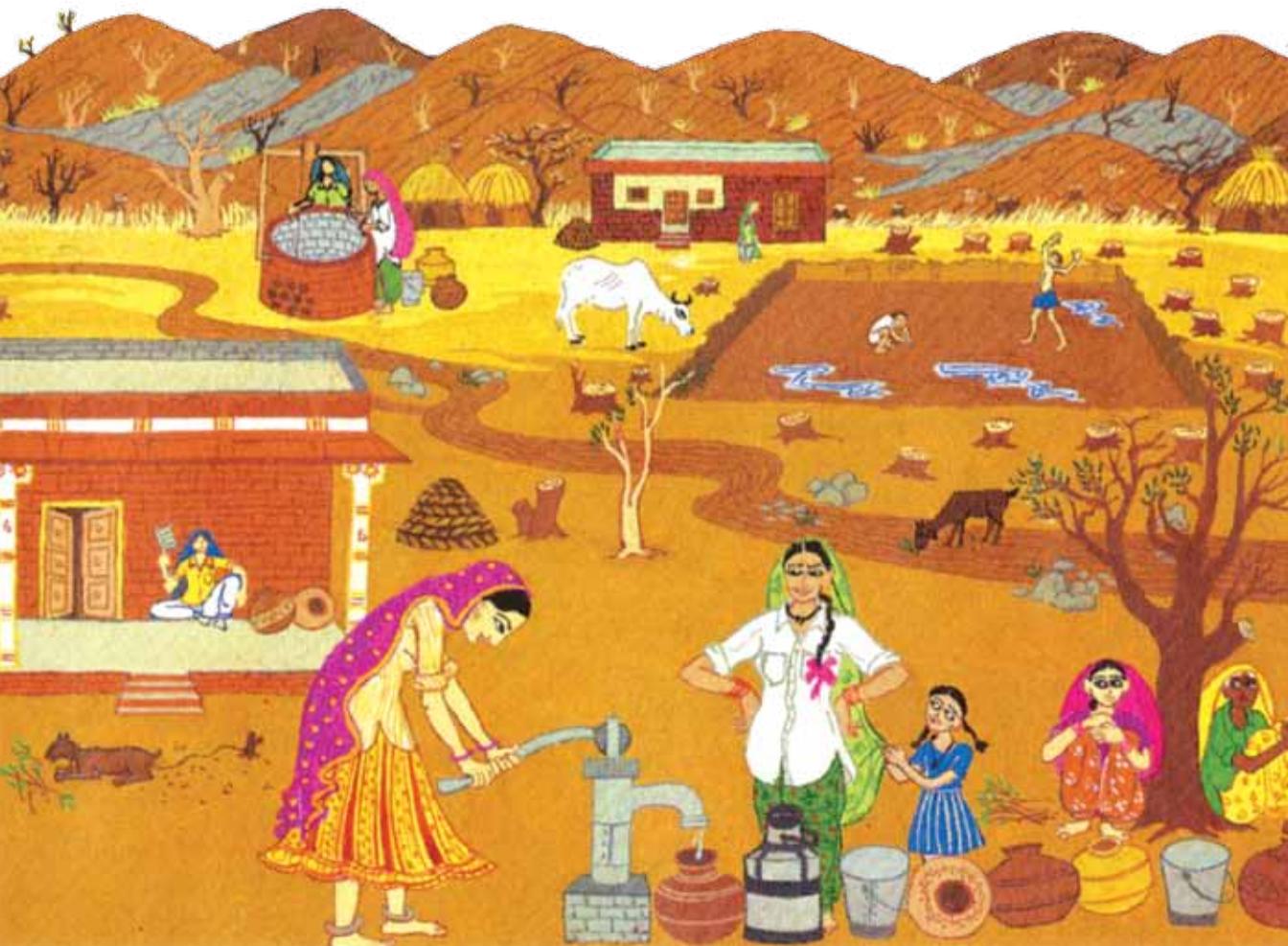


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# SUKHOMATRI

Geeta Dharmarajan

Art by Taposhi Goshal



This book belongs to

.....

#### About Katha

Katha, a nonprofit organization founded in 1988, works in the literacy to literature continuum. We work with slum communities and municipal corporation schools to ensure that every child learns to read for fun and at grade level. We also work with women and teachers so that all children achieve their potential.

Our books, workshops and learning centres strive to forge cross-cultural connections through story and Story Pedagogy®. As one of India's finest publishers, our initiative has been recognized as "a unique and special moment in Indian publishing history" by *The Economic Times*.

Katha's books have received global recognition, including the nomination by an international jury for the prestigious Astrid Lindgren Award, the world's biggest prize for children's literature.

We love to work with new and established writers, translators and illustrators.

**Do you like writing, illustrating, translating for children?** Write to us at [editors@katha.org](mailto:editors@katha.org) to become a cherished member of the Katha family!

*"[Katha] ... an educational jewel in India's crown."*

— Naoyuki Shinohara, Deputy Managing Director, International Monetary Fund

*"Katha stands as an exemplar for all the creative projects around the world that grapple with ordinary and dramatic misery in cities."*

— Charles Landry, *The Art of City Making*

*"Katha has a real soft corner for kids. Which is why it ... create[s] such gorgeous picture books for children."*

— Time Out

*"Katha's work is driven by the idea that children can bring change to their communities that is sustainable and real, just as the children do in [their books]."*

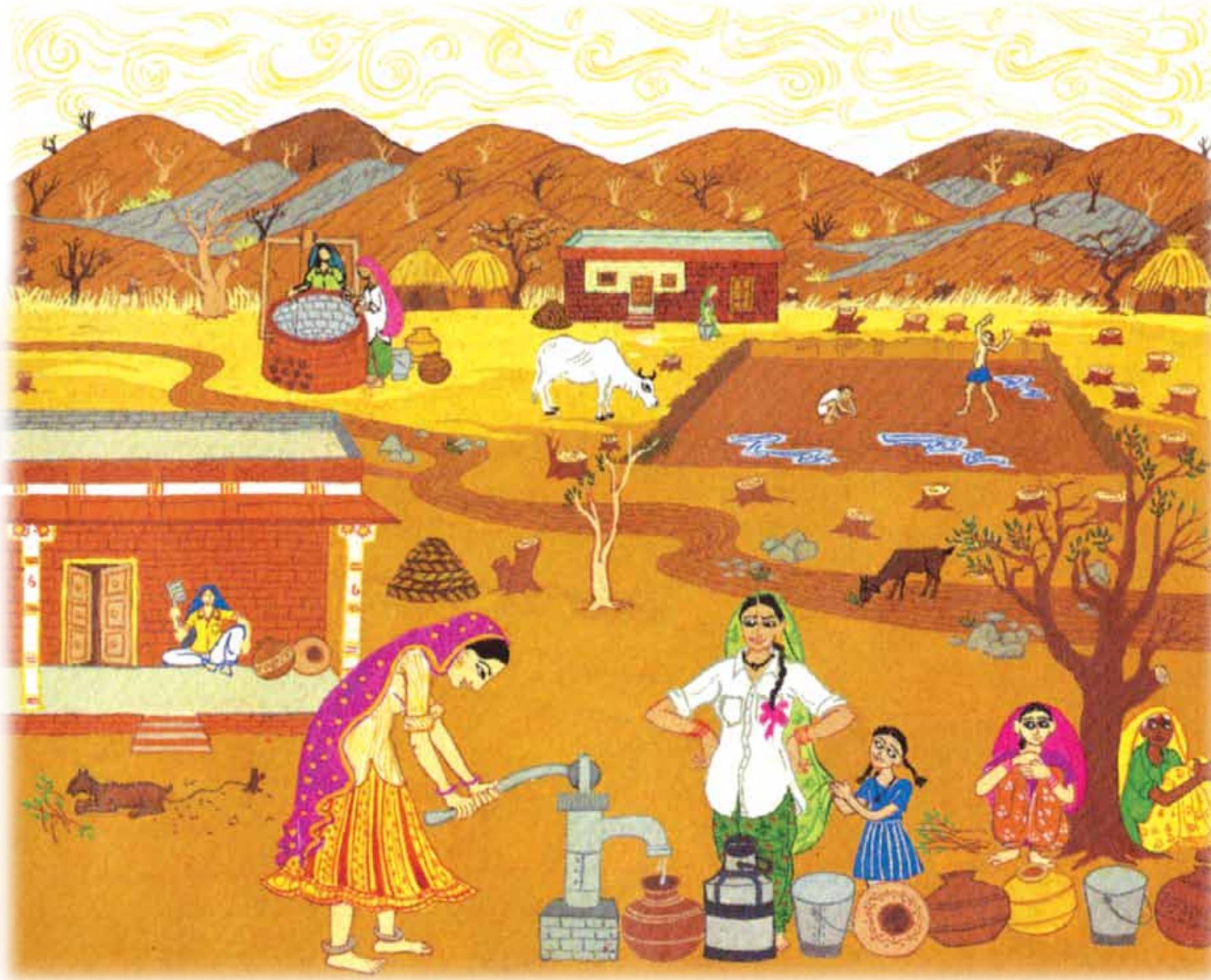
— Papertigers

# SUKHOMATI

Geeta Dharmarajan  
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**KATHA**



Have you heard the story of a village called Sukhomajri? Sukhomajri was once like many other Indian villages – forests had been cut down; there was no water in its wells and pumps; its rivers were full of mud, rather than water.

But in 1970, things changed for Sukhomajri.

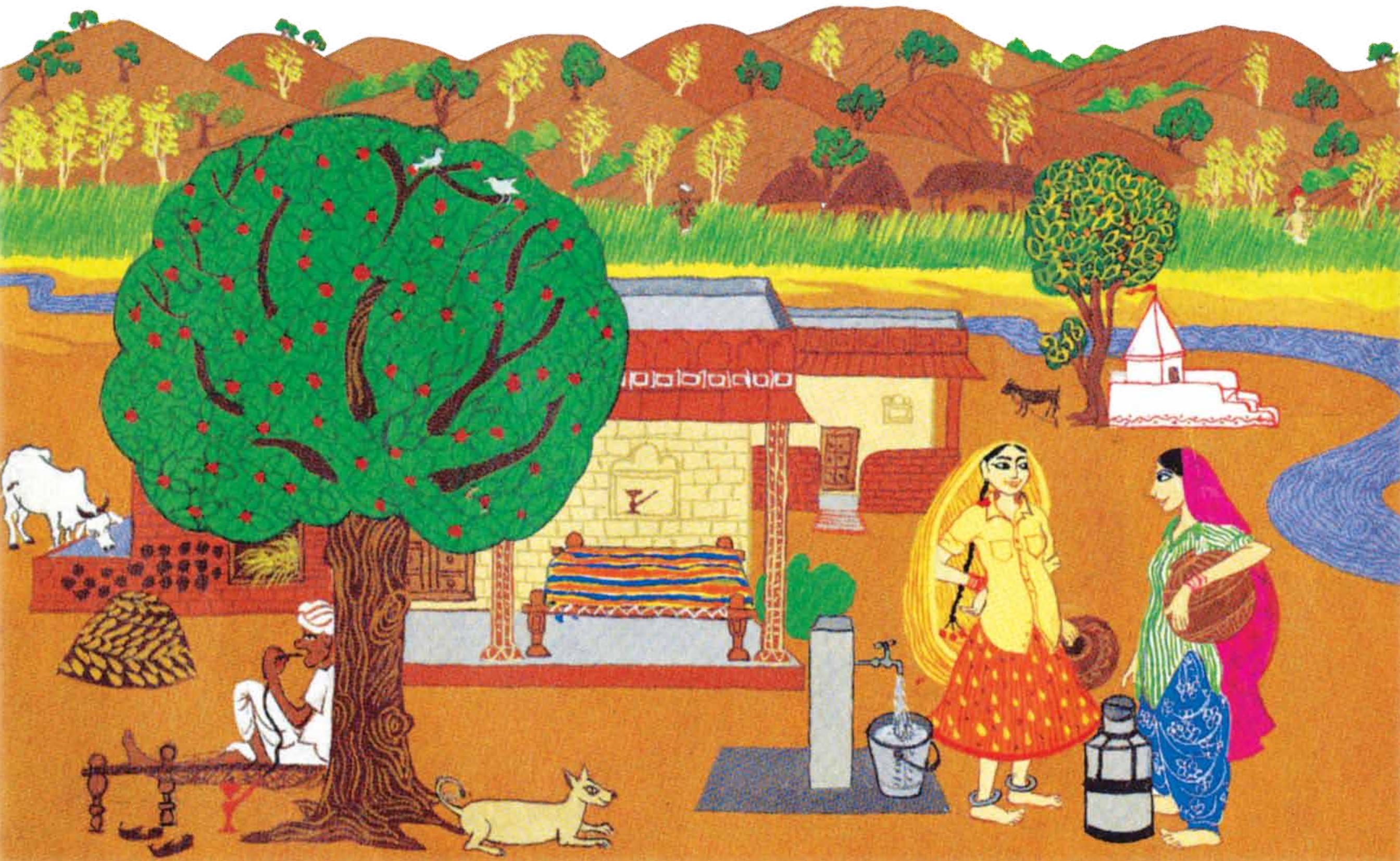
How did it happen?

'We worked for it!' the people of Sukhomajri will tell you.

'We found that since our sarpanch lived in another village our panchayat was not very helpful. So ...'

Sukhomajri formed a gram sabha and every family sent one person as a member to this sabha. The sabha decided on what was needed for the village.





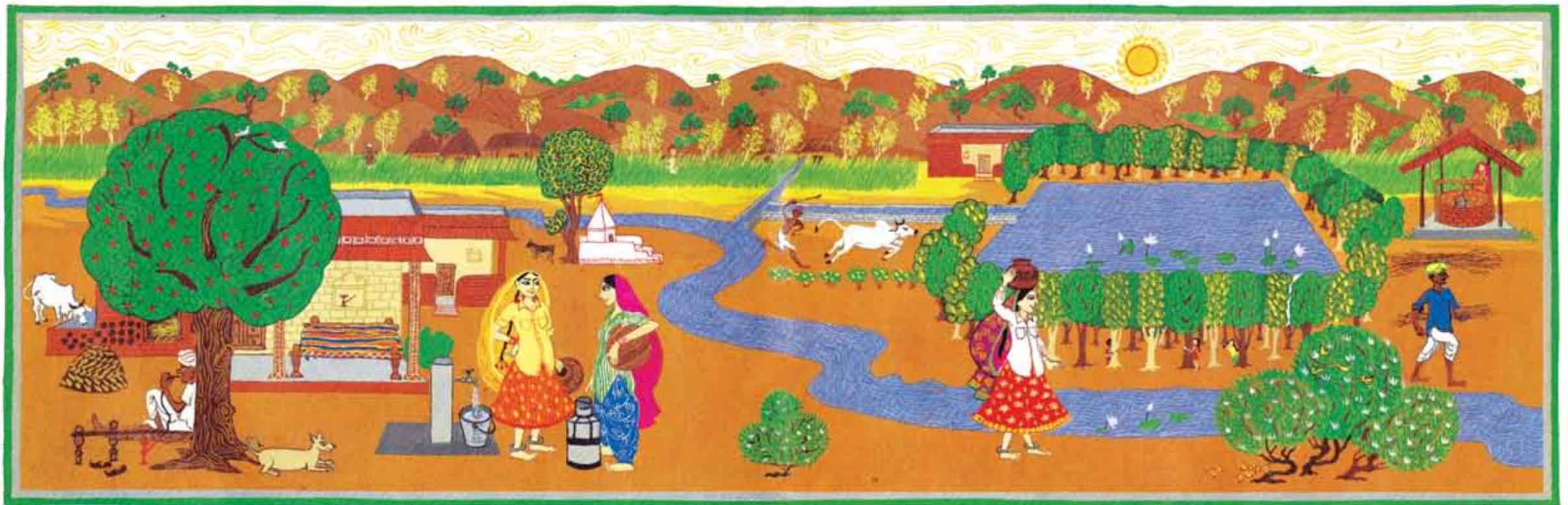
They saw the need for forests. Forests protected the soil. The soil didn't get

washed away into their irrigation tank. So they planted trees around their irrigation tank.



They didn't allow animals to graze there. No one was allowed to cut a branch, or pick leaves! Whatever came from the catchment area – water, grass, wood – was shared by everyone in the village. It was not easy to do these things, but ...

In five years, Sukhomajri was a happier place! Today, their village is green. They have plenty of water. Each home gets about Rs 2000 or so more, every year! Talk to the adults of your village. Form a gram sabha – for a greener, happier village.



**Geeta Dharmarajan** loves writing stories for children. She was one of the editors of *Target*, a magazine for children, and *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, the magazine of the University of Pennsylvania. She was awarded the prestigious Padma Shri in 2012 for her distinguished service in the fields of literature and education.

**Taposhi Ghoshal** is a graduate from the College of Art, New Delhi. She is a freelance illustrator and designer, and has worked with several publishing houses and NGOs including Katha, Pratham, Actionaid, Penguin India, NBT and Ratna Sagar. She was featured in the IBBY Honour List in 2008.



**S**ukhomajri was once like many other villages of India—parched and lacking in greenery. Suddenly, things changed for the better when the villagers formed a gram sabha. With modern irrigation practices—and oodles of determination—the people of Sukhomajri transformed their village into a beautiful green belt. A truly inspirational story for children to understand India’s villages better.

