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Development of adolescent girls

The project for providing the adolescent girls of backward castes with non-formal education, awareness on their rights and training on entrepreneurial activities continued during the year with support of the Global Fund for Children (GFC), U.S.A..



Kusum asking the girls about their knowledge

Key activities:

- Training workshop for training the trainers
- Non formal education center to provide the adolescent girls with primary level non formal education
- Awareness and education –
 - a) Camps (4),
 - b) Peace Tiles workshops (4)
 - c) Focused Group Discussions (48) organized for raising awareness among the girls on women's rights, reproductive and sexual health, prevention of HIV/AIDS, violence against women and girls etc.
- Vocational training on carpet weaving and embroidery



Kusum and sarita along with the girls in a FGD

Following were the outcomes and major achievements of the project:

- Awareness raised among adolescent girls on their rights, prevention of HIV/AIDS, reproductive and sexual health
- Girls from poor backward castes became economically self reliant, thirty of them established their own household industries
- Parents of the girls motivated to enroll their daughters for non formal education
- Discrimination based on gender was reduced in the target villages by 50% Domestic
- Domestic and workplace violence against women and girls reduced by 70%



Girls in an awareness camp organized in village Gopalyawas

Women's entrepreneurship

SEZ, Koliyo ki Dhani

A project for empowering the rural women of backward castes by providing them with vocational training was implemented in village Koliyon ki dhani in district Jaipur with support from SEZ and HSHR, Germany.

GBS works with groups of women across rural Rajasthan to enhance their standards of living. This includes working on preventing rights abuses, increasing financial independence and economic self-reliance (through Self-Help Groups and micro-credit), providing formal and non-formal education and better medical care and advice for girls and women. This program has been very successful and can boast over 650 Self-Help Groups across over 70 rural villages. The SHG saved a sum of INR 50 million (near about US \$ 1,087,000) in a period of 5 years which is a record in district Jaipur.



Sarita describing the rural women the procedure of forming a SHG

Vocational training

Nearly 1,200 women and girls were provided with vocational training in various trades including carpet weaving, bangle making, shoe making, embroidery, Rajasthani handicrafts, milk dairy etc.

These women entrepreneurs are earning a sustainable income on an average INR 3,000 to 5,000 each per month. This small amount of their income has changed the scenario. Now these craftswomen have not only become self reliant and are spending money on their needs like buying new clothes, restructuring their thatched house, sending their daughters to school etc., but contributing to their families which has upgraded their status in the family and society as well.



Dr. Monika, Dr. Runnebaum couple and the nurse in a health camp

Background of the project

A project 'Improvement of the quality of life of rural women through entrepreneurship development' was implemented by Gram Bharati Samiti (GBS) in collaboration with Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe in Rajasthan e. V. (HSHR) with support from Foundation of Development Cooperation of the Federal State of Baden-Wuerttemberg (SEZ). After preliminary discussion on the objectives of the project a formal agreement was signed between Gram Bharati Samiti (GBS) and Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe in Rajasthan e. V. (HSHR) on February 14, 2014. As per guidelines of SEZ, HSHR submitted the project application to SEZ for financial support.

Main objective

- Providing fifty women entrepreneurs of backward castes with training in weaving durry (hand woven cotton mats)
- Improving skill of the women artisans in developing new designs of cotton mats
- Increasing income of the women artisans substantially
- Popularizing traditional Rajasthani handicrafts in and around the area
- Creating opportunities of jobs for entrepreneurial women of the area
- Addressing health problems of the women entrepreneurs and their family members
- Improving overall quality of life of rural women artisans.



Meeting with the women and girls in village Koliyon ki dhaani

The beneficiaries

Fifty women of Schedule castes (SC), Scheduled tribes (ST) and other backward castes i.e. Koli, Raigar, Dhanka, Sahu, Meena etc. were the beneficiaries of the project.

The Project Advisory Committee (PAC)

The PAC was formed involving following key stakeholders:

1. Ms. Kamla devi Koli
2. Ms. Bhawati Sahu

3. Mr. Moolchand Koli
4. Ms. Manbhari Raigar

5. Sarita Yogi (Covenor)



Dr. Ramji Singh Senior Gandhian and Ex. MP inaugurating the work shed

The project performance and outcomes were monitored and evaluated in the monthly meetings of the PAC. Also, problems or hurdles faced in the implementation of the project were discussed and addressed properly in these meetings. Mr. Moolchand, a senior artisan of the local village community who was provided with training by GBS a few years ago was selected as Master Craftsman for the project. His role in providing the women entrepreneurs with training was very appreciating.

Erecting the work shed

As decided in the project quotations were invited from three contractors and masons for constructing a work shed to be constructed covering an area of 2,000 sq. feet (25x80) for training. Quotation of Mr. Ratanlal, an experienced mason was accepted by the PAC and an agreement was signed with him for constructing the work shed. He completed the construction within stipulated time.



The work shed under construction in Koliyon ki dhaani

Initially the work Shed was planned to be constructed for three looms, but later keeping the advice of the members of the PAC in mind it was built for four looms so that adequate space could be secured for store, lavatory etc. in addition to train more women artisans.

Training

The training was provided to the women entrepreneurs in two batches of 25 each. In the beginning two brain storming sessions were organized for the women selected for training. Ms. Kusum Jain, joint secretary, GBS and Ms. Sarita Yogi, the Coordinator facilitated the sessions. They tried to know the level of knowledge of the trainees and expectations from the training. Then they provided them briefly the basic knowledge on different issues related to their personal life, their rights, health, family norms, cleanliness, children's education, raising socio economic status of their family etc.

It was followed by group discussions among the trainees, which proved a very good exercise to lead the training to a success.



The community people rejoicing the completion of the work shed

Training in weaving

The master craftsman described to the trainees important parts of the weaving. First of all he taught them how to fit a loom for durry weaving with all the parts of it. Later he showed them the following activities related to weaving a durry:



Moolchand, the master Trainer instructing the trainee girls

- Making bundles of cotton threads
- Grasping the map of a durry
- Fixing warps and wefts on the looms according to the map
- Weaving simple articles in the initial stage
- Developing designs
- Setting of color threads while weaving
- Cutting the threads after completing a piece of weaving

Skill and design development

In the second round the women artisans were provided with training on application of various designs and developing skill to use different sizes, colors and type of raw materials etc. that was grasped by them gradually.



Trainee girls learning on their looms how to weave a durry

Follow up meetings

After completion of various parts of training follow up meetings were organized with trained artisans to interact with them to evaluate their experience and discuss other important issues i.e. helping them in establishing their own entrepreneurial household units, i.e. linking with banks to get soft loans, procuring raw materials, patterns, design sketches etc.



Dr. Ramji Singh with Community people in Koliyon ki dhaani

A lamp kindled for education

The women in village Koliyon ki dhaani in India have never thought they would learn how to read and write some day, but it is happening there. Koliyon ki dhaani is a small village with a population of 650 people 45 km away in the North East of Jaipur where GBS has been working for uplift of the poor community people for past 10 years. When GBS entered into village in 2003 to form a SHG (Self Help Group) hardly a few men were literate and very few children were going to School established quite far from their village. All the women were illiterate and engaged in various kind of labor work to earn their livelihood. There was no electricity and safe drinking water in the village. Other basic amenities like link road, telephone, having voter ID etc. were a day dream for them. Now the village has been electrified, has got potable water by establishing a big tank and almost all the children are going to School.

GBS intervention

GBS initiated with forming a SHG to empower the women by raising awareness on their rights, combating violence against women and girls, giving up drinking liquor and getting rid of some social evils like child marriage, dowry etc. and motivated to save a small amount of money to deposit into the Bank accounts opened into the name of their SHG. Later two of the craftsmen of the village were provided with training in weaving *durry* (cotton mats) and some of the women too started to learn how to weave the mats. When a Training Center was established in the village with kind support of Dr. Monika Boehm of HSHR, Germany the whole of the community people of the village were over whelmed with joy.



Women and girls learning in the evening School at Koliyon ki dhaani

The evening School

Dr. Monika expressed her concern in a meeting with the community people that the women of the village are still uneducated even they can't write their name. It was discussed later on with GBS seriously and Dr. Monika ensured to raise necessary resources for running an evening School for the women in order to make them literate. Ultimately funds were received from various donors from Japan including Evangelische Kirchengemeinde Kobe-Osaka, Kobe Union Church, Didymos and some anonymous donors for this purpose.

Essential materials and furniture etc. were bought from the market including a table, four chairs, a big *durry* (mat for sitting the women. Also, some learning and teaching materials were bought i.e. charts, graphics, pictorials, maps etc. the evening School was practically started on August 15, 2015. Dr. Monika Bohem along with some other guests from Germany visited the School on February 3, 2016.

Enthusiasm for learning

The evening School has been run for past nine months and thirty women including ten young girls have been regularly attending classes. It has become their daily routine that after finishing meals they rush to the classes at 7.30 in the evening and spend two hours to learn various things. Since all the women belong to labor work and have never went a School, they were not accustomed of to educational tasks, so they took much time in the beginning to learn basic things like alphabet and joining words etc. but grasped gradually.



Kamali learnt and now helping other women to learn (Left) Rajendra, the teacher checking their performance (Right)

Performance

In the first quarter they were taught the letters, the alphabet and the *Devanagari* syllables. The learners were taught to identify the names of fruits, utensils, pet animals, flowers, sweets,

agriculture tools and equipments etc. in the pictorial and charts and how to write them. Now all the women learners attending the School regularly are able to write their names and read a few sentences. In the second phase they are being taught how to read and write numbers and figures. Then they will learn how to write amounts.



Sarita appreciating Kamali (left) Rajendra giving a prize to Mausami (Right) for their performance

Some of the learners are now leading the class by making others pronounce the words correctly and showing them as how to write words properly. Kamali, Mausami, Rajanti and Pooja are the best students of the evening School who won the prize too in the tests taken last week by Sarita Yogi, the GBS Coordinator.

The women are happy with the arrangements of the Schools. Mr. Rajendra, the teacher of the School belongs to the same area so he contributes his time liberally from two to three hours daily for the School. He is very much happy to teach the women and their daughters as well. He is happy that the women of his village and vicinity are being educated. He suggested that we should conduct some examinations periodically.

As a result of the evening School all the children have become very prompt to go to their School who would earlier skipped many times. Since the women are learning themselves, they have realized the importance of the education in the real sense, so they are now very strict to send their children to School in time. Also, they check their sons' and daughters' home work given by their teachers and make sure that they complete it every day. All the women learners now sign don't make any thumb impression on any documents required in Banks or any other Government offices.

The lamp of educations has been kindled in village Koliyon ki dhaani that will enlighten not only their lives, but whole of the community and neighborhood.

Environment

Three thousand trees of acacia species were planted at Gandhivan during the year. Also, several visitors of the project planted some trees. The Additional City Magistrate (ACM) of Jaipur and Sub Divisional Magistrate (SDM), Jamwaramgarh visited Gandhivan along with

other staff of the local administration i.e. the Tehsildar (the Revenue officer), Patwai, Girdawar (Land Record Inspector) etc.. While appreciating GBS work on wastelands development, stabilizing sand dunes and harvesting rain water etc. they enjoyed planting trees. Some of the local community leaders and social activists i.e. Roshanlal Bhardwaj, Rakesh Meena, Bharat Bhushan Agarwal, Dharmendra Jain were present on the occasion.



Local administrative officers planting trees (left) Community people with GBS personnel (right) appreciating Kamali (left) Rajendra giving a prize to Mausami (Right) for their performance

Soil and moisture conservation

Soil erosion and run off has been a regular feature in and around Gandhivan during rains which degrade the land of the area. A baseline survey was carried out by GBS in the surrounding area of Gandhivan to collect exact data and information in this regard. Later a plan was developed for plugging the deep gullies and nullahs (ravines) in order to conserve the soil and moisture.

Rain water conservation

Also, a plan for harvesting the maximum rain water presently flowing in vain in the adjacent area during the rains was discussed with the neighboring farmers who happily agreed to collaborate in the endeavor. Since they were not in a position to spend money, many of them agreed to contribute their manual labor in this work whenever needed. They suggested that deepening and de-silting the old village ponds could be further a promising component of the plan, which have damaged over the years. These ponds have been a good source of water for the cattle, wild animals and birds for a long. Their repair and restoration would help reviving the biodiversity of the area.

The step well restored

GBS restored an old step well in village Tehla in district Jaipur with support from the Prince Clause Fund, the Netherlands.



Bhawani celebrating the step well with community people

According to the senior community people of village Tehla the Gopinath ji Step well was constructed by Late Dungarmalji and Sheojimalji Bajaj in 1835. At that time it was an important source of drinking water for a population of 10, 000 people of the village. A religious festival of Ramnawami (Birthday of Lord Rama) has been and is still celebrated in a marvellous way at the step well in the village. Thousands of people from neighbouring area would get together to participate in the event.



Volunteers cleaning the garbage at step well (left): A worker cleaning silt in side (right)

A temple of Gopinathji was also built in front of the step well at the same time, which is still in a good condition to some extent. The mythological paintings on the walls of the temple still look attractive. There was number of useful amenities in the premises of the step well including a beautiful garden, bathrooms for men and women, a kitchen to cook food by the visitors, fruit trees, a swing and a trough for watering the livestock etc., most of them were completely damaged.



GBS hired expert masons who restored the step well properly and brought into its original shape. The historical and cultural heritage of the step well was revived in such a way that senior community people said that it was more than the original one. Images of old paintings were modified and some new paintings based on religious and mythological background related to conserving and keeping the water clean depicted.



The gate erected with an old architecture

It is very fortunate that the water has come up in the step well profoundly by the natural way, which was not only solved the problem of safe drinking water of the village, but the cultural rituals, fair, worshipping etc. have been restarted.

Awareness was successfully raised among the community people, particularly the women and youth, who have committed themselves to preserve it by all means. They were assured that the problem of safe drinking water of the local communities will be solved extensively both for the people and cattle and drudgery of women of the village of fetching water from far away will be ended with restoration of the step well. And the dream was made true after six months.



Women expressing their support in keeping the step well clean

The villagers, particularly the women are happy to regain opportunity to celebrate cultural events in the premises of the step wells, which have already started. People from neighboring villages are coming to visualize the step well in its new form. The restored form of the step well, beauty of the painting and the common mess is attracting people that was lost for past several decades. The community people, particularly the youth are appreciating the revival of step well for providing them with opportunity to know the glorious heritage of the step well of their area.

The restoration of the step well is not simply the repairing of a traditional source of water of the village, but an important task to rebirth the ancient cultural heritage of the area. It has once again established GBS credibility among the people. In fact it has brought GBS the honor and respect much more than was expected. People's appreciation coming from various parts of the district is beyond words.

Roshan's eye operated

Roshan a 10 year old girl of a backward caste in village Gopalyawas in the remote of district Jaipur was seriously hurt at her eye running to her field as part of her daily routine. It was very unfortunate day for her life that she started bleeding and the doctors said that she has lost her eye sight and could be very hard to regain the sight when she was brought to the hospital.



Roshan with her mother after her eye was operated

When the matter was brought in to the notice of Dr. Runnebaum came over to Goplyawas Germany together with Dr. Monika, he immediately advised GBS to take her to a good hospital for operation and offered to bear all the expenses to be incurred on. Ms. Kusum Jain took Roshan to an eye hospital where she was operated twice and regained the sight within a month. Not only Rshan and her family, but whole of the village rejoiced the pleasure of this successful incident, which was no less than a miracle for them.

Lok Adalat, the court in the villages

The Government of Rajasthan state decided to settle the cases of disputes related to revenue, title of land, public paths, distribution of public land etc. that were pending for a long. Sarita Yogi of GBS was nominated as representative of CSO in the committee formed by the Government for this campaign launched in the month of June, 2015.



Kusum discussing with the villagers in a Lok Adalat

Over eight hundred cases of old age, handicapped and widow pension, land rights, issuing title of land, legal distribution of land, disputes of common paths etc. were solve during the 15 days of the campaign. People were very much happy with outcomes of the campaign and particularly the role of Sarita Yogi in solving these complicated cases.



Sarita attempting to solve the problems of the villagers in a Lok Adalat

Women at SHG

GBS campaign for strengthening the poor rural women of backward castes through Self Help Groups (SHG) continued during the year. Soft loans worth INR 25 hundred thousands was distributed to 50 women for various purposes including repair of their house, emergency needs like treatment of diseases, education of the children and promoting their small household business of handicrafts etc.



Process of promoting a SHG (left) Women's meeting of a SHG (Right)

Sarita Yogi in Germany

Sarita Yogi, Coordinator, Women's empowerment, GBS visited Germany for 15 days i.e. from September 10 to 25, 2015. She went Heidelberg on the invitation of Dr. Monika Boehm Tettlebach, President, HSHR, Germany. She participated in several meetings and group discussions and shared her experience of working with rural women to empower them by raising awareness, promoting entrepreneurship and providing with opportunities for income generation. She returned back home on September 27.



Sarita with children, showing women's production of a durry, in a meeting with German people

Visitors

Dr. Monika Boehm Tettlebach, President, HSHR, Germany visited GBS together with Dr. (Mr. and Mrs.) Runnebaum of Runnebaum Foundation from February 01 to 04, 2016. They

visited several villages in the remote of district Jaipur including Nagal Gagoriyan, Khawarani, GBS women's Bank in Bhanpur, village Pawata etc. along with GBS personnel and Sisly, the nurse with medicines. They observed the way of diagnosing the patients and issuing medicines to them.



Dr. Runnebaum couple (left): Dr. Monika Boehm (right) in health camp in Gopalyawas

Also, they visited village Gopalyawas and Koliyo ki dhani to see the women entrepreneurs weaving durry (cotton mats) and embroidery work on sarees. While visiting the School in village Shivpura they appreciated the hard work being done by the teachers in teaching the students and keeping the cleanliness in and around the School premises.



The German visitors viewing durry making (left) and visiting GBS field office in Khawarani

Interns from Germany

Two interns David and Anne from Germany came to GBS in collaboration with DIZ, a German agency and the Government of Germany for a period of one year. David worked on GBS's projects on environment while Anna supported women's empowerment project in the rural areas of Jaipur.

David contributed to teach English the students of Shivpura School in a small village in district Jaipur. Also he did some work on GBS website and studied the situation at Gandhivan on environmental issues.



David, the intern from Germany welcomed in the School

Anna searched for GBS funding agencies, wrote concept notes, annual report, project proposals etc. in addition to developing a survey instrument to research on the GBS work on SHG in the rural areas in block Amber and Jamwaramgarh in district Jaipur.



Bhawani and Anna, the intern along with the children