed to building a thriving camel support ecosystem and a products based value chain.

PARTNERS	COMMUNITIES	ENTERPRISES	POLICIES
Axis Bank Foundation			
Bask Research Foundation			
Centre for Pastoralism			
Desert Resource Centre			
HDFC Bank			
Government of Rajasthan			
National Research Centre on Camels			
Rajasthan University of Veterinary & Animal Sciences			
Revitalising Rainfed Area Network			
Sahjeevan			
SELCO foundation			
Urmul Trust			
Urmul Seemant			

Our Stakeholders

TCP stakeholders map and intervention touchpoints



Proposed Strategy

Cluster Development: Bring Communities Together

The camel herding community in western Rajasthan faces a lack of capital, institutional support, and knowledge to ensure marketing of camel milk and its varied products.

We believe that adopting an approach of mobilizing government resources, utilizing social capital, and garnering financial support could result in the economic prosperity of the identified cluster. The principles of cluster development would ensure a wholesome connectivity of all the actors in the ecosystem. With these principles guiding us, we see the camel based value chain ecosystem consisting of three major domains comprising of communities, enterprises, and policies.



Communities

Historically, camel herding communities in Rajasthan has been dependent on the animal for their livelihood. This domain would exclusively focus on mobilising efforts and resources of community to revive this traditional avenue of livelihood. The interventions would work across three levels- good nutrition, access to medical resources and generating awareness to restore this livelihood avenue.

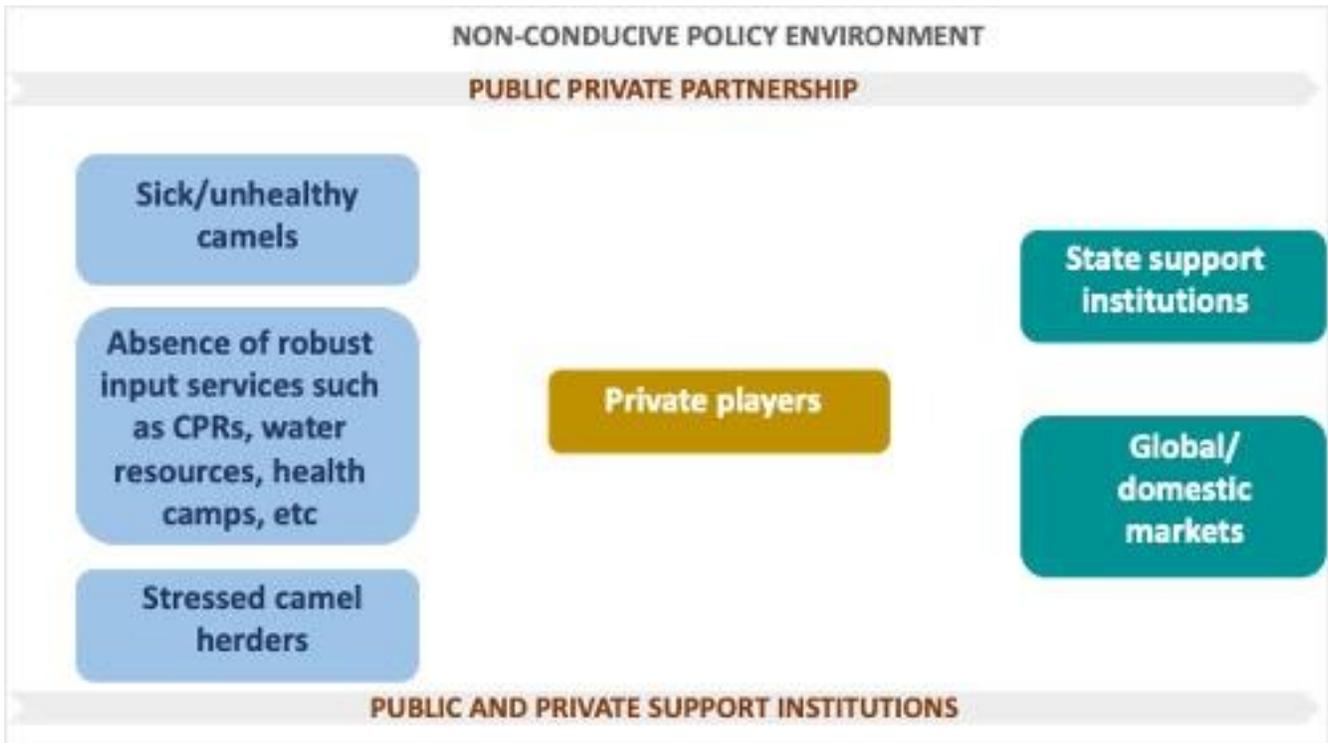
Enterprises

The focus would lie on initiatives that encourage enterprises and institutions in these clusters to undertake joint actions. This would ultimately yield benefits to the cluster as a whole. These communities would require the establishment of standard operating procedures for quality control and streamlined value chain. Sufficient infrastructure allocation to support the value chain would have to be accumulated.

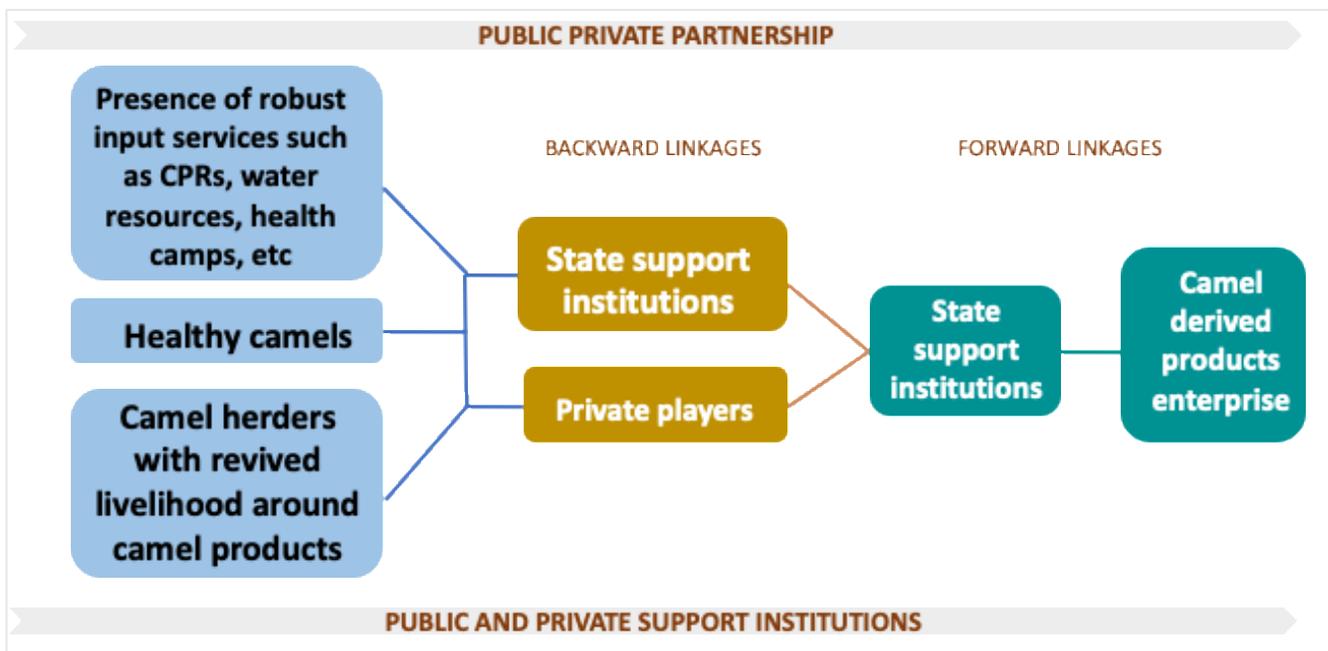
Policies

Through focused policy advocacy measures a vibrant policy ecosystem would be developed. This would ensure that all the stakeholders render necessary support and their actions are not carried out in silos. Policy advocacy dialogues with the stakeholders across levels would have to be undertaken.

Current system: Disarrayed value chain



Proposed system: Collaborative and streamlined value chain



Through various activities, we are targeting initial traction, appreciative cooperation from local community and governance, and commitments for long term partnerships for future investments and value chain development.

The Partnership at Work

In the first phase three clusters have been identified for systemic interventions around three core functional verticals. Three clusters identified are **Pokaran, Bajju and Chimana**. A visual of the same:

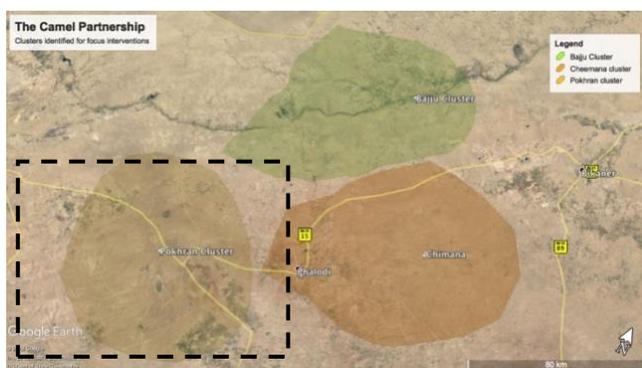


A non-exhaustive list of the cluster villages:

Cluster Name	Villages mapped
Pokaran	20*
Bajju	69*
Chimana	63*

* The Figures are not exhaustive, but random sampling

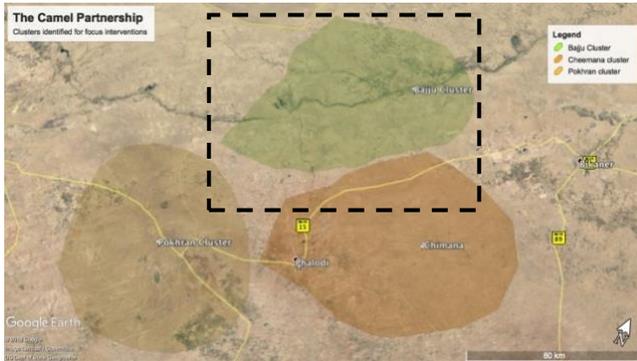
Pokaran Cluster



Interventions have been kickstarted in the Pokaran cluster. Twenty villages have been identified to be part of the Pokaran cluster. Strong enthusiasm for mobilising resources has been witnessed among the camel herding community as well as from government agencies.

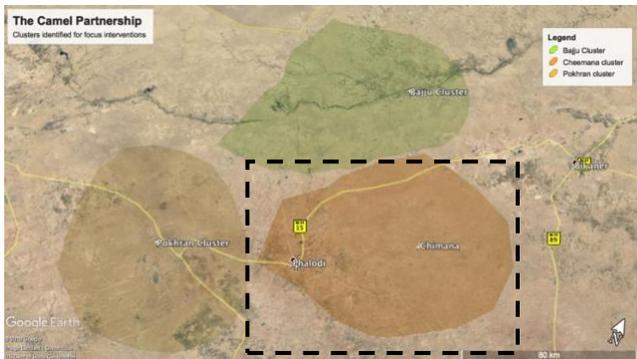
This being a strong hub of camels, there's strong enthusiasm amongst the community and the herds. Modest estimations indicate the milk shed of around 1000 litres per day in the cluster. The Partnership has set up the Bulk Milk Cooler in Ganga Ram ki Dhani village and has initiated camel milk collection and processing efforts.

Bajju Cluster



This partnership has been initiated in the Bajju cluster. Initial camel herding community mobilisation community resource, and database mapping have commenced in the region. A series of health camps were organised in January- March 2020. The cluster has also garnered favourable community and government. A cluster-level federation to mobilise the efforts of the herders is being set-up.

Chimana Cluster



The cluster has been identified to be developed as a middle resource point for both Bajju and Pokaran clusters. There is a clear geographical and infrastructural advantage arising because of its proximity to the two clusters. It promises to be resourceful for the community.

Status update of all the identified clusters

The activities undertaken in the cluster have been mapped in status roadmap. The activities highlighted with darker shade represent completion and the ones in the lighter shade represent ongoing efforts.

	POKARAN	BAJJU	CHIMANA
COMMUNITIES			
Cluster Mapping	5 villages	37 villages	24 villages
Households reached through baseline surveying	100 HHs	546 HHs	550 HHs
Meetings and focused group discussions	Village-level and cluster level meetings organized frequently		
Health Camps for camels	16 camps for 2829 camels	8 camps for 983 camels	*Health camps were cancelled due to COVID-19 lockdown measures
Documentation of ethno-veterinary practices used to tend to diseased camels	Community elders were interviewed to document these practices		
Documentation of abundantly available local vegetations that are nutritious for the camels	Community elders were interviewed to document these practices		
ENTERPRISES			
<p><i>Institutionalization of community groups</i> Facilitating ecosystem management and development work through democratically elected</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steering committee: 7 members from the village committee would be elected and 3 from Urmul would be elected to guide their efforts Village committee: 3 members would be elected by the camel herders from every village 	One cluster federation formed	One Bajju cluster federation formed with Chimana cluster federation integrated with it	
<p><i>Focused trainings of youth on</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> diseases identification & management nutrition management milk hygiene maintenance and quality control generating awareness on therapeutic value of camel milk generating awareness on growing demand of camel milk in domestic markets 	Visit to Bhuj organized	Visit to NRCC organized	Planned for April
Youth cadre formation – currently working on ground ecosystem building and village level PRI advocacy	5 youth	27 youth	7 youth
Collection center development	BMC center established	BMC & milk processing unit construction underway	Not planned as yet. Integrating with Bajju & Pokaran
POLICIES			



Policy and industry dialogues	Regular meetings taking place at State and District levels
Networking for Camel Milk with Other Organizations	The Camel Partnership formation

