Scaling participatory approaches with technology
Lessons from Karnataka and Meghalaya

Priya Sankar
Arghyam

Community and Groundwater Management

- India is the world's largest extractor of groundwater

- Groundwater as a common pool resource necessitates communities to be involved in managing it

- Communities have to be equipped with knowledge and tools to make informed decisions

Technology as an enabler for participation

- > 6L villages in India - Scarcity of experts

- GIS tools are advanced but mostly designed for experts

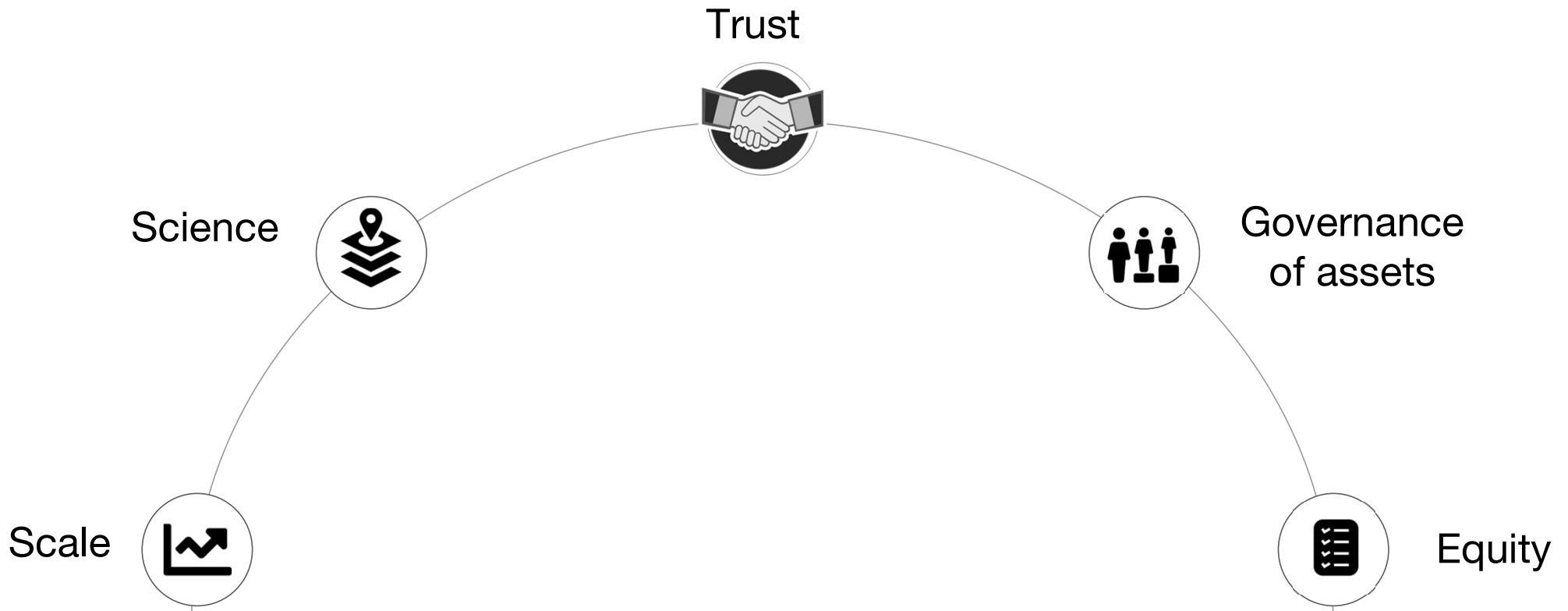- Need digital tools designed for the first mile

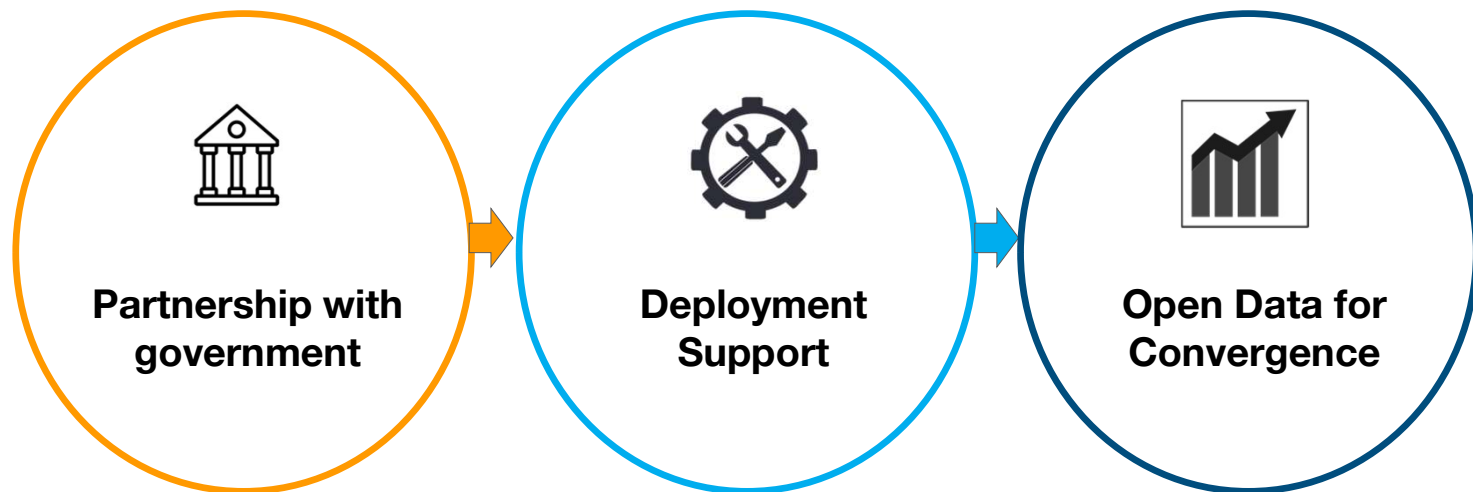# CLART: Composite Landscape Assessment & Restoration Tool

- Simple and easy-to-use

- Colour-coded maps

- Works offline

- Decision support system for the first mile

- Remote verification

Arghyam
Safe, sustainable water for all

FES
FOUNDATION FOR ECOLOGICAL SECURITY
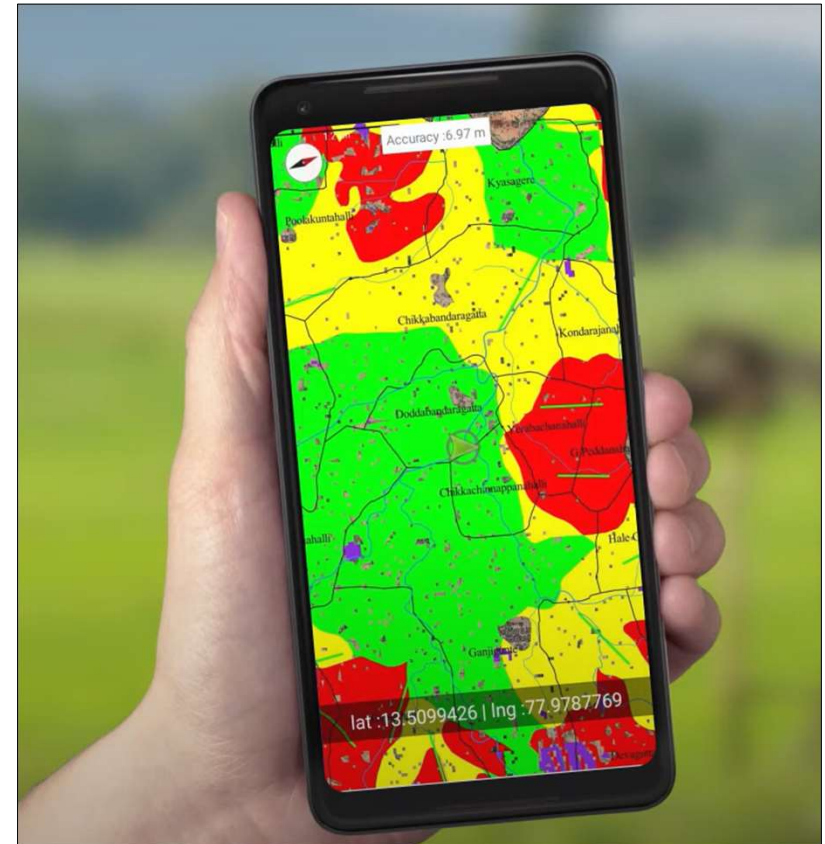
What changed when scientific planning is community-led

Trust

Science

Governance
of assets

Scale

Equity

Scaling tech enabled participation

Partnership with government

Deployment Support
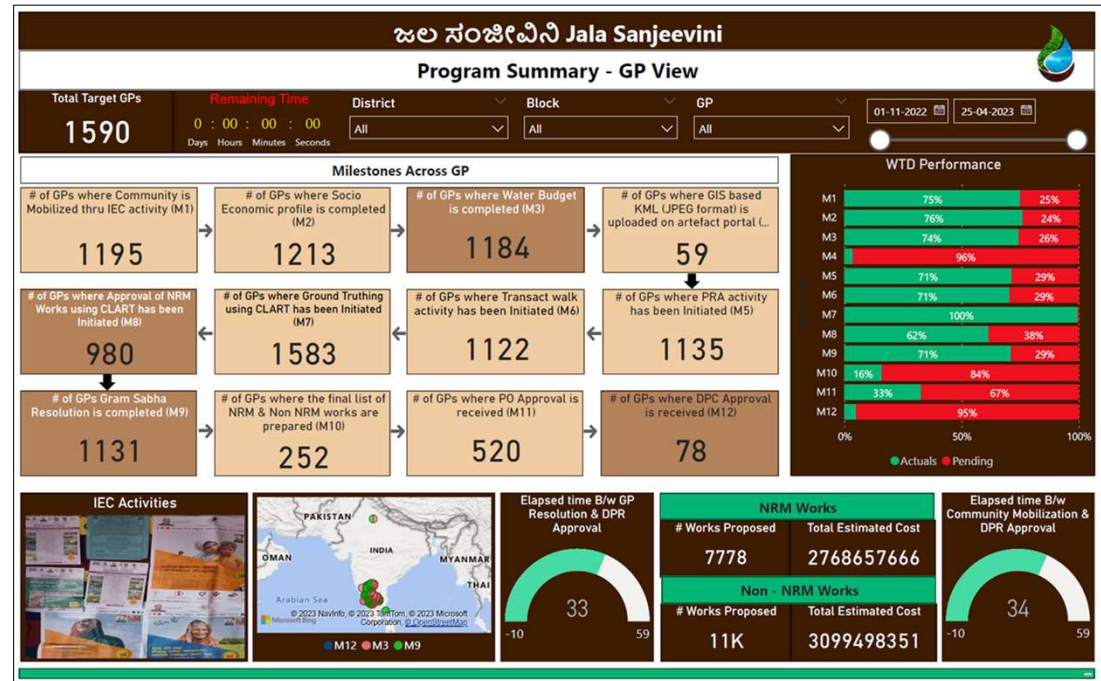
Open Data for Convergence

Partnership with government

- Embedding the platform in govt programs, Training and Capacity Building

- Re-design process to connect the outputs of the tool with the program

- Feedback loop to product and program teams - Building trust with the system
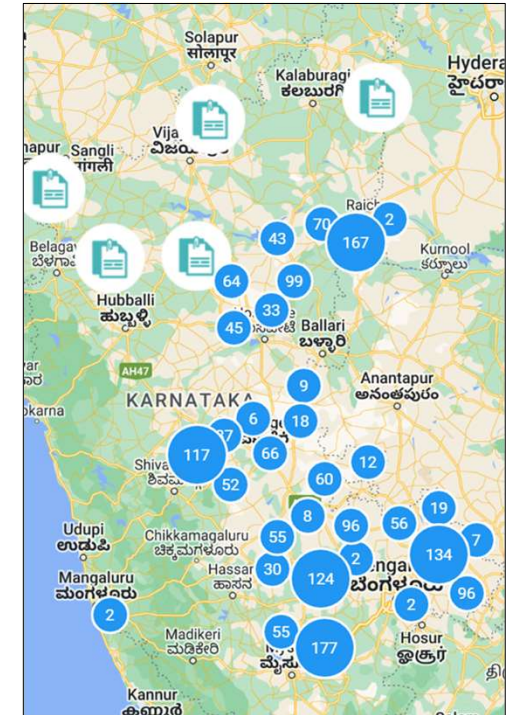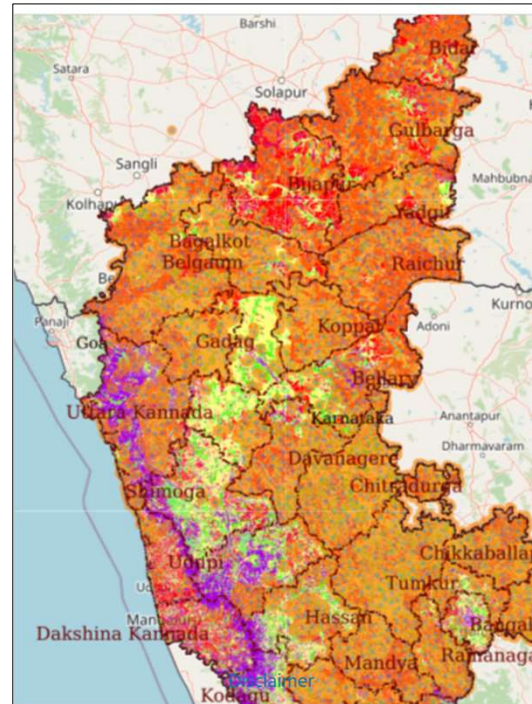
Deployment support

- Data based governance

- Support to drive 100% adoption

- Hand-holding and mentoring support to resolve queries during implementation

Open data for convergence

- Leave behind data as nutrients

- Open, trusted data drives convergence

- Communities can demand action

- Ecosystem can support in fulfilling gaps

Voices from the field

" *Earlier, we would blindly plan an intervention and implement it. Now, with the help of CLART,* **we are able to check if the site is feasible** *for the chosen intervention.* **We are able to discuss with the communities to decide** *which water conservation structure is suitable depending on the recharge potential of the area.* "

Abhilash, Technical Assistant
Coordinator, Chikkaballapur

Shashikala, Grama
Kayaka Mitra, Kolar

" *CLART tool helps me in identifying suitable NRM interventions along with the villagers.* **Thanks to the capacity building programmes by FES, my technical knowledge has improved,** *I am able to showcase my work to the officials.* **My confidence has increased** *and I have received* **recognition among the community** *and other GKMs in my district..* "

Outcomes

	2020	2023	Change
Users	1,919	3,264	**2X**
Districts	17	40	**2X**
Villages	1,851	12,150	**7X**
Interventions planned	17,816	1,70,647	**10X**

We have a scalable model to build community-led scientific plans
While they are yet to be implemented, they can potentially leverage thousands of crores of public funds

Key Takeaways

- GIS tools designed for the first-mile enables communities to participate in planning

- Build trust with the system

- Open, trusted data drives convergence

- Deployment support is necessary to scale community-led scientific planning approaches

Thank you

priyasankar@arghyam.org