

# Shivia's Goat Farming Programme

*A guide to operations*

**SHIVIA**  
LIVELIHOODS WITH DIGNITY







*"In India's poorest rural families, **goat rearing is an important source of income**. Goats can be sold easily because they are always in demand as a source of food. In fact, goats are nicknamed 'ATMs' because they are a convenient source of cash. Unlike more valuable operations on farms in India - crops or cattle, for example - goats are managed almost exclusively by women. They bring them out for grazing, take care of them when they're ill, and sell them at the market.*

*And here's the most critical point - the money women earn from their goats stays in their hands. With **more control** of their finances, women not only **improve their status** within the homes, but they also have **greater ability to make decisions** and have **greater power over their own lives**.*

*Study after study shows that **when women have cash, they will spend it on things that improve the quality of life for their family**. That means more money for buying food to improve nutrition, schooling for children, visiting a doctor, or even building a toilet."*

**Bill Gates, March 2019**

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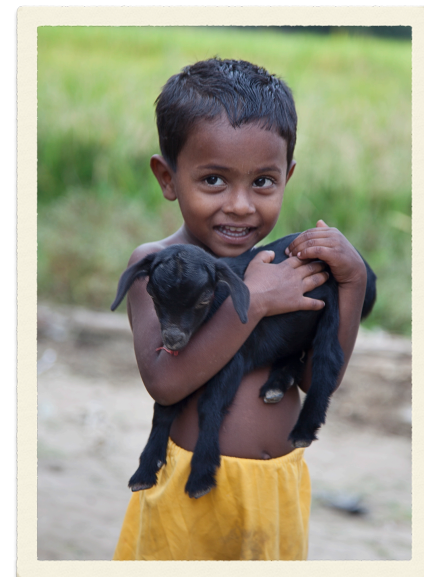
**Note: Exchange rate at the time of publication is £1 = Rs. 95 (February 2021)**



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## Glossary of terms

- ➔ **Nirdhan:** our partner organisation in West Bengal. Nirdhan was set up as a Section 8 company (NGO) in 2011 to manage some of our operations in India. Shivia and Nirdhan work in close harmony and share the same mission with their livelihood programmes.
- ➔ **Sanjevani Goats ([www.sanjevanigoats.com](http://www.sanjevanigoats.com)):** a reputable goat farm in West Bengal, 40 Kms north-west of Kolkata, where Nirdhan buys the goats and Artificial Insemination for the programme.
- ➔ **Poultry Development Services or PDS:** Shivia's flagship livelihood programme, launched in August 2011, to provide the tools and training for families living in poverty to start a small enterprise from home by raising chickens and selling the produce.
- ➔ **Agri-management Services of AMS:** Shivia's second livelihood programme, launched in December 2014, to train farmers with access to small, unproductive plots of land to increase yields and profits through environmentally-friendly and affordable farming methods. Also providing a soil testing service and helping farmers to form Farmer Interest Groups, open group bank accounts and link them to government farming schemes.
- ➔ **Field Supervisor:** responsible for all the team at a particular location.
- ➔ **Livelihood Service Providers or LSPs:** members of the field team who deliver the toolkits and training to farmers. They are recruited from the villages where we work so speak the local language and understand the culture and problems faced by the communities.
- ➔ **Social Impact Assessment or SIA:** used to assess the families we work with, our SIA has been developed using the internationally recognised Poverty Probability Index and asks key socio-economic questions of the household that are relevant in rural India.
- ➔ **Poverty Probability Index or PPI:** The Poverty Probability Index is a poverty measurement tool for organisations with a mission to serve the poor. The PPI is statistically-sound yet simple to use: the answers to 10 questions about a household's characteristics and asset ownership are scored to compute the likelihood that the household is living below the poverty line – or above by only a narrow margin.
- ➔ **Panchayat:** a village council in India.



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# Introduction

The purpose of this manual is to share knowledge and experience about our Goat Farming Programme. It was prompted by organisations asking us how to replicate our model both within India and elsewhere. It is for the benefit of corporates, social enterprises and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) wishing to start and operate Goat Farming amongst rural, marginalised families who are largely dependent on agriculture for their livelihoods. The Goat Farming Programme teaches people – primarily women – to start and sustain a backyard goat farming enterprise.

## Who we are

Shivia is a UK-registered charity working in India. Our aim is to provide the skills and training to very poor families to start income-generating activities and improve their livelihoods in a dignified way. For more information about Shivia, please visit [www.shivia.com](http://www.shivia.com)

Nirdhan, one of our partner organisations, is based in Kolkata and is responsible for delivering our livelihood programmes to our farmers in West Bengal. For more information about Nirdhan, please visit [www.nirdhan.org](http://www.nirdhan.org).

Shivia and Nirdhan jointly developed the Goat Farming Programme and have been delivering it to rural families in West Bengal since 2016. Shivia's primary roles are financing the programme and providing strategic advice, whereas Nirdhan is responsible for the programme implementation.

Shivia Livelihoods Foundation is a Section 8 company in Mumbai responsible for identifying and collaborating with organisations wishing to replicate PDS, please visit [www.shivia.in](http://www.shivia.in)

## Manual use

This manual describes how Goat Farming operates in rural areas of West Bengal, India. Users of this manual will need to tailor their particular programme to suit the local, political and cultural context in which they are operating.

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# Map of locations in West Bengal



# GOAT FARMING

## how the programme works

### STARTING OUT



After our new farmer registers on the programme she receives two young female goats on loan from us, plus one male goat which is shared with other local families. All the adult goats are insured against loss. We ask all our farmers to pay a small cash contribution of Rs 500 (c. £5.50) towards the cost of the programme (training and mentoring, insurance, vaccinations, etc).

### THE TRAINING

Our Livelihood Service Provider vaccinates the goats and gives every farmer extensive training on all aspects of goat husbandry. Each farmer also has access to a local vet should her goats need medical attention and especially at birthing time.



### GROWING THE HERD



Over three reproductive cycles (approx. 27 months), each doe typically produces five kids, so a total of 10 goat kids are born. By this time, we expect at least two "grandkid" goats to have arrived also, taking the total to 12 kids. Throughout this time, our Livelihood Service Provider is on hand for advice and home visits to check on the growing herd.



### REPAYING THE LOAN

Our farmer doesn't repay the loan for the original goats in cash. Instead she gives us half of the goat kids delivered to the original two does - usually five kids - which we can then either sell for cash or loan to new farmers who join the programme.



### A SUSTAINABLE ENTERPRISE



After 27 months with us and with a growing herd of nine goats, our farmer is now ready to continue her goat farming enterprise independently. Our training includes financial advice so she understands the costs of maintaining the animals and keeping them healthy. Goats are highly prized in West Bengal, especially at festival time and hers will fetch a good price at the local market.

### A FINANCIALLY ROBUST MODEL

We have designed our Goat Farming programme to be financially robust. Our original investment in two goats for each of our farmers is repaid with goat kids, which we then loan to new farmers, allowing us to continually expand the programme. We also sell the older females that are returned to us to generate a small income that is reinvested into the programme.



Our Goat Farming programme is directly aligned to several of the **UN Sustainable Development Goals** with a particular focus on Goals 1, 5 & 8: ending all poverty, gender equality and women empowerment, decent work and sustainable economic growth.