

Akshat Saxena *LGT Impact Fellow*

✉ akshat8saxena@gmail.com ☎ +91 7509418164 📍 Raipur, Chhattisgarh, India 🔗 LinkedIn profile

Profile

Sustainability professional with nine years of experience driving environmental, social, and economic justice initiatives. I have been working at the intersection of climate action and rural livelihoods, with a focus on natural resource management, landscape restoration and community-led enterprises. I have worked across large-scale programs to influence systems-level decision-making, build collaborative networks across public and private sectors, enable collective action to regenerate landscapes & strengthen community-led climate solutions. I am committed to work towards integrated environmental and social outcomes that go beyond business-as-usual, contributing to long-term, equitable and climate-resilient development.

Professional Experience

Living Landscapes, Common Ground initiative

06/2024 – present

LGT Impact Fellow

Raipur, Chhattisgarh; Hyderabad, Telangana, India

- Support the Markets Working Group in guiding strategic thinking and intervention design across diverse workstreams including NTFP (Non-Timber Forest Products) value chains, ESG compliance, biodiversity and carbon credit frameworks, and innovative financing models such as blended and public finance.
- Drive iterative strategy refinement by establishing effective feedback loops with partner organizations, and proactively identifying system-level opportunities for engagement and influence.
- Develop key knowledge products and intellectual property assets such as concept notes, appraisal reports, research briefs, sectoral overviews, and thematic materials tailored to different program interventions.
- Serve as the primary liaison for ecosystem partners, especially within policy-practice and financial flows coalitions—leading advocacy on PRI-CBO convergence, Forest Rights Act (FRA) implementation, PESA-FRA alignment, Localisation of SDGs, DA JUGA roll-out, NTFP trade policies, and strategies to address distress migration.
- Collaborate closely with internal teams to institutionalize project management and grant management standards, helping set clear processes, norms, and accountability mechanisms.

Central Square Foundation

08/2023 – 12/2023

Project Lead

Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, India

Designed and institutionalized fellowship management systems during a four-month assignment for the newly launched *MP NIPUN Professional Program*, aimed at improving outcomes in *Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN)*. Worked as part of the *State Project Management Unit* under *Mission Ankur*, within the *NIPUN Bharat Mission on FLN*, in collaboration with *Rajya Shiksha Kendra, Education Department, Government of Madhya Pradesh (GoMP)*.

IDH

07/2021 – 08/2023

Assistant Program Manager

Gurgaon, Haryana; Bhopal, M.P., India

- Convened and institutionalized two multi-stakeholder coalitions ("Compacts") under the Regenerative Production Landscape Collaborative (RPLC) to strengthen landscape governance across nine districts in Madhya Pradesh. These platforms promoted sustainable agriculture, improved farmer incomes, connected market demand with supply, and catalyzed new sources of finance for regenerative farming.
- Built and managed partnerships with over 15 private sector agri-commodity companies, the Agriculture Department (GoMP), impact investors, CSOs, NGOs, and Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) to drive collective action.
- Led reporting and compliance processes for institutional donors collaborating with legal, audit, and finance teams for contract management, partner due diligence, and knowledge management.
- Designed, budgeted, and co-created over four implementation projects with NGO partners; oversaw more than six scoping studies and baseline assessments with research and technical partners and vendors.
- Applied IDH's Gender Integration Tool to embed gender equity and inclusive practices across all RPLC projects in Madhya Pradesh, ensuring alignment with global ESG standards and local development goals.

Ernst & Young

09/2020 – 07/2021 | Ranchi, Jharkhand, India

Consultant

- Advised on technical and administrative aspects of flagship schemes like PMMSY, RKVY, and AIF, including the preparation and vetting of DPRs across the project lifecycle.
- Led backend operations for the Jharkhand Krishi Rinn Maafi Yojana (JKRMY), supporting farmer loan waivers through data validation and interdepartmental coordination.

- Contributed to business development by drafting proposals and concept notes for public sector engagements.

Tata Trusts & Ministry of Home Affairs

09/2018 – 08/2020 | Koraput, Odisha, India

Aspirational District Fellow

- Led the TADP Monitoring Cell, implementing an M&E framework to track 49 key performance indicators across six thematic areas: Health & Nutrition, Education, Agriculture & Water Resources, Skill Development, Financial Inclusion, and Basic Infrastructure.
- Developed District Action Plans, Annual Work Plans, and budgets under the State Finance Commission grant, facilitating resource mobilization and cross-departmental coordination.
- Built capacities of departmental teams, established structured reporting systems for the District Collector, and introduced a behavioral 'nudge' mechanism to improve program responsiveness and accountability.
- Documented progress reports, best practices, success stories, and DPRs to support knowledge management and data-driven decision-making.
- Spearheaded multi-stakeholder projects through convergence of government schemes and by leveraging funds from CSR, District Mineral Foundation (DMF), SCA, & JICA, aligned with district-level Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Technoserve

02/2017 – 06/2018

Associate

Khargone, Barwani, MP, India

- Project: *Advancing Women's Leadership and Access to Finance in Indian Cotton*: Enabled market access for two Farmer Producer Companies (FPCs) by building strategic partnerships and developing business and operational plans. Diversified FPCs' revenue streams, expanded their outreach, and conducted market trend analysis. Led community mobilization, trained women farmers, facilitated financial inclusion, and supported Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and rural women entrepreneurs.
- Project: *Women's Advancement in Rural Development & Agriculture*: Designed and implemented FPO operational and mobilization strategies under the Bihar Rural Livelihoods Promotion Society. Oversaw potato procurement operations via FPOs, enhancing aggregation and market efficiency for smallholder women farmers

Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP-AP)

04/2016 – 02/2017

Young Professional

Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh, India

- Project: *Andhra Pradesh Rural Inclusive Growth Project*: Established backward and forward linkages for the FPOs; researched & documented good agricultural practices as part of Department's SPMU & DPMU.

Education

Indian Institute of Forest Management

07/2014 – 04/2016 | Bhopal, M.P., India

Post Graduate Diploma in Forestry Management

Major Specialization: Environmental Management Result: 2.67/4.33

Maulana Azad National Institute of Technology (NIT-Bhopal)

07/2010 – 04/2014 | Bhopal, M.P., India

Bachelor of Technology

Major Specialization: Civil Engineering Result: 7.62/10.00

Sharda Vidya Mandir

2008 – 2010 | Bhopal, M.P., India

CBSE: Higher Secondary (Science): 77.60 %; Senior Secondary: 86.60 %

Internship, Training and Certificates

USAID - Forest PLUS, Intern

Assessed the de-facto status of "Orange areas" (disputable land areas) through primary and secondary research on the de-notification history & encroachment

SSC. Projects Pvt. Ltd, Trainee

Construction project: Road number 8, SH 23, Guna-Fatehgarh- Paron (65.8 kms)

Cotton Ginning (ICAR) Central Institute for Research On Cotton Technology, Nagpur

Auto-CAD (2D, 3D) Centre for Research and Industrial Staff Performance (CRISP), Bhopal

Data reporting & analysis; Strategic thinking- LinkedIn

Embracing Change; Leading Self; Speaking Effectively
Harappa Education, remote

Skills

Microsoft Office & Google suite apps , Power BI, GIS, Remote Sensing, Auto-CAD, SPSS, Data Studio, Salesforce, Zoho CRM