

# Initiative spotlight: India hybrid timber houses



## LESSONS LEARNT:

- In a nascent industry like biobased construction in India, careful consideration of its progression is essential. In India, the majority of timber is imported at a high cost. Hastily embracing the use of timber could limit accessibility to only high-end consumers.
- CSFEP can be a catalyst for change by working with organizations to influence their existing portfolios to be more climate- smart
- Influencing perceptions needs teams on the ground who understand the local context and have the community's trust

## CONTEXT

- In July 2020, India lifted a 25-year ban on using timber for constructing public buildings
- As India begins to explore timber-based construction, there is a **significant opportunity to start scalable initiatives that take advantage of the country's size and potential for scale**, bringing value to local communities for managing and protecting forests at the same time as providing modern, low carbon building materials for one of the fastest growing populations on the planet.

## CSFEP'S APPROACH AND ROLE

- CSFEP supported the Aga Khan Agency for Habitat ([AKAH](#)) to **build hybrid houses in Gujarat**, where AKAH was already working with a climate-vulnerable community
- **AKAH led the construction of 4 demonstration homes and outreach** to change consumer views on timber-based housing

### CSFEP'S ROLE

- **As a technical partner**, CSFEP conducted research, sourcing studies, safeguards assessments using the [Safeguards Checklist](#), carbon assessments using the [3S Framework](#), and influenced the final house design
- CSFEP **co-funded the demonstration homes and community outreach strategy**
- CSFEP also **connected AKAH to leading partners** in the country to help guide the project's implementation, building on their existing reforestation projects

## IMPACT

- AKAH built more houses and is **scaling beyond the project**. The initiative's success also **prompted AKAH to consider timber-based construction in their programs in other regions**
- The 3S Framework **influenced AKAH's timber sourcing choices** for their upcoming housing project by revealing variations in carbon outcomes among different local forests
- CSFEP contributed to the **R&D of timber use among low-income consumers**, a segment overlooked in favour of the ecotourism and luxury construction markets, by helping to answer questions about what catering to the segment can look like
- The initiative constructed **homes residents wanted to live in by addressing consumer perceptions** of wood as non-aspirational. Additionally, it gradually began **shifting consumer perceptions** toward a more positive view of wood